

# Wexford Academy Preschool



## Parent/Student Handbook

2011-2012

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**School Mission and Philosophy**

Wexford Academy Preschool is dedicated to providing the foundation for educational success in the lives of its students ages 3-5

Our fully developed programs are designed to build confidence and a love of learning, giving students a solid foundation for academic success.

Our longtime teachers are dedicated to helping each student discover their full potential - academically, socially, and interpersonally.

**School Calendar 2011-2012**

**First Day for Students- Monday August 29th**

**Wexford Academy will not hold class on the following days:**

<b>September</b>	Friday 2nd – In-service Day Monday 5th- Labor Day
<b>October</b>	Monday 10th – Columbus Day
<b>November</b>	Friday 11th – Veteran’s Day  Thursday 24th, Friday 25th, Monday 28th – Thanksgiving Break (School Resumes Tuesday November 29th)
<b>December</b>	Friday December 23rd through Monday January 2nd – Winter Break (School Resumes Tuesday January 3rd)
<b>January</b>	Monday 16th – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
<b>February</b>	Monday 20th – President’s Day
<b>April</b>	Thursday 5th, Friday 6th, Monday 9th – Spring Break (School Resumes Tuesday April 10th)
<b>May</b>	Friday 25th – In-service Day  Monday 28th- Memorial Day

**Last Day for Students- Tuesday June 5th**

## **Basic Information**

School Hours: Monday - Friday 9am -12noon

### Entrance Requirements

Students who are entering preschool must meet the following requirements prior to admittance:

- Be at least 3 years of age on or before the first day of preschool services
- Provide documentation of current (within the past year) physical exam and current Pennsylvania immunizations
- Have completed toilet training prior to admittance
- Child must be able to appropriately interact in large and small group settings
- Provide completed enrollment application

### Enrollment Fee

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$75.00 is required for each child enrolled. This must be paid within 3 working days of verbally accepting a preschool opening, or the vacancy may be offered to another child.

### Tuition and Payment

Wexford Academy Preschool has multiple scheduling options available. Students may attend school 3, 4, or 5 days a week from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon.

Payment can be made by cash or check (payable to Wexford Developmental Academy) and may be made at the time of pick-up or drop-off. Payment is expected in full on the dates specified on your tuition due date sheet. A late payment fee of \$50.00 will be assigned if payment is not received in a timely manner. A \$50 return check fee will be applied for all failed checks.

A 10% discount will be given for each additional sibling enrolled during the same school year.

Pre-payment of tuition for the entire year may also be made. A 10% discount will be given to families choosing this payment option.

### Severe Weather

If students are in school when a tornado watch or thunderstorm warning is issued, we will keep them in school until regular dismissal time. If a tornado warning is issued, students and staff will take shelter in designated areas and remain in school until an all clear is given. Please do not call school during severe weather except in case of emergency. School phone lines must remain open to receive incoming messages.

### Snow Days and Delays

In the case of either a delay (10:00 am start) or a closing, announcements will air on the local television station (KDKA, WPXI). For snow make up days, if you would like for your child to attend an additional day during the week, please discuss options with the teacher. Because we offer our students a variety of scheduling options we do not have assigned snow make up days.

### Uniforms

Students and staff at Wexford Academy Preschool wear uniforms daily. We have chosen uniforms because they:

- Allow student and adult focus to be on learning
- Help eliminate student or staff judging each other because of brand names, etc.
- Improve the safety and security of the school
- Improve behavior and discipline in the school
- Help develop a sense of unity
- Ensure that appropriate clothing will be worn to school

The required uniform is a Wexford Academy shirt, pants, shorts, or skirt of your choice and sneakers. Students attending will receive uniform shirts. Additional shirts may be purchased from Wexford Academy.

### Attendance Policy

In order for students to progress, it is important that they attend classes. Students should be dropped off at school between 8:45 and 9:00 am. Preschool will start promptly at 9:00 am. If your child will not be attending school on their regularly scheduled day, please let a teacher know in advance (if possible) or call Wexford Academy the morning of the absence.

