

Parent Handbook: Preschool 2022-2023

***Ashcreek Parent Cooperative Playschool
A Parent Cooperative School since 2016***

Handbook & Bylaws Received Form 2022-2023

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Parents' Names: _____

I have received a copy of the Ashcreek Playschool's 2022-2023 Handbook and a copy of the Ashcreek Playschool Bylaws or the updated pages.

Parent's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Returning member: _____ **New member:** _____

Ashcreek Parent Handbook

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PART 1: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ashcreek Playschool is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. This handbook, combined with our Bylaws, is offered as a comprehensive guide to our program. Please use it to become familiar with our methods of operation and educational philosophies and keep it available throughout the year for easy reference. A cooperative school functions only as well as its members! We look forward to working together to provide the best educational experience and developmental environment for our children.

Ashcreek Playschool is a safe, nurturing community of families and staff working together to foster the creative, social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development of our children.

MISSION STATEMENT

We believe in nurturing curiosity, creativity, and kindness through play-based learning and parent collaboration. Our mission is to enrich the lives of children, their families, and the community they live in through play-based education, parent education, and being active participants in our surrounding community.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Play is the work of young children! Research shows that young children learn best by doing and play provides the essential foundation for academic or school learning. It is the personal development time and preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters and numbers. We place great emphasis on the acquisition of social skills, equipping children with tools to develop satisfying social relationships with other children and adults, to experience and express their own feelings and emotions, and resolve conflicts without fighting and aggression. In order to foster child-led learning and allow them to explore the space on their own, minimal direction from adults is given. Safety is maintained and the teacher provides structure, asks questions, and encourages the expansion of vocabulary, partnering with children as they develop and grow. A rich, developmentally appropriate classroom environment provides the ideal backdrop for this learning, both indoors and outdoors. This provides the child many opportunities to discover concepts involved in math, science, and language arts and to develop auditory and visual discrimination skills which are necessary for learning to read and write.

A PLACE FOR CHILDREN

Our program is designed for children between the ages of two and seven. It is run by the parents/guardians who work together on a daily basis under the guidance of our teachers to offer an enriching learning experience.

A PLACE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Children are not the only ones who grow and learn at Ashcreek Playschool. Participating parents/guardians have the opportunity to work directly with children alongside our experienced teachers. Central to our philosophy of early childhood education, and overwhelmingly supported by current research, is the belief that parental education and involvement play crucial roles in assuring a child's success, both in school and in life. Parents bring a unique understanding of their children to the classroom, and with this knowledge, teachers and parents can work together to create a learning experience that meets the needs of each child. Ashcreek Playschool aims to provide opportunities for parents to learn about the development of their child(ren), the use of educational play materials, and to learn how to become more effective parents through participation in the classroom and through ongoing parental education.

WHAT IS A CO-OP?

DEFINITION

A co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

VALUES

Cooperatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility, and caring for others.

PRINCIPLES

These principles are guidelines by which co-operatives put their values into practice.

- **1st Principle: Voluntary & Open Membership** Co-operatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, physical handicap, or religious discrimination.
- **2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control** Co-operatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Members serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary co-operatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote).
- **3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation** Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of the capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. They usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surplus for any or all of the following purposes: developing the co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the co-operative; and supporting activities approved by the membership.
- **4th Principle: Autonomy & Independence** Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.
- **5th Principle: Educating, Training, & Information** Co-operatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives. They inform the general public — particularly young people and opinion leaders — about the nature and benefits of co-operation.
- **6th Principle: Cooperation among Cooperatives.** Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.
- **7th Principle: Concern for Community** While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Our preschool program uses a play-based curriculum designed to promote the growth of each child, individually, in all spheres of development. The focus is on providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for learning and growth, and not rushing towards specific academic skills. Our play-based approach focuses on social-emotional learning and helps children “learn how to learn.” Through exploration, experimentation, and play, children develop a concrete understanding of the world, which is the crucial foundation for all higher learning.

What is a play-based curriculum?

- **Self-Directed:** Children are able to choose their own activities as much as possible. Thoughtfully designed classroom and carefully chosen materials to provide opportunity for a variety of skill building activities.
- **Open-Ended:** Long periods of unstructured time are provided. Teachers act as facilitators and are available to be supportive problem solvers, but provide minimal direct instruction.
- **Process-oriented:** The process of the activity is more important than the results at this stage. This means art is messy and experimental!
- **Dramatic Play:** Imaginative and pretend play is an important way children learn to engage with each other and learn about the world. Providing time and space for this type of play in group settings is very beneficial.

Our curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development:

- **Social:** To help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, and feel they are a part of the group.
- **Emotional:** To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and to have a positive attitude toward life.
- **Cognitive:** To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical:** To help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

CLASSES

Azalea Room: This is our transitional kindergarten/kindergarten classroom and is open to students ages 4.5 and up. This class meets 5 days a week, Monday through Friday, from 9am-1pm and cannot be split into less days.

Rose Room: This preschool class is open to students ages 3.5-4.5 and meets daily Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm. Students may enroll in any combination of days, ranging from 2 days per week to 5 days per week.

Daisy Room: This preschool class is open to students ages 2.5-3.5 (age exceptions are granted for children under 2 of current members with additional students enrolled) and meets daily Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm. Students may enroll in any combination of days, ranging from 2 days per week to 5 days per week

CURRICULUM GOALS

- To provide an education program promoting the social, physical, emotional and intellectual growth of each child.
- To acknowledge children as creative, self-directed learners, and support them as they increase their knowledge and understandings.
- To facilitate social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development in order to prepare children for success in future educational experiences.
- To guide children in developing a sense of self-worth and self-confidence while developing self-control, social skills and responsibility.
- To enable children to learn how to learn, rather than just to learn specific academic skills.
- To permit children the freedom to explore their feelings and environment in imaginative, play-type activities.

CLASSROOM EXTRAS

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays will be recognized with a birthday greeting from your child's class and the reading of your child's birth story. If the family wishes to bring in a special treat to share with the class they must coordinate with the teacher.

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Each child should have a complete change of clothing at school. Please bring underpants, pants, socks and a shirt for each child in a backpack every day. If your child is not potty trained, also send diapers and wipes. There will be a spot to store a change of clothing, as well as boots and rain gear in the classroom. Please make sure to routinely change out clothing depending on the season and as your child grows.

