

The Growing Room, inc.



Parent Handbook

2013-14 School Year

The Growing Room
7754 Camargo Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243
www.thegrowingroompreschool.com

513.272.2111

Welcome to The Growing Room! This handbook contains information regarding our preschool programs. It is very important that you read this handbook and keep it handy as long as your child is enrolled. It will answer many of the questions you may have about our school.

Philosophy and Goals

The Growing Room Child Enrichment Center was established in 1999 to provide opportunities for the integration of learning in all areas of development--- intellectual, physical, social and emotional. The learning experiences our teachers plan for children are designed to concentrate on furthering children's interests and emerging capabilities through creative activities and academic curriculum.

Our classroom was designed to entice children to become involved in learning activities . The structure of the learning environment is intended to both allow and encourage children to explore and learn through their play. Additionally our program supports children's growing independence and self confidence through the many opportunities to participate and make decisions.

Our teachers have a sincere commitment to and respect for children. Above all, we are energetic and enthusiastic about our work with children...and it shows!

License

In this handbook folder is an important form called Parent Licensing Verification. Please take the time to read and sign it. Our state license is posted by the Camargo Road Entrance.

Admissions

A child is considered enrolled only after the \$50 registration fee has been received, the director has confirmed availability of space and the required paperwork is received. This includes basic enrollment and health information on file by the first day of school. Any change to this information must be communicated to the director immediately so that current information is always on file. This is for the safety of your child. A medical form signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner is require to be submitted within thirty days of admission. This medical must be updated every 12 months.

Hours and Days of Operation

Our morning preschool program for children 2 1/2 to 5 years of age meets five days a week. We also offer two, three and four day options. The morning session begins at 8:30 am and ends at 11:30 am. The afternoon sessions include our Pre-K Enrichment program; offered Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays noon-1 p.m.. Also, we offer "Mom's Day Out" on Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon-3 p.m.. We also offer a summer program. Please see the enclosed schedule for specific dates.

Our school vacations usually coincide with Madeira City School Vacations. You will be notified of any exceptions.

If Madeira City schools are closed due to inclement weather, our school will also be closed. If Madeira Schools are on a delay of more than one hour, our school will be closed. The outgoing message on The Growing Room phone line (513.272.2111) will reflect any delays or closings as soon as a decision is made.

Staff/ Child Ratios and Maximum Group Size

State mandated minimum ratios and group sizes are as follows:

Toddlers (30-36 mos.) 1:8

Preschoolers (3-4 years) 1:12

Preschoolers (4-Kdg) 1:14

School Age children 1:18

Because we desire to provide a higher level of quality of care we are committed to an EXCELLENT child /teacher ratio and maximum group size. We strive for the following:

Our teacher/child ratio:

Mixed age classroom (2.5- Kdg) 1:6 or 2:12

Daily schedule

To create an active learning environment for all children, the teacher establishes and maintains a daily routine for the enrichment classes. An example of a daily schedule is as follows:

8:30-8:45

Arrival

8:45-9:00

Greeting Circle The children and teachers sit together and review the daily schedule, sing a welcome song, read a book and offer a forum for open discussion.

Planning Time Through an activity, children plan the areas in which they will work (play) in during work time.

9:00-11:00

Work Time The children play in the areas they selected during planning time. Teachers move around the room and interact with each child in their self-directed play. The children may change their plans as they see fit. Work time is the longest activity of the day.

9:00-11:00 (a few children participate at a time)

Small Group Time The teacher presents an activity in which a small section of the group takes turns participating. The activities are chosen to meet the interests and needs of the children. During these activities the children are encouraged to choose materials, contribute their own ideas and solve problems presented by the teacher.

11:00-11:15

Clean up Time The children clean up the materials they used during work time.

11:15-11:30

Large Group Time All children come together for games, stories, songs, finger plays and basic movement exercises. Circle time encourages all children to participate in a large group and share ideas and feelings with others.

11:30

Dismissal The children prepare to go home.

Tuition/ Fees and Payment Policies

A registration fee of \$50 per child is made at the time of application.

Our annual tuition may be paid in two ways, by the semester or by a monthly payment plan. First semester tuition is due by August 1, 2011. Second semester payments are due by January 1, 2012. If you choose to participate in a monthly payment plan, the nine monthly tuition payments are due on the first day of each month.

In addition to tuition, an activity fee of \$40 is due the first week of school in September.

A \$10 late fee will be charged for past due tuition. Returned check fees are \$25.

Our Tax ID number is available upon request and is also printed in your child's confirmation packet.

Please make checks payable to The Growing Room, Inc. and either mail or place in the tuition envelope located in the back of the room. Please do not leave checks on the cubbies.