### Coming Late or Leaving Early

If your child will arrive late to school, please check in at the office prior to your child going to his/her classroom.

Because of our concern for the safety of our students, no student is to leave the school grounds at any time without permission from the office. Parents must check in at the school office when picking up their child for any excused dismissal. Please remember that learning is taking place right up to dismissal. The following guidelines will apply:

- No child will be released to a person other than a parent or a guardian during school hours without the written permission of the parent or guardian.

- The person to whom the child is to be released will be required to sign a log in the school office indicating time and purpose of the release. Identification will be required if the person is not known to the office staff.
- Teachers may release a child to an adult only after receiving notification from the director or secretary.
- No child will be permitted to leave school alone during school hours. A parent/guardian or authorized adult must pick up the child inside school.

### **School Practices**

#### Transportation

Students are transported to and from school by parents or carpool drivers.

#### Arrival and Pick-up

Arrival begins at 8:45

- No child will be admitted to Wexford Academy before 8:45
- Parents should park in the lot and walk their child into Wexford Academy. Parents may utilize the carport for quick drop off during inclement weather. However please be courteous to other families and do not leave your car parked there for extended periods of time
- For children's safety, please
  - Walk your child into school and remain with them until they are in their classroom or with a teacher.
  - Keep your car in single file to exit, please do not swing around other cars

Arrival ends at 9:00

- If you arrive any later than 9:00, please walk in with your child and sign them in at the main office

Pick-up begins at 11:50

- Children will be provided the opportunity of free choice from 11:45 to 12:00.
- When picking-up your child at his/her room, please notify the classroom teacher that you have arrived and sign your child out.

- No child will be released to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or person listed on the release of child form without prior written consent from the parent/guardian.
- Identification will be required of anyone not recognized by the staff.
- All children must be picked-up by 12:00
- If you are unable to arrive at this time please call our office. If we do not hear from you and your child is not picked up at 12:00 your child's emergency contact will be called.

### Celebrations and Activities

Celebrations will occur at various times and for various reasons. Please check the newsletter for information. When celebrating specific holidays, Wexford Academy will attempt to respect the beliefs of all of our families. Please contact your child's classroom teacher if you would like to share information regarding your family's beliefs.

If your child would like to bring a special occasion treat, please send enough for the entire class. If you would like suggestions for treats or need to know how many to bring, please check with the teacher.

### Snacks

Students will have a snack during the school day. Snacks will be provided by Wexford Academy and can include, but are not limited to: crackers, raisins, pretzels, etc.

### Items from Home

To ensure the safety of student property, we ask that students refrain from bringing in items from home with the exception of special occasions (themed activity, show-and-tell, etc.) If an item must be brought into school, it must remain in the student's cubbie for the day.

### Emergency Contacts

If your child is injured or becomes ill at school we will make every effort to contact you. Please be sure that your emergency contact information on your Student Registration Form is filled out completely and accurately and on file in the school office so that we will be able to reach you at home or at work. The registration form should also list the names and numbers of at least two other people we can call in case we are unable to contact you. Please be sure that the people you list as emergency contacts are aware of this and are willing and able to take responsibility for your child.

### Illness

To protect the health of your child and other students, we expect children to be picked up from school if they have a fever, a rash, head lice, or similar communicable symptoms.

Please notify the school if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease and keep the student home until fully recovered.

