

Minnewaska Preschool



Parent Handbook
2018-19

Play



Laugh



Learn



Minnewaska Early Childhood Family Education & Preschool
409 4th St SE
Glenwood, MN 56334
320-239-1406

Welcome to Preschool

Our staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to the Minnewaska School Readiness Program. This Minnewaska School District program is designed to provide a safe and supervised environment for children ages 3 years old to kindergarten. This program is operated by the Minnewaska Early Childhood Family Education program under the umbrella of Minnewaska Community Education. This School Readiness program strives to provide children with early childhood social experiences and pre-academic skills to prepare them for Kindergarten.

Our classes are taught by licensed early childhood/kindergarten teachers, and educational assistants. The Early Childhood Advisory Council, as well as the Community Education Advisory Council, provides staff with advice and guidance in meeting the early learning needs of the youngest children in the Minnewaska School District. Preschool is funded in partnership with state educational aid dollars, and tuition paid by participating families. Our program offers a variety of activities to channel children's energies into positive growing experiences. The purpose of a school readiness preschool is to provide all children adequate opportunities to participate in child development programs that enable them to enter school with the necessary skills and behaviors. The Minnesota Legislature recognizes the challenge of transitioning from early childhood into kindergarten and supports School Readiness as a way to assure future learning success for children and their families.

What We're All About

All School Readiness preschool programs are administered through Minnewaska Early Childhood Family Education, which is a community education program of the Minnewaska School District.

Four things make the Minnewaska School Readiness preschool unique:

- As part of the school district, we have access to an array of quality resources to support the early educational and emotional needs of young children.
- Our curriculum is designed to meet the State of Minnesota K-12 Standards and the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress which were developed by the Minnesota Department of Education.
- Children get the skills they need to be successful in school and transition to kindergarten
- High quality staff

Curriculum and Learning Environment

The curriculum used in our preschool focuses on the whole child. A combination of The Creative Curriculum, SEEDS Early Literacy Curriculum, Handwriting without Tears, Everyday Math Pre-K and Second Step Curriculum are used to promote growth in all areas of a child's development through a variety of small and large group activities. Developmentally appropriate goals and objectives are set up and carried out through our various learning centers so that the children will be stimulated physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally. They will be able to explore our creative art center, manipulatives, science, book center, large muscle area, block area and dramatic play centers daily.

Weather permitting children will spend time outdoors. Please bring your children to preschool appropriately dressed for playing outside. Free choice time is provided each day for the children to pursue their own interests in a safe, friendly and stimulating environment. Our program builds upon existing services and resources in the Pope County community to meet the health, nutrition, education and social service needs of participating children to enhance their learning and development and future success in school.

Program Calendar

The program calendar generally follows the Minnewaska School District calendar. All families will receive a calendar that indicates the days that classes will be in session, and when parent/teacher conferences are scheduled. If there are changes in the calendar for any reason you will be notified in the monthly newsletter and with messages sent home in your child's school bag. Preschool begins in September and ends in May. The start and ending date of school depends upon the school calendar and our budget. Drop Off begins at 7:50 and 11:20 in the drop off zone.

Our preschool options are as follows:

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with classroom hours from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays with classroom hours from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays with classroom hours from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

SCHOOL BAGS:

The children are not responsible for bringing any personal belongings to school except a school bag. Please print the child's name on the outside of their bag. It will be used for bringing home art projects, newsletters and other notes to parents. Regular sized school bags with a large opening work best.

CLOTHING:

Please have your child dress in play clothes during school hours, as we do a lot of messy art! We work with paints, glue, chalk, markers, inked stamped pads, cornstarch/water, paste, etc. and do not want to be held responsible for trying to keep clothes clean. We will go outside for walks, playing in the playground, etc. when the weather is suitable. During outside play the children will be supervised at all times. During the winter, **ALL CHILDREN must bring: snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens!** Please also bring an extra change of clothes. If you need assistance in obtaining warm clothing for your child, please contact the coordinator at 239-1406. We will go outside unless the temperature and/or the wind-chill are below zero.

