



# DOT TO DOT

Out of the Toy Box Learning

**Parent Handbook 2020-2021**

## **Dot to Dot Handbook**

12160 Alta Carmel Ct  
San Diego, CA 92128 [www.dottodotacademy.com](http://www.dottodotacademy.com)

**Index**

<b>Mission/ Philosophy Statement/ Programs offered .....</b>	<b>1-3</b>
<b>Toilet Training Steps.....</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>Enrichments.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Hours of Operation.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sign in/Sign out/Late Pick.....</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>Ages of Children Accepted.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Admissions.....</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Absences.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Accidents or injury.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Child playdate.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Refection.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Siblings and military.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Tuition and Fees.....</b>	<b>8-9</b>
<b>Student Withdrawal.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Schedule changes.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Vacation Policies.....</b>	<b>9-10</b>
<b>First Day.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Enrollment Forms.....</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>Attendance.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>School Attire.....</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>Snack/ Lunch .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Napping.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Art Folder.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Lost and Found.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Sun Protection.....</b>	<b>12-13</b>
<b>Rainy Days.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Morning Assembly/Reflection.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Transportation Policy/Field Trips.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Respectful Communication.....</b>	<b>13-14</b>
<b>School Closure.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Security.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Policies.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Child custody.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Medication.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Sick Policy.....</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>Communicable Diseases.....</b>	<b>16-17</b>
<b>Parent Involvement.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Parent Connection Night.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Celebrations and Holidays.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Birthdays.....</b>	<b>17-18</b>
<b>Smoking Policy.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Emergency Procedures/ Authorization for Staff to Act in Emergencies.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Babysitting.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Behavior Guidance / Negative or harmful behavior policy .....</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>Grievance Procedure/ Grounds for Dismissal .....</b>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>Policy and Schedule Changes.....</b>	<b>21-22</b>
<b>Afterschool.....</b>	<b>23-24</b>

## **Mission**

With open hearts, we are proud to invite you and your little one to experience an incredible world of excitement, creativity, values, and learning. At Dot to Dot, we understand the long-term benefits of inspiring curiosity in young minds, and of helping them draw the important connections they'll use to move forward each day. We also know how important it is to provide young children with a warm, nurturing and thoughtfully encouraging environment in which they can learn to the best of their ability.

## **Philosophy Statement**

We are a progressive educational development school that follows a Reggio Emilia approach to learning. We believe that children are capable beings and our best catalyst to see the world from a fresh point of view.

Our role as educators begin with observation and documentation in order to uncover the intention behind the children's play. Through rigorous research, collaboration with peers and children, and hypothesis we form new questions, provocations and experiences for children in order to scaffold their learning. Our goal is to take each child on a series of inquiries without the intention and pressure of getting to the "right" answer; rather focusing on the process of inquiry. When you allow breathing spaces, pauses and play to happen, you have allowed and trained the mind to think, collaborate, dream, embrace and innovate.

We believe in providing boundless opportunities for children to play, experience and understand their potentialities to help develop a voice and have the confidence to use it.

Research has shown a great majority of brain development takes place during the first five years of life. We provide stimulating challenges and brain enhancing activities as well as social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and creative skills. Our programs are designed to ensure each child progresses at their own pace, according to their potential.

This philosophy of teaching enables the educators and children to come together for a common cause making learning, investigating, innovating and reflecting an incredible journey for life!

The natural world and materials are a big part of our school. Nature instills in everyone a sense of beauty and calmness. It exposes us to things that are alive and growing and promotes curiosity and exploration. Imagination comes into play as children create special places and use natural items to create stories and play. All senses become engaged when children interact with the natural world.

Our staff uses positive reinforcement and redirection in an atmosphere of love and respect. Our goal is to create an environment in which children respect themselves, their peers, and their teachers, in which they feel safe, have fun, and learn.

## **Programs Offered**

Our school is designed to promote our mission “to enhance each child’s learning in order to maximize their potential as a human.” At Dot to Dot, we understand each child has their own strengths and unique qualities. We place children in the different classrooms mainly by their age group and encourage them to be in their classroom for a minimum of nine months to one school

year. This will promote a sense of community and team spirit as the children grow strong bonds with each other and their educators throughout the year. Below are the classroom names and range of ages in each class. Remember to ask us about the progression of learning and growth in each classroom during your tour.

## **Preschool/Kindergarten**

- Our preschool programs are for children ages 2 – 5. Our Preschool programs include snack, Music Together and Public Speaking. Our Preschool students also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of Enrichment Programs.

## **Seedlings/Sprouts**

The sprouts are a group of 2 and 3 years of age, who are beginning to explore the world around them their relationship to the world, object and people. Their relations to routines and expectations, their ability to explore, discover and venture into new experiences, and their understandings and misunderstandings!

One of our primary focuses in the Sprouts is developing simple and defined routines to help with transitioning to Dot To Dot and a world beyond their house and families. We work very closely with the families and the children to create an environment of love, trust and comfort within Dot To Dot. Language of emotions and feeling is often heard many times during the day in the Sprouts. “I am so happy you are with us, your mom and dad love you and will be back by noon to pick you up. We love you too. “

Followed by an information statement that leads the child to a state of present rather than reminding them of their parents being gone. If we are exploring a provocation we might say “I see we have clay and some really interesting materials on the table, hmmm.. I wonder what we can do with this?”

Sprouts classroom is the foundation for the rest of the Dot’s learning journey. This is where we engage in conversation and dialogue about mark making, relationships, exploring materials and their boundaries, learning different tools to manipulate object, self-expression, parallel play and learning to enter play, self-help skills: taking care of one self and belongings, understandings of emotions, testing schemas, and being immersed in everyday unfolding of life and all that it has to offer.

Children who enter the Sprouts do not need to be potty trained. We can talk further about potty training.

## **Roots**

Our Roots classroom is a mixed age group of 3 and 4-year-old. The Root classroom builds on the strong foundational skills and learning introduced in the Sprouts classroom. In the Roots we focus on strengthening and developing their social skills and interaction throughout the day by encouraging the children to share, participate and explore in a variety of settings and extended time frames for exploration. Root's primary focus is building a strong sense of voice and ability based on the skillsets the children have acquired and are to further explore c the Roots. Concepts such as sound, vibrations and schemas are further explored, tested by the children for a longer duration of time resulting in short term and long-term projects.

