

Saratoga Union School District
Extended Day Child Care



The Tree House

Located at Argonaut, Foothill, and Saratoga
Elementary Schools

Parent Handbook 2019-2020



Parent Handbook

Welcome to **The Tree House!**

Overview

The Saratoga Union School District Child Care Program **The Tree House** is a safe, trustworthy and high-quality extended day program serving our District's TK through fifth grade students and their working parents. We offer an after-school-care schedule supportive of the whole child, including supervised play, engaging, age-appropriate activity choices, homework help, and healthy snacks at all three elementary school campuses.

The Tree House staff are highly trained, nurturing, and energetic caregivers who believe that children thrive in a fun, encouraging, child-centered, hands-on program. They take pride in creating and maintaining an optimal after-school experience for students with access to a variety of campus facilities and resources.

This handbook is intended to answer parent/guardian questions and serve as a reference for our district's child care program. Please take time to review important information relative to your child.

Contact Us

Tree Houses are conveniently located on each elementary campus of the Saratoga Union School District. The program is administered through the District Office located at 20460 Forrest Hills Drive, Saratoga, CA 95070.

Registration and Tuition Payment: (408) 867-3424, ext. 218

General Questions: (408) 867-3424, ext. 330

The Argonaut Tree House: 408-867-4773, ext. 330

The Foothill Tree House: 408-867-4036, ext. 330

The Saratoga Tree House: 408-867-3476, ext. 330



Calendar and Hours of Operation

Regular Hours of Operation

Except on closure dates listed below, the *Tree Houses* are open Monday through Friday during the school year.

- After-school care begins when students are dismissed and ends promptly at 6:00 p.m.
- There is no before-school care offered at this time.

Tree Houses will operate after-school care starting the first day of school and at the following dates and times:

- **First Four Weeks of School for TK-K:** 12:10 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday:** 2:10 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- **SLCT Wednesdays and Minimum Days:** 12:10 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Calendar

During the 2019-2020 academic school year, *Tree Houses* are **closed** on the following days:

September 2, 2019	Labor Day
October 7-8, 2019	Non-student days
November 1, 2019	Non-student day
November 11, 2019	Veterans Day
November 27-29, 2019	Thanksgiving Break
December 20-31, 2019	Winter Recess
January 1-3, 2020	New Year and Winter Recess
January 20, 2020	MLK Day
February 17- 21, 2020	February Break
February 28, 2020	Non-student day
April 6-10, 2020	Spring Recess
May 25, 2020	Memorial Day

Rights and Expectations

Child Rights

The following are the child's rights as a participant of the *Tree House*.

1. To be treated with respect by other persons
2. To be free from physical, verbal or mental abuse
3. To be treated equally regardless of religion, age, sex, ethnicity or cultural beliefs
4. To receive medical aid during emergencies and as otherwise needed
5. To be provided with a healthy, safe and caring environment

Child Expectations

It is our expectation that children follow the rules set by the District and the *Tree House* staff when they are present at the center. The following are expectations of all *Tree House* children.

1. Respect each other and others' belongings
2. Show responsibility by following the directions given by *Tree House* Staff.
3. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
4. Participate positively in the group.
5. Refrain from obstructing another child's or adult's right to safety and peace

Please see page 13 for full student behavior guidelines.

Students who do not follow expectations are given verbal warnings. After two warnings parents are called, and or communicated with at pick-up time. If inappropriate behaviors continue, a student may be suspended from the *Tree House* for 1-3 days. Should the problem persist, a meeting may take place between the parents, the leaders, and the Site Supervisor before that child may return to the *Tree House*. At this time, a behavior plan is discussed to help the student be successful in the program. If the child does not show adequate improvements after the parent/child/staff communications the *Tree House* may refuse service to the child via suspension or expulsion from the program. No refunds are given to any family whose services are terminated due to breach of rules or continual student disruption. Students suspended from the regular school day are also suspended from the *Tree House* for the same duration. Reimbursement of tuition and fees will not be given for suspended days.

Expulsion/Termination of Services:

When a student is expelled, termination of services shall be in effect for one calendar year from the date of termination. Re-enrollment may be considered no sooner than one calendar year from the date of termination. To request consideration for re-enrollment, a parent may request in-writing a meeting with the Program Coordinator to discuss corrective action taken to prevent a recurrence of the reason for termination. The Program Coordinator will gather information and determine if services will be reinstated. Any re-enrolled student will be placed on provisional status for a period of 90 days. Failure to adhere to program policies, procedures and expectations will result in immediate termination and disqualification from future re-enrollment in the SUSD child care program. No refunds or tuition or fees will be given.

