

# 2023 Family Handbook



## Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare

**First Congregational Church**  
31 West Milwaukee Avenue  
Fort Atkinson, Wis. 53538  
Phone 920-563-2084

**Open Mon.- Fri. 6:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.**  
**Preschool and School Age Programs**  
**4K Fort School District Program**

**Children Ages 2 ½ (and potty trained) – 10 years old are welcome.**  
**State Licensed Program-Five Star Center, YoungStar WI**

Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/fortpreschool/> or on the web at <http://www.fortpreschool.com>

**PLEASE BE AWARE ALL CURRENT COVID 19 POLICIES TAKE PRECEDENT  
OVER POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK AND CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE  
AT WWW.FORTPRESCHOOL.COM**

# WELCOME TO FORT ATKINSON PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE!

Dear Families,

Welcome to Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare was established in 1969 to provide services to preschool children. Since then it has progressed to provide additional services to school age children, including before and after school programs and a full day summer program. We also partner with the Fort Atkinson School District to provide collaborative 4K and 3 year old inclusion services.

We believe family members are their children's first teachers and in order for children to be successful we need to work together with you as a team. At any time you have a question, concern, idea, compliment, complaint or need please contact me, we value your input.

This handbook is designed to help you navigate our school, to educate you about our rules, regulations and policies and to help make your time with us easier. From time to time our Family Handbook requires updates or clarifications and we will send you updates as needed. Please take the time to read this handbook carefully. If you have a question that is not answered here, please let us know.

The pandemic has brought many changes to the world and to our school. Many of our typical routines, schedules, policies and procedures are indicated in this handbook, however current COVID-19 policies will supersede and take precedence over anything in this handbook and can be found up to date on our webpage at [www.fortpreschool.com](http://www.fortpreschool.com), paper copies are available upon request in the office.

We are committed to providing an age appropriate education for your child and a positive experience for the entire family. We look forward to working with you and caring for your child!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Graf, Director

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CENTER PHILOSOPHIES.....	5
MISSION STATEMENT .....	5
GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY .....	5
CENTER INFORMATION .....	6
LOCATION AND PARKING .....	6
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	6
HOURS OF OPERATION .....	6
INCLEMENT WEATHER .....	6
OTHER CENTER CLOSURES .....	7
STATE OF WISCONSIN LICENSE .....	7
YOUNG STAR .....	8
RELIGION.....	8
HOLIDAYS.....	8
FORT ATKINSON PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE GOVERNING BODY .....	8
TRANSPORTATION.....	8
FIELD TRIPS .....	9
FORT ATKINSON PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE T-SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS .....	9
ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES .....	9
CENTER STAFF .....	10
ASSESSMENT POLICIES .....	11
DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS/ASSESSMENT POLICY .....	11
HEALTH/SAFETY POLICIES .....	12
DRESS.....	12
SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT .....	12
INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT .....	12
CHEMICAL/CLEANING SUGGPLIES/TOXIC MATERIAL STORAGE .....	13
PLAYGROUND SAFETY .....	13
SICKNESS/INJURY POLICY .....	14
FOOD POLICY .....	15
LUNCH.....	16
HAND WASHING.....	16
MEDICATION .....	17
REST TIME.....	18
TOYS FROM HOME .....	18
PET POLICIES .....	19
SCREEN TIME .....	19
BATHROOM ACCIDENTS POLICY .....	19
INSURANCE.....	19
CHILD ABUSE STATEMENT .....	19
BABY-SITTING .....	20
RECORDS POLICIES .....	20
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY .....	20
TRANSFER OF RECORDS POLICY.....	20
AUTHORIZATION TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION.....	20
COMMUNICATION POLICIES .....	20
OPEN DOOR POLICY .....	21
DISCHARGE POLICIES .....	22
DISCHARGE FOR NON-PAYMENT.....	22

