



A Preschool Enrichment Program
of the City of Walnut Creek

Parent Handbook



Shadelands Art Center
111 N. Wiget Lane
Walnut Creek, CA
(925) 943-5846
communityarts.org/preschool

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Contact Information

Center for Community Arts - Shadelands Art Center

Community Arts Preschool

111 N. Wiget Lane
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Main: (925) 943-5846
Fax: (925) 988-9907
Email: preschool@communityarts.org

Community Arts Preschool - Class Locations

Civic Park

1395 Civic Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(corner of Broadway and Civic Dr.)

Shadelands

111 N. Wiget Lane
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
(Ygnacio Valley Rd. / N. Wiget Ln)

Heather Farm

500 N. San Carlos Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
(located in Heather Farm Park)

Preschool Administrative Staff

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Welcome to Community Arts Preschool!



Dear Parents:

Welcome to Community Arts Preschool! We strive for our preschool to be an exciting, creative place to grow and learn for you and your child. We look forward to getting to know your family over the next nine months and beyond. Our preschool is the foundation for a broader pathway of learning and creative growth in the Walnut Creek community.

Community Arts Preschool is a play-based, child-centered enrichment program where children are encouraged to explore, discover, and create based on their interests and needs. You may often hear us refer to play as an integral part of our preschool and your child's learning. We believe that learning is active and participatory. Our classrooms are set up as environments that are conducive to your child's learning and creative interests. Our preschool provide a balanced, integrated early childhood and arts curriculum in which children's emerging ideas and interests play a vital part in our planning. Through play, children are learning, growing, and experiencing the world around them from many different perspectives.

This handbook serves as a tool for you to refer to as the school year progresses. In this handbook, you'll find our goals for our program as well as our policies and procedures that help our program run smoothly. We have an open door policy and are always available to you for questions, comments, and suggestions. We welcome your participation in our preschool activities from volunteering in the classroom to attending our community events.

Community Arts Preschool is truly a special place for young children with a tradition of providing quality early childhood education programs to the community. Our efforts over the next nine months will be directed at furthering that tradition and creating an exciting initial experience with school for your child.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maile Ogasawara". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Maile Ogasawara
Program Manager
Center for Community Arts

About Our Program

Community Arts Preschool is a preschool enrichment program of Center for Community Arts. Our preschool is a developmental early childhood program inspired by Reggio Emilia practices and encourage child centered, play-based learning. Our teachers educate the whole child through integrated curricula where children's emerging ideas and interests play a vital part in our planning. Our program offers a foundation for meaningful, experiential and creative arts-based learning. Children will experience learning in an inclusive environment – where they can feel safe making mistakes as well as experiencing the joy in success.

Community Arts Preschool has a long history in the Walnut Creek community, previously known as Fine Arts Preschool. This program is provided through the City of Walnut Creek's Arts and Recreation Department. Community Arts Preschool is a part-time, recreational preschool enrichment program, which is not required to be licensed by the State. The Department of Social Services, Child Care Licensing exempts any preschool program, offered by a city recreation department, providing that it is not childcare. Community Arts Preschool provides a safe, nurturing environment that promotes the social, emotional, intellectual and physical development of every child.

Program Goals

Community Arts Preschool will:

- Provide appropriate learning experiences through play and a balance of teacher facilitated and self-directed activities that contribute to the needs of children in all areas of development: social, emotional, physical, and cognitive
- Create meaningful arts-based experiences for children as a basis for developing learning skills and concepts
- Facilitate learning opportunities in an environment in which children are free to develop through concrete experiences and take responsibility for their own choices
- Recognize every child as being unique, valuing their emerging ideas and individual efforts, along with their need to learn, explore and discover at their own pace
- Enhance a positive self-image, a sense of self-worth and self-direction in each child
- Foster responsibility, respect, empathy, and care for the environment
- Value the diversity of the community we serve and maintain open communication and understanding with the families in our community

Please note that children must be of age by September 1 of the year that they are entering our preschool program. Our program is committed to supporting children of all abilities and developmental stages. If needed, we will work with parents to help select one of our preschool locations that best serves their child's needs.

