



AS WE
GROW

Oswegoland Park District Preschool

Parent Handbook 2024-25

Program & Curriculum Overview

Welcome to our preschool! We are looking forward to a fantastic year! We believe our school provides a nurturing and enriching atmosphere for our preschool children. The As We Grow preschool program is designed to help develop the whole child through purposeful play. During play, children are able to express themselves, problem solve, and learn about the changing world around them. Purposeful play provides a context for learning so that it is meaningful to children, which is likely a result in long term understanding and concept development.

Our preschool program is designed to help preschool age children learn the ever changing curriculum so they can have the tools needed when moving onto Pre-K and then Kindergarten.

Our preschool program is designed to help preschool aged children develop a wide range of cognitive language, physical, social, and emotional skills. Areas of concentration include creative development, literacy development, early math concepts, science exploration, focus on STEAM activities, large and fine motor development. All of our preschool teachers structure their lessons around various themes using their creativity along with utilizing concepts from Illinois Early Learning Standards. Children are taught the main sounds of the English language through an early phonics program known as Jolly Phonics.

It's exciting to be able to offer our preschool children various enrichment opportunities during their class time.

Thank you for choosing the As We Grow preschool program at the Oswegoland Park District. Myself and the entire preschool staff are looking forward to a terrific school year!

Krista Casanovas
Preschool Coordinator



Introduction

What happens to a child in the earliest years affects how well he or she learns throughout their lifetime. It’s important that you select a preschool program to fit the needs of your child. The As We Grow preschool program is designed to integrate readiness skills into your child’s daily activities, along with building self esteem, fostering creativity, and encouraging independence. Children are encouraged to learn and grow in a friendly, supportive environment. Qualified and dedicated staff members enable your child to receive the individual attention he or she deserves.

Our Philosophy

We believe children learn best through developmentally appropriate play experiences. Our preschool program is designed to provide children with the opportunity to develop skills as we guide them through play activities and hands on learning methods. Areas that relate to physical, cognitive, and emotional development are given attention when preparing daily activities that fit the needs of each individual child. We provide an atmosphere that will encourage children to:

- Develop a positive, confident self image
- Respect others
- Feel safe within the school environment
- Become independent
- Engage in activities to promote learning and developmental growth

Locations & Times

Civic Center	5 Ashlawn Ave, Montgomery
Boulder Point	Zero Boulder Hill Pass, Montgomery
South Point	810 Preston Lane, Oswego

Totally Twos (1 day a week):

Morning: 9:15 to 11:15am

Totally Twos (2 days a week):

Morning: 9:15 to 11:15am

Totally Twos:

Lunch & Learn: 11:45am to 1:45pm

Thoroughly Threes & Pre-Kindergarten (2 or 3 days a week):

Morning: 9:15 to 11:45am | Afternoon: 12:30 to 3:00pm

Pre-Kindergarten (4 days a week):

Morning: 9:15 to 11:30am | Afternoon: 12:30 to 2:45pm

Junior Kids Connection (5 days a week):

Morning: 9:30 to 1:00pm | Am & Pm care available 6:30am-6:15pm

Preparing for Preschool

Oswegoland Park District utilizes ePACT, an online system to collect and manage our participants' emergency information and other documents. After you register, you'll receive an email invitation within 24 hours that will guide you through a few quick steps to set up your account and share the following information with us before the first day of class.

- Upload a copy of your child's birth certificate
- A completed Health and Emergency document located through ePACT

If your child has a life threatening allergy, an allergy packet complete with doctor signature must be filled out prior to the first day of attendance and uploaded to ePACT.

For your child's safety, please update ePACT immediately of any change in your address, home or work phone numbers, or place of employment.

Note: All children enrolled in our 3 and 4 year old program must be toilet-trained. Please do not send your child to preschool in pull-ups.

The First Day

The process of separation from the parent is a very important accomplishment for the preschool aged child. First time separations can be difficult for children as well as for parents. Children usually do best when parents project a confident, positive attitude, and depart with a short good-bye at the door. A delay of your initial good-bye makes the separation harder on both of you. Though your child may be upset when you leave, be assured that staff is prepared for these moments and will make every effort to comfort your child.