DRESS

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and play shoes. Daily activities sometimes include active and messy play and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. Your child's name should be on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all the proper possessions and clothes.

All students, staff and parent teachers must change their shoes to "indoor" shoes that will only be worn in the classroom. These shoes will stay in the classroom (except for parent teachers). Indoor shoes allowed are: crocs, slippers, house shoes, or socks.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We wish to protect the privacy of our families. Parents are not permitted to post pictures of any children at Ashcreek Playschool, other than their own, on their personal social media sites, unless they have received express permission from the parents or guardians of any children in those photographs to do so.

Ashcreek Playschool will keep a Publicity Release Form on file for our students and reserves the right to use photographs taken during class or other events for marketing, including use on our public Facebook page and website.

Ashcreek Playschool has set up a private Facebook group for sharing photos taken at our school that will only be accessible to parents of currently enrolled students. If you would like to be added to this group for sharing photos of the preschool class you should email the board at bod@ashcreekplayschool.com

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SNACK AND LUNCH

Ashcreek Playschool is a nut-free school. Please do not bring any nuts or nut-butter products to school. Please notify the Registrar and Lead Teacher if your child has any food allergies.

Parents are responsible for packing a well rounded snack and lunch for their child. We do not allow students to bring candy to school to eat in their snack or lunch. We do ask, in the interest of our learning style, to please pack lunches and snacks in containers that your child can open or learn to open. If your family struggles with food security, please contact your Class Representative or another Board Member so we can help your family find resources. .

ILLNESS

- ***Please notify us as soon as possible if your child will be absent from school***
- We request that your child remain at home if they have a
 - New cough
 - Fever (over 100.5 F)
 - Sore throat
 - Severe runny nose
 - Unusual rash
 - Diarrhea

Children must be free of fever and vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. If you discover that your child has been exposed to a contagious disease, please notify the teacher of these details as soon as the diagnosis is made.
- If a child becomes ill during the school day, parents are notified immediately and the child will remain in supervised isolation until a parent assumes responsibility.
- If your child appears noticeably ill when you arrive at school the teacher may request that the child may not attend school that day.
- There are no refunds or make up days for days missed due to illness. Exceptions will be made for extenuating circumstances with the Board of Directors.

GENERAL CLEANLINESS

Children are encouraged to clean themselves to the extent they are capable. Children are supervised in toileting and washing hands. They receive age-appropriate training in personal hygiene to include proper hand washing and bathroom procedures.

SMOKING AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE POLICY

There is no smoking of tobacco or being under the influence of a controlled substance permitted on school grounds.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

TEACHER'S OBSERVATION RECORDS

The teacher spends time observing the children and directs the curriculum to make sure it is meeting each child's needs. If the teacher is concerned about a child's development, they may choose to use the procedure outlined below. It is always our goal that the parents and teachers work together in the best interest of the child.

- The teacher will reach out to parents via email to discuss any concerns and schedule a parent/teacher conference.
- The teacher will share observations from the classroom and potentially provide outside resources, as well as discuss strategies for in the classroom and at home.
- Teacher will follow-up between two and six weeks later via email.
- A second meeting may be scheduled to reassess.
- The teacher will hold a conference with the parents following additional evaluations in order to propose a plan for meeting the child's needs. Additional conferences may be held as needed.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

Biting, excessive hitting and kicking and other aggressive or unsafe behaviors may need to be addressed more seriously than through our typical classroom discipline policies. Severe incidents may result in the removal of a child from class for the remainder of the day and will result in a parent being called to pick up the child. If the Teacher is not able to do their job and attend to the needs of the class while managing problem behavior, they may request a meeting with the parents to create a Behavior Management Plan that works to address the needs of the child in question while maintaining a safe environment for the whole class. Specific courses of action should be put into writing by the Teacher or Director and signed by the parents. If the parents and teacher cannot agree on a mutually acceptable solution the Executive Board has the authority to approve a final behavior plan and the family must agree to it in order to keep their child enrolled.

Teachers should document incidents of behaviors to be addressed prior to proposing a Behavior Management Plan. Once established, the Behavior Plan is in place for four weeks and then re-evaluated every two weeks. The Behavior Plan is in place for any time the child is on the premises, not only during regular class hours. The child's parents or teachers may suggest modifications to the Behavior Management Plan but the Director must approve them.

The goal of a Behavior Management Plan is to provide help and support with clear strategies for Teachers and Parents to use in addressing the behavior. The intent is not to punish the child or parents for a child's behavior.

Recommendations for a behavior plan may include:

- Requiring extra supervision for the child, which may result in extra teaching shifts from the family, up to every day the child is enrolled
- Requesting the parents consult an appropriate behavior specialist
- Creating specific instructions for parent teachers on how to address or respond to certain actions
- Defining consequences in the case the behavior continues or escalates
- Suggested actions to take at home

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Ashcreek Playschool generally follows BSD (Beaverton School District) cancellations

- **Full day cancellation:** Ashcreek will be cancelled for the day.
- **2 Hour Late Start:** The Teachers and Board of Directors President will make a decision before 8:00am on the safety of the roads around the school, as well as the availability of parent teachers that day.
 - The scheduler will communicate with the Teachers, President, and Parent Teachers scheduled that day to determine the availability of parent teachers. If substitutes are needed, the scheduler will work to find substitutes before the call at 8:00am. In the event that not enough parent teachers can make it in safely, school will be cancelled on the 2-hour late start day.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to cancel school for other reasons besides weather such as school-wide illnesses, the closures will be communicated to the Membership via email.

If Ashcreek is closed for more than 5 days for any reason (weather or otherwise) during a school year the lost class hours will be added as additional days to the end of our school year.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions concerning your child or the program, please feel free to discuss them with your child's teacher or the Class Representative. Please do not bring up sensitive issues or concerns in the presence of your child or any other children of the school. We want the best possible program for your child and welcome your suggestions and assistance. Discussions with other parents regarding school procedures, or other parents' children, and "gossiping" are strongly discouraged.

