

All Seasons

Preschool



for the 2024-2025
school year

INFORMATION PACKET FOR PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES



WELCOME TO ALL SEASONS PRESCHOOL!

Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in All Seasons Preschool. We are excited to begin our sixteenth school year! In this packet you will find information about our school, its mission and philosophy, environment, daily activities, and how to enroll. In 2020, we opened our second site, All Seasons Preschool of Eagan, and offer a variety of program options for toddlers (2-year-olds) and preschoolers (3-, 4- and 5-year-olds). Both schools feature extensive outdoor time, small group sizes, and low student-to-teacher ratios. Read on to learn more about us!



OUR MISSION

We have a three-part mission, encompassing:

- Nature-based curriculum
- Arts focus with studio time for children and adults
- Intergenerational programming



NATURE-BASED CURRICULUM

A nature-based curriculum means we spend a large part of each day outdoors, both on the playground and the grounds beyond. We observe the seasonal changes and the different ecosystems around us. Children explore a variety of natural areas, including woods, meadow, pine forest and pond. Nature-based learning - both planned activities and spontaneous discoveries - happens outdoors and is extended in the classrooms. Yes, we do go outdoors in all weather, as long as it is safe to do so! Outdoor activities in all seasons require appropriate gear to stay comfortable and safe. We help to ensure your child is outfitted for the conditions: we provide a "gear guide" for families, and keep spare outdoor clothes for children to borrow if they occasionally forget their gear.



FOCUS ON THE ARTS

An art focus makes use of our specially designed art studios as well as the classroom spaces. We offer regularly planned studio sessions and time for children to work on their own projects. Each week small groups of children explore a variety of materials and processes, such as mixing colors, sketching from real life, experimenting with earth clay and creating 3D collage and sculpture. In the classrooms, we provide art materials for children to use during their indoor play and offer opportunities to respond to curriculum topics through art.

INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Being housed in senior living residences allows many natural opportunities for children to connect with the "grandmas and grandpas." Our intergenerational programming includes scheduled activities with seniors: music, art, games, cooking, plays and stories, reading, as well as informal visits. As the groups become familiar with each other, relationships are formed. During a typical year, seniors spend time in the preschool and the children go upstairs for activities. For the safety of our beloved seniors, we did not schedule in-person activities with them during the pandemic. As the pandemic eases, we look forward to connecting with them again.

COMMUNICATION

We believe parents and teachers are partners in supporting young children, and we prioritize regular, frequent communication between preschool and home. In addition to communicating with teachers about your own child at conferences and at pick-up and drop-off time, you'll have several ways to find out about what's going on at All Seasons. Each day, your child's teacher will email a summary with news and photos from that day. Every other month, an all-school newsletter goes out to families and seniors. (Seniors love hearing the school news!) The staff also takes turns posting a blog twice a month that appears on our website and our Facebook page. Parent Forums are held multiple times a year for parents and teachers to meet and discuss topics relevant to early childhood. Individual parent conferences are held three times a year and progress reports describe your child's development over time.

CONTACT US

Please contact us if you have any questions. We are happy to help you learn more about our preschool.

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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We believe that a diverse community enriches everyone. Diversity of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, and marital, parental or economic status adds richness to the learning context. We recognize each child's unique strengths and work toward inclusion of all children. We help children get to know and support one another as valued members of the community.

All Seasons strives to honor each child's and family's identity; we want our children to see themselves and their families reflected at school. Additionally, we offer children windows into cultures and traditions beyond our immediate community, teaching respectful understanding of the diverse world. Conversations about differences are welcomed and normalized at All Seasons. family, senior and staff is treated with respect.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can we take a tour of the preschools?

We offer in-person individual tours scheduled at your convenience. Please call to schedule a tour. In addition, we will hold an Information Session this spring to give prospective families a look inside our preschools. We invite you to check out our website to read more and see our photo gallery! You can also follow us on Facebook and read our blog on the website.

What program options does All Seasons offer?

For Toddlers: (age 2 by Sept. 1st)

Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

For Preschoolers: (ages 3, 4 and 5)

Choose half-days (8:30 - 11:30 a.m.) OR Full days (8:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.).

Select the number of days per week.

