

# Golden Ears Preschool Association

## Parents Handbook



## Welcome to the Wonderful World of Preschool

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The Golden Ears Preschool Association is a non-profit reporting society (Society #23647).

Golden Ears Preschool operates a licensed preschool (#8-11-153) for children ages 3 to 5

**\*\*\*Please keep this booklet for your future reference. \*\*\***

# **GOLDEN EARS PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## Background of the Golden Ears Preschool Association

The Golden Ears Preschool Association is operated by a volunteer elected board of directors. The board of directors is made up of parents and friends of children attending Golden Ears Preschool.

The volunteer board of directors administers the preschool based on the Community Care Facility Act - Child Care Regulations and the Provincial Societies Act as well as other municipal, Provincial and Federal regulations.

The Early Childhood Educators and the bookkeeper, employees of the society, manage the day-to-day operations of the Preschool. They also work closely with the volunteer board of directors to provide a quality preschool.

The elected volunteer board of directors and the teachers meet regularly to present reports and conduct the business of the society.

Once a year, all members are convened to an annual general meeting (AGM). At this meeting the past year's operations are reviewed, the audit is presented and the election of new executive directors from the membership takes place. All members of the society are notified and encouraged to attend this very important meeting.

## Philosophy

Golden Ears Preschool offers an environment for children that is stimulating, loving, supportive and non-pressured, thus enabling a child to explore the world at his or her own pace through self-directed play. The daily schedule also reflects the developmental needs for young children to have a balance of active/quiet, large motor/fine motor, cognitive/social and structured/unstructured activities.

We believe that children learn through play and that play is essential for every facet of a preschooler's development. Children learn through active involvement in play, using all their senses; through doing things to and with materials, through representing concepts in play, rehearsing roles and thus clarifying them.

Children test out, explore, discover, adapt, classify, organize and reorganize their experiences as they play. Play calls for initiative, imagination and purposefulness. It calls for motor skills and for social skills. Beginnings of symbolic thinking occur in play. Play with other children is considered essential for healthy personality development. Through play, children learn important social skills such as making friends, sharing, turn taking and conflict resolution. Play also serves as a catharsis for feelings and enables them to express themselves in a safe environment. The values of play are increased by informed guidance and a wide variety of appropriate materials and equipment, as well as by a provision for space and uninterrupted time.

## Schedule of Preschool Programs

<b>Tues/Thurs</b>	<b>Mon/Wed/Fri</b>
8:45 – 11:00 AM	8:45 - 11:15 AM
OR	OR
12:30 – 2:45 PM	12:15 - 2:45 PM

Further emphasis is placed on teacher directed activities, while allowing time for children to explore their learning environment through self-directed play.

These programs explore a variety of areas including art, music and movement, science and nature, language and literature, drama, cooking and indoor/outdoor activities.

## **Activities - What do children actually do at Preschool?**

**Free Play** - At this time children may choose what they wish to do. Possibilities may include; painting, drawing, planned art activities, play dough, exploring the science table, using puzzles or other manipulative toys, blocks, sand or water play, dramatic play or looking at books.

**Clean up** - This is the time when the children learn to "finish what's begun" and "put away when done"

**Snack** - A relaxing time for children to learn healthy eating habits, self-help skills, good table manners and to socialize.

**Circle** - Teacher led activities include songs, poetry, finger-plays, discussions, stories, flannel boards, puppets, music and movement, drama and show and tell.

**Large Motor** - Inside or outside, depending on weather, activities include climbing apparatus, slides and games.

**Cooking** - Once a month, we have a cooking activity. It could include such things as soup, pancakes, friendship salad, multicultural or holiday cooking.

**Special Events** - Approximately once a month we either go on a field trip or have a guest speaker visit the classroom. We also celebrate holidays and in June we host a family picnic.

The schedule is flexible to accommodate the interests and developmental levels of the children

## General Parent Information

**Staff** – are Licensed Early Childhood Educators. They also have valid First Aid/CPR certificates and have current criminal records checks. Our staff continue to upgrade themselves with ongoing professional development.

**Snack** - Our goals for snack time are to encourage healthy eating habits, self-help skills and socializing with the other children. We encourage the children to bring a small nutritious snack such as fruits, vegetables, or cheese and crackers. We provide cold healthy water that will quench any thirst. Please do not send junk food, nuts of any kind (complete peanut/nut ban. See special policies) sweets of any type (chips, cookies, fun fruits, candy, etc.) or drink boxes.

**Communication** - Golden Ears Preschool promotes and supports an open and effective communication policy.

Parents are encouraged to contact the teaching staff and arrange a mutually acceptable time to discuss any concerns and/or questions regarding their child or the program.

Parents can expect ongoing communication from the staff regarding program activities and issues relating to the centre operation via the monthly newsletter and parent bulletin boards.

Telephone communications are encouraged. Please check with the staff regarding mutually convenient times, preferably not during class times.

It is essential that the staff be able to contact you in case of an emergency. With this in mind, please notify the preschool, in writing, of any change in address and/or phone numbers. The centre also needs to know of any change in family status and any additions or deletions of adults authorized to pick up your child, i.e. court documents.

**Arrivals and Departures** - it is necessary to escort children into the classroom and initial their arrival on the sign-in sheet. Please note that it is a licensing requirement to sign your child in and out on the sign / out sheet. Prompt arrival is very important as the program begins at the designated time. Late arrival at the preschool will result in the child missing parts of the preschool program and may place undue anxiety on your child. On the same note, late pick up is extremely stressful for your child. Therefore, we strongly encourage prompt pick up of your child. (Please refer to "Late Fines" under Special Policies.)

There are times, however, when you may need to arrive late or pick up your child early. For these rare occasions we would appreciate advance notice so that we can minimize the disruption to the centre's program.

At completion of each session, it is necessary to initial the child's departure on the sign-out sheet. Your child will not be released to anyone but you without your prior written authorization.

**Birthdays** - birthdays are celebrated with permission from the child's parents. For those children who have birthdays during holiday times, we will celebrate on a day as close to the true birthday as possible.

**Bathroom Routines** - It is helpful if the children have visited the bathroom prior to the start of the program. Staff is available to assist if necessary. "Easy to handle" clothing should be worn so your child is able to manage his or her clothing "all by myself", thus providing your child with a sense of independence.

**Clothing** - Please dress your child in comfortable, washable, play clothes and footwear, appropriate to the weather, as outdoor play is part of our daily program when weather is permitting. Your child will also need a pair of slip on inside shoes. Please label all of your child's belongings with his/her name; this will result in the prompt return of any lost articles.

**Playground** - For safety reasons we ask that parents not approach the playground area when occupied by the preschool, but rather wait outside the preschool room for the session to officially conclude. For safety reasons children will not be dismissed from the playground.

**Confidentiality** - We maintain a strict adherence to confidentiality. All files are locked with access to regular staff only.

**Medication** - No medication will be administered by the staff without the written consent of a physician stating that it is crucial that the medication be administered during preschool hours. An additional form must be filled out and signed by the parent.

**Show and Tell** - The children are allowed to bring one item from home to show. Children are discouraged from bringing toys to school at other times as this can create problems with sharing. Also we cannot be held responsible for anything that is lost or broken. Please no weapons. Golden Ears Preschool is a weapons free zone.

## Special Policies

**Health** - Children who are not well enough to participate in the normal program, or who have an infectious illness, must not attend school. The well being of all the other children must be the first consideration. Also, if in the opinion of the teacher the child is not well enough to participate; the parent/secondary contact person will be called to pick up the child. Please notify the preschool if your child is not attending. Parents are required to notify the school if their child contracts a communicable disease. Phone # 604-463-4652 (Please refer to the Illness Policy).

**Illness Policy** - Parents must keep children at home or seek alternative care arrangements for the following conditions:

- Pain - any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- An acute cold with fever, runny nose/eyes, coughing or sore throat. Once temperature, well being and energy are normal coughing and runny nose may continue (depending on the suspect illness) without the child being contagious. (If symptoms are caused by a known allergic reaction, the child is not contagious)
- Difficulty in breathing - wheezing or persistent coughs
- Fever (100F /38.3C or more)
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin or eyes or undiagnosed rash
- Headache and stiff neck – Child should see physician immediately
- Diarrhea or loose stool combined with nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps. These symptoms may indicate a bacterial or viral (gastrointestinal) infection, which is easily passed from one child to another. The child should be kept home until all symptoms have stopped
- Nausea and vomiting may be an early sign of illness that requires a physician's attention
- Severe itching of body and scalp
- Children with known or suspected communicable diseases

Parents are required to keep (or take) a child home when the child:

- Has suffered from one or more of the above symptoms within the last 48 hours
- Is not well enough to take part in the regular program

**Anaphylaxis Policy** – The staff have yearly training to identify and manage severe allergic reactions in a child that has been predetermined by a health care professional. Staff are to be provided with appropriate instructions (i.e. prescription) by the parent and will then develop a care plan on how the reaction is to be managed. i.e. EpiPen Injection. A child with Anaphylaxis will not be allowed to eat if epinephrine (EpiPen) is not on site.

### **Requirement**

Upon registration, parent/guardian is to provide information on the child's life threatening allergy.

### **Maintain**

On registration file which includes proof of diagnosis, current treatment, emergency procedure for the student and the current contact information. Proof of diagnosis could be any of the following:

- Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan signed by a physician
- Written treatment protocol/ instructions prepared and signed by a physician
- Copy of prescription for an epinephrine auto injector (epi pen)

### **In the event of an anaphylactic emergency:**

- 1) One staff member will stay with the child
- 2) Administer epinephrine at the first sign of an allergic reaction
- 3) Second staff member will call 911
- 4) Contact the child's parent/guardian

**Peanut Ban** - To reduce any possible allergic reactions or complications we have instituted a complete Peanut Ban. This includes nuts of all kinds and peanut butter. We need parents/caregivers to read all labels. We will not allow products that say "may contain peanuts/nuts", "trace amounts of peanuts/nuts", "made in factory that has peanuts/nuts". Also, we will not permit baked goods from bakeries, as they cannot guarantee peanut/nut free items. We will allow home baked item as long as the parent/caregiver knows all the ingredients. If you have any questions or require more information please feel free to ask one of the teachers. Please be aware that we have done all we can do to reduce the risks of contamination. The preschool room is used by other groups in the evenings and on the weekends. We cannot control what these groups bring into the room.

**Nutrition Policy** – It is to promote the healthy eating and nutrition habits which are essential to a child's growth and development. The staff will encourage snacks that are in accordance to Canada's Food Guide. They will also be able to provide parents with information on healthy eating. The parents/guardians are to provide a healthy snack that is also peanut/nut free. To drink, the children will be provided safe municipal tap water throughout the day. Juice and milk is not permitted for daily snack time.

**Boil Water Advisory Policy** – In the event the municipality or GVRD has deemed the water contaminated the preschool will provide bottled water for drinking purposes. Hand Sanitizer will be provided and use monitored by teachers for hand hygiene purposes. The teachers will also closely monitor bathroom use. They will also remove any activities that would require hand hygiene upon completion i.e. play dough, painting. If the preschool feels it cannot meet the requirements of the policy, the preschool will close until either the preschool is able to meet the policy or the water advisory is lifted.

**Parent Observation** - Parents are welcome to observe their child's preschool class. Prior arrangements with the teachers should be made. Parents who observe classes will be asked to sign the "Day Book" as a visitor, indicating name, time, date and length of stay.

For visitors who wish to observe, you would be expected to follow the same procedure. These visits are a 10 minute max during class time.

**Child Visitors** - Children that are not registered in the preschool program are not permitted to attend any of the preschool classes (due to licensing regulations). This would include:

- Siblings or friends of the preschool children
- Children of adults observing classes
- Relatives and friends of hired staff (i.e. teacher, assistants or practicum students)

Please note that the exception to this policy is holiday parties and year end picnic all the above may attend.

**Weather Conditions** - Should a closure be anticipated due to heavy snow in the morning or throughout the day, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. For the safety of our teachers and students who attend Golden Ears pre-school we will try to give as much advance notice as possible. It is ultimately the teacher decision to close the school for everyone's safety.

**Late Fines** - Children remaining behind, after the rest of the class has departed, can become anxious and upset. As per preschool policy: The first occurrence will be subject to a \$1.00 per minute charge after a 5 minute grace period. The second and any and all subsequent occurrences will be subject to a \$1.00 per minute charge (no grace period will be given).

**Preschool Closures** - In the event of a preschool closure, the phoning committee will attempt to contact all families. As a rule, the preschool will be closed if the Maple Ridge public school system is not operating, with the exception of any professional days. If you have any doubts please contact the preschool.

**Child Abuse Policy** - The Child, Family and Community Service Act states that all children in the Province of British Columbia "are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect, and harm or threat of harm" and that "any person who has reason to believe that a child needs protection must promptly report the matter."

**The Golden Ears Preschool Association Child Abuse Policy is as follows:**

If abuse or neglect is suspected and reasonable grounds have been established, it is our legal duty to report it to a child protection social worker. If reasonable grounds for action are in doubt, a consultation with a child protection worker will be required. The ECE Staff shall be the reporting party. To ensure confidentiality, all information shall be shared with only the ECEs, involved parents, the reporting social worker and the police. The Board of Directors will be informed only that an incident has occurred.

**Complaint Policy** - Parents with concerns or complaints are to follow this policy to resolve the situation.

- Step 1 Parents with concerns or complaints are to speak first with the teachers, to allow the opportunity for the teachers and parents to resolve the situation.
- Step 2 If the first step has not resolved the situation the Parent Liaison will be contacted.
- Step 3 If at this time the issue is still unresolved, then the Parent Liaison shall report to the Board of Directors, and together, with the teachers, a solution shall be reached

**Reportable Incident Policy** – This policy is to ensure that incidents are reported and reviewed in a timely manner. It will assist staff defining and completing forms and where possible to prevent recurrence of similar incidents and to promote a high standard of care, safety, health and dignity of the persons in our care.

After incident occurs the staff member will take emergency first aid measures as needed and then:

- 1) Notify parents or emergency contact immediately giving details of accident
- 2) Complete a "reportable incident" form provided by Fraser Health...A list of the definitions of reportable incidents appears on the back of the form (form and instructions attached) – Review info. On form, sign it, retain the white copy and forward the yellow copy to Licensing----do not fax unless it is of urgent nature requiring licensing involvement (sexual, physical, or emotional abuse or neglect). For these incidents immediately fax and call Licensing Officer – mail yellow copy to Licensing within 24 hours. For less serious incidents not in the "urgent" category mail yellow copy within 5 working days.
- 3) After sending the incident report, take action to resolve the situation being reported, ensuring corrective measures are taken to prevent re-occurrence of similar types of incidents.
- 4) Call parent to enquire about child's health and to advise the parent that a report has been filed.

**Non Reportable Incident Policy** - Non reportable incidents are documented in a separate log book and the parent/caregiver is notified.

**Emergency Preparedness** – The Child Care Licensing Regulations, Section 28, states that child care providers must establish emergency procedures. The preschool is equipped with “72 hour emergency packs” and practices evacuation drills on a regular basis. We ask that parents provide a “Comfort Kit” – family pictures, a letter from home and a small toy to be kept at the preschool in a zip-loc bag. It is important that children’s records be kept up to date. Please notify staff immediately if there are any changes. In the event of an evacuation we can be found at our **“SAFE PLACE” – BANDSTAND IN THE PARK**. If local phone lines are jammed and you are unable to get to the preschool, please call your out of town emergency contact number to ensure all is well.

**Emergency/ Disaster Plan Policy** – In the event of an emergency/ disaster (i.e.: earthquake): Staff will assess the safety of the building i.e.: damages. If the building appears to be safe (or minimal damage) the staff and children will remain on site. If the building appears to be unsafe, the staff will guide the children via emergency exits and make their way to the bandstand. Staff will then reassess the situation i.e.: children, safety of the building and weather. If staff still feels that the building appears to be unsafe and the weather is poor, the staff will then proceed to guide the children to the evacuation site located at

**Royal LePage Brookside Realty  
11933 224th St., Maple Ridge**

Parents may phone the emergency contact for information regarding their child.  
Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervision Policy** – In order to protect the health and safety of the children of the preschool, children will be supervised by a ratio of 1 Licensed ECE staff to 10 students. They will assess the environment, analyze and anticipate any potential safety hazards and take action to ensure the safety of all the students. Regular outdoor play is provided, weather permitting. Parents are required to dress their child with clothing appropriate for any weather condition.

## Child Release Policy

- 1) The child will not be released from the facility to anyone except
  - a. The parent/guardian of the child or
  - b. A person authorized by the parent/guardian in writing on registration forms who is 16 years of age or older
  - c. Emergency situations – child will be released to a person designated by the parent verbally authorized to the staff.
- 2) If the child is not picked up within 15 minutes of the class ending. (Please refer to "Late Fines" under Special Policies.) The staff will attempt to contact the parents. If the staff cannot contact the parents the emergency pick-up contact will be called. Parents are asked to call ahead if an emergency will keep them from picking up on time or if the pick-up person has changed. If no contact of any kind can be made after one hour, Social Services will be notified. Common sense and discretion will be used at all times.
- 3) When an authorized pick-up person appears incapable to staff of providing safe care staff will:
  - a. Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up parent and child or
  - b. Offer to call a cab
  - c. If obviously intoxicated authorized pick-up person insists on driving, staff will inform the person that they are breaking the law and endangering the child's life. Also the staff will inform the person that the police will be called immediately. If the police are called they will be notified of the child's home address, description of the vehicle, and if you know where they might be going if not home. If police are notified for any reason, in accordance with the law, the Ministry of Social Services must be called.
- 4) Unauthorized Person tries to pick-up - At no time will a child be released to an unauthorized person. Every effort will be made to contact parent/guardian or emergency contacts for further authorization.

If parents/guardians call to notify staff of an emergency or delay resulting in a change of persons picking up the child, staff will accept instructions. The staff will request parent/guardian to add this person to the child's registration form under emergency contacts at the earliest time.

Custody and related court orders must be declared on registration.

**Care Plan Policy** – Care plans will be developed by the parent/guardian, teachers and if needed, Supported Child Care for any student who requires extra support or has behavioural issues. In the case of an Extra Support Care Plan, the preschool requires a diagnosis, course of action, and possible resources available to the child. In the case of a Behavioural Care Plan, the teachers will identify, observe and meet with the parent/guardian of the student to develop strategies and a care plan. Supported Child Care may be consulted. All care plans will be reviewed.

**Guidance and Discipline** – Our discipline policy is in accordance with the Community Care Facility Act, Child Care Regulations, Part 2, Section 10, 1989.

\*"The word 'discipline' is derived from the word disciple. It describes the teaching/learning process by which children develop socially acceptable and appropriate behaviour as they grow to maturity. Discipline is something that adults do with and for children rather than to children to stop them from behaving in unacceptable ways. Its intention is to help children become self-disciplined as they learn appropriate and acceptable behaviour patterns. Discipline involves a continuous process of guiding behaviour and is offered while acceptable behaviour is occurring as well as before, during, and after unacceptable behaviour is displayed.

While there are a wide variety of theories and approaches related to the discipline, the goal remains constant - to assist children in developing self control, self-confidence, and ultimately, self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others."

*Guidance and Discipline with Young Children Ministry of Health Province of British Columbia*

The staff will ensure that no child enrolled in the facility is subjected to emotional, physical or sexual abuse or to physical or emotional neglect and any form of corporal punishment.

We use positive guidance and discipline techniques, which include:

Limits - Setting reasonable and fair limits, clearly stating these limits in a positive way, along with the expectations of desired behaviour and enforcing them in a kind, consistent manner.

Time- Schedules and routines provide a sense of order for children, helping them to gain a sense of trust and security.

Gaining Children's Attention in a Respectful Way - Apart from situations where physical danger is imminent, we approach children individually, state their name, establish eye contact and use a calm, controlled voice.

Reinforcing Appropriate Behaviour - When children are doing well, it is important to acknowledge it through words or gestures. In other words "catch them being good". Positive reinforcement helps children to build self-confidence and encourages them to repeat desired behaviour.

Logical or Natural Consequences - Offering simple, safe choices and letting children experience the logical or natural consequences of their choices.

Using Words to Problem Solve - Guiding and encouraging children to use words, rather than physical means to express feelings and resolve conflicts.

Redirection - Some unacceptable behaviours are fleeting or situation specific. In these instances it is often effective to redirect the child to another activity.

Provide Opportunities for Children to Make Amends - Rather than demand a superficial apology, we offer genuine opportunities for children to restore relationships after an incident or disagreement.

## Membership

Parents wishing to enroll their children in Golden Ears Preschool are required to obtain or renew a membership to the Association. Membership fees are in effect from August 1 to July 31 and provide the following:

- Casting 1 vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Participating in the administration of the G.E.P.A.
- Privileges as outlined in the G.E.P.A's constitution and bylaws

## Fees

- 1) \$40.00 Registration/membership fee (non-refundable) paid at the time of registration.
- 2) Program fees due at registration.

The program fees may be paid as follows:

Option 1: Full payment of program.

Option 2: Monthly payment system: post-dated cheques for: Aug. 1, Sept. 1, Oct. 1, Nov. 1, Dec. 1, Jan. 1, Feb. 1, March 1, April 1, and May 1. \*Watch the year on your cheques\*

## NSF Policy

We understand payments can be lost track of and we want to be as accommodating as possible but please note:

- First N.S.F. cheque, child may remain in program as long as payment and N.S.F. charge are made by the 15th of the month.
- Second N.S.F. cheque, child may not attend classes until payment and N.S.F. charge are paid in full.
- Third N.S.F. cheque, child is withdrawn from program.

There will be a \$20.00 charge on all N.S.F. cheques. Please note: a certified cheque, money order or cash must replace all N.S.F. cheques.

## Registration Information

Getting Acquainted - Each child responds to new situations differently. To ensure that preschool is a positive experience, children who enter the preschool in September will be involved in a gradual entry process. This involves a period of time in which you and your child are asked to jointly attend the preschool classes until your child feels comfortable in the classroom. Further information regarding the gradual entry process will be described in your confirmation letter that you will receive in the month of August. For further information, please call Golden Ears Preschool at 604-463-4652 and leave a message and someone will contact you as soon as possible.

## Parent Volunteers

As a non-profit society, we rely on volunteer assistance. The Golden Ears Preschool Association is continually in need of volunteers to join the board of directors to assist with the administration of the preschool and committee work. Without the efforts of volunteer directors the preschool would be unable to operate. Volunteer work can include any of the following:

Board of Directors

Telephone Committee

Committee Work i.e. Fundraising

Material preparation

Special events helpers

Equipment repair

End of term furniture moving and toy washing

Gathering resources

## Field Trips

In the event of field trips, preschool policy requires parents to transport their own children and to supervise them for the duration of the field trip or to make alternate arrangements for transportation and supervision of their children. Parents are welcome to bring siblings along on these field trips but are required to sign a waiver form. Parents are required to supervisor children at all times.

## Withdrawal Policy

### Member (Parent/Guardian) Initiated Withdrawal

Refund of program fees will only be granted if a written request is received. No phone calls or verbal cancellations will be accepted. One full calendar month's written notice is due, or one calendar month's fees will be charged.

Mail your written program withdrawal request including your current mailing address and child's name to:

Golden Ears Preschool  
11925 Haney Place  
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 6G2

Refund requests will not be permitted for:

- Partial months
- The single months of June and December
- Absenteeism

Refund requests during the summer months are to be postmarked by July 31, in order to receive a full program refund.

### Special Considerations

We encourage our families to contact us if they have any concerns or requests. Please address all inquiries to:

Golden Ears Preschool  
11925 Haney Place  
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 6G2  
Telephone (604) 463-4652

### Association (Preschool) Initiated Withdrawal

From time to time, without prejudice, there may be a need to withdraw a child from the program. This could come from the child's developmental readiness, or social interaction, a separation problem, or a special need, etc. In such circumstances, other child care programs may be recommended to best serve the child's needs and the needs of the family. In such cases, the teachers should:

- 1) Discuss the problem with the parents.
- 2) Call in Health Care professionals if appropriate.
- 3) Discuss alternate programs available.
- 4) Child is withdrawn immediately or one month's notice at the teacher's discretion.
- 5) Notify the Board of Director's and Bookkeeper of actions taken.