We urge you to notify the Class Representative of any oversights, inconsistencies, unfairness or any other unacceptable situations. You are welcome at any time to have an audience with the Board of Directors or the Board President individually. We welcome your input to help us find solutions together. Contact information for the Staff and Board of Directors is listed under a separate section.

Contact the school at bod@ashcreekplayschool.com if you would like to be directed to the correct Board or Committee member to answer any questions.

Members have the right to an expectation of confidentiality concerning their children. Employees, teachers, and members of the co-op are not permitted to provide any information regarding any child enrolled in the school to anyone other than the parent or legal guardian unless the parent or legal guardian of the child grants specific written permission.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Ashcreek Teachers and Board Members all have access to your child's file. Any of these parties may access student files to ensure that Ashcreek Playschool is in compliance with the requirements as set forth by each of the above listed organizations.

PART 2: PROGRAMS AND FEES

DROP-OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURE

- *All classes will drop off at the parking lot side doors.*
- *Azalea drops off and picks up at the lower door*
- *Rose and Daisy drop off at the upper door*
- *Daisy picks up at the upper door*
- *Rose picks up at the playground*

All caregivers are asked to please **park** and then walk your child to the drop off door for drop off. For pickup, all caregivers are asked to **park** and walk up to pick up your child. For the Rose room, there will no longer be curbside pickup.

Drop-off success:

- Arrive on time
- Have student use potty before school start and/or with a clean diaper
- Wearing weather appropriate clothing- muddy buddy, jacket, sunscreen, boots, gloves, etc.

Children are to be picked up promptly at their designated dismissal times. Upon dismissal, complete the sign-out sheet, pick up artwork, and give your child a chance to say good-bye. Please be prompt when picking up your children. Any parent who arrives to pick up their child more than 10 minutes late will be assessed a late fee of \$1 per minute up to \$10.

Children will not be released to anyone other than the parents or those listed on the information form, unless prior arrangements have been made with the child's teacher. **Proper identification will be required. IF SOMEONE ELSE IS PICKING UP YOUR CHILD, WE NEED TO KNOW!**

If you want to talk to your child's teacher above and beyond normal daily check in on your child's day, please make an appointment with the teacher (in person, phone, or via Zoom). This will enable you to have an uninterrupted private conversation.

PARENT TEACHING

Each day that you are scheduled to work in the classroom, you must arrive to start work at 8:30 a.m. Arriving late without notice after 8:40am will be assessed a late fee of \$1 per minute up to \$10, chronic lateness will result in a larger fine. Not showing up at all for your parent teaching shifts may mean a fine of up to \$60. All parent teachers will be required to sign in and fill out a health form. Parent Teachers should plan to depart approximately 20 minutes after class ends.

DROP-IN ATTENDANCE

For the 2022-23 school year, registered students may attend class on days for which they are not enrolled for a daily rate of \$30, subject to availability.

- *If you are finding yourself needing a consistent drop in spot, discuss with the Administrative Assistant to add your child another day per week.*
- *Siblings of current students or child of a staff are eligible for drop in attendance if they were between 2 and 8 years old if there is space in the classroom, please let us know prior to your shift if you will need to bring another child.*
- *Siblings of current students who attend on their families scheduled parent teaching days must sign up as drop in students and pay the applicable fee, unless that child is a non-walking infant.*
- *Drop in fees are not applicable for those parents who are covering a shift for another sick parent.*

Drop in must be requested by either:

- Monthly scheduling google form (preferred)
- Emailing the lead teacher and Scheduler a minimum of 48 hours before class to reserve a spot and is on a first-come, first-served basis.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Children are admitted regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, or disability.

CLASS RATIOS

- The Rose Class will have a 4:1 child to adult ratio
- The Azaela Class will have a 5:1 child to adult ratio
- The Daisy Class will have a 3:1 child to adult ratio

While we strive to follow these ratios each day, be aware that these are goals set by Ashcreek and not legal requirements. Adult to student ratios may be flexed temporarily with teacher approval on a case-by-case basis, such as due to an absent parent teacher.

ENROLLMENT GUIDELINES

- Children will be placed in classes according to age.
- Students must be 2.5 by September 1st to enroll, age exceptions are made for younger siblings of currently enrolled students.
- Classes are filled based on seniority and for returning families, contingent upon fulfillment of all cooperative school requirements each year. Seniority is based on the date of the original enrollment application the first time the family enrolled. Registration for the next school year is held in February, and current families will be able to request a spot for the next school year by completing an online registration and paying the registration fee.
- If the classes are full, an outside family can opt to be placed on a waiting list, and must pay a waitlist fee of \$50 to hold their spot. As vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list or from new registrations according to the above procedures. If after the in-house and alumni registration period, space is available, the person on the waitlist will be contacted. If they choose not to take the spot, they will be moved to the bottom of the waitlist.
- In the case of a family wishing to enroll more than one child when only one vacancy exists, once the family has enrolled in the program, the second child will be given priority status over any prospective members.
- The teacher is available to meet with the parents or guardian of a child with special needs at the time of enrollment. A planning session will be coordinated with the child's parents or guardians, health, and/or education specialists.

The submission of a registration form in no way represents a contract between Ashcreek Playschool and the registering family nor does it guarantee a spot in the requested class. All registrations and placements for the next year are contingent upon the family's fulfillment of all cooperative school requirements for the current year. If a member is not considered in good standing (as defined in the bylaws), Ashcreek Playschool reserves the right to refuse and revoke registration, enrollment, and/or seniority. All waitlist, registration and supply fees are non-refundable.

After this current family enrollment period, enrollment opens to the community. Once the in-house registration deadline passes and enrollment opens to the community, all families are placed on the waitlist and in classes based on a first come, first serve basis. Seniority is forfeited if registration and class placement requests are not submitted during the in-house registration period. In the case where there is a waitlist, students are added into a classroom in order of original registration date and must pay their registration fee within 48 hours of receiving an invoice and being notified of an opening, otherwise they will be placed back at the bottom of the waitlist.

ENROLLMENT FORMS AND REQUIREMENTS

Before any child can attend classes at Ashcreek Playschool, the following forms must be on file:

- Ashcreek Playschool Registration (which includes emergency contacts and photo release) (Online)
- Immunization Record (CIS)+
- Oregon Background Check Form for parent volunteers*

- Parent Responsibilities Checklist
- Permission to Dispense Medication (if applicable)

*required by law annually. The Executive Board will review any issues raised by the background checks.

