

Preschool Parent Handbook

Durant Preschool

Durant Community School District

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WELCOME!

Welcome to Durant Preschool. It is an honor to have your child enrolled with us. We hope it will be a memorable and positive experience for your family. The following pages contain information about our program. Staff has ensured that all parents can access information and clearly understand the content (translations, reading assistance, etc. provided if needed). If you have any questions please feel free to contact one of the teachers or administrators.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Durant Community School District to enable students to understand the world around them and grow the talents within them so they can become fulfilled individuals and active, compassionate citizens.

In pursuit of the mission, Durant Community School District will do the following:

- Provide a safe and engaging learning environment.
- Nurture good citizenship, respect for others and school pride.
- Actively engage parents and community members in the learning process.

Purpose

The purpose of Durant Preschool is to:

- Ensure all children in the community, regardless of ability level and life experiences, have access to a safe, quality early childhood education that includes a developmentally appropriate curriculum, knowledgeable and well-trained educators and program staff, and comprehensive services that support their health, nutrition and social well-being in a respectful and supported environment.
- Ensure all children leave the program with the skills to be successful in school.

Philosophy

The teaching staff and administration of Durant Preschool recognize children enter early childhood centers at varying stages of development. As educators we acknowledge and value those differences. Your child will be exposed to many types of learning experiences during their time at Durant Preschool. These experiences are meant to help them grow socially, emotionally, and academically. We hope to help your child gain a good foundation for future learning.

Confidentiality

Durant Preschool follows the Durant Community School District's policy for confidentiality. This policy can be viewed on the school website. Please contact the District Office with questions or concerns.

Admissions

For preschool, your child must be 4 years old on or before September 15th, or at least 3 years old and/or qualify for special education services. In the case that classes are not filled with 4-year-olds, we will open it up to a few 3-year-olds based on the order in which the children were placed on the waitlist. There are two preschool classrooms. Both are part of the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program and have the possibility of having up to 20 students each, without exceeding a 10:1 ratio of students to adults.

Durant Preschool accepts students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion and all ability levels to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to students at school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, or ability in administration of our education policies, admission policies or any other school-administered programs.

Registration Policy

The Durant Community School District has adopted the following registration policy:

- Three-year old students currently enrolled in the preschool program have automatic enrollment for the following year, if applicable.
- Parents are to call in and provide the requested information (child's name, date of birth, mailing address, and parental/guardian contact information) to place their child on the waitlist. Or fill out the GoogleForm available on the school's website.
- In the spring, parents will be contacted and Durant Schools will begin taking enrollment forms to solidify spots for the school year beginning in the fall.
- Registrations are taken in the order received. If the program becomes full, a child's name will be placed on a waiting list to be called when/if a vacancy occurs.
- Three-year olds will not be guaranteed a spot until after August 1st, to ensure we have enrolled all of the four-year olds within the district.
- Completed registration forms **MUST** be submitted prior to the first day of school.
- Some spots throughout the preschool will be reserved for children who qualify for special education services.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms are required in addition to completing the online registration process through the school district. The forms below must be completed before any child may attend preschool:

- Pick-up Authorization Form
- Walking Distance Field Trip Permission Form
- Parent/Handbook Acknowledgement/Payment Policy Form
- Lunch account set up

Other Required Documents

All children must also have a physical and immunization record on file in the school nurse's office prior to beginning school. The physical and immunization records must be current and dated no longer than 12 months prior.

Updating Records

Parents will need to notify the preschool teacher of any changes in address, phone number or place of employment as soon as possible. In the interest of all children, our files must be current.

Payment Policy

Tuition is due by the 5th of every month. Teachers will send home a payment envelope placed in the communication folder in your child's backpack. Please send the tuition payment back to school in the envelope and the teachers will turn it into the District Office. A monthly receipt is available upon request. Cash payments will automatically receive a receipt.

