

Oak Grove School

2021 Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Oak Grove School

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Oak Grove Preschool where we believe childhood is a journey, not a race! With a variety of program opportunities available for preschool children in the Manhattan area, we are excited that you have chosen us as the learning environment for your child.

We value a collaborative approach and are devoted to developing strong relationships with families and watching these relationships grow and evolve through mutual respect. As your child's first teacher, you will always bring a wealth of information to the classroom regarding your child's individuality and we welcome you to share this information with us so that together we can help your child reach his/her highest potential.

To support your child's experience at Oak Grove, we are committed to helping our staff grow and strengthen their knowledge of early learning and child development. In conjunction with community partners we provide quality professional development to help them strengthen their skills as teachers, as well as training tracks to expand their education and career.

Oak Grove staff is excited and thankful that you have chosen to grow with us this school year. We are committed to providing a positive learning foundation that ensures each child leaves our program ready to succeed, not only in kindergarten, but later in life! Please feel free to contact me or any of our staff if there are questions or concerns throughout the school year.

Sincerely,

Shelby Bruckerhoff

Center Director

INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides Oak Grove families with information regarding the philosophy of Oak Grove, enrollment and policies. While this handbook covers the majority of information

families will need, we recognize that no Handbook can answer every question. If you do not find an answer to your question in this Handbook, or if you would like a policy or procedure clarified, please do not hesitate to contact the Director.

About Oak Grove

Oak Grove School (OGS), established in 1991, is a private, secular, nonprofit, parent-run cooperative educational facility, registered as both a child care center and private school with the State of Kansas. We provide a creative and individualized learning environment with professional instruction for children from 2.5 to 6 years old during the school year and summer. Children must be essentially toilet-trained and ready for a mildly structured program with other children to attend the school. OGS values diversity and we welcome children of any race, color, national, religious and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We are a Raising Riley partner, through which scholarships are available to families based on need and the availability of funds. At OGS, parental involvement is highly valued and considered an integral part of education and school management. We believe that it helps to create a more comfortable learning environment that is an extension of each child's home, rather than an isolated learning institution.

Oak Grove Philosophy

OGS is based on the belief that children are naturally adept learners, and when given the materials, guidance, time, and opportunity, they will choose to learn joyfully and spontaneously. Children are individuals, and learn differently from each other, at their own pace and in their own way. Children learn best when the teacher is a facilitator of learning rather than a director of learning and they have choice and control of their learning process. Children learn best in a safe environment, free from fear of failure, and when they are physically and emotionally comfortable. Children need to know that their work is important and relevant. They learn to read, write, understand math and science, in the same way they learned to walk and talk--by experimentation, practice, watching role models, trying and not succeeding, and finally trying and succeeding. Children learn best when their family is involved in and supportive of their education.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment

Enrollment at Oak Grove is open year-round, including summers, as long as there is an opening. If there is not an opening, applications to be placed on the waiting list are accepted year round. Families on the waiting list will be taken care of on a first come, first serve basis, but are welcome to contact the director regarding their position on the list.

The "Application for Enrollment", which serves as an Agreement between Oak Grove School and the Parents of OGS Students, can be picked up at 3115 Dickens Ave., is available online at oakgroveschoolonline.org, or can be mailed or e-mailed to you upon request. We reserve the right to accept or deny applicants. We encourage families to tour the facility and get to know the teachers before attempting to enroll their child to ensure we are the best fit for the child and family.

After receiving a notification of acceptance from the Director, parents must submit the following forms, completed and signed, before the child begins attending.

- CCL 029 Medical Record for All Children in Day Care Facilities
- CCL 029a Health Assessment
- CCL 029b History of Immunizations
- CCL 010 Authorization for Emergency Medical Care
- CCL 034 Parental Permission Form for Off-Premises Trips
- Oak Grove School Transportation Permission
- Entry Survey, Permission for Photographs, to Apply Sunscreen, and to Apply Bug Spray, Oak Grove Directory Application

Tuition & Fees

There is an application fee to enroll and/or to be placed on the waiting list for enrollment. A deposit of half a month's tuition will be required to hold a child's spot and the spot will be available to others until the deposit is received. Tuition is divided evenly throughout the duration of your child's enrollment. Therefore, the amount of each payment remains the same **regardless of your child's attendance** and school closing days.

