

# Welcome to the Preschool Room!



## **Interlake Child Care and Learning Center**

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### **Since 1982**

***Interlake Child Care & Learning Center 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.***

### FOREWORD

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 in the Preschool Program. We feel the sense of community at Interlake is one of the unique strengths we offer, providing the children with a feeling of belonging in a comfortable and safe environment. To that end, we encourage families to ask questions, spend time in the classroom with their child and become acquainted with teachers and families in the Interlake community. *We have an Open Door policy for families to observe and participate in our program.* Children are more confident and independent when their families and caregivers are also confident and well informed.

We are available to answer your questions during classroom hours or in a conference if more extended discussion is required. Please let us know how we can help you! Please let us know how we can help bring your family values and culture into our school. We strive to create a partnership with you to help your child put our mission into practice.

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## Preschool Program Schedule\*\*

- 7:30 Center opens. Children begin to arrive upstairs in the Star Room.
- 7:30 Table activities/Small motor, Sensory, Literacy
- 8:45 Clean up time, Lantern Room friends to transition downstairs.
- 9:00 Breakfast
- 9:30 Breakfast ends. Children are excused by raising their hands and then they clear their breakfast spot.
- 9:45\* Lantern Room: small group, indoor choices / Star Room: outside time
- 10:45 Clean up time
- 11:00 Lantern Room: outside time / Star Room: small group, indoor choices.
- 12:00 Lunch time
- 12:30\* Start clearing tables; quiet choices before nap; all children asked to go potty before resting
- 1:00 Friendship Focus
- 1:30 Naptime (children are not required to sleep, just rest their bodies quietly)
- 2:40 Wake up begins; children awake at 2:15 are offered books until wake up time
- 3:00\* Children do their own nap jobs; wake up choices such as art, books, or manipulatives
- 3:30 Snack time
- 4:00 End of snack. Clear tables, go outside
- 4:30 PM choices:Outside
- 5:15\* Clean up time outside & inside
- 5:30 Evening snack
- 5:45 Choices- outside in summer, books inside in winter
- 6:00 Closing, all children picked up by 6pm. Thanks!

\*Potty Practice/Diaper Changing times.

\*\*This is our planned schedule. Activities and outside time is subject to change according to the children's interest and needs per our Emergent Curriculum.

## Morning Drop-Off

Having a smooth drop-off is an important start of your child's day! The classroom and morning teacher are ready for your child at 7:30am. The entrance doors will be locked until that time. **Adults and teachers always open outside and inside doors and gates to ensure the safety of all the children. Children are not to open or close any gates or doors.** Please wash your and your child's hands upon arrival. Your child **must** be signed in on Brightwheel using the iPad located on the teacher shelf or scanning a QR code. This is a licensing requirement. **Do not leave your child unattended during the drop-off or pick-up process. Children must be under the supervision of an adult at all times while on our premises.**

Drop off your child's diapers (when applicable) and change of clothes in their cubby. Please make sure that your child has at least one full change of clothes (including shoes and socks) in their cubby at all times. We've found that children often prefer to wear their own clothing. Our program has only a limited amount of borrowing clothes, including jackets, shoes, and boots. If necessary, feel free to check in with the teacher before leaving your child for the day. We are more than happy to help comfort your child when you are leaving so don't hesitate to ask for a hand when you are ready to go.