DISCHARGE FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH .....	22
REGISTRATION AND HEALTH FORMS.....	22
DISCHARGE FOR DISRUPTIVE/DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS .....	23
SECURITY.....	23
CHILD CHECK IN/OUT.....	23
FAMILY EVENTS.....	24
CUSTODY ISSUES .....	25
SIBLINGS/FRIENDS/RELATIVES OF CURRENTLY ENROLLED CHILDREN.....	25
EMERGENCY POLICY.....	25
BUILDING SECURITY .....	25
PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY.....	25
PROGRAMS.....	25
SCHEDULES.....	26
TRANSITIONING.....	26
PRIMARY CAREGIVING .....	27
BEHAVIOR POLICY .....	27
FINANCIAL POLICIES.....	28
REFUND POLICY.....	28
NON SUFFICIENT FUNDS.....	28
UNPAID ACCOUNTS .....	28
RATE INCREASES.....	28
REDUCTION IN CHILDCARE HOURS.....	29
PAID HOLIDAYS .....	29
PERSONAL DAYS.....	29
ADDITIONAL DAYS/DROP-IN SIBLING CARE.....	29
FAMILIES IN NEED OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE .....	30
LATE PICK UP.....	30
SUMMER ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT .....	30
CHARGES DURING CLOSURES REQUIRED BY PUBLIC HEALTH.....	30
AVOIDABLE FEES/CHARGES.....	31
TAXES .....	31
PROBLEM RESOLUTION .....	31

# CENTER PHILOSOPHIES

## MISSION STATEMENT

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is a service of the First Congregational United Church of Christ. It is a non-profit self-supporting facility. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare's purpose is to offer quality childcare programs to parents who work, go to school, need a day out or have emergency situations.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare provides equal opportunities to all children and families without regard to race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, disability, gender identity, results of genetic testing, or service in the military.

The school is licensed by the State of Wisconsin to accommodate 75 children. As such, Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is mandated by law to follow state licensing codes and to provide childcare according to regulations based on our facility and available staff.

Our license and inspection reports are in our entry/office bulletin board for parents to view.

## GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare utilizes a play-based, developmentally appropriate, child-oriented curriculum. This curriculum is based on learning through play and encourages:

- A. Respect for each child as an individual.
- B. Individual responsibility of each child toward him/herself, his/her peers and adults.
- C. Independence, self-reliance and a positive self-concept.
- D. Direct involvement in the learning process emphasizing creative and spontaneous problem solving.

Classroom programs work to foster independence and a positive self-concept in each child. We believe that each child is an important individual and our goal is to strive to create an environment where children and families can grow to learn the value of being both universal and unique.

Our curriculum is based on the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and developmentally appropriate practices. Developmentally appropriate practices require teachers to meet children where they are and help them to reach goals that are both challenging and achievable. It includes five developmental domains:

1. Healthy and Physical Development
2. Social and Emotional Development
3. Language Development and Communication
4. Approaches to Learning
5. Cognition and General Knowledge

A resource book is available in the parent resources rack in the hall if you are interested in becoming more familiar with the learning standards. You can also access them at [https://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WMELS4thEdition\\_web\\_edit2.pdf](https://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WMELS4thEdition_web_edit2.pdf).

## **CENTER INFORMATION**

### **LOCATION AND PARKING**

The center is located at 31 Milwaukee Ave. W. in Fort Atkinson, WI. We are in the lower level of the First Congregational Church. Street parking is available (2 hours limits apply in some spaces between 9 am-5 pm) and there is free parking in city lots on the corner of Grant and S. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. W and on S. Water St. W.

Please be aware making a u-turn on Milwaukee St. in front of the preschool is against the law and police officers have issued tickets when it is observed. It is also dangerous for our families attempting to cross to parked cars.

There is one designated handicapped parking spot in front of the building for those with state issued placards. We do have parents/guardians/parishioners with disabilities who frequently use the space so please respect their needs.

