

Welcome to the Infant Room!



Interlake Child Care and Learning Center
(206) 632-6479
www.interlakechildcare.com

In an effort to make your experience and the experience of your child as fulfilling and successful as possible, we have compiled some important information about the routines, goals and practices that take place here. We feel the sense of community at Interlake is one of the unique strengths we offer, providing children with a feeling of belonging in a comfortable and safe environment. To that end, we encourage parents to ask questions, spend time in the classroom with their child and become acquainted with teachers and families in the Interlake community. We can make ourselves available to answer your questions during classroom hours or in a conference if extended discussion is required. Please let us know how we can help you! Children are more confident and independent when their parents and caregivers are also confident and well informed. We strive to create a partnership with you to help your child put our mission into practice ... ***Interlake Child Care and Learning creates an inclusive and vibrant community with families and young children. Interlake's loving environment and anti-bias, culturally relevant curriculum inspires children to grow into competent, confident and compassionate citizens of the world.***

Please let us know how we can help bring your family values and culture into our school.

Table of Contents

3	Daily Schedule	8	Waddler Program
3	Morning drop off	8	Goals and opportunities
4	Tips for successful separations	9	Child observation and assessments
5	Pick-up	9	Children's portfolio books
5	Baskets/shelf-space	9	Outside play time
5	Diapering	10	Parent participation
6	Feeding	10	Medication and accident logs
6	Toothbrushing	11	Songs, stories and rhymes
7	Napping		
7	Curriculum and room set-up		

Infant Room Schedule

An infant's first year of life is full of change, and so the schedule of activity changes quite a bit throughout the year. It seems that younger infants usually nap around 9, while older ones want to play, engage and learn about their environment. Children eat and/or have a bottle, then when the young ones are alert and ready to explore, the older infants are getting sleepy...

Please let us know the routine and caregiving strategies you use with your baby at home. Some babies' schedules fluctuate a bit at school, depending on the dynamics of other children, curriculum, indoor and outdoor environments and the weather. Parent information helps teachers tune in to the infants and follow their cues. Teachers work closely with families and infants to follow the natural routines of the child and the wants of the parents and guardians. Babies are fed on demand. They nap when their bodies are tired. Thus, activity is very loosely planned. Our aim is to get all infants outside at least twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Our opening teacher arrives at the center at 7:00 and works until 3:00. This teacher has 30 minutes to get everything ready for when the babies arrive. Doors are locked until 7:30, unless prior arrangements are made with the teacher (this time is quite busy so we ask that if you do come early please follow the policy applied to late pick-ups - \$5.00 every 5 minutes or fraction thereof). Teachers are paid the late pick up or early drop-off fee directly.

Our 2nd teacher arrives at 8:00 and works until 4:00. Usually, in the mornings babies come in and spend time exploring and then they engage in teacher led activities (anything from stories and songs, to music and movements, all depending on the dynamics of the moment).

Our 3rd teacher arrives at 9:00 and works until 5:00. At this time, the older infants are beginning breakfast. Some younger ones will either be busy with play or may be going down for a nap.

Our 4th teacher arrives at 10:00 and works until close at 6:00. Often at this time several children are either napping or having quiet time, while others go outside. (Or have Waddler Time with 3rd teacher).

Our 5th teacher arrives at 3:00 and supports the afternoon activities until close at 6:00.

On Fridays from 2:00-3:00 pm, all Infant teachers meet outside of the classroom while other teachers fill in; we plan curriculum to meet set goals, develop opportunities and collaborate on strategies to enhance our programming.

Morning Drop Off

(Having a smooth drop-off is an important start to your child's day – and yours!)

The classroom and morning teacher are ready for your child at 7:30 am. The entrance doors are locked until that time. Always check in with the teacher before leaving for the day. We are more than happy to help comfort your baby when you are leaving, don't hesitate to ask for a hand when you are ready to go.

The most important way to start the day is to wash yours and your child's hands as soon as you arrive at the school. The sign-in sheet is kept on a clipboard on the end of the teacher shelf. State licensing requires all children to be signed in and out. Always sign in with your full name, the time

of arrival and please note who will be picking up your baby so that we will know who to call if there is a need related to pick up.

Please fill out a daily report form with full name, date, the time your baby last ate, the time your baby last slept and what time you expect to pick up your infant. This information helps teachers interpret cues and lets teachers know how long the bottles need to last. If there is any other information or directions you'd like us to have, be sure to write it on this form.