+It is required by law that you provide your child immunization records and we keep them on file at school. You must be current with the immunizations or your exemption by February or you may jeopardize your membership at Ashcreek Playschool. We are required by law to post our immunization rates.

Parent teachers are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination prior to their first parent teaching shift. Vaccination records can be sent to registrar@ashcreekayschool.com

FEES AND TUITION

Tuition is determined each year by the governing Board based on expenses and enrollment and is due on the first day of each month for the following month's classes. Tuition is considered late after the tenth (10th) day of the month and a late fee of \$25 will be assessed. Full tuition is due each month and is not affected by holidays, vacations, breaks, illnesses, or absences. Children will not be allowed to attend class if tuition has not been paid by the 30th day of the preceding month. If a family's circumstances change and they experience financial hardship, they should request Financial Aid by filling out the Financial Aid Application and turning into the Treasurer (treasurer@ashcreekplayschool.com), a decision will be made within 30 days.

FEES AND TUITION

Monthly Tuition

2 days per week: \$175/month

3 days per week: \$250/month

4 days per week: \$325/month

5 days per week: \$400/month

Drop-In Daily Rate \$30

Sibling Drop-In Rate \$15

After school Program for all other students \$150/month (first come first serve, limited space available)*

Tuition Late Fee (After the 10th of the month) \$25

Returned Check Fee \$20

Multiple Child Discount: First Child is at Full Tuition Rate, 15%* Discount will be applied to the lowest tuition rate.

Registration/Supply Fees* – Non-Refundable

Registration \$150 per Year for First Child (\$100 for each Additional Child)

Student Supply Fee: \$100 per year per child

Fundraising Requirement

\$300 for families with 1 child, and \$450 for families with more than 1 child

Buyout/Member Fees*

Parent Teacher Buy-out Fee \$75

Parent Teacher No-Show Fee \$60

Parent Teacher Late \$1 per minute after 8:40am (up to \$10) **chronic lateness will result in a larger fines**

School Set Up, Mid-Year, or Closing Cleaning Non-Participation Fee: \$75

Missed Business Meetings \$100 each

Committee Non-Compliance Fine TBD by Board of Directors

Late pick-up fee \$1 per minute after 10 minutes, up to \$10

***All Fees Are Subject To Change Annually**

BUYOUT OF PARENT TEACHING SHIFTS

Ashcreek recognizes that families are busy with a variety of commitments and may want to reduce the amount of hours they are working at school, particularly for those whose children attend five days per week or those with multiple children in attendance. On a limited basis, we offer the option to pay a fee to reduce the number of parent teaching shifts you are assigned (buyout). The number of buyout shifts we can offer per month is dependent on assistant teacher availability and may fluctuate with changing

enrollment and will not be guaranteed. Families will be required to volunteer at least 2 days per month per child in the classroom as a minimum. This means that families who have students enrolled only 2 days per week will not typically be allowed to buyout their volunteer shifts on an ongoing basis, however we will allow those families to request up to 3 buyouts per year. Additional buyouts may be allowed, depending on availability, for families who contribute to the school in other ways, such as Board participation, fundraising or school maintenance. Buyouts are intended to allow families to reduce their workload, not eliminate it. If parent teaching does not fit into your family schedule at all then the co-op structure of Ashcreek Playschool is not the right fit for you. Buyouts are \$75 per shift.

MISCELLANEOUS FEES

A member's accounts may be subject to miscellaneous fees for missed business meetings, late tuition payment, not working when scheduled, etc. These fees are due and payable within thirty (30) days of billing. After thirty (30) days of billing, if the amount is not paid, that member's children will not be allowed to attend class until the account is current.

PART 3: MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

Member families are **required** to participate in their child's classroom. Families often choose to have a parent work in the classroom, but some instead designate a representative, other than parents, to work on their behalf in the classroom: Due to COVID-19 restrictions, please make sure your designated representative is consistent over a given month, and individuals that work in the classroom must complete the Oregon Background check.

SCHEDULING

- Scheduling is done on a rotating basis and is flexible.
- Families can expect to work 1 day per month per day that your child is enrolled in (example: if your child attends 4 days a week, you can expect to be scheduled 4 days per month in the classroom).
 - Families with more than 1 child may receive a 1-2 day credit if scheduling allows (example: if you have 1 child in the Azalea room (2 parent teaching shifts) and 1 child in the preschool program (4 days a week, 4 parent teaching shifts) - you would typically expect to work 6 days a month. However, if scheduling allows, you may only be scheduled 4-5 times a month. This is not a guarantee, but completely based on the number of parent teaching shifts needing filled.
- The Scheduler will send out an email including a Google form during the month prior; this will be your opportunity to request a certain day off, if needed.
- If you do not fill this form out, you can be scheduled on *any* day your child attends.
- After the schedule is released, it is your responsibility to find someone to switch or cover your shift.
- All changes in schedule must be communicated to the Teacher and Scheduler (via email).
- All schedules will be posted via Google Calendar and shared via email.
- The Google Calendar is always considered to be the **most** up to date version of the schedule.

*Parents are expected to arrange for a substitute parent teacher if they cannot participate on one of their scheduled days, including in the event your child is sick and will not be in school. In the event of **any** change, you must notify first the Teacher, then the Scheduler, of any changes to your scheduled parent teaching shift. You may contact other parents directly to request a substitute or trade assigned days. Contact the Board regarding substitutes only as a last resort.*

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Co-operative members (one member per family) are required to attend all regularly scheduled business meetings. Meetings are scheduled three times a year in August, October, and January. If you are unable to attend due to an emergency, your Class Representative must be notified within 24 hours prior to the meeting. For in-person business meetings, no children, with the exception of nursing infants. Each business meeting includes a parent education portion. There may be other parent education nights planned throughout the year.

