

Parent Handbook

WELCOME TO ALGONQUIN PRESCHOOL

A very warm welcome is extended to you from all of us at Algonquin Preschool. We are delighted to have the opportunity to share in your child's preschool experience and adventure.

About Algonquin Preschool

Algonquin Preschool offers programs for three, four, and five year old children. These programs are based on the developmental stages of young children. We welcome families of any race/ethnicity, as well as children with special needs. Algonquin Preschool is staffed with state-approved, educated, caring adults who nurture and encourage the children to explore, experiment and develop skills at their own pace. Algonquin Preschool provides a relaxed, friendly atmosphere for a positive learning experience.

Algonquin Preschool is a non-profit organization operated by a 7-person Board of Directors. The Board of Directors consists of Algonquin Preschool parents, Members of the Congregational Church, and community members. The preschool is located in the educational area of the Congregational Church of Algonquin at 109 Washington Street in Algonquin, Illinois, is licensed by the Illinois DCFS and meets all life-safety codes.

Adjusting to Preschool

In the first few weeks of preschool you will see your child go through many adjustments. Your child may experience some apprehension even though he/she seems eager to "go to school". This is normal and with support and encouragement your child will overcome this and have a wonderful school year.

The first few days of school will consist of abbreviated class times, some parent attendance, partial class attendance, and gradual lengthening of class time to ease the transition into full class time.

Arrival/Departure

The south entrance to the church is the only entrance to be used by preschoolers and their parents. You are welcome to walk your child to his/her classroom or use the drive-through option (see Drive-Through).

Your child will be released only to those persons indicated by you. Should a special circumstance arise and you wish for your child to be released to an individual not on your list, this information must be conveyed to the staff in writing or by phone prior to the time of departure. Staff members may request to see a driver's license for verification of the individual(s) identification if any doubt exists.

You must sign your child in/out of preschool every day. The sign in/out book is located in the entry way on a table by the glass doors. If you are using the drive thru a teacher will bring the sign in out sheet to you.

Book Orders

Scholastic book orders will be offered throughout the school year. The preschool earns points from the orders to purchase books and equipment for the preschool. There is no obligation for you to order.

Calendar

A school year calendar will be provided to you at Meet Your Teacher Day. A monthly classroom calendar will be sent home monthly. Please keep the calendars in a convenient location to remind you of upcoming activities.

Car Pools

In mid-September parents will complete a form indicating their car pool arrangements. Car pools are not mandatory and Algonquin Preschool does not require or form car pools. Many parents find a car pool to be helpful and convenient for transporting their child to and from school.

Communication with Parents

Staff members communicate informally with parents daily at arrival and departure times. Notes containing important information will be clipped to your child's school bag. A newsletter from the director will be sent home in your child's school bag at the beginning of each month. A bulletin board is located just inside the preschool hallway entrance to display information pertaining to preschool-age children

Should a concern arise, a staff member will contact you immediately. Likewise, we request that you alert your child's teacher(s) should you have a question or concern. You may contact our directors at any time. They are available during school hours at 847-658-2232. You may also contact the preschool office via email at algpreschool@yahoo.com.

Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in late January/early February. We offer a second conference at the end of the school year if a parent would like one.

DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY

We believe children learn best in a safe and positive environment. We focus on developmentally appropriate expectations and redirection is the cornerstone of our discipline. Children are taught the rules and expectations of the classroom and teachers guide children to be successful.

Discipline

All staff members will understand fully and sign the following published discipline policy. Rules at Algonquin Preschool are made for the safety of our students. Usually a gentle, positive reminder of what is expected is all that is necessary to gain a child's cooperation. Should a child's challenging behavior continue after a reminder or two, the child is redirected into another activity.

Challenging behavior-any **repeated pattern** of behavior that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with the optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults.

- A. Parents will be promptly be informed of any challenging behavior.
- B. If a repeated pattern of behavior is observed parents will be expected to meet with the teacher to discuss the issue (s).
- C. If the behavior continues a behavior support plan will created by program staff, parents/guardians, and a qualified professional resource.
- D. The behavior support plan will be developmentally and culturally appropriate.
- E. The expectation is that the behavior plan will be followed at home and at school.
- F. If all resources are exhausted and it is agreed that the center is not fit for the child, a transition plan will be designed to help the child and family transition to another program. The plan will include communication with the new program to help support a smooth transition.
- G. Our goal is that no child will be transitioned to another program.

Dress Code

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes so they can be comfortable during their active school day and not worry about getting too dirty. Please take into consideration the enthusiasm with which your child may display during art or other messy activities and dress your child accordingly. Children should dress appropriately for the weather as they go outside each day (weather permitting) to play.

Jelly shoes, sandals, slippery dress shoes and flip flops do not fit securely on the foot and can be dangerous. Sneakers and athletic shoes are much more safe and appropriate. Label all outerwear and boots. If your child wears shoe-boots, please send a separate pair of shoes for your child to wear in the classroom for his/her safety and comfort.