Please do not park in the loading zones which are indicated by a sign and diagonal lines on the pavement, these spaces are reserved for deliveries and buses.

**DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN VEHICLES WHILE PICKING UP FORT ATKINSON PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE STUDENTS.** Siblings and other children being cared for by parents/guardians are more than welcome to come inside. Please avoid idling when parked near Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. Pollution from idling vehicles can enter buildings and affect indoor air quality as well as affecting children playing on the playground.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

The phone number for the center is 920-563-2084. The phone is generally answered by staff between 6:30 am-5:30 pm, Monday-Friday. In the event the phone is not answered or you call during non-business hours a voice mail system is available.

Upon enrollment you will be provided with the email address of the center director, assistant director and your classroom teacher. Staff frequently check email and it is a great way to communicate. Please do not communicate with staff via Facebook pages.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is open year-round, Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We are closed for the eight designated holidays listed in this handbook and an additional day for inservice/staff trainings between summer and fall sessions, this date to be announced annually. A list of dates Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is closed is distributed at the beginning of each year and is available online.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event of inclement weather Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will close if Fort Atkinson School District closes. If the Fort Atkinson School District is in virtual learning for the entire district or closed for holidays or inservices, the director may close the center at her discretion for an entire day, delay start or close early for the safety of students and staff.

If the school district closes prior to 6:30 am the Center will not open. If the school district closes after 6:30 am the Center will cease accepting new children at that time. The parents of any children already in the building will be phoned to pick up their children within one hour of notification of closing. Parents will not be charged for a weather-related closure.

In case of a weather delay the center will delay opening the same amount of hours as the school district. If the school district delays 2 hours, the center will open two hours later at 8:30 am. Regular fees will be charged for weather delays.

If the school district dismisses early due to inclement weather school age children will be bused to the center and will be accepted. The center will close at the time the district closes and will cease to accept preschool/4K students at that time. Parents must pick up all students within one hour of the closure. Regular fees will be charged for early dismissal.

Check the closed parent Facebook page, the center webpage [www.fortpreschool.com](http://www.fortpreschool.com) and your email for closure notifications. Parents of 4K students and elementary students will receive voice and/or text messages from the school district as well.

### **OTHER CENTER CLOSURES**

In addition to weather related closures the center may be required to close if the center: loses heat, air conditioning, electricity, does not have running water, plumbing problems, phone failure, major construction repairs or any other situation that could jeopardize the health and safety of the children or staff.

If loss occurs prior to opening parents will be notified via email and Facebook.

If loss occurs while children at the center parents will be notified and children must be picked up within one hour.

During a public health emergency Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare may close by decision of church council or under an order from state and/or federal government. During closings due to public health emergencies parents will be notified via email and Facebook and must be picked up within one hour.

### **STATE OF WISCONSIN LICENSE**

The Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare Center Family Handbook, outlining all Center philosophies, policies and procedures and the Wisconsin Administrative Code, HFS 46, Licensing Rules for Group Day Care Centers are available upon request. They are also available on the parent rack in the hallway for reference purposes, please do not remove these copies from the center.





authorized pick-ups must be made in writing. No one under the age of 18 may pick up children regarding of authorization.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will schedule field trips for the children. A permission slip will be sent home in advance with all necessary information concerning destination, time, cost, what items can be brought along and if a lunch must be provided.

Parents/guardians are welcome to chaperone field trips. They are expected to pay the necessary cost. Typically parents will be asked to follow the bus in their own vehicles.

The signed permission slip and money for the trip must be properly labeled and placed in the deposit mailbox in the office or paid via Tuition Express.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare contracts the Double Three Transportation Co. to transport the children.

## **FORT ATKINSON PRESCHOOL AND CHILDCARE T-SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS**

When on field trips, it is always easier to spot our children when they are wearing the same color shirt. We may provide a t-shirt for children to wear on trips.

