

All Aboard Preschool

Parent Handbook

2025/2026



All Aboard Preschool
Located inside The Wave Aquatic & Fitness Center
1250 Baker Ave
Whitefish, MT 59937

Last updated 8/12/25

All Aboard Preschool is offered by The Wave Aquatic and Fitness Center in support of its mission to improve the health and well-being of our community. As such, we will strive to promote the overall growth of your child.

Philosophy & Curriculum

We believe that building a team which includes teacher, child, parent and community will provide a sound educational foundation for your child.

All Aboard Preschool promotes an environment where children become independent, confident, lifelong learners with a strong sense of self. We proudly offer a positive, child-centered preschool experience that fosters a love of learning in a nurturing community. In each child, we strive to cultivate:

- Autonomy
- A sense of belonging
- Respect for others
- Enthusiasm for exploration

Our Curriculum

We offer a child-centered and developmentally appropriate program for three through five-year old children. The play-based learning framework of Creative Curriculum for Preschool has been integrated with our own blend of fitness and wellness for children. Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive system of learning based on research and knowledge regarding all areas of child development – social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language.

The teachers use their own experiences, as well as the children's interest to adapt the curriculum to be unique to each class. Classroom observations and assessments become important tools for the teachers to communicate with parents.

Play allows children to learn about the world and themselves. As children play, they learn new skills, develop coping mechanisms, test new ideas, and master their bodies. Creative Curriculum for Preschool provides extensive guidance for teachers in the content areas of literacy, math, science, social skills, and the arts. As children make choices about where to play in the classroom, they are learning a variety of skills. For example, building with blocks promotes material explorations, as well as spatial planning, symbolic representation, dramatic play, and social interactions. In the area of art, teachers emphasize the process rather than the finished product. As children use art materials, they are planning and carrying out a task and also using symbols to represent their ideas.

Our play-based curriculum offers children many opportunities for positive interactions with other children and adults. We treat each child with respect and reinforce his/her value as an individual and as a unique member of the All Aboard Preschool and Wave community.

Staff Qualifications

Our staff members meet the following qualifications:

- Passed a background check
- CPR & First Aid Certified
- Familiar with Montana State Regulations in childcare
- Previous experience in a childcare or elementary educational setting preferred

Nondiscriminatory Policy

We are a nonsectarian preschool. All Aboard Preschool admits students of any race, color, religion, and national and ethnic origin to all rights privileges, programs and activities and does not discriminate in administration of its educational and admission policies.

Closures

We may close due to illness, on inclement weather days, in an unexpected event, or in which the Whitefish School District closes. Any event as such, we will send out information via text message and email, as well as post this information on our Facebook page. **We do not offer refunds or day trades due to any types of closures.**

Tuition Charges

Tuition is withdrawn monthly for all weekly contracted days, regardless of holidays, illness, snow days, or vacations and closures (planned and unplanned). **There are no refunds, credits, or day exchanges.**

Withdrawal Notice

If you are planning to leave the All Aboard Preschool program, we require a withdrawal notice AT LEAST 30 days in advance to your departure. Please note, if you fill this out late, you will still be charged for the next month's dues, regardless of attendance. This form can be found by talking to Autumn.

Parent Participation

Parents have the largest role in their children's education and we want you to feel a part of our classroom – therefore, we will have appropriate times for you to visit and/or volunteer. If you have a special talent or skill that you believe would be beneficial for our kids to observe or learn about, we would love to discuss an opportunity for you to visit. Visitors will be asked to be respectful of the classroom routine and learning environment. We ask for volunteers on swimming days, field trips and classroom parties.

Field Trips

Field trips can be an important enriching experience for our children. Information and permission slips will be sent home in school bags each time a field trip is planned. In order to attend a field trip,

each child needs a signed permission slip. A First Aid kit and Emergency Contact Information will be taken on the trip.

Birthday Celebrations

We recognize that a child's birthday is an important time in a child's life. You are welcome to bring a small treat for the class to help your child celebrate their special day.