Missed Business meeting will be handled as follows:

- 1st missed meeting = automatic \$100 fine or required 3-hour cleaning shift (to be arranged)

- 2nd missed meeting = one 3-hour cleaning shift, a \$100 fee, **AND** the member must appear before the Board of Directors (or be subject to termination of enrollment)

FUNDRAISING AND SCHOOL PROJECTS

Ashcreek Playschool is a non-profit organization. We strive to keep tuition at a reasonable rate. Tuition only covers our daily operating expenses, if all classes are at capacity. In order to provide the school with educational materials, supplies and equipment, additional funds must come from other sources. The family fundraising requirement for the 2022-2023 school year is **\$300 per family with 1 child and \$450 per family with more than 1 child**. Any remaining balance on your fundraising account will be billed on June 1. The fundraising requirement will be prorated for families who withdraw during the year or enroll late (each month enrolled will be equivalent to \$35-40). Fundraising events have been extremely successful at other cooperative schools because of parents like you, who care about the school and want to provide the best for their children. This enables us to maintain a quality early childhood program for our children that will set the stage for a lifetime of learning.

Our annual/ongoing fundraisers include:

- Auction
- SCRIP, Bottle Drop & Box Tops
- Wreath Sales/Flower Basket Sales
- Pledge-A-Thon
- Employer Matching Funds

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE

Four times per year, a number of days are set aside for organizing and cleaning the school. Each family is required to fulfill three three-hour shifts, for a total of nine hours of cleaning and maintenance. A non-participation fee will be assessed.

- All families must participate in a school start up shift (in August/September)
- Families will be split between Winter Break (December) cleaning shift and Spring Break (March) cleaning shift
- All families must participate in a school closing shift (in June)

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MATERNITY/MEDICAL LEAVE POLICY

Ashcreek offers a pregnancy and postpartum leave in which you would be excused from your classroom participation duties for six consecutive weeks and are excused from one business meeting. This can be scheduled with your Class Representative. You are still required to complete duties associated with your committee position during this leave unless you are granted special consideration (see below). Members may also receive special consideration because of a medical condition and/or other extenuating circumstances approved by the Board of Directors. Requests must be in writing, and contain reason and estimated time of leave. The Director and Board of Directors review requests.

MEMBER NOTIFICATION

All members should familiarize themselves, at the beginning of the year, with member requirements and expectations. A written "Member Notification," will provide notice to members for the following reasons:

- Missed Business Meeting
- Missed Board Meeting
- Late tuition and/or fees
- Not working when scheduled to do so and not securing a substitute to cover you
- Not fulfilling your committee position and tasks required
- Excessive tardiness when scheduled to work in class
- Not fulfilling any other membership requirements

Upon receiving three Member Notifications, your account and membership is reviewed by the Board to determine if further action is required.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND FAMILY JOBS

Each family is required to hold a Board of Director position OR serve on a Committee each year. If you enroll midyear, the Vice President will contact you for Committee placement.

Committee tasks are not to be completed during time as a parent teacher. Committee Chairs should instruct members to make other arrangements to complete tasking, such as before or after school, on a weekend, or a morning when they are not a parent teaching.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors volunteer their different skills and interests to work as a team. The Board is the governing body of the school, responsible for the functioning of the school and ensuring its financial viability for the future. Board members should make decisions in the best interests of the school.

Positions are as follows:

- Executive Board:
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Registrar

- Other Board Members:
 - Fundraising Chair
 - Maintenance Chair
 - PCPO Representative
 - Class Representative(s)
 - Health and Safety Chair

If all positions are not filled and the Board has actively tried to fill the available positions, the Board may carry on with “business as usual” including full voting capability to enact or change policy. For a complete list of the Board positions and responsibilities please refer to the Bylaws.

The Board is made up of elected officers who meet once each month. Board members can be parents of currently enrolled children or alumni. Each officer shall keep records of the year’s activities and make recommendations for the following year.

The Board exercises the right to review and/or terminate any family’s membership for failure to comply with the rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook (i.e., failing to work on scheduled work days, failing to attend the business meetings, failing to participate in the fundraisers, etc.).

ASHCREEK FAMILY JOB POSITIONS

The following list is not complete, the Board of Directors reserves the right to add family jobs and committees as needed, change duties as needed, and prioritize which positions need filled first. A full list of family job descriptions and which members hold each job can be found on our website each year. Each job reports back to 1 Board Member as well.

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
- Communications
- Social Media
- Purchasing
- Marketing & Videographer
- Auction Committee

- Fundraising Committee (Scrip, wreaths, flower baskets, pledge-a-thon, grant writing, etc)
- Maintenance Committee
- Garden Committee
- Laundry Parents
- Event Coordinator
- Playdoh Parent
- Memory & Photobook Organizer

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Occasionally, grievances may arise between members of the Ashcreek Playschool, including member families and staff. The following sets forth the school's guidelines for settling disputes and grievances:

- Settle the matter informally: Ashcreek strongly urges members and staff to attempt to resolve any grievances amicably, informally, and privately. Please attempt to do this off school property and outside of school hours.
- Class Representatives: If you would rather speak to another parent, your class representative is an excellent mediator.
- Bring a grievance to the Board: In the event that the grievance cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the matter will be brought to the Board for discussion and resolution.
- Communication: Written or verbal communication to Class Representatives, or Board of Directors (bod@ashcreekplayschool.com)

PART 4: PARENT TEACHING GUIDELINES

This section describes parent teacher responsibilities in the classroom, including guiding students' behavior, Ashcreek policies on discipline, siblings in the classroom and emergency procedures.

COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

On August 22, 2021, the Board of Directors voted to require **all parent teachers** to provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 prior to being allowed to parent teach. Proof of vaccination must be provided to the Registrar, beginning September 7, 2021. Parents who are unable to provide vaccination proof due to medical exemption must provide said exemption to the Registrar by the same time. Testing, in lieu of vaccination, is permitted for parent teachers. Proof of a negative COVID test must be provided to the Registrar within 24 hours of each parent teaching shift. For additional questions, please contact the Board of Directors at bod@ashcreekplayschool.com.

CLASSROOM MAINTENANCE

Parent teachers are responsible for helping set up and maintain the classroom. Parent teachers must arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the class to assist in setting up and getting activities ready. During cleanup time, parent teachers should put up paintbrushes and paint and then direct students where to place toys and classroom items, ensuring everything is returned to the right place.

Prior to snack, parent teachers clean the tables with the hydrogen peroxide spray found in the classroom. After snack, parent teachers ensure students clean up and put away their snack and assist if necessary.