During the spring and summer months, children spend more time outdoors and we ask parents to apply sunscreen to their children 6 months and older before leaving for the day. There is a 'sunscreen form' located on a clipboard right next to the sign-in sheet on the teacher shelf. Please sign it to let us know that you have applied sunscreen already, or note if you'd rather we skip it on that morning. We re-apply daily as needed. Thank you!

Bottles must be marked with your baby's first and last name, the number of ounces of milk/formula, and the date. Sharpies and tape are available above the sink. Please place a piece of tape on the bottle and use a sharpie to write your child's full name, the date, and the number of ounces on each bottle. Please leave a space for us to write the time at which we start the feeding. Licensing requires that unconsumed portions of bottles be discarded after one hour to prevent bacterial growth.

In the closet, just to the left of the door as you enter from the preschool room, you will find a labeled space for your baby's diaper bag. In the diaper area you will find a tub with your baby's name to hold diapers and extra clothes. If you'd like us to use any diaper cream, we need you to fill out a medication form giving us permission to do so.

Tips for successful separations

Talk with your infant ahead of time. Though your infant may seem to be nowhere near talking, he/she is certainly listening. Using the names of teachers and the other infants in the classroom will help your infant become familiar with us.

Establish relationships with teachers. Your baby looks to you for security; if you are comfortable with us your baby will pick up on it, just as she will if you are anxious.

Establish a routine at drop-off, such as always a kiss or always a bit of play, whatever it may be. When routines are consistent, your baby knows what to expect. Over time this too will help ease the transition. Always say goodbye. Though at times goodbyes can be hard in the moment, in the long run they really are important. Goodbye lets your child know you're leaving, it develops trust and communication, and it shows your baby that you are confident that they will be okay without you at school.

Communicate with teachers what you think your baby might need. Did he sleep well last night? Was morning feeding hearty? Any clues you have that may help us better understand your infant's cues will help things go more smoothly. Please write down these details on the daily sheet for teachers who arrive after you've dropped off your child.

Feel free to call during the day. Most infants transition comfortably into their environment gradually - some sooner, some later, some with a lot of noise, others quietly. However it is that your infant comes to our classroom, she may go at her own speed. For some families, starting child care

seems harder for the parents than for the infants. Of course we are here for you too! If you find yourself at work and you can't put your mind at ease, please don't hesitate to call. Be sure to leave a message if you are unable to get through and someone will call you back as soon as we can.

Pick-Up Time

- Please, always check in with a teacher when picking up your baby.
- Sign out using your full name (as required by child care licensing) and the time of departure.
- Gather your infant's go-home items. Double check the bag to ensure that you have everything your baby needs, including bottles. Also check your infant's diaper basket for anything you might want to take home or if there are items that need replenishing.
- Check the diaper chart if you want diapering information. Teachers will record diaper happenings on daily reports only when asked to, otherwise this information is on the chart hung on a clipboard in the diaper area.
- Check your parent pocket. These are located on the wall just to the left of the door as you enter from the preschool room. Parents, teachers and the office communicate by putting letters, notes or reports in these cubbies. They are labeled with your baby's first name.
- Interlake closes at 6:00 and it's time for our teachers to go. If you find that it takes time to pick up your child (i.e. your baby wants to nurse, you want to play or read a story with your baby or you want to talk to a teacher about something) please factor the time into your routine so the teacher can finish closing duties, lock up and leave on time at 6 pm. Thank you!

Baskets and Shelf Space

Each baby has their own closet space. As you walk in from the preschool room the closet will be on your left. Baby belongings go in the first closet. Your baby will have a clearly marked bin for his/her belongings. Please include an extra complete outfit or 2, a familiar lovie and a pacifier if your baby uses one. Blankets are not allowed; infant sleeper bags provided by the family are required. **Please label all your child's clothes and sleeper bags with their name!** You can expect to find your baby's empty bottles, soiled or wet clothes in his/her bin at the end of the day. We play hard, so if you have clothes you want to keep clean, please keep them at home.

Diapering

Diapering is another opportunity to build trust with your baby. Teachers use diaper changing time to play one-on-one with the sweet babies they are caring for. Diapers are changed at 2 hour intervals unless babies show cues that their pants are dirty, they are ready for a nap, they woke from a nap, or our noses detect a need.

Families supply diapers. We will gladly use whichever type of diaper you are comfortable with, whether that is disposable, cloth, or G-diapers. Please remember to restock your child's supply when you are able. Wet and soiled cloth/G-diapers will be stored in a plastic lined bag from home in their diaper cubbie.

