

The Preschool House

Parent Handbook

Mission:

The early childhood years are the time that we lay the foundation for the rest of your child's life. Using a research based and developmentally appropriate curriculum, we can best help preschoolers form this solid foundation. At The Preschool House we help each child to develop their strengths and gain the confidence and independence that will make them successful in whatever classroom they walk into after ours.

Vision:

To create a place that is a warm, friendly environment for children and their families. Preschool should be a place where the best kinds memories are made.

Values:

- Above all, the safety of each and every child in our care
- A community of learners who are kind and respect each other
- A rich, developmentally appropriate learning environment
- A commitment to providing an education that caters to all children and learning styles
- A place where each preschooler can feel confident, happy, and successful

Philosophy:

There is excellence in every child. Each one brings something unique and special to the table, and every single one of their contributions is respected, appreciated and nurtured.

Contact Information

The Preschool House

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Behavior Issues

I try my best to curtail most behaviors by thoughtful classroom set up and routine. However, young children are still working on their social and emotional skills, so of course, tricky behaviors will arise, especially at the beginning of the year. If a problem does arise, depending on the child, I will use either positive guidance or redirection. Positive guidance means that I will try and coach them through the issue, helping them to explain the problem, recognize the issue, the feelings of all involved, and together work to come to a solution. Redirection, used mostly with the younger children who don't have the skills yet to work through this process, basically means I direct them away from the issue and send them off to work somewhere else (that's a fancy way of saying distraction, distraction, distraction).

If for some reason the problem persists I may send the child to work at a space of my choosing away from their peers until they are able to calm down enough to work through to a solution. I rarely if every employ time out. Controlling negative impulses is an important part of the work we do here at preschool, and it's more important for the preschooler to recognize and learn to control these behaviors then to send them off alone to sit.

These are a natural part of our day. If I feel that whatever happened was handled effectively and satisfactorily to both the preschooler and I then I may not mention it to the parent. If, however, they are still upset, got hurt, or it is an on going or persistent problem I'll contact the parent so that we can work together as a team to help the preschooler be successful in class.

If at any time your preschooler mentions an incident at school that you are concerned about please don't hesitate to call me. I pride myself with open and honest communication with parents and want to feel like we are working together.

Birthdays

If you have a preschooler then you're aware that birthdays are the highlight of their year. We'd love to help celebrate, and you are welcome to bring treats in that day for our snack. If you need help with invitations please let me know. If you are sending invitations for me to pass out then I ask it's only if you are planning on inviting the entire class. If only a few classmates will be invited, please discretely hand invitations to the parents during pick up or drop off times.

Book Orders

I'm a children's book junkie! Book orders will go out at the beginning of each month. You can order online and they'll be delivered to school for me to hand out. You do not need to order books, but keep in mind that through the book orders they are significantly cheaper and are a great investment for gifts or your home library.

Contacting Me

Open and honest communication with parents is a core principal in my classroom. I see myself as working with parents on a team, and that requires we have a great relationship. You have my phone number and you are certainly encouraged to use it.

I make it a policy not to answer my phone during class time, so if you need to get ahold of me please send a text and I'll check and answer during a less obtrusive time during class. After class please always contact me with any question or concerns. Texting is always the easiest, but phone calls or emails either are great too. If I can't chat with you right away I'll let you know, and we can set up a time that works for both of us. I want every parent to feel very comfortable contacting me whenever they need to

Dress Code

Please make sure your child is always dressed for a great day. This includes shoes that they can move freely and clothing that is appropriate for the weather. Although we will not always go outside, it's best practice to always assume we will.

Also, please make sure that your child is in clothing that is ok for them to get messy in. I make it a policy to only use washable products and 99% of the time all clothing leaves relatively clean and intact. However, for the 1% when something odd happened it's best that they are in play clothes and not a special sweater that grandma knitted them or a fancy church dress.

Emergency Contacts

It's important for me to know who is and isn't allowed to pick up your child. Please make sure to fill out the emergency contact list in the packet you'll be given before school starts, and let me know if there are any updates to that information.

I'll assume that if listed as an emergency contact, that person is also a designated adult who is allowed to pick up your child. I will also assume that if someone dropped off your child that day they are allowed to pick them up.

If someone new is going to be picking up your preschooler please let me know, along with any other pickup or drop off changes such as carpools or early pickup times.

Field Trips and Special Events

A few times throughout the year we'll have field trips. You will be informed far in advance of what days and where we will be going. Because of liability issues, parents are responsible for transportation to and from ALL field trips, and are to stay the entire time also. Siblings are always welcomed to come, and I plan our

fieldtrips keeping that in mind. Parents are to meet me at the fieldtrip location, and we will not be returning to the preschool after the fieldtrip. Admission for the preschoolers and one parent will be paid by the preschool. Parents are responsible for admission of additional parents and siblings that may be coming along. I will let you ahead of time what costs, if any, will be associated with a field trip.

