



Preschool Parent Handbook

We believe God created childhood as a gift. We believe it is our privilege to provide environments and experiences that capture the wonder in childhood, nurture a child's individual growth and development, and pave the way for a thriving future.

Program highlights include:

- Combinations of child-directed, teacher-directed, and small-group led activities that encourage investigation, exploration, and discovery
- Creative, hands-on, and project-based learning inspired by Reggio Emilia
- Multiple and diverse learning activities that ensure children thrive in all areas of development (including literacy, mathematics, scientific investigation, history, music, and art)
- Encouraging “whole” child development by nurturing social/emotional, spiritual, and physical development.
- Safety, security, and cleanliness practices that meet or exceed all state and local guidelines
- Learning approaches that adapt to each child and incorporate their strengths and interests
- Early STEM learning that encourages future-forward skills
- Wonder Stations: Real tools and materials to tinker, construct, and create

As educators we organize children's learning with opportunities for playful inquiry both inside and outside the classroom environment. We will help your child see the connection between ourselves, the community, and the world God created.

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Program Purpose

Wellspring Preschool is a childcare facility that is a direct ministry of Wellspring Church. We are governed by the head pastor and the board of elders and advised by the Wellspring Preschool Advisory Board. We are a local non-profit organization and eligible for charitable contributions licensed by the State of California Department of Social Services. Our license number is: #274416184.

All staff are thoroughly screened to ensure there is no criminal or child abuse record. We are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid. We have also submitted to a medical examination and TB test to ensure your children will have an optimal learning environment.

Program Goals

At Wellspring Preschool your child will learn in a mixed age classroom through hands-on experience and active play. We will provide an environment that promotes a child's physical, social, intellectual, creative, and Christ-centered spiritual development. Your child is given an enriching environment where the environment will act as a third teacher. We are a Reggio Emilia inspired classroom with a hint of Montessori. Melded together we will give your preschooler a child-center play based learning experience. We will focus on fostering creativity allowing your child to make art and manipulate materials in a way of their own choosing.

Some of the key phrases you will hear us use in describing our preschool include:

- Creating a flexible, relationship driven learning environment
- Emergent curriculum that is driven by your children's interests and curiosity
- Developmentally appropriate learning areas
- Creating environments that reflect our values and allow for investigations
- Encouraging a healthy sense of self (identity) and the social tools necessary for positive social interactions in the world around us
- Explorations of history and times gone by through hands-on manipulation and materials used in earlier generations
- Godly Play stories and wondering
- Music and movement

Wellspring Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Days and hours of operation

Wellspring Preschool operates Monday through Friday from 9 am to 12:00 pm. Children may be dropped off starting at 8:45 am. We kindly ask that as much as possible please have your child signed in by 9 am, so we can begin circle promptly at 9:05 am. We follow the Pacific Grove School District calendar for holidays and school closures with the exception that we are closed for the full week of the Thanksgiving holiday. We do not offer an extended day option or have supplementary services. We are a part-time, two, three, or five mornings a week program.

Our preschool is a mixed aged setting for up to 15 potty trained children aged 2.5 years to their first day of Kindergarten. Children must be 2.5 years old before they can begin school. We offer a 1: 8 ratio (Teacher: Child).

Absences

If your child does not come to school on any day, either because of illness, vacation, or just to take a break with you, please call the Director before 9:00 a.m.

Birthdays

We enjoy sharing the celebration of your child's birthday. Your child's teacher will make this a special day with singing and a special birthday crown. You may have your child bring a favorite storybook to be shared as well. If you choose to bring in a special birthday snack it needs to be in accordance with our nutrition policy, only healthy snacks will be accepted. We suggest making the snack uniform so all children may have the same item.

Clothing

Children should be dressed for school, in a comfortable manner, so they can fully and safely experience the environment and activities available. Clothing should be appropriate for our changeable climate. Always have a jacket, sweater or sweatshirt available for your child, as you can never predict when the fog may roll into Pacific Grove. Hooded sweatshirts should have the string removed or detached for your child's safety (otherwise they will not be allowed). Shoes need to be safe for running, sand play, and climbing. We suggest sturdy running shoes.

Change of Clothes: A complete change of clothing is a necessity. Extra clothing should include a shirt, jacket/sweater or sweatshirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. These items should be placed in a labeled large plastic bag and given to the Director.

