# Family Handbook

Updated August 2022









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Dear Parents/Guardians and Families,

Welcome to Foundations Preschool! We are happy that you have entrusted us with the care of your child. We aim to provide a welcoming, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child.

This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with our program. We have tried to anticipate your questions about our program and have outlined Foundations Preschool's policies and procedures. We strive to work closely with families in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communications and a sense of trust between teachers, parents/guardians and caregivers are vital.

Additionally, we are here to help you! If at any time you need support or guidance, we will do our best to provide it either in-house or via one of our non-profit partners. Don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Finally, we depend on parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about our program. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child's experience and the program. We understand that nothing is more important than your child's early education and care experiences.

Welcome!

Sandy Williams, Executive Director Foundations Preschool



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# HISTORY OF FOUNDATIONS PRESCHOOL OF WASHTENAW COUNTY

Foundations Preschool began as Perry Nursery School in 1934, by Edith Bader, Assistant Superintendent of the Ann Arbor Public Schools. As one of four WPA (Works Progress Administration) Nursery Schools, it was founded to assist children from depression-ridden homes as well as provide employment to low income mothers hired to staff the nurseries. It was named Perry Nursery School because it was housed in the Perry Elementary School.

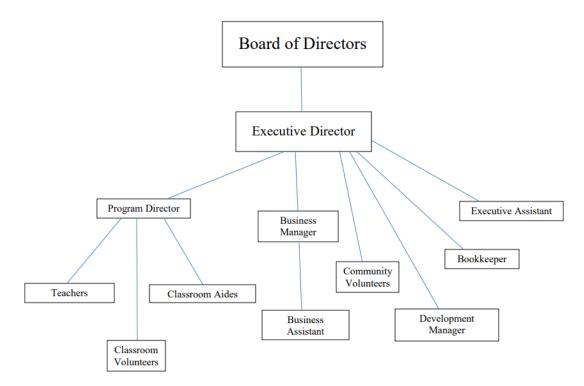
As the only local WPA nursery to remain open during the World War II era, a group of parents, administrators, and community activists recognized there was still a need for full-time childcare for young children. Many women were the sole or major supporters of their families. In addition to low-income and divorced mothers, there were war widows and wives who supported the family while their husbands went to college under the GI Bill.

In 2014, the Board of Directors elected to change our name to Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County as part of our 80th-anniversary celebration. It was determined that Foundations Preschool better reflected the current mission, philosophy, and constituents.

Foundations Preschool has been incorporated by the State of Michigan as a non-profit organization since 1948. Our goal of providing quality, affordable child care with support services has remained constant since our inception.



Foundations Preschool operates under the governance of a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors exists to secure and promote the financial, legal and ethical wellbeing of our organization and to ensure that it fulfills its mission. The role of the board is to advise the Executive Director and to establish policies for the center. The Executive Director oversees the daily operations, community outreach, and fundraising. The Program Director oversees teaching staff and all educational programming.



#### MISSION

Foundations Preschool prepares children for future academic and social success while providing their parents opportunities for professional, personal, and parental growth.

We accomplish this by providing:

- Tuition scholarships
- A researched-based curriculum and teaching methods
- Non-biased, equitable and inclusive experience
- Professional and educated staff
- Social and emotional support for children and parents/guardians
- Home/school team approach
- Vision and auditory screenings
- Free breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks

## VALUES

The shared values of Foundations Preschool are: Family, Diversity, Opportunity, Education and Community.

## VISION

To be the preschool that best understands and satisfies the educational, social and emotional needs of Washtenaw County's children and their families.

#### PHILOSOPHY

Children learn through play and are motivated by a desire to understand the world around them. Play allows children to learn about the world and themselves. As children play, they learn new skills, develop coping mechanisms, test new ideas, and master their bodies. We treat each child with respect and reinforce his/her value as an individual and member of our community.

Foundations Preschool also understands that the two areas that most directly influence a child's ability to fully realize his/her potential are home and school. The first is the positive and supportive role that parents play in their children's lives. The second is that the school setting must have significant relevance to the child's home environment in terms of his/her culture and values. Our goal is to function as a team with parents to provide the best possible environment for children to thrive and grow.

#### CURRICULUM

We use the HighScope curriculum, which was developed through research and knowledge from all areas of child development. Emphasizing active learning and a consistent routine, it allows children to make choices throughout the day. This curriculum offers children many opportunities for positive interactions with other children and adults - and focuses on the development of the whole child (social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language). HighScope lays a foundation for children to move seamlessly from Foundations Preschool to Kindergarten with appropriate beginner skills in math, reading readiness, science and social awareness.

#### STAFF

Frederick Douglas once said, "It's easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." That is why we hire the best teachers in our area. Our teachers' genuine love for, and commitment to, preparing children for future academic and social success is one of the things that makes Foundations Preschool so special.

# QUALIFICATIONS

Foundations Preschool is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This accreditation offers the assurance that we hire qualified teachers who are committed and capable of addressing the cognitive, emotional, physical, social and language developmental needs of every child enrolled in our care.

All Foundations teachers meet or exceed the Michigan State Department of Education (MDSE) licensing requirements. Every lead teacher holds a college degree and has completed coursework in early childhood education. Associate teachers must possess a Child Development certificate (CDA) or higher. Each year the program director, lead teachers, associate teachers, and support staff exceed the required number of continued training hours as assigned by the state childcare licensing department.

## **VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS\***

Volunteers and visitors are always welcome at Foundations Preschool. They provide a wonderful resource for learning as they broaden our student's horizons. All volunteers and visitors must check in at the office upon arrival. It is important to note that volunteers and visitors are never left alone with students, as they are here to assist the teachers, not to substitute.

\*During times of pandemic or other health and safety concerns, we may not allow volunteers or visitors into our classrooms/near the children.



