

Dear Families:

Welcome to the Orchard Farm School District Preschool Program! We are pleased you have chosen us for your child's preschool education. We know you have many options available.

The Orchard Farm School District preschool program celebrates each child for the individual they are in a secure, loving environment. Your child's classroom will be a friendly but challenging environment. We are licensed by the state of Missouri Department of Health with the Bureau of Child Care Safety. We are also accredited by the Missouri Association for the Education of Young Children.

We look forward to a memorable year with you and your child!

Thank You,

Connie Boatright, Lead Teacher  
Shanna Mullis, Lead Teacher

## **Program Policies and Procedures:**

### Access to Information:

All families are able to access the following information:

Missouri Accreditation: Most programs do not go through the rigorous process of MO accreditation. The accreditation standards are a step above licensing regulations. We have received this honor for the third time. Our Lead Teachers can provide further information should you have any questions about this process.

Missouri Licensing: Each classroom has a copy of our state's guidelines. You are encouraged to look at this manual. We have an unscheduled visit from our licensing representative each year.

Your child's records: Important information is kept in your child's file in the front office. You may request copies of any information.

Staff child abuse and neglect record forms: All of our early childhood staff is registered with the Family Care Safety Registry.

### **Arrival/Departure Times:**

Children cannot be dropped off before 8:15 a.m. and must be picked up by 3:30 p.m. School starts at 8:50 a.m. It is important for your child to be at school each day. The first reason is that we know children do their best when they have a predictable routine. Children can be unsettled if

they arrive late and have missed out on activities. The second reason is we need to notify the cafeteria of our food counts by 9:00 a.m. each day. Please call the office at (636)TBD-TBD by 9:00 a.m. to notify us of your child's absence or if they will be late. We encourage all our children to be in their classroom by 8:50 a.m.

### **Billing Information**

The weekly tuition is \$163.00 and includes lunch and two snacks. You may pay your child's weekly, bimonthly or monthly as long as your account remains current. Tuition is charged even when children are on vacation, at home sick, or school is closed due to inclement weather. If you need to withdraw your child from our program please give a two week notice in writing of your intentions.

Please place your child's tuition in an envelope clearly marked with their name and send it to school in their folder. The teachers check each child's folder every morning. We will only check the folder for tuition payments. Tuition is due on Fridays and applies to the following week. All tuition payments are **non-refundable**.

## **Calendar/Days of Operation**

The OFSD Preschool Program follows the Orchard Farm district calendar. Our preschool is five days a week from 8:15 .a.m.-3:30 p.m.

## **Changes in Information**

Please inform the office and/or your child's teacher of any information changes (i.e. address, phone numbers, marital status, authorized pick up people). This is extremely important in the event of an emergency we need to be able to contact you. Many of these changes may affect your child in the classroom. By communicating these changes we can meet your child's needs.

## **Classroom Staff**

Our Lead Teachers, Connie Boatright and Shanna Mullis hold bachelors and master's degrees in early childhood education. Our entire preschool staff is trained in our curriculum model, Project Construct. All teachers observe and assess each child's progress and collaborate as a team. The OFSD is committed to professional development and each teacher attends ongoing training with workshops and district sponsored classes.

## Discipline

This area is handled primarily by the classroom teachers. Occasionally there are behaviors that occur when a child needs to be separated from the group (with supervision). All of the teachers, principal, and school counselor are available to work out individual situations. At OFSD our preschool is committed to providing opportunities for our students to grow socially. Teachers encourage our students to "use their words", and teachers provide lots of modeling with this skill. Other strategies we use are: sign up sheets for centers, a timer, happy face chart, visual schedule, "take a break", role play with puppets, guidance lessons, class meetings, and parent involvement.

If a child's behavior consistently disrupts the classroom, physically harms others, and/or otherwise conflicts with preschool and/or district policies a conference will be scheduled. Parents, teachers, and possibly other school professionals will attend. If the problem persists, after all reasonable efforts have been made, the child may be suspended or dismissed from the program.

Parents will be informed on a regular basis of their child's behavior (positive as well as not so positive). It is our goal to give each child a warm and nurturing environment. We encourage parents to discuss any concerns or helpful suggestions with your child's teachers.

