



# **CAREGIVER HANDBOOK**

Joyce Preschool  
2023-2024

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# Welcome to Joyce Preschool!

We believe your entire family will enjoy the program Joyce Preschool offers. Our Parent Handbook describes what your child will experience while at Joyce Preschool. We also discuss the program plan, curriculum, policies, and rules and regulations. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your lead teacher or contact Ryan Mulso, Executive Director.

## Mission, Vision and Values

### Our Mission

We work to provide children from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and economic backgrounds with developmentally and culturally appropriate preparation for school and life.

We achieve this through quality early childhood education and family support in a dual immersion setting. Our program provides a crucial bridge to a successful K-12 education. Our focus areas are school readiness, second language acquisition and cultural appreciation, and parental involvement and support.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to become a recognized leader in bilingual and multicultural early childhood education. We strive to be a model for other local and regional early childhood educator

### Our Values

- Key to program success is a quality staff open to improvement
- We seek a balanced enrollment of students with Spanish and English as first language
- Our need-blind admission policy is committed to enrolling 40-60% of our students with scholarships
- Our staff includes both Spanish and English speakers
- We strive for strong Latino community relationships and partnerships
- We extend our reach through collaborations and partnerships
- We maintain and value our school environment

# History and School Philosophy

The United Methodist Women of the Southwest Coalition of United Methodist Churches organized Joyce Preschool in 1966. In 1995, Joyce Preschool became a non-denominational, multicultural, and dual language school readiness program for children three to five years of age. The purpose of Joyce Preschool is to supplement early home experiences in an environment that enriches each child's development. We do this through learning and playing with children under the guidance of experienced and caring early childhood professionals. We believe that all children should be allowed to develop to their full potential in an environment unhampered by stereotyped expectations of race, ability, sex, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, national origin or religious preference.

Joyce Preschool is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and operates in compliance with its standards. We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and hold a four-star (highest level) rating with Minnesota Parent Aware.

## Our Three Guiding Components

1. The two-way immersion and bicultural nature of our program. Joyce continues to be one of very few preschools in the community that goes beyond a single language model or an English-as-a-second language model. We are a dual language preschool with cultural immersion and bilingual staff.
2. Joyce's genuinely diverse and multicultural setting. Joyce strives to maintain a 50:50 ratio of English- and Spanish-speaking students. We give scholarship assistance to 40-60% of our students. This approach results in a cultural, ethnic, and economic kaleidoscope of students.
3. Joyce's commitment of service to families. The school makes a special effort to involve families in the academic success of their children, including their transition from the preschool setting into kindergarten.

## Our Approach: Two-Way Immersion

Our unique two-way immersion program is structured around equal numbers of English and Spanish-speaking children. For Spanish-speaking students, Joyce understands the great benefits to supporting native language retention, as well as English acquisition to ensure school readiness. For English-speaking students there is also a great academic and experiential benefit to introducing a second language. Children have an immense capacity for second language acquisition and comprehension at this age. Our bilingual teaching staff includes native Spanish speakers, native English speakers, as well as staff who grew up bilingually.

Teaching teams work together dynamically in their planning and delivery of instruction in order to ensure language balance in the classroom and to serve as strong language models for the children. In addition, enrolling equal numbers of Spanish- and English-speaking children means that students are able to learn language from one another.

### **Parent Support and Involvement**

Joyce Preschool strives to establish a foundation of parental involvement that our students and their families can then build on throughout their academic careers. The school makes a special effort to involve families in their child's academic success. This includes the preparation of the entire family for the transition from the preschool setting into kindergarten. We hold multiple family involvement events every year, including an open house, beginning of the school year orientation, two parent-teacher conferences, an annual Around the World Celebration, classroom special events, several all-school gatherings, opportunities for parents to provide feedback, and more. In addition, parents are encouraged to participate in their child's education in general, and as regular classroom volunteers in particular.

### **Talleres de Padres**

This program specifically addresses the needs of Latino parents who are seeking knowledge and support on a variety of topics and issues. These parent-directed workshops or *talleres* bring resources and discussions to families, with topics ranging from nutrition to literacy, continuing education for parents, and information about the K-12 school system and school choice resources. There is also a great emphasis on participation in their child's education, including support to promote parent involvement in and out of the classroom.

### **Home Visiting**

Joyce Preschool offers home visits to families with the goal of building a strong connection between home and school, as well as answering any questions families may have. Our parent outreach staff coordinate resources and activities throughout the year for all families, ranging from referrals to community programs to arranging field trips for Joyce families to visit the Children's Theater or Children's Museum. Our home visiting staff also make follow-up home visits and/or additional meetings with families who are experiencing specific concerns or challenges and work with families to connect to community resources as needed to address their issues.

