



# Preschool Handbook

## 2026-2027

Washington County Family YMCA  
1709 N Shelby St  
Salem, IN 47167  
(812)883-9622

In Partnership With:  
Salem Community Schools  
West Washington School Corp.

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## **YMCA Mission Statement**

To put Christian Principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

### **Our Commitment To You**

We take our commitment to your family and your child very seriously at the Washington County Family YMCA Preschool. We value Christian principles, integrity and people above all things. We promise that our Preschool Team will give your child the very best quality preschool experience. We believe that it is our responsibility to assure that your child is safe, healthy and has FUN every day. We promise to provide a quality, play-based curriculum that aligns with current Indiana Department of Education learning standards. We, along side you, will support your child in learning and growing each and every day. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or suggestions please reach out to our Preschool Director:

Holly McDonald  
Email: [holly@wcfymca.org](mailto:holly@wcfymca.org)  
Phone: (812)883-9622



## **Payment Policy**

All preschool payments are processed via automatic draft. It is a requirement for participation that we have a current debit card, credit card or bank account on file. We offer multiple classes at different costs. You will be informed of the cost for your class upon enrollment. There are several options for financial assistance available. We urge you to apply for which ever assistance program aligns with the class you choose. We charge a fifty dollar semester fee upon enrollment and again in January. These fees helps cover supply and equipment costs in the classrooms. We understand that on occasion financial difficulties can occur. If you are experiencing difficulties, please reach out to the Preschool Director. We want to work with you to provide a quality experience for your child.

## **Open Door Policy**

We practice an open door policy at all of our preschool facilities. We welcome volunteers, and occasionally ask for parents to assist in our classrooms. If you are interested in visiting or volunteering in any of our classrooms, it is mandatory that you have a background check and fingerprints on file at the Washington County Family YMCA. You can stop by the front desk at the YMCA to complete a background check at no cost.

## **Inclement Weather**

The safety of your child is our priority. Please use your best judgement when transporting your child to and from school during inclement weather.

### *YMCA*

When Salem Schools are closed due to weather, our YMCA preschool classes will be canceled. If Salem Schools are on a 2 hour delay, the preschool morning classes at the YMCA will be on a ONE hour delay.

### *Bradie Shrum Elementary*

*Our Bradie Shrum preschool classrooms will follow the same schedule at the Salem Community School Corporation for weather delays, closures and make up snow days.*

### *West Washington*

*The West Washington preschool classroom will follow the West Washington School Corporation for weather delays, closures and snow make up days.*

## **Discipline Policy**

We recognize that as the child leaves the security of home and enters the care of others, there will be a period of adjustment for the parents, child, and the caregiver. Children are very adaptable and can adjust quickly to new situations if the proper guidance, self-confidence, and reassurance are given from both the parent and the teacher in a loving and caring manner.

We also recognize that the behavior patterns for a child in a home situation do not necessarily carry over into a group setting. The young child can become very frustrated at having to share attention with others. Adjusting to a new routine of activities with a new authority figure and new expectations can also be threatening to the child's sense of well-being.

It is also understood that the behavior acceptable for an individual may not be acceptable for a group of children in a classroom situation. It is a primary concern to handle this socialization process with gentleness and thoughtfulness and as individually as possible.

In the day to day activities of class, children will be disciplined in a reasonable, appropriate manner and in terms with which they can relate. Praise and encouragement for good behavior will be used instead of focusing upon the unacceptable behavior. Efforts will be made to refocus the child's attention on desirable activity rather than verbal correction for the undesirable behavior. Our preschool uses conscious discipline NOT corporal punishment.

Attention spans and skills will be carefully considered in planning the program so the children are not expected to perform skills too difficult or frustrating for their level of maturity. Every effort is made to help the children develop a feeling of self-worth and a positive attitude toward this home away from home.

When extenuating circumstances do arise, and a child does not respond to this type of correction, and an unacceptable activity becomes a persistent pattern of behavior, other steps will need to be taken.

