

Downers Grove Grade School District 58  
**Grove Children's Preschool  
Parent/Child Handbook**



**2016-2017 School Year**

Henry Puffer Elementary School  
Indian Trail Elementary School

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year with District 58's distinguished Grove Children's Preschool!

The information outlined in this handbook includes District 58 information along with specific pages that are devoted to Grove Children's Preschool. It is designed to serve as a quick reference guide to answer your questions. We have similar information on our school website. If you need additional information, please feel free to call the main offices at Henry Puffer, (630) 968-0294 or Indian Trail, (630) 719- 5845.

Welcome to the new school year. We look forward to working with you and your children as we nurture the love of learning in all our students.

Sincerely,

Jackelyn Cadard, MA, CAS  
Grove Children's Preschool Coordinator  
[jcadard@dg58.org](mailto:jcadard@dg58.org)  
(630) 968-0454

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## Contact Information

<b>Role</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
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Grove Children's Preschool Follows the Downers Grove District 58 Calendar

\*Please visit the [www.dg58/preschool](http://www.dg58/preschool) for a specific calendar

## Program Info

Our program is a developmentally appropriate preschool, serving children three, four, and five years of age and their families. The student body population is made up of children with and without identified disabilities. Preschool age children with disabilities participate in the program as special education students who have a specific educational plan in place to address their unique learning needs. This plan is known as the Individual Education Program or IEP.

A portion of the population participates in the Grove Children's Preschool program through funding from the Illinois State Board of Education known as the "Preschool For All" grant. These grant funds allow District #58 to provide a designated number of preschool age students with a high quality educational program that is free of cost to families. Students must be found eligible to participate in the "Preschool For All" program by undergoing a preschool screen.

Another portion of the student population participates in Grove Children's Preschool as community (tuition) students. The community students participate in either 2 or 4 day per week programming. Parents may choose a Tuesday- Friday schedule or a Tuesday/Thursday or Wednesday/Friday schedule.

### Preschool Classrooms :

1. **Early Childhood Blended Classroom:** Preschool classroom that consists of a mix of students and ages (3-5). The students population is a blend of students from the community (tuition), students who qualify for Preschool for All and students who are receiving special education services. This classroom has a maximum of 17/18 students and meets in a morning or afternoon session. One certified classroom teacher and 2 instructional assistants.
2. **Early Childhood Developmental Learning Program (DLP):** Preschool classroom that consists of student population with special education needs. This classroom has a maximum of 10 students and meets in a morning or afternoon session Monday through Friday. One certified classroom teacher and 2 instructional assistants.
3. **Early Childhood RISE:** Preschool classroom meets the needs of children who demonstrate learning needs of those on the autism spectrum that specifically meets the needs of children on the Autism spectrum who have been made eligible for a longer classroom experience. This classroom has a maximum of 10 students and meets Monday through Friday from 8:10 a.m. to 1:10p.m. One certified classroom teacher and 2 classroom assistants.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of our program is to assist families in meeting the developmental needs of children, to promote the educational and social/emotional growth of children, and to provide a safe, secure and nurturing classroom environment. The program emphasizes the process of growth through active, hands on experiences. The program provides high quality enrichment experiences for our students, as well as activities and educational opportunities for parents and families throughout the year.

## **Beliefs**

District 58 believes in providing developmentally-appropriate experiences for preschool children, their families and the community. The goal of the Grove Children's Preschool program is to meet the developmental and individual needs of all children in a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment, while promoting educational success through engaging and collaborative learning experiences. District 58 believes in encouraging the process of growth through active learning that utilizes the natural motivators, abilities and interests of children.

## **Goals**

Grove Children's Preschool aims to have children experience a sense of self-esteem, exhibit a positive attitude toward life, develop friendships and cooperative play skills, increase independence in caring for themselves, expand with verbal communication skills, strengthen concepts needed for reading and writing, improve physical coordination, become life-long learners, and cultivate values and character. We look at the whole child to address their individual needs and goals which are addressed through an integrated approach within each preschool classroom.

## **Curriculum**

### [Creative Curriculum:](#)

Grove Children's Preschool uses the Creative Curriculum as the framework for the preschool program. This is a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is accepted by The National Association of Education for Young Children. A variety of active and quiet work/play centers are provided so children can make choices, create, and interact with peers within their environment. The materials used provide concrete experiences and are adaptable to the many different play and developmental levels of children. The teachers also develop "Units of Study" that thematically complement the children, their cultures, and the community.