Your tuition should be placed in the tuition box provided in the office. A receipt will be placed in your "parent pocket" after payment is received. Your tuition needs to be paid in a timely manner to ensure we can pay our teachers and facility expenses. **TUITION IS TO BE PAID EVERY MONTH OR SEMI-MONTHLY DEPENDING ON YOUR CHOICE** unless other arrangements are made and approved by the Director. Tuition due dates are the 1st and 16th. If payment is not received by the end of the following week, a reminder will be put in the parent pocket, along with a **LATE FEE CHARGE** of TEN DOLLARS. Unless some other arrangement is made with the school within 5 days of the receipt of the reminder, the child's enrollment will be terminated if tuition is not paid.

Late Pick Up

As noted above, children are to be picked up by 6:00pm every day. **Fees will be assessed for LATE PICK-UPS as follows:**

- First time --- You will receive a notice.
- Second, and third times --- \$5 per 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time
- Fourth time --- \$1 per minute after the scheduled pick-up time.

Parents will receive notice of fees the first, second and third time, but the fourth time and on it will just automatically be added to their invoice.

No Contact Policy: If no contact has been made by the parent or guardian by 6:00PM, phone calls will be made in the following order;

- Parents/Guardians
- Director
- Emergency Contacts
- Approved Pick-Ups

If no contact has been made by any member of the above list by 6:30PM, the police department will be called.

Discounts and Scholarship Opportunities

Referral Discounts: If you refer a family, and their child enrolls and attends Oak Grove, then you will get a 10% tuition reduction for one month.

Scholarships: Oak Grove participates in the Raising Riley Smart Start Scholarship program. Information regarding the scholarship can be retrieved from the Raising Riley department at the Riley County Health Department.

Termination

Families may terminate their child's enrollment at any time, **with two weeks' notice** to the school's director. We would appreciate your comments about the program in general and the reason for termination. The portion of the tuition not used may be refunded, at the discretion of the Director.

The school may terminate a child's enrollment, with or without two weeks' notice. This may be done either because of failure to pay tuition, to protect other students if a child's behavior has been persistently disruptive or has become dangerously aggressive, or to encourage the family to find a center that fits the family's needs better. Such action will be taken only after all other possible solutions have been discussed and enacted by teachers and parents, but have failed to produce acceptable results. Please see the section regarding discipline and guidance for a more specific policy. The portion of the tuition not used will be refunded. Decisions regarding termination will be made by the Director with the Board of Director's approval.

Daily Schedule

Our daily schedule is structured in a consistent manner so that the children can learn to anticipate what their next event or activity is. Occasionally, changes are made in the schedule to accommodate weather changes, special trips, and visitors. The current schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the front entrance, along with weekly themes or special topics.

Time	Activity
7:30-8:15 AM	Free Play Activities
8:15-9:00 AM	Outside Play
9:00 AM	Classroom Split
9:00-9:20 AM	Breakfast
9:20-9:40 AM	Circle Time
10:00-11:00 AM	Outside/ Group Play
11:00- 12:00 PM	Center Play/Morning Activity
12:00-12:20 PM	Lunch
12:20-12:45 PM	Special snack/Brush Teeth
12:45-1:00 PM	Story/Song
1:00-2:30 PM	Nap/Quiet Time
2:30-3:00 PM	Story time/Special Day Share
3:00-3:20 PM	PM Snack
3:20-3:45 PM	Free Choice Play
3:45-4:15 PM	Afternoon Activity
4:15-5:00 PM	Outside/Group Play
5:00-6:00 PM	Cleanup/Teacher Choice/Parent pickup

*Outside time depends on weather and season

School Closing due to Bad Weather, etc.

In the event of an unanticipated closing because of bad weather or other conditions, please check your email, check KMAN's website under school closing, and call or listen to KMAN 1350AM regularly. **If the public school closes due to weather Oak Grove will also close for the day.** During questionable circumstances, the director will email everyone as soon as a decision has been made.

