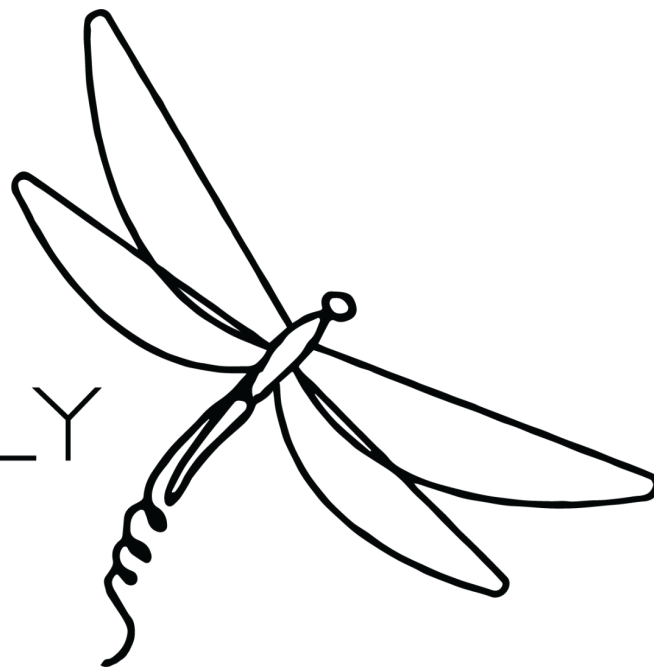


DRAGONFLY
RANCH
PRESCHOOL



HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to Dragonfly Ranch Preschool. We are so excited to have your child attend our farm-based preschool. Our goal is to provide a welcoming, safe and developmentally appropriate environment for every child with a hands-on experience related to animals and life on a farm. This handbook is designed to ensure that your family has a rewarding experience with the program. In the handbook we have tried to anticipate many of your questions about the program. The purpose of this handbook is to outline the program's policies and procedures. We expect parents to read this handbook, follow the policies and procedures outlined, provide us with all the necessary information, and be open and honest with us regarding your feedback about the program.

Child Care and Teaching Philosophies

Our experienced and qualified staff will use a hands-on learning approach focusing on social development with peers as well as the animals located on the farm. Children will enjoy time learning and exploring the outdoors of the farm as well as the day-to-day aspects of living/working on a farm.

Our mission is to incorporate a balanced outdoor/indoor approach to learning through a variety of activities relating to our animals including; feeding, brushing, cleaning, and observing each animal in their living space. Other engaging activities will include; painting horses, riding horses, gardening, collecting eggs, milking a goat, exposure to newborn farm animals, cooking, circle-time, journaling, and craft related projects. Our program will encourage appropriate development for preschool age children as well as enhancing pre-academic skills.

Operating Information

Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday with our afternoon session from 12-3 pm and our morning session T/W/TH from 8:30-11:30. Our day-to-day schedule will be ever changing due to the exciting things that happen on the farm. However, we know how important it is for this age to have a consistent routine in place, which we will as well. Our day will start out with arrival/choice time, with circle time that follows (calendar, weather, days of the week, etc...), and then a quick snack and bathroom trip before we go outside to explore the farm and our animals. We would also LOVE to include a daily art project and maybe some journaling. Our “specials” might include; cooking, gardening, music or yoga (depending on the weather) and to end our time together with a closing circle and goodbyes. We ask for prompt pick-up, not to exceed 10 minutes, otherwise there will be a late pick-up fee of \$25. If this occurs, we will formally notify you through email.

We will be following the Oregon City school district calendar, excluding staff development/professional days or early release days (we will remain open). We will be closed on all holidays and breaks.