# PARENT EMPOWERMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Best practice for quality, early childhood education shows that parent involvement is key to early success. The following are ways we provide opportunities for you to be involved in your child's education:

- Foundations Preschool Parents are encouraged to participate in our "Parent Café" sessions (information will be provided by the Program Director). \*
- Parents will be required to participate in two Parent/Teacher conferences and two home visits during the school year to discuss progress and to maintain open communication between home and school in order to most successfully reach each individual child's goals. \*
- The Parent Advisory Committee meets at least two times during the school year to offer input and school improvement ideas and fundraising. This is a way for parents to be a part of the decision-making process. This committee is voluntary and optional but your participation will make a positive impact on Foundations Preschool. \*
- There will be an opportunity to participate in the Great Start Parent Coalition. The mission of the Parent Coalition is to engage and empower parents through education around early childhood development, community resources, and advocacy opportunities on behalf of families in Washtenaw County. \*
- Parents are always welcome to visit their child here at Foundations Preschool. While parents are encouraged to visit the center, we ask that you consult with your child's teacher or the director to make arrangements for visiting and volunteering at the best times to accommodate our daily routines. \*

\* During times of pandemic or other health and safety concerns, parent visits may not be allowed and all meetings will be held virtually (computer or phone).





# DAILY OPERATIONS

## Hours of Operation and Programs

Foundations Preschool is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am - 6:00 pm throughout the year. Our infant and toddler programs run from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm. (During times of pandemic and other emergencies, these hours may temporarily change).

We serve the following age groups: children ages 6 weeks-18 mos. (Infants/Young Toddlers); 19mos. - 2.5 yrs. (Older Toddlers); 2.5 yrs. - 3.5 yrs. (Lower Preschool); 3yrs. - 4yrs. (Upper Preschool); 4yrs. - 5 yrs. (Pre-K) and 5yrs.- 12yrs. (summer program and school break care).

Tuition scholarships are available and are determined by household size and income.

Foundations Preschool participates in the Great Start to Readiness Program (GSRP). If you are enrolling in GSRP, please note:

• The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is a **free pre-K program** for qualified 4-year-olds (qualification is determined through an online process). GSRP runs from September - June, Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00am-3:00pm/8:30am-3:30pm. A lower-cost summer program option is available for those families who need year-round care.





**Days of Discovery** is our summer camp program. It runs from mid-June to the end of August and offers working parents the perfect summer solution for their childcare needs for pre-K through age 9 yrs.

Our summer session delivers learning enrichment programming for children with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (S.T.E.A.M.)

Throughout the summer we plan special on-site events for the children to experience, such as:

- Magic Show
- Wildlife Safari
- Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum (Science)
- Musical Guests
- Water Days
- Dramatic Art

Children who participate in our program will leave ready to continue successfully on their educational journeys. At the same time, your child will develop meaningful friendships and memories that will last a lifetime.

Parents who choose Foundations Preschool for their summer care needs will find an environment that is nurturing, attentive and well-prepared to meet the physical, emotional and cognitive needs of their developing child.

Summer program tuition scholarships are available. Those who were previously enrolled in any GSRP (free) program in Washtenaw County will receive special tuition savings. Summer tuition prepayment plans for students who participate in our school-year program are available.



## **Our Daily Routine**

Please arrive on time. This is to ensure that your child receives a proper welcome and can start his/her day in a predictable and positive way. A typical daily routine is posted below.

Order of activities may vary by classroom:

#### Before care activities for early arrivals

**GSRP arrival/breakfast/greeting time** (no greeting time in toddler room) - Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave.\* Children have choices about whether to eat, spend time with books, or interact with adults and one another. Once all children have arrived, teachers share the daily announcements.

\* During times of pandemic and other health/safety concerns, parents may not be allowed to stay with the children at drop off time. Our staff will help provide a smooth transition for both child and parent.

**Large-Group Time/ Music and Movement** - All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects; and events meaningful to children.

**Planning Time** (not in toddler room) - Children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, singing, planning individually, in pairs, in small groups).

**Work Time/Choice Time** - Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use the materials. During Work Time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.

**Cleanup Time** - Children and adults clean up together keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean-up. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.

**Recall Time** (not in toddler room) - Gathered in small group settings, children choose Work Time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones or periscopes, group games using a hula hoop, ball, or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete Recall Time with four or five children each day.

**Small Group Time** - An adult-initiated learning experience based on children's interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.

**Outside Time** - Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment, much as they do during Work Time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their active outdoor play, supporting their initiatives and problem solving.

**Bathroom/Diapering/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch** - Children assist in preparation and set up. Children choose where they would like to sit and are encouraged to serve themselves.

Lunch/Brush Teeth - Family style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, wipe up spills).\* Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

\*During times of Pandemic or other health/safety concerns, meals may not be served family style.

**Quiet/Resting Time** - Resting is a time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on-your-own-cot play. Rest Time plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each child. Quit play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor skills.

**Wake/Bathroom/Diapering/Snack** - As children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots and set up for snack. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal or leftovers, wiping of tables, pushing in their own chairs.

**Small Group Time** - An afternoon or supplemental Small Group experience can support a tiered model of instruction where some or a few children are homogenously grouped to meet developmental needs.

Plan/Work/Cleanup/Recall (refer to AM descriptions)

**Outside Time/Dismissal** (refer to AM descriptions)

Aftercare Activities end of day



# **Field Trips**

Preschoolers may take field trips and nature walks periodically to nearby places such as stores, libraries, and local parks. \* Foundations provides the same supervision for these excursions as we provide our children while they are in school. Permission for your child to participate in such excursions is part of the enrollment process.