- Tuition is calculated on an annual basis (\$2,700 for 4-year olds and \$3,150 for 3-year and 5-year olds) and divided into 9 payments, to be paid monthly from September-May. For the 2020-2021 school year, there is a half-day option for 4-year olds at no cost, and for 3-year olds at \$2,250 for the school year).
- Current monthly payments are as follows: \$300/mo for children considered 4-years old, and \$350(full day)/\$250(half day) for children considered 3-years old or 5-years old according to the September 15th cut-off date.
- All accounts must be paid in full by the 5th of each month.
- Refunds CANNOT be given for illness, absence or cancellations due to inclement weather, because our operating costs continue and space is reserved for your child.

- In addition, if a child is withdrawn from the preschool prior to the completion of the school year, tuition refund will not be given for the remainder of the unattended days.
- A \$25.00 fee will be added to your bill for any returned checks
- Two bad checks will result in cash only payments for the remainder of the school year.

Consequences of Non-payment

If payments are not received according to the above policies, one or more of the following steps will be taken:

- Past Due Balance Notices will be given or mailed.
- Unpaid Account Letter will be given or mailed.
- Termination of the child’s enrollment at Durant Preschool for the remainder of the school year.

Arrival and Departure

Arrival Time	Class Start Time	Dismissal Time
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 7:50-8:10	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 8:10	Half-Day Students: 11:15 daily Full-Day Students: 3:10 daily
Wednesday 9:00-9:10	Wednesday 9:10	

Arrival

In the morning, staff members are preparing for the day and not available to supervise early arrivals. All preschool students will enter through the North doors facing 6th Ave. . A staff member will open the classroom door when ready to greet the children. Never allow your child to walk into the building without an accompanying adult or responsible sibling. Please do not drop off your child before the arrival time. A staff member will be available to get children who are coming off the school bus each day, and walk them to the classroom. Upon arrival, staff will greet and observe all children. An adult will be available to take students to breakfast on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings if needed. To receive breakfast, your child must be in the classroom no later than 8:05.

Departure

Children need to be picked up no later than 3:10. If an emergency causes a parent to be late, we ask that you please call the teacher as soon as possible. Parents should enter the building by the superintendent's office. Each day, a staff member will walk all bus children down to their bus and help them get on. Children remaining after the dismissal time will stay in their classrooms with the teacher. We are required to call the Department of Human Services if you are more than 30 minutes late picking up your child, and have not notified us ahead of time.

Please inform us if someone new is coming to get your child. We cannot let him/her leave with an unauthorized person unless we receive a note or a phone call ahead of time. We may ask any new pick-up person for a valid photo ID before we release the child.

School Day Activities

Curriculum

Durant Preschool is using the research based *Creative Curriculum* for all planning and evaluating. The *Creative Curriculum for Preschool* provides teachers with a clear and concrete way to apply child development and learning theories to their everyday work with preschool children. Teachers using *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* are able to meet the needs of children with a broad range of abilities. *The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum* helps teachers focus on the sequence of the development of skills and learning to help all children grow and develop.

To fulfil our goal of nurturing the whole child, the curriculum at Durant Preschool will include a wide variety of developmentally appropriate thematic units, learning centers, hands-on activities and circle time to help children grow in all areas listed below:

- Social-Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics

Other curriculum programs are available and utilized by the teachers to supplement learning, and to create a learning experience to meet the needs of the whole child.

Class Schedule

The following includes a list and brief description of the activities children will participate in throughout the school day:

- **Interest Centers:** During this time, students engage cooperatively with each other in play-based learning experiences. Centers are changed regularly to incorporate the interests of students and themes or topics being discussed.
- **Small Groups:** Children will have a chance to build relationships with adults and work on skills in a small group setting. This will allow for more individualized and scaffolded learning.
- **Outdoor Play:** Both free-play and structured play will be included to work on cooperation and gross motor skills. Children will have the opportunity for outdoor play daily when weather permits. Preschool students will not have outdoor play if the temperature (including the windchill) is less than 20 degrees. When outdoor play is not permissible, similar activities will be available indoors when possible.
- **Circle Time/Large Group:** Daily meetings and reflection, as well as stories, and introduction of skills or main ideas will be included in circle time/large group.
- **Lunch:** Preschool eats lunch in the school cafeteria. Classroom associates remain in the cafeteria with the students for supervision.
- **Nap/Rest:** This is time for the children's bodies to rest from the day's activities. No child is required to nap, however, each child will be expected to lay quietly during this time as it is very important for them to have a mental and physical break.
- **Snack:** This is a required part of the day in order to comply with QPPS
- **Physical Education/Music/Art/Library:** For twenty minutes per day, each class is able to participate in one of the specials.

Snack

- **Choices**
 - Daily snack will be provided. Children will have a choice of white milk (at a cost) or water to drink with their snack. Snacks must be healthy snacks per the Quality Preschool Program Standards (QPPS). Snacks can include items such as fruit, crackers, dry cereal, cheese, meat products, and vegetables. Sugar based snacks such as puddings, cookies, cakes, and fruit chews do not meet QPPS guidelines and should be reserved for birthdays or special occasions.

Supervision

- Staff members will monitor any snack time. The staff will honor all parent requests regarding food allergies. Good manners and polite conversation will be encouraged and modeled by the staff.

- **Birthdays**

- We will celebrate your child's birthday or half-birthday (for summer birthdays). Your child is assigned snacks on his/her birthday. A sweet snack is permitted for this special celebration. Please do not send party hats or favors for school birthdays.

Parent Communication

Since the education of your child is a joint effort, it is important communication remains open between parents and teachers. The following will assist us as we work together:

Parent Handbook

This document includes policies and procedures at Durant Preschool that are in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Iowa Department of Education, and the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Every family will receive a handbook, and will be asked to sign a Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form stating they have received, and will read the handbook.

Backpacks

Your child's backpack is our primary communication link. Each child needs to have a full-sized backpack. Each child will also need to have a "communication folder." Notes to and from the school/teacher should be placed in the folder. We will check the folders every class session for correspondence from you. Weekly reports, book orders, special notes, calendars, newsletters, and artwork will be sent home in the folders. PLEASE check and empty your child's backpack after each school day so we know you have read the information we sent home.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

The school year will begin the year with a scheduled home visit in August for preschool orientation. Parent/Teacher conferences will take place in the Fall and Spring as noted on the School District calendar. If you would like more frequent communication or a conference pertaining to your child's progress, please notify your teacher. We will be happy to set up a time to talk with you upon request. Parents will be contacted via email or by phone if we have identified any concerns or situations we feel you should be aware of.

Preschool Calendar

Two calendars are used. If you need more than one copy, please let your teacher know.

- Monthly

- Identifies day to day happenings including: snack helpers, specials schedule, special events and class birthdays, as well as any additional notes about each month. These calendars are sent home prior to the first of each month.
- Yearly
 - This is available on the school website (www.durant.k12.is.us) under the “For Parents” tab on the “Preschool” page.
 - Identifies any weekdays where Durant Preschool is off, vacations and holidays.
 - A copy of the current school calendar is included at the end of this handbook.

Health Guidelines

Durant Preschool is part of the Durant Community School District and will follow guidelines put in place by the Iowa Department of Health and the Iowa Department of Education as it pertains to school safety measures.

Health Guidelines Continued:

Child Hand Washing

Children in the preschool shall wash their hands with soap and running water, then rinse and dry them with individual paper towels. Children’s hands should be washed at the following times:

- Upon arriving to the classroom
- Immediately before and after eating or participating in any food service activity
- Before and after using the sand/water table
- After sneezing or coughing
- After using the bathroom

Diapering/Toileting

The Durant Preschool Program follows IQPPS Standard 5.5 for making sure recommended guidelines are followed for children requiring diapering or help with toileting. IQPPS standards can be found on the school website under the preschool tab. A checklist is posted in the changing area and is initialed by the staff member to ensure the guidelines are being followed

Symptoms of Illness

Symptoms that necessitate keeping your child at home include the following:

- Temperature above 100 degrees (keep home 24 hours after fever breaks)
- Severe coughing
- Diarrhea (keep home 24 hours after last episode)
- Vomiting (keep home 24 hours after last episode)
- Severe sore throat
- Skin rash (undiagnosed or contagious)

If you are in doubt, please contact the teacher or nurse.