1. Speak with the child privately to explain the problem and the expected and appropriate behavior.
2. Remove the child from the group and provide a quiet space to think about his/her behavior.
3. Call parents/guardians after working hours to explain the problem and work together to find practical solutions.
4. Call the parents at work. Possible 1-2 day suspension.
5. Conference with Teacher and Director. Possible Expulsion.

Our preschool does NOT support any form of corporal punishment. (Corporal Punishment is defined as physical punishment that is intended to cause physical pain to another person.) Spanking, smacking hands, etc. is never acceptable. It is unacceptable to shame, humiliate or frighten a child as a means of punishment. The teacher may use a voice of authority and respond with firmness as deemed appropriate by a situation. Often times, this is all that is required to correct behavior. Sometimes, a child may be upset by corrections to behavior. We are aware that children can be sensitive and assure you that your child will be warmly received and cared for with tenderness as he/she learns appropriate behaviors. The following is a general list of classroom guidelines that ensure that each child is treated fairly and courteously by his peers and that school property is respected and used appropriately.

1. No hitting or throwing objects, other than in structured game play. (Ie: baseball, basketball, toss and catch, etc.)
2. No abusive or inappropriate language. (cursing, name calling, etc.)
3. Putting hands on another person is not acceptable. (pushing, hitting, grabbing, wrestling, hugging, etc) These behaviors will be corrected firmly and promptly even if "just for fun".
4. No weapons (toys or otherwise) are allowed at school. This includes toy guns, knives, tanks, bows, etc.
5. Toys from home are not permitted, except on scheduled Show and Tell days. The YMCA assumes no responsibility for lost or damaged toys.

# **Non-Negotiable Behaviors**

The following behaviors are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated under any circumstance:

## **Causing Physical Harm to a Teacher or Child**

Any intentional act that results in physical harm to a teacher or child is unacceptable. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Actions that break the skin, cause abrasions, or result in inflammation.
- Hitting, kicking, biting, or any other form of physical aggression.

## **Causing Physical Harm to the Environment**

Destructive behavior toward the physical environment is prohibited. This includes:

- Breaking toys or materials intentionally.
- Flipping tables or chairs.
- Throwing items with the intent to cause harm or damage.

## **Eloping from the Classroom or Premises**

Leaving the classroom or the fenced-in area without permission poses a serious safety risk and is strictly prohibited. This includes:

- Exiting the classroom or learning space without a teacher or staff member.
- Leaving a fenced-in play area or any designated safe zone without supervision.
- Refusing to return to the classroom or designated area when prompted by teacher or staff person.

### Repeated Use of Verbally Aggressive Language

The use of verbally aggressive or threatening language directed toward teachers, children, or staff members is not permitted. This includes:

- Repetitive yelling or shouting in an aggressive manner.
- Repetitive use of inappropriate or offensive language.

### Responses to Non-Negotiable Behaviors

- Immediate intervention
- Guardians contacted
- Behavior Support plan
- Suspension or Dismissal

*\*\*All children will be sent home at the discretion of administration\*\**

### Preventative Measures

To reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of non-negotiable behaviors, the following measures will be implemented:

- Positive behavior reinforcement.
- Social-emotional learning activities.
- Clear communication of rules and expectations.
- Ongoing staff training on behavior management techniques, which include looking at the classroom environment.



# **Safe Conditions Policy**

The following steps will be taken to ensure that your child is safe while in our preschool program.

Children will be actively supervised with the required number of qualified adults. Staff will have completed a national criminal history check, consent form, drug screen, negative TB test, and all required trainings.

Our preschool will not care for children in areas that are being remodeled, repaired or painted. The administration is responsible for maintaining all interior and exterior surfaces, including walls, floors, ceilings, equipment, toys, and furnishings in a safe condition, free of sharp points or jagged edges, splinters, protruding nails or wires, loose parts, rusty parts, or materials containing poisonous substances.

