



Willow Preschool

A Great Place to Grow

Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Willow Preschool
Willow Creek Community Church
67 Algonquin Road
South Barrington, IL 60010
224-512-1357



Willow Preschool

Mission Statement

The Mission of Willow Preschool is to provide a Christ Centered program that allows young children the opportunity to grow spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally through learning about the love of Jesus and participating in age appropriate activities.

Program Goals

- To offer each child a safe, Christ-Centered environment that promotes the total development of the child
- To emphasize love and acceptance for each child as a unique individual by allowing the opportunity to progress at their own pace
- To stimulate and challenge each child through opportunities like music, art, and play
- To guide each child's behavior through positive reinforcement techniques
- To nurture a life-long love of learning
- To provide an atmosphere that is inviting for parents/families
- To provide age appropriate activities for every child

Learning Programs

At Willow Preschool, we believe that children learn by doing and exploring the world around them. Our learning programs encourage children to learn at their own pace in settings that are friendly, supportive and FUN! Each learning program is designed to meet children's spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional needs. We will have themes throughout the year that correspond with Biblical concepts. Our learning centers and circle time will be centered around educational themes. We will use basic Literacy, Music, Math, Art and Science themes and also your typical shapes, colors, numbers, alphabet and Holiday themes as well.

Play-learning is a big part of our curriculum. Games, stories, creative art experiences and dramatic play help preschoolers master new skills as they gain self-confidence. We encourage our students to be creative through words, thoughts, movement, and art. Experiences are planned to help children make decisions and problem solve. Special attention is given at this age to developing pre-reading skills.

We use "Handwriting Without Tears" for our handwriting curriculum. Jolly Phonics, alongside basic Kindergarten readiness skills will also be incorporated. Our Bible curriculum is focused on basic Bible stories and concepts.

Enrollment Requirements

Age Requirements

Willow Preschool enrolls children that turn 2, or 3, or 4-years-old on or before September 1, 2023. Children will be enrolled in the appropriate program based on their age. We also accept children turning 5 on or before September 1, 2023. These children will be placed in our 4 year old program.

Potty Training Requirements

ALL children enrolled in our 3's and 4's classes are required to be fully potty trained. 2 year olds are not required to be potty trained. We will work with your child/family if you decide to train your child during the school year. We will support your child in this process while at school.

NOTE: We understand that "accidents" occur with preschool aged children and we expect them from time to time. We also understand that potty training is especially difficult for some children. We will however have to discuss other options if your child is having daily accidents. Each situation will be handled privately and on a case by case basis.

A non-refundable enrollment fee is required at enrollment to guarantee your child's place in a classroom. We have the right to cancel or combine classrooms for lack of enrollment. In this case, your fee will be refunded.

Separation and Anxiety

Some children have difficulty separating from their parents. Most children have an adjustment period during which separation is difficult and anxiety occurs. We encourage you to view this as normal and typical behavior for a young child and not to be unduly upset by it. It is easier for everyone if you separate quickly and matter-of-factly when arriving with your child. Our staff is trained to help your child in his/her transition to the program. We will be responsive and caring to each child's needs. Please do not linger in the classroom and/or hallways after drop off time. We will notify you if your child cannot be consoled. Our goal is 100% retainment and we will work hard to make you and your child feel comfortable.

Tuition

A yearly tuition is due per child but for your convenience, it has been divided into 9 monthly payments. Tuition may be paid monthly or in full by August 25, 2023. Tuition is due by the 25th of each month Aug 2023 thru April 2024. There is a 20% discount for the second child enrolled in each family for the same school year. The 20% will be applied to the child with the cheapest tuition rate. We use Brightwheel to process payments. There is a fee to process payments. The fee is 90 cents per transaction (monthly) to do an ACH withdrawal. The fees are much higher if you use a debit card or credit card. Please see the Director if you have any questions. You are responsible for keeping up with your account. Any NSF or problems with payments not posting will be charged a \$25.00 late fee.