Community Arts Preschool Locations

Community Arts Preschool at Civic Park is a multi-age, hands-on, play-based program using developmentally appropriate practices to encourage and respect students' interests that uses individual learning styles. Through an integrated curriculum, each child will grow in all learning domains: language and literacy skills, mathematics and science, social studies, social and emotional development and the visual arts. Located in the heart of downtown Walnut Creek, our preschool at Civic Park embraces its urban environment as part of the curriculum.

Community Arts Preschool at Civic Park offers two Mixed Age programs and operates four days a week throughout the year. All classes are half-day (3 hours), morning or afternoon.

Community Arts Preschool at Shadelands is an arts-based, developmental program that focuses on the whole child using the three major preschool domains: social/emotional, physical and cognitive development. Through an integrated approach, each child's creativity and learning is encouraged using visual arts, music, movement, and the dramatic arts as the foundation of instruction.

Community Arts Preschool at Shadelands offers three age-specific programs and operates five days a week throughout the year. All classes are half-day (3 hours), morning or afternoon.

Community Arts Preschool at Heather Farm is a play-based program with an emphasis in the arts. Students develop social and emotional skills through hands-on, personal and interactive experiences while cognitive development is fostered through project-based learning in a language rich environment. Heather Farm Preschool is uniquely located in Walnut Creek's beautiful Heather Farm Park. The environment is truly the "third educator" for our young learners at Heather Farm as nature walks and outdoor play is a regular part of the curriculum. The natural environment offers children multiple entry points for interest driven developmental learning including investigations of life in nature, gardening, and wildlife observations.

Community Arts Preschool at Heather Farm offers two programs (Twos and Mixed Age) and operates five days a week throughout the year. All classes are half-day (3 hours) mornings only.

Community Arts Preschool Age Groups

Multi-Age (Civic Park and Heather Farm)

(36 – 57 months)

Our Multi-Age classes offer numerous activities to enhance your child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Starting at 36 months, children entering our Multi-Age classes are immersed in collaborative play and learning as they continue to develop and deepen their language skills. Children interact with their peers, creating connections and fostering their social/emotional development. Experiences with science, social studies, and early math, reading, and writing skills are introduced alongside their emerging ideas and interests and are further deepened in small group learning stations. **Please note:** *Our Mixed Age Classes requires that children be potty-trained at the time of enrollment.*

Twos (Heather Farm and Shadelands)

(24 – 35 months)

For many young children entering our Twos class, this will be their first experience in a school setting without their parents accompanying them. Emphasis is placed on social/emotional development, helping to guide each child through separation anxiety as they become an independent member of the group. Learning is experiential at this stage and includes participation in sensory motor learning stations, a variety of arts integrated activities, manipulatives, and tactile experiences. With developmentally age appropriate learning centers, the children receive hands on experience in each domain of learning.

Threes (Shadelands)

(36 – 47 months)

Our Threes classes are the sequential connection between our Twos classes and our Fours classes. Children are encouraged to explore their creativity through arts while developing strong peer connections and building independent skills. Our project-based curriculum progresses as the children’s emerging thoughts and ideas develop within the group. Continuing our emphasis on social/emotional development is key as we prepare children for our Fours classes.

Fours (Shadelands)

(48 – 57 months)

The Fours classes helps children prepare for Kindergarten or Transitional Kindergarten programs in the coming year. Our curriculum is centered around creative problem solving and self-expression through the arts that includes a “Studio Day” once a week. Projects are driven by the child’s interest and guided by our teachers to provide age appropriate challenges in art, language, math, science, and pre-kindergarten skills with growing challenges throughout the year to promote Kindergarten readiness. Our language rich program helps children to expand their vocabulary, deepening both language and early reading and writing skills. **Please note:** *The Fours class at Shadelands requires that children be potty-trained at the time of enrollment.*

Starting Preschool

Registration

Deposit

A non-refundable \$75 deposit is due at the time of registration. Payment can be made credit cards only.

Tuition / Payment

Tuition payment can be made monthly by payment plan or in full at the time of registration. The monthly payment plan includes nine payments and must be set up with payment by credit card only. Payments will automatically be charged on the first of each month beginning August 1 and a receipt will be emailed to the primary contact.

Scholarships

Financial assistance is available on an as needed basis. To apply for a scholarship, visit our website (www.communityarts.org) and click on "Financial Aid." Please submit your scholarship application together with your preschool application.

