

ASHLAND-GREENWOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM



PARENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022

Ashland-Greenwood Early Childhood Program

GOAL

The goal of the AG Early Childhood Program is to provide high quality early childhood education in a positive and nurturing environment for all children. The program promotes social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical and aesthetic development and learning for children and promotes family development and support. This inclusive preschool program serves children of all races, ethnicities, and abilities whose parents desire a preschool experience for their child. Ashland-Greenwood does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age or handicap in admission or access to, or treatment of, or employment in its programs and activities. All information is confidential. Preschool serves as the first step to help your child grow into a life-long learner and responsible citizen.



Ashland-Greenwood Early Childhood Program

Who may attend?

Preschool is open to all children who turn 4 before July 31st. All families are encouraged to apply, however, due to limited space there may be a waiting list. If space is available, some exceptions will be made for children that are 3 years old by July 31st. Children who are eligible for kindergarten may not attend our early childhood program.

Where is AG Early Childhood located?

Within the Ashland-Greenwood Elementary building at 1200 Boyd Street

When is Preschool?

Classes are held for approximately 3 hours, 4 days per week for a minimum of 450 hours over the school year. Additional days of preschool may be planned on Fridays throughout the school year.

We have two sessions: 8:00 am – 11:20 am and 12:00 pm – 3:20 pm.

We may not be able to honor all parent requests for session times.

What will my child learn?

The AG Early Childhood program uses Creative Curriculum, a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, that addresses all areas of development, and is aligned with the standards for learning set by our district and the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines.

We measure the quality of our program through self-assessment procedures using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale as well as independent evaluations, completed by the Nebraska Department of Education.

We will measure child outcomes and progress using Teaching Strategies GOLD, an authentic measure that uses daily observations of children, which are used to guide student learning.

What services does the AG Early Childhood Program provide?

Each class is taught by a teacher who is certified to teach young children. Support to the teacher and the children is provided by one paraprofessional and other support staff which includes but is not limited to supervisors, elementary principal, special education providers, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, district special education director, and a school psychologist.

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ABSENCES - If your child is absent or ill, it is necessary for you to **call 402-944-7083** to inform us of your child's absence and the reason for it. The secretary at this number will let the Early Childhood teacher know your child will be gone. This is for your child's safety. If a child must leave early for a doctor's appointment, go to the office to sign him/her out and the secretary will call him/her to the office.

If your child is not in preschool and the teacher has not been informed of the absence, school personnel will make a reasonable effort to contact the parents or emergency contacts to ensure that your child is safe and where they are supposed to be.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

Morning class—8:00 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.

Afternoon class—12:00 p.m. 3:20 p.m.

ATTENDANCE — A key factor in making each child's school experience a success is regular school attendance. Parents/guardians should notify the school before, or as early as possible, on the morning of the child's absence or late arrival.



BIRTHDAYS - Birthdays are special occasions for young children. We will do special, in class, celebrations for each child on his/her birthday. Families may provide birthday treats for the class. Party invitations will not be allowed to be handed out in school unless they are for the entire class.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES – A certified copy of your child's birth certificate is required and should be provided to the school prior to your child's first school day. A copy will be made and the certified copy will

be returned to you.



CALENDAR - A calendar has been developed that has all of the important dates for the Early Childhood Program. Any changes to the calendar will be communicated with parents throughout the year.

CONFERENCES - Parent/Teacher conferences are held at school two times a year. Conferences are held in the fall and spring. These conferences are in addition to the two home visits. The school will send home notes to let you know when your conference is scheduled. We will discuss your child's accomplishments, strengths,

and overall progress. Please feel free to schedule additional conferences at any time throughout the year if the need arises.



DISCIPLINE - Our classroom is a small community where teamwork and respectful relationships are expected. We will spend time learning and practicing classroom and school procedures. Each child is expected to act within safe and productive standards of behavior. To establish a positive learning and play environment, the children will be guided to respect themselves and their companions through specific directions, positive reinforcement, suggested new activities and age-appropriate consequences.

DISMISSAL — If your child is not picked up after class has dismissed, efforts will be made to contact the parent, or emergency contacts. Children will not be released to people that are not on your child's emergency contact sheet. If the person is unknown to staff, he/she will be asked to show identification. **It is VERY important that the preschool has current phone numbers of parents and emergency contacts.**



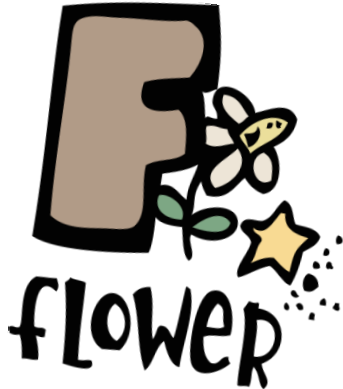
DISTRICT ALERTS- The school uses an automated calling system to contact households regarding school postponements, school closings, school emergencies and other school related announcements. It is important to inform the school of any changes in phone numbers.