## **The following steps will be taken to maintain the classrooms:**

1. Daily cleaning of classrooms, bathrooms, and play centers
2. Ensuring that a qualified caregiver maintains ratios, group size and supervision at all times. (inside/outside, transportation)
3. Keep the classroom in sanitary condition through routine cleaning.
4. Sanitize toys, furniture, cots and equipment weekly and when soiled or contaminated.
5. Wash all soiled items prior to sanitization.
6. Follow any Executive Orders (EO) or local public health emergency requirements.
7. Ensure handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontainment's.
  - Handwashing
  - Exposure to blood and bodily fluids
  - Poisons and hazardous material including but not limited to; plants, Asbestos, Carbon Monoxide, pest control equipment.
8. Protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury. (electrical hazards, bodies of water, traffic)

# **Preschool Safe Transportation Policy**

**Purpose:** To ensure the safe and secure transportation of children to and from preschool, during field trips and during school sponsored activities.

## **1. Pickup and Drop-off Procedures**

- Designated pickup/drop off locations are determined by our school partners. Your teacher will provide this information to you at open house.
- Children will ONLY be released to authorized individuals on the child's emergency contact form or communicate via email, letter, or communication app.
- **Parents/Guardians must accompany their children to the designated pickup/drop-off area.**
- **No child will be left unattended** in a vehicle or at the drop-off point.
- If a child is not picked up on time, staff will make reasonable efforts to contact the parent/guardian.

## **2. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities**

- Parents/guardians must ensure that their child is properly dressed and ready for transport. (appropriate clothing and personal items)
- Parents MUST inform the preschool of any changes in pick-up arrangements or authorized individuals who may pick up the child.
- Updated emergency contact information should be provided promptly to the school.

## **3. Compliance with State and Local Laws**

- This policy complies with all state and local laws regarding child passenger safety, transportation and licensing.
- Any updates to laws regarding child transportation or safety will be incorporated into this policy.

#### **4. Reviews and Updates**

- The Safe Transportation Policy will be reviewed annually by the preschool's administration and any necessary updates will be made.
- Parents and staff will be informed of any changes to the policy.

# **Preschool Sick Policies**

The Washington County Family YMCA Preschool reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the school for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day. Any child who seems unable to participate comfortably for any reason will be sent home. This is to ensure the continued good health of everyone at the preschool. We realize that many of you are working parents and will try to accommodate you as much as possible. However, for the health and well being of the children in our care and our staff, it is vital to maintain a strict wellness policy. We ask for parents to assist by **keeping sick children home**. We do take into consideration your physician's recommendations nevertheless it is up to our discretion when your child may return to school.

## **When a child may NOT attend school:**

**-Fever:** Children will be sent home if their temperature is 100.0 or higher and must stay home the next day for observation. Children must be free of fever (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The same policy applies if your child develops a fever at home. They must be fever free (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

**-Rash:** Any rash other than common skin irritation will require that child to be sent home for an evaluation and diagnosis from a physician in writing. The diagnosis MUST specify exactly what the rash is. The child may return to school based on the written evaluation, and clearance that the child is no longer contagious.

**-Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** Children will be sent home if there appears to be an unusual amount of discharge from irritation to the eye(s) and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and written diagnosis of exactly what it is. If the diagnosis is BACTERIAL CONJUNCTIVITIS children must have received at least 24 hours of treatment (medication) to return to class. If the diagnosis is VIRAL CONJUNCTIVITIS your child may return AS LONG AS THERE IS NO DISCHARGE. If the child does not have "pink eye" we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis and a clearance that is not contagious.

**-Thick White, Green, or Yellow Discharge:** Children will be sent home if they appear to have any thick white, green or yellow discharge. This is often indicative of an infection and they must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their physician in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact they do not have an infection we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with written clearance that it is nothing contagious. The Department of Health and most physicians are of the opinion that once on antibiotics for 24 hours, the discharge is no longer contagious even though it may persist for up to two weeks.

**Diarrhea:** Children will be sent home if they have diarrhea and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school (after the day of observation) children must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours with at least 1 regular bowel movement. If your child has one or more loose bowel movement on their first day back they will again be sent home.

**Vomiting:** Children will be sent home if they vomit and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school (after the day of observation) children must be symptom free with no vomiting for at least 24 hours.

