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Parent Handbook

Revised August 2022

Changes to the current version of the Parent Handbook may occur during the school year due to decisions of the Board of Directors, changes in the needs of the preschool, or changes in licensing guidelines. Parents will be notified of changes through Board meeting minutes, newsletters, or notes.

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Adventures Preschool

A Cooperative Experience

Adventures Preschool was established in 1968 and is the only cooperative preschool in Ames. It is a non-profit organization and is licensed by the State of Iowa. Adventures Preschool serves three- to five-year-olds and their families.

Mission Statement

Adventures Preschool provides a safe and nurturing environment where teachers and families work as a team to offer developmentally appropriate learning opportunities for each child's emotional, social, physical and cognitive growth.

Philosophy

At Adventures Preschool we believe that children learn by being actively engaged, by playing, and by experiencing. Social skills, emotional development and language development are our primary focus. We feel that if children know how to make and be a friend, are self-confident, can ask for help when they need it, can express their feelings, can make decisions, have self-control, feel positive about school and curious about their world, they will have an excellent start. Although we do explore academic skills in our program, academic skills are not our main emphasis. We usually incorporate such learning in the form of games, songs, art, cooking, and conversation. We utilize developmentally appropriate activities and materials. Adventures Preschool believes situations requiring discipline can be dealt with through the use of active problem solving. Under the guidance of an adult, children are encouraged to use words to describe situations involving conflict, express their feelings and explore solutions jointly. Finally, Adventures Preschool believes that ALL children bring a unique component to the learning environment, which in turn, enriches the experience for all individuals involved.

Objectives

- To provide a caring and stimulating learning environment for our preschoolers
- To meet the physical, emotional, social, and mental needs of our children
- To help parents develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of their preschool child.

What is a Cooperative or "Co-op" Preschool?

In a cooperative ("co-op") preschool, teachers, parents and children are fully involved in the educational process, working and learning together. The importance of parents as educators is recognized. Parents participate in the classroom on a regular basis and serve outside the classroom with special projects, on committees, or on the Board of Directors.

How do children benefit from the cooperative program?

- Children enjoy sharing their experiences with their parents.
- Children may transition to preschool more easily when their parents are occasionally in the classroom.
- More adults are in the classroom each day, supporting the children's learning; in fact, state licensing requirements for adult to child ratios are surpassed.
- Children get the benefit of both stability (teachers) and diversity (parents) in their learning environment. Parents working in classroom might be moms or dads (or even grandparents). They could be older or younger, with many children or just one. They might come from different parts of the world or from different ethnic/racial groups. They could be stay-at-home parents or career professionals. They are all different, and they all help provide a rich and varied learning experience for the children.
- Children can see the value their parents place on education.
- School is more easily extended beyond the classroom, leading to a lifelong habit of learning.

How do parents benefit from the cooperative program?

- Parents have an opportunity to observe their child with his/her peers; they can learn more about their child's interests and behaviors.
- Parents can strengthen their techniques for working with children by observing teachers and other parents.
- Parents have opportunities to develop friendships with other families.
- They can communicate more easily with the teachers and other parents.
- They have firsthand knowledge of classroom activities, policies and procedures.
- Parents may find it easier to send their child off to their first school experience when they are involved in the program.

How do teachers benefit from the cooperative program?

- Teachers really enjoy getting to know the children and their families. It's more fun working as a community.
- Communication with families is easier; as a result, teachers and families tend to be more consistent in their work with a child. They can use the same terms and work on the same goals more easily.
- Parents and teachers can draw on each others' knowledge and resources.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Adventures Preschool welcomes all children regardless of race, gender, country of origin, creed, or religion. Adventures Preschool admits students of any race, color, gender, religion, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, and scholarships. The building's (Collegiate United Methodist Church) second floor restrooms are not currently fully accessible to persons with physical disabilities. Adventures Preschool will make every effort to make reasonable accommodation for those with disabilities. Requests for accommodation should be made in writing to the teachers.

The Structure of the Preschool

A copy of the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation are available upon request. The parent body, Board of Directors, and teachers are required to hold and attend at least two preschool business meetings each year. Presently the Parent Orientation and End of Year Celebration serve as these two meetings.

Parents

Classroom volunteers: Parents assist in the classroom at regular intervals. One parent serves in the classroom each day; therefore, the number of times each family must volunteer in the classroom each semester depends upon the number of children enrolled. When enrollment is full, each family generally volunteers in the classroom about three times each semester. Parents sign up for volunteer days online. Families will receive a Sign-Up Genius link in mid-August and mid-December to sign-up for volunteer days. If a parent is unable to volunteer on their selected date, please contact Jill or Jamie. You can schedule another day to volunteer.

If a family has hardship fulfilling the volunteer duties; an exemption can be granted. Families must request a volunteer exemption form to complete before volunteering can be waived. Please contact Jill to receive the form.

To maintain a safe environment, classroom volunteers must complete a request for criminal background check and federal fingerprinting. Usually the background check form and fingerprinting takes place during parent orientation. Also, please note that parents are mandatory reporters of child abuse while they are volunteering in the classroom.

Committees and Volunteer service: Each family is responsible for participating in the operation of the preschool by serving on the Board of Directors, on a committee, or during special projects. Each family is responsible for contributing at least eight (8) hours of service outside of the classroom each year. Currently we have the following committees and non-classroom participation opportunities:

- **Fundraising:** Explores fundraising options and make recommendations to the Board. Supervises fundraising activities. Reports the outcome of fundraising efforts to the Board and the parents. Funds received from fundraising efforts are used to purchase items not included in the annual budget. Examples of purchases made with fundraising money are playground equipment, new shelf materials (games, manipulatives, etc) for the classroom, shades for the windows in the Big Room, etc. The chair (or co-chairs) of this committee is a board position.
- **Equipment:** Arranges for repair and upkeep of equipment and playground. Maintains inventory of all equipment. Conducts a monthly inspection of playground and completes documentation of inspections. The chair of this committee is a board position.
- **Communications and Marketing:** Assists the communications chair with marketing, website, and other outreach efforts. Outreach examples include, but are not limited to, Ames' Farmers Market table, Octagon Center for the Arts Festival of Trees, Campustown Action Alliance Summerfest table. The chair of this committee is a board position.
- **Social:** Plans 1-2 social events during the school year for all preschool families (non-fundraising restaurant nights, park meetups, youth matinee events, etc.). Coordinates food and items needed for the parent orientation, preschool open house, and the end-of-year celebration. Sends cards to Adventures families to acknowledge life events. Organizes meals for Adventures families in times of need (as requested by teachers or the Board). The chair of this committee is a board position.
- **Book Orders:** Distributes Scholastic book orders to families. Places book order via computer. Distributes books upon arrival.
- **Playdough:** Prepares playdough each month. Recipe and ingredients provided by preschool teachers.
- **Sewing:** Mends dramatic play clothes and doll clothes as needed. Sews new napkins as needed. Helps with bean bag projects as needed.
- **Classroom Materials Upkeep:** Coordinates sanitizing/washing classroom materials with the classroom teachers. Helps maintain and rotate supplies in the emergency kits as needed. Purchases supplies for emergency kits as needed.

Board of Directors

The Board is composed of parents (officers and committee chairs) and teachers. New Board members will be approved by a vote of the Board. The Board is responsible for the operation of the preschool: setting and managing the budget; auditing expenses and revenue; setting tuition and fees; discussing parent concerns; hiring teachers; making decisions about marketing/advertising, upkeep of premises, lease negotiation, purchasing, and fundraising.

Officers:

- **President:** Prepares agenda. Convenes and conducts meetings. Makes certain designated committees are functioning. Signs contracts.
- **Vice President:** Assumes role of president in absence of president. Assists in carrying out presidential responsibilities. Publicizes the opening of applications for enrollment.

- **Treasurer:** Serves as chair of the Budget Committee. Pays all bills approved by the board and other budgeted items. Submits payroll and tax records to accountant. Keeps accurate records of preschool budget. Arranges for an annual audit. Collects tuition.
- **Secretary:** Records board meeting minutes. Maintains minutes and agendas.

Teachers and/or Directors

With rare exceptions, two teachers are present each day in the classroom. The teachers/directors are hired by the Board. The staff may consist of either a lead teacher, an assistant teacher, and a classroom aide(s) or of co-lead teachers. The director responsibilities are assumed by the lead teacher(s). If the lead teacher is absent due to sickness, personal or family leave, the assistant teacher will assume the duties of the lead teacher.

Teachers plan the curriculum and organize materials for classroom use. They lead classroom activities with the support of the parent volunteers. Teachers help parent volunteers by orienting the parents to the classroom. Teachers conduct parent-teacher conferences twice a year and communicate with parents on a regular basis as needed. Teachers purchase new equipment and supplies with approval from the Board. Teachers are responsible for maintaining the preschool license from the Department of Human Services. They collect and maintain student and staff records. They handle inquiries from prospective families and new student registrations.

Teachers attend Board meetings and are voting members of the Board. They present an annual report to the Board at the beginning of each school year. Teachers maintain current First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions and Mandatory Reporter certifications. Teachers complete a minimum of 10 hours of training in approved early childhood education as required by the Department of Human Services Child Care Regulations for the State of Iowa.

Enrollment and Application Process

Adventures Preschool serves children ages three to five and their families. To be eligible for enrollment, children must be three years old before September 15th of the fall term. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the director. All children must be toilet trained before beginning preschool. We accept enrollments throughout the school year as class openings allow.

Families interested in enrolling are strongly encouraged to schedule a visit to preschool with their child. In this way the parents can ask questions and observe the classroom environment.

Current and returning families may apply for the upcoming fall term early by submitting enrollment materials during the month of February. Fall term enrollment opens to the public in late February or early March each year. Enrollments are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until classes are filled.

Effective February 1, 2023 a \$100 non-refundable application fee must accompany the enrollment request.

Families will be notified of their enrollment status in a timely manner. They will receive notification via email. If classes are filled, applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which applications are received.

Parents are required to complete and submit the following information for their child's file:

- Child Information Form
- Emergency Medical Information and Consent
- Field Trip Permission and Photo Permission
- Tuition Information
- Volunteer Health and Criminal Record Self-Certification (for parent(s) who will be volunteering)

- Mandatory Reporter Form (for parent(s) who will be volunteering)
- Child's current physical and immunization form
- Facebook Policy

Parents will receive forms at the classroom visit or parent orientation. The physical and immunization form must be obtained from the child's physician. Printed copies from MyChart or similar programs cannot be accepted. All forms must be returned prior to or on the first day of gradual enrollment.

Tuition and Fees

Adventures Preschool is a non-profit organization. The preschool's financial obligations are met through fees, tuition, and fundraising. The preschool does not currently receive funding from any outside source. The preschool's primary expenses are insurance, teacher salaries, room use fees/utilities, supplies and equipment. Each year the Board drafts a budget which is then presented to and voted on by the parent-body. A copy of the budget for the current year is available upon request.

Tuition

Tuition for the upcoming year is set by the Board during the budgeting process and approved by the current parent-body each spring. Tuition can be paid in one payment, in two semester payments or in nine equal monthly installments during the school year. Lump sum semester or yearly tuition payments will receive a 2% discount if paid by the first day of semester. Monthly installments are due on the 1st of every month (September through May). Please choose the schedule which best suits you. Tuition is paid by Quickbooks Online Invoice, Venmo, cash or check with checks payable to "Adventures Preschool." It is helpful if you write "tuition" on the memo line of the check. Tuition is placed in the white mailbox inside the preschool door (little room) or can be mailed to preschool.

Late fee

All tuition received after the 15th of each month will be charged a late fee of \$15.

Bounced checks and non-payment

In the event that your payment is returned for insufficient funds ("bounced check"), you will be responsible for that payment plus any bank fees charged to the preschool. The payment and bank fees will be due with the next tuition payment.

If you miss a payment or have a bounced check, you will be contacted by the treasurer. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for cancellation of enrollment, as decided by the Board. Families with financial hardships are encouraged to speak to the treasurer in a timely manner to determine if a payment plan is possible. Returning families with an outstanding balance may not enroll for the following year until the balance is paid.

Optional Costs

Preschool T-shirts are optional. The price will be set in August when orders are taken. Parents are asked to dress children in preschool t-shirts or other royal blue shirts on field trips. Books may be purchased from Scholastic. Book orders are optional.

Scholarships

There is a limited amount of funds available for scholarships. The Board determines the amount annually in the spring for the coming year's budget. Families may make a verbal request to the director(s) of the preschool. There is no application process. Scholarships are a 25% reduction of tuition. Scholarships will be granted until allotted money is gone.

Sibling Discount

Families with more than one child enrolled at Adventures Preschool will receive a 10% discount on one tuition.

Absences and Extended Leave Policy

If your child is absent from preschool due to illness or other reasons, full tuition is due. If your child must be absent for an extended time (beyond one month) and you want to retain your child's place in preschool, full tuition must be paid during the absence. Otherwise, the position will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Withdrawing from the program

If you choose to withdraw your child from Adventures Preschool, you must give a 30-day written notice to the director. You are responsible for tuition for those 30 days, whether your child attends preschool or not.

Fundraisers and donations

The preschool utilizes several fundraisers per year. In the past, these dollars have purchased new playground equipment, new shelf materials for the classroom and shades for the windows in the Big Room. Please note that participation is voluntary. Families are encouraged to contribute in whatever way they are able. All contributions are appreciated and tax-deductible. The treasurer can provide a receipt for donations if needed. Please talk to the treasurer or a teacher if you have questions or would like more information.

Discharge Policy

Teachers and parents work together to attempt to resolve problems. With parents' permission, professional help (such as the Area Education Agency) may be utilized. In the rare occasion that a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, a child may be discharged from the program. The following situations may result in discharge:

- Parents' failure to meet Adventures Preschool policy
- Failure to pay fees or tuition in a timely manner
- Inability of a child to adjust to the group experience
- Behavior which constitutes a threat to self, other children, parents, or teachers

Guidance and Discipline Policy

The teachers expect preschoolers to struggle with self-control and to test limits and rules. The teachers are trained to handle normal behavioral problems and consider these issues to be a central part of a preschooler's learning experience.

Children are treated in a caring, respectful manner. The teachers use a calm voice and go to children to talk to them (not call across the room) whenever possible. Children are not necessarily asked to apologize for inappropriate behavior as they may not feel sorry at that moment and/or may not understand the concept.

Rules are clear and consistent. Children are given much practice in making decisions and seeing the consequences of their decisions. Teachers work with children to help them identify and express their feelings and to make connections between feelings and behaviors. Redirection, problem-solving, praising appropriate behavior and ignoring problem behavior are the most commonly used strategies to help children learn self-control. If a child is hurting him/herself or others, s/he may be gently held until calm. If a child is unable to attend in a group situation and is distracting others, s/he may be removed temporarily to problem-solve with a teacher.

Yelling, threats, and any form of physical discipline (e.g., spanking) are not allowed at preschool. Parents will be informed of situations requiring guidance. Parents are asked to help teachers by reminding their children to: 1) stop and listen whenever they hear their name, and 2) use their words when they need something at home. Parents are asked to talk to the teachers immediately if they have any concerns regarding discipline at preschool.

The School Calendar

We currently offer a MWF and a TTH class. Children can also enroll in both classes, attending Monday-Friday. Class hours are 8:45-11:45, with drop-off beginning at 8:30. While our capacity, as determined by Iowa Department of Human Services, is 22 children, we normally cap enrollment at 16 children. We follow the same break (Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring) schedule as Ames Community School District (ACSD). We do not follow ACSD's schedule for in-service days.

Make-Up Days

If preschool is canceled due to weather for more than 3 days for the MWF class or 2 days for the TTH class, days will be added to the end of the school year.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch may be offered if there is enough interest from families. Lunch Bunch is an optional 1 ¼ hour of additional preschool time from 11:45-1:00pm. Children bring a sack lunch from home and eat lunch with the Teacher(s). Fee for Lunch Bunch is \$8 per session attended. Families sign up for each session via a Sign-Up Genius link. Three children are needed for each Lunch Bunch session.

Classroom Visit

Classroom visits occur over two days before gradual enrollment. The classroom visit may be an assigned time slot or an open house style visit. This is a time to visit the classroom, meet the teachers and look around the classrooms. Classroom supplies can be dropped off during the classroom visit. Children will choose their name tag color, find their locker, have a picture taken, among other things.

Gradual Enrollment

To ease the children's transition to preschool, the year begins with a week of gradual enrollment. Gradual enrollment simply means that the class time is shortened to one hour and 15 minutes and half of the class attends at one time. This allows children to get acquainted with the teachers, other children, classroom, and routines more easily. Each child will attend one of the two sessions each day (8:45-10:00 am or 10:30-11:45 am). Parents receive a gradual enrollment schedule during parent orientation or classroom visits.

Parent Orientation

Parent orientation is the first (of two) parent-body business meetings required in the preschool bylaws. It is held before gradual enrollment. At this meeting preschool policies and procedures will be reviewed, Board members will be introduced and parents will have an opportunity to ask questions. Fingerprinting will be conducted for volunteers who will be working in the classroom. Depending on date of the orientation, children's paperwork will either be picked-up or turned-in. Parents will have the opportunity to indicate committee preference and review the schedule of fall-semester classroom participation days. This meeting is mandatory for all families. No child care is provided, and parents are asked to attend without their children.

Family Events

In May, families are invited to an end-of-year celebration, either as a potluck picnic or a brief program with a dessert buffet. The preschool president will convene a brief business meeting in order to vote on the budget for the upcoming school year. Copies of the budget are available prior to the gathering and parents are encouraged to ask questions.

Conferences

The Lead Teacher(s) conduct(s) Parent/Teacher Conferences twice during the year. The fall conference is a time for parents to share information and for the teacher to share impressions and ask questions. Goals for the year may be discussed. The spring conference is a time to reflect on each child's growth and development.

Field Trips

Special trips are sometimes planned away from the classroom. These trips extend classroom learning and broaden children's experiences. Parents with ideas for field trip locations are encouraged to talk to the teachers.

Teachers ask that children be dressed in an Adventures Preschool or other blue shirt on field trip days. This helps adults quickly identify the Adventures Preschool children. If the field trip will be outdoors, parents are asked to carefully dress their children for the weather of the day.

Parents must sign a consent form prior to each field trip. The consent form will list the location, date, and mode of transportation. Consent forms are posted on the hall bulletin board before the day of the field trip. Parents may decline permission for their child to participate in an excursion but are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the teachers. Field trips generally take most of the morning and alternative activities aren't provided, so any child who isn't participating in the field trip should not attend preschool on the field trip day. Parents are always welcome on field trips. Parent sign-up sheets are also posted in the hall on the bulletin board.

We generally schedule field trips to location within walking distance of Adventures. On occasion we may ride Cy-Ride to a field trip location. There may also be field trips where the entire preschool morning is held at an alternate location and parents must drop-off and pick-up at the alternate location. Examples are Reiman Gardens or McFarland Park. We may ask for extra parent volunteers on field trip days. The two parents who are "working" at preschool on the day of a field trip will be asked to drive their cars. To be a driver, a parent must have a valid driver's license and liability insurance. Parents who cannot meet these requirements must inform a teacher prior to the day of the field trip, so that alternative arrangements can be made. A minimum of two adults will accompany each carload of children traveling outside of Ames. When traveling inside the city limits, one adult may accompany a carload of children.

Iowa law requires that all preschool children be buckled into a car seat or booster seat during transportation. Parents will be asked to provide and install the car seat/booster seat of their own child in the assigned vehicle the day of the field trip. Doors will be locked and windows rolled up during transport. Cars will be loaded and unloaded from curbside whenever possible.

Siblings may not participate in field trips. For the safety of the preschool children, all adult attention must be focused on the preschoolers.

The School Day

Staffing the classroom

Two teachers will be assisted by one parent each morning. Parents will help on a rotating basis. The number of times each parent helps will be determined by the enrollment in each class. Occasionally, it may be necessary to have one adult with one or more children (e.g., going to the kitchen, bathroom, administering first aid). Parent volunteers are not allowed to be alone with children, other than their own child, during preschool hours.

Families may complete a volunteer exemption form if unable to volunteer during preschool hours. Please talk to Jill for more information.

Siblings at Preschool

Preschool is set up for three- to five-year-olds only. While younger and older siblings are welcome to help bring and pick up preschoolers, they are not permitted to stay the entire morning.

Typical Daily Schedule

Arrival: 8:30-8:45
Morning Meeting 8:45
Free Choice, Snack, Small Group Activity: 8:50-10:10
Clean-Up: 10:10-10:15
Circle Time(Songs, Story, Weather): 10:15-10:30
Prepare to walk to playground: 10:30
Walk to playground: 10:35-10:40
Playground: 10:45-11:45
Dismissal from playground: 11:45

A weekly lesson plan, including snacks and art projects, is posted outside the door of the little room. Parents often use the information in the schedule to help prepare their children for the day or to start conversations with their child after preschool. The schedule is subject to change without notice.

Free Choice 8:50-10:10

During Free Choice, children can choose what they would like to do within the carefully prepared environment. A child's play is their "work" and the means by which a young child learns about themselves, other people, and their environment. This is an important time for a child to practice making choices/decisions, develop social skills, practice self-control and develop language skills. The role of the adult in guiding play consists of three basic elements: listening, enjoying, and establishing a good rapport with the children.

Snack

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - Before starting the preparation and eating snack hands must be freshly washed using soap and water.
 - Children will be preparing(if necessary) and eating snack at this time.
 - One of the teachers will help at the snack table.
 - Children will be offered snack during this time and it will be limited to 4-5 children at a time. As children finish snack they will clean-up their snack spot and wash their hands. As chairs become available a new group of children will be able to eat snack. All children will be reminded to visit the snack table during free choice time.
 - Many children enjoy cooking with an adult and are pleased to help. Other children are uncomfortable being sticky or messy. We can encourage children by reminding them that they can wash up afterward and that they can watch before they help. Remember to have fun!
- **What Children Can Learn:**
 - The snack preparation table often provides opportunities for parents to engage the children in beginning math and science concepts. For example, children can count cups of sugar, talk about where you get flour, watch what happens when you add liquids to solids, estimate amounts, learn about less and more, or predict what happens when you bake a muffin.
 - Parents do not need to provide lots of answers, rather they can pose questions and ask children to observe, think, and talk. This also allows children to increase their vocabularies.
 - The activities involved in snack preparation often allow children to strengthen their fine motor skills (muscles of the hand and wrist); these muscles are needed for writing and drawing. For example, children may peel vegetables, spread butter, tear lettuce, pat dough, or stir ingredients.

Art Table

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - Most mornings there is an art activity available, it could be as simple as crayons and paper or more involved such as fingerpainting. A teacher will provide materials and directions. Once

instructions have been provided, a parent volunteer might be asked to assist children at the art table.

- All children will be asked to look at the table at some time during the free play time. Children may decide not to participate as long as they look at the table first. Children are encouraged to use their words when making choices.
- When supervising children's creative activities, be an interested observer who enjoys the experience with the children. Stay with the activity you are supervising. Sit or stand near enough to be ready to listen to the children and help them. The presence of an interested adult may reduce frustration and increase attention span.
- Help with materials as needed: tie aprons, push up sleeves, wipe up spills, help children find the colors and paper they want, put artwork up to dry and help with cleanup.
- Please check with the teachers if a child wants to do more than one project; sometimes time does not allow children to do more than one (everyone must have a chance at the table) and sometimes there are not enough materials prepared for more than one.
- Avoid praising a child's artwork. (When praised, children can begin to try to please an adult instead of exploring, creating, and learning for themselves.) Talk with them about it by asking what they like, noticing their use of colors or asking how they did something.

- **What Children Can Learn:**

- The art table often provides opportunities for parents to engage children in beginning science and math concepts and to increase vocabularies. Shape, color, texture, cause and effect, prediction, and estimation are some of the concepts that parents can talk about with children. For example, parents can share a child's sense of wonder about how colors change when they are mixed. However, parents can be most helpful by being sensitive to different children's needs and by listening. Some like to be quiet and introspective when they are being creative; other children will talk your leg off! Remember, having fun with the children and listening to them will always be more important than a science lesson.
- Art projects are generally chosen to foster creativity, allow children to experiment with different materials, give children a chance to make choices and develop fine motor skills (strengthen the muscles of the hand and wrist used for writing and drawing). For example, a child may develop fine motor skills by dropping paint with an eye dropper, cutting paper, molding clay, using a paper punch, or rolling paint with a brayer. Usually the projects are process-oriented not product-oriented; the project can be completed in many ways and the experience of doing is more important than the end result. Children are encouraged to complete the project in their own way.

Easel Painting

- **What Parents Need to Know:**

- An easel is available for large paintings in the corner of the little room.
- Encourage children to paint the paper only!
- An adult may need to write the child's name on the top corner of the paper.
- There are paint shirts for the children to wear while painting.
- Use one brush at a time. If children want to mix colors, they should be encouraged to blend colors on the paper rather than pour them together in jars. Help children learn to put each brush back in the appropriate jar.
- Hang the painting to dry on the rack in the hall.

- **What Children Can Learn:**

- A child paints for the fun of using the bright, flowing colors. This activity promotes creativity, fine motor development, hand-eye coordination, and color recognition.

Water/Sensory Table

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - There are a variety of objects for use only at these tables. Children are encouraged to keep the materials in the tables.
 - When playing at the water table, children wear a waterproof apron and push up their sleeves. Towels are provided for drying hands and minor spills.
- **What Children can Learn:**
 - Teachers plan for sensory play as a regular activity for children because of its value in development. The materials used are relaxing and satisfying, thus encouraging the children to experiment with them in many ways.
 - They might compare, sort, or count items; pour, dump, or fill a container; estimate or predict amounts; experiment with sinking and floating; and learn descriptive words for their sensory experiences (e.g., "This feels slippery and that is soft.").

Playdough Table

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - Except for special activities, play dough should be used only at the dough table. There are several tools available to use with the play dough. Cooperative play is encouraged, but children should not be permitted to interfere with other children's use of play dough.
 - Throwing play dough is not permitted.
- **What Children Can Learn:**
 - Older children will sometimes make things such as cookies, cakes, balls, snakes, etc., but usually just manipulating the play dough will be a pleasurable learning experience.
 - Play dough provides opportunities for pretend play, development of social skills, fine motor development, and emotional development.
 - Sometimes, children who are angry or upset are encouraged to use the play dough (or water table or easel) to help them express their feelings.

Writing Table

- **What Parents Needs to Know:**
 - A variety of items will be available for use such as scissors, markers, tape, staplers, paper, envelopes, and stickers. These items are for creative projects of the child's own choice. Items may be used only at the writing center and in an appropriate manner (e.g., children may not draw on the table).
 - Name cards are available for children who want to practice name writing.
 - Children should be instructed to hold scissors properly and cut away from their body.
- **What Children Can Learn:**
 - Besides strengthening fine motor skills, the writing center encourages creativity, pre-reading, and writing activities and interests. The writing center sometimes becomes a social activity as children make cards or pictures for preschool friends and family members.
 - Children are asked to put work in their lockers when they are finished.

Math and Manipulatives

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - After using an item, children can be expected to help put it away. Sometimes, they will need help in completing a puzzle or gathering all the pieces.
 - Items can be placed in any available section of the shelf.

- In many cases, children are not required to share the materials they have chosen, but adults can help children express themselves and problem solve, if needed.

- **What Children can Learn:**

- Social skills can be practiced (turn taking, problem solving, etc). Materials for the shelves are chosen carefully and have different uses (e.g., letter or number recognition, color or shape recognition, cooperative play, fine motor development, discrimination, counting, sorting, pretending, and spatial relations).

Reading Area

- **What Parents Need to Know:**

- There are pillows, child-sized furniture, and bookcases with materials for reading and listening.

- **What Children Can Learn:**

- Books stimulate children's imagination and help them understand how language (words) can be used. The reading corner can be helpful when children want some quiet time. Reading with an adult is also helpful when a child is shy, anxious, or sad.

Small Unit Blocks

- **What Parents Need to Know:**

- Builders need encouragement; show interest in what they are doing.
- Towers and buildings can be built as high as a child's chin. Help them with suggestions as needed to make buildings stable if they are in danger of toppling over and hurting children.
- Blocks are to build with and are not to be used as weapons or thrown about the room. Children who continue to misuse them should be helped to find something else to do.
- Children can be expected to help put blocks away, although adult help will be needed. Blocks should be put down carefully rather than dropped. Blocks should be returned to the shelf and arranged according to size. Adults may need to help children negotiate with each other and problem solve.

- **What Children Can Learn:**

- Block play can help children develop beginning math concepts like more, less, bigger, smaller, stable, taller, and shorter, etc. Children can also practice language and social skills when they work together.

Large Blocks(Hollow Blocks, Large Styrofoam)

- **What Parents Need to Know:**

- There are large wooden blocks available in the Big Room for use in construction.
- No structure should be higher than a child's chin.
- Blocks stacked more than two high cannot be used for stepping or climbing.
- Adults should supervise construction so that the structures are stable.
- Blocks should not be thrown or dropped, but should be set down carefully.
- When in high demand, there will be a limit on how many blocks each child can have. Sheets and blankets can be used to enhance the structures.
- At clean up time, at least one adult should remain near the blocks to monitor safety.

- **What Children Can Learn:**

- The wooden blocks stimulate social development, early math concepts (see small block section), pretending, and large motor development.

Dramatic Play

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - There are several outfits and props that are available to assist children in developing their dramatic play. Safety and creativity are the primary guidelines in the use of these items. Once a child is done with an item, it should be returned to the shelves or hooks.
- **What Children Can Learn:**
 - Dramatic play describes a play activity in which children pretend about things which have happened to them or which they have noticed in the activities of other people. In this kind of play, children seem to “try out” what it is like to be other people, such as the doctor, the pilot, the road builder, the firefighter, the baby, father or mother. As children pretend about hospitals, family life, railroad stations, etc., they are trying to understand the world they live in.

Trikes

- **What Parents Need to Know:**
 - The long hallway is used for tricycle riding.
 - Two trips down the hall and back complete a turn.
 - To ensure safety, the doors at the end of the hall must be completely closed and children are not allowed to “race” each other.
 - A list is kept at the doorway to keep track of turns. Children are encouraged to write their own name on the list. The adults are encouraged to remind the children when it is their turn, so that children can play elsewhere while waiting and do not have to wait in line.
 - Children must stay on the carpet (not in the hallway) until it is their turn.
 - Riders must keep their feet on the pedals and must stop in the hallway (not on the carpet).
 - Children may need instruction about pedaling and steering.
- **What Children Can Learn:**
 - Children enjoy the road-like feeling of this area, and it’s great for large motor development.

Clean-up Time 10:10-10:15

Everyone is expected to help pick up the items from Free Play time. There are always plenty of ways a child can assist with cleanup. There will be large wooden blocks to stack beneath the windows, sand toys to empty and put on the shelf, water toys to put in the tub, dress-up clothes and props to put on the shelf, etc. Rather than asking a child if they would like to help with clean up, give them a choice of cleanup tasks.

Small Group Activities (might be offered during free choice time)

What Parents Need to Know:

After the children have learned the classroom routines and developed some capacity for listening as a group, small group time will be integrated into the schedule. This is usually 2-3 weeks after the school year starts. Occasionally, small group time is skipped on a given day due to time constraints.

What Children Can Learn:

Small group is a time for developing cognitive and motor skills related to pre-literacy, early math and early science. Activities will be developmentally appropriate and may involve cutting; drawing; storytelling; color, letter, or number recognition; memory; counting; one-to-one correspondence; patterning; sorting, etc. Activities may take the form of games or experiments. Small group time is relatively brief as it can be difficult for children to sit and concentrate for longer periods.

Circle Time: 10:15-10:30

What parents need to know:

Parent volunteers are invited to join and participate in circle time. Calendar, weather time, singing and storytime take place during circle time.

What Children Can learn:

These are social skills that are especially helpful in kindergarten: listening and participating in a group, self-control, and turn taking. The songs and fingerplays often involve rhyme, rhythm, letter sounds, and other elements important for literacy. Children are able to practice language skills, listening skills, turn taking, decision making and speaking in front of others.

Story time has many benefits for children. They can learn how language is used (pre-literacy skill), learn how to take cues from pictures, work on letter and word recognition, predict the endings of stories, learn about parts of a book and parts of a story, expand their imagination and knowledge base, practice listening skills and have fun.

Prepare to Walk to Playground 10:30**What Parents Need to Know:**

Children will leave the big room and go to lockers to get ready to go outside. Late fall, winter and early spring some children will need help dressing to go outside. We encourage children to try to put on snow pants, boots, coats, etc by themselves and encourage them to ask for help if needed. Zippers are hard for many children and we usually tell the children "I will start the zipper and you can finish it"

As children finish getting ready, they will wait along the north wall of the south hallway. If ½ the group is ready and waiting, 1 teacher may start outside with that group. Teachers might sign songs and fingerplays with children waiting in the hallway.

One teacher will lead the group with the children following behind. Children walk single file on the north side of the hall. Handrails will be used on the steps. A teacher or adult volunteer will be the last in the line.

What Children Can Learn:

Children learn responsibility for their own items and belongings.

Outdoor Play 10:45-11:45**What Parents Need to Know:**

Please dress your child for the weather! Rainboots and raincoats for rainy days, snow pants, snow boots, mittens for winter/snowy days. We will go outside every morning unless it is below 15 degrees in winter or there are thunderstorms in the area.

When leaving with your child, be sure to say goodbye to one of the teachers. Adults should not open exterior doors for children who are not with an adult. Parents are asked to watch carefully when leaving, so that an unaccompanied child does not follow them.

In the event that outdoor play is not possible, structured large motor play will typically be substituted. The teachers may lead the children in a game or a parachute activity for example.

What Children Can Learn:

Outdoor or other large motor play is vital for children's development. They can strengthen muscles, use their imaginations, develop healthy habits, expend energy, practice controlling their bodies and develop social skills.

Occasionally, slight variations to the schedule and procedures will be made. Teachers will communicate these changes to parents during their volunteer day.

Guidelines for Working in the Classroom

General Suggestions for Interacting with the Children

- Be friendly and accessible to the children. Learn and use their names (not nicknames). Seek to establish a rapport with the children, which says, "I think you can manage the situation, but I am here if you need me."
- Use your voice as a teaching tool.
 - Be quiet in manner and tone. Do not call across the room, but go to the child. Speak quietly.
 - Many times what you say is more effective if you sit or kneel down so you are at eye level with the child.
 - Speech conveys feelings as well as ideas. Try to use a pleasant confident tone.
 - Tell the children what you like about what they do.
- Think about the words you use.
 - When giving directions use as few words as possible. Make them specific. Be sure you have the child's attention.
 - State directions in a positive rather than a negative form. "We paint on paper," rather than "Don't paint on the easel." Or, "Ride around Carol, John," rather than "Don't bump into Carol, John."
 - Give a child a choice when there is a legitimate choice for them to make. Say, "It is cleanup time now. Do you want to clean up the sand table or put away big blocks?" rather than, "Do you want to clean up now?"
 - Praise should be consistently given for a definite type of behavior. Avoid using shame or blame, or giving a sense of guilt.
- Encourage the child to be independent in taking care of themselves and in their play.
 - Give them time to do things for themselves, to work out solutions to their own problems. Sometimes a few questions will start them thinking about the situation.
 - The pace of play is often fast, but shifting activities is slow. Patience and calmness avoids confusion.
 - Ask children before touching them or helping them. "You look sad. Do you want to sit on my lap and look at a book?" Or, "It looks like you are having trouble with your coat. Can I start the zipper for you?"
- When children's behavior is not acceptable:
 - Redirect rather than suppress. Suggest a socially acceptable way to help him/her work out his/her feelings, such as "I'd like you to pound the clay." Redirection is most effective when you suggest something that meets the need they are expressing in their behavior.
 - Accept the child's feelings as expressed through their behavior. Acceptance does not necessarily mean approval. Help children learn to identify their feelings.
 - Show disapproval of a child's action, but never of the child himself. "This is not a good thing to do," is much better than, "Nice children don't do that."
 - It is expected that children may test limits. Explaining the limits and giving good reasons help them to accept it. Limits should be clearly defined and consistently maintained.
 - When a child has destroyed something or hurt themselves, let them know you still like them even though you disapprove of their actions. Talk about what they can do differently the next time they are faced with this situation.
 - Telling a child they are a "big kid" or they are "too big" for such behavior is neither flattering nor constructive. Do not put a premium on being big since growth is a process, not a goal.