A child cannot be at preschool if he/she has:

1. Temperature over 100 degrees. Child may return to preschool after 24 hours of normal temperature (without medication). If a child's temperature is 100 degrees upon awakening he/she should not be brought into preschool. Temperatures rise as the day progresses.
2. Untreated conjunctivitis - eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye." The eye is generally red with some burning and there is a thick yellow drainage secreted. Child may return 24 hours after treatment with medication.
3. A physician must diagnose rashes that you cannot identify. If treatment is prescribed, the child may return after 12 hours with medication. In cases of more contagious rashes, such as scabies and lice, we recommend at least 24 hours exclusion after treatment. The child may return only with doctor's written statement of contagiousness.
4. Untreated impetigo of the skin. Shows up as red pimples. These eventually become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When the blister breaks, the surface is raw and weeping. The lesions occur in the moist areas of the body, such as the neck, groin, under arm, face, and hands. Child may return 24 hours after treatment with medication.
5. Unusual diarrhea unchecked by a physician. Child may return 24 hours with no repeated diarrhea or with a doctor's statement that virus is no longer active or contagious. Parents should advise staff if special diet is required.
6. Vomiting - child may return after 24 hours without vomiting.
7. Severe cold with fever, sneezing, and/or nose drainage.
8. Contagious disease. Example: measles (red of German), chicken pox, mumps, roseola, etc.
9. A doctor diagnosed, non-contagious infection and the doctor places the child on medication. The child may return after the parents have initiated the medication.
10. A doctor diagnosed, contagious infection (such as strep throat) and the doctor places the child on medication. The child must remain home for at least 24 hours.

The preschool staff reserves the right to send a child home if he/she has two or more of the following symptoms:

- a. Unusual Paleness
- b. Mild Fever or Chills
- c. Lethargic or too tired and cannot keep with the class
- d. Ear Pain
- e. Irritability
- f. Headache
- g. Serious Injury
- h. Lice, Chicken Pox, Impetigo, etc.

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. In there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, they student shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. The term "communicable disease" shall mean an infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person or animal to person, or as defined by law.

#### Immunizations

State law requires that student immunizations be kept up to date unless a waiver is filed with the school. Waiver forms are available from the school office upon request.

#### Medication

Pennsylvania law requires that before any medication, including over the counter medication and herbal treatments can be administered to students, the school office must have the following:

- a signed statement form completed by the parent or guardian
- a signed statement from a physician explaining doses and any precautions
- the current prescription container from the pharmacy or original packaging for over the counter medications

Please note: children are not allowed to transport medication to and from school. Parents must bring the medication to the office.

### Newsletter and Calendar

Once a month, the school calendar is sent home. The calendar includes dates of interest, upcoming events, notes and other miscellaneous topics relating to our school. Weekly a newsletter is sent home to inform you of specific topics and event that will be covered in class as well as any special notes from the teacher. It is a quick and easy way to keep in touch with what is happening at school.

### Lost and Found

Please mark your child's name on all personal items such as sweaters, hats, gloves, coats, lunch containers, and book bags. Check for lost items in our Lost and Found. Items not claimed are periodically donated to charity.

### Electronic Devices

Personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, personal music players and personal game systems, are not allowed at school. For a variety of reasons, these devices are not conducive to a social school community atmosphere. Headphones of any kind are not to be worn unless they are plugged into a school computer for educational purposes.

### Suggestions and Complaints

We view parents and students as partners in education. Wexford Academy staff is open to ideas that will help us improve Wexford Academy.

All suggestions and complaints should be of a constructive nature and be in line with the safe, loved, and learning mission of the school. Staff members are open to the opinions of parents/students who would like to contribute in this positive way. Parents and students may approach appropriate staff members directly and offer suggestions. If the suggestion cannot be dealt with at that level, the staff member will relay the suggestion to school administration.

### Student Records

Parents or guardians have the right to review records maintained by Wexford Academy for their children. Please call the office for an appointment with the director. Student record information will not be released except: 1) by written consent of parent or guardian; 2) when information is used, with parent consent, in the school directory; or 3) under circumstances as permitted by the Family Education and Privacy Act of 1974.

### Visiting School

Parents are encouraged to visit Wexford Academy at any time. Appointments are not necessary, but we ask that you check in at the front office prior to going to your child's classroom and put on a visitor badge. To provide all students with a stable learning environment, we ask that you observe your child from the window into the classroom.