**Important note:**

Part of our mission as a Preschool is to provide our families with the necessary tools to help them in the process of educating their children and parents at the same time. We believe that parents are the first educators of their children and that to guarantee the success of children in their education, parental participation is essential. In addition, because the Joyce program receives funds from other organizations to provide scholarships and discounts to families, these organizations require the active participation of families receiving these scholarships in parent activities and meetings. If you have a preschool scholarship and are not participating in activities, the Director of Family Services will contact you as the scholarship may be reduced or removed.

# Joyce Preschool Program Plan

## Hours of Operation

We welcome and encourage parents to stop in and visit their child's class during our regular hours of operation.

**Note:** If you arrive at the program after 8:40am, you will need to wait with your child until 8:50am to take them to the classroom.

**Note:** You need to register your child in order for them to attend our before school program. The time is from 8:30am to 8:50am.

**Note:** You need to register your child order for them to attend our after school program. The time is from 4:40 pm - 5:00 pm

Location	Joyce
Maximum number of students	18 Students in the Mixed age classroom (Flower) 18 Students in the 4-5 y/o class (Sun)
Age of students	3 (36 MONTHS) to 5 year olds Flower and Sun class
Drop off	AM drop off: 8:50 am- 9:00 am PM drop off: 1:20- 1:30 pm Lunch bunch: 11:50 pm - 12:00 pm
Class times	AM class: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm PM class: 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm Full day: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Lunch bunch	12:00—1:30 pm
Pick up	AM half day: 12:00 pm - 12:10 pm PM class: 4:40 pm - 5:00 pm



# School Closures

<b>Labor Day</b>	September 4, 2023
<b>Admin day</b>	September 29, 2023
<b>Indigenous peoples day</b>	October 9, 2023
<b>Fall conferences</b>	October 18-20 2023
<b>Admin day</b>	November 3, 2023
<b>Fall break</b>	November 22-24 2023
<b>Admin day - Around the World Event</b>	December 8, 2023
<b>Winter break</b>	December 18 2023 al January 1, 2024
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr.</b>	January 15, 2024
<b>Admin day</b>	January 26, 2024
<b>Presidents day</b>	February 19, 2024
<b>Salud event</b>	February, 23, 2024
<b>Spring conferences</b>	March 6-8, 2024
<b>Admin day</b>	March 29, 2024
<b>Spring break</b>	April 1-5, 2024
<b>Admin day</b>	April 29, 2024
<b>Day Without Immigrants</b>	TBD
<b>Graduation</b>	May 23-24, 2024
<b>Memorial Day</b>	May 27, 2024
<b>Juneteenth</b>	June 19, 2024
<b>Summer break</b>	July 1-5, 2024

\*We celebrate our staff and families who are immigrants. Joyce will recognize a "Day Without Immigrants" as a holiday once each year. It's a yearly celebration that is different each year to impact local economies to highlight the work of immigrants in our community. This date is generally between January and March. We will do our best to inform families in advance of the date so you can accommodate.

# Tuition

Flexible arrival time from 8:50-9:10 a.m.

Flexible end-of-day pick-up from 4:30-5:00 p.m.

Preschool programming starts at 9:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

<b>Half Day Session</b> 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. or 1:30 - 4:30 p.m.		
2 Day: Tues + Thurs \$320/month	3 Day: Mon + Wed + Fri \$435/month	5 Day: Mon - Fri \$675/month

<b>Full Day Program</b> 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.		
2 Day: Tues + Thurs \$640/month	3 Day: Mon + Wed + Fri \$880/month	5 Day: Mon - Fri \$1,350/month

## SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

<b>Lunch Bunch</b> 12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	2 Day: Tues + Thurs \$130/month	3 Day: Mon + Wed + Fri \$190/month	5 Day: Mon - Fri \$310/month
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## The Tuition Payment Process

Tuition payments are made on the first day of classes of each month. We accept the following forms of payment:

Direct Deposit (Preferred Method): Forms are available in the office.

Payment by check or money order: Please write your child's name in the "memo" section and specify which class your child is in.

Cash payment: please provide the exact amount; since we do not keep money in the office.

**Note:** You can turn in your tuition payment to our office manager on the first of every month. Please contact us if your payment is going to be late or if you need to modify tuition payments, otherwise your child's schedule could be modified (reduction of hours in the program).

# Parking

**Joyce Preschool Park Avenue**

Parents are asked to park in the church parking lot or street. Please enter through the main entrance by using your door code which will be given to you after you are enrolled.

**Late Fee Policy & Drop-Off / Pick-Up Times**

## **Joyce Preschool Late Fee Policy**

Please be on time to pick up your child after class. A late pick-up means that the teachers are unable to eat lunch, meet as a group, go home in a timely manner and/or prepare the classroom for the next group. Late pick-ups also cost the preschool money, since we must pay a staff member to stay with the child. No child is allowed to be alone at Joyce, ever.