Parent/Guardian Rights

All persons who live with and assume responsibility for the child are afforded these rights. As a parent / guardian / authorized representative you have the right to:

1. Briefly visit the *Tree House* when children are in care (without disruption to the program)
2. File a complaint against SUSD as per board policy without fear of discrimination or retaliation against you or your child
3. Request in writing that your child's other parent is not allowed to visit your child, or take your child from the *Tree House* provided you have produced a copy of a certified court order
4. Receive a call back from the *Tree House* staff within twenty-four hours

Adult Expectations

The following behaviors are unacceptable and in conflict with the *Tree House* program. Any adult who fails to follow these expectations may have his or her child excluded from participation in the *Tree House* programs and/or related functions.

1. No person will be mentally, physically or verbally abused or harassed
2. No adult will use foul, obscene or perverse language at the *Tree House*, or at any related functions
3. Alcohol, drug, and tobacco use is prohibited on any school campus or during any related *Tree House* functions
4. Destruction, vandalism, or theft of school, *Tree House*, or private property is prohibited

Tuition, Fees & Payment Schedule

Registration Fees

An annual registration fee will apply as follows:

- One Child \$ 75
- Two Children \$125
- Family Rate (3 or more) \$150

Registration fees will not be prorated for the year and will be due at the beginning of each school year or first month of enrollment in the program.

Rate Schedule Options

Schedule ^a	Full-Time ^b	Part-Time ^c
TK-K (August & September)	\$800/mo	\$650/mo
TK-K (October-June)	\$625/mo	\$500/mo
Grades 1-5	\$575/mo	\$450/mo

a. Payments are based on a yearly rate for 180 school days. August and December are not prorated. There is no payment due for June. No new enrollees are accepted in June.

b. Full-time rates = four to five days.

c. Part-time rates = two to three days. When enrolling for part-time care, parents must indicate specifically which weekdays the child(ren) will attend. Parents are charged the whole amount listed even if the child does not attend all of the days or only for a few hours each day. ***Two-week advance notice, in writing, is required to change scheduled days.**

One day per week \$240/mo. (must state the day per week at registration)

Flex Pass \$225 - A Flex Pass for six (6) visits can be used intermittently, but on no more than two consecutive days. **Only one Flex Pass per student may be purchased once every 90 calendar days. Except for the Flex Pass option described here, there is no student drop-in service.**

Returned check fee \$25

Late pick up fee \$1.00 per min. (first two times) / \$5.00 per min. (subsequent late pick ups)

Late payment fee \$25

Tuition Only Discounts: 10% discount for SUSD and/or LGSHS employees.
(Only one discount may be applied) 10% sibling discount.

(Tuition, Fee & Payment Schedule, continued)

No tuition adjustments will be granted for weeks that include holidays. We do not pro-rate for holidays. We do not charge extra for the longer Wednesday SLCT days, minimum days, or parent conference days. All school year calendar variances have been factored into the set rates.

Billing and Payments

Parents/guardians will need to register for the *Tree House* in person at the District Office. Upon receipt of the signed enrollment packet, the **first month's tuition** and **registration fee** may be paid via check. Subsequent months' tuition may be paid online using the *MySchoolBucks* option through your PowerSchool Parent Portal account, or you may pay by check dropped off at Tree House.

Payments are due no later than the first business day of each month. Payments can be left in the drop-box on site. A late fee of \$25.00 will be charged for payments received after the fifth of each month. A \$25.00 fee will also be charged for each returned check. The *Tree House* may terminate childcare services for delinquent tuition.

Divorced or Separated Parent/Guardian

The parent/guardian who signs the contract is the responsible party for making the full monthly payment. If you choose to split the payments between parents, it is the parents' responsibility to request a second contract and to determine the payment amount that will be paid by each parent. Both parents must sign a separate contract with the correct amount listed. Should one parent default on payment, service to the child will be stopped for the days that correspond to the unpaid tuition amount. For situations where separated/divorced parents/guardians alternate pick-ups and do not have separate contracts, the staff will communicate important information to the parent who picks up, and it is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to share this student information.

Charges for Late Pick-Up

The *Tree House* closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. A fee of \$1.00 per child per minute will be charged for late pick-ups. After two late pick-ups the late fee will increase to \$5.00 per minute.

