

# The Children's Garden Learning Center

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## PARENT HANDBOOK



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**(1)**

## **REGISTRATION**

A child is eligible to enroll in The Children's Garden once he or she reaches the age of six weeks, on or before the first day of attendance. Registration forms must be completed and returned to the school at least two (2) days before the first day of attendance. Students transferring from another school should present records from that school, if they are available. When a child enters school for the first time, the following documents are required: a birth certificate establishing an accurate date of birth, a current physical examination signed by a practicing licensed physician or physician's assistant, and a current immunization record.

**(2)**

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

The Clark County Health District requires the following vaccinations for students enrolling in public or private school: chickenpox (varicella); hepatitis A; hepatitis B; polio; diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP), measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), and Streptococcus pneumoniae. Parents who have recently moved to Nevada should note that chickenpox and hepatitis A vaccinations are not required in all states, so immunizations that were up-to-date in other states may not be current in Nevada.

**(3)**

## **FEE PAYMENT AND WITHDRAWAL POLICIES**

Registration fees and materials fees are due at time of enrollment for the fall and summer sessions. Registration fees material fees are non-refundable. All billing of tuition is done automatically each week of the month. Weekly fees are charged to your account the first day of the week, according to your agreed contracted days and hours. You are responsible for these fees whether your child attends that week or not, unless you give 2 weeks prior written notice before the first day of the week your child will not be attending. There are five days per calendar year credit given for vacations. There is no credit given for absences, recognized holidays or staff development days. All fees received are non-refundable, regardless of the child's attendance. There will be an automatic late fee charged to your account after the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of attendance, if your tuition is not paid. If tuition is not paid for more than two weeks past the first week of attendance, without making arrangements with the director or owner only, your child may be dropped from the program and your past due account will be sent to a collection agency. The school closes promptly at 6:30 p.m. Parents that arrive past 6:30 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. The late fee must be paid within 24 hours; there are no exceptions. The Children's Garden Learning Center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment at any time for any reason.

## **(4) MATERIALS FEES**

An initial materials fee is due at the time of registration for the Pre-Kindergarten class only. Additional fees may be charged as needed for materials such as: diapers, wipes, pull-ups, special materials, etc. A fee statement will be sent home with each child each week when fees are due.

## **(5) ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is essential for the social, emotional, and cognitive development of your child. Young children need consistency and regular routines. Keeping your child home from school disrupts the child's routine and the child may act out in negative ways, both at home and at school. Please bring your child to school on his registered days of attendance. If your child will be arriving later than his scheduled hours for school, the parent must inform the office. The parent or guardian is responsible to call the office to inform the school if your child will be absent from school. Parents should contact the school office regarding the illness and the number of days the child may be out of school. Parents are asked to report if their child has a contagious disease. You are expected to pay for your child to attend school on a weekly basis. You are paying for your child's place in the class. If he or she is absent, you are still expected to pay the weekly tuition no matter how many days your child actually attends. If your child will be out for two weeks or more, you will not be charged for those weeks of tuition, if you have made prior arrangements with the director. If you intend to withdraw your child, a two (2) week written notice will be required. If the school does not receive this notice, you will be charged for the two (2) weeks of tuition regardless whether your child attends or not.

## **(6) TIME CLOCK AND SIGN-IN/OUT SHEETS**

In order to keep accurate attendance and accounting records, your child must be clocked in and out every day on the Pro-Care time clock in the front office. Each family will be assigned a pin number to use the time clock. To insure that your child is properly accounted for in his/her classroom, families are also required to sign children in and out on a paper sign-in sheet located in each classroom. If your child is not clocked in or signed in and is in attendance, there will be a \$5.00 per day fee for all days he/she is not clocked or signed in.

## **(7) LEAVING THE BUILDING**

Children are not permitted to leave the building during school hours without a parent or guardian or without the Director's authorization. Children are permitted to leave only with parents or parents' designee. Parents/guardians/or designee must sign in at the office when entering the school building and must also sign their child out when leaving school for any reason.

## **(8) VACATIONS**

Scheduling a vacation during the school year causes interruption in the instructional process. However, when unavoidable absences occur, parents are asked to make arrangements two weeks in advance. Parents & guardians are encouraged to take vacations during the summer months of June, July and August. Children will be given five days of vacation time annually if they are scheduled with the director at least 30 days in advance.

## **(9) SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION**

When the school is closed, all other activities at the school are automatically cancelled. Reminders will be posted for the families the week prior to the date of closing. The school will be closed on the following holidays:

Labor Day, Nevada Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving and the Day after, Christmas Day, New Years Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Easter, and Memorial Day. There will be three days per year the school will be closed for teacher development work days. You will be notified 30 days in advance of these days.