## **ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

Children admitted to Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare are required to be between the ages of 2 ½ and 10 and potty trained unless they have identified special education needs indicated within an Individualized Education Plan that impacts their toilet training. As our bathrooms are not located in the classrooms students must be independent to avoid issues with supervision. Needing frequent 1:1 assistance in the restroom for any reason may become a reason for discharge.

Potty-trained students should be continent of both bowel and bladder, may not wear pull ups or diapers, must be able to tell teachers when they have to use the bathroom with a reasonable amount of notice, be able to use an adult-sized toilet (with stool and/or insert if needed), be able to pull their own clothes up and down (may need an occasional assist with zipper or buttons), and manage their own wiping for both bowel and bladder.

While accidents do occasionally happen, accidents more than once or twice per week on an ongoing basis may indicate your child does not have the potty training skills necessary at the current time.

All required registration and enrollment forms must be completed and submitted in order to be officially registered. All authorized and unauthorized persons that a child may or may not be released to must be noted at this time.

Admission is on a first come, first served basis. Priority consideration is given to those children who will attend regularly all day, five days a week and to children who already have siblings enrolled. Drop-ins of currently enrolled students are taken only if absences of the day allow space and must be prescheduled with the director, teachers are unable to schedule drop in days so please see the office.

If enrollment is full, you may place your child on a waiting list. You will be notified if any openings occur. Desire for admission and enrollment beyond an eight-week waiting period must be updated at that time.

Prior to enrollment families are expected to take a tour (or participate in an open house). . Children and parents are encouraged to visit the classrooms to meet the teachers before enrolling. During the tour, open house or subsequent enrollment visits you will receive a parent orientation reviewing policies and expectations (either verbally or in writing based upon your preference). All of the orientation information is also included in the Family Handbook which each family receives during their enrollment visit. It is also located on the center webpage. The online enrollment form contains a signature box to indicate that each family feels they have received the necessary orientation information.

The orientation plan includes:

- Discussion of current health and developmental needs and screening expectations
- Discussion of expectations of family and the needs of the child
- Discussion of parent/legal guardian and teacher roles
- Family visit with classroom teaching team
- Interpreter available if needed
- Introduction to key employees
- Opportunity for extended visit in the classroom by both family and child to allow both to be comfortable in the new surroundings
- Overview of available family support resources and activities
- Overview of program policies and procedures
- Technology usage
- Tour of facility

## **CENTER STAFF**

Our center staff consists of a director, assistant director, lead teachers and assistant teachers.

The center director, with assistance from the assistant director, can answer questions regarding enrollment, children's schedules, billing, center and program policies and much more. Please feel free to stop in, call or email the director at any time.

At our center our Lead Preschool/4K Teachers have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and are licensed by the Department of Public Instruction. They are responsible for lesson planning, assessments, classroom newsletters, parent communication and the daily running of his/her classroom. They can help your with questions regarding your child's day, the classroom schedule, classroom policies, your child's assessment and goals and much more.

Please feel free to visit with your child's teacher at drop off and pick up, although if you have the need for a longer time or more confidential setting please let him/her know so that we can schedule another teacher to cover the classroom.

Each classroom has an email monitored by the lead teacher and you can reach him/her in that manner.

The best time to phone teachers is between 12:00-2:00 during rest time.

Lead teachers have a minimum of four hours per week for lesson planning, updating portfolios and supervisory meetings with the director.

Assistant Teachers meet the minimum credentials set forth in the Department of Children and Families 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers. Many of our assistants are presently pursuing careers in early childhood education and are enrolled in Credential, Associate or Bachelor's Degree programs. Their role is to assist lead teachers in implementing lesson plans and to provide supervision to children. They also complete many of our center "chores" including snack prep, laundry, dishes, etc...

Center staff are required to possess a certificate from The Registry indicating their verified qualifications and the certificates can be viewed outside the classroom doors.