In fairness to all families and to respect the staff, Joyce charges a late fee. We encourage parents and guardians to arrive a couple minutes early to find a parking spot. Every family is allowed one late pick-up per year. Late fees are charged upon the second late pick-up.

**A tardy fee of \$5 will be assessed for the first 10 minutes of delay and \$1/minute for each additional minute that elapses.**

## **Drop-off & Pick-Up Times**

- Morning class:
  - Drop off by 9:00 am and pick up by 12:00 pm
- Afternoon class:
  - Drop off by 1:30 pm and pick up by 5:00 pm
- Full-day students:
  - Drop off by 9:00 am and pick up by 5:00 pm
- Lunch Bunch
  - Drop off by 12:10 pm and pick-up time is 1:30 pm
- Extended hour to pick up students
  - Pick-up time is 4:40 - 5:00 pm

# The Joyce Preschool Curriculum

Our primary goal is to have children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out new ideas and to think their own thoughts. We strive to develop independent, self-confident, and inquisitive learners. We teach children healthy habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of self. The Joyce Preschool Curriculum identifies goals in the following areas of development:

**Social:** Children should feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are part of the classroom community.

**Emotional:** Children should experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence, self-control, self-awareness, and have a positive attitude towards life.

**Cognitive:** Children should become confident learners by trying out their own ideas and experiencing success. They acquire skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.

**Physical:** Children should increase their large and fine motor skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The Joyce Preschool Curriculum combines carefully designed activities, an organized learning environment, a quality selection of toys and learning materials, a thoughtfully planned daily schedule, and positive interaction between children and adults to accomplish learning goals and give your child a successful start in school.

We welcome and encourage parents to visit Joyce Preschool during normal hours. The hours are noted in the Hours of Operation section of the Joyce Preschool Parent Handbook.

## Language Use

Throughout the daily schedule, language learning is promoted through use of vocabulary that is common to the classroom and introduction of new vocabulary. Our two-way immersion model reinforces native language development and introduces children to a second language through our monthly thematic curriculum. Each lesson has a language and literacy component. Teachers, parents, interns and community volunteers serve as strong language models by interacting in their native languages, while students negotiate language in mixed groups through child-directed play. By maintaining a balance of native languages in each classroom, Joyce Preschool helps students learn from each other as well as from their teachers.

We welcome parents, family and community members in the classroom to show-and-tell about their countries, cultures or traditions throughout the school year.

### **Assessment**

Joyce Preschool uses Work Sampling as an early childhood assessment tool that assists teachers in observing, recording, and evaluating an individual child's skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments. We use state standards that provide specific examples of skills and behaviors within the appropriate range for most children in each age group. The checklist is completed three times per year by a familiar teacher in a one-on-one setting, and includes the following areas: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts and physical development and health. Your child's teacher will share the metrics with you during the parent/teacher conferences. Joyce uses a qualitative assessment tool to measure second language acquisition based on teacher observations throughout the school year.

# Classroom Schedule

## **Arrival Time (approximately 20 minutes)**

Children are greeted and welcomed to school each day by their teachers. At that time, parents can connect with teachers and other parents. Children will sign-in, where they practice writing their names. Several activities selected by the teachers that promote literacy will be available for children to explore. The learning materials used during arrival time are rotated throughout the year to provide children with an exposure to a wide array of learning experiences. Teachers will guide children to activities when assistance is needed. Children build social and emotional competence, conversation skills, and fine motor skills (writing, drawing, cutting and coloring).

## **Large Group Time Circle Time (approximately 10-15 minutes)**

Children sing songs, participate in literacy activities, talk about the calendar and weather, hear stories, participate in finger plays, and interact with flannel board stories. Circle Time always includes a Daily Message that reflects the theme and activity for the day, includes repetition of vocabulary, and highlights a letter or number. Children also experience dancing and movement, learn about musical instruments, and talk about the activities planned for the day.

Children learn how to take turns speaking in a large group and how to sit in a large circle and follow teacher-led activities. This is a time where children hear single language instruction (Spanish or English) and children develop their native language or begin learning a second language.

## **Free Play / Learning Centers Time (approximately 50-60 minutes)**

This time of the day allows children to explore and choose from a wide variety of activities. Some activities are teacher-directed and others are designed for children to explore on their own. During this time, one teacher is generally facilitating a focused small group activity and one teacher is assisting children throughout the classroom with social interactions, providing guidance and direction when needed, and assisting with bathroom breaks. Parents, interns, and other volunteers may also lead small group activities. Activities during this time include: art, music, reading, blocks and building, science experiments and activities, dancing and movement, writing activities such as journaling, sensory exploration (water, sand, playdough, etc.), and dramatic play that includes rotating theme exploration in a variety of theme-based play such as a doctor's office, post office, or restaurant.