Drive-Thru

You may choose to use this option at any time during the school year. You simply drive onto the south driveway and a staff member will meet your car and assist your child into the school. In mid-September each family is assigned a car identification number to display at pick-up time. You simply drive onto the south driveway, display your assigned car identification number, and a staff member will assist your child into your car.

The Algonquin Preschool Directors may require pick up and drop off to be done through the drive thru only.

Driveway Safety Rules

1. All children must exit the vehicle from the right side of the vehicle only.
2. Do not pull onto the driveway until the sidewalk is clear of all pedestrians.
3. Do not pull onto the driveway until the entire length of your vehicle can clear the sidewalk.
4. Always hold your child's hand until he/she has safely entered the building or your vehicle.
5. Do not ever allow your child to walk on the driveway.

Developmental Screening

We believe all children birth through 5 should be screened with the purpose of identifying of identifying special needs. Parents have the option to have their child(ren) screened annually. All results are shared with parents and additional resources are given as needed. The purpose of the screenings is to identify any special needs at an early age in order to provide support to the children and parents. We will provide authorization forms and notify parents when the screenings will occur. We encourage all parents to take advantage of the screenings.

Enrollment

To enroll in the 3's class, your child must be 3 years of age when they begin attending Algonquin Preschool. To enroll in the 4's/5's class, your child must be 4 years of age by September 1 of that year.

A non-refundable registration fee and form must be submitted. Yearly personal history, medical report and all state-required forms must be completed prior to the first day of school. Your child may not attend until all of the required forms are on file.

Family Involvement

Parents are welcome to volunteer in various ways. A few examples would be; make playdough, read a story, share a talent, help with special projects, go on a walk with the class, and chaperone on a park visit. We offer several family events throughout the school year. A few examples of the events are; Family Fun Night, Spring Fling, Mom's & Dad's Day, field trips, and Winter Holiday Parties.

Fees

Registration Fee: non-refundable fee due at registration

Activity Fee: covers accidental insurance and a part of field trip costs.

Field Trips

Curriculum-related field trips are included in our program. These excursions will take place within close proximity to Algonquin Preschool. Children may be transported by school bus or the destination will be within walking distance. Parents may be invited to accompany or meet their child on a field trip.

Our liability insurance policy covers all educational opportunities outside of our facility, including year-end picnics. Due to insurance limitations, siblings are prohibited on buses.

First Aid and Emergency Procedures

Algonquin Preschool staff members are certified in CPR each year. The director and several other staff members are also certified in first aid.

The staff will follow these procedures in case of an emergency:

1. Minor Accident: For a minor cut or bump, first aid is administered and the parents are notified at the end of the session. Exception: Bumps or injuries to the head that require first aid are reported immediately.
2. Serious Accident: For a more serious injury, bump or cut, first aid is administered and the parents are notified immediately. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, an ambulance will be called and a staff member will accompany the child to an immediate-care facility.
3. Emergency Situations: For severe bleeding, unconsciousness, broken bone, stopped breathing, etc., first aid is administered, 911 will be called and parents will be notified immediately.

A written report of all serious accidents and emergencies is kept on file in the preschool office. Any expenses incurred under 2 and 3 above which are in addition to the medical coverage provided by Algonquin Preschool are the responsibility of the child's family.

Fundraisers

Algonquin Preschool conducts fundraisers throughout the school year. Your participation is encouraged, but not required. The money raised is used to offset the cost of field trips, purchase equipment, supplies and to make improvements to the school.

Handwashing

DCFS requires all children to properly wash their hands before entering their classroom.

Health

One of our responsibilities is to nurture the well-being of the children. Please respect the other preschool families and keep your child home if he/she has:

Diarrhea	Pinkeye	Spots or Rash
Fever	Runny Nose	Vomiting
Persistent Cough		

Children with any of the above symptoms/conditions are not allowed to attend school. Please notify the office if you are keeping your child home due to illness. A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before coming to school.

Please call the director immediately if your child develops one of the childhood communicable diseases. The director will immediately inform the other parents of the possibility of exposure to the disease.

The staff will not administer any prescription or over-the-counter medications to students. Severe allergy concerns, insect stings, asthma, etc. must be discussed with the classroom teachers and director prior to the first day of school. Epi Pens and emergency medications will be kept in a secure place in the child's classroom.

Illness

Any child in attendance who becomes ill or has not fully recovered from an illness, shall be immediately isolated from the class. Parents will be advised to remove the child from the school as soon as possible.

Insurance Coverage

Algonquin Preschool carries liability insurance in accordance with state guidelines.

Late Pick- Up Policy

Please call the preschool office if you will be late to pick-up your child as young children may become anxious if you are not prompt. Should you be late without notifying the school you will be charged \$1 per minute. If after 30 minutes we are unable to reach you, then we will contact an approved pick person. If one hour passes and we have not be notified or able to contact you/an approved pick up person we will notify the Algonquin Police Department.