Transportation for field trips is usually by walking or by city bus. Advance notice of at least one week will be given when a trip is planned.

When walking for a field trip, the children and staff will use a walking rope with two children holding on to each ring of the rope. A teacher will be stationed at the front and back of the rope. Some bus field trips we have taken are to Mallets Creek library and Cobblestone Farm. Walking field trips have included the Cat Clinic, Kroger, Turnberry Park and Marcos Pizza.

Infants and toddlers may take occasional walking trips in a group stroller.

\*During times of pandemic or other health /safety concerns, there will be no off-site field trips.

## Food

Foundations Preschool meets children's nutritional needs by providing free breakfast, lunch, mid-afternoon snack, and late snack for those who are still in our care after 3:30 pm. Parents of infants may choose to opt out of the food program and bring provide their children's food. All parents may opt out of the school lunch program and provide a bagged lunch for the year (agreement forms must be completed in the office).

# **Rest Periods**

Foundations Preschool follows the guidelines set by the State of Michigan Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers: R400.5106(6): (12) Nap time or quiet time shall be provided when children under school-age are in attendance 5 or more continuous hours per day.

Foundations will provide a blanket and pillow for each child to be used during rest time. These items will be stored after use in a separate assigned sealed bag for each child and washed once per week.

# Toys and Other items from Home

We ask parents to help their child understand that toys or other items are not allowed at Foundations Preschool. In addition to the spread of outside germs, personal items can be lost or damaged and can cause hurt feelings.

Discuss with your child's teacher about comfort items permitted for certain children who may need something for morning drop-off or nap time.

# Birthdays and Celebrations

Each classroom has its own birthday traditions to mark children's birthdays. These may include special activities, songs, or projects. *We ask that parents do not bring food or gifts to school to celebrate their child's birthday*.

# Food Allergies and Intolerances

If your child has a food allergy/intolerance and needs a food substitution, it *is necessary to complete a food substitution form which includes a physician's signature*. Emergency medications and action plans must be submitted. Notify staff if your child does not eat certain foods for religious reasons. Substitutions will not be made based on food preferences. We do not serve pork or tree nut products.

Food substitutions will be posted on the parent daily menu board along with serving sizes.

# **Other Allergies**

Foundations Preschool will cooperate to the best of our ability to accommodate staff or children who have allergies to dust mites, components of furnishings, or cleaning and program supplies by following the recommendations of health professionals.

Parents are responsible for providing EpiPens, inhalers, or other rescue medications for their child. A medication form must be filled out, signed and kept on file in the office. All children who may experience an allergic reaction must have an allergy action plan on file.

When children may be exposed to pets or other animals the teaching staff will notify parents in advance so that teachers know of any allergies to animals. Teachers supervise all interactions between animals and children and instruct children on safe behavior around animals.



# CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

- 1. Hands on Learning:
  - a. Foundations Preschool uses a hands-on approach to learning. Teachers implement the HighScope Curriculum to guide lesson planning for the children.
  - b. Foundations Preschool also follows the guidelines from the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) of the Michigan Department of Education.
  - c. Children learn through active involvement in activities by exploring, discovering, problem solving, and play. Foundations Preschool does not use worksheets and drills to teach concepts.
- 2. Classroom Settings:
  - a. Foundations preschool offers infant, toddler, lower preschool, upper preschool, and pre-K programs. Infant and Toddler rooms have a teacher/child ratio of 1:4 with a capacity of 12 children. The Preschool and Pre-K rooms maintain a ratio of 8:1, with a capacity for 16 children.
    - Classroom shifts (a child moving from one program to another i.e. toddler to early preschool, etc.) may occur at the end of a school year/beginning of summer program (June) or the beginning of a new school year (September) provided the move is age and developmentally appropriate and there is available space in the new room.
  - b. Children spend the school day with the same teachers and same group of children where they are able to be comfortable as part of a family of learners.
  - c. If a teacher is ill, a substitute teacher will be provided. The substitute teacher will have had all required health and background checks, including a TB test.
  - d. Foundations Preschool welcomes college students and interns or who are going into the childcare profession. \* These guests are never left unsupervised. Any guest who is considered "regular" (at least 4 hours per week for 2 consecutive weeks) will have a background check and current negative TB reading on file.

\*During times of pandemic and other health/safety concerns, students and interns may not be allowed to participate.

- 3. Child Development: Learning Needs & Behavioral Assessments
  - a. Foundations Preschool utilizes the services of a licensed social worker. The social worker will regularly observe in the classrooms and consult with teachers regarding child development, behavior management, and children's individual needs.

- b. The social worker is available to provide parents with opportunity to address concerns.
- 4. Assessments:
  - a. Shortly after a child begins, teachers will perform the ASQ 3. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3) is a widely used screening tool for young children's development assessing development in five domains: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving and Personal Social.
  - b. The ASQ SE might also be administered if the teachers feel a necessity to obtain a better social/emotional assessment. This provides a quick look at how children are doing in important areas, such as self-regulation, communication, autonomy, compliance, adaptive functioning, affect, and interaction with people
  - c. COR Advantage (Child Observation Record) is an observation-based assessment instrument for children. It is designed to measure children's progress in all early childhood programs (including, but not limited to those using the HighScope educational approach).
  - d. All assessment data helps to improve overall program quality.

# Kindergarten and Future Educational Programs

Foundations Preschool will assist parents in helping their child make a smooth transition when children leave to enroll in another program. The staff will assist parents in locating elementary schools, charter schools and private schools that meet the needs of the parent and the child. Please do not hesitate to ask for help and/or advice.

# Parent Concerns

Foundations Preschool is committed to maintaining positive relationships with parents. It is our goal to continue to find ways to make Foundations Preschool better for all families and children. On occasion, parent concerns may arise. Please address these concerns by talking with the classroom teacher(s) first. If you need further assistance, please seek the program director. The program director will determine if the Executive Director should be involved.

Formally, parents are invited to participate in an annual survey and join the Parent Advisory Committee which meets several times per year and provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together to improve programming and operations, as well as to advise the administration on issues as they arrive.

# **Referrals and Assessments**

Foundations Preschool has a strong dedication to giving every child the opportunity to grow and thrive while in our care. When necessary, staff may request service referrals and/or assessments for advance testing. Foundations Preschool will contact parents who, then, can give their consent for the provision of services.

# OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

## Payments

Tuition must be pre-paid a week in advance. If payments are not made the week prior to service, a \$10 late payment fee will be added to the account. A child may be disenrolled from tuition based programs if the account is over two weeks past due.

Tuition is based on yearly enrollment and is prorated weekly. Tuition is the same each week regardless of child absences, holidays, home visit days, building emergencies or weather closings.

We have a touchless payment system, so there is no need to go to the office to make your payment.

Cash and Checks can be placed in a pre-marked payment envelope (available at entrance) and deposited into the payment slot. No change will be given but we can credit your account if paying more than the weekly amount due.

Credit and Debit Card payments can be made by calling the office or done online through our payment system:

Go to www.myprocare.com

Enter your email address (address must match the one we have on file).

The system will send you a verification email with a link to set up the account.

#### Drop-off Procedure

- Parents/Guardians are responsible for providing reliable transportation to and from the center.
- <u>Children must be escorted to the classroom</u>. Once contact is made with the teacher, the child may enter the room.
- All people entering the building must be in good health and not have any symptoms for the past 48 hours.

#### Pick-up Procedure

- All parents/guardians must pre-determine a pick-up time our staffing depends on this!
- Please arrive on time so your child is not waiting.
- A child will only be released to another adult if there is permission given by the parent on the emergency card. Please ensure all names of those authorized are listed.
- If someone does arrive to pick up a child without a parent's permission, we will call the parent before releasing the child to make certain this is what they want.
- If a person is unknown to the staff, we will ask for picture identification. We will compare the picture with the person and make sure their name is listed on the emergency card. This applies even to parents who are unknown to the staff present at pick up time.

- We will not release a child to anyone who we feel is under the influence of drugs, including alcohol or marijuana.
- When in doubt, we will not release a child.

A child shall be released to either parent unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent. A copy of the order prohibiting release must be kept on file at the center.

# Parking

The parking lot is a one-way drive way. Please circle around in one direction (counter clockwise) when entering and leaving the lot and please drive slowly.

- Never leave a child unattended in your car.
- Never leave your vehicle running while unattended.
- All children must be car seats while the car is moving.

Parking space is very limited. We are sorry for the inconvenience!

Please be courteous and kind in our parking area.

Drive SLOWLY - children may separate from parents and run in front of traffic!

# Holiday Observances

Foundations Preschool is closed to observe the following holidays: Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving.

The school is typically closed from Christmas Eve through New Year's Day. Some calendar years there may be an additional day during this period (please check your school calendar). Tuition will not be charged *for five days* of the December closing period.

Tuition is based on yearly enrollment and is prorated weekly. **Tuition is the same each week** regardless of child absences, holidays, home visit days, building emergencies or weather closings.

Foundations Preschool also closes the week before Labor Day for staff in-service training, home visits and room preparation for the new school year. Tuition is not charged during this week.

# WEATHER CLOSINGS

Foundations Preschool closes only when BOTH Ann Arbor Public Schools and Ypsilanti Community Schools close for bad weather. If these schools are already closed for a school break, Foundations will independently assess our need to close and will alert families.

Watch for school closing broadcasts on television on Channels 2, 4 and 7. We will post "Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County."

You may also check our Facebook page (search Foundations Preschool of Washtenaw County on Facebook or follow us ahead of time) for closing status.

Please enroll in our parent communication app (currently "Class DOJO") to be alerted to urgent messages.

## **OTHER CLOSINGS**

All illnesses are reported to the health department. If a confirmed case of COVID-19 or other contagion is confirmed, the health department will decide if/how to close. All parents will be immediately notified of the closing and will receive next steps.

#### ALERTS

By signing up for our classroom and school communication system, we will alert you of a closing due to weather or other conditions, as well as emergency alerts, if necessary, during the day. If you have not signed up and do not know how, please ask your child's teacher for assistance.



# 1. Child Information Records (Emergency Cards)

The State of Michigan Department of Human Services requires Child Information Cards for each child. Please inform both the teacher and the office of any changes (address, phone, etc.) to maintain accurate records.

# 2. Immunizations and Health Form

All children must have a copy of current immunizations or an immunization waiver on file before the child starts their first day at Foundations Preschool. State regulations require us to maintain a health form for each child. Preschool physical evaluations made with the 12 months prior to enrollment are acceptable. Health forms must be submitted prior to the first day of enrollment in school.

The current immunization schedule can be found online at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/033112\_childcarerequire\_383666\_7.pdf

Please be sure your child's immunizations are current. Foundations Preschool will notify parents when children require additional immunizations. Foundations Preschool reserves the right to exclude children who need immunizations until they have been completed or a waiver has been submitted.

If a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program, all under immunized children will be promptly sent home until it is deemed safe to return.

# 3. CACFP Form

In order to receive funding from the State of Michigan for our food program we must have this form filled out by each family upon enrollment. This information is confidential and is used only for reimbursement purposes.

# 4. Other Required Enrollment Forms

Photo release, field trip, family handbook acknowledgement, tuition contract, GSRP contract, and medication/special diet forms must all be in prior to starting in the classroom.