## **Snack Time (15 minutes) or Lunch Time (25 minutes)**

Students enrolled at Joyce's Park Avenue Site's morning and afternoon classes have snack time. Students enrolled at Joyce-Windom and at Joyce-Hiawatha have lunch time.

Children eat a healthy snack or lunch and enjoy this part of the day. Children learn to use good manners when asking for help with their food and to communicate in both languages with classmates and teachers. Students learn responsibility for cleaning up their snack/lunch and putting it away.

## **Outdoor Play**

Children are outdoors every day, unless the weather does not permit. We will follow the Minneapolis Public Schools' policy on refraining from going outdoors during severe weather. Please see our Guidelines for Outdoor Play handout for details on how we learn and play outside, including activities, weather, and appropriate attire needed. Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their children before they arrive at school in order to promote safe outdoor play. Joyce staff will not apply sunscreen to children.

## **At Park Ave Site**

The Park Ave Site has a natural outdoor play space where children are able to dig and plant in the garden, dig and imagine in the mud kitchen, navigate the labyrinth, smell and taste herbs in the herb spiral, roll down a small hill, and balance on various sizes of stones and tree stumps. We also have a new playground system installed for students to embrace and challenge their large motor skills.



# **The Special Person of the Week**

During the school year children will have the opportunity to speak and present in front of their class. Each child will have the chance to be the "Special Person" of the Week. This is a time for each child to bring in special items such as family pictures, an item from his or her culture, and an item that is special to the child. This promotes cultural awareness and self-esteem. Students are invited to choose what they would like to be called when it is their special week. Some examples are: Star of the Week, Student of the Week, Flower of the Week, etc. Please help your child choose a name that is appropriate for the preschool class.

The child whose turn it is to be "The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Week" will be recognized during Circle Time with a poster created by the child, and will have the opportunity to show and share a toy/special item from home.

# **Behavior Guidance Policies and Procedures**

## **Behavior Policy Overview**

Joyce Preschool teachers place emphasis on children's positive behavior. Children are supervised at all times. Joyce Preschool staff members make every attempt to foster a learning environment that prevents tension between children and encourages problem-solving techniques and cooperative play. Occasionally, however, children may act in a disruptive manner. In this case, a teacher will work one-on-one with the child to talk about appropriate behavior in a calm, solution-focused manner. If the child is very upset or out of control, a teacher will sit with him or her apart from the other children until they are calm. Joyce staff members always encourage and guide children to solve disputes themselves. We offer suggestions of what the child might do or say in response to a dispute with another child and then monitor the process. Neither corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) nor emotional abuse is ever used with any child at Joyce Preschool. An important objective for Joyce students is to develop self-discipline and self-control over their actions. Joyce provides a caring, accepting, and supportive environment for all children in our care.

**Behavior Guidance will be reviewed with families in August before the school year begins during the Open House.**

## **Disruptive and Aggressive Behavior Plan Policy:**

For the purpose of this Disruptive and Aggressive Behavior Plan Policy, aggressive and disruptive behaviors are defined as, but not limited to: behaviors that endanger oneself or others or that consistently disrupt classroom instructional time. Examples include hitting, pushing, kicking, biting, throwing classroom objects, pinching, spitting, name calling, yelling, screaming, use of inappropriate language, etc. Joyce Preschool's Disruptive and Aggressive Behavior Plan Policy complies with state and federal civil rights laws and aims to limit or eliminate suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary practices in response to challenging and/or aggressive behaviors.

To prevent disruptive and aggressive behavior from occurring the staff will:

- Model appropriate behavior.
- Arrange the classroom environment and establish routines to support the learning of appropriate behaviors
- Use positive reinforcement when appropriate behavior occurs, i.e., "Look how high you are building the blocks! Let's count them."

When disruptive or aggressive behavior occurs or is about to occur, staff will use:

- redirection - suggest or substitute a positive activity for a negative one
- distraction - the focus of the activity or behavior
- active listening to determine the underlying cause of the behavior

Separation from the group may be used as a last resort, only when less intrusive methods have been tried and/or behavior of the child is dangerous to themselves or others. In the event a separation is used, teaching staff will adhere to Minnesota Department of Human Services guidelines.

The following sequence of events will take place following excessive or severe occurrences of any of the actions listed above:

1. Lead and Assistant Teacher will document and communicate the following information to parents or caretakers: time of event, child or children involved in the incident, what occurred leading up to and during the incident, and what action was taken by staff. Documentation of parent communication will be kept in the student's file. If the first incident is severe, step two will occur immediately. If there are multiple incidents within a month, step two of this policy will occur.
2. A conference will be arranged with the teacher or teachers involved, the caregivers of the child who is initiating the disruptive or aggressive behavior, and any additional staff deemed necessary. During this meeting, the following information will be gathered:
  - A detailed description of the problem behavior(s)
  - Steps that have already been taken to address the behavior
  - What behaviors does the caregiver experience in the home?