Newsletter

The director will compose a newsletter at the beginning of each month that will be sent home via email. The newsletter will contain pertinent information of past and future activities.

Release of Personal Information

Information pertaining to the admission, progress, health or discharge of a child shall be confidential and limited to staff members as designated by the director or by the Department of Children and Family Services. This information will not be disclosed to others without written permission by a child's parent/guardian.

Religious Observations

There will be no formal religious observance or instruction. Casual reference or celebration of religious holidays may occur.

School Bags

It is recommended that each student bring a school bag/backpack each day. Be sure to label your child's school bag/backpack. The preschool will supply a large clip to attach to your child's school bag. This clip is to remain on your child's bag at all times and will be used to send home tuition envelopes and important notes. You may use this clip to return the tuition envelope, send notes to your child's teacher, etc. Please watch for anything attached to the clip and read immediately.

School Closings

Should the need to cancel school on any given day due to weather conditions, a building problem, or other situation, the preschool staff will call you as soon as possible. School closings will also be posted on the website at www.algonquinpreschool.org.

We closely follow D300 school closing schedule for snow days. On "**Cold Days**" we will use our discretion on whether or not to hold class. Since we do offer a drive thru we feel we can keep the preschool open on cold days. **Due to the way our calendar is set up, we are unable to make up snow/cold days.**

Security

The preschool entrance will be locked at 9:10 a.m. and 12:40 p.m. and unlocked at 11:20 a.m. and 2:50 p.m. If you will be arriving late, please call the office so a staff member can open the door for you.

Snacks and Special Treats

Parents are encouraged to send a nutritious snack with their child every school day. The health department requires snacks to be pre-packaged. Please put your child's snack in a labeled container. Lunch boxes work well.

Special treats/trinkets may be brought in to celebrate a birthday or special occasion in your child's life. Treats should be pre-packaged and individually wrapped and will be sent home with your child's classmates. Please do not send in balloons as they are a safety hazard.

Start/Dismissal Times

Your child's preschool session begins at 9:00 a.m. or 12:30 p.m.

Please wait in the entrance area until a staff member opens the door to greet you.

Your child's preschool session ends at 11:30 a.m. or 3:00 p.m.

Please arrive at 11:25 a.m. or 2:55 p.m. to pick-up your child at his/her classroom and sign out.

Please call the preschool office if you will be late to pick-up your child as young children may become anxious if you are not prompt. Should you be late without notifying the school you will be charged \$5.

Tuition

Tuition is due the 10th day of every month beginning August 10th through April 10. A tuition envelope will be sent home each month attached to your child's school bag.

Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, all remaining tuition payments must be made in cash or a bank cashier check. Arrangements can be made for a 12-month payment plan. If a financial crisis occurs in your family causing hardship in making your tuition payment, please contact the office. Efforts will be made to arrange a payment plan that works within your situation.

Tuition Contract and Governing Rules

A tuition contract, which includes all policies pertaining to tuition payments, must be signed by a parent/guardian prior to the first day of school. These policies are listed below:

1. Tuition is due on the first day of each month, August through April.
2. If a tuition payment is not received by the 10th of the month, a \$10 late fee is charge. This late fee will continue to be charged each month until the account is paid in full.
3. Any tuition account 60 days past due will be turned over to S&S Financial Services, an accounts receivable management company.

4. Monthly tuition payments are calculated by first determining a per session cost. This cost is then multiplied by the total number of sessions for the school year. This factor is then divided by 9 (the number of tuition payments due each year).
5. There will be no refund for school closings due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances.
6. If your child enrolls part way through a month, tuition for that month only will be pro-rated based on the number of sessions remaining in that month.
7. If your child is absent for an entire month due to serious illness, half the tuition for that month must be paid to hold your child's space in the class.
- 8. If your child is absent for part or all of a month due to an illness or an extended vacation, full tuition must be paid that month.**
9. All requests for special consideration regarding long-term absences must be made in writing 14 days prior to the beginning of the absence.
10. Notification must be given in writing 14 days prior to withdrawal from school.
11. Tuition for sessions attended prior to withdrawal in a given month will be pro-rated for that month only.
12. Registration fee is refundable only if your child dis-enrolls to attend a facility which serves the needs of a special medical condition of your child.
13. Activity fee will be pro-rated if your child enrolls after January 1 of the current school year.

Sibling Discount

If you have more than one child attending Algonquin Preschool during the same school year, 5% will be taken off the second child's tuition.

Full Payment Discount

A 5% discount will be taken off your total tuition if you pay the year's tuition in full. The payment must be made by September 10th.

Visitors

Algonquin Preschool encourages parents to observe and participate in their child's preschool experience. We have an open door policy.

Year-End Picnic

The last day of school is celebrated at Towne Park. You are invited to bring a lunch and enjoy the last day of school playing and spending time with your child's classmates, teachers and friends.