Nature and all of its wonders are concepts we ponder upon quite frequently in the Roots. The roots learn to become aware and sensitive problem solvers, empathic teammates, responsible for themselves, peers and Dot To Dot, excited to write their names, and words and letters that intrigues them, natural mathematicians, and hypothesizing with peers and educators. They are competent and have developed the skills to communicate their feeling, address a problem and have the desire to fix it for better.

## **Stems (Kindergarten Prep)**

The Stem classroom is a mixed age group of 4 to 5. The Stem classroom is the last class the Dots enter prior to their transition to Kindergarten. In the stems class one of our primary focuses are to establish a strong sense of self, and its relationship with the world and others. In the Stems the children dive deeper into the skillsets they have been exposed to in the Roots classroom to explore and create learning journeys and projects, constantly reflecting, questioning and hypothesizing together with the large and small groups within the class and Dot To Dot as a whole. Literacy presents itself in many of the work the children put together throughout the year. Mathematical concepts are experienced and tested out through intricate and detail building with loose parts, blocks, their building projects and outdoor exploration.

Stems develop the skills to pay attention to the details as well as keeping an eye on the big picture. They are great solo thinkers, and seek the recognition, interaction, perspective of peers and adults around them to help scaffold and further their projects and explorations into new meanings and boundaries. They are very confident in themselves and their potentialities, which is transparent in their thinking and response to the world around them.

## **Buds (Kindergarten) not offered at this location**

## Toilet Training Steps

Using the toilet is a normal stage in a child's development and should be a positive experience for all children. Research suggests that children will physically and emotionally show signs of readiness and our role as adults is to be quick on catching these signs at the right time! We are here to help with this very important milestone and below will highlight some tips on having successful toilet training for both parents and child. Accidents can occur even in the stems class, once in a while, but not daily.

### When to Start

It is common to start potty training when children turn two, however some children show us signs of readiness before age two and some from two to three years of age. Stage one - educators and parents will look for signs of readiness and communicate this. If your child is showing signs of readiness and the educator has communicated that with you, we need your full support in assisting with toilet training and taking your child through its stages. We will not be able to do this on our end only, and lack of attention to this matter might result in your child not being able to move to an older age classroom and paying the non-potty tuition fee.

### Potty Training Readiness checklist

- Child knows he/she has to go "potty"
- Child stays dry for a few hours or wakes from sleep dry
- Child can follow simple directions
- Child can communicate with you when she/ he is soiled
- Child understands pee, poo, potty
- Child wants to do things such as pulling pants down and up by themselves
- Initiates interest in using the potty and asks to wear underwear
- Can follow three and four step instructions (this is important for learning to use the rest room, wipe, and wash hands)

Once we notice above signs of readiness, we will ask for you to have the child in underwear. Pull-ups are great for bedtime and naps; however, the child will soon know that pull-ups are just like diapers and that does not help the process. Shopping for underwear with your child is a milestone and promotes sense of independence to help with the toilet training. We are trained and ready to deal with accidents and need you to be with us all the way. Once the child is in underwear avoid pull-ups, this will regress the potty training and confuse the children.

Potty training can take anywhere from few weeks to few months. The more consistent we are the faster the process and more successful.

There is an additional fee for potty training, potty training fee is located in our enrollment form.

### What to wear during potty training?

To help your child be successful during potty training we ask families to have your child wear clothes that are easy for your child to put on/take off. Please avoid snaps and buttons as it affects the children independently dressing.

A potty-trained child is a child who can do the following:

- Child is not in diapers/pull ups
- Child is in underwear and accident free
- Child is not holding their desires to go to the bathroom
- Child is able to get off of the toilet independently
- Child is able to go to the bathroom without directions

**Note:** Dot To Dot considers your child to be fully potty trained when all the above developmental milestones are met and the child has been accident free in underwear for two consecutive weeks.

**Enrichment**

- o **Public Speaking:** Tuesday's
- o **Music and Movement** – Wednesday

**Hours of Operation- Preschool**

Dot To Dot offers extended care from 7:00 am – 8:00 a.m. for an additional fee. Our school's "hour of operations" are from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm. 8:00 – 12:30 for half day, 3 p.m. for partial day, and 6 p.m. for full day. Our enrollment forms have information about hours for specific programs. Our website: [www.dottodotacademy.com](http://www.dottodotacademy.com) has information about school closure dates, and other important dates.

**Sign In/Sign Out Procedure**

Every child **must** be signed into our program upon arrival and signed out before departure every day of attendance. Our sign in/sign out system is called Procure, and the sign in/sign out station is located at the front desk on the tablet. It uses a unique fingerprint code for each parent or guardian and verifies information electronically. In the event a student is not signed in or out, a verbal and/or written warning will be given, and repeated offenses will result in fees or termination. After the first notification administration will apply a fee of \$12 every time a child is not signed in and out. Photo identification will be required for child pick up and only authorized persons (18 years of age or older) are allowed to pick up. In the event that Procure is down, Dot To Dot administration team will sign in or out your child.

We realize that dropping off and picking up are hectic times of the day and that many parents are rushing to get to work or to return home after a long day, but signing in and signing out is a requirement that we are responsible for maintaining and it helps us to ensure the safety of your children.

Parents, we ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone while on our campus. Teachers and Administrators may need to communicate with you at the beginning or end of each day, and your children are very excited to have your individualized attention so they can say their good-byes or tell you about their day at school.

### **Extended A.M. Drop off/ Late Pick up**

Dot To Dot is licensed to care for the children from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday- Friday. Students enrolled for extended care in the morning must be dropped off after 7:00am. If you are enrolled in the preschool 8:30 starting time, we want you to arrive at school between 8:15 and 8:30, any earlier than 8:00 families will be charged a drop-in fee of \$12 per hour. The school closes at 6:00 PM. Employees are mandated by state law to contact Department of Social Services in instances where students are not received by 6:00 PM; therefore, we must make every effort to prevent such occurrences. There is a ten-minute grace period after your child's contracted pick up time. Families will be automatically charged after your 10-minute grace period starting from your contracted pick up time.