(Tuition, Fees & Payment Schedule, continued)

If a child is picked up late three times at the \$5.00 per minute rate, the *Tree House* has the right to terminate services.

Subsidized Payments

Tree House does accept payments from outside agencies who subsidize individual student child care. Upon enrollment in the program, the parent must provide the official signed contract from the supporting agency. Children cannot start without a current contract letter. Parents are also responsible for any difference in price between agency payment and tuition costs. Any family who has an outside subsidy will be required to sign a SUSD External Subsidy contract and must abide by outlines of the agreement or services may be terminated.

Tree House may offer a limited number of internal subsidies (scholarships) to families that qualify based on the federal income poverty guidelines. Inquire at the District Office, 20460 Forrest Hills Drive, Saratoga. Enrollment opens in March for the following school year. Subsidies are for one school year only. They do not automatically roll-over to summer or subsequent years.

See the application form on the website saratogausd.org/treehouse.

Program

Licensing

Tree House is operated by a California public-school district and adheres to California State Education Code. The Saratoga Union School District Superintendent and designee(s) oversee all *Tree House* facilities and operations. School Districts serving their own students are exempt from State Social Services licensing.

Program offerings

Tree House provides an environment that promotes positive social interaction and child development through play. Our *Tree Houses* offer children many choices with a variety of hands-on experiences through indoor and outdoor activities.

Tree House also provides quiet spaces where children may work on homework. This time is built into the daily schedule. Leaders help students, but do not check homework for accuracy, as we believe that is an important part of the home-school connection for parents. We will provide ample time for students to complete their daily homework and support the students in their work.

Tree House students will have the opportunity to participate in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) experiences, health and fitness activities, arts and crafts, games, nature walks, and/or other hands-on experiences. While attending the program, children will also have the opportunity to read, draw or paint, play educational computer or board games, and participate in sports, outdoor free play, and more.

School Site After-School Classes

If your child signs up for an after school enrichment class in addition to the *Tree House*, it is the parent's responsibility to let us know the days and times your child will attend the alternative program. Children are expected to check-in at the *Tree House* building as usual before going to another program, just to let us know they will be in later or not at all.

Program (continued)

Snacks

The *Tree House* offers children afternoon snacks. Children may bring their own snacks if they desire. Lunches are available in the Cafeteria on SLCT and minimum days or students may bring their own lunch on these days. Snacks brought from home should not include “junk food” such as candy, potato chips, sugary drinks, etc. We serve healthy snacks and would appreciate parents sending food items that are similar. It is the parent’s responsibility to let us know of any food allergies or restrictions a child may have. **Snacks brought to the *Tree House* cannot contain peanuts.**

Electronic Devices

The *Tree House* only allows electronic games to be brought occasionally to the program and only when the Site Supervisor informs children/parents of which day they will be allowed. Should your child bring his/her electronic game or any other items from home, the *Tree House* is not responsible if the item is lost, damaged or stolen. Any items brought from home should be labeled clearly with your child’s name. If your child has a cellphone, it must be kept inside of the child’s backpack during program time and it should be turned off. If you need to reach your child, you can call the *Tree House* phone directly. Should the child need to use his/her personal cell phone he/she will need to ask a *Tree House* staff member for permission. Any inappropriate cell phone use will result in the child not being able to have it on campus.

SUSD Technology

Our programs follow the District’s Student Responsible Use of Technology Policy (SRUTP) (Board Policy 6163.4). Students are expected to use SUSD devices for educational purposes only. Failure to obey policies will result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary actions. All students and parents/guardians must read and sign the SRUTP either during the new student registration process or during the annual returning-student enrollment update.

Sign In & Sign Out

All children must be signed in and out of the *Tree House* each day they attend the childcare program. A “Sign-in/Sign-Out” binder is located at the entrance to the *Tree House*.

Any responsible adult may sign in children. (*Tree House* staff will fulfill this role when children are released from school and arrive at the *Tree House*.)

Program (continued)

When signing out, children will be released from the *Tree House* only to those adults who are authorized by the child's parent/legal guardian during new student registration or the annual-returning-student-update. Adults not on the child's emergency contacts will not be allowed to pick up students. Requests to add a name to the emergency contact must be done at your school office. Verbal, text messages or emails will not be accepted for student release. In the event that parents/guardians are separated, either parent has the right to add a name to the emergency card authorizing a person to pick up the child. Any court orders or legal documents will take precedence and be strictly adhered to in the event of custody matters. Siblings may pick up a child, but they need to be at least 18 years old and listed on the emergency card. Elementary students are not allowed to sign themselves in or out or walk home from the program unattended.