Diapers and diaper cream are stored in your baby's diaper basket in the diaper changing area. Baskets are all clearly marked with first names. Thank you for helping us stay organized. If your baby has a diaper rash we will apply our Desitin or A&D ointment as long as parents fill out the medication form (see section on Medications); if you prefer something else please document so on the necessary paperwork (see section on Medications) and keep a supply in your baby's diaper basket.

Teachers and babies wash their hands before and after each diaper change and the table is washed and sanitized as well. You are always welcome to change your child's diaper at our diaper area. Please follow our diaper changing procedures.

Feeding

Babies in the infant room are fed on demand. Feeding time is not only a wonderful opportunity for relationship building, but it provides for sensory experience, self-help skill development, large and small motor development.

Teachers serve foods to babies after parents have checked off the specific food items on a form provided as your baby begins eating solids. (*It is important that families introduce all food items to baby at home first, just in case there is a negative reaction to specific foods*). This tells us they have had a particular food introduced into their diet at home. Interlake supplies organic baby food, including fruits and vegetables in jars as well as rice and oat cereal. When infants are eating solid food, we provide the cooked food from the same wholesome and delicious menu as the toddlers and preschoolers. The menu is posted weekly in the classroom and on our website.

As infants begin baby food and early solid foods, they are placed in high chairs to eat. During this time they are given opportunities to explore the use of bowls and spoons as well the textures of different foods. When it is developmentally appropriate (approximately 10-12 months), infants begin working on sitting at the table in chairs for meals and snacks. This practice helps them become prepared for mealtimes in the Toddler Room.

Let teachers know routines, schedules and playful games your baby may have at home around feeding times. Also tell us of any difficulties you or your baby may be having around feedings and let us know about any eating plan you'd like us to follow.

Please be sure and tell a teacher if you think your child is teething or stressed about anything. Any information you have will help us understand your baby's cues. When parents and teachers work together good things tend to happen.

Toothbrushing

Our waddlers participate in toothbrushing after lunchtime, before nap. Each waddler has a labeled center-provided age appropriate toothbrush that is replaced every 3 months or sooner if needed. Teachers help the child brush their teeth for 2 minutes without toothpaste. Toothbrushes are then placed back on their labeled toothbrush hook. This process continues through toddler and preschool.

Napping

To lower the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires that infants under one year old are laid on their back to sleep. At Interlake, all infants are placed on their backs to sleep. For safety reasons, there are no exceptions to this policy. If babies roll over on their own, teachers let them be and do not wake or roll them back on to their backs. When infants are showing signs of being tired we lay them down to sleep.

When infants reach approximately 10 months and are developmentally ready, we place them down for nap on a nap mat. This way they have time to get used to this method of napping before they transition to the Toddler room. Some babies go right to sleep and there are others for whom falling asleep is no easy feat. Teachers will hold, rock, stroke, sing to and otherwise comfort those that need extra comfort at nap time. Please let teachers know if you have any specific guidelines you'd like us to follow that may help your baby sleep well. Per WAC requirements for state licensing, we do not use any blankets in the infant room. Children are placed in sleep sacks provided by the family.

Curriculum and Room Set Up

Do teachers seem a bit chatty in the classroom? They ought to. Teachers strive to use language as much as they can around the babies. The language your baby hears now is supporting a foundation for further learning.

American Sign Language (ASL) is a wonderful way to communicate with babies! We strive to use it often in our room. Very young children often use ASL before they can speak. Using simple signs can help infants communicate their needs. We use simple signs in the classroom and look forward to sharing these signs with you to use at home.

Our curriculum provides opportunities for infants to feel successful in their development and also entice them to reach further. Teachers factor in both the developmental needs and the interests of the infants when planning curriculum. Teachers are responsible for planning weekly curriculum during their individual and team planning times. Some examples you may see include: sensory with water, oats, or sticky paper, instruments, puppets, and stories.

Teachers are mindful when setting up the room. We want the classroom to look welcoming and warm, enticing and relevant for younger and older infants. Be sure and share activities and ideas for teachers to implement to further support their development at school.

Weekly curriculum plans are described on a curriculum web in the classroom. Songs, rhymes, finger plays and books are a big part of the curriculum; be sure to let us know of any favorite songs or rhymes you may sing at home. We strongly encourage families to bring in books, music or any related curriculum your child enjoys at home. Your family's culture is just as important at school as is it at home. Teachers plan emergent curriculum, which is child centered, age appropriate and based on interests exhibited by the children and their families in the classroom. For this reason planned curriculum may be supplemented or replaced by something that the children find more engaging.