We are planning to open our doors on Sept. 5th, 2023

Our center information:

Dragonfly Ranch

15898 S Springwater Rd

Oregon City, OR 97045

dragonflyranch.preschool@gmail.com

Brightwheel (child care application to download for messages and pictures)

Cara Cell: 971-359-6390

Dan Cell: 503-473-7822

Preschool: 971-356-1715

Enrollment, Wait List, and Withdrawing Policies

ENROLLMENT

The Center will be strictly 3 and 4 years olds for the 2023-2024 school year. We are requiring children to be potty-trained and able to obtain vaccination reports from physicians (if requested, inability to do so may result in termination of enrollment). At this time, we are offering 2, 3, and 5 day a week programs (3-hours with am/pm sessions). Our 2 day program is \$450, 3 day program is \$500 and 5 day program is \$550 per month.

WAIT LIST

Families will be wait-listed when we have reached a classroom capacity. Families will be notified by the directors regarding enrollment status.

WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION/POLICIES

Parents are required to give the Preschool Director a minimum of three-week notice in writing prior to withdrawing their child from the program. If your child starts the month you will be charged for the full month.

Sign-in and Pick-up Procedures

Please make sure one of the directors has been informed that you are signing in and picking up your child. We will also be using a digital sign in through Brightwheel. You may download the scan code to your phone or other device.

Sample Daily Schedule

8:30-9 (12-12:30) - Arrival, choice time, dramatic play

9-9:30 (12:30-1) - Circle time, songs, calendar, weather, news, storytime

9:30-10:15 (1-1:15) - Snack

10:15-10:30 (1:15-2) - Outside time, time with animals

10:30-11:00 (2-2:30) - Art project, journaling/writing

11:00-11:30 (2:30-3) - Specials (cooking, gardening, music, yoga) closing circle, pick-up

*Our schedule isn't set in stone yet and there will be changes periodically due to weather or changes with animals (for example, if we are studying a specific animal and one of our other animals had babies, we want the children to see that)!

Supplies and Snacks Rundown

We are requiring all students to have a pair of rainboots, rain gear (coat/pants or full rain suit) and either a pair of slippers or non-slip socks to have at the Center. We are also asking for an extra set of clothes labeled with the child's name on it.

Our wishlist for supplies includes:

Miscellaneous art supplies, play dough, glue sticks, paint (jugs and individual sets), shaving cream, paper towels, toilet paper, kleenex, clorox wipes, and hand sanitizer.

The Preschool will provide a nutritional, child friendly snack during the session. All allergies will be carefully planned around and each child will have a designated snack area. Parents may send in a snack with their child if they prefer that. We have adequate and proper space to store food. Snacks will be refrigerated if necessary. We will not allow sharing of food between students.

Part of the child's tuition will be used to supply snacks for the center. Parents are not responsible for paying an extra fee.

Sick Days and Schedule Interruptions

If your child has any of the following conditions, he/she should stay home.

~ Fever of 100 or more ~ Vomiting ~ Runny nose ~ Diarrhea ~ Rash
~ Eye infections ~ Swollen glands ~ Sore throat ~ Severe headache
~ Persistent cough ~ Earache ~ Communicable disease ~ Too ill to play outside

If your child will not be in school on a day, **please call or text the directors.** If your child has a communicable disease, he/she may be required to obtain a doctor's release before returning to school.

If the child has a temperature, we will be asking the parents to take the child home for at least 24 hours fever free. We will continue to follow protocols set forth by the Early Learning Division for ELP. Subject to change.

Schedule interruptions:

If for any other reasons, the child will not be attending school, please notify the directors as soon as possible (for example, family vacations). This will not affect payment for that month. If your family needs to request a switch of days for a given week, this request needs to be in written form (email or note) at least two weeks prior to the affected date. The directors will review each request and determine whether to approve or reject the request based on space availability and reason for request. If a request is rejected, a refund of days missed will not be offered. If for some unforeseen circumstance and the school has to close, this will affect your monthly payment and reimbursement for that time period will be allowed.

We will be following the Oregon City School District snow day policies. If the district is closed, we will be too.

If there is a delay in the morning due to inclement weather, our am session will be closed.

Cara and Dan will notify all families of any closures.

*We will remain open during the district's early release days, parent/teacher conferences and staff development days.