## **Dismissal**

Children will be released only to their parents/guardians or other authorized persons noted on their enrollment form. Please contact us if someone different will be picking your child up. Please note that you and/or other authorized persons may be asked to provide picture identification, this is strictly for the safety of your child.

## **Emergency Closings**

If the OFSD is not in session the preschool is also not in session. Snow days may be made up, but will be determined by the district calendar.

## **Emergency Drills**

We schedule monthly fire and tornado drills to practice appropriate procedures in the event of a real emergency. We do this in a positive atmosphere to relieve any fears the children may have.

## **Field Trip Procedures**

Field trips are scheduled in the fall and spring. One of these may be an "in school" field trip. Ex. Guest musicians from the symphony. You will receive advance notice of our field trips. Administration approval is required for all our trips.

Parents will receive trip details and permission slips 3-4 weeks in advance. All money is collected and turned into the office. Money and permission slips are due three days before the scheduled trip. Parent volunteers and welcomed and encouraged! Background checks are required to participate as a volunteer. These need to be done annually. Further information and forms are available on our district homepage, [www.ofsd.k12.mo.us](http://www.ofsd.k12.mo.us) Clearance of these screenings can take several weeks please plan accordingly.

### **Field Trip Day**

1. Children are divided among the adults attending. We will stay together as a large group.
2. Everyone rides the bus.
3. A first aid kit will go with us.
4. Students may be signed out after we return to school if parents wish to take them home.
5. Other siblings/children may not attend the field trip.  
This is a special time for you and your preschooler!

### **Illness/Injury**

It is our hope that each child will be at school each day ready to learn. However if any signs of illness are present please keep your child home. The following could indicate a contagious illness:

Fever and/or pain	Extreme fatigue	Diarrhea
Nausea/vomiting	Rash or skin eruptions	
Constant sneezing	Constant coughing	
Red or weepy eyes	Red and/or swollen throat	

Families are required by licensing regulations to keep their child home if any of these symptoms are present. The child will be able to join their class when they have been free of any or all symptoms and have not required fever or pain medication for 24 hours. In some cases a doctor's note may be required before returning to school.

### **Illness at School**

If your child becomes ill at school they will be taken to the school nurse for evaluation. The nurse will call you if your child should need to be picked up. It is district and licensing policy that a child be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Injury at School**

All staff is trained annually in first aid and CPR. Each classroom has ice packs, Band-Aids, Vaseline, and Neosporin for minor injuries. The child will see the nurse for all other injuries.

## **Medication at School**

Medication is given at 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. by the school nurse. The original medication containers with dosage and the reason it is given.

## **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is an integral part of our program. Children receive many benefits from outdoor play. Licensing requires us to be outside for a total of 60 minutes each day (weather permitting). We may spend more than 60 minutes if the weather is especially nice! As teachers we are flexible and will bring our indoor centers to the outside space. Ex. Easel painting, block building. Our program requires that the children only wear tennis shoes, this is for their safety.

## **Personal Items/Toys**

Each classroom has an abundance of supplies, toys and games for the children to use. It is school policy that toys are not to be brought to school. These are special to your child and could become lost or broken.

\*Exceptions\*

1. One small stuffed animal for rest time.
2. Classroom Show and Tell Bag; This will be sent home each night with a different student. They can fill it with toys/items

of their choice and bring it back the next day to share with the class.

### **Rest Time**

The Missouri Department of Health requires that all children attending a full day preschool program rest for at least 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, children who are still awake will be offered quiet activities on their cot. We understand some children do not nap or are not tired. We do expect that they respect those who are napping. Our nap is from 12-1:30 p.m.

### **Classroom Policies/Routines**

#### **Birthdays**

This is a special time for your child and we love to help celebrate! Treats may be sent in and must be store bought! Please check with your child's teacher for any allergies. We do not allow candles or balloons. We discourage treat bags as well. If your child will be having a party outside of school we can hand out the invitations for you if: All the students are invited or all of the same gender as your child is invited. If only a few children are invited please take care of it outside of school. We do not give class lists or addresses.