## Tips For Successful Drop-Offs

- *Please spend time with your child discussing how they wish to choose to say goodbye every day.* It is often helpful to practice/talk about this routine at home. Your decided routine may include reading one book, playing together at one station for several minutes or simply letting your child know how many minutes until you depart (“I’m going to leave in five minutes”) and of course washing hands. With older children it may be helpful for you to give your child a choice to help them feel more in control. For example, “Which would you like - for me to leave in one minute or two minutes? Or “Do you want a hug or a high five before I go?”
- *If you give your child a verbal warning about how long you can stay, be sure you follow through.* This helps your child to trust your verbal statements, prepare for the separation and the day ahead, and shows your child that you are confident that they will be okay without you at school. While you may anticipate a few tears when you leave, always say your “goodbye” before you go and encourage them to verbally acknowledge that they know you are leaving. \*Some of our families use the “push out the door” method to say goodbye. Their child “pushes” them out the door, helping the child to feel that they have some control in regard to a parent/guardian leaving and them staying at school.
- *While it may be tempting to allow your child to bring in a toy from home to ease the home-to-school transition, please refrain.* Books, music or story CDs are “shareable,” and welcome anytime. Please ensure that the shared items are developmentally appropriate for the range of ages, 2 1/2-5 years. Other toys from home become a distraction from the play, activities and materials we offer at Interlake. Children may have difficulty sharing their own toys (and Interlake’s too), not to mention the risk of a child’s favorite toy becoming lost or broken.
- *Discuss with your child what is going to be in their nap basket.* Each child may have one small stuffed toy, “Lovie”, and a blanket that can easily fit into the nap basket. We do not have space for other items, such as pillows. If your child requires a pillow for medical reasons please discuss with your child’s teacher. It is helpful that your child comes into school with only the items that can stay at school. Please say goodbye to other items before coming into Interlake.
- *It’s helpful to choose a time of day that will allow your child to find something engaging to do when entering the classroom.* It’s difficult for most children to join in at clean-up, transitions, lunch or nap time. The best times for drop off are either 7:30-8:40, or between 9:00-9:15. It can be very difficult for children to get into the swing of things during the transitions around lunch and nap, so we encourage drop-offs before noon. Please consider this when planning doctor’s appointments, play dates, and the like. Please call the office or message on Brightwheel to let us know if your child will be in after 11:00. This helps us plan for lunch counts and neighborhood walks.
- *Always feel free to call or message and check in on your child, or ask to have a teacher call or message you, to talk about how the day is going.* Most children are able to join in play within five minutes of a difficult goodbye. We are happy to let you know how your child transitioned to the classroom after you left. We realize that goodbyes are often as stressful for parents/guardians as for the children, if not more so. We are eager to support parents/guardians as well as children with the transition. Please let the office know when your child will be out due to illness, vacation, or having a fun home day with family. This allows us to plan for potential drop in space, and helps us know what is happening for your child.

## **Circle Time/Morning Games**

Both preschool classrooms have circle time each day roughly around 9:30 – 10:00 AM, after breakfast. The Star Room also has an afternoon circle around 3:15. It provides an opportunity for children to have ritual and routine in our room, thus bringing a sense of security. Circle time includes a variety of movement games, songs, story books, discussion time for current events (generally, what's new or interesting in their lives), taking turns and sharing.

## **Small Group (September - June)**

Small Group consists of age appropriate activities planned by individual teachers, by means of emergent curriculum. Each group is made up of children based on their individual strengths and challenges. This time centers on exposure to many experiences where children learn with a group of peers around their same developmental age. Teachers follow and observe children to provide emergent as well as teacher-planned curriculum and opportunities for children to explore their own interests. Emergent and teacher-planned activities include, but are not limited to: art, sensory, cooking, walks, building, science, community, math and language/literacy. Teachers write weekly notes to families describing the curriculum and activities each group engages in. Due to the active and experiential nature of our program, children's (and sometimes teachers') clothing can get dirty. Our feeling is that if children go home spotless, they haven't had enough exploration or fun!

## **Camp Community (June - August)**

Camp Community is a mixed age, small groups to promote bonding between classrooms and support summer transitions. Each group works on the same project or activity and groups are encouraged to work collaboratively with as little adult assistance as possible. Project ideas are offered to the children and teachers facilitate and provide only needed support. Our goal for Camp Community is to provide opportunities for inclusive participation and contribution. The children work together to make their own decisions, overcome conflict, and help each other feel valued and heard. During Camp Community, teachers take turns devising activities around a weekly theme that facilitates teamwork, positive communication skills, and spreading peace within our community, as the first step to spreading peace to the world.

## **Meals, Snacks, & Dental Hygiene**

A weekly menu is posted in each of the classrooms for parents/guardians to review. Breakfast is offered at 9:00 am; lunch is served at 12:00 pm; afternoon snack is available at 3:30 pm and evening snack is served at 5:30 pm. Children eat meals and snacks in a family-style dining setting in their respective classrooms (Star Room and Lantern Room). Children are encouraged to use forks and spoons and to serve themselves (when they physically can) using scoops, tongs, and pitchers. When they are finished eating, they raise their hands to communicate to teachers that they would like to be excused. When their name is called, they clear their spots, push in their chairs, and gently place their dishes and compost items in the appropriate buckets. They wash hands before and after each meal.