Communication

We want to be wholly present to your child while they are with us. In order to do so, we ask that you kindly remember that school hours are for your child. It is never a time for parent/teacher meetings, unless pre-arranged.

We believe that good communication is important for our preschool program to succeed. All general communications, updates, reminders, and notices may be posted to our notice board, distributed by email, or located in your family file folder. Quick daily contact is the most reliable method of communication between parents and teachers. Teachers are always willing to share information and anecdotes about your child's day at school.

Informal Conferences: Informal conferences may be held at the request of the parent/teacher/director and may occur in person or over the telephone.

Family File Folders: A family file folders with the name of your child, last name first, is arranged alphabetically in the classroom. Please check this folder daily for important school communications, possible injury/ incident reports as well as your child's beautiful artwork.

Emergency Procedures

Each child is required to have an emergency food & medication supply packet to be stored at the school. We hope we will never have to use these provisions, but, if we do, we will all be thankful that we were prepared in advance. Wellspring Preschool will ensure there is adequate water supply storage.

Children are required to provide their own emergency food & medication supply in a labeled (with your child's name) ½ gallon Ziploc bag.

2 Items of fruit: Either dried fruit or packaged squeezed fruit

2 Snack bars: Nutrition bars or granola bars

In the event of an earthquake during school hours:

1. The Director will lead us through the proper safety protocols. We will find a safe space then after the initial shock; students and staff will leave the buildings and go to prearranged evacuation sites on the front lawn at St. Mary's by Sea (next door). No one will be permitted to return to the buildings until the Director has declared that re-entry is safe. Children will be held at the school until released to a parent or an

authorized person listed on the Identification & Emergency documents. With this in mind, always keep your child's Identification & Emergency documents up-to-date.

2. Do not try to telephone the school. Emergency radio broadcast stations will release information if the earthquake is severe.
3. All parents coming to the school should remain calm and obey traffic guidelines.
4. All parents, or designated parties who come for children, are to check with the Director. Children must be signed out through the Director. During an emergency, teachers will be expected to take roll several times to be certain of the safety of each child and will keep a record of children picked up by authorized adults.
5. In a severe earthquake, we would appreciate having any parent volunteers, who are able to do so, come to the preschool to help with physical and psychological first aid and/or general clean up.
6. Families are strongly urged to prepare at home for an earthquake by taking first aid and CPR classes, holding at home earthquake drills, initiating home hazard surveys and by planning how family members will meet should they become separated after a disaster.

Your careful completion of the emergency contact & pick up authorization form, in the enrollment packet, will enable us to see that, if your child leaves the school, they will be dismissed carefully, safely, and only to those of your designation.

Field Trip Provisions

We look forward to taking your child on small Field Trips. Information, including permission slips, will be made available to you in advance on all field trips.

Health and Safety

Your child's health and safety is of primary importance. The following policies will help insure your child's health and safety as well as that of the other children and their teachers.

All children entering Wellspring Preschool must submit an updated immunization record and a physician's report. According to the California State Law, a staff member daily must visually screen your child for contagious diseases.

Illness Policy

On the average, babies experience eight to ten illnesses a year; preschoolers experience almost as many. We strive to limit the spread of communicable disease in our preschool and are committed to implementing policies that balance and respect the needs of children, families, and staff in these circumstances.

Our Child Illness Policy is based on the Model Health Care Policies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Wellspring Preschool understands that it is difficult for a parent/guardian to leave or miss work; therefore, it is suggested that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when children must remain at home or be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from preschool is sometimes necessary either to reduce the transmission of illness or because the preschool is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child. The following are reasons for Wellspring Preschool to exclude children include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities, such as going outdoors.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than our staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful disease to others
- Severely ill appearance
- Fever of 100°F degrees or above (axillary); 101°F or above (orally) or an equivalent measure accompanied by behavior change or other signs and symptoms.
- Fever of 104°F or greater in a child of any age (requires immediate medical attention)
- Diarrhea; watery stools or decreased form of stool not associated with change of diet; child unable to reach the toilet
- Cases of bloody diarrhea and diarrhea caused by Shigella, salmonella, Shiga toxin producing E coli, Cryptosporidium or G intestinalis must be cleared for readmission by a health care professional.
- Blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours (unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration).
- Mouth sores with drooling (unless the child's medical provider or local health department authority states that the child is noninfectious).
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours; intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other signs of illness.
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes (unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease).
- Skin sores weeping fluid and on an exposed area that cannot be covered
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge) until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Strep throat (or other streptococcal infection) until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