Based on the information gathered, the next step will be to develop:

- Specific strategies that will prevent the problem behavior
- A detailed description of the desired behavior
- Specific strategies that will encourage the desired behavior

A determined amount of time will be set for a follow-up meeting ( i.e. two weeks). If the plan is effective and the child's behavior improves, both teachers and caregivers will continue using the selected strategy or strategies. If the behavior continues, an additional parent-teacher conference will be scheduled to reevaluate the strategies and plan used.

3. If the behavior plan fails to improve a child's behavior, outside services or support may be sought, such as observation or screening by licensed early childhood professionals. This step will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Joyce staff will work with families in the referral process.

4. A due process of discipline and/or dismissal has been established to safeguard the school operation. If after several meetings with caregivers, problematic circumstances continue to arise, and great effort to document and resolve the issue has happened, a meeting with the family will be required to discuss additional steps to be taken, which may include: reducing days and hours of attendance, receiving outside support, exploring other programs or relocation to a setting more appropriate to the child's needs.

# Health and Safety

## Early Childhood Screening

Children should complete Early Childhood Screening at age 3. Early Childhood Screening is free of charge and is an opportunity to identify any potential health or learning concerns. **Screening is preferred at age 3 and state law requires all children to be screened before entering kindergarten.** To help comply with this law, Joyce Preschool documents that our students have completed the screening. Please notify your teacher with the date of your child's screening.

For screening through the Minneapolis Public School district, call 612-668-3715 or email [earlychildhoodscreening@mpls.k12.mn.us](mailto:earlychildhoodscreening@mpls.k12.mn.us).

For Hennepin County, call 612-348-8687 to schedule a screening appointment.

## Required Health Paperwork

In order for children to attend preschool, Joyce requires a documented, recent medical check-up and up-to-date immunization records signed by a physician, as well as an emergency contact card with up-to-date contact information. **These are requirements of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and are mandatory for enrollment at Joyce Preschool. Students must have the required paperwork completed and turned in by the first day of school. A child cannot start school without having this paperwork completed.**

Parents must notify the teacher in writing of any allergies or medical conditions to be aware of, using the health form signed by the doctor with specific information about the allergy or condition. Parents must also notify the teacher of any changes to the emergency contact information and make sure the card is up-to-date.

## Illness

If your child becomes ill while at school, your child will stay with a staff person until the child is picked up. If a child seems very ill and we are unable to contact the parents, legal guardians, or other identified emergency contacts, we will call the pediatrician listed on the emergency contact card. In a serious emergency, we will call 911. Parents are required to keep all emergency contact information current.

If your child will be absent from school because of an illness, please notify the teachers. In order to prevent infection to other children and staff, **children must stay home if they had any of the following conditions or symptoms within the last 24 hours:**

strep throat	conjunctivitis (pink eye)	chicken pox
head lice	excessive cough or sore throat	fever above 98.6°F
headache	skin rash	inflamed or swollen eyes
stomach pain or diarrhea	fever blisters or cold sores	vomiting

Communicable illnesses must be reported to the school immediately so that other families may be notified. According to state licensing regulations, a child must be fever-free (normal temperature is 98.6°F) without the use of medication for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Medications**

We do not administer medications. We ask that families administer medication before and after the class time, rather than send it to Joyce.

All Joyce teaching staff members are certified in Child CPR and First Aid. If an accident occurs, a trained staff person will help your child. Parents will be notified, and if needed the parent will be asked to pick up the child. If the parent cannot be reached and immediate action is warranted, the 911 Emergency Medical Service number will be called. The appropriate facility to treat the emergency condition will be determined by the 911 Emergency Medical Services.

# Potty Training

Some children are still learning to use the restroom independently during the spring and summer prior to the start of preschool. We realize this milestone can be difficult to predict, and that some children have accidents when experiencing transition.

While Joyce Preschool teachers will assist students in the event of a toileting accident, we are not set up for diaper changes. **Please do not send your child with pull-up diapers.**

We recommend that all parents take their student to the restroom upon arrival to school, particularly at the beginning of the year, and that parents keep a change of clothes in their student's backpack.

If accidents are frequent, parents will be contacted to schedule a time and/or meet to consider the child's overall readiness for preschool.

# Birthday Celebrations

We love to celebrate birthdays in the classroom! Children will be given a birthday crown at snack time and we will sing "Happy Birthday" to the child.

We encourage families to **bring in a non-food item** to share with other children, such as pencils or stickers, as this enables all children to participate and maintains safety for children with food allergies. If a family would like to share a special food treat, we suggest a healthy option. Any food brought into the classroom must be store bought and families should check with their child's teacher to accommodate for food allergies.

Also, families have the option to donate a book for the school as a way of celebrating their child's birthday.