Further families who fail to pick up their children from Dot To Dot by their scheduled pick up time will be assessed an increasing fine for each child beginning at \$1 per minute on the first occurrence, \$2 per minute on the second occurrence, \$3 per minute on the third occurrence, \$6 per minute on the fourth occurrence, and if there is a fifth occurrence, parents will be charged \$15 per minute. If there are continuous occurrences Dot To Dot team will need to discuss with you further.

For all other pickups 12:30 p.m./ 3:00 p.m./6:00 p.m. every ½ hour increment late pickups are charged \$6 per half hour.

### **Ages of Children Accepted**

Dot to Dot accepts students two years through Fifth Grade. Our Preschool and Kindergarten program accepts students two years through five years, and our After School program accepts children grades Kindergarten through Fifth Grade.

### **Admission**

Dot to Dot will accept all children it is licensed to serve, without regard to ethnic background, gender, or creed. Families who wish to enroll may do so by completing an enrollment form and paying the registration fee, deposit, and earthquake kit fee. An admission packet will then be given to the family to be completed prior to the child's first day of attendance.

At Dot to Dot we make every reasonable accommodation to ensure your child's early childhood experience is a positive one. If your child is struggling with developmental issues such as behavioral/ emotional, developmental/ learning difficulties we will meet with you and your family, assess your child's needs and determine whether your child's needs are met at Dot To Dot without compromising the needs of your child and other children in the program. Dot To Dot's Director and Principal will make the final decision regarding whether we are the right fit for you and your child. All new students are admitted with a 60- day probationary status.

In the event of a wait list situation, due to full enrollment in a given program, families will be notified of availability in the order they were placed on the wait list, with the exception of current students' siblings, who will be given first priority. When an opening is available, we will contact the first family on the wait list and offer the opening, if it is

declined, we will continue through the list until the opening is filled. If you decline the opening, you may request to remain on the waitlist until another opening is available.

**Absences**

State law requires that daily attendance be taken in all classrooms. All absences should be reported to the front office by 9:00 am. A message may be left on the school’s answering machine or emails [connect@dottodotacademy.com](mailto:connect@dottodotacademy.com) at any hour. If the absence is due to a communicable disease (to view a list of communicable diseases please), a doctor’s release may be necessary for the child to return to school and the front desk should be notified.

**Accidents or Injury**

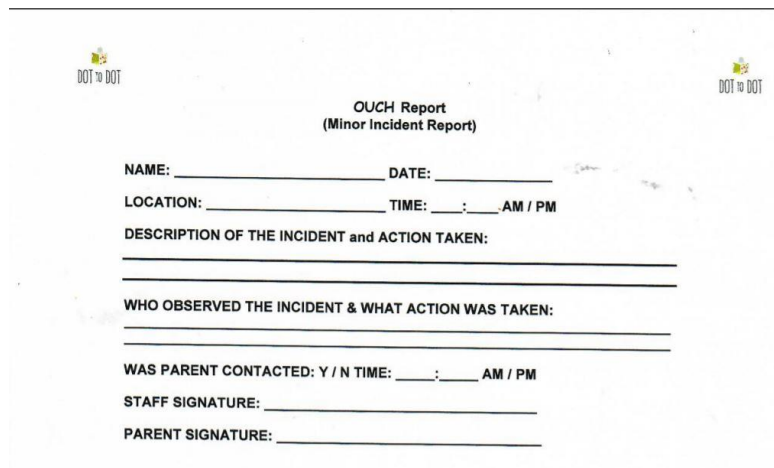
An ouch report will be provided to parents in case of minor incidents, this report will be signed by staff and will need parents signature as well. We place these reports in your child’s file. A child has any kind of head injuries, including eye, ear or mouth; the parents will be immediately contacted by telephone. In rare instances where immediate medical attention is required, the school will call 911 and contact the parents. If it is necessary to take the child to hospital, one of the staff members will accompany the child until the parents arrive.

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. In the event of minor injuries, a member of our teaching staff or administrative team will attend to your child’s immediate needs. A written report will be given to you at the end of the day with the specifics of the minor injury, for your information.

All head injuries are treated as potentially dangerous. A member of our teaching staff or administrative team will attend to your child’s immediate needs and parents will be notified by telephone if your child suffers a head injury.

If a child requires emergency medical attention, paramedics will be called, and parents will be notified immediately. An Accident Report will be completed, and the report will be kept on file in the front office. For this reason, it is critical that we have a Medical Authorization Form on file for your child in order to treat your child appropriately.

**Example**



**OUCH Report**  
(Minor Incident Report)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ AM / PM

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT and ACTION TAKEN:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHO OBSERVED THE INCIDENT & WHAT ACTION WAS TAKEN:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WAS PARENT CONTACTED: Y / N TIME: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ AM / PM

STAFF SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Child Playdate**

Prior to your child's start date at Dot To Dot, children are invited to visit the class, or classes, which are most appropriate according to their developmental abilities. Parents will be asked to step out of the class and stay on campus, so your child will have the opportunity to be assessed based upon his/ her interaction with classmates, teachers and the new environment.

We have instances when a child is not willing to let go of the parent and that is very normal, so we allow the parents to stay in class for us to be able to observe the child in the environment.

Assessments are usually 45 minutes to an hour, and afterwards teachers and director will make a recommendation of their placement in the appropriate class. Prior to starting we set a meeting with parents and the educators of your child to get to know each other and your child.

### **Reflection on child's learning journey**

Parent Teacher Conversations are scheduled two times per year; one in October and one in June.

### **Siblings Placement**

It is up to the discretion of the Director, or Principal of the school and teachers as to whether it is appropriate for siblings to be placed in the same classroom.

### **Siblings, Educator and Active military discount –**

Dot to Dot offers a 10% discount to families who either already have a child in the school or families in the Military. Only one discount will apply.