E-MAIL - You can contact your child's teacher via their email address: (first name.last name@agps.org) which is checked on a daily basis. If you need to discuss something urgent, please call

the school or send a note.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION - Please update emergency contacts promptly. *If your home or work phone number changes, or your contact numbers change, PLEASE inform the office as soon as possible so you can be located quickly if an emergency occurs.*

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS – Inclement weather may result in school closing, a delayed opening or early dismissal. If the weather is threatening, please tune in to an Omaha or Lincoln TV or radio station. The media will provide up-to-date school closing information on their website or on air. Please remember that when inclement weather exists, it is not always easy to make contact with all the media contacts. It is recommended that you use several media contacts. The district's automated calling system and district website will also be used to communicate school closings. Should the school have a delayed opening (late start), both the morning and afternoon preschool sessions will be cancelled. If school is dismissed early due to poor weather conditions, the afternoon session will not be held.



FAMILY - Families play the central role in their child's development. Engaging families with their child's preschool experience is essential to maximize learning. There will be many opportunities for families to work with their preschooler throughout the year. Some ways that we build the family-school relationship include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Two home visits—one at the beginning of the year and one in January.
- Communication—we will communicate with you via notes, e-mails, phone calls and conversations.
- Family activities—flyers will be sent home throughout the year to inform you of family activities that will happen at school.
- Early Childhood Advisory Committee - a group of parents collaborate with preschool staff and community providers that meet together and discuss current preschool happenings and events that are relevant to EEC. Three or more meetings are held each year.
- Parent and Teacher Organization (PTO) – AG PTO is a non-profit group consisting of parents, guardians, school staff and community members dedicated to providing Ashland-Greenwood Elementary with funds, programs and services that will enrich and maximize the education of every child.

FIRE DRILLS - Fire drills are held throughout the year. All children will participate and are expected to exit quickly and quietly to their designated exit. We will practice and become familiar with procedures before our first scheduled drill. Sometimes these drills cause anxiety for kids, so we spend a lot of time talking about why we do fire drills. We learn that we do them so that we are safe in case there is a real fire.

FOOD ALLERGY - If a child has identified food or drink allergies, or medical conditions that require a modification in diet, the school may provide food and drink that takes this into account. For the school to provide dietary substitutions, a doctor's note is required stating the allergy or dietary requirements.





HEALTH - Health conditions that could affect your child's safety or well-being at school may be shared with school staff on a need-to-know basis. Examples of health issues that could be shared include diabetes, seizures, peanut allergy, asthma and medications that might have a side effect at school (drowsiness, behavioral changes).

Normal good health practices should be used at all times. The school's goal is to keep your child in school while not putting other children at risk. Children feeling uncomfortable or not well to the extent that the child is unable to accomplish normal activities should not be in school.

First aid will be administered by the school nurse or personnel with first-aid training whenever possible. If a serious illness or injury takes place at school, the parents will be notified. If a parent cannot be reached at home or work, the child's emergency contact person will be contacted. The city emergency unit will be called in cases of a serious injury or illness.

The following Nebraska State Health Guidelines will be used when assessing a student's health:

- Children with a temperature of 100 degrees or more should not be in school. A child may not return until they have been without a fever for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- Children with serious communicable/infectious diseases must have a doctor's permission slip to return to school in accordance with State Health Guidelines. Diseases included are:
 - Hepatitis A
 - Tuberculosis
 - Measles
 - Mumps
 - Rubella
- Children with chicken pox will be excluded from school for no less than 6 days (day of onset of specific symptoms is counted as day "0", the day after is day "1") after the appearance of the first crop of vesicles, and the child is without fever and the vesicles are dry.
- Children with some communicable/infectious diseases cannot remain in school. Examples of these diseases are:
 - Streptococcal Infections (strep throat, scar Latina)
 - Pinkeye (conjunctivitis)
 - Scabies

A minimum of 24 hours exclusion and proof of treatment will be required before a child having this type of disease can attend school.