Late registration

Class fees will be pro-rated for late registration. A letter detailing the revised payment plan will be sent by email. Pro-rated tuition is based on the number of preschool days for which the student is registered. New students will not be accepted between April 1 and the end of the school year.

Transfers

Students will not be transferred from one class to another after October 15.

Withdrawal Fee

If you wish to withdraw, please complete the Preschool Withdrawal Form and submit to rlopez@communityarts.org by the 15th of the month prior to the month you wish to withdraw. No refunds of credits will be offered for payments that have already been processed. We cannot provide a refund or credit for non-attendance or lack of student participation.

Summer Preschool Withdrawals must be received by May 15 (Session 1) and June 15 (Session 2) if you no longer wish to attend preschool for the summer session. Withdrawals after these dates will result in full payment for each summer session.

School Year Preschool Withdrawals must be received by July 15 if you no longer wish to attend preschool for the school year starting in August. Withdrawals after the 15th of the month will result in full payment for the next month of class.

Preschool Policies and Procedures

Drop-Off / Pick-Up

Morning Classes

Drop-off is between 8:30 am - 8:40 am (Doors are locked between 8:45 am and 9:00 am)

Pick-up is between 11:30 am - 11:40 am

Afternoon Classes

Drop-off is between 12:30 pm - 12:40 pm (Doors are locked between 12:45 pm and 1:00 pm)

Pick-up is between 3:30 pm - 3:40 pm

Arrival Transition Time

Most children socialize and participate best when not feeling divided between the parent and teacher. In most instances, we ask that parents leave after a short (10 minute) “settling in” time. Every child and parent handles separation in his or her own way and our teachers will work with families through this process. This can be an exciting, as well as difficult, time for the parent and child. We always treat transitions with sensitivity and kindness.

Signing In and Out

It is required that children be signed in and out of school each day they attend by their designated parent / guardian. Please sign in and out using your full name. Each classroom has its own designated sign-in area. Children in all classrooms will be picked up in their classroom and signed out in the same location unless otherwise posted.

Arriving On Time

We expect children to arrive on time for class to best enable your child to participate fully and set a positive example and his / her first school experience. Consistency is important for both individual students and our class community. By arriving on time, children will be able to maximize their learning experiences and ensure enough time for classroom activities and make connections with their friends.

Pick-Up Procedures

Our teachers will open their door to initiate the start of pick-up. At this time, parents can enter the classroom and sign their child out. If you would like to talk to your child’s teacher, please wait until all the children have left. If it is urgent, let one of the teachers know you would like them to contact you.

Please note that only people who have been listed on your Emergency Form as “allowed to pick-up” will be able to pick-up your children. If someone else is picking up your child, you must notify your teacher ahead of time to advise them of this change. We will not let your child go home with any adult who has not been authorized by you. All adults that are not listed on your emergency form must provide picture ID before your child will be released. If you forget to notify us that someone other than an authorized person is picking up your child, we will call you to get a verbal authorization before we release the child.

Late Pick-up Policy

Children are expected to be picked up on time. If you are running late or stuck in traffic, please call either the registration desk (925) 943-5846 or your child's preschool classroom.

Parents / caregivers that are late to pick up their child will be issued a courtesy reminder for the first and second late occurrence (for pick-up 10 minutes late or more). On the third late pick-up, a \$50 fee is charged to your account. Every additional late pick-up will result in an additional \$50 fee for each occurrence.

Appropriate Clothing

Washable art / play clothes are the recommended school attire. This is a hands-on program and we do get dirty! We will provide smocks / aprons for children during class however this does not guarantee that your child will not get paint on their clothing. Please be mindful of seasonal weather changes. We suggest layering clothing as needed. We also recommend velcro or slip-on shoes with non-skid soles for the best traction; please no flip flops, crocs, or sandals.

Remember to put sunscreen on your child before coming to school. Children usually spend up to 30 minutes a day outside, weather permitting.

Please label your child's belongings. We ask that you provide one or two sets of labeled clothing. Please bring this on the first day of school and replace sets of clothes as needed. We will send all soiled / wet clothes home on a daily basis.