### **Tuition and Fees**

**Payment I:** Automatic Payment(ACH) through Tuition Express. Payment is processed on the last day of the month and your account will be debited on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

Tuition Express allows you to have your tuition debited automatically from your checking account. Due to their up charge for credit card, we accept checking account info only.

Tuition Express is free of charge to our families by returning the Tuition Express enrollment form with a voided check attached. By choosing this option you will have access to payment history and receipts at your convenience. Visit

[www.tuitionexpress.com](http://www.tuitionexpress.com) to learn more about it.

Tuition Express may be initiated at any time during the school year and must be cancelled in writing seven days prior to termination date. In cases where a card is expiring or had been canceled, please notify the administration before the first of the month to update payment method on file. Payments made through Tuition Express program that are declined by the processor will be subject to a fee of \$25 per occurrence.

### **Payment II:**

Checks should be payable to Dot To Dot on the first of the month, with the student name and the tuition month on the memo field. We will not accept out of state checks. If you have recently moved to California, please bring a cashier's check or money order until your payment checks arrive. If your check is returned, a \$25 fee will be charged to your

account. If more than once a check has been returned you will be required to sign up with Tuition Express.

If your payment is received after the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month, a late fee of \$25 will be charged. In addition, you will be required to sign up for ACH.

It is important to point out that school expenses remain unaffected by absences, no tuition allowance will be made for absence caused by illness, or any other reasons. During holiday closure, sickness, and vacation we are unable to substitute another day other than your child's committed schedule.

### **Printing tuition receipts**

1. Go to, [MyProcare.com](http://MyProcare.com)
2. Enter the email address you have on file at Dot To Dot and choose Go.
3. Enter the confirmation code sent to your email, choose a password, and press go.
4. Then you may:
  - a. View your child's schedule, time card, immunizations and more.
  - b. You can also print statements using the "Reports" tab.

### **Student Withdrawal**

In the event a student withdraws from Dot To Dot, the parent and/ or guardian must provide written notice at least 30 days prior to the effective withdrawal date by emailing the effective last date to [connect@dottodotacademy.com](mailto:connect@dottodotacademy.com). There are no exception to this policy. Regardless of the amount of notice given for student withdrawal, the non-refundable material's fee, nonrefundable administrative fee and earthquake kit fee will not be returned.

All outstanding balances are due and payable upon your child's last day of attendance in the current term.

In the absence of a 30 day notice you are responsible for the following months tuition. You may not use your one week vacation credit in your last month, if withdrawing from Dot To Dot.

### **Schedule Changes**

Any schedule changes are required before the first of the month so administration can process the change. After the first you have to wait till the following month and no tuition change will occur till then.

### **Vacation Policies**

Dot to Dot will allow a (1) one-week vacation credit per school year only. A school year begins on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and ends the following year on August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

If you are on vacation or are not able to attend the day tuition is due; please ensure tuition is paid prior to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the month to avoid late charges. Your one-week vacation credit is applied to families who are actively enrolled students at Dot To Dot beginning

ninety days after your enrollment. If vacation credit is used without your completion of your anniversary year, your one week will be debited toward your last payment.

### **First Day**

Transitioning to preschool is often more overwhelming for adults than children. We at Dot To Dot can relate to our moms and dads who are leaving their children in our loving care, and request you give your child as much positive energy as possible prior to their starting and first day of school.

They pick-up on your nervousness or happy energy, so choose happy!

Sing songs on the way to school; talk about how much fun you had when you went to school, the friends you made, the playtime you had, the songs you learnt, and the bonds you made with your teachers.

Please ensure you arrive at school early, 8:00 - 8:15 is a good time to be at school.

Once you are at the school, have them place their lunch containers, water bottles and belongings in their own spaces. You can spend 10 minutes or so in the class with your child, but keep the visit short, when you are ready to leave let the teacher know, give a big hug and a kiss to your loved one and let them know loud and clear you will be back to get them, hand them to their teacher and walk away. You might be walking out with your child crying and screaming, remember it will take time for them to adjust to new spaces, teachers, friends, and routine. Once they pass through their transition period, good luck leaving the school at pickup! As often they do not want to leave. When you pick up your child, focus on their positive experiences and talk about the teachers, friends and explorations they did that day.

Second days are always harder, since they anticipate what is coming. So be strong, positive and let us take care of them as they discover their independence and gain trust in us and our love for them.

Items to bring (Do not forget to LABEL everything with first and last name):

- A smile!
- Any paperwork that has not yet been turned in
- Immunization records
- 2 extra outfits
- A sweater or jacket
- An extra pair of shoes
- Lunch in a lunch box with an ice pack
- Nap items (sheet, blanket)
- Sunscreen, SPF 30 or higher with child's name
- Diapers and wipes (if applicable) o We use community wipes, please bring a packet to share. In the event of allergies please bring wipes with your child's name clearly printed for diapering needs.
- Water bottle
- Periodically you may be asked to replenish these items

### **Enrollment Forms**

Complete, sign, and turn in the following forms:

- Get to know me
- Dot To Dot Admission Agreement

- Dot to Dot Enrollment Form
- Identification and Emergency Information Form
- Child's Preadmission Health History – Parent's Report
- Child's Preadmission Health History – Physician's Report
- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Immunization Record
- Notification of Parent's Rights
- Personal Rights Form
- Sunscreen Authorization/Walk Permission Slip
- Tuition Express Form

### **Attendance**

The importance of your child's regular attendance cannot be stressed enough. We understand that mornings can be hard when you are trying to get yourself and your child out the door on time. We are willing to work with you to transition during this time, however we require you to be at school before 8:00 everyday. When transitioning to school it is extremely important to keep a steady routine for the children, and it also teaches them respect for time, teacher's and peers' time as well. Once the sign for morning meeting is on the doors please keep your child with the front administration or School director until their morning session is over, we will take them into the class. Morning meetings set the tone for the rest of the day, and your children depend on you to get them to school on time every day. We need your family's full support regarding this matter.