Extended care is offered before- and after-school for an hourly fee.

Half-day children can opt to stay for lunch from 11:30 - 12:30.

How do I enroll my child?

Enrollment forms can be printed from our website: allseasonspreschool.net or call to have us mail a form to you.

Current families are given priority for fall enrollment, beginning January 22.

Registrations are accepted from new families beginning **February 5** on a first come, first served basis.

Fill out an application form and mail it with a \$100 registration fee to either the Inver Grove Heights or the Eagan preschool.

We will confirm your enrollment status upon receipt of your registration form, and will place children in classes by late March.

All Seasons at Inver Glen: 651-450-0606

All Seasons of Eagan: 952-466-1471

website: allseasonspreschool.net

What We Do Each Day and Why

We want families to know what their child experiences each day and understand our program choices.

Our curriculum is age appropriate. There are things we know about children's interests, needs, and abilities based on their ages. There are characteristics that preschoolers tend to have in common, including:

- **Children learn best through hands-on experiences.** Hearing about how plant roots grow is not as meaningful as watching it happen.
- **Children have a longer attention span for self-selected activities.** You may hear that preschoolers have an attention span of five to ten minutes, but parents who have watched their child spend 45 minutes on an activity know that isn't always the case. We want our students to build long attention spans and we promote this through spending long periods of time doing activities they enjoy.
- **Children need lots of practice.** Your child may ask to hear the same book over and over again. Children develop competence and security through hearing the same story, assembling the same puzzle or building the same structure until they become experts.
- **Children benefit from having their families connected to their school experiences.** When families are a presence in a child's school, a powerful message is sent to children that their families value education and that schools value families. Having a presence in your child's classroom does not mean you need to be physically present, but that you are aware of what is happening at school and tune in to what your child wants you to know.



Our curriculum is designed to be individually appropriate for each child. All preschoolers are unique and they need their individuality recognized and respected. Children develop “unevenly.” A child may seem more like a five-year-old in one area of development and more like a toddler in another area. This still falls within the range of normal development. Teachers take these things into consideration when making choices about what to offer children.

- **Children have different interests.** Our curriculum takes children’s individual preferences, interests and abilities into consideration so that all children can find something that is meaningful and experience success.
- **Children have different comfort levels in new situations.** Some children need time to warm up, while others dive right in to a new experience. Both are normal responses to new situations.
- **Children come to us with different experiences.** Some children need little support as they learn to separate from parents and as they learn to share space, toys and adults with other children. Other children need more support.
- **Children are different based on their family backgrounds,** including birth order, family traditions, and family structure. These differences affect children’s interests and reactions. Everyone benefits from understanding a child’s family before the school year begins.



Our environment is culturally appropriate. Because we are a part of a larger community (with the senior residences), it is especially important for us to recognize that people have different cultural backgrounds.

- **Families speak different languages.** Awareness of a child’s linguistic background helps us meet needs at school.
- **Families have different beliefs.** We support the belief systems of families rather than expecting that everyone celebrates the same holidays or any holidays at all. For us, being in a community means children will be exposed to different holidays and traditions.
- **Not all families are the same.** We acknowledge and value a variety of family structures without making assumptions, allowing us to meet children’s needs at school.

A Day at All Seasons Preschool

Morning:

Children and parents arrive. Parents bring their children into the classroom to begin the day. Teachers and parents touch base, and each child is greeted by name.

We begin our day with outside playtime. We go outside in all types of weather, which means wearing appropriate clothes. Children are encouraged to dress themselves with teachers offering assistance or coaching as needed. This process can be a lengthy one in the winter, but it fosters independence and confidence. We spend time exploring the woods, pines, meadow, pond, and boulders. We also spend time playing on the playground.

We gather for group time. Children are introduced to new activities and materials available so they can make thoughtful choices for their morning. We sing a song, do a literacy activity and read a story. We share a healthy **snack** family-style. Children practice taking turns serving themselves food, pouring water into their cups and cleaning up their places at the table. Lively conversation and good manners are encouraged.