Before leaving, parent teachers clean up the classroom. Typical tasks include:

- Wipe the tables and chairs again
- Wash any dishes
- Clean paint brushes and cover paint
- Vacuum
- Each day part of the classroom must also be dusted and sanitized, using the hydrogen peroxide solution.

The chart posted in the classroom indicates which area should be sanitized each day of the week and other specific cleaning assignments. The cleaning instructions are subject to change throughout the year, parents are expected to follow written instructions posted in the class. Parent teachers are responsible for communicating with each other if they will split the duties or who will do which cleaning tasks. Classroom cleaning may be done while students are being supervised outside, only at the discretion of the teacher, ensuring that there is adequate supervision on the playground.

STUDENT BATHROOM POLICY

When students need to use the restroom outside of designated breaks, a parent teacher or teacher must accompany them. Whenever possible, only one child should leave the classroom to use the restroom. Only one child allowed per stall at a time. Students must wash their hands before returning to class. **If a student needs help changing diapers, pull-ups, or clothes – the teacher must be the one to help, not the parent teacher (unless it is the child's parent).**

SIBLING PARTICIPATION

Children ages 0-8 years old may attend with you on parent teaching days only if you have pre-registered them as students of the school and signed up for that day. To ensure any accidents are covered by insurance the school needs a registration fee paid and registration form filled out for each student on campus. Siblings must pay a discounted drop in rate of \$15 per day to attend; this fee is waived for non-walking infants. You must let the teacher and Scheduler know the sibling will be attending as soon as you can to maintain the desired parent child ratio. Younger siblings will be assigned to be in the 2's and Young 3's classroom on days when that class is in session. The sibling will be treated just like another member of the class (unless they are an infant), older siblings will be treated as special helpers to help engage them in the class. As a parent teacher with a sibling present, you are still required to do all of the general parent teaching duties.

STUDENT INTERACTION AND PLAY

One of the great benefits of a co-op preschool is the parent education and participation of families in the classroom. The teachers will provide training and ongoing support for parent teachers as they engage with children, using principles consistent with our Ashcreek Playschool philosophies and guidelines. This is a great time to create memories with your child, get to know their peers and other parents in the school, and to enjoy playschool together. Ask the teacher for help with recommendations.

Parent teachers are asked to remember that this space is intentionally crafted for the children to learn and grow. Stay focused on the class; **cell phone use is not allowed during class.** (Upon approval from the teacher, please step out to take any urgent phone calls).

During open play in the morning, parent teachers are encouraged to read the students, engage in dramatic play, and encourage students to play with any of the materials available in the classroom. The main goal during this open playtime is to ensure students are able to explore safely and choose activities for themselves. Oftentimes parent teachers must help students communicate and negotiate with one another and when conflicts arise.

Encourage children to play or participate in activities during non-directed playtime, however it's okay if a child wants to sit quietly and watch, let them. Above all, do not try to entertain the child by doing things for them. Inspire creative play.

Do not always insist that children finish an activity before going on to another. Children's attention spans are often very short. Allow them to stop and put away materials at any time (with assistance if necessary).

During outside play, parent teachers should ensure students are playing safely within the designated area and assist students on the swings, playscape, with toys, etc.

During circle time, help students stay engaged and prevent students from distracting others. If a student is distracted or distracting others, the story or teacher instructions, we silently remind them to pay attention and if needed, a parent teacher can take the student aside until they are ready to sit and participate.

Here are some additional guidelines for student interaction and play:

- Make directions clear and precise
- Use visual clues often
- Avoid interrupting
- Find out what is relevant to the child
- Use appropriate physical and verbal signs of affection often
- Acknowledge the child and let them know you are listening to them
- Remain aware of the expected behavior at various ages at all times. We do not expect 2 year olds to act like 4 year olds

- Try not to play favorites, as much as possible treat all children the same even though it is natural to feel more positively toward some children than others. On the other hand, if your own child is in your area try not to be harder on them or expect more from them than from the other children.
- Pay attention to what is going on at all times. Do not become too involved in conversation with other adults or children
- Try to remain in the background as much as possible. Do not become the center or director of children’s activities. You are there primarily to supervise and observe.
- Do not discuss a child with other adults in the children’s presence.
- Get down to the children’s level when you talk to them. Squat, kneel or sit on a low chair at their eye level.
- Children constantly have the need for POWER: Provide lots of activities that include getting POWER and let children take risks. Offer choices.
- Remain calm if children are hurt or injured. If you get upset and emotional the children will do so also.
- Save any non-urgent questions or concerns for the teacher until after school, class is not the time for those adult-to-adult conversations.
- Above all, relax. Be cheerful. Smile. Cultivate a sense of humor. Laugh with and enjoy the children.

STUDENT SAFETY

- The classroom doors can be opened to improve airflow, however, all gates in the hallway must be closed and locked
- The gate to the Juniper classroom must remain closed
- Do not prop open the exterior door, except during pick up and drop off times
- Parent teachers should count students at least every 15 minutes as well as every transition, example: Circle Time begin/end. Especially, outside to inside count before students leave and as they arrive playground as example
- Before class begins fill in the student count form (posted on the teacher cabinet) with the number of expected students for the day
- After drop off fill out how many children are currently present, and update as needed

HANDLING CONFLICTS BETWEEN STUDENTS

Conflicts are very common among preschoolers, and provide excellent opportunities for children to learn how to communicate and develop empathy, delayed gratification and problem solving. Below are some common conflicts and guidance on how to handle them.