- Children with some diseases must have a doctor's permission slip or evidence of treatment (proof of medication) to re-enter school. Examples of these diseases include:
 - Impetigo
 - Ringworm

- Head Lice – Children identified as having head lice will be excluded from school until they receive appropriate treatment. They may return to school with proof of treatment and determined to be lice and nit free by a school representative.
- Children with an unidentified rash who are without fever (under 100 degrees) and feeling well, may stay in school. When a rash is observed, parents must be notified of the rash. Rashes persisting longer than 3 days require proof of medical evaluation. Some rashes may require immediate exclusion and proof of medical evaluation.
- Children will be sent home if they are vomiting or have diarrhea regardless of whether or not they have a temperature elevation. A child may not return to school until 24 hours symptom free.
- In the event it becomes known that a child is infected with a chronic infectious disease not commonly associated with casual transmittal (i.e. hepatitis, rheumatic fever, mononucleosis and HIV) and any changes in the educational program of a child is needed, this will be handled on a case-by-case basis, relying on the best scientific and medical advice available.

HOME VISITS - Teachers will visit every family at their home two (2) times during the school year. These visits will typically happen in August and in January. During the first visit the teachers are getting to know you and your family. At the second visit information will be shared about your child's progress.



ILLNESS - The question of when to keep your child home from school is often a difficult one, especially when decisions must be made first thing in the morning. It is important, however, to keep your child home if he/she is ill. This helps to make them more comfortable and prevents others from becoming ill. Children function more effectively in the classroom when they are healthy. Please remember that your child may not come to school with a temperature. Children may not come back to school until he/she has been fever free, without medications, for 24

hours. Please see health issues listed – Page 8.

Immunizations - Children in Nebraska may only enroll in and attend school if they are protected against communicable diseases and conditions such as measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus, by immunization prior to enrollment (Revised Statute, Chapter 79-217). The following are the vaccines children need prior to attending preschool for the 2017-2018 school year:

- 4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT vaccine,
- 3 doses of Polio vaccine,
- 3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 months of age (Hib not required after child reaches 5 yrs of age),
- 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine,
- 1 dose of MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age,

1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age, written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian or health care provider will be accepted.

4 doses of pneumococcal or 1 dose of pneumococcal given on or after 15 months of age (Pneumococcal not required after child reaches 5 years of age).



LIBRARY TIME – Children will have library one time per week. They will have story time and be able to check out a book. It's important for the book to be returned each week.

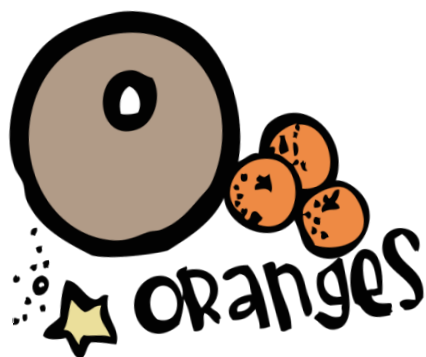
MANDATORY REPORTERS - The law requires that every member on staff at the AG Early Childhood Program report any sign of child abuse or neglect. This includes proper safety restraints, or leaving younger children in vehicles while picking up your preschooler. If staff sees abuse or neglect they are required under state law to report.

MEDICATIONS - Products will be used at the discretion of the school nurse or other trained personnel. - Over the counter medication products may be used in the school health office for personal hygiene, skin care, first aid, or for therapeutic purposes. These products may be used without specific consent and are provided by the school.

NEWSLETTER - Newsletters will be sent home electronically or in paper to keep families informed about what is happening in class.

OH, WOW!!!! - You will be constantly amazed at the changes your child will be making this year. We will be learning and growing DAILY! Preschool is the key to kicking off your child's learning career. It is the year all of their

learning beliefs are set in stone. Please help us in making this a very fun, beneficial, exciting, and positive year!



OUTSIDE - Children will go outside as long as the weather is appropriate for outdoor play. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing for cold and warm weather play (coats, ear/head covering, mittens or gloves, and boots when necessary).

*****Please note that preschoolers may not play on the school playgrounds between 11:20am-12:00pm. The playgrounds are reserved for K-5th grade use at this time. The playgrounds are open to our families and the community after 3:30pm.***

PAYMENT – Ashland-Greenwood Early Childhood program has a minimal cost to families for children to attend our program. Fees collected are used to cover the costs of meals and services to children and families and to help defray costs for our comprehensive program. The following fees will be used for the upcoming school year.



Tier I – Full Tuition

\$150 per month for 9 months (September – May)

Tier II - One enrollment priority*

\$100 per month for 9 months (September – May)

Tier III – At least two enrollment priorities*,
or students who receive Special Education Services,
or qualify for free lunch or reduced meals
\$0 per month

Enrollment priorities include:

- Child has special education verification (IEP)
- Qualification for the free or reduced lunch program
- Mother under 18 years of age at child's birth
- Home language is not English
- Child's birth weight was under five pounds at birth (doctor verified)
- Child is in foster care or is a ward of the court (legal documentation required)

Tuition is due on the first day of the program and at the beginning of each month starting September 1. The last payment is due on May 1. If tuition is not received by the tenth day of the month, a reminder will be provided to families. Failure to remit payment for program tuition may result in discontinued enrollment, unless extenuating circumstances are discussed with the building principal.