Waddler Program

As the infants grow and are ready for a more dynamic curriculum and environment, but are not yet ready to be toddlers, they join our 'Waddler Program'. This program is for infants who are at least one year old, are transitioned to one nap a day, and have begun walking. These children are offered a more structured and advanced curriculum in the Infant Room, including group times that focus on self-help skills and safety practices. Their days naturally become more scheduled and teachers follow this schedule with relevant experiences to build on where children are developmentally. For example, large group time with finger plays, stories and/or songs will follow a period of free play or snack. Nap time could be followed by outside time or a large motor activity - dancing or yoga anyone? This structure establishes itself naturally when teachers work intentionally guiding the flow of the classroom. So, what took place last fall could be very different than what happens this fall, depending upon the ages and developmental needs of each particular group of infants. While still providing an environment that serves very young children, we are able to meet the needs of much older infants. Because there are only 8 children in the infant room, younger babies are able to do their own thing, joining in or not.

One aspect of the Waddler Program includes some time visiting in the Toddler Room with an Infant Teacher. The Waddlers spend a little time with their old friends who have already transitioned to the Toddler Room and explore a more advanced environment (including sensory, circle time, and toddler play yards). An infant teacher teams with a toddler teacher to observe, plan and implement this program.

Goals and Opportunities

It is the goals and opportunities set up that create our curriculum. The goals we strive for in the infant room may seem simple, but each step they master lays the foundation for further development. There are many stages of development in the first year of life; room set-up is key in providing opportunities to reach goals on so many levels.

We work on 6 major goals in the infant room, each having various objectives. Our first goal for the babies is for them to learn about themselves. Objectives for this focus are: to feel valued and attached to others, to feel competent and proud about what they can do, and to assert their independence.

Our next goal is for the babies to learn about their feelings. Objectives include: communicating a broad range of emotions through gestures, sounds, and eventually words, and expressing their feelings in appropriate ways.

Thirdly, we want the babies to learn about others. The objectives for this goal include: developing trusting relationships with nurturing adults, showing interest in peers, demonstrating caring and cooperation, and trying out roles and relationships through imitation and pretend play.

Next, our goal is to learn about communicating. These objectives include: expressing needs and thoughts without using words, identifying with a home language, responding to both verbal and non-verbal commands, and communicating through language.

The fifth goal in the Infant room is to learn about moving and doing. Objectives include: developing gross and fine motor skills, coordinating hand and eye movements, and developing self help skills.

The last (but not least) goal in the Infant room is to acquire thinking skills. Objectives for this goal include: gaining an understanding of basic concepts and relationships, applying knowledge to new situations, and developing strategies for solving problems.

It is the teacher's job to provide opportunities for infants to achieve these goals; it is the infant's job to choose for themselves what they'd like to focus on.

Child Observations & Assessments

Teachers keep ongoing assessments of each child's developmental progress which enable us to plan programs to meet the individual developmental needs of each child. Teachers collect and analyze data from formal and anecdotal (informal) observations and conversations with parents, and other teachers and staff. Our curriculum is geared to support individual children's development and interests. Conducting observations and completing the assessment tools ensures that the curriculum is appropriate for each child. Our program uses The Ages and Stages Questionnaire and The Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Assessment in each classroom. Observations are done on a monthly basis and assessments are done every quarter.

This research-based assessment tool kit aids teachers in gathering data relevant to physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and language development, as well as special abilities and interests of infants, toddlers and preschoolers. During parent/teacher conferences, parents/guardians share information about their child and together, teachers and parents collaborate on developing curriculum and providing practice for building specific skills. The completed conference form (Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Assessment) is signed by the parent and the child's teacher at the end of the conference. The family takes a copy of the reports with them and the signed copy remains in the child's file. We also use the Ages and Stages Questionnaires to be both completed by the parents and the teachers for comparison. Assessment portfolios are confidential and stored in each child's file in a locked cabinet. Parents can access and review the assessment tool upon request. Assessment and other sensitive child and family information remain confidential.

Children's Portfolio Books

Each infant is given a Portfolio Book when they start at Interlake, in which observations, photos and children's work will be stored and which follow each child through their time at Interlake. The child will receive their completed Portfolio on their Happy Last Day, or at the Graduation Picnic. Each piece of work is labeled with your child's name and the date it was completed. These books are stored on a shelf in the main playroom. Please feel free to take a look with your child at any time. All teachers aim to write notes in these books about your child or something the child did or said. It is fun to look back on these as your child grows into an adult!

