

Gingerbread House Preschool Handbook



Welcome

The Staff of the Gingerbread House welcomes you and your family. The day your child/children enters our Early Childhood Program, we share in the responsibility for his/her mental, social, physical and emotional development. It is important to us that your child's first school experience be a positive and rewarding one. We will strive to help each child develop a healthy self-concept through "active learning" in a peer group setting. In addition, each child will be encouraged to develop social, emotional, intellectual, and physical skills. We are glad you have chosen Gingerbread House Preschool, and look forward to the partnership we will enjoy during your child's time with us. Welcome!!!

Gingerbread House is a private preschool program that leases space at Zionsville Christian Church. We are a non-faith based preschool. We welcome all children and their families.

We will do our best to quickly answer your questions. There will be a group email for each class. Every weekend you will receive a message from your child's teachers. For additional calendars or photos, go to our website at: GingerbreadPreschoolZionsville.com

Our Professional Educators

Gingerbread House is very proud of its warm, caring, experienced and professional educators. They have been chosen for their patience, sensitivity, and understanding of how young children learn. There are two teachers in each classroom setting. Our classes use the team teaching approach with two lead teachers.

Prior to every month, the age level teachers from each room, hold planning sessions to create the activities for the upcoming month. Parents and students will receive a monthly calendar filled with the daily classroom activities, and any upcoming special events. If you misplace your monthly calendar, you can always print out a new copy from our website.

As professionals we are always seeking new information in the field through conferences and workshops. We look forward to getting to know you and your children.

Our Teaching Philosophy

Our program is a flexible one, to enable each child to learn at his/her own pace, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. Our goal is to educate the whole child, by trying to meet each child's individual needs. Knowledge is not something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. "Children acquire knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. Children do not need to be forced to learn; they are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world." This is a position statement of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) with which we wholeheartedly agree.

Our Approach to Discipline

The goals of Gingerbread House Preschool include helping each child to develop a feeling of positive self-worth, competence and mastery. Discipline is approached from a realization that children need to learn self-control. Clear rules for behavior and clear directions for compliance are established. Positive reinforcement is given for compliance. The teachers convey an attitude of firmness, respect, and kindness when stating expectations for children's behavior. Guidance involves establishing rules for safety, general health, and social interaction. A safe, caring atmosphere, and consistent daily routines, provide a feeling of security and confidence in each child.

Specific strategies for discipline and guidance include:

1. We connect and redirect. We do not use negative reinforcement or punishment.
2. We change the learning environment when it interferes with positive behavior.
3. We set clear, consistent, and reasonable limits on behavior.
4. We avoid negatives by stating expectations in a positive way.
5. The teachers contact parents when necessary, regarding a child's inappropriate behavior.
6. Parent-Teacher conferences will occur 2 times each school year.

Health Guidelines

Sick children must be free from fever, vomiting, diarrhea, without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. A child with pink eye or strep throat must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school. If there is suspicion of a communicable disease, such as pink eye, please keep your child at home.

****Please call the school to let us know when your child is sick.**

*****No dispensing of medications, even over-the-counter medications.**

Potty Training

Children in the 3, 4, and 5-year-old classes must be potty trained. Parents will be notified in case of a fecal accident to take care of the situation. Children in the 2's class are not required to be potty trained.

Dress

We would like children to wear play clothes to school. Despite precautions on our part, play dough, glue, and paint often get on clothing. Make sure your child's clothing is washable. Please do not allow your child to wear a costume to school. Choose clothing that is easy for your child to fasten and unfasten. This will aid in their independence when using the restroom.

School shoes: We prefer athletic or rubber soled shoes for climbing and running outdoors. Please do not send your child to school wearing crocs, flip flops, or slides. These types of foot wear fall off the children's feet on the playground and inside the school during Music and Movement class. If your child wears boots to school in the winter, please also send in regular shoes for indoor use.

Dressing for the Weather: Children should be prepared to go outside, unless it is raining. Please dress your child for the weather. If the temperature or wind chill is 15⁰F or below, we will not go outside. In the winter months, your child should have an appropriate winter coat, boots, mittens, and hat. Please label these items with your child's name. No umbrellas, please.