### Volunteers

Research has shown that parent involvement is crucial to a child's success in school. We welcome, encourage, and appreciate the time and support of all the parents who have given to our children. In addition to Family Council, volunteer opportunities at Wexford Academy include, but are not limited to:

- **Classrooms:** This includes listening to students read, helping students with projects, or helping teachers prepare for projects.
- **Office Work:** Parents help in the office by making copies and doing other paperwork.
- **Homework:** Lots of parents who can't come to school volunteer by doing work at home, then bringing it back to school or sending it with their student.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

#### Grading, Assessment & Reporting Student Progress

Assessment of student progress will take several forms at Wexford Academy

- We report to students and parents monthly through communications from school that assess student progress and development in milestone activities.
- We will have optional Parent-Teacher conferences mid-year and additional parent-teacher conferences as needed.

Our goal is that all our students have competent learning in our curriculum. We do not count something as learned until it is at a level of competence.

## Discipline Philosophy and Practice

At all times we will treat the students kindly, respectfully and work to have a warm relationship. At Wexford Academy we have one school rule for all students and adults within the school. That rule is "Do the right thing because it is the right thing to do."

That is exactly what we want to teach our students.

We do the right thing as we go through our daily lives not because someone is going to give us a reward, or because we will be punished, but because it is the right thing to do. It will make us happier and those around us happier. Doing the right thing helps promote better learning.

At our school we believe that talking it through will solve all problems. We teach students a process for talking through problems that promotes self-evaluation for improved behavior. We will have as a primary goal prevention of all discipline problems by developing good relationships with our students and creating classrooms that are need-fulfilling for students. If a student does disrupt learning, we will:

1. Ask the student to please do his/her work in another area of the room until he/she is ready to rejoin the group. Whenever the student decides to rejoin the group is fine as long as there is no further disruption to the learning.
2. If that is not effective, the student will be asked to please go to a "cool-down area" to provide time for their emotions to cool down and get their behavior under control. The number of minutes spent in the "cool-down area" will be the student's age plus one.
4. At any time if there is violence or threat of violence, there will be a referral to the director.
5. Parents will be contacted if their child has been referred to the director.
6. If the incident is severe enough (violence, threats, or repeated disruption of learning) the student will be dismissed from the school.

## Withdraw/Dismissal Policy

Families must give Wexford Academy one month written notice in advance if preschool services are no longer needed. If this notice is not given, payment will be due for the full month of service.

The staff of Wexford Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student at their discretion. If dismissal is found to be necessary, the family will receive two weeks written notice of dismissal. Reasons for dismissal include but are not limited to:

- Non-payment/Consistent Late payment of tuition
- Communicable or infectious disease
- Non-compliance with entrance requirements and/or school procedures
- Repeated behavior that is detrimental to the well being of the children and staff at the preschool including: hitting, kicking, abusive language, biting, damaging property, etc.

### Child Abuse Reporting

In compliance with state law and to provide protection to victims of child abuse, the school believes incidents or alleged child abuse should be reported to the proper authorities. Employees are encouraged, and licensed employees are required as mandatory reporters, to report alleged incidents of child abuse they become aware of within the scope of their professional duties. See the definition of child abuse below.

When a mandatory reporter suspects a student is the victim of child abuse, the mandatory reporter shall orally or in writing notify Pennsylvania's Child and Youth Services. If the mandatory reporter believes they child is in immediate danger, they local Pennsylvania law enforcement agency shall also be notified.

### Child Abuse Defined

"Child Abuse" is defined as:

- Any non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of it, suffered by a child as the result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of the child.
- The commission of a sexual offense with or to a child . . . as a result of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for the child. Sexual offense includes sexual abuse, incest, and sexual exploitation of a minor.
- The failure on the part of a person responsible for the care of a child to provide for the adequate food, shelter, clothing or other care necessary to the child's welfare when financially able to do so. A parent or guardian legitimately practicing religious beliefs who does not provide specified medical treatment for a child for that reason alone shall not be considered abusing the child.