### **School Attire**

At Dot To Dot, we believe that the only way to truly experience physical nature is by fully immersing ourselves in the material. So, we paint with our feet, fingers, hands and brushes, we play with water, and test its limits by pouring it on ourselves, we take nature walks and walk in the mud and puddles and make mud sculptures!

What does this have to do with attire? Everything! Please send your children in clothes they can get dirty, stained and not worry about it. We are a school that fully immerses in the experiences inspired by the children, so dress your children in comfortable clothes and shoes to help enhance their experiences. Please avoid flip flops and flimsy shoes, as it limits their outdoor exploration, impromptu hikes or other outdoor experiences.

If it is raining and cold outside

- Wear closed toe shoes
- Jackets/raincoats with hood
- Warm or layers of clothing
- Extra set of clothing to change into

If it is hot and during the summer months

- Cool cotton clothing
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Extra set of clothing to change into
- Extra shoes
- Water bottle

Please label your child's clothing prior to bringing it to Dot To Dot.

### **Snack**

A nutritional snack is provided to all the children attending school in the morning and afternoon. We serve snack to children here after 3 pm. A small portion is provided to give them enough energy to last until lunch time, it is not meant to replace their breakfast, so we request that your child eat a nutritional breakfast. For the children who are with us full day we request that you pack a nutritional lunch, since their afternoon snack is also a light snack provided at 3 p.m.

### **Lunch**

Your child's overall health and nutrition is an essential part of their learning and growing experience here at Dot To Dot. To ensure your children are growing up with a healthy body and mind we request all parents send a minimum of three of the five recommended food groups for their lunches: vegetable, fruit, grains, dairy or protein. Please refrain from highly processed foods, sugar and carbohydrates. Healthy nutrition is crucial to their health, brain development, growth, emotional stability and learning. We need parents support and cooperation in this matter.

If a child is sent to Dot To Dot with no lunch, the Dot To Dot team will serve your child a lunch and administration will charge your account \$7.00.

### **Napping**

Our nap time is from 1p.m. to 2:45 pm. Children sleep on their individual cots. Please provide a crib sheet and a small blanket. We do not allow the use of pillows due to health regulations. Please avoid bulky blankets due to lack of storage. Urban Infant a bedding suggested from one of our Moms has a small pillow attached and is convenient. You can purchase on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) Bedding needs to be taken home on Fridays, washed and brought back on Mondays.

### **Art Folder**

Every child has an art folder labeled with the name of the child. When Children are done with their art piece, and other work, they place their art in their folders. This empowers them to be in charge of their own belongings and placing their work in its appropriate places. Please pick up their art and other items in their art folder. It is really important to your child to talk about their art, scribble or an attempt to write. Even though it might not seem significant to your eyes, it's extremely important to their self-esteem and growth to recognize, talk about and expand upon what they have drawn and written.

### **Lost and Found**

Unclaimed clothing items are kept in a bin at the front lobby. All unclaimed contents of this bin are donated every two months. Please check the lost and found, we will send reminders to parents prior to donating. **To help with this please label your children's clothing.**

### **Sun Protection**

We require you to fill out a sunscreen release form. You must apply sunscreen to your child/ children prior to drop off. Please label your child's sunscreen. Inform administration and your child's teacher if you choose not to use sunscreen, you must

inform administration in writing, please email all inquiries to [connect@dottodotacademy.com](mailto:connect@dottodotacademy.com) . Please send a hat, and extra set of weather appropriate clothing in the days we have extreme weather conditions.

### **Rainy Days**

We love to go outside, feel the rain, jump in the puddles, and make mud sculptures, when we get a chance to! On Rainy days, please send a pair of water-resistant outdoor shoes, raincoat, and extra clothing.

### **Morning Assembly/ Reflection Time**

Morning and before half day pickups children gather to discuss their day, any challenges, accomplishments, daily board, projects, explorations, risk assessment, what they liked best and what they may have utilized or not, and why. The educators are acting as mediators, conducting and moving the conversation.

The goal of morning assembly/reflection time is for children to express their thoughts and accept different perspectives on ideas and solutions; not just one truth. Due to the flow and focus reflection time requires, we do not interrupt this precious time. If you choose to pick up your child earlier than normal, please let us know so that we can have your child ready and at the front for pick up.

### **Field Trips**

Dot to Dot will incorporate field trips into the program throughout the school year and summer program. Parents will be notified of the details of every field trip in advance. A permission slip will need to be signed by a parent for every field trip. Parents are required to install their child's car seat.

### **Transportation Policy**

We offer transportation to field trips with advanced parental notice and consent. We need parent volunteers to assist with transportation for their own child for field trips. In this case, any parent volunteer drivers will be required to provide proof of Auto insurance and seat belts. Parent volunteer drivers will be required to provide proof of a recent negative TB test as well.

### **Respectful communication**

Dot to Dot has an open door policy when it comes to communication. We are available for phone calls and in person during school hours. Outside of school hours, email is the best way to contact the school at [connect@dottodotacademy.com](mailto:connect@dottodotacademy.com), or you may leave a message on the school phone at 858-485-1978. Language of respect and tolerance for staff, parents and children is extremely important.

You can plan to receive the following regular communication from the school:

- Weekly email updates
- Information board notifications
- Weekly classroom blog updates from teachers
- Bi-yearly parent teacher conferences
- Facebook/ Instagram update every week
- Daily classroom update on the daily board
- Facebook/Instagram update every week
- Daily classroom updates on the daily board

We expect you to communicate with us, as well. Keep us informed about anything unusual at home, visitors, celebrations, changes you have noticed, updates to emergency information, etc. Your feedback, your suggestions and any concerns we take very seriously. We ask you to let us know in advance if you need to discuss anything with our director in order to give the time and attention you deserve.

We welcome your feedback, your suggestions and any concerns and questions regarding your child. We ask that you let us know in advance if you need to discuss anything with the director, teachers, and administration so we can work on a best time to do so.

### **School Closure**

Our school closure dates can be found on [www.dottodotacademy.com](http://www.dottodotacademy.com). Any unscheduled closures, due to weather or other emergency situation will be handled on a case by case

basis. Parents will be notified via phone and/or email as soon as possible. If the school closes for an emergency during a regular school day, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their children within (1) one hour.