# 5. Birth Certificate, Proof of Birth (from hospital), or passport

## Late Pickup Policy

At the end of a day, your child will be looking forward to seeing you. *Please be on time* so that he/she is not worried, bored, or overheating (if already getting dressed to leave).

If your child is enrolled in the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP free program) only, you must pick your child up by the time you chose at enrollment (either 3 or 3:30). If late, you will be charged \$1 per minute.

For aftercare and tuition based enrollees:

Foundations Preschool classrooms begin closing at 5:30 pm. Please allow enough time to pick up your child and be out the door by the time the room closes.

We do understand that traffic and other situations can mean a slow-down. Please plan for these possibilities.

A FINE of \$15 and a LATE FEE of \$1 per minute applies at the time of pick-up. If a child is not picked up by 6:30 pm, we are instructed to contact the police and Child Protective Services (DHS).

#### Attendance Policy

Breakfast is served prior to 9:00 am. Greeting time begins at 9:00 am. Setting the day up in a positive way for your child is important, so please arrive on time. To help our staff plan, excused tardiness or absences for appointments such as doctor or dentist appointments must be pre-arranged with the classroom teachers.

Parents are asked to notify the center when their child will be absent. The staff will work with families to identify any factors that are keeping the child from attending school, and will provide support to ensure continued attendance.

To ensure your child remains enrolled, tuition is charged regardless of absences (illness, vacations, etc.).

#### Withdrawal Policy

- 1. Two Week Notice: We require that you give a two-week notice when leaving Foundations Preschool. This allows proper transition time for the child and teacher as well as providing time to fill the vacancy. If there is not a two week notice in place, charges will be incurred and payment must still be made.
- **2. Behavioral Concerns:** Foundations Preschool will not deny enrollment or exclude a child based on challenging behavior or any disability because of staff attitudes

and/or apprehensions, unfamiliarity with the behaviors or disability, the need to access additional resources to serve a specific child or the need for individualized planning and intentional teaching.

Any child, at any time, who has developmental or behavioral concerns that cause him/her to harm himself/herself, staff or other children, or who disrupts the program will be assessed. We will, to the best of our ability, provide in-house services and/or refer to outside services. If it is determined that our services are not appropriate for that child's needs and/or for the safety of others, the option of disenrollment will be explored.

Foundations Preschool strives to promote and maintain an educational environment free from harassment, humiliation, and intimidation.

We prohibit any type of verbal abuse, physical abuse, and disruptive or threatening conduct from parents, guardians, and family representatives. By this, any display or engagement of such behavior on Foundations Preschool grounds is a violation of our policy, and may result in the immediate disenrollment of the family's child from the program.

3. Other reasons for Withdrawal & Disenrollment: Disenrollment from tuition based programs may be made without prior notice for failure to pay tuition fees or for extreme negative behaviors. The parent is still responsible for any outstanding balance. If this balance is not paid, it can result in reporting the balance to an outside collections agency. We understand that life has its challenges! Please do not let your account get late without talking with us - we may be able to help!

# Child Custody Rights Policy

When a parent has sole legal custody of a child, the custodial parent shall make all decisions regarding the non-custodial parent's rights at Foundations Preschool. A copy of the court's sole custody documentation must be submitted to Foundations Preschool.

The only way the non-custodial parent will be allowed to visit their child, obtain access to financial records, or access the child's educational records is if one of the following criteria is met:

- 1. The custodial parent submits a written statement to the office allowing specified rights to the non-custodial parent.
- 2. The non-custodial parent submits a signed legal document from the court stating specified rights for access to the child and child records.

# No Cell Phone Policy

Please end all cell phone conversations before you enter Foundations Preschool. Your child needs your attention during this important part of their day to ensure a smooth transition between home and school. This also allows staff to communicate with you about your child.

## Photograph Policy

Photos are taken frequently at Foundations Preschool for classroom use and marketing. Teachers may use personal cameras or cell phones for classroom photos. Teachers are instructed to delete all photos from personal devices as soon as they are printed or downloaded onto school media.

Pictures may appear in newspapers, magazines, brochures, or other publicity materials. As part of the enrollment agreement, your signature acknowledges your permission to use your child's photograph without compensation.

## **Clothing Policy**

- Clearly mark your child's clothing with his/her full name as children's clothes are very much alike in appearance and size.
- Children should be dressed in washable play clothes that allow freedom of movement. We will not be responsible for clothing worn by children that needs special consideration.
- We require sneakers or rubber-soled shoes. No flip flops, open toed shoes or sandals allowed (except on water days). Clothing with ties or drawstrings are a safety concern for your child and should be removed.
- Children may not wear jewelry except stud earrings. No rings, bracelets, hoop or drop earrings or similar items are allowed. If you send expensive clothing/jewelry with your child, you do so at your own risk.
- FOUNDATIONS WILL NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST OR DAMAGED CLOTHING OR JEWELRY.
- Because children will spend a part of each day outdoors, they also need to be dressed according to weather conditions. In the winter, children need a warm coat, snow pants, hat, gloves/mittens, and boots. Please mark all items with your child's name. Spare winter clothes, such as snow pants, may be left at school.
- Extra Clothing: Each child needs at least one complete set of extra clothing marked with their name. Sometimes children need extra clothes for emergencies caused by anything from toileting accidents, mishaps at meals or messy activities. Please check the size of the extra clothes on occasion as children grow quickly at this age. If soiled clothing is sent home a new set of clothing must be provided the next day.

# **Pet Policy**

Visiting animals must be pre-approved and have documentation from a veterinarian or animal shelter that the animal is immunized, healthy and suitable for contact with children.