Special Classroom Activity Rules

Families will have the opportunity to provide a snack or a treat for their child's birthday. If you prefer to provide your child with a separate snack or treat due to dietary or allergy concerns you may do so by letting Dragonfly Ranch Preschool staff be aware of your concerns. Other special classroom activities will be communicated as they approach through our classroom communication application. Please do not hesitate to ask the staff for further information to answer any questions.

Families will be provided waiver forms in advance when children will be participating in activities with the horses (horse painting, riding a horse or pony). Only children with signed waivers from a legal guardian will be able to participate in those activities.

Codes of Conduct and Discipline Procedures

One goal of Dragonfly Ranch Preschool is to help children not only develop a positive self-image but also grow their social emotional awareness. We hope to encourage children to be self directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. The staff's interactions with children are based on a philosophy providing a positive, supportive environment that focuses on prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors guides the staff in their interactions with children.

Young children, due to their developmental age, are not capable of understanding the consequences of many of their behaviors. Therefore, children need to be encouraged to make good choices and to be prevented from harming themselves or others. This can best be accomplished through close supervision, gentle guidance, and most importantly, redirection.

Children need to learn to identify and express their feelings. However, often this requires the caregiver to acknowledge the child's response to the situation, and help him/her use appropriate strategies. For example, if we see a child about to hit another child for taking a toy away, we will prevent that child from hitting the other and say, "It looks like you want to keep the truck", and provide an alternative to hitting. We will also help the child understand the other child's point of view. "I see that Tommy is playing with the truck you had. It looks like he wants it too. Can you tell him that you are playing with it?" Through this method, children can begin to learn about the intentions of others. We hope to prevent one child from hurting another and at the same time help that child to learn to identify feelings and verbalize expectations.

Small children are very egocentric. As a result, they are not yet capable of understanding the concept of sharing and taking turns. Therefore, it is our responsibility to lend guidance through redirection to other activities when conflict situations occur.

As every parent knows, caring for young children requires a lot of patience. Children require ongoing guidance and support as they learn about themselves and others. Dealing with challenging behaviors is a process of teaching and

working alongside families to ensure successful experiences throughout the farm.

Through this strategy:

- (1) children know what you expect,
- (2) a more positive classroom climate is promoted, and
- (3) children and adults form supportive relationships.

Use of Corporal Punishment and Harsh Language

The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in preschool. The discipline philosophy of the center is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed, exhibit self-control, and become problem-solvers. Children are re-directed and given choices to encourage appropriate behaviors. The use of threats and derogatory language by staff is not accepted behavior in handling children that misbehave.

Discipline Strategies Used by Dragonfly Ranch Preschool Staff and Students:

- Maintaining realistic expectations of children based on knowledge of child development.
- Providing clear and simple limits.
- Planning an environment that facilitates a caring atmosphere.
- Providing appropriate activities that keep children engaged to prevent challenging
- Modeling appropriate and respectful behaviors.
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors toward desired outcomes.
- Giving children choices between two appropriate alternatives.
- Encouraging children to work together to solve problems.
- Encouraging children to use their words to solve problems or to elicit peer cooperation.
- Providing logical and natural consequences for children's actions.
- Guiding children away from the situation until they are able to calm down and address the problem.

When there is an ongoing behavior concern, teachers will contact the child's parents. Communication may be in the form of informal or formal parent-teacher conferences or written behavioral reports. If a conference is scheduled, the parent and teacher will discuss strategies to promote

appropriate behavior, and develop a plan for change. If the behavior concern continues after implementation of the plan, a child may be asked to leave the program for a short period of time (1-5 days). If the problem is not resolved, the child may be removed from the program. It is our intent to work together with families to promote a positive experience for their child. However, we do realize that there may be circumstances that keep a child from being capable of fully participating in a group program, and recognize that the program may not be equipped to deal with all circumstances underlying certain behavioral issues.

Health and Safety Regulations

The staff are cpr/first aid trained. We will be carrying a backpack with general first aid supplies as well as any medications provided by families when traveling around the farm. Hand Sanitizer stations are found throughout the farm and Preschool. Additionally staff will comply with state guidelines around cleaning highly or frequently used surfaces on a daily basis as well as between morning and afternoon sessions.