Children may receive nametags to wear the first few days of preschool so that teachers can learn their names quickly. Being called by name helps your child feel safe and secure.

The Preschool Day

ARRIVING: As soon as children arrive, they will place jackets and backpacks in the assigned areas and engage in table activities in the classroom.

FREE PLAY: During free play, children may choose from a variety of activities including games, puzzles, playdough, and blocks. Children may use their imaginations to pretend play in the dramatic play area, explore the sensory table, create a picture using art materials, or page through a book.

CENTERS: The children will work one-on-one or in small groups centers focused on achieving STEAM lessons and fine motor skills.

GROUP TIME: Children gather together for songs, learning exercises, finger plays, stories, and sharing. Weather, calendar, and activities of the day are discussed as well.

SNACK TIME: Although we do not have a daily snack, there may be special times that your child has a snack. Examples would include birthdays and if teachers choose to incorporate a snack into a specific theme.

FOOD ALLERGIES: We want to provide the safest atmosphere for all children enrolled in our program. If your child has allergies, a completed Park District allergy packet must be uploaded to ePACT before your child can begin class.

ARTS AND CRAFTS: Exploring and using art materials allow preschool children to express creativity, learn to recognize colors, shape design and textures, as well as enhance fine motor skills and coordination.

LARGE/SMALL MUSCLE: Children will develop their large muscle skills through creative movement, jumping, and climbing. Fine motor skills are enhanced through puzzles, playdough, lacing cards, stringing beads, cutting, and writing.

CLEAN UP: All children are encouraged to share the responsibilities of putting toys and materials in their proper place before the end of the school day. Cleaning up is a great sorting activity, and children feel proud when they can help get their room back to its original state.

Arrivals

Please arrive at the car drop off line a few minutes before class begins. We are asking every parent to utilize our drop off and pick up system to eliminate traffic in and out of the building.

CIVIC CENTER

The drop off/pick up line is located at the end of the sidewalk on Ashlawn Avenue. A preschool staff member will help your child out of the vehicle and walk them into the classroom.

BOULDER POINT

The drop off/pick up line is located at door C on the south side of the building. A preschool staff member will help your child out of the vehicle and walk them into the classroom.

SOUTH POINT

The drop off/pick up line is located at door 7 in the front of the building. A preschool staff member will help your child out of the vehicle and walk them into the classroom. Since we typically coordinate our drop off with Southbury Elementary, please be aware of the buses. If the buses are lined up, wait until they have unloaded the children before pulling up. Please do not pass the bus if the stop sign is out and the red lights are flashing.

Dismissals

When class ends, your child will only be dismissed to a parent or person listed on as an authorized pickup person on your child's ePact account. Any other pickup arrangements must be given to your child's teacher in writing. Teachers will require an unfamiliar pickup person to show identification before they will release your child. Please arrive at your scheduled pickup time. Please display your car tag in the passenger side window. A preschool staff member will bring your child out to your vehicle. Please remain in your car while the staff member is escorting your child to the vehicle.

Late Pick Up

If you will be late picking up your child due to an emergency, please call the Park District so that a staff member can inform your child's teacher. All sites can be reached at 630.554.1010.

Please note: Starting and ending times for preschool classes are based on the clock in your child's classroom.

Illnesses & Absences

We depend on parents to assist us in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all of the children. We reserve the right to send home any child that exhibits signs of illness. Any child that becomes ill will be isolated and made comfortable until his/her guardian can be notified and the child is picked up. Children may be sent home if they have any specific symptoms as listed below. In addition, a child must be free of all these specified symptoms for at least 24 hours before returning to preschool.