# Weather Policy

- Foundations Preschool follows the guidelines set by the State of Michigan Licensing rules for Child Care Centers: R400.5106(6). The center shall provide daily outdoor play when children are in attendance for three or more continuous hours per day, unless prevented by inclement weather or other weather conditions that could result in children becoming overheated or excessively chilled.
- Please make certain that your child has the appropriate clothing for outdoor play.
- Children are not taken outdoors when temperatures are excessively hot or cold. Water is provided for children outdoors on warm days. Foundations provides sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher. If a child requires a special lotion due to sensitivity/allergies, we ask that the parent provide the sunscreen labeled with the child's name. Parents may provide an insect repellant lotion for children sensitive to bug bites. Parents must provide written authorization annually for sunscreen and insect repellants.

# Integrated Pest Management Policy

Policy: It is the policy of Foundations Preschool to implement Integrated Pest Management procedures to balance the risk of pests and pesticides by managing structural and landscape pests and minimize exposure to children, faculty, and staff from pesticides.

Pests: It is the policy of Foundations Preschool to manage pests in the school environment. Pests such as cockroaches, fleas, ants, wasps, termites, and rodents are annoying and can disrupt the learning environment in school. Pests are known to bite, sting, or transmit diseases, and may also cause allergic responses.

Pesticides: It is the policy of this school to reduce unnecessary exposure to pesticides in the school environment. When pesticides are used to manage pests in schools, there is potential for human exposure. Excessive exposure may result in pesticide poisoning or allergy-like responses in sensitive individuals. Children are more susceptible to pesticides than adults due to their smaller size and rapid growth and development. Their behavior may expose them to more pesticide residues.

Integrated Pest Management: To balance the risk of pests and pesticide use, it is the policy of this school to employ principles of integrated pest management. Some of the major principles include

- Monitor and identify pests to verify a pest problem,
- Prevention of pest populations using such methods as sanitation, exclusion, and cultural practices, and
- Targeted application of "least hazardous" pesticides only as needed and in in inaccessible area to correct verified problems.

Procedures: Annual notification shall be provided to parents and guardians informing them that they will receive advance notification of pesticide applications (this handbook notice)

Notification of a pesticide application will occur by two methods:

- 1. Written notification in English and Spanish place in the lobby.
- 2. Written notification in English and Spanish to all parents if school wide, or by classroom if location is specific to a particular classroom.

Advance notice will contain information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of application, contact information, and toll-free number or web site for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

Liquid spray or aerosol insecticide application may not be performed in a room of a child care center unless the room will be unoccupied by children for not less than 4 hours or longer if required by the pesticide label use directions.

A professional is called if an infestation is found in the kitchen prep, cooking or serving areas, Foundations Preschool will contract services from:

Proof Pest Control at (248)-509-5151

www.proofpest.com

Creature Control (734) 476-0166

# Toilet Training

Upon enrollment, you will be asked about your child's toilet training progress.

If your child is not potty-trained, please talk to Foundations Staff about your child's toilet training needs.

Please ensure extra clothing for your child is always in their cubby.

Staff's approach to toilet training is to create a stress-free process full of verbal praise (stickers and other reward items will not be used).

Pull-ups, diapers, and wipes must be provided by the parent.

Children in the toddler room will receive information daily about your child's toileting patterns.

# Licensing Notebook

The licensing notebook is available to parents in the office during regular business hours. The licensing notebook contains all of licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related correction action plans.

The licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the last two years are available on the child care licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

# PAYMENT POLICY

## Tuition Based Preschool and Wrap-Around Care:

It is your responsibility to make certain that full tuition is paid every week.

Tuition must be pre-paid a week in advance. If payments are not made the week prior to service, a \$10 late payment fee will be added to the account.

A child may be disenrolled from tuition based programs if over two weeks past due.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you are having difficulties. We may be able to help.

If you need special payment options, a signed agreement must be on file. Please see the office to discuss options. All agreements must be adhered to or they will become void.

When your child leaves Foundations you are still responsible for payment in full of any outstanding balance. A payment plan can be agreed upon to settle outstanding balances, but if payment is not received, the amount owed will be sent to an outside collection agency.

Our tuition is prorated. This means that a weekly average has been determined for the price of a year of service. Each week's tuition will be the same amount, regardless of child absences, snow days, home visit days, closings due to building problems, and holidays (with the exception of 5 days during the Christmas holiday closing).

To ensure your child remains enrolled, tuition will be charged regardless of absences (illness, vacations, etc.).



# HEALTH AND SAFETY

#### Child and Staff Illness Policy

- For the protection of all children, keep your child at home if he or she shows any of the following symptoms:
  - fever of 100.4 degrees or more
  - intestinal disturbances (diarrhea or vomiting)
  - rash
  - red and/or crusty eye
  - excessively runny nose
  - lethargy or unusual irritability without explanation
  - pain which does not go away
  - soreness or discharge of eyes or ears; profuse nasal discharge
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - Persistent cough
  - Asthma flair-ups
- If staff or volunteers become ill with the above symptoms while at the center, they will be sent home to prevent further spread of illness.
- If children become ill while at school, he/she will be isolated from other children, usually in one of the director's offices. The parent or emergency contact person will be required to **immediately pick up the child**. We will call the emergency contact number for that person to come pick up the child if a parent does not respond or cannot get here within 30 minutes.
- It is the responsibility of each parent to be certain that there are alternative arrangements available in the event that you, the parent, cannot pick up your sick child in a timely manner (30 minutes max).
- Children should be symptom free without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours (one full school day) before returning to school. Certain symptoms may warrant a doctor's note and/or a 48 hour period away from school.
- Children need to be kept home for any contagious diseases/ ailments and kept home until successfully treated.
- Children exposed to any contagious diseases such as COVID-19, whooping cough, German or regular measles, mumps, chicken pox, etc., should report the illness to the school immediately.