All staff must be current in first aid, CPR and AED, Abusive Head Trauma Prevention and Child Abuse and Neglect/Mandatory Reporter training. Full time staff complete 25 hours each year of continuing education and part time staff (less than 20 hours per week) complete 15 hours each year. The Director must complete 35 hours of continuing education each year and the Assistant Director must complete 30 hours of continuing education.

## **ASSESSMENT POLICIES**

### **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS/ASSESSMENT POLICY**

Families are provided information on community agencies and services in their enrollment folders. They are encouraged to discuss any needs with their teacher or director who will refer them to appropriate agencies.

During the enrollment process families are provided with the Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS) form to complete within the online enrollment form. This 10 question form is a screening tool that can help parents and staff identify children who may have a need for evaluation of developmental and/or behavioral problems.

The director will score the test and provide families and teachers with the results. If the need for further evaluation is indicated by the screening tool parents will be provided with information regarding agencies that could be of assistance. Following up with further evaluation is the responsibility of the parents (this includes financial responsibility for related costs), although providing the center with any results will help staff prepare appropriate goals and/or behavior plans for the child.

This is a screening tool, it does not diagnosis, it simply identifies areas where further evaluation may be needed. The screening is completed at enrollment and annually thereafter. Families who do not wish to participate in the screening may sign a form waiving the screening.

Within the first 30 days of enrollment staff will complete *The Redleaf Developmental Milestones Observational Record*. This assessment will be used to determine developmentally appropriate learning goals for your child. We encourage families to participate in the assessment process. The

assessment is completed at a minimum three times per year, usually in an on-going fashion. At any time parents may request to view the child's assessments which will be kept in the child's portfolio and reviewed at parent teacher conferences twice a year.

Preschool intake forms are provided to families as part of the online enrollment form. The online enrollment form must be completed prior to your child's first day of attendance. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare believes strongly in creating consistency between home and our program's culturally/linguistically appropriate practices. We acknowledge families cultures/values and their rights to make decisions for their children. Please help us to foster these values by completing this form. Intake forms are completed at enrollment and annually thereafter.

## **HEALTH/SAFETY POLICIES**

### **DRESS**

Please dress your child in durable, self-help clothing. Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities, which may mean getting messy, dirty, soiled or ruffled. Wash and wear items that are easy to take off and on and shoes that will not slip or slide when running or climbing are most appropriate.

Tennis shoes are required in order to ride bikes or scooters or climb on the equipment and are strongly encouraged for daily wear by all. Open toed shoes, sandals and flip flops are **STRONGLY DISCOURAGED** due to the wood chips on the playground. Please **DO NOT** send your child in open toed shoes or CROCS.

Suitable clothes should be worn for existing weather conditions. Children play outside every day that weather permits. We play outside until the wind chill is below 10 degrees. Boots, snow pants, mittens, hats and scarves are necessary during winter months. Students who do not have boots and snow pants will be required to stay out of the snow during outside time. Please bring shoes daily as we discourage wearing boots in the classrooms as the floors get slippery. Make sure to label ALL of your child's belongings with his name.

Preschool children are required to leave one complete change of labeled clothing at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare at all times. We provide a box for your child's extra clothing which is kept in his/her locker. You will want to change the provided extra clothing according to the seasons. Parents will be called if students who need to change clothes do not have clothes in their locker. We are unable to let children sit in wet clothing so parents will be required to bring clothes to the center immediately if spare clothes have not been provided.

### **SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare and the outdoor play areas are entirely smoke free and smoking is not allowed in the presence of children.

### **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare uses the least toxic methods of pest control first. These methods will pose the least risk to people, property and the environment. Many of these methods are proactive and include things such as cleaning up food and drink spills immediately, eating in only designated areas, removing standing water, fixing leaks, storing food properly, etc. If chemicals must

be used we will notify families and employees in advance regarding the timing and location of applications and what products will be used. When required the individual applying the pesticides will be a licensed professional.