- Head lice or nits until after first treatment.
- Rubella, until 7 days after the rash appears.
- Scabies until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried or crusted (usually 6 days after onset of rash).
- Pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A virus until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice or as directed by the health department (if the child's symptoms are mild).
- Tuberculosis until the child's medical provider or local health department states the child is on appropriate treatment and can return.
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

For your child's comfort, and to reduce the risk of contagion, we ask that children be picked up within 30 minutes of notification. Until then, your child will be kept comfortable and will continue to be observed for symptoms.

Children need to remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to the program, unless the center receives a note from the child's medical provider stating that the child is not contagious and may return to the center. In the case of a (suspected) contagious disease, rash, or continuing symptoms, a note from the child's medical provider may be required before the child can return. Children who have been excluded may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual program activities, including outdoor time.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling
 - The child's medical provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

If a child is excluded because of a reportable communicable disease, a note from the child's medical provider stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return is required.

The final decision on whether to exclude a child from the program due to illness will be made by the Director.

Note: Notes allowing for a child's return to the center after exclusion due to illness must originate from the child's medical provider. A note written and signed by the child's parent/guardian who is also a physician is not acceptable.

Medications

Parent/legal guardian's AND physician's signatures are required before Wellspring Preschool staff can administer medication of any kind during school hours. Children should NEVER self-administer medication. Medications must be given to the Director upon arrival at school and must be in the original container. The physician's statement must detail the symptoms treated, dosage amount, method and time schedule by which the medication is to be taken. No over-the-counter medication (e.g. Tylenol) will be dispensed without physician and parent/legal guardian statements. The preschool staff is not authorized to administer injectable medications. However, all staff members are trained to administer an epi-pen for those students who have severe allergies. Permission to Administer Medication forms are available and required.

Injuries

Minor Injuries: The staff will handle minor injuries by providing calm, respectful care, cleaning, icing, and bandaging the area as necessary, if the child allows. An injury report will be completed and filed in your *family file folder*.

Serious injuries: Serious (Medical/Dental) injuries will require the immediate notification of parents. The director will attempt to contact the parents, however, if they cannot be reached, the child's physician/dentist will be contacted. In emergency situations, 911 will be phoned and parents notified

Child Welfare

The school head, director, or any other staff member will report to the Children's Protective Services or the Police Department, as required by the State Penal Code, if there is any suspicion of child abuse, sexual or otherwise, neglect, or endangerment of which they may become aware.

Policy for Exclusions

Communicable Disease: Certain symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children who have the following symptoms (See the Wellspring Preschool Child Illness Policy) will be excluded from the childcare setting until:

- A physician has certified the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent or that they are no longer contagious
- The child has been symptom free for 24 hours.

These policies are taken from the Department of Human Services and Public Health, with the intention that all children present in care are healthy. This will mean less illness for students and parents and fewer missed classes/work days. If your child experiences any of these symptoms please inform your child's teacher.

Snacks

Morning snacks are included.

We will serve snacks once a day with water at approximately 10:25 am. Each child will be offered one appropriately sized portion from two of the listed food categories (see the Sample Snack Menu Choices sheet for more info). If a child asks, we will provide one round of second helpings. Please check the calendar for the specific snack of the day. We aim to serve local and organic foods as often as possible.

Smoking Policy

Please note that smoking is not allowed on the property of Wellspring Church.

Sign-In/Out Procedures

All children must be signed in and signed out (no initials) by the parent/guardian, or other authorized person to drop off and pick up the child, with the time of arrival and departure clearly indicated. We will not release a child to anyone without prior authorization. Emergency and Identification forms must be signed by the parent/guardian. Any changes must be documented and signed by the parent/guardian. Be prepared to show staff a picture ID at the time the child is picked up (as needed). Our "sign in/out" forms are required by the State of California Department of Social Services and are considered legal documents.

Transportation

Wellspring Preschool will not provide transportation for your children. Designated "field trips" will be done on foot to nearby destinations such as Pacific Grove Library, Natural History Museum, and the Fire Department for example. Signed permission slips are required before your child attends these excursions.

Notice of Withdrawal

If you would like to withdraw your child from Wellspring Preschool, please give us 30 days notice prior to your child's withdrawal or one month's tuition will be due.