### **Security**

When entering and exiting the building, be sure to close the front door behind you. This will ensure no child is able to exit the building without their parent or a staff member, and that no unauthorized person is able to enter the building. When entering or exiting the school, if you notice any suspicious person(s) or activities, inform a staff member immediately.

### **Policies**

- Parents are required to sign children in and out each day of attendance.
- All children's belongings must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
- Children may bring items from home to share, please place all items in child's classroom cubby.
- Parents are required to notify administration of any changes of address, phone number, email address, or emergency contacts.
- Children are required to have an updated medical form every year. Parents must provide proof of immunization prior to start date.
- Every student will be required to wash their hands upon arrival, after using the restroom, after coming in from outdoors, before eating, and before and after use of certain materials and toileting.
- Parents are responsible for providing health insurance for their children to cover any accident that may occur at Dot to Dot.
- Prescription medications must be given to administration with signed forms and instructions before they may be administered at school. Do not leave medications/ vitamins in child's reach (lunch box, cubby, etc.). We ask that you administer the first dose of medication at home to avoid any reactions at school.

### **Child Custody**

Dot To Dot staff cannot physically restrain a parent from removing a child from the premises, unless in our judgment, the child is in immediate danger of physical harm. If we have a copy of a court order prohibiting a non-custodial parent from removing a child from the premises, we are limited to explaining that the authorities will be called and the custodial parent will be notified before the child can be removed from the premises.

### **Medication**

If your child is currently taking medication, the parent must sign a medical release form requesting and authorizing Dot to Dot staff to administer this medication. The form should include time of day medication is to be given, dosing information, any additional information required for administering the medication. Medication must have Rx label with dosing instructions.

- If a Nebulizer or other inhaled medication is required, parents are required to provide a completed Nebulizer Care and Consent form.
- All prescription medications must be in the original container, with the prescription number, name of the medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name, specific directions for administering and storage, and the expiration date.
- All medications will be stored away at all times, and administered by certified staff members.

### **Sick Policy**

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, they must be kept home from school, and Dot to Dot should be made aware of their symptoms.

If a child has one or more of the following symptoms while at school, they will be asked to be picked up and sent home, and will not be able to return to Dot to Dot until they are symptom free, have been on medication for at least 24 hours, or have a physician's note allowing them to return.

- Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Excessive sneezing, coughing, or nasal discharge
- Head Lice
- Difficulty breathing
- Unidentified rash
- Vomiting (more than 2 episodes)
- Diarrhea (more than 2 episodes)
- Runny nose
- Continuous green or yellow mucus/nasal discharge \* See note below
- Pink eye\*\* see note below

\*When your immune system is fighting a cold virus, one of the first symptoms is clear, runny mucus from the nose. Infection-fighting blood cells cause the change in color and texture as the blood flows to the nasal area and increases in number as the cold

progresses. Your child may simply need a few days at home, resting and snuggling, to get back on their feet and be ready for school.

**\*\*We require a note stating type of pink eye. If this is a viral/contagious pink eye. The child can't attend school until the discharge and red eye is gone. Pink eye is highly contagious, and we need your support in keeping it controlled.**

If a child exhibits symptom not listed above, staff may contact parents to discuss the possibility of sending the child home. Children who become ill at school will be separated from the group and will be kept as comfortable as possible until a parent or authorized pick up person is able to pick them up. Children must be picked up within (1) one hour of the call.

At Dot to Dot we understand the importance of being a working parent and the challenges it has with flexibility of time. However sometimes your child may need to stay with you. If your child is teary, not eating or lethargic please keep them home with you. There is no place like home especially when you are not feeling well.

Home remedies cannot be used as an alternative method of treatment for any communicable diseases. Medical attention is required with a Doctor's note to ensure the health and safety of the children and staff.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Exposure to communicable diseases is reported to parents immediately. A notice will be posted on the parent board in the main lobby and an email will be sent out to all parents at Dot To Dot.

#### **ILLNESS:**

Fever (100.00):

Ringworm:

Scabies:

Chicken Pox:

Pinworm:

Impetigo:

Head Lice:

Pink Eye:

#### **CHILDREN MAY RETURN TO SCHOOL:**

After being fever free for 24 hours without medication

After the affected area is clear of symptoms

After the fifth day of treatment

After all scabs are completely dry

After receiving a release from a physician

After the skin is clear of all sores

After all nits are removed, and scalp is clean and clear

After eyes are clear of discharge

Strep Throat: After the third day of medication & fever free for 24 hours

- Director and staff reserve the right to make individual decisions about children needing to go home in the event of any illness and if the children are exhibiting signs of being lethargic.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent involvement is necessary for the success of the children in our programs. The following are a few suggestions of ways parents are able to be involved:

- Reviewing your child's weekly blogs, and discussing your child's day with them.
- Showing interest in your child's day and school activities by having conversations with your child at home as well as asking their teacher about their day.
- Attend Parent Teacher Conferences to hear about your child's progress in school.
- Attend family events.
- Volunteer in the classroom or on our playground.
- Participate in any fundraising efforts.
- Valuing their art work, which is placed in their art folders
- Attend Parent Connection Meetings
- Volunteering to help or provide support for "behind the event" activities at Dot To Dot
- Per licensing requirements all volunteers must present a copy of their immunization record

### **Parent Connection Night -**

Parent connections are focused on communicating with parents the emerging interest of the classroom and inviting them into the daily lives of the children at Dot To Dot. It is an incredible opportunity for the parents and educators to connect on the children's learning journey and collaborate on questions about their child, classroom, Dot To Dot and community wide topics. We often invite educators, experts whose visions align with Dot To Dot to talk to our parents and educate us on the best practices, providing tips and tricks to help us with the journey of parenting. There is a lot of effort and planning that goes into these connection nights and we need your full support to keep it going.

### **Celebrations and Holidays**

We enjoy a wide cultural diversity at Dot To Dot and understand the importance of celebrating and keeping alive each child's cultural heritage. We welcome and celebrate Holidays from all cultures and encourage parents to come in and educate the class on their celebrations.