Weather Delays and Cancellation of School

When the Zionsville Community Schools (ZCS) cancel school, GBH is cancelled. When ZCS have a delay, GBH will have school at its **regular time**. It is your choice whether to bring your child to school, or not. The GBH staff will hold classes as usual.

****Please call the school (317-733-1105) if your child will be absent for any reason.**

Snacks and Parties

Snack time is a regular part of each day. Classroom snacks are provided by parents on a rotating schedule. A “**snack bucket**” will be sent home with your child prior to his/her turn. We ask that the snacks be simple and nutritious. The children will have water to drink. The school will supply cups and napkins for snack time. If a child has special dietary restrictions, you will be informed so that this can be taken into consideration when you make your snack selection. Snack time is a learning situation and an important part of our curriculum!

***If your child has food allergies, please alert his/her teachers. Also, send in alternative snacks in case your child is not allowed to eat the snack of the day.**

We love birthdays. If your child would like to bring a special snack and a drink for his/her birthday, please plan with the classroom teacher in advance. Summer birthdays will be observed during the school year.

If your child is having a birthday party outside of school, please do not distribute party invitations at school (including in the hallway prior to or following class).

Arrival and Dismissal

Parents and children should enter through the glass front doors when these doors have been unlocked, and a “smiley face” has been hung in the front window. Please bring your child to his/her classroom area. At dismissal time, the doors will be unlocked again. Please wait in the Big Room for your child. Each class will be dismissed by their teachers in the Big Room waiting area.

If anyone other than parents will be picking up your child, please send a note, a text, or an email stating who will be picking up on that day.

It is important to be prompt for arrival and dismissal. This effort will help your child feel secure during this transition time. If you are running late, please leave a phone message at: 317-733-1105, so that we will know you are on your way.

Late Pick-up fee:

A fee will be charged for **Late Pick-up** at the end of your child's school day. There will be a 5-minute grace period, followed by a **\$1.00 per minute late fee**. Your child's teacher will fill out a form to document your arrival time. You will need to pay this late fee directly to the teachers who have waited with your child.

No cell phones: Please turn off your cell phone when dropping off or picking up your child from school. We would like you to devote at least 5 minutes of quality one-on-one time with your child.

Please leave your child's personal items in your car, not in his/her bucket. These precious items might get lost at school.

Payments of Tuition and Fees

Tuition for the school year is divided into nine equal payments. Payments are due the first week of school each month. The payment is late if received after the first week of each month. There is a \$25.00 late fee assessed for a late payment, if other arrangements have not been discussed with the director. We trust that when you register, you are doing so for the entire nine-month school year. If you should find it necessary to withdraw, please give us one month's notice in writing. If we do not receive written notice, you will be held responsible for the following month's tuition.

There is no reduction in tuition for absences due to illness, inclement weather, vacations, etc. Snow days will not be made up at the end of the school year. Any matter concerning tuition and fees, should be discussed with the director.

Make checks payable to: Gingerbread House Preschool

Tuition payments may be placed in the tuition bucket located outside the GBH office. You may also mail your payments to:

Gingerbread House Preschool

120 N. Ninth Street

Zionsville, IN. 46077

*There is a \$25.00 late fee for all payments made after the first week of school each month.

**There is a \$35.00 fee for all returned checks. (This is the amount the bank charges GBH for returned checks.)

***Tax ID number: 35-1677232 (Early Childhood Educators, INC.)

Admission Forms for other schools: If you need us to fill out forms for other schools or kindergartens we will fill out the first form for free. For each additional application, there will be a \$10 fee, payable to your child's teacher.

Parenting Book Recommendations

The Gifts of Imperfect Parenting: Raising Children with Courage, Compassion, and Connection

by Brené Brown

Positive Discipline Parenting Tools: The 49 Most Effective Methods to Stop Power Struggles, Build Communication, and Raise Empowered, Capable Kids

by Jane Nelsen, Mary Nelsen Tamborski, Brad Ainge

How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk

by Adele Faber, Elaine Mazlish

No-Drama Discipline: The Whole-Brain Way to Calm the Chaos and Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind

by Daniel J. Siegel and Tina Payne Bryson

The Collapse of Parenting: How We Hurt Our Kids When We Treat Them Like Grown-Ups

by Leonard Sax