Personal Belongings (toys and other items)

We request that children do not bring toys from home to school unless there is an opportunity for sharing time. Teachers will let you know in advance about sharing days.

Your child can bring a "lovey" (Eg. special blanket, stuffed animal, etc.) or photo to school that they can hold while they transition from home to school. This item can be kept in their backpack or cubby and retrieved whenever they need it. Please remember to put his/her name on it and remind your child that comfort items brought from home should stay in the cubby during school hours and only retrieved when needed.

Please do not put any food items in your child's backpack. Food allergies are common in school. While children may not like to share toys, they willingly share food from their backpacks.

Diapering and Toileting

Children enrolled our Mixed Age classes and our Fours classes are required to be fully toilet trained upon entry to preschool.

Children must be able to:

- Ask to use the restroom as needed
- Pull down and pull up their own underwear and pants
- Wipe, flush, and wash hands

Lead Teachers and Co-Teachers will assist children in our Twos and Threes classes with their toileting needs. With diapering and toileting, our goal is to:

- Support children's toilet learning and growing independence
- Meet children's individual toileting needs, including self-help skills such as undressing and dressing
- Maintain hygiene and safety, including handwashing and use of gloves
- Appropriately supervise children when they are using the toilet
- Recognize when children no longer require adult assistance

Learning to use the toilet is an important step in development for young children. We will work with you throughout this process to meet your child's diapering and toileting needs as they develop throughout the year. If your child is fairly independent using the toilet, we will encourage them to do as much on their own and help as needed. If your child is in diapers, we will change soiled diapers as needed unless we feel your child does not feel comfortable or safe having us do so. Continuity between home and school is an important part of making this a successful experience for everyone.

As your child begins the potty-training process, please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for this stage.

Suggested clothing includes:

- Loose clothing that is easy to pull on and off
- Bottoms with elastic waistbands

Please do not dress your child in the following:

- Belts
- Onesies
- Long dresses

Snack

We foster a family style atmosphere during snack time, making snack more conducive to active socialization and more time effective. Children will assist in set-up and clean-up. From time to time they will help with preparation and serving. Snack is not intended to be a meal; your child should already have had breakfast or lunch before arriving at school. Please note that we serve only vegetarian foods to children.

Children that do not want to eat during snack will be encouraged to try something from snack and to have some water to drink. Children will never be forced to eat nor privileges be withheld because they do not want to eat.

Snack for Community Arts Preschool at Civic Park

Parents provide a healthy snack for their children every school day. Water is always available for the children to drink. Please remember that this is a snack, not a full meal – large portions tend to be overwhelming as children have about 20 minutes to eat.

Snack for Community Arts Preschool at Shadelands and Heather Farm

Our programs at Shadelands and Heather Farm have snack cooperatives. Snacks for the week are provided by one family on a rotational basis. Parents are asked to take turns during the school year to bring nutritious snacks and paper products for the class (two to three times per child over a nine-month period).

We will contact families who are scheduled the first week of classes ahead of time. The complete snack schedule (August – December) will be emailed to parents. Parents are responsible for changing dates with another family if they cannot provide snack on their designated dates. Each family will receive a class list with phone numbers at the beginning of the school year. Please notify the office of any change in snack dates – we kindly ask that you do not involve teachers in this process. Feel free to contact the Preschool Registrar if you have questions.

If your child has a specific diet restriction, you may provide a separate snack for your child that will be stored in our kitchen. Please label your snacks with your child's name.

When it is your week to provide snack, please keep the following in mind:

- Our classes are peanut and all tree nuts free zones. Please check and make sure there is no trace of peanut labeled in the packaging of the snack.
- Snack must be brought to school in its original packaging.
- Bring 5 oz paper cups for the water and napkins with your snack, plus any needed utensils (e.g. plastic spoons for apple sauce) or paper plates, bowls/cups (e.g. for yogurt, dip, or cereal and milk). Please bring enough snacks, cups, and napkins for the entire class and teachers (refer to class list for numbers).
- Please wash and cut up all fresh fruits and vegetables except those that will turn brown easily such as, apples, pears and bananas. Teachers will cut them up just before snack time.
- We offer a refrigerator for snacks that need to be refrigerated.