Per WAC 110-300-0180: (2) At least once per day, an early learning provider must offer children an opportunity for developmentally appropriate tooth brushing activities. For preschoolers, this involves offering books that talk about our bodies, teeth, and dental hygiene. We also do circle time activities or offer free choices that explore bacteria, germs, or practicing cleaning a model or picture of teeth.

## **Mindful Eating & Family-Style Dining**

In the Preschool Program, we practice mindful eating and family-style dining. Family-style dining requires

friends to make their own choices about what food they will eat, as well as requires a more independent approach to mealtimes. This includes scooping their own food, passing the bowls to the next friend, and pouring their own milk. We practice this simultaneously with mindful eating, which we encourage you to do with your child at home. **The process goes like this:**

- We let the children choose how many minutes we will be practicing (usually 3 or 5 minutes)
- When we are ready to begin, we ding the singing bowl to calm our bodies, take a peace breath, and listen as the sound fades away. When it is quiet, we set a timer (we use sand timers but any will do the trick), and begin eating mindfully  
When eating "mindfully," we do not speak to our friends and teachers at the table; rather, for the 3-5 minutes, we focus solely on the food in front of us, how it tastes, feels in our mouth, the colors, scents, textures, etc. Though it is important to strive for silence, the more important element is concentrating on the food on our plates and how it fills our bodies.
- If you would like to take it one step further, the friends really enjoy talking about where the food comes from, and how it got on their plates ("The farmer milked the cow, then they put it in a bottle to sell at the store. Brookie bought the milk, and we poured it into our glasses")
- When the minutes are up, we ding the singing bell, take another peace breath, and share what we experienced during mindful eating. Some helpful language → What did you notice about the color/texture/taste/temperature of your food?

## Friendship Focus

Preschoolers spend time in Friendship Focus groups everyday. During this time we offer activities, songs, and stories that focus around social-emotional learning, friendship, developing peaceful relationships, community and self-esteem. We feel children can never be supported too much in becoming competent, confident, and compassionate citizens of the world; thus why we offer focused social emotional development opportunities daily. Teachers take turns leading the Friendship Focus group times. Friendship Focus is a year-round opportunity for your child. You can learn about what is going on in Friendship Focus in curriculum emails. The curriculum we use for Friendship Focus is called Second Step.

## Nap Time

Nap time is from 1:15/1:30- 3:00PM. Teachers help children settle onto their mats by tucking them in with their blankets and stuffed animals/dolls, and rubbing or patting their backs. Our ultimate goal is for all children to be able to help themselves rest without much assistance.

Let us know if your child has any specific nap time routines at home, and, as always, we will do our best to help them feel comfortable during nap time. We encourage a quiet environment by saying, "It's time for resting our voices" and "let's listen to our breathing."

Children often experience a very long day in care. Children five-years-old and younger benefit from having time when they relax. Having a routine to help children rest allows them to recharge their batteries so they're ready to play and participate in the afternoon activities. Often children don't realize how tired they are until they slow down for a few minutes. Having a scheduled rest lets them find out what their bodies need. Washington State Child Care Licensing WAC 170-300-0265 states: "An early learning provider must offer a supervised daily rest period for children preschool age and younger who remain in care for more than six hours per day, or who show a need for rest." (Sleeping is not required.)

Nap times are recorded on Brightwheel. We aim to allow children to follow their own nap and wake schedule.

As much as possible, we allow children to wake up naturally from a nap. We are aware that bedtime at home can sometimes be challenging. Because we recognize this, we are eager to assist your family in coming up with possible solutions.

## **Nap Baskets & Cubbies**

Each child has a nap basket labeled with their first name in which to keep a blanket and soft toy for cuddling (We call this a "Lovie.") Please send a blanket and lovey that is machine washable and will easily fit into the nap basket, as we have limited space. After nap time children "do their nap jobs," by putting their belongings back into their baskets, putting them away, and using the potty. By taking care of their own nap time belongings children have the opportunity to recognize their written names and the names of their classmates; it also gives them a sense of ownership and belonging, one of the first steps in learning to share.

