

Dodger Preschool Handbook

4-Year-Old Program

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Purpose

Dodger Preschool was organized in May 1973. A Board of Directors was elected by the council of the First Congregational United Church of Christ to plan and supervise a non-profit, Iowa licensed preschool for children in the Fort Dodge Community. Since then, Dodger Preschool has evolved and has become part of the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) for Four-Year-Old Children.

You can find out more about the SWVPP by viewing the fact sheet here:

<https://educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/SWVPP%20Fact%20Sheet%202019.pdf>

Our Mission

The mission of Dodger Preschool is to provide a safe, caring, and purposeful early learning environment for children, ages 3-5 in the Fort Dodge area. Dodger Preschool follows the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and implements research-based curriculums that teach social, emotional, physical, and academic skills to prepare students to be successful members of our society.

Preschool Program (Days & Times)

At Dodger Preschool, four-year-old preschool meets three days a week for a total of 10 hours. The morning class meets on Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 8:00AM to 11:20AM. The afternoon class meets Monday, Wednesday, Thursday from 12:00PM to 3:20PM.

We provide opportunities for children to learn and grow through indoor and outdoor play, small group activities, and large group experiences. We aim to surround children with love, understanding, and acceptance, so that each child might come to know themselves as unique and important individuals.

Staff

Our staff consists of a full time teacher and director and a full time teacher's associate. For both 4-year-old classes (AM & PM), we typically enroll up to 15 students (exceptions may be made, but class sizes will never exceed 20 students).

Registration

Registration for the next school year typically begins in December and is available until all openings are filled. Students are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis. A child **must be 4 years old on or before September 15th** to be enrolled in our 4 year old program. Upon registering your child, a registration form and a non-refundable **\$50 registration fee** is due to secure your child's enrollment. There is **no tuition charge** for 4-year-old preschool. Please call us at 515-955-6060 with questions about registering your child.

Admission Requirements

1. Parent contact information
2. Emergency contact information

3. Persons authorized to pick the child up from the preschool
4. Medical contact (child's doctor name, phone, address)
5. Dental contact (child's dentist name, phone, address (if they don't have one can list the parent's dentist or any other dentist))
6. Copy of a physical signed by a health professional and most up-to-date immunization form
7. Field trips/Off site activities authorization form
8. Authorization to administer sun screen and/or insect repellent
9. Media release form
10. Parent/Teacher Contract that includes
 - Agreement to two home visits (fall and spring)
 - Child is accompanied by a parent/guardian when he/she attends the orientation session (Open House, Home Visits)
 - Parents must agree to mark clothing and other items the child may bring to school with child's name/initials
 - A parent must notify the director by written notice 2 weeks prior to withdrawing their child
 - Parents/Guardian must attend a family school event
 - Child is potty trained prior to admittance to Dodger Preschool

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Grant Requirements

The following requirements must be met in order to receive the SWVPP Grant which allows 4-year-old's in the state of Iowa to attend a free quality preschool program.

- An early childhood licensed teacher responsible for designing and implementing effective learning environments using instructional strategies to enhance children's learning.
- A minimum of 10 hours per week of quality preschool instruction.
- Program must provide family involvement opportunities such as home visits, family nights, and conferences.
- Implement the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.
<https://www.educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/IQPPSandCriteria2017withformnumbering.pdf>
- Have rigorous and relevant curriculum and assessments to enhance children's strengths, interests, and knowledge (based on the Iowa Early Learning Standards); and alignment with K-12 standards and academic expectations.
- Appropriate adult-child ratio of 1 to 10 and a maximum group size of 20.

Curriculum and Assessment

Dodger Preschool uses Creative Curriculum and the GOLD assessment tool. The following domains are what classroom activities are based on to support your child's learning:

- **Social-Emotional:** problem solving, emotional literacy, building positive relationships, manners, participating in different group settings, school skills

- **Physical:** traveling skills, balancing skills, gross-motor skills, fine-motor skills
- **Language:** complex language skills, expressing thoughts/needs, conversation skills
- **Cognitive:** positive approaches to learning, classification skills, symbolic thinking
- **Literacy:** phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, writing skills
- **Mathematics:** number concepts, spatial relationships & shapes, patterns
- **Science and Technology**
- **Social Studies**
- **The Arts**

Your child's progress will be shared with you at parent/teacher conferences at least twice a year.