- In some situations, an adult must intervene quickly:
 - When children are hitting, kicking, or scratching others: “I can’t let you kick (child’s name). I won’t let you hurt them and I won’t let (child’s name) hurt you.” Help them identify their feelings (“You look angry. Are you angry?”). Encourage both children to express their feelings and to listen (“Did you like it when Suzy hit you? How did you feel?”). Talk about what they can do next time they have these feelings (e.g., “Use your words.” “Ask for a turn.” “Get an adult to help you.”). Sometimes children need to engage in some quiet activities in the little room to help them calm down. Remember that sometimes children are reacting out of fatigue, frustration, or even hunger; they may be having a rough time because of how their morning started before they even got to preschool.
 - When children are running around knocking down things and people, intervene quickly. “You must use your walking feet at preschool. It’s not safe to knock down the blocks.” Talk to the child about their feelings. Sometimes this behavior is a result of frustration about a play situation. Sometimes children want to enter play with others, but they don’t know how. A child may need to go to the little room for some quiet play. You may need to interest them in water play, play dough, etc. Sitting down with them and getting involved yourself may help.
- Help children problem solve in disputes over toys. Help each child express his/her feelings and wants.
 - Ask the children to think of solutions. The classroom timer is a great tool for turn taking (“How many minutes do you need to play with the pink purse?”). Often problem solving is a lengthy process, but it is very valuable. Sometimes, all they really need is to express themselves and to be heard.
- Help children learn play skills and assertiveness
 - Children don’t always want to join in. Recognize “watching” as a beginning form of participating. “If you want to watch for a while, that’s o.k. If you want help, I’ll be right here.”
 - Help a lone child enter play by helping them talk to children they want to play with. Model appropriate words and behaviors.
 - If a child consistently “gives in” to others during problem solving and other social interactions, help him/her learn assertiveness by modeling words for them to say or by stopping activity and asking other children to listen.
 - Sometimes sharing is appropriate, but children should not be made to feel they must always share. For example, if a child builds a structure with the big blocks, s/he may certainly want to have some control over how the structure is used. This is part of learning assertiveness. Talk to the builder about what s/he wants. If the builder doesn’t want others to use or change it, other children can be encouraged to build their own structures. On the other hand, if the builder is using all the blocks or all the space, s/he may have to decide whether to allow others in or to give up some blocks/space. Sometimes, the builder simply wants some control (“They have to knock before they come in.” or “I don’t want them to say it is a house—it is a cave!”) or wants to protect something they worked hard on (“I don’t want them to knock it down.”).
 - If children are excluding other children (“No girls allowed.” or “Sam can’t play with us.”), use the problem-solving model. We do not want children to feel excluded.
- Some games are not appropriate or safe at preschool:
 - Please do not play “hide and seek” at preschool. Explain to the children that the adults always need to know where each child is.
 - Avoid situations that encourage competition and comparison. It is inappropriate to encourage children to race with the trikes or to paint the “best” picture. Research suggests that placing children in competitive situations prior to third grade may be too challenging to their self-esteem.

- Maintain a calm, interested presence
 - It is generally settling to the children to have the adults settle. Sit down on the floor or a low chair near or with a group of children.
 - You needn't feel you must constantly be "doing something" to be useful. If you are not directly involved with the children, you can learn a great deal by observing and listening to them. Do not use your time visiting with other adults in the group.
 - Try to avoid rapidly moving from place to place unless you are attending an emergency situation. If adults are relaxed, children are apt to be also.
- Try to keep in mind that your responsibility does extend beyond the few you are with. Be aware of what is going on in the rest of the room or playground so you can help with an emergency if needed. An occasional head count helps keep track of children.
- Children are sometimes tempted to put materials in their mouths or on their lips (especially pretend food or dishes). Remind them to pretend only. Give the item to a teacher, so it can be cleaned.
- If materials or equipment are in need of repair, notify a teacher.
- Consult lead teacher about procedures if you have any doubts. For the children's sake, there should be consistency in what the adults do.

Arrival and Dismissal at Preschool

Before Preschool

- **School closings** If it is announced that the Ames Public Schools are closed or delayed due to severe weather, Adventures Preschool will also close. Adventures Preschool WILL NOT be announced. If you are unsure, you can call, text or email Jill. Note: You are always encouraged to use your own judgment regarding road conditions; you may choose not to come to preschool or to leave early even if school is not closed.
- **Please call preschool if your child will be absent or late.** We (teachers and children) wonder and worry about children who are absent. You can leave a message on the answering machine if we have not arrived yet.
- **Dress for comfort and active play (children and parent helpers).** Things sometimes get messy (e.g., paint, juice, glue, sand, mud). Often there are opportunities for climbing, crawling, etc. Children are trying to be independent in the bathroom. It may be distressful if special clothes get dirty, clothing restricts play, or clothing is too difficult to manage alone.
- **Dress for the weather.** In the fall and spring, it can be warm outside, so dress accordingly. In the winter dressing in layers may be most comfortable. Please send mittens, boots, snow pants and coats or snowsuit when winter arrives. Remember that children are working on being independent; you can help by practicing at home and supplying them with somewhat roomy outerwear. LABEL ALL BELONGINGS.
- **Change of clothing.** Please bring a change of clothing for your child (including socks and underwear) and place in the box labeled with their name above their locker in the coatroom. Please label clothing with child's name and be sure to show the clothing to your child so they will recognize it if they ever need to use it. We've had children get upset because they think they are wearing someone else's clothing. Also, please exchange the clothing in the box as the seasons change.

Parking

- **Remember the parking lot is one-way.** Enter from Hayward Avenue and exit onto Lincoln Way.

- **Park only in the parking spaces facing the church.** This prevents children from having to cross the busy parking lot.
- **We are not allowed to park in the upper parking lot!** CUMC/WF has rented out ALL parking spaces and we are required to park in the lower parking lot
- **Keep your children with you in the parking lot and on the stairs.** Watch for unaccompanied children and direct them to their parent/driver. Do not open the outside door for unaccompanied children. Please close the outside door and hall door (at the top of the stairs).

Arrival

- **Bring a backpack.** Often children will have artwork, leftover snacks, notes, etc., to bring home. Don't forget to check your child's backpack regularly—those snacks don't look too appetizing after a few days!
- **Remind children to walk down the hallway and to stay with you.** It is tempting to run but easy to slip and fall. If you need to, you can say "Jill says you must walk in the hallway."
- **Please try to arrive in the preschool rooms between 8:30 and 8:45a.m.** When children arrive too early, the teachers lose important preparation time. When children arrive too late, the children miss some of their valuable preschool time.
- **Help your child with the routine.** Assist your child in hanging up his/her coat, backpack, etc, using bathroom, washing hands, etc.
- **Check the bulletin board and whiteboard for current information.** If you carpool, please relay messages and other important information to your carpool.
- **Check lockers at each arrival time.**
- **On your volunteer date,** please arrive by 8:30 a.m. and check for your responsibilities. The teachers will explain your duties and answer questions.
- **Children will be greeted by a teacher each day.** This gives the teachers the chance to say good morning or hello to each child.

Saying Goodbye to Your Child

- **A good morning at preschool begins long before you and your child arrive.** Try to establish morning routines at home that are not rushed. Try to make sure that your child has enough sleep and eats breakfast. Let the teachers know if something happened during the night or in the morning that was distressful. Sometimes children need extra support on those days.
- **Establish routines at preschool, beginning with hanging up backpacks, putting on name tags and moving the name magnet.** Encourage your child to do as much as they can for themselves. If your child is still working on being independent or consistent in the bathroom, please take your child to the bathroom before coming into the Little Room.
- **Separation Anxiety:** If your child has anxiety about separating from you, we can work together to ease the transition. Begin to notice the things that your child likes best. These things may be comforting to him/her when you are leaving. Sensory play things are often good choices (e.g., sensory table, play dough). Talk to your child about what you will do and then stick with that plan. For example, "We will read one book together each morning before I leave." This will help your child know what to expect from you. Remind your child that you will return at the end of the morning ("I will come and get you from the playground today."). and give them the message that they can do it. Once you have said goodbye, leave. Let the teachers know if you need help. Sometimes children cry and cling to parents. We will help by gently talking to your child and trying to distract them with activities after you say goodbye. At this stage, it is common for children to be upset at your departure; however, they usually stop crying before you get to the end of the hallway. Please refrain from coming back and peeking in—your child will probably see you. This may encourage them to watch the door for you or even to

run down the hall in search of you. If your child does not stop crying, we will call you to let you know. We will brainstorm solutions if needed. You are always welcome to call us if you are wondering how your child is doing.