Child Specific Information

During arrival and dismissal times, staff members must devote full attention to all of the children and each specific need. Please keep conversations brief. If you need to communicate specific information, a written note or email is preferred.

- There are opportunities for parent/teacher meetings two times per school year - at the beginning and end. Parents and teachers will have the opportunity to discuss their child's individual goals and evaluate the child's progress. At any time that you have special concerns, please feel free to contact your teacher.
- Please call The Wave (406) 862-2444 and ask for All Aboard Preschool, ext 122, during school hours. In the case of emergency please notify The Wave's Service Desk or Children's Depot.
- Please share pertinent information with the teachers regarding your child or any situations that may affect your child so we can be sensitive to any changes in behaviors or family dynamics. Privacy will always be respected.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. We take this issue very seriously and will make every effort to protect each family's privacy. Communications among staff and parents about children will be kept confidential at all times. It is recommended that conversations about a child, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of the preschool community. If a parent has a question or concern, we suggest the parent first contact the teacher via email or in person to arrange a time to discuss the issue.

Communication

Communication is vital to a successful preschool program. We strive to make communication open and clear to all. Here are a few ways you can expect us to relay information:

- Email
- Class Dojo
- Parent orientation
- Notices sent home with child in monthly newsletter

Drop Off/Pick-Up

Never leave your child alone inside or outside of the building. **We require all children to be checked in by an adult, and met by a teacher at the gate for drop off.** Parents must sign their children into the facility each day and sign them out. We require all children to be picked up by **an adult** (no underage siblings please) after our program finishes for the day. Any early drop offs or late pickups should utilize the drop in child care services of the Children's Depot. Arrangements will be made with the preschool aide to transfer your child. For all late pickups, your child will be taken to the Children's Depot and regular pricing will apply.

Authorization

Each parent is asked to give specific individuals permission to pick their child up. Parents **MUST** give authorization either in person or by phone each and every time their child is picked up by an unauthorized adult, not listed on your registration form. We want to ensure safe transport for your child. If our staff members observe an authorized individual that is disgruntled or if the staff has reasonable cause to suspect that the individual is under the influence, or physically impaired in any way that may endanger the child, the staff may have cause to refuse to release the child until another authorized adult can pick the child up.

Late Arrival

Please be considerate and try to arrive on time. We ask that all kids are dropped off between 8:30 – 9:00 am. If you do arrive late, please inform our teachers and be respectful of what is going on in the classroom.

Absences

Please notify us by 9:00am, if your child is not attending for the day. A voicemail may be left on the preschool voicemail, ext. 122. Inform us about any or all illnesses/health concerns. Teachers and students miss a child when he/she is gone and want to know everything is OK. Because of our tuition policy and staffing regulations, absences are not credited and swapping of days is not allowed. **IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT WELL ENOUGH TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE DAILY SCHEDULE, PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME.**

Well Child Policy

We work hard to prevent childhood illness. If children come to a school when they are not feeling well, they will be more vulnerable to infection and to getting sick. It is in the best interest of your child and of the other children to keep your child at home when he/she is ill.

Children need to be well in order to be able to participate actively in our program; however, The Wave recognizes that in some cases children who are not contagious will attend the program when they are not functioning at their best. For the protection of other children and our staff, we rely on the thoughtfulness of each parent's assessment of their child. Our staff reserves the right to refuse to admit any child that is ill. Please refer to the following guidelines to help determine an ill child.

24 HOUR RULE: ANY CHILD WHO HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF ILLNESS IN THE PREVIOUS 24 HOURS MAY NOT ATTEND CLASS.

- **Fever:** Has had or has a fever within the last 24 hours above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Diarrhea:** Has diarrhea or nausea in the last 24 hours defined as loose, very watery or mucus filled stools.
- **Cold:** ANY of the following symptoms - Discharge from eyes, or a profuse nasal discharge, a cough with mucus secretions.
- **Rash:** A contagious disease (rashes of any sorts or bacterial infections).
- **Antibiotic Time Line:** A child should be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Specific Disease Protocol:

Hand Foot Mouth – Child must stay home until their fever has been gone for 24 hours, there is no drooling from the mouth, and all sores are healed and no longer open.