TRANSPORTATION:

It is the responsibility of the parent to see that transportation is provided for their child. Car pools are generally formed by the parents, while some parents choose to have Rainbow Rider provide their transportation by calling 320-283-5065. It is EXTREMELY important that preschool is notified of transportation arrangements and any changes that may occur.

SNOW DAYS:

If the public school cancels school due to poor weather conditions, we will also cancel school. If the public school runs 2 hours late, we will cancel morning preschool. If the school has an early out, afternoon session will end at the same time as the school. Parents will need to pick up their child at the scheduled early out time. If the district has a 2 hour late start, afternoon preschool will be as scheduled. Please listen to KMGK 107.1 radio for school cancellations due to weather.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE:

Our goal is to ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior. Our guidance methods are tailored to the developmental level of the children in our program. Our main behavior guidance method is redirection and teaching children problem-solving skills, acceptable alternatives and thus protect the safety of all children and staff persons. We provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior. If this type of behavior persists, the child will be given a "Cool Down Period" (sitting away from the group but within sight of the staff) until his/her behavior is improved and under control. No child will be subject to corporal punishment or emotional abuse. Food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care will not be withheld as a punishment.

As the children begin the school year, they test the teachers, rules, regulations, and sometimes teacher/parent conferences on behavior are needed. This is natural and the only way some children learn boundaries. If a child is given a "Cool Down Period" several times a day and/or on a frequent basis, a conference with the parent(s) will be initiated to determine a behavior plan that encourages a successful day for the child.

The Minnewaska School Readiness Preschool admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, and other school administered programs.

PUBLICITY:

No child in our center will be involved in research, experimental procedures, or public relations unless written notice is given to parents, and the preschool receives written consent back from the parent(s).

Registration and Tuition

ICE BREAKER DAY will be held prior to school starting. At this time, you are to bring your child to meet the teachers and see the Preschool classrooms. All forms must be on file before the first day of school.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS are required prior to the first day of preschool: Registration form and fee, Immunization Form (Shots must be current), Early Childhood Screening by Pope County Public Health, Permission Slips, and Contract Agreement.

TUITION:

Tuition is based on the total number of school days per year, not on the number of days per month. Tuition can be paid in one payment at the beginning of the school year or, for your convenience, can be paid in 9 monthly installments.

M/W/F & M/T/TH \$1,350.00/year - or - \$150.00/month

T/TH \$990.00/year - or - \$110.00/month

Minnewaska Preschool is set up as an automatic payment system. Families are billed on the 15th of each month for that month's tuition. Minnewaska Area Community Education uses paperless billing. Online account access can be viewed at: <https://minnewaska.cr3.rschooldtoday.com/public/home/> Minnewaska Preschool is a self supported program and must have prompt payments. Minnewaska Area Community Education reserves the right to discontinue or limit participation in the program due to nonpayment. If you have any concerns, please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator at 320-239-1406 or the Community Education office at 320-239-1305.

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Scholarships may be available to families who meet income guidelines. Scholarships are based on first come, first serve and availability of funds. Scholarships are made available through various grants. The United Way of Douglas and Pope Counties provides monies for some scholarships.

FIELD TRIPS:

Field trips may be taken with the children. Parents will be notified of these events in advance. Resource people will be brought in to visit with all of the children.

CONFERENCES:

Parent-Teacher Conferences for the children will be held twice during the school year for those who wish to participate. The first conference will be held in the fall, and a second conferences will be held in the spring. The intellectual, physical, social, and emotional progress of each child will be documented in the child's record and will be conveyed to the parent(s) during these conferences.

We would like to encourage you to feel free to call if a problem arises. If you have any questions concerning the program or your child, you are encouraged to call or stop by after school from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. You and your children are our first priority.