In addition to nap baskets, each child has a cubby for their belongings, including diapers (if applicable), extra clothing/shoes, jackets and weather gear, and wet/soiled clothing (placed in a plastic bag, ready to go home). Please be sure to keep an extra set of weather appropriate clothes in the child's cubby. Please note that sunscreen, chapstick, and lotion are considered by child care licensing as over-the-counter medications, and cannot be kept in cubbies. Be sure to label all clothing, blankets, loveys, etc. to avoid mix-ups.

## **Diapering & Potty Practices**

Our morning diaper changes begin at 10:00. Diapers are changed every two hours, even if dry and as needed throughout the day. Changes are recorded on Brightwheel. The potty is available to all children who want to use it. We ask children to help take care of their own bodies when using the potty (i.e. wiping themselves, taking their clothes off/putting them on, etc). We offer the potty during each child's diaper change. If they choose not to use the toilet, we encourage them to try later with language such as, "okay, we'll try next time."

Let us know if you think your child is ready to begin potty training so that we can assist you by helping your child use the potty at school. We do ask that children be peeing and pooping in the potty consistently at home for at least 3 days and are showing an awareness of their body's potty messages. They show this by letting adults (teachers) know that they need to use the toilet, before coming into school in underwear. As we are always looking to do what is best for your child and your family, we work to keep an open dialog going regarding their progress.

**NOTE:** Beginning potty training too early often ends in frustration and failure. Classroom teachers have experience helping many children learn to use the potty, and are very willing to help you assess your child's readiness and discuss tips and ideas that support your child and your family's personal needs.

Children wearing underwear may need to use the potty more than our scheduled diaper changing times. We always respond to a request to use the potty made by a child in underwear and remind children to use the potty before going on walks and after lunch to avoid accidents. Let us know if your child needs frequent reminders or if they are able to tell a teacher that a potty trip is needed. Leave lots of extra clothes for your child, including socks and shoes. Sometimes even children's shoes get soaked. We change a child's diaper immediately when the child has had a bowel movement. Children and teachers wash their hands before and after each diaper change or potty use to avoid the spread of germs. Teachers use the words pee and poop to refer to urine and feces. We use vagina and penis to refer to body parts. It is important to use the correct anatomical terms to help children become comfortable with their own bodies.

## Pick-Up Time

- Always check in with the teacher when picking up your child.
- Sign out using your code on Brightwheel, either using an iPad or scanning a QR code.
- Check your child's coat cubby for soiled clothes or other items to bring home.
- Check your child's art cubby for work to take home. (This work gets recycled or filed monthly.)
- Check your family pocket. Families, teachers, and the office communicate by putting newsletters, notes or reports in these folders. They are labeled alphabetically, by the child's first name.
- If your child needs time to transition out of the Center, to say goodbye to friends, or to show you their art, plan some time for that into your routine so that your child does not feel rushed, and the school-to-home transition can be smooth.

## Medication Forms & Accident Logs

With proper authorization, we can administer prescribed, over-the-counter, or homeopathic medication. Please ask an admin for a medication authorization form. **WE CANNOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION WITHOUT THIS SHEET, COMPLETED WITH A PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE, STOP DATE, AND MEDICATION EXPIRATION 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 into Brightwheel. If you need to bring in medication, please email admin for a copy of the medication form.

- **Prescription Medication**
  - Must be accompanied with a medication authorization form that has the medical need and the possible side effects of the medication.
  - Must be labeled with:
    - Child's first and last name on prescription
    - The date the prescription was filled
    - Name and contact information of the prescribing health professional
    - The expiration date, dosage amount, length of time to give the medication, and frequency (can **not** be "as needed")
    - Instructions for administration and storage
- **Non Prescription Oral Medication**
  - Must be in the original packaging
  - Medication container needs to be labeled with child's first and last name
  - Needs to be accompanied with a medication authorization form that has:
    - Expiration date
    - Medical need
    - Dosage
    - Age
    - Length of time to be given
    - Frequency (can **not** be "as needed")
  - **\*\*Teacher must follow the instructions on the label or parent/guardian must provide a medical professional's note**
- **Other Non Prescription Medication**
  - Teachers must have a written authorization from a parent/guardian **and** a health care provider with prescriptive authority prior to administering medication if the item does not have:
    - Age

- Expiration date
- Dosage amount
- Length of time to give
- Examples:
  - Vitamins
  - Herbal Supplements
  - Fluoride supplements
  - Homeopathic or naturopathic medication
  - Teething gel or tablets

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). Parents/guardians must train staff to administer medications for asthma and rescue breathing or emergency medicine.