[Phonemic Awareness Curriculum-](#) Dr. Michael Heggerty

[Handwriting Curriculum-](#) Zaner-Blozer

## Daily Schedule Components

**Student Arrival:** Includes individual greetings, hang coats, empty backpacks, put away snack, mail, and library books, attendance, table activities.

**Group Meeting:** Children sing songs and finger plays, share views, complete attendance, check the calendar, check the weather, talk about the day's activities and choices.

**Center Time:** One hour of child-initiated play at learning centers which include: blocks and floor toys, dramatic play, table toys & games, art center, library area, discovery table, scooping table, water table, writing table, and computers. Snack & Pack Mail will also be incorporated during center time. Children will sit together for a self serve snack from home. During this time children have opportunities to make requests, use self help skills and practice conversation. Children put papers, art work, snack bag and communication folders into their back packs.

**Clean Up:** Children sort, categorize, and organize as they put away the materials.

**Large Group:** Activities include; stories, dramatics, literacy, music, dance, and games. Students will also visit the library one time per week.

**Small Groups:** Children participate in small group activities designed to meet each child's individual needs. Topics may include; graphs, charts, games, writing, communication, and academic skills.

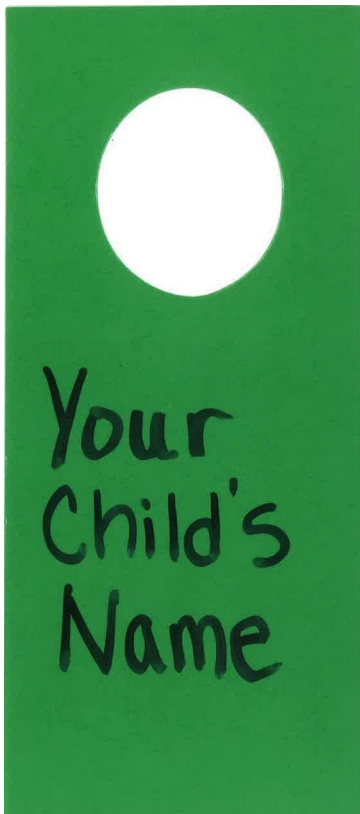
**Gross Motor:** Children will participate in gross motor activities such as playground equipment, balls, group games, etc. Gross motor will be outside weather permitting. Students will also visit the gymnasium during scheduled times.

**Closing Activities:** Class reviews activities from the day. Children are encouraged to put on coats and backpacks independently. Class sings good bye song.

\*\*\*Individual classroom schedules may vary and allow for flexibility but will include the daily components listed above.\*\*\*

# Grove Children's Preschool Carpool Procedures

In order to ensure the safety of all preschool students, a drop-off and pick-up procedure has been developed. Please drive slowly and carefully in the parking lot for the safety of your child and others. Every child will be given 2 hang tags with their name on them to be displayed on the rear view mirror of your car during drop off and pick up. Please face the name outward when hanging your tag/s. If you need additional tags, contact your child's teacher.



## **Safe Drop Off Procedures**

1. Follow the circle drive and stay in the line of cars.
2. Please stay in your car to say good-bye
3. A teaching assistant will come to your vehicle to help transition/walk your child into school.

## **Safe Pick Up Procedures**

1. Follow the circle drive and stay in the line of cars. DO NOT PULL TO THE FRONT OF LINE UNLESS WAVED ON BY A TEACHER.
2. For everyone's safety it is important that you stay in your car and in the line of cars while your child is being walked to you by a teaching assistant or teacher.
3. Please note that it is your responsibility to buckle and unbuckle your child's carseat.

## **Don't Forget.....**

**\*\*\*CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED BY LAW WHILE OPERATING A VEHICLE IN THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT OR SCHOOL ZONE\*\***



## **Absences**

If your child is going to be absent (sick, vacation, etc.) from school, please call the school office as soon as possible.

**Henry Puffer - 630-968-0294**  
**Indian Trail 630-719-5845**

Families are responsible for reporting student absence each day a child will be out. If you have questions regarding your child's illness and when it is safe for them to return to school, please call the school nurse.

You should call your child in sick when....