Wish List

As a preschool and church community, we strive to provide the best for your child. Occasionally "needs and desires" may arise that will compliment your child's experience with us. These items will be listed on our wish list and are solely at your discretion to provide. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Admission

Pre-Admission Process: Touring of the facility will take place prior to registration. A tour with the parent(s), child and director will be made. After the tour, you may choose to visit on a Monday, Wednesday, or Friday to observe morning circle, transitions into the classrooms and the first 15-20 minutes of the classroom daily routine.

Registration: To secure a space in a class, a registration application and a \$150 annual registration fee must be submitted, after which an admission packet and parent handbook will be given. The \$150 registration fee is non-refundable, pending extenuating circumstances as determined by the Director.

Tuition: Tuition is due on the 1st of every month. Tuition is \$550 per child per month (August to May) or \$5500 annually for 5 days a week. It is \$400 or \$4000 for the 3-day Monday, Wednesday, Friday option. It is \$300 or \$3000 for the 2-day Tuesday and Thursday option. There are no credits for absences and holidays. Returned checks will receive a charge of \$30.00. You may also pay online, please make sure to note "Wellspring Preschool Tuition".

Waiting List: In order to be contacted as openings become available, a registration application must be submitted (a space in a class is not guaranteed). No fee is required to be placed on the waiting list.

Items needed to complete admission:

- Identification & Emergency (LIC #700)
- Physician's Report (LIC #701)
- Copy of Immunizations
- Physical Check-Up
- Health History (LIC #702)

- Emergency Medical (LIC #627)
- Non-Refundable Registration Fee: (\$150)
- Enrollment Application
- Admissions Agreement
- Tuition Agreement
- Emergency Contacts (LIC #601)
- First Month's Tuition
- Parent's Rights (LIC #995)
- Personal Rights (LIC #613A)
- Questionnaire
- Birth Certificate (copy)
- Custody Agreements/ Court Orders (if applicable)

30-Day Transitional Period

A 30-day transitional period, beginning on the first day of your child's attendance, should allow adequate time for them to get acquainted with their new classroom, teachers and daily routine. During this period, your child's teachers will provide verbal or written updates as to how your son or daughter is adjusting to their classroom and the preschool as a whole. A meeting with the Director may be suggested if, at the end of the 30 days, the parent or school determines it is not meeting the child's needs.

Student Guidance and Discipline

Our discipline policies guide children in the development of developmentally appropriate social skills. We want each student to grow in kindness, honesty, respect and consideration for others. The teachers carefully plan the classroom environment to encourage and foster peaceful living, cooperation and collaboration. The day is carefully orchestrated to provide the routines and consistency children need. Most importantly, the adult-to-child ratio is kept low enough for problems to be addressed promptly and each child's needs to be met judiciously.

Young children are still learning the problem-solving skills needed to express their feelings in appropriate ways. Therefore teachers are pro-active, deliberately teaching cooperation, collaboration and compassion. Many materials and books support our goals, inviting cooperation and the development of morals and a strong character as modeled by Jesus. Teachers model, sharing, talking about feelings, respect for others and problem solving. Expectations for behavior are clearly delineated and discussed with the students on a regular basis. Cooperative and respectful behavior is praised and kind acts are modeled and noted. The need for discipline is circumvented and minimized by purposeful guidance and education.

Responding to Conflict: The safety of each child is our highest priority. In our classroom, conflict can often be deterred with redirection, reminders and the provision of alternate choices. If transgressions occur, teachers provide reminders and intervene as necessary. When teachers have established a relationship of trust and respect, they may move an uncooperative child to action with gentle, verbal encouragement. Children are reminded of previously learned rules and expectations and prompted to respect the needs of others. Sometimes, privileges are withdrawn so they can learn the connection between their actions and logical consequences. Aggressive behavior, however, is stopped immediately and calmly by the teachers and discussed privately with the child or children involved. A young child may be asked to sit quietly to regain self-control and may be removed from the activities of the other children for a short time, but children are never completely isolated from others. Gross misconduct, including physical harm to another student or behavior determined to be detrimental to the preschool community, may result in Wellspring Preschool reserving its right to require the withdrawal of a student. A withdrawal from Wellspring Preschool will only occur if it is determined that Wellspring Preschool is unable to meet the child's or family's needs.