Indoor the temperature will be maintained between 68 and 82 degrees F. Conditions that lead to excess moisture will be avoided in order to prevent the growth of mold and mildew. Adequate ventilation will be maintained through the HVAC system and/or screened windows. HVAC filters are cleaned or changed by church maintenance every 3 months or more often if indicated by manufacturer's guidelines. Aerosols will not be used near children

Outdoor air quality is monitored daily through the Air Quality Index and outdoor activities are limited or avoided during unhealthy Air Quality Index days.

Radon testing, notification and remediation will be performed according to Wisconsin Department of Children and Families regulations every 5 years.

### **CHEMICAL/CLEANING SUPPLIES/TOXIC MATERIAL STORAGE**

These materials must be stored in the original containers, clearly labeled. They must be inaccessible to children and kept in locked cabinets/closets and separate from medication and food. No mercury thermometers will be used.

The above items must be disposed of according to manufacturer's instructions. All efforts will be made to prevent mercury from entering water sources. Disposing of items such as florescent and compact fluorescent bulbs and thermostats is the responsibility of the First Congregational Church maintenance staff and are disposed of at the Jefferson County Clean Sweep program.

### **PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

We require students to wear bike helmets when riding bikes or scooters. Staff do clean helmets but they will not be cleaned between each individual use and they are shared helmets. If you are more comfortable you may send a helmet from home labeled with your child's name. The helmet will be kept in his/her locker and he/she will be responsible for bringing it outside and back in. As classrooms must remain in ratio so students will not be allowed to come back in for helmets if they choose not to bring them outside.

Please do not allow children to open the gate on the playground, even when with adults. We prefer children do not learn how to open the gate so as to keep everyone safe.

Tennis shoes are required in order to ride bikes or scooters or climb on any equipment.

The playground is inspected by the director or designee daily when in use. A log will be initialed indicating the playground has been inspected for: broken equipment, broken glass/trash, cracks in plastic, hazardous or dangerous debris, insect damage, problems with surfacing, displaced loose-fill surfacing under climbing toys, holes, flakes and/or buckling of unitary surfacing, user modifications (such as equipment rearranged unsafely or toys tied or attached to other toys), vandalism, worn, loose, damaged or missing parts, splitting wood, rusted or corroded metals or rot.

The playground is inspected bi-annually using the Suggested General Maintenance Checklists (Fall and Spring) from the CPSC Handbook for Public Playground Safety.

## **SICKNESS/INJURY POLICY**

We are not licensed to care for ill children. At this time we are following current COVID-19 protocol regarding illness. Please see the current policies found online at [www.fortpreschool.com](http://www.fortpreschool.com).

During declared public health emergencies or outbreaks of specific illnesses either at the center or in the community, additional health related criteria for attendance and return to the center may be temporarily or permanently implemented. Parents will be notified via email and/or Facebook and the new requirements will be posted on the parent bulletin board.

We ask that you do not administer laxatives and send your child to school before you have seen results at home. These medications make it very difficult for children to know when they need to use the bathroom and the routine amount of waiting for bathroom breaks in a group setting can pose a problem in these types of situations.

In most cases if your preschool child requires medication for illness they should remain at home. Many over the counter medications have side effects that make it difficult for small children to learn including agitation, restlessness, drowsiness, etc...

If your child is attending Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare and becomes ill we will isolate your child from the group, phone you and ask that you (or an authorized person) pick your child up within one hour.

If your child becomes seriously ill or injured, we will phone 911 and have your child transported to the nearest medical facility for treatment, typically the Fort Atkinson Memorial Hospital (611 Sherman Ave. E. Fort Atkinson, WI). We will notify you immediately. A staff person will accompany your child taking the child's file along.