- \*He/she has a fever of 100 degrees. Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- \*He/she has vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- \*He/she has a strep infection.
- \*He/she has a rash that covers part or all of the body. Consult a doctor before sending your child to school.
- \*Please remember that students need to be vomiting, diarrhea, and fever free for 24 hours before returning to school
- \*Guidelines from the Illinois State Medical Society Alliance (ISMSA)

## **Clothing/Shoes/Backpacks**

- \*Please send an extra set of clothing for your child to keep at school(including underwear and socks).
- \*Children should have comfortable clothing and be dressed to play.
- \*Children should have shoes that are comfortable and allow for moving, running, jumping and climbing.
- \*Children should have a full size backpack that allows for a folder to fit.

## Winter Weather

\*Guidance from Illinois State Board of Education\*

Children will play outside daily Almost every day unless there is active precipitation (temperature between 25 and 90 degrees, taking into consideration wind chill). In order for your children to remain warm, dry and safe on the playground, we ask all parents to send your child in proper winter weather clothing.

This includes:

- warm winter coat
- hat
- scarf
- pair of mittens

When your child wears boots to school we recommend you send a pair of shoes that can be kept in their backpack to be sent back and forth each day. If you have any further questions, please contact your child's teacher.

## School Closings for Hazardous Weather/ Other Emergencies

In the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that present threats to the safety and well being of students, staff, or property, the Superintendent of Schools may deem it necessary to close school. District 58 utilizes an automated calling system to alert parents of school closings (see also: Parent Notification System). The District also posts information on the district's website, [www.dg58.org](http://www.dg58.org), and places a message on the District's answering machine, which can be accessed by calling (630) 719-5800. In addition, the District notifies the following radio/TV stations from which the official announcement is made: WBBM (780), WGN (720), CBS Ch 2, NBC Ch 5, ABC Ch 7, WGN Ch 9, FOX 32, CLTV. Parents may also check the status of the school facility by going to [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com) and searching for the school facility or school closings. In cases of emergency early dismissal, the Superintendent allows one hour, if possible, from the time the announcement is made to the time of dismissal. Building principals notify the proper Parent Teacher Association representatives, and telephone trees are used to communicate with parents. Students who walk to school are dismissed only after the parent or the parent's designee arrives in person to take the child home. Buses unable to reach designated stops will return students to their home school. (Per: District 58 Handbook)

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are an exciting and special celebration. We will celebrate birthdays for a short time at the end of our school day. You are welcome to attend this celebration and here are some other ways you can participate; read your child's favorite book to the class, sing along, sit with your child during a special birthday story. If you are unable to attend you can still send in your child's favorite book for the teacher to read. We ask that you do not send birthday treats, food or favors. If you wish, we invite you to donate a copy of your child's favorite book to expand classroom libraries. These books can include a special message from you to your preschooler and create a lasting memory of your child's birthday in the classroom.

Also, please be aware that students are not allowed to distribute birthday invitations at school unless all of the students in the class are invited.

## Snacks

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to school each day in the snack bag provided by the school. This should include something your child likes to eat and something healthy such as: cut up fruits, or vegetables, cheese, yogurt, crackers, pretzels, popcorn, or raisins. Place your child's snack in the plastic bag provided and labeled with their name. Always send your child's snack in a plastic bag with your child's name on it. Please do not send candy or juice. We will supply cups of water at snack time. If your child participates in our Preschool For All program the grant affords us the opportunity to provide a healthy snack for your child. You are always welcome to send a preferred snack from home, but know that we have healthy snack option for your child at school. Finally, please remember that **Grove Preschool is a Nut Free Environment**. Please make sure your child's teacher/nurse is aware of special diets and/or allergies

## **Nut Free Safe Snacks**

Please check label ingredients for peanuts, nuts, or made in factory.

