



THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN

— PRESCHOOL —

2024-2025

Parent Handbook

15515 Gleneden, Spokane, WA 99208

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Physical & Mailing Address 15515 Gleneden, Spokane, WA 99208

Church Office Phone 509-466-1768

Director's Preschool Phone 509-720-8042

Website Address www.thechildrensgardenpreschool.com

General Email Address thechildrensgardenspokane@gmail.com

1. GET TO KNOW US

WELCOME FROM YOUR DIRECTOR AND TEACHER

Welcome to The Children's Garden Preschool! It is an honor and blessing to bring more educational experiences to children in North Spokane. I have a teaching license in early childhood up to 8th grade, as well as a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, and an English Language endorsement. Over the last 13 years, I have been a teacher and learning specialist with students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. I believe you are the most valuable person in your child's life, and I look forward to partnering with you to make these early years even more impactful and enjoyable for your child.

This handbook is intended to inform you about the preschool's expectations and daily operations. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about our preschool's policies and procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The Children's Garden Preschool is a nonprofit preschool licensed by the State of Washington to provide development of the whole-person; youth and adults. The Children's Garden meets and exceeds the standards and regulations that are required by the State of Washington and works with a Board of Directors that meet quarterly to further develop the charitable work of our organization.

ABOUT OUR PRESCHOOL

Our Mission

Our mission is to develop the whole person, through physical and intellectual opportunities, that create the foundation for an amazing story.

Our Foundations

At the Children's Garden we achieve our mission by creating a culture of **community**, that fosters **independence** through curiosity and self-driven learning, as well as treating ourselves and others with **kindness**.

Our Philosophy

It is our belief that children learn best by interacting with the world around them in meaningful ways through play and developmentally appropriate instruction that is fun and engaging. Children who experience age-appropriate and inviting learning activities, gain confidence in their natural abilities and develop a love for learning. Our mixed-age program leads to independent discovery and allows children to enjoy the learning process while working at their own pace.

Program Goals

Our goals at the Children's Garden Preschool are to:

- Instill a love of learning through developmentally appropriate activities that engage children in meaningful ways. With a play-based and inquiry approach, our students will test their curiosity while also building independence.
- Provide high quality early education to preschool-aged children in North Spokane.
- Provide a well-educated, skillful staff who interact positively with children, foster their self-esteem and encourage their social-emotional development.
- Ensure the environment and experiences that are provided match each child's culture, developmental level, and individual style of learning.
- Support and partner with families to ensure a successful and enriching experience for their children.
- Partner with schools and others in the community to bring more educational experiences to our students and their families.
- Ensure students enrolling in kindergarten the following year will be more than ready to attend: socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

2. ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

FEES

Age Requirement by 8/31/2024	Days	Registration Fees	Monthly Tuition Fees
3	M, W, or T, Th. (2 day)	\$150.00	\$300.00
	M, T, W, Th. (4 day)	\$150.00	\$575.00
4	M, W, or T, Th. (2 day)	\$150.00	\$300.00
	M, T, W, Th. (4 day)	\$150.00	\$575.00
5	M, W, or T, Th. (2 day)	\$150.00	\$300.00
	M, T, W, Th. (4 day)	\$150.00	\$575.00

* With a four-day program, we will have mixed-age classrooms. Classes run on an A.M. and P.M. schedule.

* A.M. schedule - 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

* P.M. schedule - 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Registration Fees

1. Payment of the registration fee is due at time of registration and is non-refundable unless a child's name is placed on a waiting list.
2. If paying this fee by check, it must be received within five (5) business days from the date of registration, or the spot may not be held.
3. This fee reserves your child's spot and goes towards the first month's tuition in September.
4. Registration changes for current students to decrease the number of days per week must be requested on or before the end of February of the current year. The only exception to this is if the parents/guardians of another currently enrolled student on the waitlist agrees to fill the potential vacant days per week at the same time.
5. Registration changes to increase the number of days per week will only happen if there are spots available.