Suggestions for healthy snacks:

- Cut up raw vegetables and dip or hummus
- Fresh fruit and yogurt
- Cut up melons and banana muffins
- Crackers (baked) and cheese for “sandwiches” and seedless red grapes (cut in half for toddlers)
- Yogurt and pretzel sticks
- String cheese and green grapes (cut in half for toddlers)
- Orange sections and bran muffins
- Dried fruit and crackers
- Popcorn (not for toddlers) and sliced apples
- Celery sticks, cream cheese, and rice cakes
- Apple sauce and mini-sandwiches
- Cubed cheese, bread and butter, and sliced watermelon
- Bagels and cream cheese, and sliced nectarines
- Chex mix and sliced peaches
- Strawberries, and blueberry muffins
- Pasta salad, banana bread and sliced pears
- Fruit salad and whole grain, sugarless fruit bars
- Fig Newtons, wheat thins, and sliced melon

Please do not bring the following snacks:

- Candy
- Potato chips
- Cookies, cupcakes or other sweets
- Peanut butter or peanut or other nut products
- Individually wrapped / packaged foods
- Highly processed foods or foods high in sodium or sugar
- Meats (“Lunchables”, packaged meats, etc.)
- Foods that contain chocolate

Food Allergies

We are aware that many children have food sensitivities and allergies. Please help us protect your child by identifying allergies and sensitivities on your child’s emergency form. We develop a working list from your emergency medical information that is posted in every classroom, kitchen and our preschool registration desk. Please provide this information at least one week before school begins, especially if your child has allergies. **Our classes are NUT-FREE zones – we do not allow nuts or their by-products.**

For younger children, any fruit, such as grapes, need to be halved to prevent choking. If fruit is canned, please be sure it is labeled “in its own juices”.

Ideas and suggestions about snack are greatly appreciated. Please contact your child’s teacher if you have any questions.

Celebrations

Birthdays

It is our custom to celebrate birthdays at school. We ask parents to bring popsicles as treats to celebrate birthdays - please speak directly with your teacher for guidelines around birthday celebrations and questions that you have regarding special birthday treats. Following the same guidelines as our snack policies, please do not bring birthday treats such as candies, cookies, and cupcakes.

Holiday Celebrations

Traditions and celebrations are a vital part of growing up. Our teachers aim to provide a wide variety of seasonal and cultural experiences for our children. We invite families to share their cultural traditions and holidays with their child's class as part of our learning. Please coordinate with your Lead Teacher if you would like to do so. We respect families' wishes that their child not participate some holiday traditions, and we will do our best to accommodate your specific requests.

Our teachers will provide updates in their monthly newsletters to share how their class will celebrate upcoming holidays (E.g. Halloween, Valentine's Day, etc.) in class in their own special way.

Due to the number of activities and classes that are taking place at each of our sites, we cannot accommodate parties or gathering outside of class times in our facilities.

Class Celebrations

Our teachers invite parents to join us for in-class celebrations in the winter and in the spring as we wrap up the school year. Details about class celebrations will be sent out by our teachers in their monthly newsletters and / or emails to families.

Class celebrations are an opportunity for each class to come together to celebrate the learning and achievements of the children. These events give our parents the opportunity to see their child in their class environment, interacting with their teachers and classmates. We also encourage parents to use these opportunity to engage with other parents in class. Most importantly, class celebrations allow children to share their classroom with their parents – a space where they feel safe taking risks (such as singing and dancing in front of an audience) and are familiar with and proud of!

Community Events

Community Arts Preschool and Center for Community Arts offer a variety of community based events throughout the year. Community events include our annual Preschool Carnival at Heather Farm Preschool, Youth Art Show, Family Art Days, and fundraising events such as Family Yoga, Family Music, and Wake Up and Dance.

Community events are an opportunity for our preschool families to come together as a whole school community. Our larger community events include other community members and incorporate various arts activities which we encourage our families to take part in.

Please see our Preschool Events Calendar for dates and times. Additional information about these events will be shared with our preschool community via email or monthly newsletters.

Positive Guidance

Our teachers assist your children as they develop socio-emotional skills by using positive guidance. We will work closely with you to come up with solutions for any difficult behaviors your child may be presenting. It is our goal to support children as they learn how to build self-control, and to keep every child in our program safe.