- Nabisco Original Premium Saltine Crackers
- Nabisco Wheat Thins
- Pepperidge Farm Goldfish crackers
- Nabisco Honey Maid Graham crackers
- Nabisco Teddy Grahams
- Nabisco Animal Crackers
- Nabisco Nilla Wafers
- Kellogg's Nutra-Grain Cereal Bars
- Quaker Oats Cereal Bars
- Pretzels
- Raisins
- General Mills Kix Cereal
- Betty Crocker Fruit Roll-ups
- Nabisco Triscuits (Original or Cheddar)
- Sunshine Cheez-it Crackers
- Kellogg's Nutri Grain Yogurt Bars
- Great Value Fruit & Grain Bars
- Betty Crocker Fruit Gushers (all varieties)

## **Unsafe Snacks**

- Most Granola Bars
- Sesame Street Cookies or Crackers
- Most cookies
- Some cereals
- All Little Debbie Products
- All Bulk Food Bin Items
- Ritz Bitz sandwich crackers
- Brach's Fruit Snacks (Barbie as Rapunzel, Clifford Big Red Dog, Barbie of Swan Lake)

## **Entry to School Buildings**

To ensure the safety and well-being of students, District 58 requires that all visitors to school buildings report to the school office and obtain a visitor's badge after being let in through the secure front entrance by school personnel. The badge is to be worn during the entirety of the visitor's stay in the building. A notice regarding the requirement for visitors to report to the main office upon entry is posted on the entrance doors of all District 58 schools. (Per: District 58 Parent Handbook; Reference: Administrative Regulation 1360)

## **Family Involvement**

District 58 believes parents are the child's first and most important teachers. For this reason, Grove Children's Preschool embraces family involvement as a basic component of the preschool program. Research has shown that the greatest benefits are derived when parents and teachers work as partners to guide children in their growth, development, and education. Volunteer opportunities are provided within the classroom, on field trips, and for special occasions.

### **Goals That Guide Parent Involvement**

- Helps parents understand developmentally appropriate practices
- Provides parents with information related to how children grow and learn
- Provide support through resource, materials, referrals, and parent conferences
- Aid parents in recognizing and coping with stresses related to parenting
- Provide ideas and materials for learning at home
- Help parents understand the importance of regular, consistent school attendance for their child's future success

## **Parent Volunteers In the Classroom**

Parent volunteers contribute greatly to classroom activities and we encourage you to sign up at the beginning of the school year through our Parent Volunteer Forms. If you enroll mid year please inquire about volunteers options through your child's classroom teacher. These volunteer opportunities do not include parent volunteers for field trips.

When volunteering adhere to the following guidelines:

- We also ask that you do not bring siblings.
- Volunteering in the class must be arranged with the classroom teacher. There are a variety of ways parents can contribute either from home or by their presence in the classroom.
- Volunteers are reminded to maintain confidentiality in regard to student needs.
- Remember when you volunteer in the classroom you will be working with all of the students in the classroom and not just your child.
- Once you have been given your volunteer assignment, the teachers' primary responsibility will be with the children. While the teachers are available to answer questions about the project you are working on, they will not be available for conversations or to answer questions about the children in the classroom.

## **Family Fun Nights**

Family is a very important part of a child's life and we would like to encourage you to set aside some time to spend with your preschooler. Grove Children's Preschool would like to invite you and your family to attend our Family Fun Events, which are held 5 times throughout the school year. This is a great opportunity for you to spend some quality time with your child and have fun. These events are planned by the preschool team and include developmentally appropriate activities such as games, art, singing, and dancing. Not only are these events beneficial for your child, but also for you as a parent. Family Fun Events provide opportunities for you to learn about some of the activities that your child participates in during the school year and teaches you how to bring them into your home. It also allows you to meet many of the other children and families in the preschool program. Information about dates and times of events will be sent home with your child.

## What is “Developmentally Appropriate Practice”?

You will probably notice that our classrooms have a lot of bustle and noise with children talking, playing, and exploring. Such a classroom environment differs from the old images of a teacher doing a lot of talking while children sit and listen quietly.

Research and experience tells us that to be effective with young children, teaching practices need to be “developmentally appropriate.” What this means is simply that educators need to think first about what young children are like and then create an environment and experiences that are in tune with children’s characteristics.

Early childhood, after all, is a time of life quite different from adulthood, and even from the later school years. Children 3-6 learn far better through direct interactive experiences than through just listening to someone talk. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration.

Based on such knowledge about what children of this age are like, we design our program to fit them. It works a lot better than trying to redesign children!

A developmentally appropriate program like ours is age-appropriate, but that’s not all. To make our program a good place for every child, we gear our classroom environment and activities to this community and the families involved. We’re eager to learn as much as we can about each child’s family, cultural background, past experience, and current circumstances. With this knowledge we can work to create a program that fits the children and the families we serve.

Copple, Carol, and Sue Bredekamp. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009. Print.