Covid-19 – Child must stay home until it has been at least 5 days since the date of first symptoms, and all symptoms are gone

Strep Throat – Child must stay home until it has been at least 24 hours on antibiotics

Pink Eye – Child must stay home until it has been at least 24 hours on eye drops/antibiotics

Lice – Child must have lice treatment if there are live lice or eggs seen within the scalp and may return back to school after medical lice treatment has occurred and no lice are found within the scalp. Please repeat a scalp check 7 days after treatment to ensure there are no more evidence.

RSV – Child may return once they no longer have a fever for 24 hours (without Tylenol/fever reducing medication) AND are no longer wheezing

For any diseases not listed, please check on what next steps are.

If diagnosed with a communicable disease, such as the above, **please let the teacher know.** We **will not** release the child's name, but in case of an outbreak, it is important for us to note if other kids are being infected. In large outbreak cases, we may post that there has been a case of _____ reported for all other parents to be aware of, and follow all other contact tracing and potential classroom closure protocol.

Emergencies

Each child's program has an emergency procedure plan in place. Please ask for a copy of the plan so that you will know what to expect in case of a natural catastrophe, unusual condition or other threats. Make sure your emergency transportation form is updated and complete as this is the information that will be given directly to hospital staff in the case that your child is transported.

Medical Treatment

It is important for parents to keep their consent for medical treatment and emergency contact information up to date.

In the event the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to give permission for our staff to provide basic first aid to your child. However, parents understand that we shall not be required to strictly follow those guidelines when, in its judgement, circumstances may require otherwise.

In the event that the All Aboard Preschool in its sole discretion, believes that a child needs more advanced care, and the emergency contact from your registration form cannot be reached, parents must consent to dental, medical, surgical, and/or hospital care, treatment and/or procedures to be performed for your child by a licensed dentist, physician, ambulance attendant/emergency medical technician, or other licensed health care provider (collectively, "Health Care Professional") associated with a licensed treatment facility when deemed necessary or advisable by the Health Care Professional to safeguard your child's health. The parent waives their right of informed consent to such treatment. A staff member will stay with your child until contact with authorized personnel is made.

Communication with Parents of an Emergency Situation

Communication with parents during an emergency will be made through either a text message sent to cell phones and/or a phone call from a member of our staff and/or email. If possible, staff will leave a message on the preschool voice mail and/or a sign on the door.

Emergency Phone Contact Information for Each Child

Emergency phone numbers and email lists will be maintained to notify parents of any unexpected events, such as a school closing or an evacuation. The *Emergency Form* will be supplied during the enrollment process. This form must be completed and returned to the office before the child's first day of class.

- The *Emergency Form* includes the name and phone number of the child's local physician. The preschool has the right to call the physician or other emergency personnel in case of emergency. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep emergency information up to date.

Shelter and Evacuation Sites and Plans

Our shelter and evacuation site is the Whitefish Police Department located just up the block at 275 Flathead Ave, Whitefish, MT 59937.

Positive Discipline Policy

We are committed to providing a safe and positive learning environment for all children. The school's behavior policy encourages children to develop social skills that reflect many of our values, including self-control, respect for others, and a positive self-esteem.

Teachers model appropriate behavior and guide positive interactions among children and adults. Nurturing these social skills is a central component of Creative Curriculum®, and it helps children grow as successful, lifelong learners.

Our commitment to an age-appropriate and play-based curriculum ensures that activities are child centered and promote positive social interactions. Teachers carefully craft the environment, communicate and enforce clear boundaries and expectations for behavior, and use nonverbal cues and/or redirect a child's behavior to foster success.

When a problem arises, the teacher relies on modeling appropriate behavior, teaching peacemaking skills, and presenting stories or scenarios that reinforce the desired behavior. Children learn to make suitable choices and develop techniques for regaining self-control when they feel frustrated. Instructive and individually appropriate consequences help to strengthen the child's self-control and self-esteem.