## **(10) SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

The Children's Garden Learning Center views discipline as a process of developing appropriate behaviors. Positive reinforcements for "good" behavior in a loving, supportive environment promote the child's self-confidence and leads to increased desirable behaviors. A challenging environment that allows experimenting, learning, physical activity, and quiet times prevents boredom and promotes good behavior.

The Children's Garden Learning Center uses *indirect guidance* techniques:

- We give advance warnings: "You have five more minutes to play before it's time to clean up."
- We give choices: "You may paint with the other children or you may read a book in a quiet corner."
- We have regular routine: "We always wash our hands before lunch. After lunch is a story time."
- We avoid nagging: We tell the child what we expect just once, follow it by asking the child if he/she remembers what we asked, and then offer to help the child do what was asked.
- We're consistent: We do things the same way each day so the children know what to expect and learn to trust and feel safe in their environment.

We also use *direct* guidance techniques:

- We use affirmative: "We use walking feed indoors" rather than "Don't run!" or "use your words to tell us you're angry" rather than "Don't hit!"

- We get the child's attention by crouching down to his/her level, making eye contact, speaking quietly, and asking the child to repeat the directions.
- We try very hard to be fair. We examine our expectations to make sure they are age appropriate, and we don't make rules just because an activity is too noisy or messy.
- We avoid arguments by following through with solutions that address the problem, but also offer the child a way to exit gracefully from the problem: "You can choose a quiet place to calm down or I can choose one for you."

If a child is unable to demonstrate self-controlling behavior, a brief time-away from the group results for the child to regain control. Time-away from the group occurs only when other measures fail, and is used as an opportunity for the child to re-group, not as a punishment.

At The Children's Garden Learning Center, the discipline goal is educating and redirecting children. It emphasizes cooperation. In contrast, punishment has as its goal hurting, shaming, or scaring children. Punishment is an inappropriate form of discipline and has no place in our preschool.

By law, and program philosophy and policy, the following forms of discipline are forbidden: hitting, spanking, shaking, scolding, shaming, isolating, labeling (words such as: bad, naughty, etc.), or any other negative reaction to the child's behavior. All forms of corporal (physical) punishment are strictly forbidden.

Some negative behavior is best ignored since its goal is often to get attention. This technique is effective for some of the disruptive things children do and it minimizes mimicking activity by other children.

If a child is unable to gain control and requires more individual attention that can be given within child-to-staff ratios, we may need to contact a parent. A child that consistently requires one-to-one attention may have to leave the center temporarily for safety's sake. Repeated uncontrollable behavior can lead to discontinuation of learning center services.

The Children's Garden Learning Center is not a substitute for parents. If parents and children are having problems at home, those problems and solutions are to be taken care of in the family. We cannot discipline your child for you at school.

## **(11) Health and safety –Accidents**

An emergency medical card and authorization form must be completed by each parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year. This must be kept on file at the school office and be updated whenever the information changes. Parents must give three other names, addresses and phone numbers of relatives/neighbors who the school may contact, in the event the child's parents cannot be reached. Although every care is taken to prevent mishaps, accidents may occur which involve your child. When a child is injured a staff member will administer first aid immediately, comfort the child and notify you. All

full-time staff hold current first aid/CPR certificates and are experienced in managing the minor injuries which may occur. If the injury is to the head, the child will need close monitoring, therefore we will ask you to come to collect your child. If we are unable to contact you or your chosen emergency

contacts, we will continue to monitor your child closely until you can be reached. An ambulance will be called in case of a serious injury requiring urgent medical attention. The Director will remain the child at the hospital and await your arrival. All injuries are recorded and parents are requested to read it, give a response and sign it. The parent or guardian will be given a copy of a “Boo Boo” report and a copy of an accident/Incident report form will be placed in your child's file. These records are used to monitor the frequency of accidents and evaluate our practices to maintain an optimum level of safety.

The Children's Garden Learning Center has an Emergency Plan that was developed by a team approved by the Nevada State Department of Child Care licensing. If an event occurs such as a flood, earthquake, fire or other emergency, it is imperative that you do not attempt to enter the campus immediately. This precaution is for your own safety. In case of emergency, please contact the front office or the director at that time, you will be directed to the pick-up location. Please ask for a copy of the emergency & evacuation plan for more detailed information.