Arrival/Departure Policy

Parents or an authorized person over the age of 18 must accompany the children into the classroom, make verbal contact and sign in and out on the appropriate forms to insure the children's safe arrival and departure. Parents must sign the appropriate release form to authorize another adult to pick-up a child in advance. Proper ID is required by the adult.

Upon arrival each morning, children must be signed in on the appropriate sheet(s) in the front of our classroom. Parental involvement in helping a child get settled with that staff member will help your child adjust quickly into the morning routine. If there is anything that the staff can do to assist with the morning transition, parents should not hesitate to ask. We discourage parents from "sneaking out" of the school.

Children attending the morning preschool program should be settled and ready for the program by 8:45. Late arrivals may make a child feel left out since his or her classmates will already be involved in the day's activities.

When picking up children at the end of the day, parents should sign out their children. The sign in/out sheets are reviewed by the state licensing personnel and also help to determine our staffing requirements.

Once a child is removed from the supervising staff member, it becomes the responsibility of the person picking up the child to supervise him or her.

Release of Children

Since the safety of the children is our utmost concern, The Growing Room and its' employees maintain a strict policy regarding the individuals to whom we will release a child. The enrollment forms require a parent to specify at least two individuals to whom the child may be released either on a regular or emergency basis.

Advance written notice is required for an individual to be authorized to pick up a child. In the case of an emergency, the Director may be notified by phone as to the name, address, phone number, and brief physical description of the person who will be picking up the child. The director will then call the parent back to verify this authorization. Once the individual arrives at school, a staff member will need to verify the individual's identity by reviewing 2 forms of identification including photo identification before the child is released.

If a non-custodial parent is not among those persons authorized by the custodial parent to pick up the child please inform the director and your child's teacher. A copy of the appropriate legal documentation must be included in the child's school file. This information shall remain confidential and will be shared with other staff members only as required to meet the needs of the child.

Should an unauthorized individual arrive to pick up a child, a parent or emergency contact person will immediately be notified via telephone call. If the director is unable to reach a parent or emergency contact, the child will not be released. Should an unauthorized person become uncooperative with the school's policies regarding the release of the child, the local authorities will be notified.

The Growing Room, inc. will not release a child to any parent, relative or any other authorized adult who appears to be impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol. In the event this situation occurs, a phone call will be made to the parent or emergency contact person.

Licensing Information Statement

The Growing Room, inc. has been licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Child Daycare Licensing Dept. to legally operate in the state of Ohio. A copy of the license and any inspection reports are posted by the rear door of the school. A copy of the ODJFS license rules is available upon request for your review. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services also offers a toll free telephone number if a parent needs to report a suspected violation of rules. Our licensing record, including compliance report forms, is available from ODJFS upon request. Please refer to our posted license for the ages and # of children for which we are licensed. According to the rules set by ODJFS and our ethical standards, it is unlawful to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, religion, sex, color, or national origin, or disability in violation of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq

Parking Lot

Please do not leave any children unsupervised in a car in the parking lot...especially with the engine running. Exercise EXTREME caution when entering and exiting the parking lot, especially if you have a large SUV where visibility of children is hindered.

Staff Courtesy

We ask that you not arrive earlier than five minutes before the start of class. Your child's teachers rely on the morning time to prepare the materials and classroom for your child. Also, please pick up your children promptly, as staff members are anxious to get home to their own families. If you are unexpectedly detained, call the school so we may provide your child with an explanation.

Absences

Please call the school to report absences so that your child's teachers are not worried and can plan for your child.

Field Trips

As part of The Growing Room program, periodic field trips are planned to provide the children with exposure to learning experiences in our local community. Prior to each field trip, information will be sent home outlining the date, time, location, cost, chaperones, etc. The permission slip must be signed, dated and returned to the supervising teacher by the date requested in order for the child to attend. On each trip, each child has identification that includes the name, address and phone number/ cell phone contact for the school attached to his clothing. A first aid kit is taken on all trips and all trips include at least one staff member trained in first aid. A copy of emergency transportation and health records on each child will be taken. Staff child ratios will be maintained at all times. Before departing from school, a count will be taken of all children attending, and will be marked on a separate attendance sheet created for the field trip. Upon arrival at the destination, another count will be taken to assure all children have arrived safely. This process will be repeated upon leaving the destination, and returning to the school. All children will be assigned specific staff and adults during the entire course of the trip and will be accounted for at all times. Children with special health care plans will walk with their appropriate paperwork and supplies needed to provide treatment, and if possible, their parent.