These symptoms are as follows:

- A fever of 100 degrees or more with no medication
- Vomiting within the previous 24-hour period
- Diarrhea within the previous 24-hour period
- A heavy nasal discharge indicative of infection
- A constant cough or sore throat
- A skin rash
- Head lice
- Symptoms of communicable disease

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever over 100.4
- Cough, not allergy related
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Unusual fatigue

Accidents & Injuries

Preschool teachers are trained to treat minor cuts, bruises, and other simple playground injuries. All staff members are certified in First Aid, CPR, and AED. In the event of a serious injury, teachers will call 911 to request emergency medical assistance. While a teacher attends to your child, another Park District staff person will contact you (or your emergency contact person if you are unavailable). The Oswegoland Park District does not carry medical insurance for program participants, therefore you will be responsible for any costs incurred in caring for your child.

Tornado & Fire Safety

Preschool teachers incorporate fire and tornado safety training into their curriculum early in the school year. They practice fire, tornado drills, and lockdown drills at regular intervals throughout the year so that children will know exactly what to do should an emergency arise.

Student Book Bags

Please send your child to school each day with a standard size backpack, and include your child's name on the bag where it is clearly visible. It is important to check your child's school bag each day for notes from the teacher as well as any books or artwork your child may have worked on during class.

Clothing Guidelines

Play activity is an important part of the curriculum. A preschooler's day is filled with activities that allow them to explore art materials to stimulate creativity, as well as outdoor activities for large motor development. Clothing choices should be practical as children may get messy throughout the preschool day.

- Choose ***comfortable, loose fitting*** clothing that your child can get on and off easily. This helps make trips to the bathroom easy for children.
- We recommend comfortable ***closed toe shoes*** for your child. Children are active outdoors, and little toes can become easily hurt on the playground.
- ***Label all of your child's outdoor clothing.*** Many times children will have the same boots, coats, gloves, or mittens as other children in their class.

Discipline Policy

Discipline is the ongoing process of helping children to develop inner controls and assume responsibility for their own actions. We accomplish this by setting, explaining, and consistently enforcing clear and understandable rules, limits, and consequences prior to and as part of any disciplinary action. As much as possible in carrying out discipline, teachers will use firm positive statements or redirection of behavior. If necessary, to help a child gain control, the teacher may remove him or her from the activity or group for a time not to exceed one minute per year of age. Children will have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts. Should an adult need to intervene, children will have input in resolving the conflicts.

Although discipline problems in preschool rarely warrant it, the Oswegoland Park District reserves the right to exclude any child from the program whose behavior seriously disrupts the program or is a danger to him/herself or others. When a child has a pattern of unacceptable behavior, the staff will work with the parents and, if necessary, a professional clinician on a plan for helping the child to develop self-control. We may use the resources of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) for assistance in observing and suggesting methods of behavior management for with the child. Parents will be notified before someone from FVSRA is called in to observe their child. If it becomes necessary to exclude the child, we will make every effort to assist the parents in locating an appropriate program to meet their child's needs.

Tax ID Number

As We Grow Preschool is not a child care program, but depending on your circumstances, the cost of the program may qualify for a deduction. If you and your tax advisor decide you can use this. The number is 366009398.

Potty Time

Please have your child use the bathroom prior to arriving at school. If your child should need to use the bathroom during class, a preschool staff member will take him/her to the bathroom.

Our 3 and 4 year old program requires that your child be independent in the bathroom which includes:

- Using the toilet without assistance
- Pulling up and down his/her own clothes
- Washing and drying his/her hands

If your child should have an accident at school, the preschool staff cannot change your child's clothing. If your child cannot change his/her clothing without assistance, we will contact you.

If your child needs changing during their Twos class, We will contact you.

Please pack a spare change of clothes, including underwear and socks, in a clear plastic bag and label it with your child's name. This bag will stay in your child's book bag and be available if needed.

Parent Communication

Each teacher will have a class dojo page to provide classroom information, reminders, and pictures of classroom activities. You will be given information on how to sign up. Every week, new information and pictures will be posted.

School Pictures

Individual pictures of each child, as well as a group picture of your child's class will be taken in September/October.

The purchase of pictures is optional.

Lunch Box Club

Lunch Box Club is an additional sign up. Preschoolers will spend time with their friends eating lunch and afterwards have fun participating in activities, gymnastics, or games.

