

Childkind School

Parent Handbook

Please read and retain this Handbook for your records, knowing this information will ensure you keep in the loop about what is expected and how things run at Childkind.

Let us know if you have any questions.

REGISTRATION, ENROLLMENT, AND FEES

Pre-Registration

We conduct pre-registration for our summer and fall programs in the spring. Pre-registration guarantees your child a place at Childkind. After returning students have been placed, we give preference to siblings of returning students, and families on our waiting list. A non-refundable registration/materials fee is required with pre-registration annually.

Change of Schedule

We make every effort to accommodate changes of schedule you may need; however we require a 2 week notice for such changes. When requesting additional days or hours, please be aware that we may not be able to fill your request immediately as we are generally at full capacity.

Tuition & Fees

Our program is based on a school year tuition which is payable in 10 monthly installments. Summer tuition is based on a 2 month program and is also payable monthly. Tuition does not vary from month to month regardless of closures or days absent (except when using vacation credit- see below). We reserve the right to change rates, and will give as much notice as possible (30 days or more). Rates are calculated for each program we offer. When you combine choices (ie: 2 Mornings and 2 Extended Days) your tuition is prorated by percentages.

Family Discount

For families who have two or more children attending a regularly scheduled program, we offer a 5% discount on total tuition. We are not able to offer this discount when your child attends for extra hours or prorated months.

Payments

Tuition is due by the fifth day of the month. Your monthly base tuition plus any extra hours and any debits or credits are recorded under your child's name on the sign in sheet.

Late Payment Fee

Unless other arrangements are made, there is a \$1 per day late payment fee after the 5th of the month. Enrollment may be suspended if tuition is not paid by the end of the billing cycle to avoid incurring more than a month's tuition.

Extra Hours

Parents needing to leave their children beyond their scheduled hours must receive prior approval. We make every effort to meet your additional needs when we can. We keep track of extra hours utilized past the child's scheduled time and bill you for them at the beginning of the following month. See the rate sheet for current cost of extra hours. Unfortunately, we are unable to switch days. Any days beyond their scheduled days or hours will be billed as extra hours.

Late Pick-up Fee

All children should be picked up by 5:50pm. We charge a late pick-up fee of \$2 per minute after 6pm.

Return Check Fee

If your check is returned for insufficient funds or other bank problems, we charge a fee. If this occurs more than once, cash payment or money order will be requested.

School Vacations and Holidays

Childkind is closed for major holidays and for our winter and summer breaks. We follow the Oak Grove school calendar. Winter break is generally the last two weeks of December; summer breaks are generally the 2nd week in June and the 2nd week in August. We will notify you of the exact breaks in the newsletter and it will be posted in the classroom. You are responsible for childcare during these breaks and holidays. General Holiday closures: New Year's Day, M.L. King Birthday, Presidents Day, Spring Break Day, Memorial Day, June Break (1 week), Independence Day, August Break (1 week), Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Break (2 days), Winter Break (2 weeks). Holiday closures vary year to year.

Vacation Credit

Each child is eligible for a 2 week vacation credit in each school year. When you take your vacation credit, we reduce your tuition for the week(s) and hold your child's place in school. This credit can be used in one or two week units of time when you are going on vacation, when a prolonged illness keeps your child out of school, or when the school is closed for scheduled breaks. When you take your vacation credit, your child may not attend. Please submit your wish to take the credit to the office at least 2 weeks before the credit is requested (except in cases of illness). This credit is non-refundable at the end of the school year.

Withdrawal from school

We require a 2 week notice for withdrawal from school. We will charge two weeks of tuition for withdrawal without notice. If possible, we request one month's notice. We may ask that you withdraw your child from our program if, in the opinion of the director, placement of your child is not appropriate at Childkind. We will give you two weeks' notice if possible in this unlikely situation.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Hours We Are Open

Childkind is open from 7:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday.

Arrival and Departure Rules

State law requires parents to bring their child into the school building and to sign him/her in using their full name. Each child's name is on the sign in sheet alphabetically. Parents must also sign out when picking up your child; other adults may sign out a child only if authorized in the child's file. Please remember to mark the time when dropping off and picking up. When signing in or out, be sure to check for notes by the sign in desk. During circle and story time enter the school quietly and with respect for the children's activities.

We encourage children to be responsible for putting their lunches away and hanging up their jackets at the beginning of their day. At the end of their day, they should help gather their things including checking their cubby. This encourages child appropriate independence and responsibility.

*Children are not allowed to exit the front door or play yard gates unless accompanied by an adult. Please hold hands in the parking area.

