WELCOME TO THE PRESCHOOL ONE GROUP!

Please take the time to read these few pages of information that will help give you a basic understanding of the Preschool One Group. Thank you!

CHILDREN
The children in the Preschool One Group range in age from approximately 2 ½ to 3 ½ years.

STAFF
There is a ratio of one caregiver for every four children. This enables us to provide a good deal of attention to the individual needs of each child.

ROOM
The Preschool One room is accessed through the preschool gym. The Preschool One room has a large kitchen, a bathroom complete with small toilets and changing tables and it has a separate room for naps. Preschool One shares the gym area with the Preschool Two Group.

DAILY ROUTINES
The goal of the Preschool One Group is to provide for the needs of each child in our care. There is a schedule of routines and activities that includes eating, sleeping, toileting, playing and learning for this group and a copy is posted in the room. Copies are also available upon request. In addition, staff spends time helping children to reach developmental milestones through planned and improvised activities.

You may choose to receive a written summary of your child’s day by filling out the top portion of a DAILY DETAILS form at arrival time. Each parent should complete a PRESCHOOL ONE INTAKE FORM when your child starts in our program and at any time that there are significant changes in eating, sleeping, health needs, etc. The Intake Form gives caregivers an overview of your child and is something they will refer to periodically for guidance. These forms are given to you at registration but additional copies are available in the office.

TOILETING/DIAPERING
Children in diapers are changed every two hours or when needed. Parents provide all diapering supplies and will be asked to sign a form giving us permission to apply creams or lotions. Department of Health guidelines are followed for diapering and these procedures include but are not limited to:

- Staff wear gloves when changing diapers
- Diapering area is covered with exam table paper
- Soiled diapers and paper are disposed in covered trash cans
- Diapering area is wiped down with a disinfecting solution of bleach and water
- After diapering, children and adults wash their hands

Children in the process of toilet learning will be encouraged to use the toilet and staff will work cooperatively with parents on this important developmental step. When your child begins toilet training, please notify caregivers.
ACTIVITIES/LEARNING
Children are learning every minute of the day. They learn from the way we organize the room, from the daily schedule, from activities, and when they play outdoors.

The Preschool One room is set up for learning. Children have many opportunities to make choices, come up with ideas, experiment, and take responsibility for their work. Here’s what you see when you visit the Preschool One room:

- The children have cubbies, labeled with their names and photos. Their jackets, coats, change of clothing, etc. are kept in the cubbies.
- Each child also has a mailbox where you will find artwork and notices from the office.
- Materials are on low shelves, in containers, and on hooks so children can get them independently and put them away.
- Shelves are neat and uncluttered so materials are easy to see, remove, and replace.
- Picture and word labels are on containers and shelves so children know where materials belong and to learn to identify words.
- There are distinct interest areas--blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, discovery, library, sand and water, music and movement, computers, and different play spaces outdoors--so children know what choices are available and make decisions.
- A variety of learning materials are in each area so that no matter where children choose to play, they learn.
- Similar materials are grouped together to teach children to sort and classify--skills that are important to understanding and solving math problems.

We want your child to feel secure and independent, to move from one activity to another as easily and confidently as possible. And we want to provide a variety of learning experiences for a well-rounded education. So we plan a daily schedule with these goals in mind. We follow this same schedule day after day. After a few weeks, the children can tell us what they are supposed to do next!

Caregivers plan a variety of activities for the children each day and each day also includes opportunities for the children to learn how to express themselves, to play and share with one or several friends, to learn self-help skills and to learn to follow simple group rules.

The Preschool One Group goes outdoors to the playground each day, weather permitting, to climb, ride on bikes and cars, dig in the sand and play with outdoor toys. The group will occasionally go for walks to enjoy the sights and sounds of the campus. On rainy or very cold days, the group will use the indoor gym area for active play.
MEALS
Meal times are a social event as the children sit as a group to eat. With the caregivers facilitating conversation, the children will share their thoughts and experiences on just about any topic that comes to mind. Special attention and encouragement is given to the children to ensure their nutritional needs are met and that they eat the food you provide for lunch. We provide snacks for the children three times per day. Please refer to the “Meals” section in the Parent Handbook for specific food guidelines and keep the following in mind when preparing lunches:

- Please bring food in a lunch box or bag, clearly labeled with child’s name.
- Please cut all food into bite-sized pieces and remove bones from meat.
- Please send a beverage, milk or 100% fruit juice, with lunch.
- Food intended to be served warm will be heated by our staff.
- Please put your child’s first and last name on all cups and food containers.

SPECIAL FOOD NEEDS – health or allergy related, nutritional, religious, or cultural, will be accommodated. The most important factor in special situations is to discuss these needs with administrators and caregivers.

MEAL SCHEDULES
In addition to lunches that come from home, snacks are provided for the children three times per day.

- **Morning Snack** - consists of a variety of nutritious breakfast foods and is served at approximately 9:15 AM.
- **Breakfast** – you may send in breakfast from home, if you would like. It will be served to your child at morning snack time or if you are scheduled to arrive before 8:30 AM, it will be served when your child arrives.
- **Lunch** – is served at approximately 11:45 AM but if a child does not eat well, they are offered lunch again at afternoon snack.
- **Afternoon Snack** - is served at 2:30 PM and this is also when lunch will be served again for those children who did not eat well earlier.
- **Late Afternoon Snack** - a light snack is served at approximately 4:45 PM.
- **Beverages** – the children are given diluted apple juice, milk, or water as a beverage with all snacks.

SLEEPING
Parents give staff guidance as to whether or not their child should nap. The Preschool One room has a separate sleeping area where the children sleep on cots. A caregiver sits with children while they are going to sleep and monitors children while they are sleeping. Cots are labeled with children’s names and are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
SUPPLIES
Please bring these items to the Greenhouse for your child and please write your child’s name on each item:

- One change of clothing that includes a shirt, pants, undershirt and socks.
- A sweater or sweatshirt just in case it’s cool in the building.
- Diapering supplies including diapers, wipes and diaper ointment or cream. As you run low on diapering supplies, you will receive a note asking you to bring in additional items.
- When your child begins toilet training, please bring in extra changes of clothing along with extra underwear.
- A crib sheet and light blanket for sleeping. (Sheets and blankets will be laundered weekly at the Greenhouse.)

MOVING TO THE NEXT AGE GROUP
We generally transition children to the Preschool Two Group at the start of a new semester. Occasionally, we will move a child during a semester if there is an opening and if the child is developmentally ready. When the decision to move a child is being made, parents will be informed and given an opportunity to meet with new caregivers. As part of the transition process, children will make several visits to the new room, accompanied by caregivers they know.

IN CLOSING
We want your time in the Preschool One Group to be a positive experience for your child and for you. At any time, please do not hesitate to ask questions of caregivers and to speak with administrators if you have concerns.