Examples include: Book reading, storytelling, sharing a treat from the culture, music and dancing.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are an important part of Dot To Dot. We recognize children's birthday on or as close to their birth date as possible. Keeping in with our mission of healthy body/healthy mind, we ask the parents to stick to healthy choices. Bring us your child's favorite healthy treats and the ingredients to make in the child's classroom. On the celebration day the class, will make their birthday treat from scratch! Please help your child choose

or find healthier versions of your child's favorites treat. We will not be able to serve them commercial cupcakes or other processed treats. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our children healthy.

### **Smoking Policy**

For the health of all Dot To Dot employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on school property. Adults are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds or in the parking lot.

### **Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

Under California State Law, called the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, section 11164- 11174.3 of the California Penal Code, and the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters 21 are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Dot To Dot are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making the report. Under the act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible for failure to report suspected abuse and/or neglect. As mandated reporters the staff at Dot To Dot cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith".

### **Emergency Procedures**

At Dot to Dot, we have emergency drills periodically, typically one per month. This is to help the students become familiar with our procedures in case of a real emergency. In the event of an emergency requiring we evacuate the building, we gather across the parking lot to the side of the Spa. Once gathered, we will make sure all students and staff members are accounted for, provide any first aid that may be required, and contact parents if we are unable to return to school. We will post a notice on the front door of the school if we need to relocate to another location. Parents will be contacted as needed.

### **Authorization for Staff to Act in Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency, the school staff will immediately attempt to contact one or both parents. If parents cannot be reached, staff will attempt to contact persons listed on the emergency contact list. If no one is able to be reached, we will contact the physician listed on the emergency form.

If the emergency is life threatening, staff will immediately call 911 for emergency assistance, and will accompany the child until a parent/ authorized person arrives. All of our staff are trained in CPR and First Aid.

### **Babysitting**

Dot To Dot advises families to not request educators to take care of your children outside of the workplace. We understand the connection and trust to your child's educator in ensuring they are safe. We want to ensure we are fair to all of our families and children.

## **Behavior Guidance**

The goal of discipline is to maintain a safe and fair environment encouraging growth and development of the child's self-esteem. Our environment also encourages the building of interpersonal confidence and fosters self-discipline.

- Discipline shall include behavioral guidance, redirection, modeling, identifying and handling of feelings and resolution of interpersonal conflict, setting of clear limits and boundaries, and use of logical consequences.
- Corporal punishment will not be tolerated on Dot to Dot premises. Any staff member, parent, volunteer, or any other person seen using corporal punishment on the premises will be immediately removed and/or terminated.
- Every person, including, but not limited to staff, children, and parents, will be treated with respect at all times. Any type of behavior intended to cause physical or emotional harm to anyone will not be tolerated. Dot to Dot uses positive guidance as a learning tool to provide children with the guidance and security necessary for emotional and social growth.

## **Negative or harmful behavior policy**

We have the most respect for all children and want to make sure we can be part of their early childhood learning experience however in some instances our philosophy, operations, class size and/or ratio is not always conducive to all children's needs.

The following policy is our step by step corrective action plan to transform negative behavior or incidents into successful interactions. This also contains our consequences for continued harmful behavior.

This can include various levels of biting inflicted on others, self-harming such as head banging scratching, hitting which may cause harm or cause an injury to themselves. It can also include excessive and prolonged hitting, kicking, spitting or spreading of other bodily fluids. This can also include a perceived lack of control or perceived danger to others or themselves that may harm such as pushing in areas that can cause serious injury, using materials to intentionally inflict harm or using physical force to cause harm which may also include a disregard to heed care takers instructions to stop or remove themselves from the situation. Prolonged or continuous acts of intimidation, bullying, and verbal attacks are also included in this definition.

Dot to Dot requires children to actively participate in taking responsibility for their own actions and make the situation better by coming up with a plan to prevent future issues and caring for the child harmed. See our behavior guidance policy.

In the event that staff informs administration of a concern in behavior the following steps will be taken.

1. Teachers bring their concerns to administration staff and begin documentation of all behaviors leading up to, during, corrective action taken and subsequent behavior after the event. An incident report is written and given to parental parties or guardians. Documentation will begin and administration is kept informed on a daily basis to provide support for the teachers and child.
2. Depending on a weekly progress determination a parent/guardian meeting may or may not be called which will include an administrator and the child's teacher

with one of the following, a request for continued documentation a request for an objective observer or no further need for documentation.

The following actions for the above is as follows.

- a. Teacher requests another week for documentation and further behavior modification actions, fills out ouch/incident reports and gives administration copy of all documentation. Administration keeps a record of all ouch/incident reports and a copy of the weekly documentation record.
  - b. Teacher requests an objective observer with special needs experience to observe and suggest ideas or request further recommendations or assistance and parents/guardians are called in for a meeting.
    - i. Parents/ guardians are updated and informed of the current plan in place and are reminded of the need to be part of the team to help child and a home plan is required at this time. Weekly or bi weekly team meetings are set up. These meetings are with an Administration member, teacher, parents or guardian and if requested the objective observer. Notes and plan workup are written and signed by all present.
  - c. Outside assistance is requested and a parent update meeting is required.
    - i. Outside assistance may be requested at this time this may include parental classroom participation or school district evaluation or doctor's input.
  - d. No further corrective or assistive measures needed.
3. In the event a documented dangerous or harmful situation requires immediate actions. Such as the bodily injury of another child. Child is immediately suspended from school a minimum of 24 hours and a mandatory meeting to discuss a plan must happen before child is allowed back in school. (Per section B)
  4. In the event that corrective measures and our team plan, within the scope of the programs limitations, has not worked and another harmful incident has occurred a parent meeting is called with administration and immediate suspension or dismissal begins. This may occur at any time during the above processes.
  5. In the event the parents do not cooperate with the school, dismissal can occur. We cannot help a child without everyone on board working together as a team.
  6. Dot to Dot staff will do everything they can to prevent further harm to occur but In the event the child has a second documented harmful incident the child may be dismissed from school. We reserve the right to dismiss a child/family immediately from school based on the severity of the harmful incident.

