



# GINGERBREAD PRESCHOOL

Learn through play!



**Program & Class Guide 2014-15**

4333 Black Avenue | 925.931.3430 office | 925.931.3436 fax | [gingerbreadpreschool.org](http://gingerbreadpreschool.org)

# Gingerbread Preschool Program Guide

## Table of Contents

Gingerbread Preschool Location.....	6
Gingerbread Preschool Mailing Address:.....	6
Gingerbread Administrative Team .....	6
Gingerbread Preschool Program.....	7
Gingerbread Preschool Program Philosophy and Guiding Principles .....	8
Honoring Our Young Children: A Statement of Beliefs .....	8
Social-Emotional Skills .....	8
Communication Skills.....	9
Self-Help Skills .....	9
Fine and Gross Motor Skills .....	9
Language Readiness Skills.....	9
Dealing with Separation Anxiety.....	10
Gingerbread Preschool Calendar .....	11
Dress Code .....	11
Drop-off & Pick-up .....	12
Bathroom Time .....	13
Participant Behavior.....	13
Dismissal Policy .....	14
Gingerbread Preschool Staff .....	15
Staff Ratios .....	15
Qualifications.....	15
Gingerbread Preschool staff directory .....	15
Parent Teacher Communication.....	15
Parent/Teacher Conferences.....	16
Primary Care Giver System .....	16
Ages and Stages Questionnaire .....	16
Program Policies .....	17
Late Fee .....	17
Refunds.....	17
Payment Plan .....	17
Late Payment Fee .....	17

Return Check Fee .....	17
Priority Registration Information .....	17
Wait List.....	17
Parking Lot .....	18
Distribution of Information/Flyers/Cards, etc.....	18
Gifts .....	18
Special Activities.....	19
Birthdays.....	19
Visiting Readers .....	19
Off-site .....	19
Parent's Day .....	19
Week of the Young Child.....	20
Mini-Indy.....	20
Cultural Celebrations .....	20
Health & Wellness Policy .....	20
School Attendance .....	20
Planned Absence .....	20
Unplanned Absence/Illness.....	21
Wellness Check .....	21
Hygiene .....	21
Hand Washing .....	21
Cleaning.....	21
Wellness .....	22
Sleep .....	22
Nutrition.....	22
Immunizations .....	22
Exclusion from Program due to Illness .....	22
Removal from the Classroom.....	23
Health epidemic .....	23
Communicable Disease Notification.....	23
Life Threatening Food Allergy/Medical Condition.....	23
Safety Policies and Procedures .....	24
Fire Drills .....	24

Building Security .....	24
Personal Information/Privacy .....	24
Photograph and Video Taping.....	24
Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act .....	25
A Diverse Community.....	25
Gingersnaps (2's) .....	25
Teaching Staff (Gingersnaps 2's) .....	25
Learning Activities.....	26
Block Play .....	26
Dramatic Play .....	26
Arts .....	26
Music Time.....	26
Story time .....	26
Sensory Activity .....	26
Manipulatives .....	26
Gathering (Circle) Time.....	26
Outside Play.....	27
Snack Time .....	27
Clean-up Time .....	27
Diapering and Toilet Training.....	27
Diapering Procedures .....	28
Toileting Readiness.....	29
Participant Behavior .....	29
Biting.....	29
3's Classroom Guide .....	31
Teaching Staff (3's) .....	31
Learning Activities.....	32
Block Play .....	32
Dramatic Play .....	32
Sensory Activity.....	32
Manipulatives.....	32
Science.....	32
Arts and Crafts .....	32

Me Binder .....	32
Gathering (Circle) Time.....	32
Group Discussion .....	33
Story Time.....	33
Music Time .....	33
Surprise Bag (Sharing) .....	33
Community Helpers .....	33
Yoga.....	34
Outside Play.....	34
Snack Time .....	34
4's Classroom Guide .....	35
Teaching Staff (4's) .....	35
Learning Activities.....	36
Block Play .....	36
Dramatic Play .....	36
Sensory Activity.....	36
Manipulatives.....	36
Science.....	36
Arts & Crafts.....	36
Me Binder .....	36
Letter & Number Recognition & Writing.....	36
Buddy Days .....	37
Gathering (Circle) Time.....	37
Group Discussion .....	37
Story Time.....	37
Music Time .....	38
Surprise Can (Sharing) .....	38
Community Helpers .....	38
Attendance/Counter .....	39
Calendar .....	39
Weather.....	39
Pledge of Allegiance.....	39
Yoga.....	39

Outside Play.....	39
Snack Time.....	39
5's (Kinderpals) Classroom Guide .....	40
Teaching Staff (5's - Kinderpals) .....	40
Learning Activities.....	40
Block Play .....	40
Dramatic Play .....	40
Sensory Activity.....	41
Manipulatives.....	41
Science.....	41
Arts and Crafts.....	41
Alphabet/Number Recognition .....	41
Social Studies .....	41
Gathering (Circle) Time.....	41
Beginning Circle .....	42
Middle Circle.....	43
Last Circle .....	43
Outside Play.....	43
Snack Time.....	43
Clean-up Time .....	44
Bathroom Time .....	44
Parent Resources .....	45
Friends of Gingerbread Preschool (F.O.G.).....	45
Room Parents .....	45
Parent Lending Library .....	46
Parent Support .....	46



### **Gingerbread Preschool Location**

4333 Black Avenue  
Pleasanton, CA 94566  
925-931-3430 | office  
925-931-3436 | fax  
[gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov)  
[www.gingerbreadpreschool.org](http://www.gingerbreadpreschool.org)

### Gingerbread Preschool Mailing Address:

Gingerbread Preschool  
P.O. Box 520  
Pleasanton, CA 94566

### **Gingerbread Administrative Team**

Samu Tiumalu  
Preschool, Youth & Teen Supervisor  
(925) 931-3432 | office  
[stiumalu@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:stiumalu@cityofpleasantonca.gov)

David Weisgerber  
Youth & Teen Coordinator  
(925) 931-3474 | office  
[dweisgerber@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:dweisgerber@cityofpleasantonca.gov)

Georgia Gordet  
Preschool Program Assistant  
(925) 931-3433 | office  
[ggordet@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:ggordet@cityofpleasantonca.gov)

Lilly Caridis  
Preschool Office Aide  
(925) 931-3430  
[gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov)

## **Gingerbread Preschool Program**

Gingerbread Preschool has over a 40-year history in the Pleasanton Community. The program is provided through the City of Pleasanton Community Services Department. It is a part-time, recreational program, which is not required to be licensed by the State. The Department of Social Services, Child Care Licensing exempts any preschool program, offered by a city recreation department, providing that it is not daycare.



Our program provides children with an opportunity to experience a classroom setting prior to kindergarten. This experience may be the first time your child has participated in an activity independent of you. We believe participation in our program allows your child to successfully adjust to this newfound independence without being overwhelmed.

Our program is not a parent cooperative program and parents are not present in the classroom on a regular basis. This is purposeful; as one of our goals for your child is to be able to successfully separate from you, participate fully in the classroom routine and then happily reunite with you at the end of class. We provide a parent participation activity each quarter and the parent volunteer program begins in January. Parents may arrange with their child's teacher for any additional classroom visits throughout the school year.

Our program day is structured and requires children to participate as a member of the classroom community during specific times: gathering time, snack time and outdoor play. We also provide an opportunity for children to select activities they wish to participate in. For example, your child may love to play with blocks and play with them for several weeks before he/she moves on to the arts and crafts table. We allow each child to move at their own developmental pace while gently encouraging them to try new things when they are ready.

Many parents send their child to preschool so they will be "ready" for kindergarten. We believe that our developmentally appropriate approach to Early Childhood Education will provide a foundation from which each child will enjoy success in future learning.

## Gingerbread Preschool Program Philosophy and Guiding Principles

The Gingerbread Preschool philosophy simply put is "The Gingerbread Way is Play!". The guiding and underlying principles of the philosophy is four fold.

1. Building Relationships
2. Nurturing Others
3. Promoting Abilities
4. Learning through Play



These principles provide us with a place to begin and to grow from.

### Honoring Our Young Children: A Statement of Beliefs

(excerpts taken from "Early Years Summit: Preschool-Kindergarten Collaboration Makes a Difference" Young Children Publication, - January 2003)

Gingerbread Preschool has adopted a Statement of Beliefs originally drafted by Russ Firlik, Ed.D of South School in New Canaan, Connecticut. This Statement of Beliefs is the cornerstone of our program; development of these skills is the goal as we teach and nurture your child. It is important to remember that each child has their own timetable and matures at their own rate, and in their own way. Not all children behave alike, nor do they all reach the customary stages of development at the same time.

Early Childhood (0-8 years of age) is a special time of wonder, imagination, and discovery. Young children need knowledge and new experiences to develop and thrive. The early years mark a period of rapid change in the ways children think about themselves and the world around them. Too much exposure to television, computer games, and organized activities rob children of their childhood and may produce the *hurried child* syndrome (Elkind 2001). Additionally, too much exposure to formal academics early in a child's development may cause a child to grow resistant to the excitement of learning.

As educators of young children, we value childhood and want to keep it protected. It is imperative for us to ensure that children develop the skills and acquire the knowledge needed to provide them with a firm foundation for their later years. Toward that end, we endorse and value the following skills, knowledge, and experiences as appropriate goals for young children entering kindergarten.

#### Social-Emotional Skills

To be successful in a kindergarten classroom, children need to be able to: exert self-control when frustrated, listen, follow directions, be polite, take turns, carry

out self-help routines without direct supervision, and begin to read nonverbal language.

Children's social skills directly affect the quality and success of their school experiences. Young children construct understanding by interacting with others and with their environment. Throughout the early childhood years, educators emphasize sensitivity to the feelings of others, kindness, patience, and cooperation. These social-emotional competencies are best achieved through play and play-related activities.

### Communication Skills

Communication and language skills are critical to children's social, emotional, and cognitive well-being. Throughout the early childhood years, we encourage children to develop increasingly sophisticated language skills through social interactions, dramatic play, and age-appropriate activities.

To communicate effectively, children must be able to determine appropriate conversational tone and volume, advocate for themselves, employ situation-appropriate vocabulary for putting feelings into words, be mannerly without prompting, and use language to discuss activities and events.

### Self-Help Skills

Children gain confidence and self-esteem as they become more independent. Throughout the early years, children should master important self-help skills, including the ability to:

- recognize teachers and other children by name
- respect property and materials that belong to others
- manage their own clothing, including buttons, zippers, and snaps
- wash hands and use the bathroom independently
- manage snacks independently

### Fine and Gross Motor Skills

Educational progress hinges largely upon the acquisition of fine and gross motor skills. Proper diet, adequate rest, and good physical health habits go far in helping to set the stage for early success in these skills. Young children need exposure to a variety of rich activities designed to help them:

- develop large muscles, including upper-body strength
- experience skipping, jumping, hopping, climbing, and balancing
- play for exploration, imagination, and enjoyment
- develop awareness of personal space while walking, running, and playing
- use comfortable but proper grip when using crayons, markers, and pencils
- use scissors properly and safely
- experience a variety of art materials

### Language Readiness Skills

A child's approach to learning is central to his or her success in school. Curiosity and the desire to learn come from positive, age-appropriate experiences in the

arts and sciences. Throughout early childhood, children need to develop the ability to listen to and comprehend a story being read aloud. Children also need to develop the language and thinking ability necessary to retell and sequence a story. Recognizing and generating rhymes in games, songs and poetry form the foundation for understanding rhythms and patterns in language. Young children are ready to acquire familiarity with upper and lowercase letters and develop the ability to solve problems.



### Dealing with Separation Anxiety

We want your child to love coming to school and can't wait to hear them say "I don't want to go home!" Coming to/leaving school develops your child's social and emotional skills. Specifically, your child is learning to "separate and attach" "Separation issues are lifelong and children learn to deal with them as they become

increasingly autonomous." (Reiss 1984)

When children have difficulty separating they may experience separation anxiety. "Separation has three stages: protest, despair, and adjustment or emotional detachment. A child may suffer for a few hours or as long as ten days." (Reiss 1984) As children work through these stages they will begin the attachment process. When they are ready, they will begin to bond with their teachers and classmates and find comfort in the classroom routine. Children often re-experience separation anxiety after holiday breaks, illness, or when returning to school after summer break.

No one knows or loves your child better than you! We respect the trust you have placed in us to care for and teach your child. Parents must first deal with their own separation anxiety; your child will know if you are anxious about leaving them. Be consistent; bring them to school every day, even if they protest. Decide on how you will say goodbye and do it the same way each day.

Leave after you say goodbye, even if your child is crying. Lingering and saying goodbye over and over only intensifies the feelings of separation. Our staff will comfort crying children and take your child from you if needed. On the first day of school parents may stay up to 30 minutes, the second day up to 15 minutes and on the third day parents will drop off, say goodbye and leave. Staff will let parents know if their child is having continued difficulty with separation. You may call the preschool office at any time to check on your child. Parents often feel bad for the staff if they leave while their child is crying. Staff is trained and

prepared to help your child through the stages of separation, knowing that once the process begins, a smiling face will soon follow.

## Gingerbread Preschool Calendar

Here are some important dates for the 2014/2015 school year. No school dates are listed in bold. Please note events and dates are subject to change without notice.

September 2 & 3	Open House (times vary depending on class)
September 8-November 21	Fall Quarter
September 8	First day of School
September 22	Lunch & Play (11:00am-12:00pm)
October 9	Coffee with the Therapist
October 15	Parent Workshop: Building Blocks to Literacy
October 15-16	Picture Day
October 20	Lunch & Play
<b>November 10-11</b>	<b>Veterans Day (No School)</b>
November 17	Lunch & Play
November 19	Parent Workshop: Building Block Beg Writing Skills
<b>November 24-28</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Break (No School)</b>
December 1-March 13, 2015	Winter Quarter
<b>December 15-January 2, 2015</b>	<b>Winter Break (No School)</b>
<b>January 19</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday (No School)</b>
January 21	Parent Workshop: Building Blocks Writing Skills pt 2
January 26	Lunch & Play
February 2-6	"Read to Your Child" Week
<b>February 16</b>	<b>President's Day (No School)</b>
February 18	Parent Workshop: Kindergarten Readiness
February 23	Lunch & Play
March 2-6	Week of the Young Child
March 18-June 5	Spring Quarter
March 18	Parent Workshops: Building Blocks of Science
March 23	Lunch & Play
<b>March 30-April 3</b>	<b>Spring Break (No School)</b>
April 15	Parent Workshop: Building Blocks of Math
May 13-15	Mini-Indy (days & times vary depending on class)
<b>May 25</b>	<b>Memorial Day (No School)</b>
June 5	Last day of School

### Dress Code

Gingerbread Preschool provides HANDS ON learning experiences and your child will come home DIRTY! Children will be using expressive materials including paint (which may not wash out), water, mud, etc. Children should wear PLAY CLOTHES. You may want to bring an extra set of clothing if you plan to go somewhere immediately after preschool. In addition, they will be involved in climbing and running activities. Recommended clothing includes: clothes that

your child can easily manipulate themselves such as pants with an elastic waist band, jeans, sweats, shorts, t-shirt, sweatshirt, sweater or jacket. Children are required to wear closed-toed, rubber soled shoes.

Gingersnap students should have at least one change of clothing, appropriate diapers and wipes as well as any other necessary diapering supplies, placed in a large Ziploc bag provided by the Gingersnaps staff.

### Drop-off & Pick-up

When you drop-off your child, wait in the lobby until the teacher greets you at the door. Students will then be asked to wash their hands then parents can escort their child into their classroom, have child place any personal items in their cubby and check in with your child's primary care giver. Once you have left, please do not return to the classroom as this often causes more separation issues than necessary. You are welcome to call the school at any time to check on your child.

In order to support a smooth transition for the Gingersnaps, drop off time will be a relaxed, slow paced time. Parents are encouraged to join their child in the classroom and assist them in selecting from the free choice activities provided. Be sure to say "good-bye" to your child and reassure them you will be back after they have fun playing. It is suggested that your child bring a 'transitional object', such as a small blankie or stuffed animal as needed. Gingersnaps staff are available to discuss your child's separation and develop individualized transition strategies as appropriate.

The staff will take attendance during the first ten minutes of class. If you arrive late, please enter the classroom quietly and speak to a staff member to let them know your child has arrived.

To pick up your child, collect your child's file folder from the wall pocket located in the lobby. The file folder is color coded to match the classroom color your child is attending. Once you have found your child's file folder, sign-out your child and wait to be called into the classroom. Once you have been called, proceed to the classroom with the file folder, hand the file folder to the designated staff member. Once a parent has signed a child out, it is the parent's responsibility to safely monitor and escort their child out of the classroom, through the security door and into the parking lot. If you need to pick your child up early or if you wish to observe your child, please check-in with the preschool office first and receive a visitor's sticker.

Staff may require any individual picking up a child to provide identification. Staff will not release your child to anyone who is not listed on your Release Authorization Waiver and Assumption of Risk Form. Special Instruction Cards (RED Cards) are available in the front office to complete if someone other than a parent is picking up your child or if you would like the teacher to call you for any reason. This should be given to staff at the beginning of class time. If there

is an emergency, and someone who is not on your list needs to pick your child up, you must contact us by phone at 931-3430. When calling, give the full name and a physical description of the individual and instruct them to bring a State Driver's License or a State Identification Card.

### Bathroom Time

Children learn personal hygiene and independence skills when taking a trip to the bathroom at preschool. Staff reinforces the importance of hand washing and children learn to care for their own needs.

Children with pants that are wet or soiled by a bowel movement on a regular basis will be considered not fully potty-trained. Staff will confer with parents regarding the child's readiness for the program.

Staff escort children to the bathroom, stand in the hallway with the bathroom door open and, as needed, verbally coach the children through the toileting process, assist children with snaps and zippers and make sure that all children wash and dry their hands. Staff then escorts the children back to class.

Generally, staff will not enter a bathroom stall when it is occupied. Sometimes however, it will be necessary for staff to enter a bathroom stall in order to change or re-dress a child. If a child is in need of such assistance, staff will ask a second adult to be an "observer".

Children with wet pants will be escorted to the bathroom, their wet clothes placed in a plastic bag, and given dry clothing. Children with pants soiled by a bowel movement will be escorted to the bathroom, coached as to how to clean themselves and given clean clothing. The soiled pants are placed in a plastic bag. A parent will be called to return to school to clean their child if staff is unsuccessful in the coaching process or the child becomes upset. Parents are to wash the school clothing and return them the next class day.

### Participant Behavior

A main goal of our program is for each child to have an enjoyable and quality experience at preschool. A contributing factor is the individual child's participation, which must follow certain behavior guidelines and general rules in order that the entire group can function together.



It is important to understand that children come to us from many different backgrounds and a variety of parenting styles. Within each age group there is a wide range of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Children in preschool are just beginning to learn and refine these skills.

At times, there may be conflict in the classroom, either between children or possibly between the teacher and child. These are “teachable” moments in which staff will guide children towards learning how to express themselves and communicate their needs, desires and wishes. Teachers encourage the development of skills including: use of appropriate “inside” voices, respect for one another, taking turns and sharing.

The role of staff in the classrooms is one of providing guidance. This is a process which includes modeling appropriate behavior, positive reinforcement and redirection. If the behavior deems it necessary, the “process” may include removal of the child from the classroom or being sent home for the day.

When a child is demonstrating inappropriate behavior or is involved in a conflict with another child, staff will document this behavior in an Incident/Injury Form. The parents of all children involved will be asked to acknowledge their child's behavior by signing the Incident/Injury Form. If the severity or frequency of the behavior is deemed detrimental to others or to the staff's ability to implement the program, a conference may be scheduled with the Recreation Supervisor.

#### Dismissal Policy

It is our goal to work in partnership with parents to address areas of concern regarding your child. Parents will be informed of any problem or concern by staff. Staff will work with parents to determine a plan of action towards a resolution. If the problem continues, a conference will be scheduled with the Recreation Supervisor to discuss all possible options, one of which may be dismissal from the program.

Your child may be dismissed from the program if:

- Staff determines that the preschool experience is too stressful for your child.
- Staff determines your child's behavior is having an adverse effect on the classroom routine and participants.
- Discipline or behavior problems are requiring excessive staff time or added staff is necessary for one-to-one attention for more than two continuous weeks.
- Your child has frequent bathroom accidents over an extended period.
- Your child is not signed-out on a daily basis.
- Continued tardiness in picking up your child.
- Failure to comply with the school Health and Wellness Policies.
- Failure to complete and return the required paperwork.
- Failure to comply with parking lot procedures.
- Nonpayment of registration and late fees.
- Inappropriate or unauthorized use of Gingerbread Families personal information.

## **Gingerbread Preschool Staff**

### Staff Ratios

Our program provides a ratio of one (1) staff to every eight (8) children. This 1:8 ratio is in accordance with the National Association for the Education of Young Children Guidelines. Although we are exempt from licensing, we do comply with the staffing ratios required for state and government funded facilities.

Gingersnaps (2's) provide one (1) staff for every four (4) children at all times. Each staff member is assigned four children for whom they are the 'primary caregiver'. Additional support staff is also available throughout the day.

### Qualifications

We adhere to State Licensing and the City of Pleasanton's hiring practices. We look for people who enjoy working with young children and who work as a team to develop a loving, developmentally appropriate environment. Each teacher must have a minimum of twelve (12) semester units in Early Childhood Education and be certified in CPR and First Aid. All staff are fingerprinted and processed through the Department of Justice. The Gingerbread staff receives ongoing professional development through on-site workshops and off-site professional training. Gingerbread staff will receive 40 hours of professional development and in-class technical support during the school year.

### Gingerbread Preschool staff directory

Messages may be left for any staff member via the phone at (925) 931-3430, via e-mail at [gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov). When leaving/sending a message, please state the staff members name, your child's name and classroom.

### Parent Teacher Communication

The relationship between the parents and staff are critical to your child's success at Gingerbread. It is important for parents and staff to establish a good working relationship early on in the school year. Finding a good time for both parent and staff to talk may be difficult. However, the staff is typically available at the end of each class to discuss with you any concerns, questions or comments you may have regarding your child's participation in the classroom. At any time you may leave a message for staff at (925) 931-3430 and they will return your call as soon as possible.

When speaking to your child's teacher it is helpful to ask specific questions regarding your child's abilities in the classroom setting. For example, "Does Bobby participate in the group activities? How long is his attention span at circle time? Does he play well with the other children?" This will assist the teacher to specifically address any questions or concerns. Some communications tools available to parents are the GB Newsletter, Room Parent Email Tree, reminders on sign-out folders, notices in the preschool lobby, GB website and the Red Cards.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

The teaching staff does not conduct parent/teacher conferences or give recommendations to parents regarding their child's "readiness" for kindergarten. Throughout the year, your child's teacher will send items home and informally discuss with you your child's progress. Our goal is to always support your child and family to meet your child's needs. Staff will speak to parents if they feel a child is having difficulty in the classroom. However, if you feel your child is not progressing as they should, speak with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will refer you to the Recreation Supervisor to discuss additional evaluation options. We believe in early intervention to ensure each child reaches their greatest potential. If staff or parents have concerns regarding a child, they may request: the Recreation Supervisor to consider conducting a classroom observation of the child, implementing Ages and Stages Questionnaire or a "Team Meeting" (Teacher, Parents and Recreation Supervisor).



## Primary Care Giver System

A primary care giver system is a relationship-based approach in which staff develops a rapport with both child and parent. Each child/family is randomly assigned to a staff member who is principally responsible for that child. This means that the staff member is intentional in engaging with the child to build a relationship/attachment and also

observes the child throughout the day and is able to engage in conversation with parents about their child's daily experience in the classroom. Sometimes a child may form a close attachment to a staff member that is not their primary care giver. In such an instance, to ensure that each child is comfortable and connected, staff may make a change a primary care giver assignment. If there are concerns regarding a child, the classroom teacher will communicate with the parent.

## Ages and Stages Questionnaire

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is a developmental screening tool. Each questionnaire contains 30 developmental items organized into five areas: Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social. In October, an ASQ will be given to you to complete with your child and return to the Preschool Office. Staff will then use the information from the questionnaire to support their activity choices in the classroom to individually support your child's learning and development. If any areas of concern are identified in the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) staff will discuss them with you.

## Program Policies

### Late Fee

If a child is picked up late, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. You will receive a late fee invoice from your child's teacher which must be paid to the preschool office by the next class time. Continued lateness in picking up your child may lead to dismissal from the program.

### Refunds

In order to receive a refund, requests must be made no later than ten (10) days prior to the first class meeting each quarter. Refunds requested at least five (5) days prior to the start of the class will be assessed a \$5.00 administrative fee per program/activity. Full refunds will be given for any class cancelled by the Community Services Department. No refunds will be issued for requests received less than five (5) prior to the start of the class or program. Customers purchase a space in the program by the quarter. Portions of a quarter cannot be purchased separately.

### Payment Plan

Parents may select the Payment Plan option to pay tuition. To participate in the Payment Plan, an agreement must be signed at the time of registration for each quarter. The Payment Plan agreement lists dates that each payment is due. **Parents will not be sent a bill or reminder in the mail. VISA and MASTERCARD payments ARE NOT automatically charged against your account.** Each payment must be individually authorized. Credit Card payments are to be made in person, by phone, fax or online on or before the due date. If payment is not received on the due date by 3:00 p.m., a \$25.00 late fee will be charged.

### Late Payment Fee

A fee of \$25.00 will be charged for payment plan fees that are received after the payment deadline. Failure to pay fees will forfeit your child's space in the program.

### Return Check Fee

A check that is returned from the bank with insufficient funds will incur a \$10.00 fee. The \$10.00 fee must be paid separately by cash or money order. Subsequent payments may be made with credit card, check, cash or money order.

### Priority Registration Information

Once your child is enrolled, you will be given first priority to register (Priority Registration) for the next quarter. Priority registration is completed once the preschool office has received a payment for the upcoming quarter.

### Wait List

If you are currently enrolled in a class, and wish to be transferred to a different class, you must complete a Wait List Form at the Preschool Office. As spaces

become available, those on the Wait List are accommodated in the order that they were received. All transfers are made at the Recreation Supervisor's discretion.

### Parking Lot

Class times have been purposely staggered in order to help alleviate overcrowding in the parking lot. Overflow parking is available at the Aquatic Center. Preschool staff park off-site to provide more parking spaces for participants.

Please be considerate of other parents when dropping off and picking up your child and leave as promptly as possible. This will allow parents in the next class time to find parking.

When entering the parking lot, **please drive slowly**; be cautious of pedestrians walking down the driveway and through the parking lot. At the end of the driveway, before entering the parking lot, please stop at the stop sign to make sure a parking space is available. Yield to vehicles exiting the parking lot. Parking is available at the back of the building. You may not block another vehicle or park illegally in any of the red zones, handicap parking spaces or in the cross walk area. The driveway (red zone) must be able to provide access to emergency vehicles at all times. **Never leave children unattended in a vehicle at any time.**

On special event days and parents days, please park at the Aquatic Center to alleviate overcrowding in the Gingerbread Preschool parking lot.

### Distribution of Information/Flyers/Cards, etc.

Nothing is allowed to be distributed by hand, attached to sign-out file folders, or in the children's cubbies, that is not approved by the preschool and related to preschool or City business.

### Gifts

It is against City policy for staff to accept gifts from our participants. The Friends of Gingerbread (F.O.G.), on behalf of the entire student body, provides several special luncheons, professional development opportunities and gifts throughout the year to let the staff know they are appreciated. If you would like to give a donation towards these activities or volunteer to help with one of the activities, please contact the preschool office at (925) 931-3430. If you feel it is necessary to give a personal gift, your child may make a card, a picture or baked-goods to show their appreciation.

## **Special Activities**

### Birthdays

Birthday celebrations validate the uniqueness of each child and contribute to the development of a strong self-image. Every child is invited to celebrate their birthday at school, whether or not it is on their actual birthday. Parents are asked to pick a date and put your child's name on the class calendar. Only one child per day celebrates their birthday as this keeps it "special" to your child. The sign-up is on a "first-come, first-serve basis". If you want a certain date and it is taken, select the next available date. When your child comes to school on the day you designated for their celebration, he/she will receive a birthday crown that they will be able to take home and the children in the classroom will sing Happy Birthday to your child.

NO PARTY FAVOR BAGS AND NO FOOD is allowed to be brought into the classroom. If any such items are brought, staff is not allowed to give these items to the children or send them home with the children. If you would like to do something special for your child's class, you may donate a book to the classroom library. Your child may bring the book wrapped, open the gift during circle time and present it to the teacher.

NO BIRTHDAY PARTY INVITATIONS are allowed to be distributed at the preschool. Nothing is allowed to be distributed by hand, on the sign out file folders, or in the children's cubbies that is not approved by the preschool and related to preschool or City business. If you want to invite specific children from your child's class to a birthday party, please use your classroom roster to contact a child's parent via e-mail, mail, and phone or speak privately to that child's parent. When parents and children discuss birthday parties in the classroom, children who were not included in the party feel left out and have hurt feelings. While this is a natural part of growing up, we would like to guard against this during the preschool years.

### Visiting Readers

During Read to Your Child Week parents are welcome to sign up in their child's classroom to be a visiting reader. This is on a first-come, first-serve basis. You may bring one of your child's favorite books to share or your child's teacher will select one for you.

### Off-site

Throughout the year children will leave the school campus to do a nature walk through the park or play on the "big" playground in Amador Park. Staff will let you know when you drop-off your child that they will be going off-site that day. No parent participation is required.

### Parent's Day

Parent's Day is a half hour event at the beginning of your child's class. Children and parents participate in a classroom activity together. The GB Newsletter will

list your child's Parent's Day date and time and you will receive an invitation from your child attached to their sign-out folders.

### Week of the Young Child

Gingerbread's celebration is based upon a nationally celebrated week. We have so much fun we need an entire month to celebrate! An art auction-food drive, a raffle fundraiser, family social and other special activities occur during this week.

### Mini-Indy

During the spring quarter your child will participate in the annual Mini-Indy. The children ride their tricycles, bicycles or big wheels around several courses. Helmets are required for all participants. There are no classes at preschool on these days. Parent participation is required. Children who are not enrolled at Gingerbread will not be allowed to participate.

### Cultural Celebrations

We are very excited to have a culturally diverse school and enjoy learning about and participating in a variety of cultural celebrations. If you would like your child's class to learn about and participate in a cultural celebration that your family enjoys, please speak to your child's teacher and we will be happy to work with you.

## **Health & Wellness Policy**

The goal of the Health and Wellness Policy is to prevent and reduce the spread of communicable illnesses among children, their families and staff. Below are the guidelines and procedures to ensure we work cooperatively so that everyone remains healthy.

### School Attendance

Participant's school attendance is monitored by the Preschool Office. Staff takes attendance each class session. If a child is noted absent and the school has not been notified regarding a Planned Absence or an Unplanned Absence/Illness, the Preschool Office may contact a family regarding the absence.

### Planned Absence

If you know in advance that your child will be absent from class due to an appointment, vacation, etc. Please write on your child's sign out folder on the dates they will be absent. For example: "appointment" or "vacation". In addition, verbally notify your child's teacher of your child's planned absence.



### Unplanned Absence/Illness

If your child is absent, parents should contact our Preschool Office via email at [gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov](mailto:gingerbread@cityofpleasantonca.gov) or call (925) 931-3430 to report your child's absence. When contacting the Preschool Office, provide the following information:

- Your child's name
- Your child's class day/time/teacher
- Reason for absence
- If absence is related to an illness:
  - What is the specific illness/symptoms?
  - Has child been seen by a physician?

### Wellness Check

If a child has been absent for two (2) consecutive class periods, the Preschool Office may contact the family to inquire regarding the child's absence. This is to ensure that the child is not ill with a communicable disease in which notification to other families may be necessary.

### Hygiene

We are committed to teaching your child proper personal hygiene and how to clean up after themselves.

### Hand Washing

Hand washing is an important activity throughout the day at preschool. Before class begins, all children are required to wash their hands in the preschool bathroom or classroom. While liquid hand sanitizers are available throughout the preschool facility, these are intended for adult use. The most effective way to kill germs is by using soap and water. Children will also wash their hands after using the bathroom, before eating snack and after playing outside on the playground. We also encourage the children to wash their hands in the classroom as is necessary.



### Cleaning

The preschool facility is cleaned daily by a professional custodial service. During program hours, preschool staff disinfects each toilet seat after it has been used and wipe down bathroom toilet and sink surfaces as well. In the classroom, staff cleans the tables throughout the day and disinfects the tables with a bleach and water solution before and after snack time. Three times a year preschool staff deep cleans the classrooms, washing all furniture, cleaning the area rugs and sanitizing all the toys. If there is an accident in the classroom in which an area is soiled, it is immediately cleaned or the carpet removed to be cleaned. If a communicable illness is reported that requires special cleaning by County Health, the classroom is closed and cleaned according to the proper guidelines and then is re-opened.

## Wellness

For many children, this is the first time that they are participating in a large group setting of other children their age and they will be exposed to a variety of “new germs” and may become ill, notwithstanding hygiene practices. Your child must build up their immunity to these “new germs”, this is part of “getting ready for elementary school”.

## Sleep

Getting enough sleep is critical for your child's proper brain and body development. It is also a key factor in helping your child be able to fight off illness. Children who do not get the proper amount of sleep may often show reduced coordination and reaction time which makes them more likely to get injured. Additional concerns are difficulty paying attention, reduced memory retention, increased irritability, frustration and difficulty controlling their emotions.

The recommended amount of sleep changes as your child grows.

2-4 years of age need 11-13 hours of sleep a day

4-7 years of age need 10-12 hours of sleep a day

## Nutrition

Children should always eat before coming to preschool. It is important for them to have nutritious food to energize them and enable them to actively participate. Although a snack is provided, it is not substantial enough to replace a meal.

## Immunizations

A record of immunizations or a Personal Beliefs Against Immunization Affidavit is required at the time you register your child in the Gingerbread Preschool Program. Participants who are not immunized may be temporarily excluded from the program in the case of an outbreak of a communicable disease for the child's protection. Exclusion will be determined by the City of Pleasanton in accordance with Federal, State and County recommendations.

## Exclusion from Program due to Illness

### **Children are to stay home when they have the following diagnosis or symptoms:**

- Diagnosis of communicable diseases such as:
  - Conjunctivitis
  - Strep throat
  - Chicken pox
  - Measles
  - Pin worms
  - Ringworm
  - Lice
  - Meningitis
  - Pertussis (Whooping cough)
  - Flu

*Report any communicable illness to the Preschool Office (925) 931-3430.*

- Fever – your child must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication.
- Strep infection – child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before they may return to class.
- A cough with mucus secretion (a wet wheezy cough).

- A rash or skin ailment such as: poison oak, impetigo, ringworm, cold sores or fever blisters.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eye or conjunctivitis. Your child must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

#### Removal from the Classroom

A staff member may remove a child from the classroom if they are presenting symptoms of an illness. Parents or guardians may be required to pick-up their child within a reasonably short period of time after being notified of the illness, and the child may be isolated from others while waiting to be picked-up. Parents or guardians may be required to provide certification from the child's doctor that the child is allowed to return to the preschool.

#### Health epidemic

In the case of a health epidemic, the City of Pleasanton/Gingerbread Preschool may revise or add additional requirements to the Health and Wellness Policy and families will receive an Exclusion Addendum, specifically addressing the health epidemic.

#### Communicable Disease Notification

If a child becomes ill with a communicable disease, parents are required to notify the Gingerbread staff as soon as possible. A doctor's note confirming the diagnosis will be required. Notices will then be issued to all students who may have come in contact with the student with their sign out folder or through email. A doctor's note is required for the child to return to school.

### **Life Threatening Food Allergy/Medical Condition**

The City of Pleasanton/Gingerbread Preschool accommodate children with life threatening food allergies/medical conditions using a team approach with parents, classroom staff and preschool administration in order to ensure each child's safety. All staff are EpiPen® trained and receive general training regarding food allergies and safety precautions annually.

A parent of any child who has a life-threatening allergy/medical condition must complete an Emergency Action Plan for Life Threatening Allergy/Medical Condition Form. Constant communication between parents and staff regarding planned activities, snacks and ingredients is necessary. Parents should notify staff if they have any concerns regarding the scheduled snack. Parents are always welcome in the kitchen to review food labels.

All medications, prescription and over the counter medications, must be provided to the preschool in their original packaging, with the child's full name and dosage written on the container and placed in a zip lock bag. A measuring spoon or cup must be included. Any child, who requires medication

for life saving measures, may not attend the program without that said medication on site.

## **Safety Policies and Procedures**

### Fire Drills

Fire drills are held twice a year. Teachers prepare children during the first circle time for the drill. Each class is assigned an evacuation route. Once everyone is out of the building, staff takes roll call and plays games with children until the “all clear” signal is given to reenter the building. If a false alarm occurs during drop off/pick up time, parents are to follow the instructions of preschool staff and evacuate the building. Once the alarm has been sounded, staff is required to follow evacuation procedures, even if it is a false alarm.



### Building Security

We have implemented several measures to ensure the safety of the children and staff. The entries into the preschool from the lobby are locked at all times and accessible by key or to be “buzzed” in. The back door of the building remains locked from the outside at all times. The door is only left open if a staff member is loading/unloading in the back parking lot. The front doors to the facility remain unlocked during program hours. These doors are locked only if there is no staff scheduled to supervise the lobby area. A green doorbell may be found to the left of the door for parents to gain entrance if the building is locked. All parents and visitors must check-in at the preschool office to receive a visitor's sticker.

### Personal Information/Privacy

The email address, provided at the time of registration, is intended to be used for official Gingerbread Preschool, Friends of Gingerbread, and City of Pleasanton business. Those who are authorized to send information on behalf of the Gingerbread Preschool/City of Pleasanton are the Friends of Gingerbread Preschool (F.O.G.) Parent Board, Room Parents, and Gingerbread/City of Pleasanton Staff.

### Photograph and Video Taping

Your child will be photographed/videotaped while in attendance at Gingerbread Preschool. These photos/video tapes may be used for classroom projects or in promotional materials for Gingerbread Preschool and the City of Pleasanton. Parents may take photographs and videotape for personal use only.

## **Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the City of Pleasanton encourages those with disabilities to participate in its programs. Gingerbread Preschool is a program of the Community Services Department and thus we provide inclusion for those who may have special needs. We believe this allows an opportunity for our participants to include those who may be different from themselves. If your child has a life threatening allergy, medical condition, developmental disability, or other special need requiring accommodation, it is helpful if parents contact the preschool office prior to the first day of school to ensure that your child's needs are met. Additional information regarding our accommodation process is available by contacting the Recreation Supervisor at (925) 931-3432.

### A Diverse Community

Gingerbread Preschool is a diverse community. We respect all cultures and faiths and actively celebrate our children and their families. The diversity personified in our classroom represents the community of Pleasanton. We want to share this image of Pleasanton with our participants and instill values of respect and acceptance for all.

## **Gingersnaps (2's)**

### Teaching Staff (Gingersnaps 2's)

The Gingersnaps program is run with a 1:4 ratio (teacher to student). The Gingersnaps program is offered twice a week Tuesday & Thursday and Wednesday & Friday from 8:00-10:00am and 10:15am-12:15pm.



Wednesday/Friday & Tuesday/Thursday  
8:00-10:00am & 10:15am-12:15pm  
Yellow Room

Teacher  
Ms. Jamie

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Sheila, Ms. Rupali & Ms. Daniella

### Learning Activities

During class time your child will be engaging in a variety of play which we call learning activities. Children explore different areas of the room, at their own pace and direction. Typically there is at least one learning activity at a table in which staff is assisting the children, such as science, puzzles, arts and crafts, etc. The following are some of the activities your child will be learning from.

### Block Play

When children play with blocks, they learn concepts of shape, size, length, and location which are pre-reading and math skills. They also learn to use their imagination and cooperate with others.

### Dramatic Play

This is a favorite activity for two year olds. Children dress up and pretend they are learning self-help skills as they manipulate the dress up items as well as learning to use their imaginations and interact with their peers and teachers.

### Arts

Children use their imagination, creativity and express feelings during this time. They explore using a variety of paints, glue, shaving cream, crayons and markers. Opportunities are made available to the children to “play” with these materials. The process is the focus, not the end product.

### Music Time

During music time, children are exposed to a variety of songs, poems and musical instruments. They learn the principles of music and rhythm.

### Story time

During story time children are presented literature in a variety of ways; reading, story-telling, felt stories, story props and finger plays. When being read to, children learn that letters on a page represent words, and pictures represent words and ideas. They learn to listen to spoken language and to follow the development of thoughts and ideas in the plot of a story.

### Sensory Activity

During sensory activities children learn new vocabulary, concepts of texture, color, weight and size as well as observing likenesses and differences.

### Manipulatives

Manipulative are items such as LEGOS® and beads. When playing with manipulatives, children learn hand-eye coordination, symmetry, shapes and order.

### Gathering (Circle) Time

The Gingersnaps will gather together on an informal basis on the large classroom rug. Each day, a teacher will provide the children with the opportunity to participate in story time, singing or other interactive activities. Children may

choose to participate or not. As the children grow and develop, children will be encouraged to participate in the Gathering Time as individually appropriate.

### Outside Play

Outside Play is important for your child to develop their gross motor skills by participating in activities such as: running, jumping, climbing and pedaling. This is very important for their physical development as well as their brain development. Children are also able to use their imagination and learn to cooperate with others when involved in group play. The Gingersnaps children will play outside in their gated play yard for the first few months of school. As the children mature, they will also play on the larger play yard when they have the yard to themselves. In the spring, they may share the larger play yard with another age group.

### Snack Time

At snack time your child will practice their self help, social and language skills.

Snack time is an activity that children participate in together as a classroom community. At the table, teachers and children practice sitting at the table, eating, using their words to ask for more and cleaning up after themselves.

Snacks are primarily healthy foods that include a variety of crackers, cheese, oranges, bananas and applesauce. Occasional sweets will be served on special celebrations and if it relates to the curriculum theme. Water is served at each snack time. Snacks are pre-planned; however they are subject to change.

If your child has a food allergy or restriction, please notify staff and we will do our best to find an appropriate substitute snack.

### Clean-up Time

Each child is expected to participate in clean-up time. Children learn that they are a member of a classroom community, and as such have a responsibility to participate with the group to accomplish this task. Children learn cooperation as they work together and practice their communications skills as they use their words to ask teachers, "where does this go?" Teaching staff assist children in sorting and classifying items as they put them away.

### Diapering and Toilet Training

Children do not need to be toilet trained to participate in the Gingersnaps class. During your child's time in the class, we will try to work with you and your child to provide him/her assistance through various stages of toilet training. When your child is ready for the transition from diapers to toilet training, please notify classroom staff. Staff will review Toilet Training Preferences for your child. As your child progresses, the Preferences may be modified by you with classroom staff.

## Diapering Procedures

At Gingersnaps, staff are trained to engage children and involve them in the process.

Children are required to have diapers, wipes and a change of clothes available in the classroom. Please put a clean diaper on your child prior to coming to class, as diapers are changed on an as-needed basis only.

Children wearing diapers will generally be changed in the classroom at the diaper changing table by their assigned 'primary' staff member, except in cases of staff member's absence.

Children wearing diapers will be changed in the classroom at the diaper changing table by their assigned 'primary' staff member only, except in cases of staff member's absence. Children will be treated respectfully and calmly as staff walks them through the following steps:

- Tell child that it is time for a diaper change; if the child is engaged in an activity, allow child to complete activity before going to the changing table.
- The child will climb steps on the diaper table with assistance, to the clean diaper changing area.
- Staff will put on non-latex gloves.
- Staff will remove child's clothing and diaper.
- The soiled diaper will be removed and disposed of in a covered container.
- The child will then be wiped clean using wipes which will then be disposed of in the covered container.
- Gloves will be removed after cleaning the child but before the staff puts on a clean diaper in order to eliminate cross contamination.
- The child will then be dressed with a clean diaper and clean clothes, if needed.
- The child will walk down steps with assistance.
- Changing table will be disinfected with a bleach solution and covered with a clean paper towel.
- Both child and staff will wash hands thoroughly.

## Toileting Readiness

Children that are demonstrating developmental readiness for toilet learning can be provided some assistance through the process as determined jointly by the parent and staff.

Children must show physical, cognitive and emotional readiness to begin the process. Parent will then review with classroom staff and fill-out the **Toilet Training Preferences** form.

Children who are toilet training are to wear underwear or pull ups under their clothing. Children will generally be escorted by a staff person when children indicate that there is a need to use the toilet. Children will generally not be left alone in the children's bathroom.

Please discuss your child's toileting-readiness with his/her primary staff member. And, be sure to bring an extra set of clothes to keep on hand in the classroom. Accidents do happen!

## Participant Behavior

### Biting

Biting is a common behavior for two year olds. There are many reasons for biting: teething, attention-seeking, power/aggression, territorial/defense, and frustration/stress. When a child bites or is bitten, a strong emotional response is sure to follow. Children and adults alike may experience overwhelming feelings of fear, anger, frustration, and guilt. Biting by a child of any age cannot be tolerated. It is not safe, socially acceptable, or helpful in creating a positive environment for children.

Most biting occurs among toddlers who have limited language skills or ways to express their feelings. They also may bite when they have become so frustrated or overly tired that they have lost all control. Pressures to keep pace with a hurried adult world can be very stressful for young children. Children often need more time than adults allow moving from one activity or setting to another: home to preschool, dinnertime to bedtime.

When a child bites, staff will intervene quickly, calmly and firmly. Most often, a child bites because they are out of control, which is very frightening to them. Staff will reassure both the child who bit and the victim. The child who was bit will be comforted and have the bitten area washed with warm soapy water.

Once the child who bit calms down, staff will make sure that the child understands that biting cannot be allowed and that staff will stop it every time.

Staff will encourage the child to comfort the victim with words, hugs, or pats. Staff will demonstrate the gentleness and kindness expected.

Staff will assess what led to the biting, evaluate the classroom environment and teach the children alternative actions. Staff will give children words they can use to ask to have a turn with a toy and also suggest acceptable ways a child might express their anger or frustration.

Both children's families will be notified of a biting incident. If a child continues to bite, staff will work with the child and family to ensure the behavior stops. This may include removal from the classroom.

As children turn three, biting is no longer "age appropriate". When a child bites, they will be removed from the classroom and the parent will be called to pick up the child. This is to send a very clear message to the child that they will not be welcome in the classroom if they bite.

## 3's Classroom Guide

### Teaching Staff (3's)

The 3's program is run with a 1:8 ratio (teacher to student) with a maximum of 22 students per class. The 3's program is offered twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 2.5 hours per class.



Tuesday/Thursday  
8:30am & 11:50am  
Red Room

Teacher  
Ms. Mika

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Briana & Ms. ??

Tuesday/Thursday  
8:40am & 12:00pm  
Green Room

Teacher  
Ms. Lori

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Emily, Ms. Kara (AM) & Ms. Cheryl (PM)



Tuesday/Thursday  
8:50am & 12:10pm  
Blue Room

Teacher  
Ms. Kathleen

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Lorie & Ms. Cristina



## Learning Activities

### Block Play

When children play with blocks, they learn concepts of shape, size, length, and location which are pre-reading and math skills. They also learn to use their imagination and cooperate with others.

### Dramatic Play

In the dramatic play area children learn to improvise and use items in a symbolic way to represent something else - this is abstract thinking. They also try on different roles and work to solve social problems through negotiation with friends.

### Sensory Activity

During sensory activities children learn new vocabulary, concepts of texture, color, weight and size and they learn to observe likenesses and differences. These are pre-reading, math and science skills.

### Manipulatives

During manipulative play children learn hand-eye coordination, symmetry, shapes, order, design and they learn to make and repeat patterns. These are pre-math skills. They also use their fine motor skills to manipulate LEGOS®, beads etc., which helps to develop hand muscles that are critical for writing.

### Science

During science children use fine motor skills and tactile senses. They learn about real-life situations and experiences, cause and effect, experimentation, questioning and logic.

### Arts and Crafts

Children use their imagination, creativity and express feelings during this time. They interact with staff and learn to follow instructions. They learn relationships of space and size, concepts of symmetry, balance and design. These are foundational pre-math and pre-reading skills.

### Me Binder

During learning activities your child may create something to place in their Me Binder. Me Binders stay at school and are sent home the last week of school. The Me Binder will serve to help you and your child reflect on their Gingerbread Preschool experience.

## Gathering (Circle) Time

Gathering (circle) time is an intensive learning time for the children. Gathering time is held at the beginning and end of the class time. It is important to bring your child on time so they do not miss an opportunity to be assigned a special responsibility for the day. Children participate in a variety of learning activities as well as work on developing attention span. At the beginning of the school

year, Gathering time is typically 10-15 minutes and by the end of the school year it is up to 30 minutes.

### Group Discussion

Group discussion is a time when the teacher greets the children, discusses what they will be doing that day and possibly asks the children to respond to a question. This allows the children to practice raising their hand, waiting their turn, and having their comments be valued by the teacher and the group.

### Story Time

During story time children are presented literature in a variety of ways; reading, story-telling, felt stories, story props and finger plays. When being read to, children learn that letters on a page represent words, and pictures represent words and ideas. They learn to listen to spoken language and to follow the development of thoughts and ideas in the plot of a story. These are foundational skills for reading.

### Music Time

During music time, children are exposed to a variety of songs, poems and musical instruments. They learn principles of music and rhythm, vocabulary, memory skills, sequencing, and auditory discrimination (recognizing different sounds) - these are foundational skills for reading and math.

### Surprise Bag (Sharing)

Sharing helps increase children's socialization and language skills. It provides an opportunity for children to share part of their world-what they like, what they know, what they found, and how they feel. As they share something of themselves with one another, they gain confidence in becoming the focus of the group's attention, develop speaking skills, and find others are interested in them. They discover there are things they know about and they learn to feel good about themselves. Sharing requires use of critical and creative thinking processes.

Sharing is done with a Sharing Bag. Children take the sharing bag home, on a rotating basis, and bring back to class the next class session to share with the entire class. With the help of their parents, children will select an item from home, place it in the bag and bring to class for sharing. Please do not include valuable items or play weapons. If a child forgets to return the bag, an extra one will be available. Each child will have several opportunities to take the sharing bag home.

### Community Helpers

Community Helpers represents a variety of "jobs" that need to be completed by the children each day. Children are selected on a rotating basis; if a child is absent, they may miss their turn. Community Helper "jobs" include: Door Holder, Line Leader, Bell Ringer, Plant care taker, Class Pet sitter. The class pet is a stuffed animal that will become the class mascot. The children will select a

name for the mascot and each day a child will be responsible for making sure it is cared for. In addition, each day three children will be selected on a rotating basis to have snack at a special table with the teacher. Sharing in these jobs will allow children to take a leadership role in the class, feel successful for completing their task and develop their social and emotional skills, as well as establish positive self-esteem.

### Yoga

Yoga is used during transition times such as coming in from our time outside; we wash hands and gather on the carpet. This is a time to focus on breathing and calming the body to help each child learn the skill of self-regulation.



### Outside Play

We view outside play as an extension of the classroom. Children will be able to self select their own play activity as well as experience group games such as relay races and parachute play.

### Snack Time

At snack time your child will practice their social, language and communication skills. Occasionally children will have the opportunity to assemble their own snack. This activity introduces “cooking” at a preschool level. Through this experience children are practicing pre-math (measuring), pre-reading (sequencing), and science skills (cause and effect).

Snacks are primarily healthy foods that children enjoy such as oranges, apples and a variety of crackers. Occasionally sweets will be served during special celebrations and if it relates to the curriculum. Water is served at each snack time. If your child has a food allergy or restriction, please notify staff and we will do our best to find an appropriate substitute snack.

## 4's Classroom Guide

### Teaching Staff (4's)

The 4's program is run with a 1:8 ratio (teacher to student) with a maximum of 24 students per class. The 4's program is offered three times a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 2.5 hours per class.



Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
8:30am & 11:50am  
Red Room

Teacher  
Ms. Janice

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Emily, Ms. Kara (AM) & Ms. Cheryl (PM)

Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
8:40am & 12:00pm  
Green Room

Teacher  
Ms. Sharon

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Lorie & Ms. Cristina



Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
8:50am & 12:10pm  
Blue Room

Teacher  
Ms. Andrea

Teacher's Aides  
Ms. Holly & Ms. Uzma



## Learning Activities

### Block Play

When children play with blocks, they learn concepts of shape, size, length, and location which are pre-reading and math skills. They also learn to use their imagination and cooperate with others.

### Dramatic Play

In the dramatic play area children learn to improvise and use items in a symbolic way to represent something else – this is abstract thinking. They also try on different roles and work to solve social problems through negotiation with friends.

### Sensory Activity

During sensory activities children learn new vocabulary, concepts of texture, color, weight and size and they learn to observe likenesses and differences. These are pre-reading, math and science skills.

### Manipulatives

During manipulative play children learn hand-eye coordination, symmetry, shapes, order, design and they learn to make and repeat patterns. These are pre-math skills. They also use their fine motor skills to manipulate legos, beads, etc., which helps to develop hand muscles that are critical for writing.

### Science

During science children use fine motor skills and tactile senses. They learn about real-life situations and experiences, cause and effect, experimentation, questioning and logic.

### Arts & Crafts

Children use their imagination, creativity and express feelings during this time. They interact with staff and learn follow instructions. They learn relationships of space and size, concepts of symmetry, balance and design. These are foundational pre-math and pre-reading skills.

### Me Binder

During learning activities your child may create something to place in their Me Binder. Me Binders stay at school and are sent home the last week of school. The Me Binder will serve to help you and your child reflect on their Gingerbread Preschool experience.

### Letter & Number Recognition & Writing

One way in which children are exposed to letter and number recognition and pre-writing skills is through participating in reading, storytelling, coloring and cutting activities, play dough, LEGOS® and block play. These are all foundational skills.

In order for children to successfully write, their hand muscles need to be well developed and children need to have the appropriate level of visual perception and eye-hand coordination. When a child is ready, they will demonstrate an interest on their own to begin forming letters and words. Gingerbread uses "Handwriting without Tears" curriculum to assist in providing pre-writing and writing skills. Children are exposed to important pre-writing skill concepts through a variety of activities including music, use of wood pieces, chalk and slates, or paper and pencil. When ready, we present letter formation, emphasizing the capital letters. In conjunction with the writing of the letters, we have an Alphabet Book for the children where they are asked to work on a skill (patterning, cutting, gluing, tracing, etc.) in addition to learning about the letter of the week. Letter and number recognition are also presented in a variety of other activity times such as gathering time, snack time, games and art/craft projects. These are foundational skills for reading, writing and math.

#### Buddy Days

On Buddy Day each child will be paired with a classmate for an activity. Learning how to foster friendships will be discussed at gathering time. This intentional time works on building social skills.

#### Gathering (Circle) Time

Gathering (circle) time is an intensive learning time for the children.

Gathering time is held at the beginning and end of the class time. It is important to bring your child on time so they do not miss an opportunity to be assigned a special responsibility for the day. Children participate in a variety of learning activities as well as work on developing attention span. At the beginning of the school year, Gathering time is typically 10-15 minutes and by the end of the school year it is up to 30 minutes.

#### Group Discussion

Group discussion is a time when the teacher greets the children, discusses what they will be doing that day and possibly asks the children to respond to a question. This allows the children to practice raising their hand, waiting their turn, and having their comments be valued by the teacher and the group.

#### Story Time

During story time children are presented literature in a variety of ways; reading, storytelling, felt stories, story props and finger plays. When being read to, children learn that letters on a page represent words, and pictures represent words and ideas. They learn to listen to spoken language and to follow the development of thoughts and ideas in the plot of a story. These are foundational skills for reading.

## Music Time

During music time, children are exposed to a variety of songs, poems and musical instruments. They learn principles of music and rhythm, vocabulary, memory skills, sequencing, and auditory discrimination (recognizing different sounds) - these are foundational skills for reading and math.



## Surprise Can (Sharing)

Sharing helps increase children's socialization and language skills. It provides an opportunity for children to share part of their world-what they like, what they know, what they found, and how they feel. As they share something of themselves with one another, they gain confidence in becoming the focus of the group's attention, develop speaking skills, and find others are interested in them. They discover there are things they know about and they learn to feel good about themselves. Sharing requires use of critical and creative thinking processes.

Teachers will set up a rotating schedule for the sharing can. Each child will have several opportunities to take the sharing can home. Parent and child together put a "surprise" in the can and think of clues to help other children guess the contents. Clues are writing on a Surprise Can Clue form. The child will be asked to give their clues to the class and the class will try to guess what's in the can. Sometimes it is difficult for a child not to tell their friends what is in the can. The teacher will help children know how fun it is when no one knows the surprise. The group should be encouraged to ask questions. **Do not use the word "secret". We do not keep secrets from people, especially from parents.**

## Instructions for using the Sharing Can

- Put an item in the can.
- Write 2 or 3 clues on Clue form.
- Tape clues to the outside top of the can.
- Bring to class on the next school day.

## Community Helpers

Community Helpers represents a variety of "jobs" that need to be completed by the children each day. Children are selected on a rotating basis; if a child is absent, they may miss their turn. Community Helper "jobs" include: Line Leader, Snack Helper, Weather Monitor, Calendar, and Flag Salute. As a Community Helper, children are able to take a leadership role in the class and feel successful for completing their task. This helps to develop their social and emotional skills, as well as establish positive self-esteem.

### Attendance/Counter

A child is assigned to count all the children present. Then by looking at the attendance chart, the children are asked to determine who is here and who is absent. We are working on name recognition of not only their name but their classmates' names as well. Math skills are used to determine the amount of children present for the day.

### Calendar

The calendar is reviewed at each class period. The teacher, along with the community helper, leads the class in reviewing the name of the month and days of the week, counting the number of days that have already passed and determining the current day of the week and date. The children are learning number and letter recognition, sequencing and memory skills. These are foundational skills for math and reading.

### Weather

The community helper, with the assistance of the teacher, determines what the weather is like on that day and then chooses a picture that represents the type of weather they have chosen. This requires the child to use their observation and critical thinking skills.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The community helper holds the flag and leads the class in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. This requires the children to use memorization skills. Throughout the year, teachers also discuss with the children the meaning of the pledge. It is our hope, that this will instill a sense of pride in their country and help the children understand that they are part of a larger community.

### Yoga

Yoga is used during transition times such as coming in from our time outside; we wash hands and gather on the carpet. This is a time to focus on breathing and calming the body to help each child learn the skill of self-regulation.

### Outside Play

We view outside play as an extension of the classroom. Children will be able to self select their own play activity as well as experience group games such as relay races and parachute play.

### Snack Time

At snack time your child will practice their social, language and communication skills. Occasionally children will have the opportunity to assemble their own snack. This activity introduces "cooking" at a preschool level. Through this experience children are practicing pre-math (measuring), pre-reading (sequencing), and science skills (cause and effect).

Snacks are primarily healthy foods that children enjoy such as oranges, apples and a variety of crackers. Occasionally sweets will be served during special celebrations and if it relates to the curriculum. Water is served at each snack

time. If your child has a food allergy or restriction, please notify staff and we will do our best to find an appropriate substitute snack.

## **5's (Kinderpals) Classroom Guide**

### Teaching Staff (5's - Kinderpals)

The 5's program is run with a 1:8 ratio (teacher to student) with a maximum of 16 students per class. The 5's program is offered five times a week on Monday through Friday for 2.5 hours per class.



Monday-Friday  
12:45-3:15pm  
Yellow Room

Teacher  
Ms. Lori

Teacher's Aide  
Ms. Heather

### Learning Activities

Children use their imagination, creativity, and express feelings during this time. Something that is unique to the Kinderpals program is the way in which we teach art to the children during a whole group session. By showing the children that simple lines and shapes can create a piece of art, they gain confidence that they have the ability to draw things they didn't think was possible. This approach emphasizes the relationships of space and size, concepts of symmetry, balance and design. Learning how to follow directions and the use of fine motor skills are emphasized.

#### Block Play

When children play with blocks, they learn concepts of shape, size, length, and location which are pre-reading and math skills. They also learn to use their imagination and cooperate with others.

#### Dramatic Play

In the dramatic play area children learn to improvise and use items in a symbolic way to represent something else - this is abstract thinking. They also try on different roles and work to solve social problems through negotiation with friends.

### Sensory Activity

During sensory activities children learn new vocabulary, concepts of texture, color, weight and size and they learn to observe likenesses and differences. These are pre-reading, math and science skills.

### Manipulatives

During manipulative play children learn hand-eye coordination, symmetry, shapes, order, design and they learn to make and repeat patterns. These are pre-math skills. They also use their fine motor skills to manipulate LEGOS®, beads etc., which helps to develop hand muscles that are critical for writing.

### Science

During science children use fine motor skills and tactile senses. They learn about real-life situations and experiences, cause and effect, experimentation, questioning and logic.

### Arts and Crafts

Children use their imagination, creativity and express feelings during this time. They interact with staff and learn to follow instructions. They learn relationships of space and size, concepts of symmetry, balance and design. These are foundational pre-math and pre-reading skills.

### Alphabet/Number Recognition

One way in which the children in Kinderpals are exposed to letter and number formation is through the “Handwriting without Tears” curriculum. One day of the week is consistently used to show the children through wood pieces, chalk and slates, or paper and pencils on how to form the letters and numbers. We emphasize the capital letters. In conjunction with the writing of the letters, we have an Alphabet Book for the children where they are asked to work on a skill (patterning, cutting, gluing, tracing, etc.) in addition to learning about the letter of the week. Once the children are exposed to the writing of the numbers, they will be given their own calendar and they will fill in the numbers on a daily basis. Letter and number recognition are also presented in a variety of other activities times such as gathering time, snack time, games and art/craft projects. These are foundational skills for reading, writing, and math.

### Social Studies

Children will study different cultures and learn to compare and contrast them with each other. Through the introduction of other cultures, children will learn about the world outside of Pleasanton.

### Gathering (Circle) Time

Gathering (circle) time includes group discussions, sharing, story time and music. Kinderpals has three gathering times one at the beginning to start the day, one in the middle to help transition between cleanup and outdoor time and one at the end to reflect on the day.

## Beginning Circle

This first gathering time is packed with skills that we will work on throughout the year:

### *Attendance*

By visually looking at the attendance chart, the children are asked to determine who is here and who is absent. We are working on name recognition of not only their name but their classmates' names as well. Math skills are used to determine the amount of children present for the day through addition, subtraction, counting by one, twos or fives.

### *Community Helpers*

Community Helpers represents a variety of "jobs" that need to be completed by the children each day. The jobs are a way for the children to feel as a member of a community they have a responsibility. The jobs are assigned on a rotating basis and are held for the entire week.

### *Sharing Can*

This is an opportunity for public speaking and for making the connection between home and school by having parents get involved in the writing of clues. This activity requires the children to use critical thinking and reasoning skills.

### *Calendar*

We will be using a weekly calendar to highlight the concept of "today", "yesterday" and "tomorrow".

### *Weather*

The skill we are working on during weather time is the ability for the child to be observant of his/her surroundings.

### *Question of the Day*

A couple of days a week, the children will be asked a question of the day that they will answer during their free choice time. The results will be shown as a graph and then discussed. We learn about the concepts of more, less and equal to.

### *Class Mascot*

A stuffed bear, Beary, will have an opportunity to go home with a child once during the year on the weekends. The child will have the opportunity to document through words, drawings and/or photos their time with Beary. We will discuss Beary's adventure with the child which lends itself to more public speaking.

### *Music/Movement*

To get the blood circulating, we usually have music that includes hands or body movement. It's a great way to begin the class.

### Middle Circle

This gathering time is a way to transition between cleaning up after our free choice/small group session to going outside time. We use this opportunity to discuss and model any outdoor games that we want to play as well as a time to discuss any incidents that have happened.

### Last Circle

### Yoga

After coming in from our time outside, we wash hands and gather on the carpet. In the beginning a staff member will lead the children through yoga poses. As the year progresses, the children will take turns leading the group. This is a time to focus on breathing and calming the body to help each child learn the skill of self-regulation.

### Story Time

After yoga, the children are calm and ready to hear a story. In the beginning, stories will be simple. As the year progresses the books will get longer and more complicated. We are not only working on listening skills, but also being able to stay focused for longer and longer periods of time.

### Circle Up

The children will be asked to “circle-up” which means they will create a circle by sitting on the outer edge of the carpet. During this time a stuffed bear will be brought out and whoever is holding the bear is the “speaker”. This is another opportunity for public speaking. We will ask the children a question that either reflects on the day (Tell me something that you liked about today) or a question that tells about the child (My last name is.....).

### Outside Play

We view outside play as an extension of the classroom and not recess. It is an opportunity to introduce group games such as relay races, parachute play, exercises and sports to the children. We usually set about 10-15 minutes aside for organized play and then the children are free to choose their activity for the remainder of the time.

### Snack Time

At snack time your child will practice their social, language and communication skills. Occasionally children will have the opportunity to assemble their own snack. This activity introduces “cooking” at a preschool level. Through this experience children are practicing pre-math (measuring), pre-reading (sequencing), and science skills (cause and effect).

Snacks are primarily healthy foods that children enjoy such as oranges, apples and a variety of crackers. Occasionally sweets will be served during special celebrations and if it relates to the curriculum. Water is served at each snack

time. If your child has a food allergy or restriction, please notify staff and we will do our best to find an appropriate substitute snack.

Unlike the other age groups, Kinderpals incorporates snack time as a learning center. During our small group/free choice time, the snack for the day will be available to the children to come to at their leisure. It is their choice as to whether or not they eat during this time. The children will be told the serving size of the snack (one scoop of goldfish crackers or 1 sheet of graham crackers) and they are told to patrol themselves. By doing snack in this manner, we give the control of the food to the child and they decide whether they are hungry or not. We also talk about what a serving size is and how important it is to only take the serving size amount. In the beginning of the year, staff will closely monitor the snack table, but as time goes by, the children will monitor themselves and take the opportunity to eat with their friends and have a social time. A friendly reminder will be given ten minutes before clean up, to give those children who forgot to eat a chance to have a snack.

#### Clean-up Time

Each child is expected to participate in clean-up time. Children learn that they are a member of a classroom community, and as such have a responsibility to participate with the group to accomplish this task. Children learn cooperation as they work together and practice their communication skills.

#### Bathroom Time

Children learn personal hygiene and independence skills when making a trip to the bathroom at preschool. Staff reinforces the importance of hand washing and children learn to care for their own needs. For hygiene purposes, all children are required to wear underwear under their clothing. Staff will speak to a parent if the child is coming to school without the appropriate underwear.

Kinderpals have the privilege of going to the bathroom by themselves. We have bathroom passes in the classroom so that when a child needs to use the bathroom, the child will tell a teacher, they will take a pass and proceed to the bathroom. The child will hang the pass in the bathroom before entering the stall. After flushing and washing hands, the child will return to the classroom with the pass. The staff will monitor the amount of time a child has been gone and will check when necessary. The privilege of going to the bathroom by themselves will be taken away for a specified amount of time if a child is not able to follow the rules.

## Parent Resources

### Friends of Gingerbread Preschool (F.O.G.)

The Friends of Gingerbread Preschool is a non-profit organization formed for the purpose of providing parent involvement in the program and individual classrooms. These activities include fundraising for specialized items for the preschool, providing opportunities for parents to network with other parents, and providing parent and community education. The Friends of Gingerbread Preschool board also provides a two-way line of communication between staff and parents.

Friends of Gingerbread Preschool have a five (5) member board that is elected annually to represent the parents and children of Gingerbread Preschool. This board meets monthly to discuss a variety of issues and concerns, as well as plan for upcoming activities. Some of these activities include: welcome coffees, socials, parent lending library and so much more! Consult the GB Newsletter and the information board located outside the front doors for information regarding current Friends of Gingerbread activities.



### Friends of Gingerbread (F.O.G.) Board 2014-2015

President	Stefany Doukas
Vice President	Jill Lackhoff
Secretary	Lina Edwards
Treasurer	Ann Moitra
Volunteer Coordinator	Hallie Giddings
Room Parent Coordinator	Marianne Burdeny
City Staff Liaison	Samu Tiimalu

Please email [gingerbreadvolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:gingerbreadvolunteer@gmail.com) for information about the Friends of Gingerbread.

### Room Parents

The Room Parents program is supported by the Friends of Gingerbread Preschool. Room Parents provide additional support to the classroom teacher. Typically each class has two to three Room Parents. Responsibilities include creating a class roster so that parents can keep in touch. They coordinate play dates and functions for the children in the class to continue foster friendships outside of school. They keep parents informed about class/school functions through e-mails. They welcome new families as they join the classroom. They work with the classroom teacher in a variety of supportive roles, from providing classroom activity preparation, photographing classroom activities/events, and

more. They also create/coordinate a class donation for the Week of the Young Child Silent Auction.

A room parent orientation is held in the fall and an additional meeting is held in January. This is to provide some training, answer questions and provide support. Teachers schedule regular meetings with their Room Parents to go over their needs and to ensure that information is being disseminated in a timely fashion to families.

### Parent Lending Library

A parent lending library, located in the preschool lobby, is available to all Gingerbread parents. Books, DVD's and audio books have been provided by parent donations and the Friends of Gingerbread Preschool.

The ideas and concepts in these materials do not necessarily represent the views of the Friends of Gingerbread Preschool Board, The City of Pleasanton or Gingerbread Preschool. As there are a variety of parenting ideas, it is important to keep your family values and your child in mind. Not all of these ideas are going to meet your families or child's needs.

This is a "help yourself" library. Parents who are interested may borrow materials for a 2-week period. Complete the index cards located in the book or DVD case and place the card in the card file box. Once you have finished using the borrowed material, pull the card from the card file box, cross your name off, place the card in the book and return it to the Parent Lending Library shelf. If a book or DVD is damaged or lost, you will be asked to pay for the cost of replacement.

### Parent Support

At Gingerbread Preschool we hope to meet the needs of the whole child, this includes supporting the child's family as well. Parenting today is at times very challenging. We want to provide information and opportunities for parents to be supported in the most important role of their life - being a parent!

We provide several educational leaflets and brochures that will be attached to your child's sign out folders and articles in the GB Newsletter throughout the year as part of this effort. We also will be offering a variety of classes and workshops for parents. Space is limited so look for registration information in the preschool lobby and the GB Newsletter.