Celebrations

OGS is a secular institution. The school will neither sponsor nor devote resources to religious celebrations or cultural holidays with religious roots. At the same time, OGS welcomes and values the diverse legacies of the families, communities and cultures of our students. We therefore encourage child-led sharing of family traditions and experiences. Teachers will participate in discussions of religion only as necessary in response to children's actions or questions. Non-religious seasonal celebrations will take place as the children and staff desire. In the past we had such events as Summer Day and International Day. The common holidays which are not celebrated include Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Halloween, Hanukkah, Christmas, Ramadan, Easter, and St. Patrick's Day.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Philosophy

An essential part of education is understanding where a child is developmentally and then enabling a child to develop self-control and inner-directed discipline, based on where they are in development. We wish to help our children learn to control their own behavior by modeling non-violent conflict resolution, and by reinforcing positive behaviors. At OGS, our children learn to work through conflict by talking or reasoning, and they are listened to and respected in their opinions, no less than adults. Because feelings are usually the root of behavior, we first help them identify feelings and guide them in choosing appropriate ways of coping. We feel it is very important for the child to be able to share his/her concerns and feelings about an event, especially when angry or upset, and the teacher makes this sharing both possible and safe. We also believe the teacher is a strong role model for sharing feelings, and children seem to have an inherent sense of honesty in communications with adults. With guidance, our goal is to help children develop their own skills to identify and cope with their emotions. Problem behaviors will be handled sensitively and privately; a child will not feel humiliated or publicly shamed. We will not tolerate any shaming or intimidation of a child, including yelling at or scolding; mocking or laughing at a child; withholding food or fluids; physical pushing, pulling up, pinching, or hitting a child; or any other type of behavior that could be considered physical, verbal, or emotional abuse toward a child.

Establishing Rules

Usually one of the first things the teachers do at OGS is to meet with the children and jointly establish school rules. The rules are simple and basic, and few in number. Throughout the year, the rules are visible and in use. Children are also reminded often of the rules to establish expectations and create repetition for the children.

Pick Up & Drop Off

As you may have noticed, parking is somewhat limited at the school. In addition to the driveway and the parking space by the front yard, we are also allowed to use the Jewish Congregation's parking lot on Wreath Avenue, Cico Park, or along the street across from Manhattan Area Technical College. Please be courteous to other parents, especially during busy morning and evening hours. We ask that if you park in the driveway, pull your car into the front spot to allow someone to park behind you. If you are not able to wait for another parent should someone park behind you, we encourage you to park in one of the other options listed above. Please walk your child into our building. Sign in the time of your child's arrival and departure.

When you return to pick up your child, make sure that staff know you have arrived, and sign your child out promptly. You are responsible for the care of your child once you arrive to pick him/her up. (Statistically, most accidents at day care centers happen during this transition period.) For the safety of the children, we will not allow them to leave with other people unless you have included their name on the permission form, or you send a signed and dated note asking that we release children to someone else. Anyone other than parents picking up for the first time will be asked to show a valid Driver's License or other form of identification.

Items to Bring

Please bring the following personal items. They will be kept at OGS throughout the year. Please label them with your child's name:

1. Two changes of entire clothing, for the appropriate season, including two sets of underwear.
2. Blanket (pillow and/or stuffed animal if it will help your child nap/rest).
3. A pair of tennis shoes to play outside.
4. School Supplies (optional)

Clothing

We play outdoors every day, weather permitting, and may go for walks at Cico Park or do nature studies or gardening outdoors; it is often muddy. Please dress children in clothing that they can play hard in without fear of damage. (We do have paint-and-glue smocks at the school.) As mentioned above, children need a complete change of (seasonal) clothes to be kept at the school in case of spills or other mishaps. We have a cubby for each of the children for clothing and personal items.

Cold Weather Policy & Clothing

Outdoor activities are an essential part of our program and children at school are presumed to be healthy and able to participate in all parts of the school day. It is important that the children be safe and warm during outdoor activities. The children will be kept indoors on days when the temperature or wind chill factor is less than 10 degrees Fahrenheit. They may also be kept indoors at the teacher's discretion. Children must have proper outdoor clothing at all times. This includes a hat or hood that covers the scalp and ears, mittens or gloves, a cold-weather coat, and boots or outdoor shoes if it is snowy or wet. A change of clothing should always be available as well.