It is our hope that we can assist our parents and help children create as many successes as possible, but we understand that may not be possible at Dot to Dot. We have a duty to protect all our children from harm and may require outside assistance, which at this time would be the school district the child lives in, suspension or dismissal.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Dot to Dot strives to offer a positive experience to every family. We have an open door policy, and encourage parents to discuss concerns with the staff and/or Director as needed and appropriate. In the event that a negative situation occurs resulting in filing a

grievance becomes necessary, the following procedure has been put in place so concerns may be properly addressed:

**Definition:** A grievance is defined as a statement alleging a violation of your or your child's rights under law or under the published policies or principles of Dot to Dot. Dot to Dot staff and administration will not discriminate or retaliate against customers who file a grievance.

**Step 1:** Informal Resolution – An aggrieved person should first attempt to resolve the grievance in an informal manner by making a good faith effort to discuss the situation with the staff member or Director.

**Step 2:** Formal Resolution – If the informal process does not resolve the situation to the satisfaction of the complainant, the grievance must be then put into written form and submitted to the Director within five days of the disputed action. The Director will respond to the grievant in writing within five working days.

**Step 3:** Action by Board of Directors – If the complaint is still not satisfied with the resolution of the grievance, within five working days from the receipt of the Director's written response, they should submit a copy of the grievance and all correspondence to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will then investigate the grievance and respond within fifteen days to the complainant the final resolution of the complaint.

Dot to Dot shall have an environment free of intimidation and harassment because of race, age, sex, religion, handicap, or ethnic origin. Dot to Dot prohibits any physical, verbal, or visual harassment by any employee or preschool parent toward any family, child or team member. A family member is to report any complaints of this nature to the immediate supervisor or Director. These complaints will be thoroughly investigated and should they be found to have any basis in fact, the person or persons involved will be appropriately disciplined, which may include immediate termination.

#### **Grounds for Dismissal from Dot To Dot**

Children demonstrating excessive disruptive behavior, preventing others from benefitting from the program, and/or those requiring inordinate individual attention may be dismissed. Prior to dismissal, the following procedure will be followed

- The teacher will attempt personal contact with a parent, this contact may include verbal or written notification, and request for a parent/teacher meeting.
- Meeting between Teacher, parents, and possibly the Director, to develop an appropriate resolution to the problem. Resolution may include discussion of outside resources.
- If after efforts to resolve the problem persists, a child may be dismissed upon the recommendation of the Teachers and a final decision of the Director.

Students may also be dismissed on grounds of non-payment. When accounts are two weeks delinquent, parents will be given written notice. If payment is not received within two weeks of written notice, student will be dismissed until balance is paid. Reinstatement will require a new registration fee of \$200 and a late fee of \$25. Other grounds of dismissal can be when our families and our vision do not align.

#### **Policies and Schedule Changes**

Dot to Dot requires a thirty day notification of withdrawal in writing. If a notice is given less than 30 days, we will not be able to return any fees or tuitions.

Should you alter your schedule please submit your request in writing and email it to [connect@dottodotacademy.com](mailto:connect@dottodotacademy.com). We will do everything possible to accommodate changes in days of attendance or hours.

### **After School**

- The Dot to Dot After School Program is for students attending public or private school from Kindergarten to Fifth Grade. We provide transportation from the following schools in our area depending on release times and transportation logistics:
  - Highland Ranch
  - Chaparral
  - Shoal Creek

After School students are transported to our school, provided with outdoor time, snack, homework help and completion and supplemental academic work. Public Speaking, Creative Arts, cooking, coding, gardening, science activities, and nature walks are also included during the year.

- **Policies**
  - If your child will not be attending Dot To Dot, we must be notified before 12 P.M. of the same day. If not, a fee of \$25.00 will occur. ○ There is an additional flat fee for early release of 15.00.
  - We appreciate you giving your child extra snack, but it is important to give your child healthy snack with low sugar content as per our policy at Dot To Dot.
  - Your child's booster seat must be labeled with their name. Dot To Dot is not responsible for any booster seat. If you need the booster seat from the afterschool van it is your responsibility to pick up the booster and assure it returns to Dot To Dot for your child the next day.

### **Afterschool Camp**

- Dot To Dot provides after school camp for our school age children (K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade). Children arrive in the morning between the hours of 8:15 – 8:30 A.M.
- There is an additional fee of \$30 per day if you are part of our after school camp.

### **Summer Camp**

- Our Summer Camp is offered to After School students and other students entering grades Kindergarten through Fifth Grade in the upcoming school year. This program is offered on a weekly basis and incorporates a weekly concept that is explored, discussed, researched, and experienced throughout the week. This Camp includes snack time, Public Speaking and Leadership skills, and daily outings in the mornings returning at one o'clock. Campers have the opportunity to participate in Enrichment Programs. Additional fees may apply depending on the outings.

### **Grounds for Dismissal for afterschool**

Children demonstrating excessive disruptive behavior, preventing others from benefitting from the program, and/or those requiring inordinate individual attention may be dismissed. Prior to dismissal, the following procedure will be followed

- Personal contact with a parent will be attempted by the teacher, this contact may include verbal or written notification, and request for a parent/teacher meeting.
- Meeting between Teacher, parents, and possibly Director, to develop an appropriate resolution to the problem. Resolution may include discussion of outside resources.
- If after efforts to resolve the problem, it persists, a child may be dismissed upon the recommendation of the Teachers, and a final decision of the Director.

Students may also be dismissed on grounds of non-payment. When accounts are two weeks delinquent, parents will be given written notice. If payment is not received within two weeks of written notice, student will be dismissed until balance is paid. Reinstatement will require a new registration fee of \$250 and a late fee of \$25. Other grounds of dismissal can be when our families and our vision do not align.

**Please sign and return to Director.**

Date received \_\_\_\_\_ Child Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this section, I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have reviewed, read, and understand Dot to Dot's Parent Handbook.

We thank you for being a part of our family at Dot To Dot.