Routine procedures are for treatment of minor injuries and superficial wounds are conducted. As per licensing law, staff are unable to apply Neosporin, clean with alcohol or apply any other topical treatments. Wounds are cleaned with soap and water only and protected with band aids if required. Ice packs are applied if needed. All injuries are recorded in a logbook. A copy of the injury report is placed in your child's file. If you would like a copy of the report please indicate after you sign it and we will make a copy for you.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare follows all necessary cleaning procedures should head lice occur at the center. We have a "No Nit" policy. Children are not allowed to attend Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare if any nits are present.

If your child has an allergy requiring an epi-pen or has a chronic illness that requires regular monitoring or treatment during school (such as diabetes or asthma) we will work with you and the child's doctor to complete an action plan. Training will then be provided based on the plan to all pertinent staff. The action plan will be posted in a confidential way in all classrooms the child visits. The plan must be updated at least annually.

Please call or email the center if your child will be out ill and include a description of the illness. If your child has a communicable disease we are required to post the illness (names are confidential) so other families can be aware and vigilant. Certain illnesses require us to report to public health and/or licensing. Notifications will be put on the parent information board by the entrance and on the closed parent Facebook page.

Children must remain at home to await results of COVID-19 tests.

If your child is too ill to complete any portion of the school day, including outside, please keep him/her home. We do not have the additional staff needed to provide 1:1 care for children who cannot participate with the group.

## **FOOD POLICY**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare focuses on teaching children proper nutrition. We have discussions during lunch regarding which foods are healthy and which are treats. We encourage children to eat their healthy foods before their treats.

Children bring their lunches from home. We provide 1% milk with their lunches. If a child's lunch does not meet nutritional requirements, we are required to supplement with the necessary foods. Children should have a protein, a grain, and one fruit and one vegetable along with the milk we provide. Children will not be served soda, kool aid, or any beverage that is not a milk (or milk substitute), water or a 100% juice, even if these items come from home. Please do not send them.

Snacks will be served in BPA-free dishes.

Morning and afternoon snacks consist of two healthy foods at least one will have whole grain component. A snack calendar is published monthly, posted on the closed parent Facebook page and on the parent bulletin board in the hall and in each classroom. Paper copies are available upon request.

Families bringing treats for birthdays or other reasons are encouraged to bring healthy foods. For safety reasons store bought items are required.

We have a peanut and tree nut free snack policy meaning we do not serve any products containing nuts. If bringing a treat from home, please be sure it is nut free.

If there is a child with a diagnosed nut/peanut or any other allergy in any given classroom a "peanut free" or "allergen free" lunch table will be designated. Additional precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of the student with allergies to be determined in conjunction with parents on a case by case basis.

If your child has other food allergies or other dietary restrictions, please make us aware of these issues so we can provide for the safety of your child.

If your child has a milk allergy or intolerance and requires an alternative milk (almond milk, lactose free, etc....) this must be indicated on the health form signed by your physician. Parents are required to send alternative milks properly labeled. All other students are expected to drink milk during snacks/meals.

Parents of children with food allergies/intolerances will be required to review the snack menu each month and cross off any items they do not want their child to eat. On those days parents are expected to send a healthy alternative for their child. The signed menus must be returned to the office and copies will be distributed to any classrooms where your child may eat snack.

Licensing laws prevent us from forcing your child to eat snack or lunches. This means we cannot tell them how much they have to eat to “be done.” We cannot force them to eat their food in a certain order or prevent them from eating one food if they have not eaten another. Therefore please make sure you are packing healthy lunches with choices they enjoy and minimal treats. Food is never used as punishment or reward.

Families who arrive early in the morning sometimes choose to bring their child’s breakfast to the center to eat. We strongly encourage children to eat their breakfast at home. Children seldom eat their breakfast once they see their friends playing, leaving them hungry until morning snack. However, if you do choose to bring your child’s breakfast to school please be aware it must consist of healthy food items-no donuts, cookies, coffee cake, etc... Staff are not able to wash dishes you bring from home so please be sure you send a container with a lid so that your child’s backpack stays clean.

Food and snacks may not be kept in children’s cubbies or open in lockers to protect children who have allergies. Please make sure your child has a lunch box that closes securely.