PICTURES - AG Elementary contracts annually to have pictures taken of school children early in the school year. Information regarding prices, times and dates are distributed by notes from the school.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS - The administration of medication at school is discouraged except when necessary for the child's health or education. The dosage intervals of many medications can be adjusted so the times for taking medication come outside school hours. When possible, interval adjustment should be considered before administering medication at school. All medications administered by school district personnel shall be administered in accordance with Medication Aide Act.

- A. **Authorization for Prescription Medications** - Prescription medications which must be administered during school hours may be administered when the following are on file at school:
1. A caretaker's signed and dated authorization/permission to administer the medication during school, which included the reason the child is receiving the medication. (Note: all references to "caretaker" in this policy shall also include a parent, foster parent, family member or legal guardian; it shall not include a friend or child provider).
 2. The medication is in its original packaging and is labeled as dispensed by the prescriber or pharmacist. The label must name the child and identify the medication, administering physician, strength, dosage, time interval and route to be administered. Two labeled containers may be requested: one for home and one for school. If needed, the physician may be contacted for clarification on medication administration.
- B. **Authorization for Non-Prescription Medications** - If a regular education child must take non-prescription medication during school, procedure 1 above is to be followed before administration, and the medication must be provided in its original container.
- C. **Authorizations** - Medication authorizations must be renewed annually and updated immediately as changes occur.

QUESTIONS - We want to make sure that you have a positive year at the Ashland-Greenwood Early Childhood Program. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact:



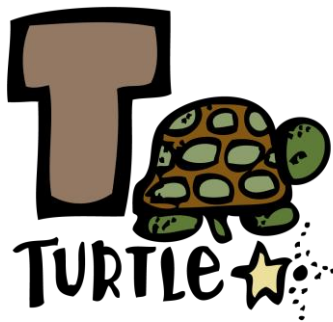
Erin Rathe, Early Childhood teacher
(erin.rathe@agps.org)
Darcy Carey, Program Coordinator & Special Education teacher
(darcy.carey@agps.org)
Teresa Bray, Elementary Principal
(teresa.bray@agps.org)
Kristin Fangmeyer, Director of Student Services
(kristin.fangmeyer@agps.org)



RESTROOMS - We have restrooms in the classroom. We encourage children to use the restroom and have adults in the room remind children as well. Please continue to work on restroom skills: flushing the toilet, getting dressed and washing hands.



SUPPLIES - The school provides all necessary supplies for students. Special requests may be made by the classroom teacher for special projects (milk jugs, paper towel tubes, etc.). Assistance with these supplies is appreciated but not mandatory.



TOYS - Toys may be brought to school if used for a show and share assignment. Toy weapons shall not be allowed in the preschool setting at any time; please do not allow the child to bring any toy/item that could be perceived as a weapon.



NOTICE OF DISCRIMINATION

Ashland-Greenwood School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The Building Principal has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies.

ELE: (402) 944-7083

For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education (OCR), please contact the OCR at 601 East 12th Street, Room 353, Kansas City, MO 64106, (800) 368-1019 (voice), Fax (816)426-3686, (800)537-7697 (telecommunications device for the deaf), ocr.kansascity@ed.gov.

PRESCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGREEMENT

It is very important for a child to attend preschool regularly in order to benefit from the services provided. It is your responsibility as a parent and/or caregiver, to notify the school that your child will be absent and give a reason why.

If your child is absent and you have not notified the school you will receive a call from the school to check on your child's absence. If persistent absenteeism occurs with no explanation, your child's enrollment may be reviewed.

Please notify the school of your child's absence within 20 minutes of the beginning of preschool so that we can plan meals accordingly. If your child will be over 20 minutes late to school please feed them breakfast or lunch before bringing them UNLESS you have made arrangements prior to class.

I have read the above agreement and will abide by it.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

A-G Early Childhood Program Handbook Notice of Receipt

For a school to provide meaningful, positive, learning experiences, the school must have a well-defined organizational program. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize parents and children with the preschool program and district procedures and policies.

Please read this handbook. If you have any questions, please call (402) 944-7083. Sign and return this form to the elementary office.

I hereby acknowledge that my preschool child and I have received the procedures and regulations outlined in the Ashland Greenwood Early Childhood Handbook and that I have read and understand them.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date