Notes for Parents and Parent's Bulletin Board

More pressing items will be posted on the front door or by the sign-in desk, including: exposure to illnesses, Newsletters, school closures, school policies, and other news. Please check the sign-in desk daily for notes about the school or personal notes about your child. There is a bulletin board for parent resources and information in the classroom. Please check it periodically to see what is available in the community that might be of interest to you.

Clean-up

Children are expected to put away any materials they have been playing with or using. Outside, we all cooperate and straighten up the yard as a group. When you pick your child up please encourage them to put away their work and then to gather their belongings. Supporting their independent efforts will encourage responsibility and cooperation.

Parking

Please park to the far edges of the driveway to leave room for other cars to come and go. Always watch your children carefully while going from school to car.

ILLNESS AND MEDICATIONS

Illness Policy

Childkind Preschool is licensed for well ambulatory children. We are not licensed to care for sick children. Children showing signs of illness- fever, vomiting, rashes, bad cough or runny nose, or diarrhea- should be kept at home for a least 24 hours after the last symptoms have disappeared. Any child showing signs of illness at school will be presumed ill and his/her parents will be notified and required to pick up their child as soon as possible. Once sent home, children should be kept home for at least 24 hours to ensure wellness before their return. This insures against spread of infection to other children and teachers.

We ask your cooperation in keeping your child home if you suspect an illness. Please notify the school immediately when your child will be absent and/or if he/she has been exposed to or has exposed the school to any serious illness or disease (ie: chicken pox, strep throat, flu, lice, fifth disease, pink eye, etc).

Medication Policy

We can only administer physician prescribed medication. All medication must be accompanied by a doctor's order, address, and phone number, and be in the original container with an appropriate measuring tool. When you have medication to be administered, fill out a medication permission slip and give it to the on duty teacher. Medications must be kept out of the reach of the children. Do not put any medications, cough drops, or vitamins in cubbies or lunchboxes.

Sunscreen is considered a medication and must be accompanied by a medication permission slip. Please apply sunscreen before coming to school when needed.

A special note for other ongoing medication:

If your child is in need of "Incidental Medical Services" including: Inhalers, Epi-Pen, Blood Glucose Monitoring, or other medication that needs to be kept on-hand at the school, please see the director to be sure we follow the appropriate guidelines for documentation, storage and administering the medication. We will make reasonable accommodations as we are able and enrollment is dependent on medications and IMS form being complete.

DAY-TO-DAY POLICIES

Birthday Celebrations

Celebration of your child's birthday at school is special and separate from his/her party. To celebrate at school, the birthday child decorates a paper birthday cake and receives a balloon. We request the parents send 30 small cookies (no cakes, cupcakes, or brownies) to school on the day nearest the child's actual birthday. Please inform the staff which day you will be bringing cookies, so two children do not celebrate on the same day. Check with the staff regarding any food allergies.

Please send invitations for your child's home birthday party through the mail. It is difficult for the children and parents when the birthday invitations are handed out at school or left on the front desk.

Book Ordering

We make available children's book clubs for building your child's library. An order form is available most months. The book orders are placed on the front desk with a due date to be returned. Checks made out to the book club must accompany the order (no cash please).

Toys and Books

We discourage bringing toys to school. A small sleep item is fine for nappers but other toys need to be left at home or in the car. This avoids conflict over toys and the risk that a special toy becomes broken or lost. Please see section on Sharing for appropriate times for bringing things from home. Books and music and items from nature however, are welcome. Let us know when you bring in a special story and we will try to be sure to read it to the children.

Clothing

A complete set of extra clothes needs to be left at school in case of accidents or soiling in messy play. We request a gallon size ziplock bag labeled and stocked with underwear, socks, shirt, and pants. These are kept on a shelf in the bathroom. Remember to replace items when something is used and to keep the bag stocked with weather appropriate clothing.

Children who are being potty trained need at least 2 complete changes of clothing and an extra pair of shoes. Suitable clothing for potty training includes dresses and skirts- that are not too long or fluffy, shorts and pants; clothing with elastic waists works best (no overalls or belts or hard fasteners for potty training children please)

Please label your child's clothing, especially jackets and sweaters that are hung up on hooks in the classroom. Our yard can get very chilly especially in the mornings and even in the summer. Bring your child to school with warm layers. Every day will require a sweater or

sweatshirt and winter days will necessitate a warm winter jacket or vest. With dresses and skirts we ask that you add either shorts or pants or legging (depending on weather) underneath.