- **Always say goodbye.** Be sure you have your child's attention when you tell them you are leaving. Children with separation anxiety will have difficulty developing trust if you sneak out while they are playing; they will not want to take their eyes off you next time. It is better to comfort their distress today than to try to rebuild trust tomorrow. Even children who are comfortable at preschool often like to say goodbye and get a hug.

Dismissal

- **We will spend up to an hour outside each morning.** Each day we post on the whiteboard our plans for outside play. When we go outside, we try to get everything out of the lockers and into backpacks. The children will wear their backpacks to the playground. Please pick up your child from the playground.
- **We will make every effort to dismiss at 11:45.** If you arrive early, please resist the temptation to peek in and see how we are doing. The children are very observant and easily distracted. Please wait in the south hallway for your child. We want the children to put their name tag away and check their cubby for artwork or writing center projects. Also, when they know you are outside the door, some children become worried that you will not wait for them. Please let the teachers know if you need to pick your child up early.
- **Say goodbye to one of the teachers when you leave.** This is a safety measure and helps us keep track of children.
- **If someone else will pick up for you:**
 - Make sure they are on the pick-up permission form
 - Tell one of the teachers in the morning at drop-off time
 - Remind the person who is picking up to say goodbye
 - If it is the first time they are picking up your child, a photo id is required to be shown before we will release your child.

Parents with custody issues are asked to inform teachers of potential problems relevant to preschool. Parents are reminded that Iowa law protects a parent's unlimited access to their child unless parental contact is prohibited by a court order. If such a court order exists, a copy must be retained in the child's file.

Health and Safety Policies

Transportation

Daily transportation of a child to and from preschool is the sole responsibility of that child's parent. Parents may arrange carpools by talking with other interested parents.

Parents transporting children for a field trip must possess a valid driver's license and carry liability insurance.

Snacks

Children are provided with a snack and water during preschool hours. The snack is usually prepared by the children during free play time. Children and adults wash hands prior to handling food. Children will use their own waterbottles during snack. Water bottles are washed everyday. Children may drink water at any time. Food is stored in plastic containers and/or refrigerator or freezer at the preschool.

No nuts (or nut products) are allowed in snacks or treats due to possible allergy issues. If your child has a food sensitivity or allergy, please inform the teachers immediately.

As dishes used during snack are washed in a dishwasher at CUMC/WF.

Health Records

Upon admission, parents are required to provide their child's immunization certificate and a report of their child's most recent physical examination. The exam must have been done within 12 months of the start of enrollment. Children must have a physical exam every 12 months and provide a new physical exam report at that time. Please request a physical form be completed at the time of your child's appointment. Immunizations must be up-to-date. Immunization certificates are provided by the physician.

Student Records

Student records are reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure best practice standards are kept.

Health Care Provider Information

Upon admission, parents are required to complete the Emergency Medical Information and Consent Form. In doing so, parents identify their child's physician, dentist and hospital to be used in the case of an emergency. In completing the form, the parents also give consent for the teachers to obtain emergency care as needed. A copy of the Emergency Medical Information and Consent Form is taken along on field trips and the original kept in the child's file in the classroom.

Allergies

No nuts are allowed in the classroom in any form (including peanut butter). Parents of children with allergies should inform teachers.

Medications

Unless medications are required due to a life-threatening allergy, no medications are stored or administered at preschool.

Illness

We follow guidelines established by the Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa Department of Human Services for common childhood diseases and exclusions. A child will be temporarily excluded from an education or child care setting when the child's illness causes one or more of the following:

- prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities
- a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- an acute change in behavior: lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a quickly spreading rash.
- Fever with behavior change or other signs and symptoms in a child older than 2 months(e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea)
- a child with a temperature elevated above normal is not necessarily an indication of a significant health problem. A fever is defined as:
 - for an infant or child other than 2 months, a fever is a temperature that is above 101 degrees F
 - for infants younger than 2 months of age a fever is a temperature above 100.4 degree F by any method
 - Temperature readings do not require adjustment for the location where the temperature is taken.

The guidance for specific illnesses is included at the end of the parent handbook.

Infectious Disease Control

Teachers are trained in universal precautions (infectious disease control). The teachers will use gloves when treating children with blood or body fluids and will use proper disposal and cleanup procedures. If a child contracts a contagious illness, parents are asked to inform the teachers. Teachers will post information on the whiteboard regarding children's possible exposure to a contagious illness at preschool. All adults and children

will use proper handwashing procedures. Adults and children will wash their hands upon arrival, before food preparation, before eating, after using the toilet, and after helping to feed the fish. Children will be asked to wash their hands if they put their fingers in their mouths or noses. Adults will remind children to use a tissue if they need to blow their nose.

Handwashing Procedures for Children and Adults

- Wet hands under the stream of water
- Pump one squirt of soap into the palm of the hand
- Make bubbles on hands by rubbing the soap on the fronts and backs of hands and between fingers
- Rinse all the bubbles off hands using running water
- Dry off their hands with a length of paper towel provided by three pulls on the handle of the dispenser.

Injury

If a child is injured at preschool, the teachers will inform the child's parents immediately. (If the injury is very minor, the parents will be notified at the end of the morning.) Emergency care will be initiated if needed. A written report will be made. One copy of the report will be placed in the child's file and another copy given to the parent.

The teachers maintain first aid and CPR certifications. A first aid kit is located in the cupboard under the black shelf. Another kit is located in a backpack in the kitchenette and is taken on field trips and to the outdoor classroom.

Biting

Biting is a very common behavior among young children, especially those ages 0-3 years. Biting is a form of communication, as biting is almost always a response to the child's needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stress. Understanding the developmental stages of the children and their individual needs can prevent biting behaviors.

When a child bites we will:

- Ensure all children are safe.
- Focus on the child who was bitten and show concern and support for that child.
- Administer first aid immediately by washing the area with soap and water. If necessary an ice pack will be applied as well as a bandage for an open wound.
- Talk with the child who bit about the different strategies s/he can use the next time rather than biting.
- Relay a confidential injury report to the parents of the bitten child as well as the parents of the biting child. Children will not be identified on the injury report. A copy of the injury report will be kept in the child's file at preschool.

Smoking and Intoxication

Smoking is not allowed in or near the classroom. Intoxication is not allowed. Anyone who is intoxicated will be asked to leave the classroom area immediately. If the person is unwilling to leave, a teacher will call the police. If a parent appears to be intoxicated at pick-up time, a teacher will talk with the parent; the other teacher and volunteers will take the children into the classroom. The intoxicated parent will be strongly encouraged to allow another designated person to transport his/her child and/or to allow the teacher to call a friend or relative to assist the parent. The law does not allow the teachers to prevent an intoxicated parent from taking their own child. If a parent insists on transporting the child, staff will call 9-1-1 and report the incident to the Iowa Department of Human Services.

Unauthorized Access to Children

Children are supervised in the classroom and hallways by teachers and classroom volunteers who have been cleared through a background check and fingerprinting process. CUMC/WF has installed security systems which include: security cameras in hallways on the 1st floor, south hallway of the 2nd floor and near the

student lounge at the north end of the 2nd floor and secure, locked doors at all building entrances and the doors at the top of stairs to 2nd floor. The south door is the main preschool entrance and the door is locked 24 hours a day except from 8:30-9:00 Monday-Friday for preschool drop-off. The west (main entrance to church) door is unlocked 8:00AM-10:00PM every day, but all other doors and hallways are locked. You will not be able to access the preschool classrooms from the west entrance.

Emergency Procedures for Specific Events

Power Failure

No power at CUMC before preschool opens

If CUMC loses power before preschool opens, church staff will contact the preschool director to notify of the situation. The preschool director and assistant teacher will notify families via email and phone calls.

Power Failure during preschool hours (8:45AM-11:45AM)

CUMC/WF main office will be notified in event of power failure. The City of Ames will be notified. Due to the number of windows in our classroom, power failure may not require evacuation of classrooms. If power failure disrupts normal preschool routine (not able to prepare snack or not enough natural light in classrooms), preschool will be canceled. The preschool director and preschool board president will notify parents via email and phone calls.

Utilities Emergency

Water

If there is no water at CUMC/WF due to a water main break, emergency maintenance by City of Ames, or a natural disaster such as flooding, preschool will be canceled. If the water shutoff occurs during preschool hours, the director and preschool board president will call parents for immediate pick-up of children

Boiler Malfunction

If the boiler is not operating properly and the preschool classrooms are too cold, preschool will be canceled. If the director is notified before preschool that there is no heat in the preschool classrooms, parents will be notified via email and phone calls. If a decision is made to dismiss preschool early due to a malfunction of the boiler, the director and preschool board president will contact parents via phone calls.