Outside Time

Our aim is to go outside at least 2 times a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon, unless the weather is severely rainy or cold. If your baby is well enough to be at school, we feel your baby

is well enough to spend time outside. Please have weather-appropriate clothes available for your infant on a daily basis, including sun hats and jackets.

Typically, infants will spend one of their outside times in the play yard rolling balls down the ramp, exploring the outside toys, climbing on the small play structure, engaging in water play, popping bubbles or simply blissing out in the sun. Usually the alternate outside time is spent on a buggy/stroller ride through our beautiful neighborhood, walk around the Rose Garden at the Zoo, or perhaps we'll head on down to Green Lake to watch the ducks. We do go outside in the cooler weather as well, and rain sprinkles don't keep us indoors.

Infants 6 months old and older wear sunscreen when they go outside during the months of May through October. The Center does supply sunscreen (Tropical Sands Broad Spectrum SPF 30) or you may supply your own. If your child will be wearing sunscreen, please be sure to fill out the appropriate medication form. Please apply sunscreen in the morning before you leave, and sign that you have applied it so that teachers know it has been done. Teachers will re-apply sunscreen in the afternoon.

Parent Participation

One of the ways we build the Interlake community is parent participation. Parents are asked to volunteer 15-20 hours per year. Families help in a variety of ways, including gardening, painting, sewing mat covers, repairing books, and participating on one of our committees (Facilities, Social, Fundraising, Diversity, and Technology). Parents/guardians can attend work parties, participate in classroom activities (reading stories, holding infants, playing a musical instrument), or become board members!

Medication and Accident Logs

With proper authorization, we can administer prescribed, over-the-counter and homeopathic medication. Medication forms are stored in the hanging files above the parent pockets. The name of the medication, how much and how often to administer medication, and method of administration must be filled out. WE CANNOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION WITHOUT THIS SHEET, COMPLETED WITH A PARENT'S SIGNATURE AND STOP DATE. Please be as detailed as possible when filling out the medication form. For over-the-counter and homeopathic medication, the dosage listed for your child's age must be on the package, or we will need the **doctor's complete and specific instructions and dosage**. Any time we administer medications, it is recorded on the back of the medication form.

Parents/guardians will need to fill out the Individual Child Health Care Plan for children with allergies, asthma, or other ongoing health concerns, including the need for any rescue medications or breathing treatments (albuterol).

Refrigerated medications are stored on a labeled shelf in the Infant Room refrigerator. Non-refrigerated medications are stored in a medication box in the latched closet marked with the first aid symbol, out of the reach of children.

If your child has an accident during the day (bumps, scratches, etc.) the time, place and nature of the accident are recorded, as well as the treatment and the name of the teacher who witnessed the accident and cared for your child. You will receive the original of this accident report; a copy will be

placed in your child's file in our office. Due to the nature of emerging social skill building, teachers don't reveal the identity of the child who hurts another child. We may consult the parents of the child who hurts another, so that we understand more about the child and how we can help him/her develop better coping skills.

Serious injuries, marks on the head, or illness will be reported to the parents immediately. If your child vomits twice in a 24 hour period, has two or more incidents of diarrhea in a 24 hour period, or has a fever of 100 degrees or more, a teacher will call a parent to arrange for the child to be picked up. We ask that you pick up your child within one hour. We keep your child as isolated and comfortable as much as possible while you are making arrangements for pick up.

A child must be fever free and have no incidents of sickness related to vomiting or diarrhea (we realize that children may vomit from crying or coughing which is an exception to the rule) in the last 24 hours before being accepted into group care. Please have alternative childcare arrangements in place for your child. Virginia Mason Medical Center provides the Tender Loving Care (TLC) child care program for children who are mildly ill and one year or older. The telephone number is (206) 583-6521.

Songs, Stories and Rhymes

Teachers spend much of their time singing in the infant room. We read books, tell stories that go with finger plays and recite silly rhymes. All these things help babies learn language and later help with reading. Playing music is one of the ways we comfort, amuse and expose babies to various cultures. When we sing songs or play music from a baby's home life, we create opportunities for infants to feel connected to school. Please be sure and share any songs your baby enjoys from home! You may also ask to look at Interlake's Infant Songbook kept in the infant room. Here is a sample of our favorite songs, finger plays, and books:

Songs:	Finger Plays:	Books:
Hickory, Dickory, Dock	5 Little Ducks	Mr. Brown Cow Moo
3 Green & Speckled Frogs	Twinkle Twinkle	My Aunt Came Back
You are My Sunshine	Great Big Moose	Guess How Much I Love You
Mmm Ahhh!	Itsy Bitsy Spider	Barnyard Dance

...and many, many more!