When a child experiences a particularly challenging time, the school encourages parents and teachers to work together and develop appropriate strategies. If a specific circumstance needs attention, the teacher will follow these procedures:

1. The teacher will observe and document a child's behavior.
2. The teacher will discuss the child's behavior with a parent and inform him or her of learning-based strategies the teacher will implement. The teacher will discuss options with the director.
3. The teacher will follow up with the parent about how these strategies are influencing the behavior.
4. If concern persists, a conference will be held with the teacher, parent, and director to discuss options to help the child further develop appropriate social skills.
5. Staff members will make reasonable effort to work with the child and his/her family to resolve behavioral concerns. At any time, an individual plan of action may need to be implemented, depending on the severity of the concern. If needed, there is opportunity for teachers and the director to seek support from outside resources. The plan may include removal of a child from the classroom and/or calling the parent to take the child home. Repeated problems may result in dismissal from our program.

What to Bring & Dress Code

- Your child should be dressed for active and participatory play. We do not want a child's activity or creativity hampered because he/she is wearing clothing that should not get dirty.
- Your child should wear comfortable shoes that they can independently put on and take off their feet. No sandals, flip flops, straps or slippers with rubber soles are recommended. **No boots in the classroom, (snow or rain) pack inside shoes daily for your child or leave a pair shoes for the year in their cubby.**
- Children go outside most days, so please dress your child appropriately.
- In the winter, hat and mittens, snow pants and boots are needed every day.
- During the Swimming fitness unit, and on swim party days, please send your child's swimwear. Towels, goggles and toys will be provided at school.

- Please bring an extra set of clothes in a large zip lock bag labeled with your child's name to leave in your backpack – make sure this clothing is appropriate for the current season.

Lunch and Snack

Parents should send lunch and snack in a lunch box daily, and a spill proof water bottle. No juice boxes, chocolate milk or candy. Please label your child's lunch box clearly with your child's name on the outside of the lunch box. We encourage parents to promote healthy eating habits by sending nutritious items for lunch and snack. Please pack an appropriate amount of food for your child for the day. Lunch and snack time is a time for children to reenergize their bodies and build language and conversational skills.

We ask that children bring a clean water bottle each day to school as we will encourage water throughout the day.

PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR TEACHER IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY KNOWN ALLERGY.

Spare Clothes

Pack a full change of clothes for your child in a gallon zip lock bag, labeled with their name. Should a mess of any kind arise, they will have the option to put on clean clothes. Please make sure this clothing is seasonably appropriate.

Enrollment

Enrollment for our fall preschool programs will begin in the spring of each year. Registration first comes available to existing families and members from the prior year. All other registration is accepted on a first come first serve basis. A completed registration packet is necessary for enrollment as well as a non-refundable registration fee which will hold your child's placement in our program.

Immunizations

We require proof of immunizations. Our standards are based on guidelines set by the State of Montana however, we do not allow exceptions for religious reasons.

Registration

All registration forms included in the registration packet must be completed and up to date.

Procedures for Withdrawal

A WRITTEN notice must be received 30 days prior to the first day of the month for cancellation in our program – NO EXCEPTIONS. If you cancel out of our program less than 30 days in advance, you will be charged that month's tuition. We need time to fill each vacant spot.

PLEASE NOTE: On occasion, a program is not an optimal fit for a child or family. We will make every effort to work collaboratively with families to resolve any challenges that arise. Additional resources may need to be used to support a child's success in our preschool environment. If, after all reasonable efforts are exhausted, and a

problem cannot be resolved, we reserve the right to dismiss a child from the program.

Payment Policy

Payments must be made on time to ensure your child's continued participation in our program. All fees will be drafted on the first of the month via auto pay as indicated during registration. A late fee of \$10 will be assessed for a returned draft.

Photo Policy

As a parent, you have the choice to release your child's photo. We often use Class Dojo and parent newsletters to communicate and give updates. Completion of our photo release form is required during registration.

Recognition of Handbook

By signing below, I am recognizing that I have received this handbook and am responsible for reading and understanding all of the policies listed here in All Aboard Preschool. Please return this portion back to the facility.

Signature

Print Name