Emergency Procedures

- Emergency phone numbers are clearly posted by all phones.
- The parent/guardian provides, in writing, the names and phone numbers of persons to contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached.
- In case of an emergency, a faculty/staff member may go with the child to the emergency room and remain until a parent/guardian arrives.
- Teachers report in writing any injuries that may occur while the child attends the Preschool.
- Teachers notify the parent/guardian of any injury requiring first aid treatment.
- Teachers report serious injuries to the Director immediately.
- Fire drills are practiced once each month to prepare children in the case of an emergency.
- Children are supervised at all times and appropriate child: staff ratios are maintained.

- Authorized pick-up information is on file and in the emergency directory.
- If we are not familiar with the authorized pick-up person we will ask to see identification and will match the person's ID with the emergency directory information provided by the parent(s).
- Each room is equipped with a first-aid kit.
- Teachers take roll and monitor the number of children in their care.
- Teachers move throughout the play yard to ensure adequate and appropriate supervision.
- All staff members are mandated to report any suspicion of child abuse/neglect.
 - Medicines are stored out of children's reach and administered only with written permission of parent/guardian.
 - Individuals who serve food wear gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.
 - Cleaning supplies are stored out of children's reach.
 - Teachers fill out documentation for accidents, incidents, and health-related situations. Parents receive copies of accident/incident forms.
 - Teachers follow universal precautions for blood-related accidents and incidents.
 - Medicines are stored out of children's reach and administered only with written permission of parent/guardian.
 - Health and safety information incorporated into the curriculum and taught to the children on a regular basis.

Parent Conferences and Communications

Dragonfly Ranch Preschool will communicate with parents on a daily/weekly basis using BrightWheel. The application will allow us to send messages and texts as needed.

Parents/guardians can contact the center using the BrightWheel app, email or contact the directors directly via cell phone.

If changes or updates to your child's basic information, please email the center at dragonflyranch.preschool@gmail.com with those changes and the directors will update immediately.

Billing Policies

Payment for the 2023-2024 center year will total the number of days your child will attend multiplied by 10 (months). We will offer a 5% discount of payment for the full learning center year calendar and a 10% discount for siblings.

Payments are due on the first business day of the month. Please let us know at the beginning of each month how you will be paying. You may mail or hand-deliver your check. Our billing system will be through BrightWheel, which you can pay by credit card (please take into account a 2% processing fee). We will also accept Venmo.

Following the initial payment, an invoice will be sent to you on the 25th of each month. If payment is not received, a 2nd notice will be sent on the 10th of the month. If we do not receive payment by the end of a given month then we will contact you to consider alternatives. There will also be a \$25 late fee.

Forms to Return

- Dragonfly Ranch Preschool Registration/Application Form (two pages; be sure to sign and date).
- Tuition Agreement Form (complete the form for the specific program you are registering for – ex: 2 day/week program, 3 day/week program, 5 day/week program).
- Authorizations and Agreements (be sure to sign and date).
- Photocopy of Certified Birth Certificate (this can be from the state or the hospital).
- Oregon Certificate of Immunization Record - don't forget to sign and date this form.
- Medical statement provided by the child's primary care physician.

- Signature page from this handbook; acknowledging that you have read and agree to the terms.
- Get to know your child form.

Closing Statement

A strong home and school environment is essential when building a good environment for young children. All of our staff will try to do our very best to keep you informed and involved in our preschool program. Clearly, ongoing communication and support from both families and staff make the connection between home and school a two-way street. Please share with us information about your child and report any changes especially during a major crisis. Anything you share with us will be held in confidence. We hope to nurture mutual trust and respect at every opportunity. There will be many ways for parents to become involved in Dragonfly Ranch. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

****Please sign and date the final page of the handbook. Return to the Preschool before your child's first day. Thank you!**

Acknowledgment and Signature

I, _____ have read, understand and agree
to policies within this handbook.

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian