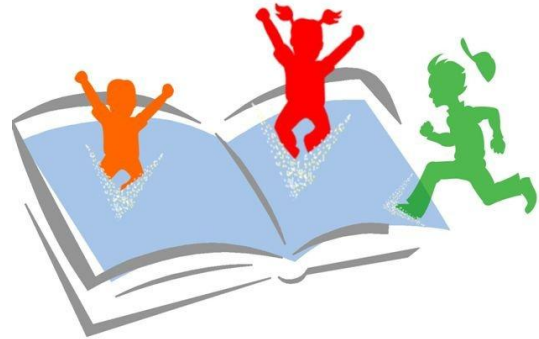


# *Adventures In Learning*

*Preschool, LLC*



## PARENT HANDBOOK

*Caileen Hill*

*7611 Mullen Rd SE*

*Lacey, WA 98503*

*360-481-9214*

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## **CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY**

At Adventures in Learning Preschool our curriculum approach encompasses all areas of your child's development and growth; we understand that every child develops at his or her own pace and therefore are never asked to complete a task that is beyond their level of understanding. We offer children many hands on opportunities to develop in an environment planned with their physical, cognitive, language, social, sensory and emotional needs in mind.

Our curriculum is based on the interests of the children and encompasses all areas of your child's development and growth. Our approach to learning recognizes the individual differences in children, and honors their process and style of learning. The many learning centers in our space, such as housekeeping, block-building area, reading area, math and writing centers, etc. all promote learning and growth. In these various centers children are learning through their play; opportunities with art materials, such as painting, drawing, creating collages, etc. allows children to experience creativity and explore the textures, colors and designs. Language, social and emotional development are integrated into all the centers through interactions with teachers and peers, positive interactions help develop positive self-esteem, which supports learning in all other areas. Teachers work to encourage the children to try new activities, to practice sharing, to solve problems, to participate and cooperate in small and large group activities and to express his/her wants and need with peers and teachers. At Adventures of Learning we believe playing outside offers daily opportunities for scientific discoveries, social experiences and Music and Story Time.

An important aspect of our program is prepare each child for big world of kindergarten, since every child is unique in their learning style and interests we individualize our curriculum, and our instruction to the group, or the individual child, as needed. We collaborate with parents to set goals for children including inclusion of children's with special needs. We are constantly evaluating what children need and how we can support by providing opportunities for them. In order to do this, we use an assessment tool called Teaching Strategies Gold, which aligns with the Washington State Early Learning Guidelines, and help assess the whole child, to include the academic development of your child, to meet their goals. Assessments are performed 3 times a year, and shared with parents at conferences in the Fall and Spring, the end of the year assessments are shared via email after school gets out for summer.

As an educator I value the input of parents, as your child's first teacher, you know your child better than anyone else. Your family is central to your child; this is where they have learned everything that they know up the point that they enter my program. The culture of your family is part of who your child is, so in essence, when your child comes to school your family comes with them. It's important for me to build relationships with families and to learn about your goals and dreams for your child. We want our preschool classroom to be an extension of your family. It is my goal for families to see our relationship as a partnership, and to feel supported by me always.

## **EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE**

My educational background consists of a Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood and Family Studies from University of Washington. I attend a minimum of 10 hours of professional development each year and am required to keep these training certificates make them available to parents upon request. My experience comes from owning and operating a family childcare program since 2004; during which time I taught a preschool program to the children in my care. In 2011 I began exclusively running a part day preschool program, which quickly became a great passion. I absolutely love my work with children and families!

## ADMISSION

Enrollment is open to any child regardless of race, creed, gender, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability or use of trained guide dog or service animal by a disabled person. Upon acceptance of enrollment, AIL requires that a Registration Form, Child Information Form, Certificate of Immunization Status, Emergency Information Sheet, Media Release, the Preschool Contract and a non-refundable registration fee of \$100. **These forms must be on file before the child can be left at Adventures in Learning Preschool.** All forms are kept in individual file folders in file box kept in the preschool space and are kept confidential; parents may request their child's file at any time. If your child receives an updated immunization during the school year please notify me so that it can be added to their immunization form.

## TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition must be paid by 3:30 pm no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, if the 5<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend tuition is due on the Friday before. A \$10 per day fee will be added for late payments, late payments are required to be made via Venmo. If late payments become an ongoing issue I reserve the right to terminate your contract. Refunds are not given when children are not at preschool for any reason.

## PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

8:50 – 9:00	or	12:25 – 12:30	Arrival
9:00 – 9:15	or	12:30 – 12:45	Star of the day
9:15 – 10:00	or	12:45 – 1:30	Recess
10:00 – 10:15	or	1:30 – 1:45	Clean-up and transition inside
10:15 – 10:30	or	1:45 – 2:00	Circle Time
10:30 – 10:40	or	2:00 – 2:10	Hand washing
10:40 – 11:00	or	2:10 – 2:30	Snack
11:00 – 11:40	or	2:30 – 3:10	Choice Time
11:40 – 11:45	or	3:10 – 3:15	Clean-Up Time
11:45 – 11:55	or	3:15 0 3:25	Music and Story Time
11:55 – 12:00	or	3:25 – 3:30	Departure

## BUSINESS PRACTICES

Regular operating hours are Monday through Friday 9:00 – 12:00 and Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 12:30 – 3:30. If you need more than a couple of minutes to chat with me about your child please schedule a time with me for an afterhours meeting, either in person or by phone, you can also call me without a prescheduled time.

The front preschool door has a coded lock to prevent unknown people from entering the school. This code will be given out to parents whose children are enrolled and can be shared with friends, families, nannies, etc. who you entrust to pick up your child. I will change the code as needed and will notify parents immediately when I do so.

Parents are welcome to drop in at any time and may have access to any licensed part of the preschool during business hours.

Because I am licensed through the state myself, and my employees must meet the Washington Administrative Codes for First Aid/CPR, background checks, and on-going child development training. In the event of my absence I will provide a substitute who also meets these requirements. If I do not have a substitute that has met the qualifications I will close for the day. In these incidents where I must

close you will receive a credit for each day your child missed school on the following months tuition payment.

Individuals who have disqualifying or unknown backgrounds, or demonstrate abusive and/or assaultive behavior are prohibited to be on the premises, and will be told to leave immediately. 911 will be called if the individual refuses to leave.

In the event of a power outage I will not open the preschool, or may be forced to close early. The law states that I cannot operate my business if I cannot provide sanitary conditions and since we are on a well and we cannot flush our toilets or wash our hands without power, I am not able to provide those conditions.

Smoking, and the use of drug or alcohol use is prohibited in my home or on my property during preschool hours by parents and staff.

My assistants and I are required by law to report any incidents or suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

My state license is posted. Feel free to contact my licenser with any concerns or comments you may have. Upon request you also have the right to review my licensing inspections and compliance agreements.

## **TRANSITIONS INTO PRESCHOOL**

Transitions in to any program can be hard on children and families, especially when a child has never been in a structured program before; the goal of our program is to make these transitions as smooth as possible. One thing that is really helpful to us when children are transitioning into our program is having all the enrollment paperwork turned in as early as possible. Our Child Information Form is the best source for us to get to know your child and your family as much as possible before actually having them in our care. This form helps us anticipate what your child may need, their areas of strengths and areas that may challenge for them. The form also familiarizes us with your family's customs and culture, which is very helpful for us in getting to know your child.

Once your child starts preschool it is our number one goal to build a trusting relationship with them. We do this through playing together and supporting their needs as they arise. If your child has a hard time transitioning into preschool we will work one on one with you to determine which strategies we could use to help them; some strategies that we have used in the past are:

- Social stories – this is a story written specifically for your child through collaboration between parent and teacher that addresses the child's fear or need, and helps to calm the child.
- Transition idea cards - these cards are activities that your child can do when they get to school, for example, draw a picture, play with dolls, listen to a story on CD, etc. The goal of these cards is that they provide your child with an activity, that they choose and are looking forward to doing, to help them separate a little easier.
- Bringing a special, comforting, toy or blanket from home.

At the first conference of the school year, which is done in October, we share information about the CDC developmental screening tool, Teaching Strategies Gold assessments and observations that we have made in the first month of school. During this conference we also take the opportunity to discuss how the transition into preschool is going for you and your child, we also use this conference time to learn about your goals for your child and to share our goals with you, and how we can partner together to meet the goals. When necessary, based on the outcome of the child's developmental screening, teachers may refer parents to speak with a speech and language therapist, their pediatrician, and/or Child

Find services in order to receive a screening/evaluation for areas of development that we may have concern about. Referral information is provided to parents in writing by the teacher and also through a hand out when teachers or parents feel that a screening is necessary. We will follow up with parents within 6 weeks from the time of referral to discuss the outcome of the screening/evaluation.

## **TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN**

Transitions out of our program to kindergarten may be hard for some children, and families; we make every effort to ensure that this transition is as stress free as possible. Throughout your child's time at preschool we are using an assessment tool called Teaching Strategies Gold to assess all of areas of your child's development, and tracking progress towards school readiness. During our first conference we share with families of 4-year-old students, the WaKids Characteristics of Kindergarten handout, this handout provides information about where children should be socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and academically, as they transition into kindergarten. At the spring conferences we go over, and provide you with a copy of, our assessments so that you are fully aware of your child's strengths and needs, as they get ready to go to kindergarten. At the end of the school year we fill out North Thurston School District's preschool to kindergarten transition form, which can only be done if you authorize us to do so by signing the form. We deliver the form to the district office to be distributed to your child's school. You will receive an email from me after school is out with copy of the transition form as well as your child's final Teaching Strategies Gold report card, an All About Me form that you will fill out and give to your child's kindergarten teacher, and an activity resource list to give you ideas for continuing summer learning prior to the start of kindergarten.

The North Thurston School district hosts a kindergarten event in March, where parents can register student and meet the kindergarten teachers and principals, we will notify families through newsletters and handouts about this event as early as we know the date. We also attend this event with you to help you navigate it, as we know it can be overwhelming. To help the children transition to kindergarten, we start talking with the 4 year old classes, in May about going to kindergarten. We read books about kindergarten and talk it up to get them excited about going.

## **COMMUNICATION AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

I make an effort every day at drop off and/or pick-up times to connect with parents, unfortunately most days I don't get to everybody. I am happy to discuss with you your child's progress and experiences at preschool any time. If ever you have a concern, question, or just want to know how things are going I would be happy to set up at time to discuss your child; I prefer not to talk at length at drop off and pick up times because it then makes it hard for me to connect with other parents. You will also have opportunities for parent teacher conferences twice a year; the first conferences are done in late October/early November and the second in late March/early April. Please know that I am available by phone or email after business hours as well.

If your child has special needs it's especially important that we are communicating often! It's very important that I know your child's needs from the very beginning of the school year so that we can devise a plan to help your child with their specific needs; working as a team will help your child adjust to school and learn so much more effectively.

Another way that we can assist parents is through our resource center that is located in the sign-in area of the preschool classroom. This resource area contains books about parenting strategies, and also handouts on a variety of issues related to children and parenting, I also provide information about community activities and programs for families; sometimes these are located on the resource shelf, sometimes they are on the bulletin board in the sign-in area, so keep checking back for new items. I

welcome and encourage families to use these resources by either checking out a book or asking for a copy of a handout that I have provided.

## **TEACHING AND TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS**

Adventures In Learning Preschool has a partnership with South Puget Sound Community College to allow their students to learn in our facility; this may be a student with a one time observation, or with a 10 week long student teaching obligation. The students will never photograph or film during their time in our facility, they are there to observe and learn from the interactions that teachers have with the children, and to improve their interactions with guidance from myself.

We also have a partnership with the University of Washington's Cultivate Learning program, this partnership is one that photographs and films teacher child interactions and uses the footage in order to develop professional development videos for other early childhood educators across the nation. There is a release that each family must fill out in order for the child to be present during filming. The University of Washington has made it clear that we must have waivers for every child in attendance the day of filming, if you are not comfortable with your child being filmed we will do our very best to avoid filming on days your child is at preschool, however if that is not possible you will be notified ahead of time when the day of filming will occur and may keep your child home that day. We also require that whoever is dropping the child off or picking the child up for preschool also have waiver signed.

## **PETS**

Our family has 2 dogs and 1 cat. All of these pets are not in the preschool area or playground during preschool hours. Our dogs are also not allowed to be in the playground area after hours to eliminate the risk of unfortunate shoe messes!

We also have a pet corn snake in the preschool science area; she is in a reptile habitat that has latches so that she cannot escape and so little hands cannot assist her in escaping. She stays in her habitat at all times!

## **TERMINATION**

Your preschool contract may be terminated if any one or more of the following occur:

1. Repeatedly fail to pay tuition on time.
2. If I determine I am unable to meet the needs of the child.
3. Behavioral issues that cannot be resolved. (See behavior management section)
4. Lack of parental cooperation, communication and respect for me and for my business.
5. Failure of parent to comply with written policies.
6. Parental Termination – Requires two weeks notice for which you will be charged your normal tuition rates. Please give this notice in writing with the exact date of termination. If there is no two week notice you will be required to pay the two weeks of tuition, whether your child is here or not. Failure to pay this will result in it being sent to collections. Any collection fees that I incur will be added to the amount you owe.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

An adult must sign each child in and out daily. We ask that they be dropped off no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the start of their session and picked up promptly when the session is over, as children tend to become upset, restless, and/or afraid if you are late, and teacher planning/preparation times are essential. If an emergency arises, call the preschool at (360)481-9214 so that we can reassure your child.

We must have either a written note or in-person request to release your child to a babysitter, car pool, family member, or friend other than specified at the beginning of school.

### **SCHOOL ATTIRE**

Please dress your child for school activities. We exercise, play, and paint. Clothes may become soiled. Each day children need comfortable clothing and shoes. Please tag all sweaters, backpacks and jackets brought to preschool with the child's name. Please do not send your child to preschool in ties shoes, unless they are able to tie them by themselves. Our program is designed to promote independence in children and tie shoes do not allow children to be independent.

We go outside most days for a minimum of 30 minutes, during this time your children will play hard and they will get dirty! I ask that all children keep a pair of rubber boots here at school so that they do not get their shoes dirty and to help keep our classroom cleaner. We also ask that parents send coats with hoods because we go outside rain or shine!

### **RELIGIOUS PRACTICES**

Adventures in Learning Preschool is a Christian based program. We do not teach Bible lessons as a part of our curriculum; however teachers will talk with the children about their own faith and love for Christ when the opportunity presents itself. We will celebrate the Christian holidays and discuss Christ during these times. Children will not be required to pray or talk about Christ if they do not want to.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are very important in the life of a preschooler and will be celebrated at school. If you would like to you may bring treats in to share during snack time I will assign a day as close to your child's birthday as possible and send a notice home with information and details.

### **SNACK**

A snack will be served every day and will be provided by the preschool. A typical snack might include apples, oranges, or bananas, crackers, pretzels or toast, and water. All children will be offered the same snack unless there is a special dietary need, in which case the parents may bring his/her child's snack to preschool.

Snack is served family style to encourage independence. Children are required to wash their hands prior to eating snack. The children are also given jobs to help out with snack; some examples of these jobs are hand washing helper, cup helper, and plate helper.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Teachers approach behavior management in preschool as an opportunity for your child to learn. Emphasis is placed upon appropriate behavior and positive reinforcement. When a problem arises the child(ren) are encouraged, under the teacher's guidance, to work it out him/herself or with the other child. Reoccurring incidents of biting, spitting, and abnormally profane language is discussed with the parent to enlist their cooperation and support. The child will be made aware that she/he is loved and that it is her/his behavior that we cannot accept. The child is encouraged to talk about her/his feelings and to realize that all people have feelings. When verbal efforts to manage behavior are not effective we will use a visual aid to help a child process through their behavior, these items include problem solving cards, daily behavioral report, etc. Visual aids will be individualized for the child. If these efforts fail, a meeting will be set up with the parents and teachers to establish an action plan. If after this action plan has been implemented, efforts continue to fail, other options will be discussed. These options could include evaluation for special needs and outside services put in place, or as a last resort, termination



from the preschool, if termination is the only option we will make every effort to assist you in finding another preschool program that meets your child's needs.

Spanking or any form of corporal punishment is prohibited by law and not allowed at preschool or on my property, by me or anyone else, including parents.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

If your child is ill use the following guidelines to keep your child home for the:

1. Two or more incidents of diarrhea within the last 24 hours
2. Two or more incidents of vomiting within the last 24 hours
3. A draining rash or blister
4. Suspected communicable skin infection such as impetigo, pinkeye, and scabies. The child may return 24 hours after starting antibiotic.
5. Lice or nits.
6. Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher combined with any of the following symptoms:
  - a) Rash
  - b) Fatigue/Irritability that prevents normal activity
  - c) A thick greenish or yellow drainage from your child's nose.
  - d) Consistent complaints of ear, stomach or other pain.
  - e) Severe coughing
  - f) one or more incidents of vomiting in the last 24 hours
  - g) one or more incidents of diarrhea in the last 24 hours

**Your child may not return to preschool until they have been free from any of the above for a complete 24 hour period.** This is for the health and safety of all children and employees.

I am required to report certain communicable diseases to the department of health as defined by WAC 170-296A-3210.

The preschool area is cleaned and sanitized regularly with a bleach and water solution. The bathroom is cleaned and sanitized daily to prevent the spread of germs.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Adventures In Learning Preschool staff does not transport children off site at any time. All field trips are parent involved. Field trips are open to all children enrolled in the program even if a field trip is not on a day your child is enrolled for; siblings are also welcome to come on most field trips. I always have a First Aid kit with me when we are off site.

## **ADVENTURE DAYS AT THE PARK**

The second Thursday and Friday in the months of October, November, January, February, March, and May, rain or shine, parents will drop children off and pick children up at a park (which will be announced several weeks prior to the date) at normal preschool times. The intent behind these adventure days is to get children outside to explore, and deeply experience nature.

We will choose parks that have wooded areas to explore, a covered area so that we can escape the weather, if needed, and a restroom. The children must be dressed appropriately for the weather, or they will not be able to attend. It's important to dress for worst-case scenario; we can always remove layers if needed. On these days children will need to bring their own snack, water bottles, and change of clothing in their backpack. Carla and I will both have backpacks that contain items to ensure the health and safety of the children, and all health and contact information for the children.

## **EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS**

In the event that there is a major emergency, earthquake, major power outage, blizzard etc, I will make every effort to contact you and to care for your child to the best of my ability. Parents/guardians should be prepared to pick up your child from preschool right away. In the event I am unable to reach you, I will make my best effort to contact your emergency contact person(s).

I keep a supply of water and non-perishable food items, which are donated by parents, in my home in the event that I must keep children on the preschool premises for an extended period of time. Every couple of years this supply needs to be replaced, I may ask for donations from parents, this is completely optional but very much appreciated!

If your child is injured, beyond the typical bump or bruise, while at preschool I will notify you right away. If the injury is severe enough to require immediate attention I will call 911 first, then notify you. All injuries that result in a trip to the doctor must be reported to my licenser. I will make this report within 24 hours of the visit.

## **MEDICATION**

I prefer not to administer medication to children at preschool, however if the need arises your child's medication must be in the original container from the pharmacist with your child's name on the bottle. Medication will be administered only as directed on the prescription bottle.

## **PRESCHOOL CLOSURE DATES**

Adventures in Learning Preschool follows the same schedule as the North Thurston School District. All weather related decisions are based on the school district's decisions and I will let you know as early in the morning as possible. If school is cancelled due to weather preschool will also be closed. If school is running 1 to 2 hours late I will run preschool as normal, as long as the roads are safe to drive on and my assistant teacher is able to arrive on time, if preschool is cancelled on late start days, these days are not made up at the end of the year. The days that school is cancelled by the school district will be made up at some point during the year, or at the end of the school year, as determined by the school district.