If you are planning a birthday celebration at home, and wish to invite the entire class, please contact your child's teacher and we can assist with distributing invitations. If you do not wish to invite the entire class, we ask that invitations be distributed outside of school to avoid hurt feelings.



# **Pets**

Joyce Preschool may have a pet visit the classroom during the school year. Parents will be given advance notice. All classroom pets are licensed and vaccinated following local health department regulations.

# Weather Closing Policy

**If the Minneapolis Public Schools close due to severe weather, Joyce Preschool also closes.** In the case of dangerous weather, listen for school closings on the radio or the television. Joyce Preschool will communicate the school closing via email and phone. School closing notification is posted on our website: [www.joycepreschool.org](http://www.joycepreschool.org) and communicated through social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram).

# **Field Trips and Classroom Enrichment**

## **Field Trips**

Written parental permission is required for any child to participate in a school field trip. A permission slip is sent home for your signature before each field trip. Appropriate safety procedures are used at all times. Field trips play an important part in your child's education, and the success of these experiences relies in part upon parent chaperones. Please consider being a chaperone.

## **Classroom Enrichment**

Each class has a budget for special visitors and presentations in the classroom such as puppeteers, artists, musicians, story-tellers, etc. Our teachers welcome any ideas, suggestions, or recommendations from parents for classroom visitors.

# **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall and in the spring. Fall conferences are held in November. Spring conferences are held in March. In preparation for the conference a form is sent home for you to complete. This form includes questions for the conference regarding your child's progress in intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. At the conference, parents will sign a conference review form and receive a summary of what was discussed.

# Photo/Video Policy

Joyce Preschool parents can accept or decline the option for your child to be included in photos used for promotion or sharing on our website, Instagram and Facebook pages. There is also the option to decline or accept if your child can participate in research on childhood development.

**All children must have a photo release form on file, even if the parent does not give permission for photos to be taken** (the form has an option to accept or decline but needs to be signed by a parent either way).

# Volunteers at Joyce Preschool

Joyce is fortunate to have the support of many volunteers throughout the school year. Our volunteer team is made up of parents and family members, students from area colleges and universities, Cristo Rey Interns and also members of the community including neighbors, local professionals, and members of local churches. Our volunteers work alongside teachers in the classroom and also help with administrative projects in the office. Volunteers sign in at the office and wear name tags while working in the classroom or office. If you see a volunteer, feel free to introduce yourself.

**Families are strongly encouraged to volunteer.** Sign up to volunteer with your child's teacher. Ask your teacher about opportunities to help with planning events or prepping class materials if you are not available to volunteer during class time. If you have any questions about volunteering, or if you have an activity to share with the students, please contact your child's lead teacher. Thanks for your continued support!

# Absences and Withdrawal

## **Absences**

Please notify the school as soon as possible when your child will be late or absent for any reason (illness, out-of-town, etc.). This affects teachers' planning and preparation for the day. Learning takes place every day at Joyce Preschool. It is therefore important that your child attend school on a consistent basis. Extended absences require tuition payments to hold a space for a child. Please contact the Office Manager if your payment is going to be late or if you need to arrange a payment plan otherwise your child's schedule could be modified (reduction of hours in the program).

## **Withdrawal**

Our preschool budget is based on full enrollment. Accordingly, we require that families give at least 2 weeks paid notice when withdrawing a student from the program in order to allow ample time to fill the slot.

## **Automatic Withdrawal (no attendance)**

If you enroll your child at Joyce Preschool, and if your child does not attend for more than two weeks, and if you haven't informed Joyce Preschool or paid the monthly tuition, your child will lose his or her spot in the class and s/he will be automatically withdrawn from the program.

Please let us know in advance if your child will not be able to attend due to travel, family situations, illness, transportation issues, or other issues.

If you know that you will need to remove your child permanently from the program due to relocation or family schedule, please inform us at least two weeks in advance.

You are responsible for paying the monthly tuition for two weeks after you notify us that you will be withdrawing your child.

# Arrival and Departure Procedures

**We appreciate families being punctual when dropping off and picking up children.** Before entering the classroom, we ask parents to take their children to the bathroom and wash hands with water and soap for 20 seconds. Children may enter the classroom ten minutes prior to the start of the session. If you arrive at school earlier, we suggest that you take your child to the bathroom, read a book with your child, or do another quiet activity with your child. We appreciate your cooperation while the teachers are preparing for the day's activities. Please arrive on time at the start of class, unless arrangements have been made ahead of the time with the teacher. Arriving late is disruptive to the class and makes the transition to the classroom for the child more difficult.

## **Arrival and Departure:**

- Please use your key code to enter Joyce Preschool at the front entrance on Park Avenue. Your key fob is programmed to function only during the specific drop-off and pick-up hours of your child's class. If you forget your code please contact staff immediately. please go to the doors on the parking lot side of the building (west side) and follow the posted instructions to buzz the Joyce office and identify yourself. A staff person will buzz you in, once you have identified yourself and the child you are dropping off/picking up.
- Do not let strangers enter the building with you. If someone enters with you, please tell one of our staff.