SNACKS:

A snack will be served to your child each day. Each family will sign up and supply snack for a rotating schedule for the class. A list of healthy snacks will be given to you. Children love to explore new foods. Getting creative with snacks is always an enjoyment for them. If your child has a particular food allergy, it is important that you notify us of this. Our goal is to ensure a safe environment for all children.

BIRTHDAYS:

Each preschooler's birthday will be celebrated at preschool. This is the one time per year that you may bring a non-nutritious snack if you choose. If you bring cupcakes, we prefer that you bring the mini-cupcakes to help us limit sugary snacks. If your child has a summer birthday, we celebrate their half-birthday with them. The teachers will let each family know when their children's birthday will be celebrated.

SPECIAL NEEDS:

If your child is receiving special education services such as speech therapy or other, please notify staff to ensure your child's needs are met.

SICKNESS POLICY:

If your child has any of the following conditions or behaviors, we ask that s/he not attend school. Or, if these conditions occur after arrival at the center, you will be called to come and get your child.

*No medications will be given out at the school, unless a written statement from the parent giving permission is in the child's file.

HEALTH REGULATIONS:

The following symptoms often occur in children, and many times parents call or have questions about when to send a child back to school. Many diseases are spread from one child to another when the child returns to school too soon or is sent to school ill. Certain symptoms in children suggest the presence of a communicable disease. Children with the following symptoms should be kept home until the following: 1-A doctor certifies the symptoms are not a threat to the child's health or to others; 2- The symptoms are gone (check the following details).

1. **FEVER:** Oral temp of 100°F or higher- Keep child home at least 24 hours after it returns to normal.
 2. **DIARRHEA:** 3 or more stools- Wait until stools are firm again. Call your doctor if it's accompanied by severe abdominal pain or if diarrhea persists.
 3. **VOMITING:** If your child has thrown up during the night-Keep the child home EVEN if they feel fine in the morning. Often vomiting is the first symptom of a disease that develops later. This is usually the most contagious time for the other children.
 4. **EYE/NOSE DRAINAGE:** If the drainage is thick & yellow, has bad odor, or persists-Keep the child home until the drainage clears. If the eye itches or is matted shut, see your doctor. It is probably Pink Eye, which is very contagious.
 5. **SORE THROAT:** If accompanied by chills, fever, earache, or the throat is bright red or contains white spots. See your doctor and keep your child home as long as the doctor recommends.
 6. **SKIN PROBLEMS:** Rashes known to be contagious (chicken pox), sores with crusty yellow or green drainage, or persistent itching must be cleared or checked with your doctor to allow your child to remain in school.
- COUGH OR RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS:** Deep, painful, or persistent coughs should be excluded from school and checked by your doctor.

SPECIFIC TIME EXCLUSIONS (most common)

CHICKEN POX: About 5-6 days, until scabs are dry.

PINK EYE: 24 hours AFTER treatment begins. If the eye is not noticeably improved after 24 hours of treatment, keep your child home and call your doctor.

FIFTH DISEASE: No exclusion necessary.

IMPETIGO: Until the sores are healed or treatment for a FULL 24 hours has been completed and the sore is covered.

LICE: After first treatment is completed and no live lice may be seen.

SCABIES: 24 hours after first treatment is completed.

INFLUENZA: 2-7 days depending on symptoms, relapse OFTEN occurs if child is sent back too soon.

COLD SORES: No exclusion unless many, accompanied by other symptoms, or develops into impetigo.

IT IS CONTAGIOUS, caution your child to use good hygiene and leave sore alone.

STREP THROAT OR SCARLET FEVER: 24 hours after treatment is started if child is feeling better.

COMMON COLD: If symptoms are mild, exclusion is not necessary. GET EXTRA REST!

Mandated Reporters:

All staff of the Minnewaska School Readiness program are mandated by the State of Minnesota to report any suspected abuse or neglect.