Enrichment Classes

Enrichment classes are an additional sign up. Preschoolers can spend some extra time after their morning class sparking their curiosity through science and sensory experiments, learning about famous artists, going on a traveling adventure or practicing their cooking skills in our enrichment classes.

Totally Two's

(Children must be 2 by Sept 1, 2024)

Goals and Objectives

- **SELF-ASSURANCE** - Children will feel comfortable and secure in their classroom environment.
- **MOTOR SKILLS** - Children will develop gross and fine motor skills.
- **READINESS SKILLS** - Children will become familiar with classroom procedures, learn to follow one step directions, and be exposed to basic shapes, primary colors, and counting 1-5.

Skill Development

- **COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL SKILLS** enable children to interact with others. Children are encouraged to communicate their thoughts and needs in words and play with others. They are encouraged to take turns, and make good choices, begin resolving conflict by using appropriate words and set the foundation for curious and enthusiastic approach to new activities.
- **SELF HELP SKILLS** promote independence. Children are encouraged to hang up their coats and backpacks, self-care skills include cleaning up in the classroom.
- **CIRCLE TIME** provides children the opportunity to learn how to sit in a group setting. Children learn to share their ideas with each other. Children will listen to and enjoy stories in a variety of delivery methods, and participate in music activities.
- **LARGE AND FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES** promote physical activity. To develop fine motor movements, completing puzzles, painting, stringing beads, and manipulating items. To develop large motor movements, children practice jumping, skipping, hopping, and running.
- **READINESS SKILLS** enhance the child's awareness of literature and language in the classroom. Children learn to recognize the printed form of their first name, begin to recognize patterns, identify colors and basic shapes. An introduction to the Jolly Phonics program enables children to learn the songs associated with sounds.
- **COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES** help children focus and learn. Children practice retelling stories and identifying connections. Children are encouraged to ask questions pertaining to the story, and follow single step directions.

Goals and Objectives

- **SELF-ASSURANCE** - Children will feel comfortable and secure in their classroom environment.
- **MOTOR SKILLS** - Children will develop gross and fine motor skills.
- **READINESS SKILLS** - Children will become familiar with classroom procedures, learn to follow one step directions, and be exposed to pre-math and pre-reading skills.

Skill Development

- **COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL SKILLS** enable children to interact with others. Children are encouraged to communicate their thoughts and needs in words, ask questions, solve problems, and play with others. They are encouraged to take turns, to make good choices, to resolve conflicts appropriately, and to have a curious and enthusiastic approach to new activities.
- **SELF HELP SKILLS** promote independence. Children are encouraged to hang up their coats and backpacks, zip and unzip, and clean up after themselves.
- **CIRCLE TIME** provides children the opportunity to learn how to function in a group setting. They learn that there is a time to talk and a time to listen, and how to share their ideas with each other. Children will listen to and enjoy stories in a variety of delivery methods, and participate in music activities.
- **LARGE AND FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES** promote physical coordination. To develop fine motor movements, children practice using scissors, completing puzzles, painting, stringing beads, and manipulating items. To develop large motor movements, children practice jumping, skipping, hopping, and running.
- **READINESS SKILLS** enhance the child's awareness of literature and language in the classroom. Children learn to recognize the printed form of their first name and other classmates, recognize that reading and writing progresses from left to right and top to bottom, begin to recognize patterns and sequencing, identify colors and basic shapes, recognize upper and lower case letters, and recognize numerals. An introduction to the Jolly Phonics program enables children to learn initial letter sounds.
- **COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES** help children focus and learn. Children practice retelling facts from the story, making predictions, and identifying connections between events. Children are encouraged to ask questions pertaining to the story, follow single step directions and remember events.

Goals and Objectives

- **SELF-ASSURANCE** - Children will feel comfortable and secure in their classroom environment.
- **MOTOR SKILLS** - Children will continue to develop gross and fine motor skills.
- **READINESS SKILLS** - Children will learn developmentally appropriate skills for their age, including learning how to walk in a line and being responsible for packing and unpacking their backpacks at the end of the day.
- **LITERATURE SKILLS** - Children will be introduced to the concept of journaling, and be encouraged to creatively express their thoughts through writing and drawing.

