

Pre-K Parent Handbook

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Please see our [ISW Parent Handbook](#) for all general information, policies and procedures

A. Welcome to the Pre-K Room

We are very excited to be given the opportunity to be a part of you and your child's life. Within this classroom we will have children ranging from the age of almost 4 to 5 years old. As pre-k children, the classroom will be full of opportunities for exploration and growth. Each child is an individual and will have their own unique learning style. We will strive to provide the greatest learning environment. We will do this by, providing opportunities that promote their skills in language, reading, writing, science, motor development, art, math, social studies, social/emotional skills, and appropriate behaviors.

B. Parent & Teacher Communication

Family communication/ Parent Board/COR ADVANTAGE:

We believe that a strong parent-teacher partnership is important in helping in your child's success here at ISW. We primarily use Brightwheel and COR Advantage as our means of communication. You will receive two photos each day and see in finer detail what your child is engaged in throughout the day. . We will use these apps to send reminders or when you need to bring in more of something. They are great resources for all of us and we enjoy having them in the classroom. However, we do not feel that app communication should replace our daily face to face communication. We love having the opportunity to share information in person and I would prefer it. Apps are just one of our many ways of communicating with parents. Here are some of the other ways we will also communicate information to you:

- Papers in child's mailbox
- Easel in hallway
- The Parent Board will have important information and a weekly lesson plan. (which will also be emailed out on Fridays.)
- Each month a parent newsletter will be shared electronically/

- Parents are encouraged to contact us whenever questions or concerns arise. We have an open classroom policy and you are welcome to visit at any time.

Labeling:

Please label your child's things! It is so important that everything is labeled that you send to the center. We want to make sure all of your child's belongings are returned to you and having your items labeled is the best way to ensure this. You could label with a permanent marker or [stickers](#). [Stuckonyou.com](#) and [Inch Bug](#) are labeling options for a very reasonable price. When labeling please think about bedding, water bottles, shoes, extra clothes, winter apparel, and any bags that will be brought to school

Cubbies/ Mailbox:

Each child will have their own cubby/hook, and mailbox in the classroom. Please have a back pack for all your children's belongings to stay together in. This is also a great place to store extra clothes, bedding, coats. The children will also have a mailbox for art projects and papers.

C. Independence and Self-Help

As the children grow older, we expect more of them in terms of independence and self-help, which they thrive on. The pre-k children will work on cleaning up after themselves and putting things where they belong. During snack time, there will be a snack station available for the children to serve themselves their own eating utensils and drinks. During lunch time, they get their own lunch bag, pick out a seat, and unpack their lunch. After eating lunch, they pack up their containers and put their lunch bag away. They also get their own bedding and practice putting their sheet on a cot at nap time. In addition, we encourage the children to put on their own shoes and socks, pull up their own pants and underwear in the bathroom, and wipe their own noses and faces. Of course, we are always there to help them help them if needed.

Bathroom Time:

We also continue to work with the children on toilet independence, if needed. We encourage you to communicate any preferred methods with us in order to provide the consistency needed for your child to succeed in this area. We work together as a team to help your child succeed in toilet training. Our goal is to have your child be able to independently use the restroom. This means your child will be able to dress/undress themselves, wipe, flush the toilet and wash their hands independently. Multiple times a day, as a group we go to the bathrooms. Many children may insist that they do not need to go to the bathroom. We try and explain to the children that our bodies at times trick us and that we might have to go and we don't even know it. At that point, we ask them to at least try and if they don't have to go, then they may go wash their hands.

Messy Reminder:

While at school, the children will engage in many different hands on activities. Sometimes the children end up with more of the materials on them than on the paper. Please keep this in mind when dressing your child. Children need to explore and have fun, both indoors and outside. We want the children to feel free to explore with a variety of materials and have fun being messy.

Snack Time:

To promote independence and self-help, the children will be serving themselves their snack. We will be having snack set out with the proper utensils for the children and for them to fill their own water.

D. Academics

Circle Time, Small Groups, Story, Music and Movement:

On a daily basis we will have the above stated group times. We will be doing one in the morning, before lunch, and one in the afternoon. Circle Time will consist of a discussion about the color, shape, letter, and theme of the week. Small group will be a time for the children to talk with us about something to do with the theme. Story time will provide a time to read a book about that week's theme. Music and Movement give the children a wonderful opportunity to move their body and learn new songs. We also will be doing show in tell every Tuesday and Friday. Each show and tell item should go with the theme of the week.

How Young Children Learn

Young children learn by doing. The work of Piaget (1950, 1972), Montessori (1964) and other child development theorists and researchers has demonstrated that learning is a complex process that results from the interaction of the children's own thinking and their experiences in the external world. Knowledge is not something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. Children acquire knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with materials and people. Children do not need to be forced to learn; they are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their work

How to teach young children

By preparing the environment so that it provides stimulating, challenging materials and activities for the children. Teachers closely observe to see what children understand and place additional challenges to encourage further thinking. It is possible to drill children until they can correctly recite pieces of information such as alphabet or numbers 1 to 20. However, children's responses to rote tasks do not reflect real understanding of the information. For children to understand fully and remember what they have learned; the information must be meaningful to the child in context to the child's learning experience and development. The important task for the teacher is stimulating motivation in children. Observation is a big part of assessing each child's individual needs.