- Children may return to school following a contagious disease when it is no longer communicable, the fever has been gone for 24 hours, and the child feels well. A doctor's note may be necessary.
- In cases of *suspected* communicable disease/ailment, a child must have a note from the physician stating the nature of the illness with treatment recommendations. If the child does not have the suspected illness, then a note indicating this is also required.
- When Foundations Preschool is aware of a communicable disease we will post a notice on the sign in the lobby and/or on the message board of each classroom.
- In the event there is a case of any preventable disease (immunization available) to which children are susceptible, all under immunized children will be sent home and may not return until it is deemed safe by the county health department.
- If a child has allergies that cause the same symptoms as a cold or other illness, the allergy will be treated as an illness unless a doctor's note indicates: There is an allergy; What the child is allergic to; and How to treat symptoms if they flair up.
  - You may be asked to get your child tested for COVID-19, even if the child has allergies as a way to rule out illness.

# **Medication Policy**

Foundations Preschool follows the guidelines set by the State of Michigan Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers: R400.8152 as well as those set by the National Accreditation for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

#### Medication:

(1) Medication, prescription or nonprescription, shall be given to a child by an adult caregiver only.

(2) A caregiver shall give or apply medication, prescription or nonprescription, only with prior written permission from a parent and written guidelines from health care provider. (NOTE: Foundations Preschool abides by NAEYC guidelines that medication **prescription and nonprescription** must include written guidelines from a licensed health care provider.)

(3) All medication shall be its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled for the enrolled child.

(4) Prescription medication shall have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication and shall be given according to those instructions.

(5) A caregiver shall keep all medication out of the reach of children and shall return

it to the child's parent or destroy it when the parent determines it is no longer needed or it has expired.

(6) A caregiver shall give or apply any prescription or nonprescription medication according to the directions authorized by a written order of the child's physician.

(7) A caregiver shall not add medication to a child's bottle, beverage, or food unless indicated on the prescription label.

(8) Topical nonprescription medication, including, but not limited to sunscreen and insect repellent, requires written parental authorization annually.

(9) The center shall maintain a record as to the time and the amount of medication given or applied, with the exception of subrule (8) of this rule, on a form provided by the department or a comparable substitute approved by the department. The signature of the caregiver administering the medication shall be included.

Forms for this purpose are available in the office and in the classroom.

(10) Staff is trained in CPR and First Aid. This includes the use of Epi-pens.

(11) If a child needs an inhaler or nebulizer due to asthma flair ups, the child must remain home until the inhaler/nebulizer is no longer needed).

**Immunizations:** Foundations Preschool maintains updated immunization records for each child as required by Michigan Law. The law requires that you provide an updated certificate of immunization when your child receives new immunizations. The current immunization schedule is found online at:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/ 033112\_childcarerequire\_383666\_7.pdf

Please be sure your child's immunizations are current. Foundations Preschool will notify parents when children require additional immunizations. Foundations Preschool reserves the right to exclude children who need immunizations until they have been completed.

# Parent/Guardian Notification Plan

Parents/Guardians will be notified at pick-up time for minor injuries and incidents that require minimal first aid. A written incident report is also completed by a staff member with a copy provided to parent/guardian. Cubbies must be checked daily to check for up to date communications.

Parents will be notified immediately via telephone for some injuries and incidents. If unable to reach a parent, the emergency contact person will be notified. Serious injuries include but are not limited to the following: head injuries of any kind, injuries requiring medical attention, allergic reactions, rashes, seizures, asthma attacks,

unconscious child, fever, vomiting or incidents involving lost children.

If a serious injury or illness appears to need immediate medical attention the center

staff will call 9-1-1 for assistance.

Attendance expectations are explained during enrollment. Parents are asked to notify the center when their child will be absent. The staff will work with families to identify any factors that are keeping the child from attending school, and provide support to ensure continued attendance. *To ensure your child remains enrolled, tuition will be charged regardless of absences (illness, vacations, etc.)* 

# **Building Security**

The building is locked at all times. Entry can only be gained through a pre-determined access code or by using the call button to the right of the door. The office has a security camera with a view of the entryway and parking lot. The office can "buzz" a visitor in after the visitor is cleared.

All classroom doors are locked from the outside (access to leave the room is not blocked).

#### Procedure for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

The Child Protection Law of 1975 requires school personnel, among others, to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. The law also makes confidential such reports unless the persons reporting consent to be named or the persons reporting become known through judicial process.

The following procedures are to be used when reporting suspected abuse (physical or sexual) of a child enrolled at Foundations Preschool. The preferred method for reporting is through the CPS online reporting system.

- 1. Staff will verbally notify the Executive Director of the situation.
- 2. Staff member will log on to the MiBridges website.
- 3. Staff member will complete the form.

4. After submitting the form, a hard copy will be printed and given to the Director as a way of notifying that a report has been made.

5. The Director will place the form into child's confidential file.

Prior to being hired, an extensive background check is performed on all applicants. If, while in our employ, a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect, our policy is:

- Staff member will immediately be placed on paid leave until the results of the investigation is final.
- If staff member is cleared of the accusation, they can return to work.

## Fire emergency, bomb threats, gun threat or building emergency:

We have procedures and policies in place for managing serious emergency incidents. Our staff has been trained in critical incident response and receive regular renewal training on this topic. We are in communication with the emergency preparedness systems for our community.

Staff shall note the posted evacuation routes within each classroom and play area. Teachers shall facilitate calm and quick evacuation of the building. Teachers exiting the building will take child emergency cards and parent sign-in/out clipboards or current method of attendance. All exits are clearly marked and the center practices regular fire/emergency drills.

For bomb threats, children and staff shall move out of the building, at least 500 feet. Should the children need to be outside the building for any extended period of time, staff and children will proceed to: The Ann Arbor Cat Clinic.