**Persistent Hacking Cough:** Children will be sent home if they have a persistent hacking cough and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school the child will need an evaluation and diagnosis from the physician in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact they do not require treatment we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with a clearance that is not contagious.

**Lice:** Children will not be readmitted until 24 hours after treatment and must be nit free. The Nurse, Director or Lead Teacher will make an evaluation and determine if the child can be readmitted.

**Respiratory Infection:** Children suffering from respiratory infections (Covid, common cold, etc.) will be assessed on an individual basis. Factors for consideration include the parameters set by previous requirements (fever, cough and discharge regulations) and the developmental level of your child in congruence with our ability to limit the spread of germs. The younger your child, the more difficult it is to keep the spread of germs down. For example: hand to face contact, uncontrolled nasal discharge, uncovered sneezing and coughing, etc.

### **Medication Administration Policy:**

Medications are very rarely given at school. In the case that your child is absolutely required to receive medication at school, we will coordinate with the school nurse to determine how best to handle your child's individual situation. We urge parents, with the help of your child's pediatrician, to work out a schedule of giving medication at home, outside school hours whenever possible. If required, a Medication Administration Policy will be provided for you and the child's pediatrician to review and then provide required information to the teacher and the school nurse. If the medication is to be administered on an EMERGENCY basis, it will be the parents responsibility to provide the proper training to all staff.

# **Learning Plan**

The Washington County Family YMCA has partnered with Building Blocks to enhance and challenge each child's individual needs, interests and abilities. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. We offer a play based environment that fosters self-confidence, trust, creativity, autonomy, and acceptance of individual differences. To achieve this we offer the following:

## **Learning Centers:**

- Dramatic Play
- Science
- Math
- Sensory
- Literacy
- Manipulatives
- Art
- Writing
- Music/Movement

Each learning center contains a variety of age appropriate toys, supplies and games that are changed throughout the year. Children are given plenty of opportunity to use each center, and free choice to spend their time learning what they find the most interesting. These centers also provide an environment to explore peer interaction. They will be encouraged to share, problem solve, use good manners, respect the feelings of others, and communicate their want and needs effectively.

# **Kindergarten Readiness**

We hope to work in partnership with you to prepare your child for their transition to Kindergarten. Your child's teacher will occasionally send home "homework" or subject areas that need to be reviewed at home. Your support and participation is instrumental in preparing your child to progress to the next phase of their learning path. The following is a list of skills that we will be working on throughout the year. Please support your child's early education by working on these at home as well.

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| -contact phone number      | -parent's names       |
| -birthday                  | -alphabet recognition |
| -number recognition (1-10) | -count (1-20)         |
| -safely using scissors     | -spelling name aloud  |
| -printing name             | -recite full name     |
| -basic shapes              | -basic colors         |

# **Community Involvement**

The Washington County Family YMCA is committed to serving our community. We are happy to invite your family into service with us. On occasion we visit senior citizens in our community. We invite Fireman, Policemen, Physicians, Nurses, Farmers and other tradespeople to visit us and talk about what they do. If you are interested in serving with us, please reach out for information. If you are interested in sharing your own talent or skill we would be happy to schedule a time for you to visit. Involvement can be as simple as reading a book to your child's class.

# **Signature Page**

Please initial each blank below to indicate that you have received the policies contained in the Washington County Family YMCA Preschool Handbook.

Your signature below acknowledges that you have read and agree to the policies outlined in this handbook. Please return this page to your child's teacher as soon as possible. It is mandatory that this signature page be kept in your child's main file.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_Mission Statement/Commitment to Your Family

\_\_\_\_\_Payment, Open Door, and Inclement Weather Policies

\_\_\_\_\_Discipline Policy

\_\_\_\_\_Non-Negotiable Behavior Policy

\_\_\_\_\_Safe Conditions Policy

\_\_\_\_\_Safe Transportation Policy

\_\_\_\_\_Sick Policy

\_\_\_\_\_Learning Plan/Kindergarten Readiness

\_\_\_\_\_Community Involvement

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name