Potty Training

At Childkind we accept children who are still in diapers and potty training. When children start showing an interest in using the potty and helping themselves with clothing in the bathroom we encourage "pull-ups" - the type that work at school have Velcro sides and can be re-attached without taking off pants. Other signs that your child is ready to start potty training are when they have self-initiated potty time, stay dry for longer periods, or start peeing in the potty when asked to try. Once your child stays dry and can self-initiate urination and bowel movements at home for a period of time (recommend 1 week or more) with occasional reminders, then they may be ready for coming to school in underwear. Please talk to your child's teacher during the process so that we may collaborate. See above notes regarding clothing.

Rainy Days

Please send a raincoat and boots with your child on rainy days. We do go outside for play and rain walks on most days. Regular shoes are still needed on these days for indoor activities.

Shoes

Children's footwear needs to match their activity. Please send your child in play shoes. Our play yard has bark and the children run, ride bikes and climb all day. Party shoes, cowboy boots, and sandals are not allowed.

Cubbies

Each child will have an assigned cubby. Encourage your child to make a habit of checking the cubby each day before leaving school. Occasionally soiled clothing or other items that need attention will go in cubbies so please be sure to empty them daily. As most cubbies are shared, check the names on art or other materials in the cubby.

Lost and Found

We keep lost and found items in a basket near the front door. It's a good idea to check it periodically for missing items. Clothing that is left will be donated to the Childkind extra clothes box or to a service organization.

Lunch

All children need a nutritious lunch. We encourage the children to start their lunches with the most nutritious item first (usually sandwich, heat-up, or other protein), and then they will move on to vegetables and/or fruits before any snack-like items. Please send food choice from each food group (protein, carbohydrate, fruit, vegetable) and a water bottle everyday. We discourage sweets at school. A better choice for your child is an extra piece of fruit or popcorn. Watch out for disguised candy such as granola bars or chewy fruits; these products have the same effect on children as candy and cookies. An occasional small treat is fine, but please check with the teacher to see if this is too big of a distraction for your child during lunch. Your child needs a good nutrition filled lunch to get the most of the school day.

A microwave is available for heating up foods. Food must be sent in microwave safe wrappings or containers (glass or waxpaper). If your child has a "heat-up" item in their lunch and/or glass container please make us aware by putting a twist tie on the handle of their lunch box- some will be made available by the lunch shelf and sign-in desk.

Childkind provides a morning snack consisting of fruits or vegetables, protein, a carbohydrate and water. We try to buy healthy, natural products low in sugar with no preservatives or additives. Children are encouraged to finish the food in their lunch boxes for afternoon snack and we supplement with additional snack foods. Your child's nutrition is very important to us and we encourage good eating habits at all meals.

Napping

Children who take a nap need their own blanket and a soft toy if desired. Blanket cubbies are stored in the nap room. Choose a blanket and sleep toy that can be left at school. Do not send the "favorite" blanket or lovey as it may get forgotten. Pacifiers are ok for young nappers, but bottles are not allowed. We wash the bedding on a regular basis.

Sharing

Sharing at school is a very popular activity. Each child is assigned one day approximately every 2-3 months that is her/his sharing day. We encourage the children to bring one item from home to share. Try to avoid media based toys, especially ones that make noise as the goal of sharing the item is to encourage language. Our preferred choices are: items from nature, something handmade or hand grown, pictures of family events, news from home (pictures or an item that will assist them is helpful) and books. If the item is related to the monthly theme that is a bonus since it will expand what we are all learning in school.

Themes

Each month has a theme that we follow to help guide our curriculum and provide a structure to the year. We begin with topics close to the child and gradually expand our

focus as the year goes on. Your guide to our themes and project is your newsletter. We publish these approximately once a month.

Parent Participation

Parent Volunteers

We welcome parents who would like to come to school to share a special skill or interest. This is not an expectation of the program, but an opportunity for you to be involved in your child's preschool experience.

Parent's Nights

We generally have two all-family potluck gatherings per school year. The first is scheduled in October and is designed to acquaint you with our staff and so families can begin to get to know each other. The second is an end-of-the year event held in late spring.

Phone, Mail and E-Mail lists

We prepare a master list of all the families at Childkind Preschool. This list will be copied and handed out to all parents for contacting new friends, birthday party invitations, and for arranging play dates. If you do not wish to be included on this list please inform us.

Parent Teacher Conferences

We are available for parent teacher conferences at your request. We will occasionally ask for a conference when we see that it would be helpful for your child's success at school or home. Please feel free to request a conference with the teachers or director at any time, for any reason. We are here to support your child's development and your family.

Open Door Policy

You are always welcome to come by school without notice to observe how things are going.