Our administrators, teachers, and assistant teachers will implement our child guidance policy and practices daily by:

- Planning for appropriate behavior through the environment by arranging furniture and other materials to encourage active learning and independence
- Planning daily scheduling that prevents boredom, waiting, hurriedness, with time to relax and enjoy activities
- Fostering a daily routine with ample opportunity for children to select activities and move between them at their own pace, and receive ample notice of transitions ahead of time
- Providing children with expectations that are clear, age-appropriate and applied in a consistent way
- Allowing children to participate in the establishment of rules, policies and procedures where appropriate and feasible
- Reinforcing positive behavior by recognizing children's positive actions
- Modeling appropriate behavior by being consistent with our program's expectations for children
- Redirecting children toward positive activities by interrupting a child's negative behavior and steering the child toward an acceptable substitute activity
- Teaching children new skills and encouraging them to discuss and resolve their conflicts on their own or with an adult's assistance when necessary rather than imposing an adult's solution on them
- Encouraging children to express their feelings in words and to resolve problems peacefully
- Working with parents to address children's difficulties in class and encouraging consistency in practices between home and our program
- Observing and documenting children's behavior
- Meeting with parents, keeping them informed of their children's behaviors, and documenting discussions with parents
- Assessing specialized support services if a child's behavior continues to be harmful to themselves or others. With written parental permission, we will refer the family for mental health counseling or other specialized services that can help address the child's behavior problems.

Additionally, in alignment with the Department of Early Education and Care regulations, our administrators, teachers, and assistant teachers at Community Arts Preschool are prohibited from:

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children
- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment
- Depriving children of meals or snack
- Using methods such as force feeding children, disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

In the event where a child's safety is at risk, supportive holding will be considered. The supportive hold will only be sustained long enough to remove a child from an unsafe environment or keep him or her from hurting themselves or others.

Supportive holding will be considered only in the following situations:

- The safety of the child, other children, or adults is at risk
- The child must be moved in order to be safely supervised
- The child demonstrates a sustained behavior that is highly disruptive and/or upsetting to other children necessitating moving the child
- The safety of the child and others demands immediate intervention
- All other possible interventions have been attempted prior to supportive holding

Hitting and Biting

Hitting and biting are common behaviors for young children that present health and safety concerns for others.

These behaviors can result from:

- Frustration or inability to communicate their needs
- Separation issues
- Insecurity
- Problems at home with siblings or parents
- Young children's developmental inability to self-regulate their emotions.

We will help your child to calm him or herself down if this occurs in class. If your child's behavior continues to be aggressive toward other children and/or teachers, and the child is unable to calm down with our help, we will move the child to a quiet area of the room so he/she can regain self-control in a non-threatening and non-humiliating way. A teacher will stay with your child while helping them calm down and talk about what has just occurred.

If we feel it is appropriate, we will call you to pick-up your child and take him/her home for the rest of that school day.

Standards of Behavior

For the enjoyment and safety of everyone, the City of Walnut Creek expects all participants and spectators to treat the people and facilities connected with the program with respect and abide by all rules and direction from the staff. We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone for failure to abide by these standards.

Health and Safety

Medical Information & Emergency Permission Form

Medical information, immunization records and emergency permission forms must be submitted before children attend school. **Parents are responsible for keeping their child's forms up to date throughout the school year.** Any changes in emergency contact numbers, authorizations for child pick-ups, and health / allergy conditions should be reported to the Preschool Coordinator and administration.

Medication Waiver

Please speak with our Preschool Coordinator and your child's teacher before or during the first week of school if your child needs to take medications or has severe allergies. DO NOT send medications of any kind to school without contacting the Preschool Supervisor first. A Medical Waiver and Release of Liability must be on file with our administration.

Health Exclusion Procedure

Control of communicable illness among the children in our program is a prime concern at our preschools. Procedures related to outbreaks of communicable illness in this program have been developed with the help of early education guidelines from the Center for Disease Control.