At the time of enrollment, you are required to provide a list of authorized people who can pick up your child. We will release children to authorized persons only. A person listed as an emergency contact also needs to be listed on pick-up authorization and will be asked to show photo ID when they pick up a child. **Please inform us in writing or by telephone if someone other than those originally authorized will be picking up your child.**

**For the safety of your children and to maintain consistency in our program we highly recommend that you send the same authorized pickup for your child.**

- Departure – When picking up your child, please be sure that the teacher is aware that the child is leaving.
- Children left for ½ hour after dismissal will be considered abandoned and Child Protection Services will be notified.

If an emergency arises and you know you will be late picking up your child, please call Joyce Preschool before the end of class time. We suggest you carry the school number



with you at all times: (612) 823-2447. We suggest you also carry the phone number of another parent whose child is in class with your child in case you are delayed and need assistance with picking up your child. If your child is still at the school 15 minutes after the class ends and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps in the order listed:

1. Attempt to reach you at home, work or school.
2. Call the people listed on the Emergency and Authorization Cards.
3. After 30 minutes, we will call the authorities, such as the police or Child Protection Services.

All information in your child's file, emergency cards, and authorization cards must be kept current. Please inform us immediately of changes, including:

- Home phone number and address(es) of parents
- Workplaces and phone numbers of parents
- Name, address and phone number of child's physician
- Name, address, and phone number of child's dentist
- Names and phone numbers of persons authorized to pick up your child.

# **Missing Child and Emergency Procedures**

## **Missing Child**

Children will never be without adult supervision at Joyce Preschool. In the event a child is missing, both the inside and outside premises are immediately thoroughly searched. If the child is not found, parents and police are called immediately. Further procedures will be directed by the police.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Fire drills and lockdown drills are held in each class each month to familiarize the students with emergency procedures. Tornado drills are conducted once per month April through September. In the event of a fire or other emergency requiring evacuation, the children are taken to a designated shelter and families are notified.

During all drills, teachers are careful to use language like “practicing to be safe” during a certain event (fire, tornado, intruder, etc.) and emphasize that children are safe and that there aren’t any fires or tornadoes actually happening.

# Clothing and Personal Property

Your child must wear clothing that is comfortable, washable and easily managed by the child. Your child should be able to easily remove clothing without help (age-appropriate zippers, large buttons, elastic waists, Velcro, etc.). Children gain self-confidence and independence when they are able to manage their own clothing when going to the bathroom. Overalls and belts, for example, are often difficult for young children to take off and put on.

Learning can be messy! **Please send your child in clothing that can get dirty from outdoor play or art projects.** We will go outside every day that weather permits. We ask families to leave a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, socks and underwear) in their child's backpack at all times.

Play clothes and rubber-soled shoes are recommended for your child's safety and comfort. Sandals, slippers or hard-soled boots can be dangerous when running, jumping and climbing.

**All clothing and other property coming to school must be clearly labeled with your child's name. This includes: snack and lunch containers, backpacks, and clothing.** We encourage writing your child's name on the inside label of sweaters, sweatshirts and jackets with a permanent marker. We can easily return clothes that are left at school to families when the name is written on these belongings. We make every effort to see that each child's belongings are kept safely in the child's cubby. Children should not bring toys to school or other personal items such as money, candy, or make-up, except for specific school activities assigned by a teacher, such as Special Person of the Week. If your child brings a personal item to school, it will remain in the backpack.

**No guns, weapons, or war-related items are ever allowed at school, as they promote aggressive play and are not suitable in a group situation.**

# Snack and Lunch

Children need to bring a healthy snack (and/or lunch, for students in Lunch Bunch or who are enrolled for full days) and water or milk to school every day. Snacks must incorporate two different food groups. Lunch must incorporate three different food groups. Suggestions include: whole-wheat crackers, unsweetened fruit cups, sliced fruit, dried fruit, cubed lean meat or poultry, cubed tofu or meat substitute, applesauce, sliced vegetables, enriched pasta, granola bars, cheese, yogurt, and trail mix. **Please, never send candy, gum, pastries, sweets, pop, etc.**

- Send plastic/reusable utensils with the snack/lunch every day, if needed.
- Write your child's name on the outside of the snack/lunch bag and all food/beverage containers.
- Your child must understand that we don't share our food at school.
- Your child can only eat the food provided by you.
- Joyce can provide drinking water during snack time (and milk at lunch time), if you forget to include a drink.
- Food will not be refrigerated; send a cool pack and use an insulated lunch bag.
- Food will not be heated.

# Insurance Coverage

Joyce Preschool is insured under general liability insurance.