Our goal this school year is to give each of your children a positive learning experience. How? By preparing the environment for the children to learn through active exploration; interaction with other children, the teacher and materials. Interactions and activities are designed to develop the children's self-esteem and positive feeling towards learning. Children choose their own activities and manipulate the work based on their interest. When needed, we will redirect a child if they are not able to choose on their own. We add new materials and have the expectation of children to handle materials in a respectful manner.

Areas of Curriculum and Development

Annie's philosophy of learning is based upon the child learning through a curriculum rooted in an understanding of their play and development abilities, with a focus on the process of learning rather than the product. Lessons will be based on several different developmental areas that will be implemented throughout the day.

A day in the Pre-K room will provide opportunities for choice time, teacher driven lessons, circle time, snack and lunch time, outdoor play, rest time, and field trips. Within the classroom there will be different areas for learning. These will include reading nook/relaxation nook, block area, dramatic play, art station, sensory table, small motor manipulation, and writing table.

Language Arts and Reading:

Listening to and reading stories and poems, dictating stories, seeing classroom charts, and other print in use; talking informally with other children, experimenting with writing by drawing, copying, and inventing their own spelling.

Introduction of upper and lower case letters, vowels and sounds. Journal writing, drawing, and signing in at the beginning of the day.

Music:

Listen and participate during songs, rhythm instruments and movement to music

Science:

Five Senses	Living/Non-living
Body Parts/Dental	Field Trips
Healthy Food Choices/Cooking	Four Seasons
Observing Weather Changes	Collecting Nature

Motor Development:

Outdoor play in back and front play areas, parks and walks.

Exercise movement during group activities, object manipulation, and small and large motor activities.

Art:

Opportunities to explore and manipulate art materials. Child directed and teacher directed activities will be provided daily

Math:

Games, reading numerals 1-20, comparing lengths, measuring, counting 0-100, counting backwards 10-1, money, graphs, patterns, sorting, and grouping.

Social Studies:

Looking at the world and where we live.

Social/Emotional Skills:

The children are provided many opportunities to develop social skills (cooperating, helping, negotiating and talking to another child to solve interpersonal problems). What is an appropriate choice? What is an inappropriate choice? Helping children understand the difference is our goal. Talking and teaching about emotions through experiences.

Plan Do, and Review :

In the plan-do review process, children make plans, carry them out, and reflect on what they have done. In doing so, children learn to take initiative, solve problems, work with others, and accomplish their goals – their play becomes more purposeful and focused.

Outdoor Play:

The children will play outdoors every day, three times a day,(for full day students); weather permitting. Outdoor play gives children fresh air, nature to explore and room to move. We play outside in all seasons, so please be sure to send weather appropriate clothing, including sun hats and sunblock in the summer, if needed. We are required to stay inside when the wind chill is below 26 degrees Fahrenheit or the heat index is above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Assessment and Conferences

Throughout the year the teachers will be taking antidotal notes and work samples. In addition to this, ISW will be using COR assessments. COR provides each family an overall picture of their child development through a period of time. Conferences will be held twice a year (Fall and Spring). This will be a time for the families to meet with the teachers to discuss the assessments and any question or concerns you may have.

Behavior Guidance:

Our job is to help your child recognize their emotions and help them work through social interactions with other children and adults. Because at this age the children are still learning, it is most appropriate that our primary form of discipline is redirection and talking through their emotions. (e.g. If a child throws a block, we would talk about the things they can do with blocks and remind them of the things they can throw.). If there is a conflict between two children our goal is to help your child communicate and work through the problem. We will talk about feelings and using our words with each other. In the beginning we will be feeding the children the words to use, e.g. "I don't like it when you hit me" or "Please give that toy back". If certain situations keep occurring, we then have a resting spot for your child to take time to think and calm their body down. After about 3 minutes, a teacher will talk with your child about what happened and what they could do differently next time. In a last case scenario, our option would be having your child go to the office and talk with Ms. Beverly. Sometimes having a change of scenery helps a child calm down and gives them a chance to talk through what happened in a quiet and more private area. Our goal is to help your child have a fun and successful day at school!

E. Nutrition, Health, and Safety

Lunch Time:

Children are to bring a lunch box labeled. Please send an ice pack to handle food that you want to keep cold. We keep our lunches in a large plastic bin. When sending containers, please make sure they are ones that your child can work towards opening all by themselves. All containers should be labeled. **If you have glass containers, please be sure to send sturdy cookware; Pyrex etc.** The children will be responsible for getting their own lunch boxes, pulling out their lunch items, asking us to warm items up that they want warmed, and cleaning up after they are done eating. When it comes to food the children are not wanting to eat, we ask them to try a no thank you bite. This encourages them to keep retrying foods. WE express to them that sometimes our taste buds change and one time we might not like something and another time we might.

Rest Time:

After gross motor time, all the children will have the chance to use the restroom and then will be asked to get out their bedding for rest time. After 30 minutes of resting, the children who are awake will be able to get up and engage in quiet time activities. We will turn the lights on 60 minutes after rest time begins and start to wake up the rest of our friends. At the end of each week their bedding should go home and be laundered.

Medication:

For all medication brought to ISW, medical form must be filled out and on file with us. Please if any changes need to be made for medication given or time please ask to change it on your child's form.

F. What to Bring!

- Extra clothing in large zip lock bag
- Lunch box, containers, silverware and cooler pack (if needed)
- Water bottle (Brought clean daily)
- Blanket/Pillow (must fit into tote bag.)
- Optional- Small stuffed animal
- Reusable bag or backpack for transporting and storing bedding
- Family Picture for the classroom