- Avoid rushing in to help a child. Allow the children, as much as possible, to solve their own problems with other children or with materials. However, if you see a child is becoming frustrated or upset, ask if they need help.
- Always listen to both sides of the controversy. You may have only seen half of the situation, and the child who looks like the victim may have actually caused the problem.
- Never initiate competition between children. Don’t ever point out how much better another child can do an activity.
- Sharing/Taking Turns: Sharing can be a challenging skill to learn, and school provides many opportunities for practice! Avoid saying, “we share our toys in school” or encouraging a child to give up materials they are still using. The child keeps the toy until they are finished.
- When multiple students want the same toy, encourage them to take turns, by telling the student who wants the object to ask the other student if he can have a turn when the other finishes. This gives the first child control and helps the second child learn delayed gratification.
- **Altercations:** Children are not allowed to hit, bite, or scratch other children (or adults) under any circumstance. Children who are wronged are encouraged to use verbal rather than physical force, such as, “Tell Gwen that it is your shovel and ask her to wait until you are through.” Don’t make judgments on what children say.
- **Communicating:** Interpreting one child’s actions to another is sometimes needed. “Hayden is trying to help you. They did not mean to knock down your blocks.” Children are encouraged to stand up for their own rights. It is legitimate for a child to hold on to a toy that another child unjustly tries to snatch away or to ward off any offender by pushing them away. Encourage the timid child to stick up for themselves— don’t always step in to protect them. **EXAMPLE:** Children don’t always have words to express their feelings: help talk them through it.
- **Including/Excluding:** Try to discourage children from excluding other children from play activities by suggesting some way the child can be included. “Maybe Paul can be the uncle or grandpa,” “There is room for 4 in the boat,” or “How about letting Janie be the building inspector?” Try to discourage the dependence of one child on another special friend by suggesting activities with different children whenever possible.

GUIDING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Parent teachers are responsible for helping students understand and follow school rules. When students do not follow the rules, state the appropriate behavior, for example, “when the clean up music comes on we stop playing and clean up” or “we do not throw play dough; we keep it on the table.” Explain the rule as needed. **EXAMPLE** “these toys are hard, they will hurt if they hit someone, so we need to keep them in our hands.”

Help the children put away materials. Even if they end up doing most of the work, children are not nearly as overwhelmed by the job initially if you say, “I will help you,” “Let’s put the blocks away now,” or “Do you want to do it yourself or would you like some help?”

Do not ask children to help you put toys away. Make it clear that it is the child’s responsibility to put toys away after they have used them but that you will help them. “You can paint as soon as the blocks are put away.”

Relate to the child- “It’s hard to clean up. I have days I just don’t want to do all the dishes/laundry. So I choose one small thing I can do and ask others for help. How about you choose 1 toy to put away and I can help with the rest?”

Here are some additional guidelines:

- Do not shout or yell to children across the room. Approach a child, make sure you have their attention, then give directions or make suggestions.
- There must be no throwing of equipment or materials (except balls and bean bags).
- Before asking a child to change what they are doing you can say, “You are welcome to play blocks with us as long as you aren’t throwing them.”
- Do not push being “big” too much or tell a child they are acting like a baby. Expect a child to cry when they are hurt or unhappy.
- Treat the children as you like to be treated. Use “please” and “thank you.” Children learn by imitation. “Please clean up the blocks.” “Your feet belong on the floor, thank you.”
- Use the words “let’s” and “we” often. They give a sense of togetherness.

DISCIPLINE

Our parent teaching philosophy and purpose encompasses compassionate and supportive interaction with our children. Corporal punishment is *not* an accepted method of dealing with young children’s behavior at Ashcreek. Children will not be hit, slapped, spanked, verbally or emotionally abused in any manner while attending this school or on school grounds. Rather, as parent teachers, we use positive reinforcement techniques. While our school teachers respect the right of every parent to discipline their own child in their own way (except where child abuse or neglect is suspected), parents who participate in the school may not hit or use name calling at any child, including their own. At times it is preferable to allow the teacher to suggest appropriate responses to a child’s behavior.

The policies of our school regarding discipline do not mean that we permit inappropriate behavior. Instead, we work to change behavior by modeling or redirection. Some of these techniques include:

- Developing with children rules that are stated to the children at their developmental level.
- The use of natural or logical consequences.
- Having age-appropriate expectations for children.
- Allowing children time to practice new guidelines.
- Ignoring some kinds of inappropriate behavior. Misbehaving can be an attempt to get attention. The more attention the child gets, the more likely it is that the behavior will be repeated.
- Reinforcing desirable behavior by praising and encouraging the child. When the child realizes that attention comes from appropriate behavior, that behavior is more likely to continue. Children are most likely to respond to attempts to discipline them when the adults involved are consistent; that is, when every adult who disciplines the child uses similar techniques.

One of the many goals of Ashcreek Playschool is to work together with parents to help children develop appropriate behavior. Parents are invited and urged to discuss their concerns about their children’s behavior with teachers during private parent conferences.

Below are several guidelines for providing limitations and discipline in the classroom.

- Be positive! Try as much as possible to eliminate the words “no,” “don’t,” “can’t,” “quit,” “bad,” etc., from your vocabulary while in the classroom.
- Tell children what they can do, not what they can’t do:
 - Instead of: Say:
 - Don’t sit on the table; Chairs are for sitting
 - Don’t hit the puzzle with the hammer; You may hit the pegs with the hammer
 - Quit hitting Andi. It hurts Andi when you hit them; Tell them if they are doing something you don’t like
 - Don’t throw the clay; You may play with the clay on the table.
 - You may throw the bean bags inside or we will find you a ball to throw when we go outside
 - Be quiet we use inside voices when we are inside; You may yell when we go outside
- Unless a child is hurting themselves, another child or toys and equipment, try as much as possible to ignore inappropriate behavior. Pay attention to children when they are behaving appropriately.
 - EXAMPLE You have asked the children to put away the toys, after reminding Jeff several times, he still isn’t helping. Name the children who are helping and be sure to recognize Jeff if he puts away even one toy. (After a while he will want to earn your praise by helping.) “Jaspreet is putting blocks away, and Maria is cleaning the table.”
- When a child is being disciplined, always tell them how and when the consequence will end. “You may go back to the sandbox when you are ready to play without throwing sand,” “You can join us when you have calmed down.”
- Try to help the child who is being disciplined understand that you do not like what they are doing, but that you still like them.
- If a child hurts another child ask them if they would like to tell the other child that they are sorry. However, do not force a child to say they are sorry. When they are not, nothing will be gained by saying they are. You can model that you are sorry, “I’m sorry Billy hit you.”
- Let one adult handle a situation to the finish whenever possible. Do not “gang up” on a child. If you want the teacher’s assistance, however, always feel free to ask.
- Once a child has been disciplined, do not continue to try to make them feel guilty. When it is over, let it drop.
- Never hit or spank a child! This includes your own, not even in the parking lot. There may be times that an angry child needs to be restrained, but try to do it in a calm fashion, or let the teacher do it.
- Do not feel responsible for disciplining your own child while they are at school. Allow the adults who are supervising their area to guide them if necessary. (Try to treat them as you would any other child.)
- When you become irritated and upset, the children usually get worse, not better. If you find yourself getting angry, count to 10 or leave the area temporarily.
- Try to anticipate problems rather than waiting for them to happen. Often just moving close to a possible problem situation calms the children.
- When you see a child behaving inappropriately, tell them what they are doing wrong, explain to them the consequences if they continue, and then follow through if they continue the behavior.
 - EXAMPLE Vanessa is throwing sand. Go to her and tell her , “Sand is not for throwing. You are welcome to play in the sandbox as long as the sand stays low.” If she continues to throw sand, tell her to go to another activity.
- Generally the only punishment used in the school is removal from a desired activity. Continued disobedience may require placing a child temporarily on the chair or bench, but this is usually not necessary.
- Help a child to find an outlet for their hostility or anger. “You feel like hitting something, you may hit the pegs with the hammer,” “Tell Pete that you are angry with him.”
- If a child sulks after some difficulty or after being disciplined, ignore it. You may suggest a new activity, but not in a manner of pacifying the child. If they refuse to join the activity, ignore the sulking; do not reinforce it with further attention.
- Look for genuine opportunities for fun with, or appreciation of, a child you have had to discipline. It helps them to like themselves again and to believe that you still like them.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING PROCEDURE