Parents will be contacted if the children are not able to re-enter the building and need

## For other natural or man-made disasters

Included but not limited to: flood, gas leak/chemical spill, sewer back-up, and power outages, staff and students will follow directions from police or other emergency/law enforcement personnel. It is imperative that we have constant parent contact information updates. Please make sure you are signed up for communication alerts!

# Community-directed evacuation:

When community evacuations are required, law enforcement officials will contact FPWC. Emergency management officials will determine off-site evacuation sites. Emergency management officials or their contracted agents will transport staff and children. Staff will take child emergency cards. Staff will also plan to take with them quiet play activities to use with the children. Staff will contact parents by phone to notify them of the designated pick-up location.

#### **On-site sheltering:**

Should Foundations Preschool be under an on-site shelter need (tornado, dangerous police activity nearby, etc.) children and staff will move to assigned safety areas. Adequate bottled water, food, flashlights with fresh batteries, and AM/FM battery-powered radio shall always be available at Foundations Preschool should this need arise.

# Utility Failure:

In the case of a utility failure, the administrative team will determine the course of action dependent upon the type and length of loss.

The director/designee may authorize to close the center to protect the health and safety of children and staff.

Foundations Preschool follows the guidelines set by the State of Michigan Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers: R400.8140

Discipline:

(1) Positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation shall be used.

(2) All of the following means of punishment shall be prohibited: (a) Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment. (b) Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her. (c) Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child. (d) Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use. (e) Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities. (f) Excluding a child from daily learning experiences. (g) Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.

(3) Non-severe and developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used when reasonably necessary, based on a child's development, to prevent a child from harming himself or herself or to prevent a child from harming other persons or property, excluding those forms of punishment prohibited by subrule (2) of this rule.

In addition to abiding by the licensing regulations, Foundations has adopted the following policy:

Our goal is to develop in each child: respect for other people, a feeling of self-worth, internal control, and appropriate use of resources. Physical and verbal abuse of children by adults is unacceptable and is grounds for disciplinary action. Similarly, physical and verbal abuse of others and property destruction by children is grounds for intervention by a teacher.

Teaching teams regularly discuss children's behavior and group management techniques to develop the most reasonable approaches for individual children. Classroom teachers are best prepared to deal with children's behavior considering their close relationships with individual children. The teaching teams may ask for additional input from Foundations Preschool staff including the Executive Director, Program Director, and Social Worker.

Parents are encouraged to arrange conferences with the teachers and director to discuss their children whenever they wish.

Foundations Preschool follows the HighScope 6 Step Approach to Conflict Resolution. This process encourages cooperation, independence and respect for self and others. We expect children to have occasional difficulties with self-control, as well as with conflict resolution. Teachers view these times as opportunities for children to practice their developing social skills. When children are verbally, emotionally or physically hurtful, we take the following steps until the problem is resolved:

- 1. Adults approach the children calmly, stopping any hurtful actions. The teacher will place themselves between the children, on their level, they use a calm voice and gentle touch; they remain neutral rather than taking sides.
- 2. Acknowledge children's feelings. Teachers say something simple like "You look really upset" or "You seem frustrated." If the conflict is over a toy, the teacher will hold the toy until a resolution is agreed upon by the children.
- 3. Gather information from the children, allowing each child to express their point of view.
- 4. **Restate the problem**, giving children a chance to add any details.
- 5. Ask children for ideas for solutions to the problem, and choose one of the solutions together.
- 6. Give follow-up support and help children implement the solution.

When interventions are necessary, we use the least disruptive, most effective method. We utilize the following child management techniques:

- Verbal or non-verbal communication with a child.
- Redirection of a child to another activity or area.
- Appropriate consequences for disruptive behavior.
- At times it may be necessary to physically protect a child from harming himself or others. The least amount of restraint that will be effective is used.

Learning social-emotional skills can take time for children! Please do not encourage your child to "hit back" when they are unhappy with the behavior of others.

Ultimately, Foundations Preschool strives to promote and maintain an educational environment free from harassment, humiliation, and intimidation.

We prohibit any type of verbal abuse, physical abuse, and disruptive or threatening conduct from parents, guardians, and family representatives. By this, any display or engagement of such behavior on Foundations Preschool grounds is a violation of our policy.

## CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

- 1. Files required by Michigan Child Care Licensing rules are kept in the main office and may be accessed only by authorized administrative personnel.
- 2. Teaching staff will keep individual files on each child which include anecdotes, copies of parent communication, family reports, home visits, screenings, ILP's, and IEP's in filing cabinets that are only accessible to teaching staff and authorized administrative personnel.
- 3. Child Observation Records (COR) are maintained in an online database accessible only with passwords.
- 4. Parents must sign a release of information form before any information is transferred to another school or placement.
- 5. All staff is informed and follows rules of confidentiality regarding the sharing of child/family information.

# STATEMENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY & NONDISCRIMINATION

Foundations Preschool hires new employees and admits children to its program without respect to race, color, creed, national origin, age, gender identification, or disability.

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, institutions are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll-free (866)632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

# FINAL STATEMENTS

Foundations Preschool reserves the right to change school policies as needed.

Foundations Preschool has attempted through these pages to outline its duties and responsibilities, concerns, expectations, as well as your obligations as a parent of an enrolled child. As a parent, you can expect that we will adhere to all state and community licensing rules regarding fire, safety, and weather emergency precautions as well as health, sanitation and adult staffing requirements (including provisions for substitutes when necessary).

Finally, Foundations Preschool does its very best to provide your child with a program of education to suit his/her needs and a physical environment in which he/she can feel both secure and free to grow. Toward achieving these ends, we encourage and welcome your comments and suggestions, and extend our sincere thanks for your cooperation in these efforts.

Thank you for trusting us with your child!