# Parent Grievance Procedure

If parents who have their children enrolled in Joyce have a problem with the program, here are the steps to take:

1. They should go to the lead teacher at Joyce Preschool to communicate the situation of the problem or concern.
2. If the teacher is unable to remedy the situation, the problem will be discussed with the teacher's supervisor and the Executive Director.
3. If the situation is not resolved, the Preschool Board of Trustees will be notified. For which a detailed written note of the situation is required.

# Community Assistance

Children need a safe, nurturing environment that helps them to grow, learn, and feel loved by their caregivers. If you should have difficulty providing for your child's emotional or physical needs you are encouraged to ask Joyce Preschool for help. Our staff can help you find community resources that can be of assistance. Parenting can be a difficult job.

If you find that you are experiencing more stress than you can handle, some community resources that can help include:

1. First Call For Help: (612) 335-5000, or dial 211
2. Child Protection Services: 612-348-3552
3. CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio): (612) 746-3500
4. Volunteer Lawyers Network: (612)752-6677
5. Immigration Center of Minnesota: 651-641-1011

Joyce Preschool staff is required by Minnesota law to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to Child Protection Services. Please refer to the "Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting Policy for DHS Licensed Programs," located at the end of this handbook, for procedures regarding reporting child abuse or neglect.

## **Substance Use Policy**

Joyce prohibits individuals, employees, volunteers, or subcontractors from working with or near the children while under the influence of a controlled substance, alcohol, or any substance that may impair the individual's ability to perform the job.

Joyce is a smoke-free and drug-free environment.

No smoking or drug use is allowed on the premises.

## **Data Privacy**

Records concerning your child and all other information about your child are confidential and will only be accessible to you, your child's teachers, the directors, and a person designated by the state licensing department to review our records for licensing purposes. Joyce Preschool requires written permission from the child's parents/guardians before information will be shared with any other persons or agencies.

Joyce Preschool is not allowed to share families' contact information with other families.

However, we want to encourage families to make play dates and plans outside of school, so we ask for parent volunteers each year to coordinate the creation and distribution of a school directory. Please talk to your child's teacher if you are willing to help coordinate a directory for your child's classroom.

# Board of Directors

Joyce Preschool is a 501c3 non-profit, and as such has a board of directors which acts as its governing body. Individuals who sit on the board are volunteers and are responsible for overseeing the organization's activities. Members of the board are diverse and typically include a representative of Park Avenue Church, parents of Joyce Preschool students, local professionals, and members of the Joyce Preschool community.

Joyce Preschool's Board of Directors meets regularly throughout the year to discuss and vote on the affairs of the organization. The Board includes several committees, including a finance committee, fundraising committee, and strategic plan/program committee.

**Parents are encouraged to participate at these meetings.**

Please contact Ryan Mulso at 612-823-2447 or [ryan@joycepreschool.org](mailto:ryan@joycepreschool.org) for more information about the Board, or if you are interested in becoming a member of the board.

# Staff Directory

## Telephone Numbers

Joyce - Park 612-823-2447

## Staff Email Addresses

Ryan Mulso	Executive Director	ryan@joycepreschool.org
Morgan McKenna	Office Manager	morgan@joycepreschool.org
Graciela Duran	Program Coordinator	graciela@joycepreschool.org
Karina Cerrato	Director of Family Services	karina@joycepreschool.org
Carol Will	Instructional Coach	carol@joycepreschool.org
Juanpa Briceno	Marketing Coordinator and relationship with donors.	juanpa@joycepreschool.org
Sandra Lepez	Lead & Mentor Teacher	sandra@joycepreschool.org
Perla Hernandez Sotelo	Lead Teacher Lead Teacher	perla@joycepreschool.org
Maria Montes	Assistant Teacher, Float Staff	maria@joycepreschool.org
Jocelyn Cortez	Lead Teacher	jocelyn@joycepreschool.org
Dolores Montes Zarco	Senior Assistant	dolores@joycepreschool.org
Luz Maria De La Lus	Assistant Teacher	luzmaria@joycepreschool.org
Mary Albachten	Finance	finance@joycepreschool.org



# Maltreatment of Minors & Mandated Reporting

## Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

## Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 297-4123.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 612-348-3552 or local law enforcement at 612-348-2345.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 296-3971.

## What to Report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

## Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

MN Department of Human Services  
Division of Licensing  
January 8, 2008

# **Immunizations & Conscientious Objector Policy**

The state of Minnesota requires all child care providers to maintain a record of immunizations or exemption for each child cared for in the facility.

Joyce Preschool recommends that all children receive the immunizations recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health. It is possible that a student enrolled at Joyce is not immunized. In this case, Joyce Preschool requires a Conscientious Objector Vaccination Exemption Form signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and notarized by an authorized official.

For more information about immunization laws and immunizations recommended by the state of Minnesota, please visit

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/laws/cclaw.html>.