In order to protect the entire group of children, as well as your own child, we ask that parents assist us by keeping sick children at home if they are experiencing or have experienced any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours:

- Fever of 100° F (37.8° C) orally or 99° F (37.2° C) axially (under the arm). A child must be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to school
- Severe coughing, coughing up sputum, or discolored nasal drainage
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or upset stomach that has not subsided over the past 12 hours
- Unusual or explained loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache
- Any discharge or drainage from the eyes, nose, ears, or open sores/rashes
- Any rash with a fever or preceded by a fever

Children who become ill with any of these symptoms at school will be sent home. If your child is too sick to participate in active play, please keep them at home. We appreciate your cooperation with these procedures. Parents must provide an emergency contact person (listed on your emergency form) when your child is sick and you are not available. A health alert will be sent out whenever a communicable illness is diagnosed in your child's class.

Immunization Requirements

As of January 1, 2016, all children entering our program must provide proof of their up-to-date immunization records as per California State Law SB 277. Personal Belief Exemptions (PBE) are only valid if filed before January 1, 2016 with your current preschool program.

Please review the immunization guide on the next page or speak with our Program Coordinator or administration if you have any questions regarding immunization requirements.

GUIDE TO IMMUNIZATIONS REQUIRED FOR CHILD CARE OR PRESCHOOL



Requirements by Age at Entry and Later (Follow-up is required at every age checkpoint after entry.)

Vaccine	2–3 Months	4–5 Months	6–14 Months	15–17 Months	18 Months–5 Years
Polio (OPV or IPV)	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses
Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP or DTP)	1 dose	2 doses	3 doses	3 doses	4 doses
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)				1 dose on or after the 1st birthday	1 dose on or after the 1st birthday
Hib	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	1 dose on or after the 1st birthday	1 dose on or after the 1st birthday (only required for children less than 4 years, 6 months)
Hepatitis B (Hep B or HBV)	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses	3 doses
Varicella (chickenpox, VAR or VZV)					1 dose

INSTRUCTIONS:

To enter a child care center, day nursery, nursery school, family day care home, or development center, children must have received immunizations required by California law.

1. Parents must submit their child's immunization record as proof.
2. Copy the date of each vaccine onto the California School Immunization Record (Blue Card, CDPH-286).
3. Determine whether children meet requirements above.

ADMIT A CHILD UNCONDITIONALLY WHO:

- Is 18 months and older and has all immunizations required for their age, or
- Submits a personal beliefs exemption (PBE) filed at a prior California child-care facility for missing shot(s) and immunization records with dates for all required shots not exempted. The PBE must have been filed before January 1, 2016 and is only valid until entry to transitional kindergarten/ kindergarten. For complete details, see ShotsforSchool.org.
- Submits a licensed physician's written statement of a permanent medical exemption for missing shot(s) and immunization records with dates for all required shots not exempted.

ADMIT A CHILD CONDITIONALLY IF THE CHILD:

- Is under age 18 months, has received all immunizations required for age, but will have more required at next age checkpoint.
- Is missing a dose(s) in a series, but the next dose is not due yet (This means the child has received at least one dose in a series and the deadline for the next dose has not passed.) The child may not be admitted if the deadline has passed or the child has not yet received the 1st dose.
- Has a temporary medical exemption to certain vaccine(s) and has submitted an immunization record for vaccines not exempted. The statement must indicate which immunization(s) must be postponed and when the child can be immunized.

WHEN MISSING DOSES CAN BE GIVEN:

Missing Dose	Earliest Date After Previous Dose	Deadline After Previous Dose
Polio #2	6 weeks	10 weeks
Polio #3	6 weeks	12 months
DTP/DTaP #2, #3	4 weeks	8 weeks
DTP or DTaP #4	6 months	12 months
Hib #2	2 months	3 months
Hep B #2	1 month	2 months
Hep B #3 (under age 18 months)	2 months after 2nd dose and at least 4 months after 1st dose	12 months after 2nd dose and at least 4 months after 1st dose
Hep B #3 (age 18 months and older)	2 months after 2nd dose and at least 4 months after 1st dose	6 months after 2nd dose and at least 4 months after 1st dose

DO NOT ADMIT A CHILD WHO:

Does not fit one of the prior categories. Refer parents to their physician with a written notice indicating which doses are needed.

FOLLOW-UP IS REQUIRED AFTER ADMISSION:

- At every age checkpoint above until all doses are received.
- If child was behind schedule and admitted **conditionally**.
- If child has a temporary medical exemption.