Tuition Fees

1. Tuition is due by the first of each month starting with September. **Payments are due each month September through June.** There are ten total tuition payments in addition to the one-time, non-refundable registration fee. Families who enroll late may be placed on a different payment schedule.

2. Payments can be made online, with cash, or checks. Checks must be placed **INSIDE** the payment envelope in your child's take home folder.
 - a. Checks should be made payable to: The Children's Garden Preschool
3. Your child's acceptance into our preschool is for the entire school year, for each day per week that they register, and there will be no refunds for absences. Tuition is not a fee per day or per month. It is not adjustable nor prorated, transferable, nor refundable for days missed due to illness, holidays, inclement weather, vacation, schedule breaks, personal decisions, behavioral suspensions, and/or withdrawal.
4. A child is registered for a set number of days per week. If a parent opts to send their child for less days per week than they registered their child for, the full tuition is still due and is not prorated nor adjusted, and payment is not refundable nor transferable.
5. A requests to change a child's registration to attend more days per week may be made if spots are available. The new schedule and tuition rate will take effect the month following the approved request. Note: If the child attends more days per week in the month the schedule request is approved, the difference between the tuition rates will be charged and due immediately.
6. A request to change a child's registration to attend less days per week may be made through the end of February of the current year. The new schedule and tuition rate will take effect the month following the approved request. Note: If a child attends less days per week in the month the schedule request is approved, the lower tuition rate will not be applied that month, nor will the higher tuition rate be prorated or adjusted for that month.
7. Parents who opt not to send their registered child for a month(s) that preschool is in session, intending for the preschool to hold the seat for the child until a later start or return date, tuition is still due in full for each month the spot is held and is not prorated, nor adjusted, and payment is not refundable, nor transferable.
8. If a child is voluntarily withdrawn from the program after parents have paid the next month's tuition fee, the tuition payment applied to the month in which the child will not attend may be refunded. See *Voluntary Withdrawal*, for more details about how to give proper notice to withdraw from the preschool.
 - a. Parents must inform the preschool office of the address to which the refund check should be mailed.
 - b. The refund check will be issued, less any fees that may have been incurred (i.e. late fees, returned payment fees, etc.)
 - c. Please allow up to four weeks to receive the refund check.

Scholarship(s)

Each school year, there is the potential to have donor dependent scholarship opportunities for children that would like to attend The Children's Garden that may not have the ability to otherwise. Scholarships are available on a

limited basis and awarded based upon need. Confidentiality is maintained. Once available, the scholarship application, information, and guidelines can be found on our website.

Other Fees

1. Payments will be considered late after the 5th of each month and an automatic late fee of \$25 will be added each school day a payment is not received on or before the 15th of each month. Late fee payments should be included with your late tuition payment. All fees past due after 15 days will make the child subject to suspension until payment is made. This could also result in dismissal of the student from the program. If a financial problem should arise, please contact the Preschool Director prior to the due date. Reasonable payment arrangements may be made if we are aware of the need.
2. A \$25 fee will be assessed on all returned payments. After a second returned check, all future tuition payments must be made in cash or a cashier's check, make sure to request a receipt. The Children's Garden reserves the right to refuse any cashier's checks. Money orders may not be accepted.
3. A \$25 fee will be assessed on accounts when children are voluntarily withdrawn without giving a proper 30-day notice of such withdrawal.
4. Non-payment of any fee due to the preschool will make the child subject to suspension until payment is made. Failure to pay could also result in dismissal of the student from the program.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Registration

Registration is available online, under the enrollment section, at: www.thechildrensgardenpreschool.com and in person during the Spring Open House/Registration day. The director will notify parents via email or phone call of the status of their registration application. Spots will be given on a first come first serve basis. Our preschool capacity is 16 students per class with one lead teacher and one assistant teacher.