Snow Days

The Growing room will follow the Madeira Public School system's snow schedule. If Madeira Schools are closed, we will also be closed. If there is a delay, the am classes will be canceled. Call the center if in doubt. We will record a message with instructions for the day.

Discipline, Safety and Emergency Policies

Children who have conflicts or problems with self-control while at our center will be encouraged to verbalize their angers and concerns. The teachers will set the example by describing problems, solutions and logical consequences. The role of an adult in The Growing Room is to be a helper in positive problem solving. We use guidance technique rather than punishment. Children whose behavior endangers others will be supervised away from the other children. The child will then process and verbalize the problem with the teacher and any other parties involved. Our teachers rarely use a "time out" unless the child is emotionally out of control and needs private time to regain composure. Verbal processing is our preferred method of guidance. Children at our center will not receive physical punishment of any kind. No child will be frightened, humiliated, shamed or subjected to verbal or physical abuse by any staff member or by parents on the premises at any time. Children will always be treated with respect and kindness. This discipline policy applies to all employees of The Growing Room at all times.

The Growing Room's Safety Policy observes the following regulations:

1. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
2. Our arrival and departure policy must be followed by all parents and teachers at all times to ensure the safety of children.
3. A monthly fire drill at varying times each month will take place. A record of these drills shall be maintained at the center at all times.
4. An emergency and weather alert plan shall be posted at each exit and in the office, by the phone of The Growing Room. These plans shall include evacuation routes.
5. In the following cases, The Growing Room shall complete an Injury/ Illness/Incident report:
 - a.) Illness, accident or injury which requires first aid treatment
 - b.) Bump or blow to the head
 - c.) Emergency transporting
 - d.) Unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children.
6. A copy of this completed form shall be signed by and given to the parent on the same day of the incident. In the event of a medical emergency requiring outside assistance (i.e. EMS) an Inj/Ill/Inc Report will be sent to ODJFS with in 72 hours
6. The use of spray aerosols are prohibited at The Growing Room.
7. All Growing Room staff members shall immediately notify the local public children's services agency when the staff member suspects that a child has been abused or neglected. All child care employees are appointed as "Mandated Reporters" by law and ethics and shall act accordingly.
8. In case of an emergency, we will always have a telephone available.

Emergency Medical Transportation Authorization

Our policy at The Growing Room is to call 911 in case of an emergency. If Transportation is deemed necessary by the medical professionals and/or emergency staff, the child will be transported via ambulance. This must be agreed upon and authorized with an Emergency Medical Transportation Authorization located on the enrollment form prior to your child's enrollment to our school. Parent(s) must have on file with the center a written emergency medical transportation authorization for each child. The form, provided by The Growing Room is to be on file prior to the first day of attendance. Please advise us of any changes of information during the school year.

Procedures for Medical/Dental Emergencies

1. All staff members have completed Red Cross First-Aid training.
2. Teachers shall assume responsibility for any emergency which occurs on The Growing Room property.
3. If, in the judgment of the teacher, the injury needs medical attention, the parent of the child will be called. If the parent can not be reached, the emergency number on the Emergency Information Record will be contacted. If the injury requires immediate medical treatment, 911 will be called for medical assistance and transportation to the emergency room of a hospital authorized by the parent on the Emergency Information Record. At that time, the parent will be contacted. When possible, the classroom teacher will accompany the child to the hospital.
4. An incident report will be completed for illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment, bump or blow to the head, emergency transportation, and unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children or staff.

Fire and Weather Alerts

Fire and weather alerts are posted by the front door, rear entrance and by the telephone in the office of The Growing Room. The children and staff practice fire and tornado drills monthly. Also, procedures for environmental hazards and threat to safety are posted in the aforementioned location. In the event of a loss of power and/or heat the director (designee) will assess the situation and length of time the school will be without power. If the time is extended, parents will be notified and the children will be sent home.

Threat of Violence or Environmental Emergency

In the event of an environmental situation or threat of violence, the director (designee) will lock the school and call 911. All children and staff will be accounted for and no one will be permitted to enter or exit the school. Local emergency personnel will direct all actions to be taken following the school "lock down". In the event that we are directed to move to a nearby building, such as Kroger, a sign will be posted on the front door indicating the evacuation and location where you can pick up you child.

Management of Illness

The Growing Room provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize children become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first group experience, it is possible they may experience more frequent illness at the beginning before their immune system becomes more active.

We observe all children as they enter our classroom to quickly assess their general health. We ask that you not bring a sick child to school- they will be sent home!