Food & Snacks

All food and snacks are prepared at the school by one of the staff members. A morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided (for timings please check the current schedule). We follow the state nutritional guidelines and seek to provide a healthy, well-rounded meals. Parents are welcome to be "guest chefs" for a meal should they desire. We have experienced delicious ethnic cuisines as a result of this parental involvement.

We can adhere to any allergies or food restrictions your child might have. Please make sure the Director, and your child's teacher are aware of these and discuss alternatives to ensure a balanced diet is provided.

Sharing

We ask parents to help children keep their personal toys at home since it is hard for them to share with other children at school, unless it is their special day. However, we DO encourage children and families to bring things to share, such as games, books, art or nature objects, or activities and stories. Many of our school resources have been loaned or donated by generous parents. The children are taught to respect other people's possessions, and in general have taken very good care of loaned equipment; however, objects precious to either children or parents should not be brought, or should be identified as such to the teacher.

Once your child is enrolled, you are part of this caring network of families and staff. More often than we want, we are pressured for time and in need of an extra pair of eyes or hands. Don't be shy when you need help, because soon you will find yourself helping others. Just let your child's teacher or a Board member know of your needs; other parents and the staff will be there on your side.

(OGS is not responsible for accidents and injuries that happen to the child outside the school premises and activities. Any form of help between the parents is based on their mutual agreement and understanding.)

Parent/Board Meetings

The Board of Director's is made up of parents that currently have or have recently had a child attend Oak Grove School. The Board of Director's meeting is held at least every other month. Board meeting dates and times are posted at the school and/or emailed prior to the meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend these meetings. If you have an item for the agenda, please contact the President of the Board. A Directory of the staff and Board members as well as Parents Directory is available at school. Please note there is a strict confidentiality standard upheld for board members and teachers. The director and other teachers do not discuss children by name with board members or other parents and all identities are kept private.

Corporate Concerns

OGS has been incorporated according to the laws of the State of Kansas. All parents of children enrolled in OGS are members of the corporation. The corporation does not own stock, and is non-profit. Decisions are made by the Board of Directors, whose members are elected by the parents at the annual meeting. To date, no major changes have been made in the school's operations or functions without extensive parent input and consultation. Board meetings are open to all members and families. Please contact the Director for dates and times for scheduled meetings.

The school's financial records are open to all members. While income figures are available in these records, individual tuition payment information will not be made public in keeping with the members' needs for privacy.

Communication

Communication is very important to your child's success at Oak Grove. We welcome your comments, suggestions, or criticisms at all times. We value open and honest communication between parents and staff and hope that parents will play an engaged and interactive part in their child's experience at Oak Grove. The teachers will be available for conferences as needed, as well as regularly scheduled conferences once or twice a year. Parents are encouraged to bring questions or concerns about classroom structure, class content or other related issues to the teachers and the Director. Final responsibility for the school rests with the Board. We welcome your insights and need to hear your unresolved problems with the program or any other aspect of the school. We also need your assistance in making our program the best one possible for our children, and encourage you to become involved in the management of the school. Please take the time to fill out an Exit Survey or give parent feedback when you leave Oak Grove School.

Communication is done primarily through email and/or parent pockets located in each classroom and will be where your child's weekly other important reminders are placed. Reminders will also be posted on the Brightwheel app. Daily communications are private between teachers and parents.

Events

Oak Grove hosts multiple get-togethers throughout the year to engage and interact with families regularly. We are a small school and become quite close knit as the year goes on. Participation at parties are not required, but encouraged as the children, teachers, and past parents have enjoyed them very much.

Donations

OGS is a nonprofit corporation, having 501(c) (3) status. All donations of materials, food, money or other items are tax-deductible. Please keep your receipts for your tax records.

Tax Deductible Contributions

Items you purchase and donate to OGS (e.g., materials, food, etc.)

Items that are brought by you and sold at OGS' Garage Sales

Items that are purchased by you for fund raisers

Monetary contributions

FOOGs ("Friends of Oak Grove") generous donors who can give \$200 or more become FOOGs and they will be recognized, with their names on a special plaque at the school.

Tax ID Number: # 48-1102881