Parents/guardians give the medication and forms to staff to store safely. Refrigerated medications are stored inaccessible to children in the fridge. Non-refrigerated medications are stored in the first aid cabinet (out of children's reach) in the preschool classrooms.

## Illness & Injuries

If your child has an accident during the day (bumps, scratches, bites, 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/or cared for the child. You will receive the original of this accident report and a copy will be placed in your child's file in our office. Preschoolers are learning how to socialize and to avoid any child being labeled as "aggressive," teachers don't reveal the identity of the child who hurts another child. We may consult the family of the child who hurts another, so that we understand more about the child and how we can help them develop their communication and friendship-building skills.

Serious injuries or illness will be reported to the parents/guardians immediately. If your child vomits, has one or more incidents of diarrhea, or has a fever of 100.4 degrees or more, a teacher will call a parent/guardian to arrange for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. We ask that you pick up your child within an hour of receiving our call. A child must be fever free (without fever reducer) and have no incidents of sickness related vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours before being accepted into group care. Please have alternative childcare arrangements in place for your child. [For full exclusion policy please refer to the Family Handbook].

Virginia Mason Medical Center provides the Tender Loving Care (TLC) program for children who are mildly ill and one year or older. The telephone number is (206) 583-6521

## Biting Policy

We all understand and accept that when toddlers are in groups, biting is unfortunately not unexpected. Toddlers may bite for a variety of reasons, from frustration, fatigue, attention seeking, confined spaces or inability to communicate. We may seek information about any big changes at home or situations which the child encountered to bring about such behavior?

However, biting is never the right thing to do. We recognize that a human bite, which breaks the skin, brings great risk of infection (e.g. Tetanus, Hepatitis B) and jeopardizes the physical and psychological safety of the children in the Toddler room. Our goal is to help children who are bitten feel better by giving them care,

support, and advice on handling themselves in a threatening situation. As well as teach the children who bite more appropriate behaviors. The safety of all the children is our primary concern.

**Here are steps the teachers at ICC will take:**

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm, “No...we don’t bite people!”
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The child who bit will be given alternative options to engage with.
- The wound will be assessed by the teacher and cleansed with soap and water.
- The child who bit will be spoken to on their level in a loving, but firm manner. We will explain that, “You cannot bite your friends because it hurts them. We do not hurt our friends.”
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. An incident report will be filled out and a copy will be submitted to the office for further action.

**If biting instances continue, we will need to take further steps** to protect the children at the Center and to encourage your child to behave in a socially acceptable manner.

- You will be notified of the biting incident and will be expected to begin your own research and assist us in training your child to use appropriate behavior.
- When a child **bites three times on a given day**, the child’s parents will be called and **the child must be picked up from the Center immediately**. This is to prevent further incidents and to calm the child.
- We will work closely with the child, in hopes to guide them quickly past the stage. However, if biting continues we will meet with you to create a behavior improvement plan.
- If, at any time, the child’s biting behavior becomes especially excessive or hazardous to the children or staff, the Executive Director may have to explore suspension of care to protect the other individuals in the room.

We request families to let us know what language or steps you are taking at home when your child bites so that we can reinforce them at school.

## **Curriculum & Learning Centers**

Teachers are responsible for planning bi-weekly curriculum during their individual and team planning times. Interlake uses an emergent curriculum approach, which is child-centered, age-appropriate and based on interests exhibited by the children in the classroom. For this reason, planned curriculum may be supplemented or replaced by something that the children have expressed a stronger interest in. Teachers regularly update the curriculum board with current activities and projects.