## **Book bags/Folders**

1. Please check your child's bag and folder every night! Their folder and communication notebook will contain information about their day and upcoming events.
2. Anything that needs to be turned in must be in the folder including tuition. We will not look through the bag for notes and tuition checks.
3. Class newsletters will be sent home every Friday.

## **Clothing**

1. Tennis shoes are required for our preschool program. Flip flops, Crocs, sandals, and dress shoes are not the safest choice for our playground.
2. Please dress your child in play clothes. We will be MESSY at preschool, large adult t-shirts are provided to cover their clothes as they work.
3. Please dress your child in clothing they can manipulate. Belts, onesies, and overalls are a few examples of clothing that can be difficult for a child to manipulate.
4. St. Louis weather can change quickly! Please dress your child accordingly. You may want to include a sweatshirt/hoodie when you send their extra clothes.
5. Please do not send an umbrella to school with your child. The preschool staff has large umbrellas to assist your child to and from their cars.

## **Meals**

Lunch and two snacks are provided as part of the tuition. Everyone eats choice 1 on the school lunch menu. No lunches from home may be brought. Breakfast is an additional charge. You are encouraged to visit our classroom anytime! If you want to join us for lunch please let us know by 9 a.m. so that lunch can be ordered for you. No outside food may be brought in. Ex. (McDonalds)

## **Parent Teacher Conferences**

These are held in the fall and spring and allow us to share all of the exciting things your child is doing at school. You are welcome to request a conference at any time.

## **Schedule**

A visual schedule is posted for the children in each room. We have seen the benefits of children following a routine and predictable schedule. We also know that at times we need to be flexible and change our schedule if the children are engaged in an activity.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

We love to have parents and other family members involved in our program! There are lots of ways to volunteer, all that is needed is an approved background check.

Some examples of "in class" volunteers are:

- Field Trips
- Class parties
- Reading stories to the class
- Sharing a hobby/your job
- Playing games with students

We know how busy family life can be, so we also have opportunities for "at home" volunteers. Some examples are:

- Making class games
- Putting class books together
- Collecting "beautiful junk"
- Furnishing dress up clothes
- Providing class wish list items

Please let your child's teachers know if you are interested in volunteering in the class in any way!

## Preschool Tuition Schedule 2010-2011

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. August 11    | 11. October 15  |
| 2. August 13    | 12. October 22  |
| 3. August 20    | 13. October 29  |
| 4. August 27    | 14. November 5  |
| 5. September 3  | 15. November 12 |
| 6. September 10 | 16. November 19 |
| 7. September 17 | 17. November 24 |
| 8. September 24 | 18. December 3  |
| 9. October 1    | 19. December 10 |
| 10. October 8   | 20. December 17 |
|                 |                 |
| 21. January 7   | 31. March 25    |
| 22. January 14  | 32. April 1     |
| 23. January 21  | 33. April 8     |
| 24. January 28  | 34. April 15    |
| 25. February 4  | 35. April 21    |
| 26. February 11 | 36. April 29    |
| 27. February 18 | 37. May 6       |
| 28. February 25 | 38. May 13      |
| 29. March 4     |                 |
| 30. March 11    |                 |

## Preschool Supply List

1. An extra set of clothes. Please include socks and underwear. Label each item with your child's name or initials, many children have the same items and we want to avoid any mix-ups!
2. A folder sized backpack. NO rolling backpacks are allowed. The backpack should be large enough to hold their folder, notebook, and their rest time blanket and sheet. Blankets and sheets will be sent home every Friday to be laundered.
3. A full size clipboard
4. 2 boxes of Kleenex
5. 1 box of sandwich size Ziploc bags and 1 box of gallon size Ziploc bags.
6. Small blanket for rest time. 1 crib sheet for their cot. Please label these items! NO pillows or large comforters.
7. 1 three ring binder, 2 inch size.
8. 1 box of baby wipes
9. 1 pocket folder labeled with your child's name.
10. 1 notebook for parent-teacher communication, labeled with your child's name.
11. 1 bottle of sunscreen, 30 SPF or above. Please label with your child's name.