In the event that a parent cannot attend a field trip, the preschooler can be brought by any other adult, or even by the parent of another preschooler in the class. It's important to remember that whatever adult comes with a preschooler will also be expected to keep an eye on them also. Typically field trips will be held on a Thursday morning, and both classes attend together. The following preschool day for the Friday class will then be cancelled.

There will also be various family events or in class events that everyone will be invited to throughout the year. As these come up I'll be sure to send home plenty of information well ahead of time.

Holidays

We will plan on recognizing and celebrating various holidays in class, always with a non-religious tone. These include Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines Day, St Patrick's Day, and Easter. If we are celebrating with an event or party I'll make sure that all that information gets to the parents well ahead of time.

Immunization

Being a licensed program, the State of Idaho requires all children to have current and up to date immunizations to attend our preschool. I will require a copy of their immunizations to keep here on record, and new copies anytime their immunizations are updated.

Parent Visits

I have an open classroom policy, which means you are welcome to come to preschool any time. I love having parents in the classroom and encourage that each parent should try to come for a preschool day at least once a year so that they are able to get to know the class better. If you are planning to visit try to notify me ahead of time so that I can utilize the treat of having an extra adult around. It's great to have some extra hands and I like to keep you busy if I can.

I do suggest that for the first month of preschool that parents don't visit. Your preschooler is making a transition to a more independent setting and having a parent there in the first month while they are still figuring out the classroom and myself, and where they fit in can actually be difficult for them. I find that after a month most preschoolers are over this period and are ready to have you visit. If you have any questions about whether or not it's a good time yet for you to come and spend the morning with us just ask and we'll chat.

Due to licensing requirements, siblings or another children cannot visit preschool. They are, though, more than welcome to attend field trips or off site preschool events.

Payments

Payments are due at the first preschool day of the month September through May. A payment envelope will be sent home the class before. I can accept cash, check, and even credit or debit, however a 2% fee will be added to all card transactions to cover the fee. You can also choose to pay online on the website if that is easier I don't have a late payment policy, just try and not be late ☺ If you have a special circumstance or need to make other payment arrangements please contact me and we'll figure it out. Please make all checks out to me, Malia Chaplin.

Pick Up And Drop Off

Preschool starts each day at 9am. Parents are to walk their child to the driveway and wait until I come to greet them at 9am. If your child is going to be late feel free to bring them whenever you can. We'd much rather see them late then not at all.

During pick up, please come to the driveway to greet your child, and I will walk them out at 11:30. Please be respectful to my neighbors. Do not park in front of their driveways, driving fast through the neighborhood, or allow your children to walk on their lawns. They are a little hesitant about having a preschool near them and I want to keep them happy. Also, when picking up or dropping off avoid backing up or turning around in the street. When entering from Country Terrace, follow the street around to exit on Gibson, and vis a versa when entering from Gibson.

If someone new is going to be picking up your preschooler please let me know, along with any other pickup or drop off changes such as carpools or early pickup times. I will always assume that whomever dropped off your child is authorized to pick them up.

If you are going to be late picking up your preschooler please text or call to let me know. I totally understand that these things happen so no late fee will be assed, just try not to make it a habit, or we may have to have a talk ☺ I'll call parents after 10 minutes. If I'm not able to get ahold of either parent, after 20 minutes I'll begin calling down the emergency contact list.

School Year Calendar

We follow the Meridian School District's Calendar rather closely. Our preschool will be off during all of their major breaks, but will not, however, take off many of the teacher in-service or semester break days in order to maintain consistency. I will provide a year-at-a-glance calendar that lets you know all no school days.

Share Day

The first preschool day of the week will be our share day. Usually Monday or Tuesday. Each preschooler can bring one item from home to share with the class. We'll keep the shares in our share basket until share time, and then place them back in the share basket afterwards until it's time to go home. Please don't let your preschooler bring anything valuable or breakable unless you have arranged it with me first. Whatever they choose to bring is perfectly fine.

Sick Policy

Preschool is often a child's first prolonged contact with germs in the outside world. If it's your child's first year of preschool let me give you a warning, they are going to get sick, and probably more than usual. It's just how it goes as their little bodies adjust to a new environment. Keeping everyone as healthy as possible takes commitment from each family as well as myself. At school we will practice constant hand washing, learn how to properly cover our mouths when coughing, and I'll be using bleach solution and other cleaning products to make sure our environment stays as germ free as possible.