Due Upon Enrollment: \$125.00 to enroll/hold your child's spot (non-refundable)

Monthly Tuition: Due August 25th thru April 25th (9 months)

Full Tuition Option: Due August 25th for entire school year

Mon - Fri Tuition: \$500.00 per month x 9 months = \$4,500.00
**PLUS \$125.00 enrollment fee

MWF Tuition: \$375.00 per month x 9 months = \$3,375.00
**PLUS \$125.00 enrollment fee

TTh Tuition: \$280.00 per month x 9 months = \$2,520.00
**PLUS \$125.00 enrollment fee

School Hours/School Year

September 5th/6th, 2023 are the first days of school for the 2023/2024 school year. The last days of school for the year will be May 20th/21st, 2024. All classes meet from 9 a.m.–12 noon. We will follow Barrington 220 school district for Christmas and Spring Break. Please see Willow Preschool Yearly Calendar for all school dates and closings.

Morning Drop-Off Procedure

Entrance F will be the Willow Preschool entrance. All families will receive a key card that will open the Entrance F doors at 8:50 each school day morning. The inside hallway doors can be opened at 8:55 a.m. by the same key card. Teachers will be ready to receive students at that

time. Each student will need to be signed in daily. See your teacher packet for more information. Doors to the preschool area will only be available to use with key cards until 9:15 a.m. After that time, you will need to be let in the facility by a Willow Preschool staff member. Please make every effort to arrive and have your child in their classroom by 9 a.m.

Guidance and Discipline Policy

Managing children's behavior is an important part of the educational process. Discipline is not synonymous with punishment. Effective discipline helps children gain self-control and aids in developing a positive self-concept. Through positive management techniques, a child can learn to handle conflicts in a peaceful and effective manner.

Staff members of Willow Preschool shall use the following guides to speech and action:

- Use positive techniques of guidance, including: redirection, anticipation of and elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement, appropriate alternatives, encouragement and praise
- Establish and maintain clear, consistent rules for the children - the children will be involved in setting "classroom rules" and they will be posted in the classroom
- Redirection to a quiet time activity until the child is able to re-enter positive play with others (not to exceed 1 minute per year of age)
- Speak positively and focus on desired behavior
- Refrain from the use of humiliating, frightening or harsh language
- Refrain from taking away toileting, rest, snack as punishment
- Refrain from any form of corporal/emotional/verbal punishment of any kind
- Involve the children in socially acceptable ways to resolve social conflict
- Parents will be kept informed if there are any behavioral concerns and the parents and staff will work together to come up with a solution
- Willow preschool staff will help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions in a way that is age appropriate and enforceable
- When persistent and serious challenging behaviors emerge, the early childhood program shall document steps taken to ensure that the child can participate safely in the program; including observations of initial and ongoing challenging behaviors, strategies for remediation and intervention plans to address the behaviors, and communication with the parent or legal guardian, including participation of the parent in planning And decision making
- Willow Preschool shall, with parental consent as required, utilize a range of community resources, if available, and deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, developmental screenings, referrals to programs and services administered by a local educational agency or early intervention agency

- If there is documented evidence that all available interventions and supports recommended by a qualified professional have been exhausted and the program determines in its professional judgment that transitioning a child to another program is necessary for the well-being of the child or his or her peers And staff, with parent or legal guardian permission, both the current and pending programs shall create a transition plan designed to ensure continuity of services and the comprehensive development of the child. Communication with families shall occur in a culturally and linguistically competent manner.
- Clinical behavior management plans may be developed to meet the needs of a particular child if developed with the parent and a professional clinician. This must be documented in the child's file. All staff working with the child shall receive a copy of the plan

Parent Communication and Special Circumstances

Our goal is to work with families in the best interest of their children at all times. Please know that we appreciate communication and feedback. We have an open door policy for our families. Please reach out if we can help you or your family in any way. We want to be made aware of changes in circumstances in families so we may help your child.

All forms of communication will be held in the strictest confidence. Children are dropped off and picked up at the door daily. This can be a chaotic time to chat with teachers privately. All efforts will be made to assure that we communicate with parents as much as possible. Monthly newsletters and calendars will be sent home. As well as weekly updates via email. The Director will also be available to you with any questions or concerns about your child or anything that may concern you. The Director and teachers will share email and phone numbers so that you can contact them when necessary. Parents are encouraged/welcome to visit the center at any time. We will provide opportunities for parents to engage in classroom activities throughout the year. Parents are not required to schedule an appointment to visit the center. We love our families and want you to feel welcome at Willow Preschool.