1. Children will be enrolled according to the child's age as of August 1st.
2. Registration packets for the upcoming year will be made available after Christmas break to students currently enrolled.
 - a. Registration deadlines for currently enrolled students are in January before enrollment is opened to the community in February.
 - b. Preference will be given to currently enrolled students and siblings.
 - c. Upon full enrollment for the coming year, a waiting list will be created for each class. The waiting list is good for the current school year only.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms are required for your children's files and to complete registration. *These forms must be completed within ten business days of registration acceptance into the program.* You can find all these forms on our website at: www.thechildrensgardenpreschool.com under the 'enrollment' section.

Required Forms for All Children:

- Application for Enrollment Form
- Family Volunteer Form
- Health History Form
- Receipt of Handbook Form
- Certificate of Immunization Status
- Certificate of Exemption from Immunizations
- General Permission Slip

Forms Required as Needed:

- Medication Authorization Form
- Asthma Plan Packet
- Allergy Plan Packet

NOTE: Children may not be allowed to attend class due to required information and/or forms that are missing, illegible, and/or incomplete. **especially medical forms (e.g., Immunization Record, Medication, etc.).**

Noncompliance with policies outlined in enrollment forms and this handbook, such as proper submission of medication that a child may require, may also result in a child not being allowed in class. Parents are cautioned to carefully read this handbook and each form, give extra attention to all requirements, and to initial and sign in all places indicated on each form. Tuition will not be prorated, and refunds will not be granted, for days missed due to improper completion and submission of forms or noncompliance of policies.

3. OPERATIONS

SCHEDULE INFORMATION

School Hours

Preschool classes operate from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM and 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Thursday.

Arrival and Departure

1. Please arrive on time. Drop off for the morning class is 7:50-8:05. Drop off for the afternoon class is 11:50-12:05.

2. Do not bring your child earlier than the time stated. Enter through the main church doors and wait in the entrance for the teacher(s) to come get your child. Teachers will arrive to pick-up children at the start of each session's time. Prior to that, they will be getting the classroom set up and ready.
3. Children are to stay with their parent/guardian during drop off and pick up. Children are not allowed to run through the halls or move throughout the building unsupervised. The church is graciously allowing us to use their space for preschool, so it is important for us and our families to respect their space, as well.
4. If you will be late dropping your child off, please call the main office at the church: 509-466-1768. The secretary will let your child in and walk him/her back to the class.
5. When picking your child up from preschool, please pull into the loop off Gleneden Rd. The teacher will walk the class outside and direct the students to your vehicle. Please be standing outside and/or ready to help load your child into the car.
6. Teachers will check each child in and out every day. Make sure to communicate specific needs your child may have for the day. Minors are not allowed to drop off or pick up students.
 - a. If parents have planned for someone else to pick up their child, they must inform their child's teacher, even if the person is listed as a contact person.
 - b. We will ask for photo identification at time of pick-up for anyone that is not the parent and not personally known to employees.

Late Pick-up

Pick-up time is 11:00 AM and 3:00 PM for all students. For every minute past 11:10 AM and 3:10 PM that you are late to pick up your child, you will be charged \$1 per minute. After that time, you will need to sign a "Late for Pick Up" sheet. This sheet will be used to determine if a pattern of tardiness is developing. The late pick-up fee will be added to the child's account and due the next class day. A child who is repeatedly picked up after the times stated is subject to dismissal from the program. If special or one time circumstances arise, please call the preschool.

Holidays and School Year Calendar

The Children's Garden follows the Mead School District's yearly calendar for holidays and closures with the exception of their LID days, snow make-up days, and parent-teacher conferences. We will remain open during those days. The Children's Garden school year calendar can be found on our website.

Your Child's Day

Your child will have the opportunity to engage in a multitude of intellectual and physical learning opportunities each day at The Children's Garden Preschool. Throughout the week, your child will enjoy activities ranging from art and craft projects to games, songs, finger plays, storytelling, creative dramatics, exercises, science, shapes, numbers, colors, alphabet, and much more through various monthly themes. Some of these projects will be taken home to share with you, and others will be group activities that you can ask about. I know that children learn best by "doing".

Therefore, the activities the children participate in are developmentally appropriate, concrete, hands-on, and most of all fun, because I believe that learning is an exciting experience.