You can help by knowing and following our illness policy. If your child is sick, we'll miss them. We'll talk a lot about where they are and wonder if they are ok. We'll be sad they aren't there, but it's better for everyone if sick children are at home on the couch getting better.

-When to Keep Your Preschooler Home:

Keep your children home if they exhibit any of the listed symptoms. Children must be excluded for 24 hours after the symptoms of the illness have subsided without the aid of medication. Do not confuse this with the onset of symptoms, meaning the 24 hours begin after the child's symptoms disappear.

No matter what the cause is, a child is not able to attend preschool if the child exhibits any symptoms for exclusion. Those include but are not limited to:

- Severe sore throat/coughing/colds or strep throat.
- Fever of 100° F or above.
- Green/yellow discharge from nose or eyes.
- Ear discharge.
- Head lice, nits or scabies.
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
- Chicken pox.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye).
- Mumps, measles, influenza, pertussis (whooping cough), croup, impetigo, tuberculosis, rubella, rosella, etc.
- Any type of body rash.
- Anything contagious and transmittable.

- Any ailment that requires fever or pain medication
- If the child is too tired or fussy to participate in normal activities.

If a child becomes ill at preschool the parent will be contacted and the child will need to be picked up as soon as possible. During the time spent waiting the ill child will be separated from the other children and given the opportunity to rest.

If a child becomes ill at home please let me know so can look out for signs of spreading illness among the other preschoolers.

Keep in mind that fever reducers and pain simply mask symptoms, but do not cure illnesses. If a child is given any form of fever reducer or pain reliever then this means that the child is not well enough to attend preschool and should be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours from the time that the last dosage was given.

-Medication

Here at preschool I will not administer any type of medication. This includes prescription and non-prescription medication. If a child needs medication of any kind, a dosage schedule must be set up that does not include the hours that the child is at school.

An exception will be made for emergency based medications like epi pens or asthma inhalers. Topical products such as lotion, ointments, sunscreen, children's toothpaste, etc. are another exception but both require written consent. All medications must be provided in unopened and original containers and labeled with the child's name and must remain at the school at times.

-Antibiotics

Children that are put on a new regimen of antibiotics must be excluded from daycare for the first twenty-four (24) hours of starting the dosage. This is to minimize the risk of infection to the other children as most antibiotics take a full 24 hours to take effect and render the infection incommunicable. It also helps minimize the risk of the child having a severe allergic reaction to the antibiotic while at daycare. Children exhibiting symptoms for exclusion due to antibiotics must still follow the illness policy.

Snacks

Snack time is an integral part of our preschool day where we practice very important social skills. Once a month you will be asked to provide 11 healthy snacks for our class. You will be notified of your upcoming snack day ahead of time in our monthly calendar, and the school day before your child's snack day they will be send home with the snack bucket for you to return. Snacks don't need to be anything elaborate or time consuming. Something you already have around the house like a small box of store bought crackers or a bag or two of

microwave popcorn is perfect. When possible let your child help decide on what snack to bring, snack day is a big deal for them. You do not need to provide drinks, cups, utensils or napkins with your snack. If there are allergies in the class you will be made known of them and asked to provide a snack that everyone can eat. If by chance we end up with a snack that your child would be allergic to, I will have alternate snacks available.

Toilet Training

Preschool is easier for everyone if your preschooler is toilet trained. I understand, however that all children are working on a different time table, and I'm happy to work with families as long as they are actively working with their preschooler at home on toilet training.

Start working hard on toilet training your child the summer before preschool starts. Also, start working on them learning how to dress and change themselves if they have occasional potty accidents. If they are very resistant to toilet training, are still in a diaper, or are having frequent poop accidents there is a chance they are not ready yet for preschool. Nearing the beginning of the school year, if this is still the case just give me a call and we can discuss what would be best for your child.

Teacher Sick Days And Substitutes

Even with my ironclad immune system that I've developed after years of teaching, I do sometimes occasionally get sick. I don't anticipate being sick often, but if I do become ill will first try to schedule a substitute, but if I am unable, school will be cancelled for the day. I do not charge tuition for the last week in August and the first week in June to allow for up to four sick days for myself where I can cancel school. If for some reason there is a fifth time (which again, is highly unlikely, but who knows), you will be refunded for that day and any days after that.

Substitutes will be full licensed, trusted, and someone the preschoolers know. If I am utilizing a substitute you will be made aware of it via text before class starts. Since preschool is in my house rest assured I'll still be onsite should I be needed.

Weather

In the event of bad weather, like a snow day, we will cancel school if the Meridian School District does and I will notify you in the morning via text. These days will not be refunded in your tuition unless the number of snow days exceeds more than 3.