Curriculum is age-appropriate and designed to help children learn vocabulary, develop muscle control and emotional intelligence, as well as increase social and self-help skills through exploration and play. Emergent and teacher-planned activities include but are not limited to: art, sensory, cooking, walks, building, science, community, math and language/literacy.

Play spaces are also designed to teach children important skills. For example, block areas help with skill building in math (patterns, counting, measurement, problem solving), language and literacy skills (communication, vocabulary), hand-eye coordination, and social skills.

Our goal as teachers of young children is to provide them with the skills needed to build friendships and emotional awareness with the ability and confidence to express their feelings and needs. We also work to provide varied experiences that develop physical and cognitive skills to help build self confidence and trust in their competency in a safe and nurturing environment. Our curriculum is child-centered, developmentally appropriate, and allows each child to participate at a rate that is both comfortable and challenging for them as an individual.

We aim to create a strong community and partnership with families. To meet that end, please feel free to share favorite activities from home. Either a new favorite or activities that represent the culture of your individual family. We love new ideas!

## **Child Observations & Assessments**

Teachers keep ongoing assessments of each child's development 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, conversations with families, 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 Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Assessment in each classroom. 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 the family/teacher conference, teachers and families share information about the child and discuss ideas to best support any developmental goals for the child. The completed conference form is signed by the parent/guardian and the child's teacher at the end of the conference. The family takes a copy of the form with them and the signed copy remains in the child's file. Assessment portfolios are confidential and stored in a private location but parents/guardians can always access and review the assessment tool upon request. Assessments and other sensitive child and family information remain confidential.

## **Goals & Opportunities Provided in the Preschool Program**

- **Social/Emotional:**
  - Awareness of emotions, ability to label them, and express an appropriate response.
  - Problem-solve creatively with some impulse control and substitution of language for physical actions.
  - Confidence and curiosity to seek out new experiences
  - Interact with children and adults cooperatively and respectfully.
  - Making and expressing choices, plans, and decisions.
  - Being sensitive to the feelings, interests, and needs of others.
  - Awareness of cultures, skin colors
  
- **Language:**
  - Communicate with adults and children verbally in a range of contexts.
  - Listen to directions with one or more steps and follow through.
  - Recognize and identify adults and children by name.
  - Name familiar objects in the environment and ask questions about unfamiliar objects.
  
- **Gross Motor:** Expand skills in climbing, experimenting with bars using hand-over-hand motions.
  - Walk through the neighborhood while holding hands.

- Run with confidence.
  - Kick and throw balls with improved aim.
  - Explore moving through space with dance.
  - Exert control over their body, stay in “self space.”
  - Skill building using indoor and outdoor obstacle courses
- **Fine Motor:**
    - Draw with pens, pencils, and crayons.
    - Work on puzzles with 10 pieces or more.
    - Build with Legos and stack blocks with increasing complexity.
    - Manipulate/cut with scissors carefully and effectively.
    - Sort items with plastic tweezers.
    - Beading
- **Self-help:**
    - Put away toys, dishes and personal items when requested.
    - Learn to pour with a pitcher, and use tongs to serve food.
    - Have knowledge about bodily functions and gain experience using the potty successfully.
    - Wash own hands and wipe face clean after eating and when needed (“bubble gloves.”)
    - Show care for one’s own property and the property of others.
    - Exhibit an understanding of safety rules and their application.
    - Ask for help when needed
- **Cognitive:**
    - Discriminate between different shapes and colors, identifying some by name.
    - Identify body parts.
    - Understand cause and effect, and that actions have consequences.
    - Sort objects by different factors, including color, size, weight, volume
    - Counting, sequencing

## Portfolios

Each child has their own portfolio in which some of their artwork is kept. This binder contains pictures taken during their time at Interlake, and learning documented through Teaching Strategies Gold. Documentation is added to the portfolios periodically as the collection of materials expands. The portfolios are begun when your child first starts at Interlake and continue with them through each classroom. When your family leaves Interlake, at the all-school Graduate Celebration or before, your child’s portfolio is given to you as a memory book of their time here with us.