A child with any of the following symptoms will be immediately isolated to a "sick cot" and discharged to a parent or emergency contact:

- 1.) Temperature of 100 degrees F- in combination with other signs of illness.
- 2.) Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four hour period).
- 3.) Severe coughing- causing the child to become red in the face or make a whooping sound.
- 4.) difficult or rapid breathing.
- 5.) Yellowish skin or eyes.
- 6.) Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- 7.) Untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- 8.) Unusually dark urine, grey or white stools
- 9.) Stiff neck with elevated temperature.
- 10.) evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.
- 11.) Vomiting when accompanied by another sign of illness.
- 12.) Sore throat or difficulty swallowing.

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. The Parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in school activities, the parent will be called to pick them up.

A sign will be posted by the front door if their child has been exposed to a communicable illness. Children will be readmitted to school after 24 hours of being free of fever and symptoms. If they are not symptom free a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

Medications/ Food Supplements/ Modified Diet

Our school will only administer emergency treatment medications to a child only after the parent completes a Request for Medication Form. All proper sections must be completed and the medication handed to the director. Medications will be stored in a designated area inaccessible to children. Medications may not be stored in a child's cubby or book bag. Staff will be responsible for the administration of all medication to all ages of children. Requests for food supplements and modified diets must accompany the proper required paperwork. Please see the director in this case.

Prescription Medication

Prescription medication including the child's full name must be in its original container and administered in accordance with instructions on the label.

Over the Counter Medications

Over the counter medications must also be administered in accordance to label instructions. If parents request any different dosages/uses, a physician must provide a written instruction on the Request for Medication Form. Over the counter medications will not be administered for more than three days without instructions from a physician.

Food Supplements

If your child requires a food supplement or modified diet, you must secure written information from your child's physician regarding this matter. Please speak with the director for more information regarding this.

Meals and Snacks

The Growing Room will provide a morning and afternoon snack, around 10:30 and 2:00 each day. Each snack will contain at least two nutritional foods... for example strawberries and a bagel. The children have access to water all day as well as at snack time. A daily snack schedule will be posted on the parent board. Any changes to the menu will also be posted on the parent board.

Parent Provided Lunches

If your child participates in our Mom's Day out program or the Pre-K Enrichment Program, you are required to provide a nutritional lunch for them. A sample lunch for a 3-6 year old, which would meet 1/3 of a child's daily dietary allowance, may include the following: Peanut butter, one slice of bread, one slice of cheese, carrot sticks and a 100% fruit juice box/ milk. If a child's lunch does not meet nutritional requirements, the school is mandated to provide the additional food(s). Each lunch should include two fruit/veg, one grain, one protein and one dairy. Please make sure that your child's lunch contains a freezer pack to insure freshness, as we have a small Refrigerator and space is limited.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will be included on a daily basis, weather permitting, for children who stay for more than three hours a day (for example: Mom's Day Out). Conditions that might prevent outdoor play would be weather or safety issues, including a temperature or wind chill below 40 degrees F or above 90 degrees F, thunder, lightning, rain, ice or any questionable safety issues. If the children cannot play outdoors, we will provide large muscle indoor activities in addition to our existing activities. For example: dance, dramatic movement, relays, beanbags, etc.

Parent Involvement

Teachers will meet with parents for a scheduled conference once per semester to review the child's progress and to discuss any pertinent information. However, parents are encouraged to schedule conferences at any time.

The Growing Room practices an open door policy and encourages participation by parents. There is a Parent Volunteer sign up sheet located at the parent table where you may volunteer to help in the classroom (read in the library, talk to children about their art, sing songs in the music center, etc...).

If parents/guardians or employees have concerns or need assistance with problems related to the center, they may discuss the issue with the teacher involved or the director, if applicable. Names and telephone numbers of parents of children currently enrolled in the center are available on our parent roster. The rosters will not include the names and phone numbers of parents who request that their information not be listed. We feel that parents and teachers are partners in the effort of teaching young children. We will always welcome parents to volunteer or simply observe in our classroom.

Clothing Suggestions

It is suggested that the children wear clothing that lends itself to active play and is easily cared for in case of soiling. Please remember that we encourage the children to really "dig in" to the art materials and although we provide smocks, children's clothes are likely to get paint on them. It is also recommended that the children have a complete change of clothing in their basket, located by the main entrance. Please remember to check your child's basket frequently to see if replacements are needed. Parent(s) are responsible for marking the clothing with the child's name.



Dear Parent,

The Growing Room, Inc. Child Enrichment Center Parent Handbook contains valuable information about The Growing Room's Policies and procedures to assist you throughout the year. Please carefully read the handbook and sign the enclosed statement of receipt. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you and again, we look forward to working with you.

Name of Child _____

Date of Birth _____

I, _____ have received The Growing Room, Inc. Child Enrichment Center Parent Handbook and I agree to the terms therein.

Signature _____

Date _____