## **(12) STUDENT RECORDS**

The Children's Garden Learning Center and State of Nevada Child Care licensing requires that adequate and accurate student records be maintained for the following purposes: to provide cumulative data for attendance purposes; and to provide the instructional staff with valuable background information on students' needs, abilities and achievements. Parents can be afforded the opportunity to review the contents of the student's record. This review will be conducted by the Director or his/her designee who will explain the documents in the pupil's file. Parents who wish to review their child's records should make an appointment with the Director. Information contained in student records can be accessed for instructional purposes by the The Children's Garden Learning Center School Staff. Parents will be notified prior to the transmission of records prescribed by judicial order or subpoena. Records can be transmitted to other schools to which the student plans to enroll by request of the parent. Any other access to student records requires written permission by the parents.

## **(13) REPORTING PROGRESS TO PARENTS**

A pre-assessment will be done on each child in the first 4 weeks of the child's attendance and parent-teacher conference for the families or guardians will be scheduled by the fifth or sixth week to discuss goals of the family and the teaching staff. An evaluation of the child's progress will be completed three times per year and will be available within one week of completion for the parents to discuss with the child's teacher or primary caregiver at open house or at a scheduled appointment with your child's teacher

## **(14) MEALS & SNACKS**

The Children's Garden Learning Center's fulltime Children will be provided with breakfast which will consist of bread, fruit and milk & lunch and which will consist of a protein, vegetable, bread, fruit and milk. Both meals will meet at least 2/3 of your child's nutritional needs. For more information please talk to a staff member. A vegetarian option is available daily. Please note any special dietary concerns on your registration form. The menu is available and is posted on the parent board and in the kitchen and is available to take home at the front desk Children arriving before 8:15 may bring breakfast to school to eat at the snack table. Children with special dietary needs may be asked to bring in foods to substitute for what is provided to the group. Please do not send snacks or candy with your child to day care unless prior approval has been given. Please remember we eat breakfast no later than 9:00 a.m.

If your child has an allergy to a specific food, please let the office know and we will try to make an appropriate substitution. If a child has so many allergies that he can not eat from the menu, we may require the parents to provide his lunch and/or snacks. We never force a child to finish what is on his plate, but we do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. Sometimes they are surprised by what they like!

## **(15) DRESS GUIDELINES**

All children must have a complete change of clothing, **clearly marked with the child's name**, left at CGLS. Caps, mittens, and warm clothing must be worn during the cooler seasons for the daily outdoor playtime. Preschool children need to be dressed for the weather. Accidents can happen even for the older preschoolers when they wait too long before going to the bathroom, or if they get wet on the playground.

Any clothing that is disruptive to the educational process or hazardous to the safety of any student will not be permitted.

Guidelines are as follows:

- 1) Shoes must be worn at all times; cleats, open-toed shoes, etc. are not considered safe footwear.
- 2) Shirts which expose midriff or torso are not permitted.
- 3) Policy for wearing shorts varies depending on the weather; shorts must be not more than five inches above the knee.
- 4) Hats, caps, coats, and sunglasses are not permitted to be worn during the school day inside the building without the Director's permission.
- 5) Clothing with lettering or illustrations which are considered obscene or profane as defined by the law are not permitted. Clothing advocating the use of drugs or alcohol will also not be permitted.
- 6) Halloween costumes must be in accordance with positive family values followed at our school.

## **(16) PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Classroom teachers and other school staff welcome parents and grandparents to volunteer their time and expertise in the following areas: chaperoning on a field trip; reading to students and listening to students read; cleaning and organizing classrooms; helping with special events and fundraisers; preparing classroom activities; and/or assisting teachers in the classroom. The volunteer must be approved by the Director. In addition, each volunteer who works more than 10 hours a week must have a Clark County Health Card, be FBI fingerprinted and have a visible identification badge. The volunteer is under the direct supervision of both the head teacher in the class and the Director.

## **(17) DISPENSING OF MEDICINES IN SCHOOL**

If a student requires medication during school hours, written physician verification is required. Written parental permission for school personnel to dispense any medicines is mandatory. A consent form may be obtained from the office. The school has the right to refuse to administer any medication. All medication must be in its original container clearly showing the child's name, the name of medication, dosages and directions. No over-the-counter medications will be given to a child without an authorization from a physician. This medication must be checked in by the teacher or staff designee. Medications requiring refrigeration must be in a closed container. Any unused medication will be returned. A designated staff member will be responsible for giving medications and a complete record will be maintained.

## **(18) ILLNESS**

Children must not be brought to school if they have any of the following symptoms: a fever of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, unexplained rash, lice or nits, diarrhea, eye infections, sore throat, or colored discharge from nose. If a child is brought to school with any of these indicated symptoms, the parent or parent designee must remove the child immediately from school.