Children learn through play; because of this, we do not underestimate its importance on a growing child's mind, body and spirit. Therefore, the children attending The Children's Garden Preschool receive a lot of both free-play and structured-play throughout each day.

Family Observation and Visits

The Children's Garden Preschool values the importance of the home to school connection. There may be times you want to come in and observe the classroom or help. We have an open door policy, and you are welcome to come and visit/observe the preschool. The one thing we ask is that you let us know when you would like to come and have a background check on file if you will be helping and working with students.

BUILDING INFORMATION

Parking Lot Guidelines

Feel free to use the parking lot for preschool arrival. During pick-up, you will use the drive through loop off Gleneden Rd and stay by your vehicle while we direct the students to you. As always, please be cautious and mindful of students entering/exiting the building when parking or pulling out of the drive through.

Entrances to Preschool

While the church doors will remain open during their normal operating hours, the doors leading into our preschool will be locked at 8:15 AM and unlocked at 11:00 AM for our morning class. The doors will be locked at 12:15 PM and unlocked at 3:00 PM for our afternoon class. This is to help provide a safe environment for our students. Please make sure to check-in at the church's main office if you come during the hours the doors are locked.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PRESCHOOL

Voluntary Withdrawal

A written notice must be received thirty (30) days in advance of your child's last day and is **REQUIRED** before you withdraw your child from our program. If thirty days written notice is not received, a penalty of \$25 may be charged to your account and should be paid on or before the child's last day.

The full month's tuition is due for any month in which the child attends one school day. Students are considered enrolled for the entire year; therefore, budgets and teacher contracts are set accordingly.

If your child is voluntarily withdrawn from the program after you have paid the next month's tuition fee, the tuition payment applied to the month in which your child will not attend may be refunded if 1) The preschool receives

written notice of the withdrawal from the parent or guardian, and 2) The preschool office is informed how high address the refund check should be mailed. Refund checks will be issued, less any fees that may have been incurred (i.e. outstanding tuition balance, late fees, returned payment fees, etc.). It may take up to four weeks to receive the refund check.

Involuntary Dismissal

Enrollment of a child(ren) can be terminated by the preschool for the following reasons:

1. A child's behavior is consistently disruptive and/or becomes a threat to other children and/or staff.
2. Acts of violence, threats or implied threats of violence, and intimidation impede the goal of providing a safe environment and will not be tolerated. All students, employees, parents, and visitors are covered by this policy.
3. Failure to pay registration, tuition, and/or any fees on time. Contact the preschool as soon as possible to discuss possible payment arrangements if there are extenuating circumstances.
4. Students who do not attend without notice for two consecutive weeks may be considered to have abandoned their seat in the class and may be withdrawn.
5. Consistently picking up your child late from preschool.
6. Persistent show of disregard for the policies and procedures, philosophy, and other items outlined in The Children's Garden Handbook.

If any of these issues occur, the Children's Garden director and staff will inform parents of the specific problem well before conversations of termination. Time may be given to work together to correct the problem. The exception to this is any acts of violence or threats.

SNACK TIME

Both morning and afternoon classes will have time for a healthy snack. At the beginning of each month, there will be a snack calendar sent home with your child's day to provide snacks for the class. Please send healthy snacks. Ideas will be provided on the calendar.

WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS

1. All personal belongings should be labeled with the child's first and last name.
2. Please leave toys and other personal items at home, unless the class has planned a special show-and-tell day.
3. Labeled book bag with a change of clothes, and water bottle.
4. Appropriate dress for indoor/outdoor play. Please label coats.
 - a. Children will be playing outside every day, weather permitting. Please make sure your child has an appropriate coat and cold weather accessories when applicable.

- b. Please send your child to school in tennis shoes. Because we will utilize the playground and gym every day, it is important that your child can run and play safely.
- c. We will do a lot of messy and fun activities, so please dress your child in clothing that is ok to get dirty.