Absence Reporting

For safety reasons, it is important that the *Tree House* staff know which children are expected to be in attendance each day. Parents must report their child's absence to the *Tree House* whenever the child will not be attending the childcare program as expected. Call the phone numbers listed on the last page of the handbook. If the child will be absent from both the regular school day and childcare, please call to report the absence to both school and *Tree House*. Parents will not be reimbursed for days when the child is absent. (Special consideration will be given for long-term illnesses or other unforeseen extended emergencies with a doctor's note.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: It is imperative that parents notify the *Tree House* of any changes in a child's attendance schedule. This includes enrichment classes. The *Tree House* staff will search for any child who does not arrive as expected to the *Tree House*. If the child is not found, the *Tree House* will assume the child is missing and will contact the parent, the school office, and then the Sheriff for immediate assistance.

Program (continued)

Dropping/Changing Scheduled Attendance

Parents who wish to drop their child(ren) from the *Tree House* program or make changes to the scheduled dates of attendance must provide the center with a **two-week notice in writing**. Families who are dropping from the program will be charged for the two weeks following the written notifications, after which all services will end. Verbal notifications are not sufficient to alert us of a program change. In addition to the change form; the parent/guardian must also complete a new parent contract indicating their new payment amount.

Illness

If the child exhibits any of the following symptoms while at the *Tree House*, the parent/guardian will be notified. The parent/guardian will be expected to pick up the child within one hour. The *Tree House* may request proof of treatments and/or a doctor's note before the child is permitted to return to the center.

- Child was sent home from school same day due to illness.
- A fever of more than 100 degrees
- Diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting
- Any communicable disease that is required for a child to be sent home according to Santa Clara County Public Health requirement

Additionally, for health and safety reasons, children who exhibit any of the above symptoms should not be sent to the *Tree House*. Children should be fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours before returning to The *Tree House*.

Injuries

The *Tree House* staff may clean and apply adhesive bandages to minor cuts and scrapes and may apply ice to minor bumps, bruises or other injuries. For more severe injuries, staff will contact an authorized person to pick up the injured child and care for him/her and/or staff may call for emergency response. A written incident report will be given to parents any time their child is injured at the *Tree House*.

Program (continued)

Medication Policy

The Tree House will be responsible for giving medication to students only under the following circumstances: We will not dispense daily medications that are scheduled to be given during the school day. The *Tree House* follows School District policy, which states that, in order to dispense medication, parents must provide the staff with the doctor's orders for that medication. In addition, if children require an epi-pen, inhaler, or other emergency medications, parents will be responsible for providing training and the medication needed to the staff. **Two sets of medication will be required to cover both the school-day and *Tree House* since access to the school office is not always available after hours. The *Request For Medication* form stating that they are designating the staff to dispense the medication must be turned in at the school office, not *Tree House*.** Dispensing of medication must not interfere with the overall operations of the program. Medication can be provided to students only after parents have provided the proper training and paperwork.

IEP OR 504 Plans

Upon registration, families must disclose if a child has an IEP or 504 Plan and provide a copy to the Site Supervisor. If an IEP or 504 plan is issued, families should communicate with the Site Supervisor.

Staffing and Training

SUSD will employ *Tree House* leaders to develop and implement the after-school care program. These leaders will participate in on-going training. Trainings will include classroom management, conflict resolution, social-emotional literacy, emergency procedures, and curriculum development. The ratio of staff to students will not exceed 1:20. All staff have a CA Department of Justice, FBI, and tuberculosis clearance and are reference-checked before hiring. The Program Coordinator oversees our District's *Tree House* program and staff and is certificated by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing .

Program (continued)

Mandated Reporters

All *Tree House* employees are mandated by the State of California to report any suspicion of child abuse. Employees shall not form opinions or conclusions on these suspicions. It is only their responsibility to contact Child Protective Services and state concerning observations. The responsibility then lies with Child Protective Services to investigate, draw conclusions, and, if necessary, prosecute.

Open Door Policy

Our doors are always open to parents who wish to briefly visit the *Tree House*. Parents should plan all visits with the *Tree House* staff and check-in for a visitor pass. We also encourage all parents to attend our schools' fall Back-to-School Night and spring Open House.