Children with infectious or communicable diseases are to remain home until a physician gives them permission to return to school.

First Aid Kit

Each classroom will be equipped with a basic first aid kit. The first aid kit will accompany the children when they leave school grounds and contains emergency contact information for each child.

Accident/Injury Reporting

Incidents or accidents resulting in injury to a child will be immediately referred to the school nurse. The nurse will document and contact a parent or guardian if necessary.

Parent Notification of Sickness or Injury

Should a student become ill during class time, the staff will notify the parent immediately. Should the parent be unavailable, the next person on the Emergency Contact Form will be notified and asked to pick up the student from class. Until an adult arrives to take the child, the child will be kept in an area separate from the rest of the children, to prevent possible spread of the illness. Every attempt will be made to keep the child comfortable while keeping the risk of exposure to a minimum.

In case of emergency related to injury, the staff will administer CPR or First Aid. All staff will receive certification in CPR and first aid, which includes the use of an epi-pen and AED. If medical attention is required, the child may be transported to the hospital. An attempt will be made to notify the parent/guardian. If we are unable to reach the parent/guardian, those individuals listed on the Emergency Contact Form will be contacted. Please keep us informed of any changes.

Medication

In cases where medication is required, the parents must inform the teacher and sign the Medication Administration Form. An allergy action plan and/or an asthma action plan must be filled out by a physician and be placed on file in the child's records so we can verify the right child receives the right medication in the right dose at the right item by the right method. The school nurse will be notified of any and all medications children receive, and may require a doctor's note for nonprescription medications.

Mandatory Abuse Reporting

QPPS requires every employee of a preschool facility who, in the course of employment, reasonably believes a child has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect to immediately report the suspected abuse directly to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours.

Appropriate Dress

Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for outside activities. Sandals may be worn at school, but please take into consideration the activity level of young children when choosing their attire. Also, please ensure they are wearing tennis shoes on physical education days, as marked on your monthly calendar.

Emergency Clothes: Spills or accidents occasionally happen in preschool. A spare set of clothing (prior to the first day of school) will be required for your child. When soiled clothes are sent home, please send another outfit the next class session. Consider season changes and your child's growth when you select spare clothing.

Weather Closings

We follow the Durant Community School District (DCSD) schedule for inclement weather. If DCSD cancels classes for the day, our classes will be cancelled. If DCSD has a two-hour late start in the morning, we will have a two-hour late start in the morning. If DCSD has a weather related early dismissal, we will follow their dismissal schedule. Cancellations and late starts will be posted on KWQC-TV 6 (www.kwqc.com) and the school website. **You may also sign up to receive text/email alerts via the school website under the "For Parents" tab.**

****In need of any cancellations, preschool is not required to make up any snow days.**

Emergencies

Durant Preschool follows a district-wide protocol for emergencies and incidents. The protocols were developed and agreed upon by the school Administration and Durant law enforcement. Teachers and school staff have been trained and are aware of procedures related to the following:

- Emergency Phone Numbers
- Severe Weather/Flooding
- Fire
- Intruder
- Bomb Threat
- Hostage
- Suicide Threat or Attempt
- Medical Emergency
- Hazardous Materials
- Suspicious Package or Mail
- Media Inquiry
- Armed Assailant
- Assaults
- Demonstration/Student Unrest

The listed procedures are in compliance with Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

***The policies set forth by the Durant Community School District will supersede any and all policies stated in the Durant Preschool Handbook.**