PARTIES

Birthday Celebrations

We will celebrate birthdays in class. Let your child's teacher know if you would like to bring in special treats for birthdays. Late June and July birthdays will be celebrated in June, and August birthdays will be celebrated in September.

Class Parties

Holidays will be celebrated at various times during the school year. There will be a volunteer sign-up for parents to coordinate and help with these parties. Parents are also welcome and encouraged to attend parties.

CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Because our preschool hours are designed for the children, we ask that you do not conference with staff during arrival, dismissal, or special event times. We do have two conference times scheduled on the school year calendar where each family will get a chance to meet individually with the teacher to set goals and get progress reports. However, if you do have a concern or simply want to meet with a teacher outside of conferences, please reach out to set up a time. It is through this communication of needs, wants, and/or concerns regarding your child that assist The Children's Garden Preschool in providing the best possible experience for them and you!

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the rare instance where there are inclement weather situations, all delays, early releases, or closing announcements will be posted on our website and social media page. We will also do our best to send text messages to families if the circumstances allow.

In general, The Children's Garden Preschool will follow the Mead School District's inclement weather policy when it comes to delays, early releases, or closings.

- If there is a late start (2 hour delay), the morning class students have the option to come in at 10:00 for an hour. The afternoon classes will start as normal at 12:00.
- If there is an early release, the preschool will close immediately, and children should be picked up within 30 minutes. Note: Staff will work diligently to communicate early releases by calling parents, and if necessary, emergency contacts. However, please continue to monitor announcements on our website, social media, and local news stations for school district closures when there is a possibility of inclement weather while your child is in school.

There may be times when The Children’s Garden makes decisions that differ from the Mead School District, so please be sure to look for information on our website and social media pages first.

Severe Weather Procedures

Fire and tornado drills are practiced once a month at school. During these drills, your children are taught where to go for their safe location and how to get there quickly.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Our goal at The Children’s Garden is to teach children respect for themselves and others. At this age, children will have many opportunities to learn and build problem solving skills. We guide them by talking, giving choices, redirection to other activities, removal of the child from the situation, and teaching children to use their voices when disagreeing with one another. Teachers will use positive reinforcement in the classroom to encourage proper responses and appropriate behavior. Children at this age are still learning and may need help with a skill they do not yet have (i.e. social, emotional, cognitive, motor skills, etc.). Our goal is to positively build their skills while helping them make connections between their actions and the outcomes of those actions.

The Children’s Garden prohibits the use of the following methods to correct behavior: corporal punishment, verbal or physical abuse, humiliation, neglect, or abusive treatment; addressing a child in a manner or tone that is disrespectful, sarcastic, demeaning, or threatening; and denying a child food or drink as a punishment.

Innapropriate Behavior Policy

Teachers will use various methods to help a child calm down or address inappropriate behavior that is disruptive or aggressive. If those methods are unsuccessful, or the child is still having a hard time regulating his/her emotions, teachers may use a time-out, allowing the child time away from the stressful or triggering situation, in a ‘calming corner’ or ‘zen den.’ Children have a wide variety of needs, especially when feeling dysregulated, so the teachers will be well trained to address and adjust to those differing needs. What works well for one student, may not work for another. At The Children’s Garden Preschool, our main priority is to keep all children safe and cared for. If a child is needing more assistance than we can give, parents will be called to either come help with the situation, or in cases of physical aggression, to pick up their child.

Aggressive and/or Consistently Disruptive Behavior Policy

The Children’s Garden Preschool may enact the following procedures if a child’s behavior escalates from inappropriate to aggressive and/or is constantly disruptive:

1. Actions of a child who is consistently disruptive in the classroom; often presents with verbal and/or physical outbursts; is repeatedly defiant, non-compliant, and/or aggressive; and/or causes serious harm to others and/or property destruction will be documented and reviewed with his/her parent. Examples of such behaviors include, but are not limited to punching, kicking, slapping, hair pulling, spitting, throwing chairs, intentionally breaking or trying to break things, intimidating and bullying others, foul language, etc. Disruptive, defiant, and/or non-compliant behaviors also include, but are not limited to a child who may repeatedly climb under tables and/or on furniture; often refusing to stop running around the classroom when requested and/or running away from the teacher; making multiple attempts to leave the playground and/or classroom, etc. Teachers will complete Behavior Reports to record these types of serious and/or ongoing incidents, which must be signed by the director, lead teacher, and parent.
2. The actions outline above, or any action that is considered by the preschool to be egregious and/or dangerous may result in suspension or dismissal from the program with or without the issuance of a Behavior Report if deemed appropriate by the Preschool Director. As a reminder, fees are not prorated due to a child's suspension or dismissal from the program.

SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICIES

Allergies

Your child's allergies should be entered on the enrollment forms where indicated. A copy of this information will be kept in a binder in your child's classroom for the teacher's use. Please also make certain to discuss with your teacher any allergies your child may have.

Medication

The Children's Garden requires proper written authorization from the child's physician AND parent or guardian to allow its employees to administer medication at preschool. Plan to give all medications at home to avoid needing the preschool to administer medication to your child. However, if a medication such as Benadryl is needed for emergency situations, please complete the appropriate form.

Sick Child Policy

We ask that you do not bring your child to preschool if they have had or currently have one or more of the following symptoms within the previous 24 hours:

1. Temperature of 100 degrees or more. Your child should be fever free for 24 hours, without fever reducing medication, before returning to school.
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea
4. Pink Eye - Keep home until 24 hours after treatment has started.
5. Contagious or unexplained rash

6. Persistent, heavy coughing
7. Runny nose with thick discolored discharge or any type of colored discharge
8. Other obvious signs of illness
9. COVID-19 diagnosis
10. Head lice - Keep home until child's hair has been fully treated. If your child returns and still shows signs of lice, we will ask you to keep your child home until it is gone.

If your child becomes sick at school, we will contact you to come pick up your child. If you cannot be reached, the emergency contact(s) listed will be called.

The usual childhood diseases, such as meningitis, chickenpox, scarlet fever, infectious hepatitis, hand, foot and mouth disease, impetigo, head lice, and ring worm must be reported so that necessary precautions can be taken.

Injuries/Emergencies

Emergency information is kept on file at the preschool. In case of illness or injury this information will be used to notify you or the person designated by you, of your child's status. If your child is injured while at the preschool, first aid will be administered. If treatment by a doctor is necessary, we will make every effort to contact you or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In all cases, an injury report is completed, and a copy is given to the parents as well as being kept on file. Authorization for emergency treatment must be signed at the time of enrollment to ensure that in the event of an emergency, we can make sure your child receives the necessary emergency treatment he or she needs. It is very important that all emergency contact information is kept up to date and correct. Please inform me immediately of any changes to keep your information current. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

Note: In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring immediate medical attention, the following procedures will be followed.

1. A phone call to 911 is made.
2. Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called.
3. Child is separated from the other children and appropriately cared for.
4. Parent, provider, or ambulance takes the child and health records to the doctor or hospital.

STAFF AND FACILITY

All staff of The Children's Garden will be required to complete a background check and become CPR certified with basic first aid training.

All staff will be required to complete training hours at least once per school year that further develop their understanding and knowledge of early childhood education and development.

All classrooms and bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected on a regular schedule.

Staff and children's hands are washed after using the bathroom and before snack time. Toys are disinfected on a regular basis.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Staff is required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

The Children's Garden will not discriminate in relation to admissions of any child on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.

ONE FINAL NOTE

It is important that you feel comfortable with The Children's Garden Preschool's policies and procedures. If you do not understand something, have a concern, or you feel uncomfortable with one or more of the policies and/or procedures it is important that you express that to us before enrolling your child. We are always open to suggestions and feel communication is a very important part of a quality early childhood education. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and provide an amazing preschool experience for your child. We look forward to a future of keeping your child safe, smiling, learning, and exploring!

By signing the Receipt of Handbook form, it is understood that all of the policies and procedures of this handbook are understood and agreed upon.