## Family Participation

One of the ways we build the Interlake community is through family participation. Families are asked to volunteer at least one hour per guardian per month. Families help in a variety of ways, including gardening, painting, repairing books, and participating in one of our committees (Facilities, Communications & Community Engagement, Fundraising & Staff Appreciation, Finances & Business Planning.) Parents/Guardians can attend work parties, participate in classroom activities, or become board members! If you enjoy telling stories, play an instrument, have a knack for messy science explorations or have a favorite cooking or art project, we are always open to family support in special curriculum projects! We also invite Grandparent participation.

The classroom teachers always appreciate any of the following items for exploring and projects. Feel free to check in with a teacher if you have other ideas!

- **Art Project items:** paper, magazines (people, animals), stickers, packing materials, old calendars
- **Dress-up items:** scarves, jewelry, hats, ties, “snazzy” shoes, costumes, plastic dishes, play food
- **Miscellaneous:** borrowing clothes, borrowing shoes, borrowing blankets, puzzles, shells, beads, rocks, recyclables(cardboard tubes, clean egg cartons, etc.)

## Field Trips & Outings

We frequently take children on walks through the neighborhood, local parks (including Green Lake, Meridian and Woodland Park), to local businesses (such as the post office and Diva Espresso to hang up artwork).

We also offer a number of field trips throughout the year. We have an annual field trip in the fall where we rent a “real yellow school bus” to take us to a local pumpkin patch. The children get the opportunity to pick out their own pumpkins, and enjoy a fun walk through the farm to meet the animals. Mid June thru August is our Field Trip Season where we go on a variety of different trips, including some variation of the following: Woodland Park Zoo, lunch at Woodland Park Rose Garden, the Ballard Locks, and the International Fountain. If you have a place in mind for a great field trip, or you can give children a tour of your workplace, please talk to the staff about your ideas. We love exploring new places! We go as often as possible. Field trips happen most frequently in the summer months. Being a chaperone for our field trips is one of the most valuable roles for parents/family members and a great way to get in your family volunteer hours! Without enough adults to ensure small adult-to-child ratios, we simply can't go.

When a field trip is planned, email communications will be sent out, requesting permission for their child to go and space for parents/family members to sign-up to help. We always ask for permission for trips that are out of our immediate neighborhood, require a metro bus trip and/or will be longer than 1 hour.

## Positive Behavior Guidance

The word “discipline” tends to be interpreted negatively, as referring to punishment. However, the word “discipline” (as defined in the Merriam Webster dictionary), means “to train or develop by instruction and exercise, especially in self-control”. This is how we see our role in redirecting, guiding, and managing children’s behavior... helping children to develop self-control through demonstration and encouraging them to practice. It’s important that children understand that all behavior has a cause and an effect. Disciplinary measures never include corporal punishment, humiliation or withdrawal of emotional support. Our number one rule in the preschool is “bodies and feelings stay safe at school.” When a child’s actions jeopardize their own safety and/or the safety of others, are interfering with the rights of others, or they are breaking classroom or others’ property, we use the following techniques:

- We explain how and why the child’s actions are inappropriate. Depending on the age of the child and the circumstances, teachers may outline alternatives.
- We clearly indicate the consequence(s) that will occur if the inappropriate behavior continues. Consequences are based on relating the outcome to their behavior. For example, if a child is breaking a toy, they’re not allowed to play with the item for a period of time, usually only for a part of the day. In general, if children aren’t making safe or kind choices for themselves, teachers will redirect them to safer choices. When this happens, teachers may help decide where a child can play, what materials they use during choice time, or where they sit at meals. Children are often given another chance to “try again” before the consequence is implemented and after being informed of the potential consequence.
- A request for a child to take some time away from the group is made if a child is physically out of control. The goal is for the child to determine when they are ready to return to the activity or group. We don’t use the term “time out”, instead we ask them to sit away from the group to calm down or to take

some space and find their calm and peaceful body. We talk about them trying again when “their heart is slow, (their) breath is slow, (their) body is slow, and (they) are aware of what’s going on around them”. When they feel like that has happened (no matter if it’s been 1 minute or 10) we ask them to check in with us and anyone else involved. We make sure they can explain why they needed space and what choices they plan on making when they come back.

- We have many conversations throughout the day about respect. We expect the children to respect their friends and teacher’s bodies, feelings, space, and words. This is also an expectation of the teachers. We feel that prevention and dialogue are keys to avoiding conflict before it happens.

## **Conflict Resolution**

One of the biggest transitions as children grow from toddlerhood to preschool-age is their development as social beings and their interest in building friendships. Along with this phenomenon is their ever-expanding vocabulary. As children learn about each others’ boundaries, they continue to test them. Best friends can become “best enemies” very quickly as they work out the dance of friendship and self-esteem. As teachers, we believe one of our most important duties (and probably the most complex) is to help children learn the effects their behavior has on others. We assist all children in helping them “find their own voice” and express their needs and feelings to their peers and the adults in their lives.

- When children have a conflict we facilitate by helping them describe what happened, and help their peers to listen and consider each other’s point of view. If they struggle to find a solution on their own, children are offered choices of what to do next.
- We don’t insist that children apologize to each other. We’ve found that “I’m sorry,” can turn into a “free pass” and ultimately, they haven’t learned to negotiate how they can really make them feel better.
- We will ask children if there is a way that they can help their friend(s) feel better and we also ask the child who was hurt (body, feelings or property) what they want their friend(s) to do to help them feel better. Sometimes this will include asking the friend to play with them, making a plan to share a toy, or having the friend get them an ice pack or cup of water. In addition, we offer kind words that they can choose to say such as: “I’ll be more careful next time” or “I’ll remember to use words instead of taking something that someone else is using.” The children involved also have a conversation about what the child could have done and what safe or kind choices could be made next time the same situation arises. As a result of what children learn about the give and take of relationship building, many of our children remain friends throughout elementary, middle, high school and beyond.

## **Happy Last Day/Graduation**

When your child leaves Interlake, we look forward to their next adventure (even though we also get misty-eyed at the end of their time here). To help children with this transition from our program to Kindergarten or to another program, we recognize every child’s “Happy Last Day.” We celebrate this day and their time at Interlake, and talk about the adventures to come, wherever that may be. It is important for children to purposefully say their goodbyes, rather than to leave without the knowledge that it is permanent. We want to help you and your child have a positive experience leaving Interlake.

In the summer before many of the Preschoolers transition to Kindergarten, there are several events held at Interlake to celebrate their time here with us, including the Preschool Play, the Graduate Party (a tradition wherein graduating 5 year olds celebrate their accomplishment with a party at Interlake), and the Graduate Celebration, for all families. While many children maintain friendships with their Interlake friends well past their Happy Last Day, these rituals help children understand and move through the transition from this community to their next school community.

## **Songs and Stories**

There are many opportunities during our day for singing, storytelling and flannel board stories. Below is a sample list of songs and flannel board stories children grow to learn and love. Many of them have a lot of hand/body motions. Feel free to share family favorites that we can use too!

*Old McDonald Had a Farm*

*Hokey Pokey*

*Hickory, Dickory, Dock*

*I Had a Little Turtle*

*Itsy, Bitsy Spider*

*Five Green and Speckled Frogs*

*Row, Row, Row Your Boat*

*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

*Rainbow Song*

*Five Little Monkeys*

*Ring Around the Rosy*

*Slippery Fish*

*Cinnamon Toast*

And many more!

# WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS EVERYDAY



WELCOME TO THE PRESCHOOL ROOM! BELOW IS A CHECKLIST OF ITEMS YOUR CHILD MIGHT NEED AT INTERLAKE. THANKS!

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> INSIDE SHOES                        | <input type="checkbox"/> RAIN COAT / PANTS / SUIT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OUTSIDE SHOES/BOOTS (*TO GET DIRTY) | <input type="checkbox"/> SWEATER FOR INSIDE       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> REUSABLE BAG OF EXTRA CLOTHES       | <input type="checkbox"/> OVERCOAT FOR OUTSIDE     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PANTS/ SHORTS                       | <input type="checkbox"/> ONE LOVIE                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHIRTS                              | <input type="checkbox"/> ONE BLANKET              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SOCKS                               | <input type="checkbox"/> WATER BOTTLE (OPTIONAL)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UNDERWEAR                           | <input type="checkbox"/> HAT (OPTIONAL)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DIAPERS/PULL-UPS (IF NEEDED)        | <input type="checkbox"/> GLOVES (OPTIONAL)        |