Nut/Peanut-Free Facility

Willow Preschool is a peanut-free facility. This includes peanuts, tree nuts, etc.

Snack Policy

Willow Preschool will provide a mid morning snack for all students to include:

One item from TWO of the four components (packaged) (2 items total)

1. Snacks
 - a. Fluid milk ½ cup ½ cup 1 cup

- b. Grains/Breads ½ serving ½ serving 1 serving Bread ½ slice or 0.5 oz. ½ slice or 0.5 oz. 1 slice Or cereal cold/dry ¼ cup ⅓ cup ¾ cup Or cereal
- c. cheese ½ oz. ½ oz. 1 oz.
- d. Juice/fruit or vegetable (full-strength juice) ½ cup ½ cup ¾ cup

We will also provide water to drink. We will closely monitor food allergies and cross contamination. All staff are required to have Food Handler Permits.

Birthday and Special Occasion Celebrations

Celebrations are an important part of a child's life! Please coordinate with your child's teacher if you'd like to celebrate your child's birthday at school. We will also have special party days, cooking days, etc. where we will have peanut-free snacks and treats.

If you will be celebrating your child's birthday outside of school, but will not be inviting the whole class, please refrain from putting invitations in children's bags/cubbies. If the whole class is invited, feel free to give out invitations at school. If your child has any food allergies, please communicate with your child's teacher and school Director. See the Safety and Health Policy Handbook for more information.

Immunization Policy

All children are required to have up-to-date immunization records and health examinations as indicated by the Cook County Health Department on file with the Director by the first day of attendance. The only exception to these requirements will be a signed and dated directive from your child's doctor stating that your child cannot complete all immunizations, as it would be hazardous to your child's health or for religious reasons. Please see the Safety and Health Policy Handbook for more information on all Health Policies.

Mandated Reporting

Willow Preschool and staff are obligated by law to report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) of Illinois.

We take the safety of everyone who attends Willow Preschool very seriously. We abide by a robust protection plan, as well as specific policies that govern the protection of those who attend or work at Willow Preschool. The Preschool is located in a secured area with only key card access. All staff are background checked. If you have questions surrounding our protection plan specifically, we are happy to share that information.

Wellness Prevention and Health Policies

At Willow Preschool, we believe that parents and teachers share the responsibility for maintaining health and preventing the spread of contagious diseases. We do this by including illness prevention practices in daily routines, keeping staff informed about child illness, and alerting parents to symptoms of illness. We ask parents to make sure children receive immunizations and regular checkups, give us accurate information concerning their child's daily health, and make arrangements for timely pickup and diagnosis when their child becomes ill. Thank you for your partnership in helping keep the children healthy!

Prevention

Children showing signs of illness should remain at home. Each day, Willow Preschool staff will observe each child's general wellness. If a child seems uncomfortable, lethargic, irritable, not feeling well, without other symptoms, in some cases we may need to call a parent to have his/her child picked up if he/she is not able to comfortably participate in group care.

The children are under direct adult supervision at all times. Fighting is not allowed; running and throwing objects are not allowed except as a supervised part of curriculum.

All poisonous substances are stored in a locked cupboard out of reach of children. All sharp objects are stored out of the reach of children. Objects such as scissors are used only under adult supervision. The classroom equipment is observed continually for stability, smoothness of wooden objects, and safe corners.

The playground is fenced and no child is allowed outside to play unless there is a staff member present.

Whenever cooking is done as a part of the curriculum, the children are cautioned and are under direct supervision of staff.

Anytime the children leave the building as a group, they are required to walk in an orderly fashion and are accompanied by the staff, and other adults.

Parents are required to bring their children into the building and pick them up inside each day.

Willow Preschool Staff members are not allowed to be personal babysitters nor are they allowed to transport Willow Preschool children in their personal vehicles.

Health and Hygiene

All children are required to have up-to-date immunization records as indicated by the DCFS Code 407.310 on file with the Director by the first day of attendance. A copy of these records is available from your pediatrician. The medical report is 2 pages, it contains a health screening section which can be completed by your pediatrician or by the parent. Page 2 is required to be completed by the doctor and contains your child's shot records. The medical exam is good for 2 years. However the immunization portion should be updated by your doctor upon receiving new immunizations. After enrollment, it is the responsibility of the parents to update immunizations as required, in order to ensure the protection of all the children. Children immunizations must be kept current. This is the responsibility of the parents.

The only exception to these requirements will be a signed and dated directive from your child's doctor stating that your child cannot complete all immunizations, as it would be hazardous to your child's health or for religious reasons.

In the event of an outbreak of contagious illness for which the child has not been immunized, parents will be asked to keep the child home to protect the health of the child until the outbreak has ended.

Medication/Sunscreen/Topical Medication

Willow Preschool will not administer any medication to your child while they are in our care. This includes oral and topical medications. Because we are in school for only 3 hours a day, medications of all kinds will need to be administered BEFORE your child enters the classroom. This includes SUNSCREEN. The only exception to this rule is possible life saving medications for anaphylaxis/diabetes etc.. . If an EpiPen or Inhaler is needed, we will administer that medication in an emergency situation. **EpiPens /Inhalers will be kept away in a locked cabinet and only used with written permission from parents** Each situation will be considered on a case by case basis.

Accidents and Injuries

At Willow Preschool, we make every effort to examine equipment and play areas in order to provide a safe environment for play and learning. When accidents occur, we immediately assess the situation and enact one of the following procedures

First Aid

Minor injuries include scrapes, cuts, bumps that can easily be washed with soap and water or saline and treated with ice or a bandage. In these situations, a parent may be called during school hours to be notified or may be informed at pick up time (depending on the situation).

Some injuries may require a parent to seek further medical advice, beyond simple first aid given by Willow Preschool staff. Examples may include, injury to teeth or gums, deep cuts that may require stitches, or any bodily pain/injury that needs further medical attention, such as limping or a child complaining of pain. Willow Preschool staff will call parents immediately upon such an occurrence.

Willow Preschool staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. A condition is considered a medical emergency when one or more, but not limited to, the following symptoms are present: seizure, excessively high fever (105 or higher), extreme breathing problems (inhaler/EpiPen administered if applicable), severe stomach pain, vomiting following a head injury, uncontrolled bleeding or an apparent broken bone.

Parents will be called as well as 911. *911 will be called first in the event of a life threatening situation*

Payment for all medical care following an accident is the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

Common Illnesses and Exclusion Policies

Children should NOT attend school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 or higher. They must be fever free without medication for 24 hours
- Diarrhea - if your child has more than one abnormal/loose stool, please keep them home
- Vomiting - please keep your child home if they have vomited within the last 24 hours
- All rashes
- Diagnosed illness with antibiotic treatment - please keep them home for at least 24 hours after starting an antibiotic
- Lice/Scabies - children cannot return to school until treated and "nit-free"
- Willow Preschool will not administer medication/creams of any kind to children in our care (exceptions will be made in life saving situations ex: EpiPen)

Willow Preschool staff may contact you during school hours if your child is acting unusually sick or ill and ask you to come get them. Please make sure to keep your contact information up to date at all times so we can reach you if your child becomes ill or injured.

Hearing/Vision Screening

The center shall ensure that hearing and vision screening services are provided annually, paid for by parents, in accordance with Illinois Department of Public Health's Hearing and Vision Screening Codes (77 Ill. Adm. Code 675 and 685) and the Illinois Child Vision and Hearing Test Act [410 ILCS 205]. e) Space shall be provided for a child who becomes ill at the center.

Fire - Earthquake - Tornado - Lockdown

Fire

In the event of a fire, the building will be evacuated according to the evacuation maps. We will exit the building and go to the building F parking lot. Staff will contact parents and remain with the children. Fire Drills will be conducted MONTHLY during the school year.

Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake, if the children are indoors, they will be seated on the floor along the inside walls. If the children are outside, they will be kept outside in the open, away from the building. Staff will contact parents and will remain with the children in a safe place designated by authorities.

Tornado

We will closely monitor the weather at all times. In the event of a Tornado warning, the children will be protected until the threat has passed. In the event of an actual Tornado, the staff will take children into the main hallway and remain with the children until authorities arrive and will follow their instructions. Staff will contact parents when it is safe to do so. We will conduct Tornado drills twice a school year. Once a semester.

Lockdown Procedures

Secure - Soft Lock Down

A soft lockdown may occur when there is an identified situation away from the Preschool. Out of an abundance of caution, we will secure the Preschool space with all kids and faculty staying within the Preschool space (no outdoor or playground activities). No one will be admitted to the

space during this time. All classroom activities will continue as usual. Parents will be notified by text of the Secure status and will be unable to retrieve their child(ren) until the all clear is provided.

Hard Lock Down

A hard lockdown may occur when there is an identified situation near the Preschool. Classroom activities will halt and kids and faculty will move to a designated safe place and remain there until an all clear is provided. Parents will be notified by text of the Lock Down status and will be unable to retrieve their child(ren) until the all clear is provided.

Lead Testing and Mitigation Actions

Willow Preschool will do annual lead testing of all of its water sources for the presence of lead. Parents shall be informed of those results, posted in a prominent place. Any mitigation actions shall be communicated to families and also posted.

Radon Testing and Mitigation Actions

Willow Preschool will do radon testing of all of its preschool rooms for the presence of radon. Parents shall be informed of those results, posted in a prominent place. Any mitigation actions shall be communicated to families and also posted.

Classroom Schedule

Each classroom teacher will provide you with a Teacher Packet full of information for you. The classroom schedule will be included in that packet. Please dress your child in play clothing for school days. We love messy play! We will also be playing outdoors as much as possible so send your child with the appropriate outdoor wear as appropriate. Our staff will also be dressed in casual clothing to interact with the children. Shoes should be comfortable and safe for indoor and outdoor play.

Every child will need a complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks, to be sent in a clear plastic bag labeled with the child's name. This must remain at school during the school year. Tote bags will be provided to students to bring their items to and from school.

Emergency Cards and Approved Pick Up Lists

An up-to-date emergency card is kept on file and with your child's teacher at all times. It is your responsibility to update your contact information information and approved pick up list when

necessary. Our first contact in an emergency situation will always be the parents/guardians. If you cannot be reached, we will begin to contact your emergency contacts/approved pick up list. In the event of a serious injury or medical emergency, 911 will be called immediately. See the Safety and Health Policies Handbook for more detailed information.

Children will NOT be dismissed to anyone who is not on your child's emergency contact form or without written permission from parent/guardian. Persons other than the parent/guardian will be required to provide a state issued ID to prove identity. Once a pick up person is known to staff, the ID will not be required.

Attendance and Absences

Fees are based on registration and not attendance. Refunds are not provided for missed days. The school year is based upon 9 months of school (not including Christmas and Spring Break). Tuition is based upon 9 months of attendance and broken into 9 monthly payments for your convenience.

Admission and Discharge Policies

Willow Preschool will have an open enrollment policy on a first come, first serve basis as capacity allows. You as the parent may withdraw your child from Willow Preschool with a 30 day notice to the Willow Preschool Director. Willow Preschool may suggest a child consider another program if it is deemed that a child's enrollment in the program is not in the best interest of the child or the program. Options for a child will occur with parental involvement and WP will help the child transition to another program. **SEE Guidance and Discipline Policy

Child Transition Policies

Willow Preschool will transition children to the next classroom at the end of each school year, if a child enrolls for the following year, they will be moved up to the age appropriate classroom in September. Children must be the appropriate age on/before September 1st of that school year. Our school year is September through May.

Snow/Calamity Days

- Barrington 220 Canceled - Willow Preschool SB Canceled
- Barrington 220 1 hour delay - Willow Preschool SB 1 hour delay (10 to 12 noon)
- No refunds will be given for snow days
- We will make up snow days after 5 days missed

Personal Information

All information regarding children and their families will be kept in strictest confidence. Records pertaining to children shall not be made available to unauthorized persons for inspection, review or duplication. Willow Preschool will not release personal information on children without permission from the family.

Liability Insurance

Willow Preschool carries liability insurance on each child in the program. If you have questions, please see the Director.