Maintain a list of unimmunized children (exempted or admitted conditionally), so they can be excluded quickly if an outbreak occurs. Notify parents of the deadline for missing doses. Review records every 30 days until all required doses are received.

Questions? Visit ShotsForSchool.org or contact your local health department (bit.do/immunization).

Accidents / Medical Emergencies

Simple injuries such as scratches will be cared for by our teaching staff. Teachers will wash cuts and scrapes with soap and water and will apply a band aid if needed. We do not apply any forms of medication to cuts or scrapes. In the case that your child has a simple injury, teachers will speak directly to the parent about the injury or will send an “ouchie” form home.

In case of a medical emergency, parents will be notified immediately. Appropriate medical treatment will be started and emergency services called. Preschool faculty and staff have current first aid / CPR certification. We encourage parents with children who have severe allergies or medical needs to confer with our Program Supervisor and child’s teacher before or during the first week of school.

Fire, Earthquake & Natural Disasters

In the event of a fire, earthquake or natural disaster, teachers and support staff will follow the Emergency Evacuation Procedures posted by classroom exits in each classroom. Children will take part in alternating fire and earthquake drills monthly throughout the year with their teachers. Emergency supplies will be located at each site.

Security Cameras

In an effort to promote increased safety for students, staff, and visitors, security cameras are employed in each of our preschool classrooms and outdoor spaces. These cameras are unmonitored, but access to recordings will be available solely to the Walnut Creek Police Department and City of Walnut Creek management personnel, as needed. Security camera footage is not generally available to program participants or members of the public.

Parent Involvement and Communication

Parent Communication

Email Communication

We communicate with our parents via email on a regular basis. Please be sure that we have your current email on file. If you change your email, please let our preschool registrar know.

If you would like us to add your spouse or another family member (like grandma or grandpa) to our email list, please email our Preschool Coordinator with your request and include your child's name in the email as our lists are organized by our students' names.

Daily Communication

Our teachers communicate with parents on a regular basis. We encourage parents to communicate with their teacher as well. We value clear and consistent communication between our parents, teachers, and staff – please do not hesitate to ask questions and to reach out for resources or information. Parents should feel free to email their teacher with any questions or concerns they might have.

Monthly Newsletters

Monthly newsletters with updates about your child's class and other important information will be emailed to parents via MailChimp. Monthly newsletters will share progress from the past month as well as what's to come for the upcoming month. We will share articles and events for our preschool families as well. Please do not mark these emails as spam as it will prevent you and others from receiving our monthly newsletters. Please keep us informed of any email changes.

Documentation

Each of our teachers will be using an online documentation blog to share our progress with activities and projects throughout the year. This blog will be hosted by Tumblr and is password protected and unsearchable on the web. If you prefer that your child's image not be included in our documentation blogs, please speak with your Lead Teacher.

Parent Participation

Parents are always welcome at our preschools. We encourage parents to participate in the classroom. Storytelling, reading a book, cooking projects, a special talent you would like to share (i.e. playing an instrument or sharing an aspect of your culture/family tradition) is a wonderful way to enhance our programs. We ask that you schedule extended visits ahead of time with your child's teacher and that you come prepared to participate in activities. Parents who would like to observe the classroom should contact our Program Supervisor to set up an appointment.

Parent Orientation / Open House

Once a year we hold a parents only orientation for new and returning families. Our Parent Orientation is held for our entire preschool community in the evening a week or two before classes begin for the school year. A drop-in Open House is typically held on Friday morning before classes begin. Students are invited to accompany their parents to the Open House to familiarize themselves with their classrooms. Information about both events will be sent out to all registered families.

Parent Conferences

Starting in February, Parent Conference sign-up sheets will be posted in the sign-in / out area in the classroom for our Mixed Age and Fours Programs. Conferences with your teacher are optional but recommended for children that are getting ready to transition into kindergarten. Conferences for all children can be arranged with your teacher throughout the school year. Our teachers will call individual conferences as needed and encourage you to do the same.

Parent Education

Parent education opportunities come up throughout the year. If you are interested in or have suggestions for parent education topics, please contact our Program Coordinator at preschool@communityarts.org.