The Director and Staff of Ashcreek Playschool are required by law (ORS 329A.255) to report suspected child abuse/neglect in child’s home, facility or elsewhere to a reporting agency, such as the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-275-8952) or Child Protective Services. Failure to report is a misdemeanor per ORS 329A.255. Staff is trained in reporting requirements.

CPR AND FIRST AID

Ashcreek Playschool teachers are trained in CPR and First Aid. Certifications are located in their employee files.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our teachers are trained in emergency procedures through state requirement to have biennially training in first aid and CPR training. The child's parent, guardian or authorized person shall be notified immediately in the event of a serious accident or illness requiring emergency care. We discuss safety issues on an ongoing basis.

Primary Evacuation Site
Southwest Bible Church
14605 SW Weir Rd
Beaverton, OR 97007

Secondary Evacuation Site
Safeway
14555 SW Teal Blvd
Beaverton, OR 97007

Emergency evacuation procedures are posted in the classroom. All Ashcreek parent teachers are required to review these drawings and follow the exit routes indicated in the event of an emergency.

PARENT RESOURCES

Play Today?

*You say you love your children, and are concerned they learn today?
So am I - That's why I'm providing A variety of kinds of play.
You're asking me the value of blocks and other such play?
Your children are solving problems. They will use that skill each day.
You're asking what's the value Of having your children play?
Your daughter's creating a tower; she may be a builder someday.
You're saying you don't want your son To play in that "sissy" way?
He's learning to cuddle a doll; He may be a father someday.
You're questioning the interest centers; they look like useless play?
Your children are making choices; They'll be on their own someday.
You're worried your children aren't learning And later they'll have to pay?
They're learning a pattern for learning; For they will be learners always.*
Leila P. Fagg

ABC'S and 123'S EARLIER IS NOT BETTER

Many parents are concerned when their children aren't practicing letters and numbers. They feel that ditto sheets and homework will prepare their children for elementary school. We could give your children workbooks. We could make them memorize the alphabet. We could drill them. We could test them. But if we do, your children may lose something very important.

Children who are rushed into reading and writing too soon miss important steps in learning and may suffer later on because they lack the foundation they need for using language. Children who are taught to read before they are ready may be able to sound out and recognize words, but they also have little understanding of what they are reading. If they haven't been given time to play, They won't have explored objects enough to know what words (like "hard, harder, and hardest") mean. If they aren't allowed to string beads, button, dress up, cut, paste, pour, and draw, they won't develop the small muscle skills they need for writing.

Because math involves more than memorizing facts (like $2+2=4$), because it involves logical thinking, children shouldn't be pushed into paper and pencil arithmetic too soon. To acquire the foundation for logical thinking, children need many opportunities to count objects, sort them into piles, and add some to a pile and take some away. It is by playing games like these that they will learn to truly understand addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. Without these concrete experiences, children may give correct answers but probably won't understand what they are doing and why.

Worst of all, if children are rushed into academic subjects too soon, they may lose their enthusiasm for learning and lose their sense of themselves as learners. If children are told what to learn and memorize by the teacher, they may become more passive and dependent learners, and be less excited about learning something new.

Children who are given plenty of time to play, however, learn to ask their own questions and figure out their own answers. They are responsible for their own learning. They see themselves as explorers, discoverers, problem solvers, and inventors.

The Language of Encouragement Phrases that communicate confidence: "Knowing you, I'm sure you'll do fine." "You'll make it." "I have confidence in your judgment." "That's a rough one, but I'm sure you'll work it out." "You'll figure it out." "What do you think?" "Keep trying; you can do it." "Just a little more and you'll have it!" "Would you like to tell me about what you have done?"

Phrases that focus on contributions, assets, and appreciation: “Thanks; that helped a lot.” “It was thoughtful of you to.” “Thanks, I really appreciate it, because it makes the job easier.” “I need your help.” “You have skill. Would you do that for the family?”

Phrases that recognize effort and improvement: “It looks as if you really worked hard on that.” “It looks as if you spent a lot of time thinking that through.” “I see that you’re moving along.” “You’re really improving…” (Be specific) “I can see the effort that went into this.”

Phrases that value the child as they are: “I’m glad you enjoy.” “I like the way you handled that.” “I’m glad you’re pleased.” “It looks as if you enjoyed that.” “How do you feel about that?” “Since you’re not satisfied, what do you think you can do so that you will be?” “I love you, it’s (a specific behavior) I don’t like.” “I guess you made a mistake. What can you do about it?” “You are very special.” “I love you.” “You’re a neat kid, you know that?”

Phrases that stimulate independence: “How do you think we should do this?” “You can handle it.” “You’re getting able to take care of that yourself now.” “Would you like to practice?” “Would you like to?”

Thank you for the work you are putting in as a member of the Ashcreek Playschool community. We look forward to seeing you and your child in the classroom!”