Skill Development

- **SOCIAL SKILLS** promote self-assurance. Children are encouraged to develop trust and respect for their teachers and classmates, learn how to work in a group as well as individually, and to interact positively with their classmates.
- **SELF HELP SKILLS** promote independence. Children are encouraged to hang up their coats and backpacks, zip and unzip, use the bathroom independently, clean up after themselves, appropriately express their needs, ask questions, seek answers, and initiate problem solving.
- **LARGE AND FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES** promote physical coordination. To develop fine motor movements, children practice using scissors, holding a pencil, using print as a tool for communication, completing puzzles, and stringing beads. To develop large motor movements, children practice hopping, dancing, jumping, and running.
- **KINDERGARTEN READINESS SKILLS** prepare children to succeed in kindergarten. Children learn to identify letters, shapes and colors. They learn to identify and print their first and last name using upper and lower case letters, be aware of the initial sounds that letters make through the support of the Jolly Phonics program, and become aware of the beginning, middle, and end of stories. Children will learn to identify many numerals, and make a one to one correspondence between objects and numbers. Children will learn number stories through various games and activities that promote the early fundamentals of math skills.
- **COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES** help children focus and learn. Children practice following single step then multi-step directions. They learn that there is a time to listen and a time to talk, to ask questions pertaining to the story, and to complete an assigned task.
- **COMMUNICATION SKILLS** enable children to interact with others. Children are encouraged to converse with teachers and peers, develop manners, speak so others can understand them, and use words and sentence structures appropriate for their age.
- **COOPERATION SKILLS** promote respect between children and teachers. Children are encouraged to take turns, share, and resolve conflicts with their peers in an appropriate manner.

Nature-Based Preschool Program at Civic Center

Program Overview

The mission of our Nature Preschool is to provide a high-quality early childhood learning program that meets the developmental needs of preschoolers while at the same time inspiring them to love and appreciate the world of nature. Our unique nature-based curriculum combines traditional Kindergarten readiness learning with age-appropriate educational activities that are designed to teach children about the natural world, exercise and physical fitness, health and wellness, nutrition, and the importance of getting outdoors.

At our nature based Preschool, we believe that nature plays a vital role in the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of young children. Research shows that children who spend time in nature are healthier, can think more clearly, have an easier time paying attention, and have the ability to cope more effectively with stress. Childhood experiences in nature help stimulate children's curiosity and interest in the world around them, and help them grow intellectually in their desire to better understand the world and their place in it.

We believe that children's interactions with the natural world allow for the development of a lifetime of skills. Nature serves as a living classroom for our preschool and provides an ideal environment for children to learn through direct experience and play. Our preschoolers spend time outdoors almost every day, where they can fully engage all their senses in a safe and nurturing environment. On the rare occasions when the weather is too extreme for outdoor exploration, children are able to participate in active play in the classroom.

Weather Conditions

Your child's safety is a priority at the As We Grow Preschool Nature-Based Program. We will not explore the outdoors during a thunderstorm with lightning, on bitterly cold days, or on extremely windy days. If there is a light rain or thunder, without lightning, we will stay close to the building or indoors depending upon the instructors' discretion.

Cold Weather Policy

The instructors will make a judgment call prior to class start time as to whether or not the children will be engaging in outdoor activities. Several factors go into making that decision. Instructors base their decisions off of wind chill, temperature, and sunlight. Due to incorrect weather forecasts or weather changes that may occur during a class allowing us to participate in outdoor activities later in the class, we advise that you dress your child for the weather. If temperatures fall below 15 degrees, we will stay inside.

Outdoor Clothing

Clothing should be kept ***simple, non-restrictive, and washable***. Active exploration of the outdoors is encouraged and clothing could get dirty. Children will need to wear ***comfortable, protective shoes*** for running, gripping, and climbing. All children should be dressed appropriately for the weather. Label all clothing as many times children will have the same items as other children in their class. We spend much of our day outside, so plan accordingly. When needed, please apply sunscreen to your child prior to sending them to school.