## **(19) Curriculum**

An educational curriculum including: Language and Literature, Mathematics and Science, Music and Movement, Art, Craft, Drama and Construction, is planned with developmentally appropriate experiences to meet the interests and abilities of the children on a daily basis. We follow the standards set forth by the NAEYC ( National Organization for the Education Of Young Children). We use the "Creative Curriculum" and follow an "Emergent Curriculum Approach" when planning educational experiences for the children to participate in. This means we observe each child at play as an individual and as a member of a group. We record and evaluate their achievements/strengths and interests. Then plan to extend the interest and build upon the strengths. We aim to facilitate growth in the use of expressive language - to empower the child to make meaningful connections with his or her peers; to facilitate social

competence; to effectively function as a capable and contributing member of the group. We provide young children with on-going opportunities for active learning through play – to explore, to learn at their own pace, to experience success, develop initiative, curiosity, resourcefulness, and self-confidence – to foster qualities which will serve them well throughout their lives.

- Play is the most effective way for young children to learn.
- Play is freely chosen
- There is no 'correct way' to play. The process is important, not the result thus an emotionally "safe" manner in which to explore and learn
- Play is functional as it allows children to work out anxieties and conflicts, and to practice roles they will assume in later life
- Play allows the child to practice his competencies and acquire new skills in a relaxed and pleasurable way
- Play serves as a means where a child can safely explore and seek out new information
- Play promotes this exploratory behavior by offering the child the possibilities of novelty, complexity, uncertainty, surprise and incongruity
- Supports the development of the whole child – socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically
- Allows for the recognition of each child's unique learning style, abilities and developmental level
- Allows for hands on learning, where the curriculum can emerge from the children's interests, needs and desires, making learning concrete and meaningful
- Repetitive play helps children to master skills and concepts so they can progress to the next level, adding their own level of complexity to their play and thus contributing to their development and learning
- Children can contribute to decisions about their own curriculum – children self diagnose what they know and what they can or want to learn next
- Play provides the ultimate curriculum for social, physical, and cognitive advancement
- Play allows children to develop a sense of control over their environment and a feeling of competence and enjoyment that they can learn
- Play is a very effective way for children to accumulate a huge amount of basic knowledge about the world around them

## **(20) Daily Schedule**

**6:00 – 8:00 Drop off & greetings**

**8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast**

**8:30 – 9:00 Teachers prepare for school & Children's Arrival Multi age grouping classrooms or playground**

**9:00 – 9:15 Clean-up/Snack/Health**

**9:15 – 9:30 Circle Time** (Stories, songs, art/craft, enrichment activities, thematic learning , puppets, group games)

**9:30 – 11:00 Activity Center Time** (Calendar, birthdays, weather, stories, flannelboard, fingerplays, puppets, music & movement, table games, art activities, nature, computer, seasonal projects, special guests, readiness skills, theme/unit study)

**11:00 – 11:30 Outside Play,**

**11:30-12 Noon Lunch**

**12 noon - Dismissal for ½ day children**

**Afternoon PM Schedule**

**12:30 – 2:30 Rest Time**

**2:30 – 2:45 Snack Time**

**2:45 – 3:45 Creative Movement, Art or Music Time**

**3:45 – 5:30 Outside Play Time and Afternoon Centers multi-age**

**5:30 – 6:00 multi-age grouping and pick-up**

## **(21) Personal Property**

**Please avoid bringing toys, jewelry, dress-up costumes, money or sweets,** because these items will become the focus of discord and exclusion amongst the group. The preschool is well resourced with equipment designed to promote cooperative play and pro-social behavior. Private property in the form of toys from home detracts from the non-competitive and inclusive nature of the program. While trying to discourage children from bringing toys to preschool, we recommend you encourage your child to bring photographs or postcards and interesting natural objects instead. (Things that have potential as “conversation starters”, that may be of interest to the group.) Please check with staff to ensure items of interest are safe (particularly if they're alive and some plants and flowers are poisonous or may cause allergic reactions.)

## **(22) Quiet Time**

Quiet time at The Children’s Garden Learning center is a period for relaxation, reflection and a break from social interactions for all the children. We encourage the children to sleep however if a child does not sleep we engage them in activities such as quietly

looking at a book, listening to music, and imaging while listening to told stories, meditate or play alone. However, all children are expected remain on their cots during this time. Please provide your child with a small sheet and/or a blanket to put on his cot for rest time. Children may bring a comfort toy or ‘security’ blanket to use at this time. Please name these items and keep them in your child’s bag or backpack until needed.

## **(23) Ratios**

During the hours of preschool operation at The Children’s Garden Learning Center there is always on duty the required amount of teachers per student required by the State of Nevada Child Care Licensing Dept. However; we understand that these are minimum standards and strive to provide smaller group size ratios on a regular basis.



## **(23) TEAR-OUT PAGE FOR PARENTS**