## Attendance Policy

1. Please notify the school office (636)TBD-TBD by 9:00 a.m. if your child will be late or not attending school that day. We need to know this information for accurate lunch counts.
2. If you bring your child to school after 8:50 a.m. you will need to walk them to the classroom. State licensing regulations state that preschool students may not walk themselves unattended to class.
3. School begins at 8:50 a.m., please be here on time. Your child misses important learning experiences when they are late. A consistent routine also helps children adjust to school.
4. There is a waiting list for our program. Excessive absenteeism(13 days) **WILL** result in your child's dismissal from the program. Our program is 5 days a week from 8:50 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
  - a. After 4 unexcused absences you will receive an attendance letter.
  - b. After 7 unexcused absences you will receive an attendance warning letter.
  - c. After 11 unexcused absences your child will be placed on attendance probation and a letter will be sent home.
  - d. After 13 unexcused absences your child will be dismissed from the OFSD Preschool Program.

## Grievance Procedures

The OFSD Board of Education recognizes that situations of concern to parents/guardians or the public may arise in the operation of the preschool. Such concerns are best resolved through communication with the appropriate staff members and officers of the school district, such as faculty, the principals, the superintendent or the Board of Education.

The following steps are proper procedures to be followed by persons with questions or complaints regarding the operation of the preschool:

1. Matters concerning individual students should first be addressed to the teacher.
2. Unsettled matters from (1) above or problems and questions concerning individuals should be directed to the Building Principal, Betheny Brown.
3. Unsettled matters from (2) above and questions concerning the district should be directed to the Superintendent.

If the matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the Superintendent, it should be brought to the Board of Education. Questions and comments submitted to the secretary of the Board of Education in letter form will be brought to the attention of the entire Board. If necessary, a Board hearing will be scheduled to resolve the complaint. However, the decision of the Board of Education shall be final, except in the case of complaints concerning the administration of Federal Programs. In that case the complaint may go to the appropriate section of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and from there on to the United States Secretary of Education.

## **Philosophy**

It is the intention of the Orchard Farm School District to provide a friendly but challenging environment in our preschool while serving students of diverse abilities and backgrounds. Project Construct represents an approach to teaching that is based on what we know about learning. Designed for use in preschool classrooms, Project Construct incorporates a research-based curriculum that is linked to the Missouri Show-Me Standards and the Frameworks for Curriculum Development and that reflect current knowledge about how children learn and develop.

## **Goals and Objectives**

It is the intention of the Orchard Farm School District to provide a preschool program for forty students that reside in the district.

1. Identify and enroll forty(40) children.
2. Enhance school readiness through a seamless provision of early childhood services by the Orchard Farm School District.
3. Provide quality instruction by certified early childhood educators using an age-appropriate curriculum, Project Construct.
4. Provide on-going assessment of the program's effectiveness, the children's growth and development and school readiness.

## Orchard Farm Preschool Curriculum

The Orchard Farm Preschool curriculum implements a developmentally appropriate practices curriculum. The focus is hands-on learning from experiencing a wide variety of classroom activities. Each activity is chosen based upon developmental skill of the child. The classroom is well-equipped with developmentally appropriate materials.

**Project Construct**, a theory of learning tells us that children can best learn through hands-on experiences. By being involved in the learning process the child constructs his/her knowledge by participating in developmentally appropriate activities. These opportunities for learning are provided through learning centers set up throughout the classroom, each center dealing with one of the areas of development of the young child. You will see centers in our classroom that offer learning activities in the area of language, social development, motor development, and intellectual development. The classroom is child-centered and children are given choices as to the activities they wish to do. The teacher's role is that of facilitator, helping each child gain maximum benefit from each learning experience.

Project Construct is based on three principles of child development and related practices:

1. Children have an intrinsic desire to make sense of the world. What they genuinely need to know and are genuinely interested in helps them learn.
2. Children actively construct knowledge and values based upon the physical and social world. Because their thoughts are still closely tied to action they require a physically and mentally active learning environment.

3. Development areas are interactive and interrelated, each influencing the other. It is within the social environment that intelligence and language are furthered.

All of our preschool staff is fully trained in the Project Construct Curriculum model. If you have further questions about this curriculum please let your child's teacher know.

## Parent Agreement

I have read and understand the Orchard Farm Preschool Program handbook.

Parent Signature(s):

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_