Seasonal Clothing Needs

FALL & SPRING	Rubber boots Rain jacket <i>*Please do not send umbrellas</i>
WINTER	Hat Scarf Waterproof gloves or mittens Snow pants Snow boots Snow jacket

Billing & Payment

DAILY FEES 2023-2024

One Day 2s	Two Day 2s	Two Days 3s/PreK	Three Days	Four Days
\$22(R)/\$24(N)	\$22(R)/\$24(N)	\$24(R)/\$26(N)	\$24(R)/\$26(N)	\$24(R)/\$25(N)

Tuition Payments

As We Grow Preschool is a monthly billing program. You will be billed at the beginning of every month. The first As We Grow payment is due on or before September 1, 2024. Subsequent payments are due the first of every month, September 2024 through May 2025. Auto-Charge Authorization form that allows the Park District to charge your monthly payments on the date due to the credit card of your choice: VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover. You may also complete an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form that allows the Park District to withdraw monthly payments from your checking account on the date due. These methods of payment protect you from the additional cost of late fees.

Late Payments

If payment is not received by the 1st of the month, a \$25 late fee may be charged to your account. If you cannot make the payment on time, you can avoid the late fee by contacting the Park District’s billing department at 630.554.4064 prior to the due date to make an alternate payment plan. If that plan is honored, you will not be charged the late fee. If a payment has not been received, your child’s participation may be disrupted. The third time your account is past due, automatic payments will be required to continue in the program.

Scholarships

There is a limited scholarship fund available through the Oswegoland Park Foundation. Please call 630.554.1010 to request an application if you feel your family may qualify.

If you have questions or concerns about your preschool payments, please contact our Finance Department at 630.554.4064.

2024-2025 Calendar

Oswegoland Park District preschool classes will begin on Wednesday, September 4 and Thursday, September 5. Preschool classes will end May 23. The no school days listed below are taken out of our calendar. Please note that you are not charged for these days.

Preschool Closings

Preschool classes may be canceled after a heavy snowfall or during other weather emergencies. Whenever Oswego School District 308 classes are canceled due to weather, our preschool classes will also be canceled. You may receive a credit on your account for any canceled classes that are not added on to the end of the year. Teachers will notify parents of school closings by email.

No School Days

Mon, Sept 2	No School
Tue, Sept 3	No School
Mon, Oct 14	No School
Tue, Nov 5	No School
Fri, Nov 8	No School
Wed, Nov 27 - Fri, Nov 29	Thanksgiving Break
Mon, Dec 23 - Fri, Jan 3	Winter Break
Mon, Jan 17	MLK Day
Mon, Feb 17	Presidents' Day
Fri, Mar 7	No School
Mon, Mar 24 - Fri, Mar 28	Spring Break
Fri, Apr 18	No School
Mon, Apr 21	No School
Fri, May 23	Last Day of School

Parents

We welcome and encourage contact between parents and teachers, and respect confidentiality. We want to know if you’re expecting a new baby, if someone in your home is experiencing an illness, or if there is any other situation that might affect your child’s day away from home. Parent/teacher conferences are offered in the fall; however, you are always welcome to talk to your child’s teacher.

Teachers

Our dedicated teaching staff is available to discuss any questions you may have about your child’s classroom experience. Please call 630.554.1010 and ask to be connected to your child’s teacher.

Contact Information

Krista Casanovas
Preschool Coordinator
630.554.4060
kcasanovas@oswegolandpd.org

Cristin Handlon
Registration Coordinator/Billing
630.554.4064
chandlon@oswegolandpd.org

Park District Phone Number
630.554.1010

Park District Facilities

Civic Center	5 Ashlawn Ave, Montgomery, IL 60538
South Point	810 Preston Lane, Oswego, IL 60543
Boulder Point	0 Boulder Hill Pass Montgomery, IL 60538
Prairie Point	313 E. Washington St, Oswego, IL 60543