Indoor play time follows. Children engage in an activity of their choice in the classroom. Many activities are available every day, including blocks, manipulatives, paint, art materials, sensory play, and dramatic play. These activities are open-ended and allow children to play in different ways and at different levels as they grow. Other activities available vary, based on the children's interests. These include cooking and art projects, and seasonal/nature-based projects. Clean up takes place before we transition to the next activity. Children take responsibility for caring for the classroom and pitching in with necessary chores. Additionally, small groups are taken to the art studio each week for guided art exploration and projects.

We spend time with the seniors and the Activities Directors of the senior buildings. After indoor play time, we go upstairs for an activity with the grandmas and grandpas. We sing, read and act out stories, play games, do art and food projects, celebrate birthdays, and watch old movies with popcorn. Children are encouraged to greet and say goodbye to each senior with a handshake or hug. These experiences foster a sense of community and build social skills by allowing the children to create connections with others.

Our closing activity of the morning may include acting out stories, playing a group game, or finishing up story dictation and illustrations in story journals. For both our morning and all day classes, parents pick up children in the classroom. Teachers and parents check in with each other once again, and teachers say goodbye to children who are leaving.





Afternoon:

We sit down for lunch. Eating together is a community-building activity. Children eat at a table with a teacher where we encourage conversation, both speaking and listening.

Rest time is a licensing requirement and provides a much-needed break for children after a busy morning. Children lie on cots with a book and soft music playing. Some children fall asleep and others get up after a short rest for more play time.

Afternoon play begins with outdoor time when non-sleepers get up. There are also art studio groups scheduled during this period. After everyone is awake, there is a second **indoor play time**.

Senior time continues in the afternoon and is usually paired with our closing activity. A grandma or grandpa comes to our classroom to read to the children or we go upstairs for an activity in the community room. This time may include a game, story-acting, and a song.

Parents pick up children in the classroom where teachers and children say goodbye.

"The List" is sent home to parents via email every day summarizing the events of the day. This strengthens the connection between home and school and gives parents a chance to initiate a conversation about what happened at school that day.



What Do Children Learn at All Seasons Preschool?

How do we “teach” math?

- Play board games.
- Talk about the time and schedule of our day.
- Sing counting songs.
- Sort materials.
- Count within context – How many crackers do we need for snack? How many days did it take for the goose eggs to hatch?
- Offer measuring materials in the sensory table.
- Measure each other on the growth chart in fall, winter, and spring.
- Set out materials using one-to-one correspondence.
- Provide manipulatives for sorting, grouping, making patterns.
- Measure and follow sequences in cooking.



How do we “teach” reading and writing?

- Speak to children using complex language.
- Read to them daily.
- Sing together – incorporating rhyming, phonetics, rhythm.
- Place books and writing materials in several areas of the classroom.
- Encourage proper book handling.
- Model writing daily.
- Take story dictation.
- Act out stories - from books and from our own dictated stories in our journals.
- Exchange letters with friends and with the grandmas and grandpas.
- Follow recipes.
- Use children’s printed names in many contexts, since names are the most familiar words to them.
- Play guessing games using letters, letter sounds, and rhyming.
- Use children’s sign-in sheet to teach proper letter formation.
- ‘Draw’ letters in the art studio to accompany our study of lines.





How do we “teach” skills such as following directions and self-help?

- Allow time for children to work on developing skills and completing projects.
- Encourage children to problem-solve.
- Share limited resources – two sinks, one doll stroller; pass snacks using serving bowls, etc.
- Set reasonable expectations.
- Offer large group experiences where turns must be taken.
- Offer unlimited opportunities to practice – cutting, writing, putting on jackets.

How do we “teach” empathy, social skills, patience and communication?

- Offer several large and small group experiences in the classroom and with seniors.
- Set reasonable expectations.
- Allow children to make their own choices and experience consequences.
- Model appropriate behavior.
- Have mixed-age classes in which children teach and help each other.
- Handle animals carefully.



How do we “teach” respect?

- Model it.
- Express and acknowledge feelings.
- Use “real” or authentic voices.
- Set high expectations for how people should be treated.
- Admit our own mistakes.
- Explain our reasons for why we do what we do.
- Make clear distinctions between requests and directions.

How do we handle discipline?

- Follow through until the end.
- Facilitate relationships with parents.
- Set clear, shared expectations for being part of our community.
- Accommodate individual needs.