Gas Leak

If gas is detected or Adventures or CUMC/WF staff are notified about a gas leak, we will evacuate classrooms and building. Do not turn any electrical switches on or off. Do not use any telephones (landline or cell) or anything that could cause a spark while in the building.

Initial evacuation site will be The Annex at 159 Sheldon Ave. Using monthly attendance sheet, we will verify that all children are in attendance. CUMC/WF staff will report a gas leak or the smell of gas by notifying 911 and the gas company. Parents will be notified about evacuation and our location for pick-up of children. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called.

Severe Weather Emergency

Blizzards, Ice, Fog

If Ames Community Schools delay or cancel school due to severe weather, Adventures Preschool will also close. Parents are encouraged to watch local TV stations to check for Ames Community Schools delay or cancellation notices.

If preschool is already in session and we need to dismiss due to deteriorating weather conditions, parents will be contacted by the preschool director and the preschool board president and/or preschool board

vice-president.

Occasionally, Adventures Preschool may choose to close preschool even if Ames Community Schools do not delay or cancel due to inclement weather. If this occurs, parents will be notified via email and phone calls. The director and assistant teacher will call parents. The director and assistant teacher have copies of parent contact numbers and emails in case school closes.

If preschool closes early and parents cannot be reached via phone, emergency contacts will be called. Parents are always encouraged to use their own judgment regarding weather and road conditions. Parents may choose not to come to preschool or to leave early even if preschool is not closed.

Tornado Warning or High Wind Warning

If notified by NWS via weather radio or sirens operated by the City of Ames, we will evacuate to Room 44 in the basement of CUMC. We will remain in Room 44 until the warning has expired.

If the building sustains damage we will remain in Room 44 until notified by church staff and building superintendent that it is safe to leave Room 44. If necessary, we will evacuate the building and walk either to the playground or The Annex at 159 Sheldon Ave.

Parents will be contacted and notified of our location. Copies of children's emergency contact forms are located in the first aid/emergency backpack that we take when we leave the classroom.

Flooding

Due to our location in the building (2nd floor) and the location of CUMC/WF, flooding would most likely not directly affect the building. However, areas in Ames, including major streets across town, have flooded in recent years. If Ames Community Schools cancel due to flooding, Adventures Preschool will also be canceled.

Extreme Heat

Adventures Preschool classrooms are air-conditioned and it is unlikely extreme heat will cause preschool to close. In the case of extreme heat, outdoor classroom time will be canceled or shortened.

Earthquake

During shaking, we will reassure children and stay calm. If indoors take cover under tables. Cover head and neck and help cover young children. We will stay away from walls with windows and watch for falling debris. If outdoors, we will stay. Move away from the building and avoid being under trees, near fences, power poles and under overhead wires. After the shaking stops, evacuate the building with a first aid/emergency backpack. Do not turn any electrical switches on or off. Verify all children and adults are accounted for using name-to-face counting and monthly attendance sheets.

If CUMC has sustained structural damage, preschool will be canceled and parents called for immediate pick-up. If there is no structural damage at CUMC/WF and the building superintendent okays our return, we will return to the classrooms and resume our normal schedule.

Emergency Events

Fire

If smoke detectors in either preschool classrooms are activated or we are notified by CUMC staff or building superintendent of smoke or fire in another part of the building, the director, assistant teacher, parent volunteers and children will immediately evacuate the classrooms. The director/lead teacher will take the first aid/emergency backpack, monthly attendance sheet and cell phone. Primary evacuation route is the south hallway/stairs. If the south hallway/stairs is not safe, the north hallway/stairs will be used as evacuation route.

Initial evacuation site is the playground, located west of CUMC.

When all staff, parent volunteers and children arrive on playground, children will be accounted for using the monthly attendance sheet. The director will call 911, and the assistant teacher will notify CUMC staff office of the emergency. If instructed by Ames Fire Department, we will evacuate to our in-neighborhood evacuation site at The Annex, 159 Sheldon Ave. At that time, parents will be called to immediately pick up children at The Annex. If the Ames Fire Department allows the children to remain on the playground, parents will be notified for immediate pick-up of children.

Chemical Spills Environmental or Outdoor

Upon notification from the City of Ames or CUMC staff or if adults notice an unusual odor while outdoors, we will return to the classroom. All doors and windows will be immediately closed. Situation will be monitored until dismissal time, calling parents for early pick-up if necessary.

Indoor Chemical Spill

If notified by CUMC staff or building superintendent that evacuation is necessary, we will walk to our in-neighborhood evacuation site, The Annex, 159 Sheldon Ave. The director will bring the first-aid/emergency backpack and cell phone. Once at The Annex, parents will be notified by the director and preschool board president for immediate pick-up.

Bomb Threat

If a teacher or parent volunteer receives a bomb threat or locates a suspicious package, we will evacuate the classrooms and building. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO MOVE A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE. Upon arrival at the in-neighborhood evacuation site, The Annex, director will call CUMC staff and 911. If we are unable to re-enter the building in a timely manner, preschool will be canceled and parents will be notified.

Disgruntled Parent

Try to guide the parent to a private location or area in the building. The other classrooms on the 2nd floor of CUMC are not used during the week and can be used to talk to the parent. Listen calmly to the parent's concerns without promising anything that does not follow preschool policy and procedures. If the parent becomes more upset, be prepared to call 911.

Impaired Parent

Offer to call the other parent or another parent authorized to pick up the child. If the parent refuses to allow another person to pick up the child, you cannot prevent the parent from taking the child. Call 911. Report the vehicle make, model and license plate as best as possible. The assistant teacher and parent volunteers will continue to supervise and engage other children in the class.

Violent Intruder

Call 911. Remain calm and be polite. Try to keep the intruder away from as many children and adults as possible. If the intruder goes into a room with children, try to draw him/her into the least utilized area of the room. While the director is engaging the intruder, the assistant teacher and parent volunteers should evacuate the children if it is safe. The assistant teacher and parent volunteer should walk with the children to CUMC Room 44. Due to the arrangement of our classrooms, the assistant teacher and parent volunteers should be able to move the children out of one of the classroom doors and into either the south or north hallway and down the stairs. No one should physically restrain or block the intruder's movement. If the intruder chooses to leave the building, allow them to exit. Note the direction the intruder leaves the building. Once Ames Police arrive they will assume charge of the situation. If the decision is made to evacuate, gather children and first aid/emergency backpack and walk to The Annex at 159 Sheldon Ave. The director and preschool board president will contact parents to notify them of our location for immediate pick-up.

Active Shooter

Use ALICE when responding to an active shooter situation.

Alert - Inform assistant teacher, parent volunteers, CUMC office staff and building superintendent when you recognize signs of danger.

Lockdown - If evacuation out of the building is not an option, we will implement the lockdown procedures. If we are unable to move to Room 211, the middle school/high school youth room, we will move to the Big Room, along the wall, away from the classroom door. Doors will be locked and lights turned off. Try to keep everyone as quiet as possible and do not open the door. If possible, put items in front of the door to create a semi-secure barrier.

Inform - Call 911. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher as long as it is safe to do so, even if you cannot talk to the dispatcher. Do not hang up.

Counter - This is a strategy of last resort when you are in the same area as the shooter. Actions that create noise, movement, distance and distraction to potentially reduce the shooter's ability to shoot accurately.

Evacuate-When it is safe to do so, evacuate the building and proceed to The Annex, 159 Sheldon Ave. Law enforcement will assume charge of the situation. Notify parents via phone of situation and location of preschool children. Emergency contacts will be called if the director is not able to talk to parents.

Missing or Abducted Child

Anytime a child is unaccounted for, search the premises. Begin search with "big" and "little" classroom, coat room and both bathrooms on the 2nd floor. If the child is not found in any of these rooms, call CUMC office staff to close all exits to the building and to help search for the child. Call 911 and provide information about the child to the dispatcher. Call the child's parents to tell them that the child is missing. Continue to search for the child. The assistant teacher and parent volunteers will supervise the children in the classrooms. Children and adults will stay in the classrooms during the search. Once Ames Police arrive, provide any needed information. Contact DHS child care consultant to inform them of the situation.

Serious Injury or Illness

Follow first aid procedures. Call 911 if appropriate. For an injured or ill child, call the child's parents. For an injured or ill teacher, call the person's emergency contact. If the child must go to the hospital by ambulance and the child's parent has not arrived, determine if the director or assistant teacher will accompany the child when being transported. If the illness or injury does not require immediate medical attention but requires doctor's care, determine who will provide first aid until parents or emergency contact arrives. Document treatments and any action that took place based on the injury or illness. Provide a copy of the child injury/incident form for the parent. Contact DHS child care consultant to report serious injury or illness that occurred at preschool.

Parental Access and Communication

Access

Parent involvement is the key to the success of a cooperative preschool. Parents are welcome to visit Adventures Preschool at any time, without notice. If you would like to observe your child, we ask that you come into the room. If your child sees you in the hall or peeking through the doorway, they may want to leave the classroom. Or they may stop participating so they can watch for your return. We also ask that you remember that your behavior sends a message to your child. If you are reluctant to leave the classroom, your child may feel that the classroom is unsafe or that you think they are not capable.