Discipline Policy

Our teaching staff is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful in handling challenging behaviors. Dodger Preschool implements Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a process for creating a safe and effective school environment and it provides consistent procedures and processes for all students and staff. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individual plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Injury Policy

Your child's health and safety is of utmost importance to us. In the event that an injury may occur, we strive to provide your child with the care they need. A parent/guardian will be notified of any injury a child may receive within 24 hours of the incident. All staff are required to have up-to-date First Aid/CPR/AED training. If an injury requires first aid or medical care, a staff member will fill out an injury/incident report and it will be kept in your child's file. All children must have an emergency medical treatment authorization form on file with up-to-date information.

Drop-off/Pick-up Policy

Children are to be brought into the classroom upon arrival by the person providing them transportation. The person picking up the child must come into the classroom upon departure. We have a sign-in/sign-out binder that must be signed by the person dropping off/picking up upon arrival and departure. This policy is necessary for the safety of our students and also allows for daily exchange between guardians and teachers.

Attendance Policy

Children must be brought to school promptly at 8:00AM or 12:00PM and picked up by 11:20AM or 3:20PM. It is very important for children to arrive on time so they do not miss out on activities or disrupt the group due to late arrival. It is equally important for children to be picked up on time as they do not want to feel left behind when others are going home.

Please call to let us know (515-955-6060) if your child will be late so we can make necessary arrangements. The preschool door gets locked 10 minutes after arrival time for safety purposes.

A Stop/Go sign hangs in the preschool window. When it is flipped to "GO" this means you can come into the classroom at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day to pick up your child. The teachers need the time before class for preparation so please do not try to come into the classroom until the sign is flipped to "GO". The doors will be locked until 8:00AM or 12:00PM for arrival and again after children have arrived. The doors will unlock again at departure time.

If there is a change in who is picking up your child from school, a written note to the teacher is required.

Illness Policy

For everyone's health and safety, it is mandatory that sick children are not brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms the night before, he or she will not be admitted the following day:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eyes with drainage
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

For an ill child to return the following must be established:

- Fever free for 24 hours without medication
- Chicken Pox: one week after onset
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye): 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

When a child develops signs of an illness while at preschool, parents, guardians, or other persons authorized by parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child.

If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, will be provided a place to rest where other individuals will not be exposed.

Snack Policy

A nutritious snack will be served to your child each preschool day. We follow the guidelines given by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Each child will have the opportunity to bring a special birthday treat (cookies, cupcakes, ice cream, etc.). Your child's teacher will communicate with you to determine the best date to bring this special treat. If the birthday treat does not meet our nutritional guidelines, we will serve something in addition to meet the guidelines.

Open Door Policy

Dodger Preschool has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to observe any time during the preschool day. Parents of prospective students are also welcome to observe. Please call the preschool, 955-6060 to make arrangements. Parents are asked to wait three weeks to visiting the preschool during school hours to allow children to adjust to our schedule and routines. If a parent is a registered sex offender, a restricted access policy will be put into place before he/she will be allowed on the school grounds.

Pet Policy

We love to have family pets come visit the preschool. Before bringing your pet to share, you must present an up to date vaccination record and be sure of any allergies the preschoolers might have.

Transportation

Dodger Preschool does not provide transportation to or from school. However, we are willing to make suggestions for car pools.

Field Trips

In order for your child to attend field trips, an authorization form must be signed. The DART bus is our form of transportation for these outings. We will notify you ahead of time when field trips are scheduled and will also ask for chaperones to join us. We ask that chaperones arrange for sibling care on field trip days. We expect chaperones to help keep the students together in groups and follow the same classroom rules the children must follow. Be respectful, be responsible, be safe.

Snow Days

We follow the Fort Dodge Community School District when decisions are made for canceling school. If the district cancels due to inclement weather the morning and afternoon class will be cancelled. However, if the district has a late start, Dodger Preschool will not have the morning class. If the district calls an early out due to inclement weather and preschool is not in session at the time of the decision, we will not have an afternoon class. Parents are encouraged, however, to use discretion when determining if it is safe to send their child(ren) to preschool.

It will be up to the discretion of the Board of Directors to determine if missed school days will be made up.

Extra Set of Clothes

While it is our policy that your child is potty trained, we understand accidents happen. Whether it is spilled milk at snack, a paint mess, or we just didn't make it to the bathroom in time. Please keep an extra set of clothes (top, bottoms, underwear, socks) in your child's backpack with their name on them. That way if needed, they will be there. Thanks!

Toys at School

Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school or have in their backpacks. Toys should be kept at home. It will eliminate an extra distraction and prevent toys from being lost, broken, or "borrowed". An exception will be made on designated "show and tell" days.

Weapons at School

We have a zero tolerance policy for dangerous weapons (real or toy) on the premises of our school.