Emergency Procedures

Tree House staff will follow the emergency guidelines set by the Saratoga Union School District. *Tree House* staff are trained in our District's emergency procedures. All *Tree House* buildings have phone access for emergencies, a cell phone, and hand-held radios to communicate in the event students are in different places on the school grounds. Site Supervisors cell phone numbers will be given at the beginning of the year, and are to be used in case of emergency only. All *Tree Houses* are equipped with emergency supplies and first aid kits.

Student Behavior Guidelines

The goal of Saratoga Union School District's child care program is to provide a healthy, physically and emotionally safe, stimulating and secure environment for all program participants. We strive to help students discover who they are through activities and experiences that build strong relationships and encourage our youth to be globally upright citizens.

PROGRAM BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

- People are RESPONSIBLE for their actions
- RESPECT each other and the environment
- HONESTY will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- We will CARE for ourselves and those around us

WHEN A CHILD DOES NOT FOLLOW THE BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES, THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE TAKEN:

- Staff will redirect the child to more appropriate behavior.
- The child will be reminded of the behavior guidelines and rules, and a discussion will take place.
- The parent will be notified of the behaviors.
- The staff will document the situation. This written documentation will include what the behavior is, what provoked the problem, and corrective action taken.
- A conference with the parent and staff will occur to determine the appropriate action.
- A progress check or follow up will occur.
- If the problem persists, a conference will occur with the parent, child, staff and Site Supervisor. The Site Supervisor will have all documentation, and conference notes for review.
- If a child's behavior at any time threatens the immediate safety of self, other children or staff, the parent will be notified and expected to pick up the child immediately pending next steps.
- If a problem persists and/or a child continues to disrupt the program, the SUSD Child Development Program reserves the right to suspend the child from the program.
- Expulsion from the program will be considered in situations involving violent acts or after all alternatives have been attempted to resolve the problem.

SUSPENSION* FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CURRENT DAY AND THE NEXT DAY

- Children suspended or expelled from the school day are not permitted to attend the *Tree House* after-school and/or before-school for the duration of the suspension/expulsion.
- Grounds for suspension from the *Tree House* include the conduct listed below as well as suspensionable incidents listed in [Board Policy 5144.1](#) and [California Education Code 48900](#).
 - Endangering the health and safety of self, other children and/or staff.
 - Threats made to children and/or staff regarding firearms, knives, firecrackers or explosives.
 - Theft or damage to school, or personal property.
 - Leaving the program premises without permission.
 - Continuous disruption of the program and/or refusal to follow program behavior guidelines and/or school rules.
 - Use of profanity, vulgarity, obscenity and/or lewd behavior.

*The severity of the behavior may result in immediate expulsion and persisting behaviors may lead to extended suspensions and/or expulsion from the program.

IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF SERVICES

- Grounds for termination of services include, but are not limited to:
 - Endangering the health and safety of self, other children and/or staff;
 - Possession of, and/or use of tobacco products, knives, alcohol, illegal drugs, firecrackers, firearms or explosives;
 - Inappropriate interaction by parents, family contacts, or family members towards other parents, participants or staff. (Example: threats, harassment, obscene language, fights, displays of hostility, etc.)

Upon completing the registration process for the *Tree House*, you agree to the behavior guidelines listed above.

Contact Information

The Argonaut Tree House

Joey Stefani, Program Site Supervisor
jstefani@saratogausd.org
408-867-4773, ext. 330

The Foothill Tree House

Kia Yamamoto, Program Site Supervisor
kyamamoto@saratogausd.org
408-867-4036, ext. 330

The Saratoga Tree House

Corri Coss, Program Site Supervisor
ccoss@saratogausd.org
408-867-3476, ext. 330

Registration and Payments

The first month's tuition and registration fee should be paid via check at the time of registration at the District Office, 20460 Forrest Hills Drive, Saratoga. Subsequent payments can be made via check (dropped off at Tree House) or through PowerSchool.

Inquiries regarding billing and invoices

SUSD Business Office
(408) 867-3424, ext. 218

Program Manager

Jessica Baker
jbaker@saratogausd.org
(408) 867-3424, ext. 330

All of our *Tree Houses* have phone lines, so that parents can call whenever they have a question or concern. Our policy is to answer the phone when staff is available and not working with children. Your children's well-being and safety are our priority! Should you leave a message for the staff, we will contact you as soon as possible and within 24 hours.