Communication

Parents are encouraged to contact teachers with relevant information, concerns or questions and to do so in a timely manner. Because teachers need to remain attentive to children, be accessible to other parents, and prepare adequately for the day's activities, parents should consider how much time they need from a teacher

and the degree of privacy they prefer. For brief conversations, parents are welcome to talk to teachers before or after preschool. When more time or privacy is needed, parents are asked to make an appointment with a teacher or talk to a teacher by phone. Parents have the right to view their own child's written records at any time. Each child's records are confidential and will not be shared with another party without parental permission.

Class list

Parents will be provided with a class list. It is for preschool use only. Please do not use it for business purposes.

Lockers

Lockers are located in the hallway outside the little room and in the small room adjacent to the "close"(women's) bathroom. Each child has a locker, labeled with their name and picture. Children may share a locker with a child attending the opposite day she/he attends Adventures. Children are encouraged to use their locker to store anything that will be taken home that day. Teachers put notes and announcements for parents in the lockers and should be checked daily.

Postings and daily announcements

Please check the bulletin board and whiteboard for daily announcements. Upcoming events, volunteer calendar, permission forms and other information may be posted there. A weekly schedule is posted by the door to the Little Room. Whiteboard messages are posted on the private Facebook page nearly every day.

Class lists, lockers and bulletin boards are for preschool use only. Information not related to preschool may not be distributed in the cubbies or posted on the bulletin board. Please consult the teachers before using the lockers or bulletin board.

Information for local events and programs geared towards preschool-age children and families can be posted on the bulletin board or distributed via lockers. The information may be posted on bulletin board or distributed in lockers only if: 1) it is for preschool-aged children and their families and 2) is it approved for distribution by the teachers. This information and/or organizations are not endorsed by the preschool in any way.

Newsletter

The lead teacher prepares a monthly newsletter for preschool parents. The newsletter is distributed via email.

Social Media

Adventures Preschool has a private parent group on Facebook (Adventures Preschool Parents), so we can utilize social media to connect and inform parents outside of the preschool day. This connection may offer online access to preschool information, class contacts, important dates, newsletters, preschool recipes, candid photos from the classroom and daily updates from the whiteboard posted outside the classroom. The wall may be used by parents to participate in community-building activities such as play dates, to swap volunteer days, to ask questions or to post positive comments. All posts must be respectful and constructive. Any posts or comments deemed inappropriate will be removed by the admins. Egregious or repeat offenders may be removed from the group. Classroom volunteers may take photos of the children during the class day and post in our private group only. At no time should photos that are posted in the Adventures Preschool Parent group be copied/posted/shared on your own wall or tagged with anyone's name. This is to protect the safety and privacy of other people's children. Adventures may take photos of approved children to use on our public page and our website for marketing purposes and will adhere to the permissions that have been granted on a per child basis. Each year families not returning will be removed from the group, so at all times the members will be limited to current Adventures families. Only parent and authorized classroom volunteers are invited to join the group. Extended family and friends are not allowed to join the group for privacy purposes. People outside

the Adventures Preschool Parent page will NOT be able to see posts or comments on the wall of this group, even if they are your friends. It is a private group and only members have access to this page. All parents and authorized classroom volunteers will be required to sign the Facebook Policy upon enrollment at Adventures.

Other Information

Picture Book

The pictures taken at home visits along with a child interview are placed in a small photo album. Children will take turns bringing this picture book home throughout the school year. Please read and enjoy it and return it on the next preschool day. This book helps families learn names and become acquainted.

Birthdays at Preschool

We may celebrate birthdays or ½ birthdays during preschool by singing happy birthday to the child. The preschool child is always asked before the group sings happy birthday. Not all children like the attention of the entire group singing and some children may decline the group singing happy birthday. We do not allow food/treats to celebrate birthdays at preschool. Children may hand out small gift(stickers, crayon, paper, etc) but are not required or expected.

Cubbies may not be used to distribute invitations for birthday parties, **unless** all preschool children are being invited.

Record Checks

The Iowa Department of Human Services requires that a criminal background and child abuse and dependent adult abuse check be completed on any parent (or other adult) who will be working in the classroom. Each parent (or other adult) must complete the Request for Non-Law Enforcement Record check form and return the form to preschool. This form will be provided to parents by preschool. The background checks are valid for two years. Families will be assessed a \$15 fee per background check completed during the preschool year.

FBI Fingerprinting

The Iowa Department of Human Services requires that FBI fingerprinting be completed on any adult who will be working in the classroom. Each adult initiates the process by completing a waiver agreement form allowing the fingerprinting to be done, and a fingerprint card. Fingerprinting will be conducted as a group on an evening designated by the board. If an adult is unable to attend, they will be responsible for obtaining their own fingerprints from a police department or other fingerprinting service at their own cost. Completed fingerprint cards must be returned to preschool and will be mailed for processing by preschool staff. Fingerprint checks are valid for four years. At this time there is no fee for fingerprinting that is completed at preschool.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

Section 232.69 of the Iowa Code requires that every employee of a licensed daycare or preschool facility, who in the course of employment reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or denial of critical care, shall immediately notify the Department of Human Services.

Preschool parent volunteers are mandatory reporters during the time that they are working in the classroom. The Iowa Department of Human Services requires that any parent (or other adult) who will be teaching more than two times in a year be informed of their responsibilities as mandatory reporters. Parents are informed of their responsibilities in writing at the time of enrollment.

Section 232.70 of the Iowa Code requires that each report made by a mandatory reporter, as defined in Section 232.69, shall be made both orally and in writing. The oral report must be made by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours of becoming aware of suspected abuse. If the person making the report has reason to believe that immediate protection for the child is advisable, that person shall also make an oral report to an appropriate law enforcement agency. The written report must be made to the Department of Human Services within forty-eight hours after the oral report.

By law, the oral and written reports shall contain the following information, or as much thereof as the person making the report is able to furnish:

- the names and home address of the child and his parents or other persons believed to be responsible for his care;
- the child's present whereabouts if not the same as the parents' or other person's home address;
- the child's age;
- the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries;
- the name, age, and condition of other children in the same home;
- any other information which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of injury to the child, the identity of the person or persons responsible for the injury, or in providing assistance to the child;
- the name and address of the person making the report.

To report child abuse anytime, day or night, call toll-free:

1-800-362-2718

Legal sanctions for failure to report are as follows: Any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to report is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure (Legal Reference 232.75). Any mandatory reporter who in good faith makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of a child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without releases required in other situations. (Legal Reference 232.73).

Further information regarding mandatory reporting can be found in the DHS Handbook for Mandatory Reporters (copy on file at the Preschool) or at www.dhs.state.ia.us/reportingchildabuse.asp.

Goals for preschoolers

Social-Emotional Goals

- Shows ability to adjust to new situations
- Demonstrates appropriate trust in adults
- Recognizes own feelings and manages them appropriately
- Stands up for self
- Demonstrates self-direction and independence
- Takes responsibility for own well-being
- Respects and cares for classroom environment and materials
- Follows classroom rules
- Follows classroom routines
- Plays well with other children
- Recognizes the feelings of others and responds appropriately
- Shares and respects the rights of others
- Uses thinking skills to resolve conflicts

Physical Development

Gross Motor

- Demonstrates basic locomotor skills (running, jumping, hopping, galloping)
- Shows balance while moving
- Climbs up and down
- Pedals and steers a tricycle
- Demonstrates throwing, kicking and catching skills

Fine Motor

- Controls small muscles in hands
- Coordinates eye-hand movement
- Uses tools for drawing and writing

Cognitive Development

- Visually discriminates between colors
- Observes objects and events with curiosity
- Approaches problems flexibly
- Able to recognize own name
- Shows persistence in approaching tasks
- Explores cause and effect
- Classifies objects
- Arranges objects in a series
- Recognizes patterns and can repeat them
- Shows awareness of time concepts and sequence
- Shows awareness of positions in space
- Uses one-to-one correspondence
- Uses numbers and counting
 - Counts orally to 20 (4-year-olds)
 - Counts 10-20 objects and knows the last number stated is the number of objects (4-year-olds)
 - Tells more, less, or same when looking at objects (4-year-olds)
- Takes on pretend roles and situations
- Makes believe with objects

Self-Help Goals

- Able to pour juice, pass snack and cleans-up snack spot
- Takes responsibility for possessions
- Participates in cleaning up materials
- Able to use the bathroom independently
- Recognizes or knows own birthdate
- Beginning to learn home address
- Knows first and last name

Language Development

Listening and Speaking

- Hears and discriminates the sounds of language (rhyming, syllables)
- Names the sounds of 10-20 letters (4-year-olds)
- Expresses self using words and expanded sentences
- Understands and follows oral directions
- Answers questions
- Actively participates in conversations
- Reading and Writing
- Enjoys and values reading
- Demonstrates understanding of print concepts
- Demonstrates knowledge of alphabet
 - Identifies 11-20 lower and upper-case letters (4-year-olds)
- Use emerging reading skills to make meaning from print
- Comprehends and interprets meaning from books and other texts
- Understands the purpose of writing
- Writes letters and words (including first name)