## **LUNCH**

Lunch boxes should be clearly marked with the child’s name on the outside. The center may provide classroom tags for lunchboxes, please switch the tags if your child gets a new lunchbox. Children should place their lunch boxes in the appropriately labeled wagon upon arriving at school. At 8:30 am staff will take the lunch boxes to the refrigerators.

Because of our responsibility to monitor the nutritional quality of the children’s lunches, your cooperation in providing a lunch for your child that meets the required standards is appreciated. Nutritious, easy to manage foods that your child enjoys are best. Please see the meal pattern requirements in your enrollment packet as required by the State of Wisconsin licensing rules. Lunches which do not meet the meal pattern guidelines will be supplemented by Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare to bring meals up to recommendations.

Staff may “heat up” items in lunches as long as it will take less than one minute of microwave time. They may not prepare meals (such as Ready Mac N Cheese or TV dinners) due to time constraints as well as the amount of time it takes the food to cool to a safe temperature. Please do the preparation at home and we will be happy to help your child have a warm lunch. Families are encouraged to send lunches in BPA-free containers.

## **HAND WASHING**

Washing hands is the single most important thing we can do to decrease the possibility of spreading illness. We ask that all children wash their hands upon arrival. If families are going to stay and play we ask that they wash their hands as well.

Children and adults at the center will wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day.



- After using the toilet.
- After handling bodily fluids (blowing/wiping a nose, coughing into your hand, touching any mucus, blood or vomit).
- Before and after meals and snacks.
- After coming in from outdoors or the gym.
- Before preparing or serving food.
- Before and after using sensory tables.
- After handling any animals.
- After handling garbage or cleaning.

The proper procedure for hand washing is stressed to children.

We teach them a handwashing song which they are encouraged to sing through twice while washing their hands. It goes like this:

(To *The Wheels on the Bus*)

The soap on our hands goes suds, suds, suds,  
 Suds, suds, suds,  
 The soap on our hands goes suds, suds, suds  
 And the germs go down the drain!

Children and staff are taught to:

- Wet hands.
- Apply soap.
- Rub vigorously for 20 seconds including the backs of hands, between fingers, under fingernails and around jewelry.
- Rinse hands.
- Dry hands with a paper towel.
- Use the paper towel to turn off the water.
- Throw the paper towel in the garbage without touching the can.

## **MEDICATION**

Medication administration forms are available from the office if your child needs medication while attending Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. A form must be completed by the parent/guardian for insect repellent and sunscreen. **Medications including both over the counter and prescription medication must be authorized by a physician.**

Lotions and lip balms are considered medications and require a physician's authorization. Children may not have on their person, in their lockers or back packs, lip balms, lotions, cough drops or hand sanitizers.

Medications must be brought in the original container clearly marked with the child's name and brought directly to the director or assistant director, teachers may not accept medications from parents so you may want to call ahead to schedule a meeting with an administrator. Medicine should be timed to be administered at 12:00 noon whenever possible. Any medication brought in different containers will not be administered. No child shall receive medication meant for another family

member. No expired medication will be given. A written report including time, date and name of person administering the medication is recorded in the medical logbook and a copy is kept in your child's file.

Please do not put medication in lunch boxes or back packs. All medications must be kept in a locked cupboard while at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. Please ask teachers to retrieve the medication for you at the end of the day. We ask that you do not go into the locked medication cabinets as a matter of confidentiality.

## **REST TIME**

State licensing requires children under the age of five who are in care for more than four hours to have a rest period. A child who does not sleep after thirty minutes or who awakens during rest time is to have a quiet time through the use of equipment or activities that will not disturb other children.

A "rest time" does not necessarily mean children have to nap. In classrooms where a majority of children have given up nap time the class may have a 30 minute quiet period where they relax and listen to music, read books or do other quiet relaxing activities such as yoga, educational videos or other choices. During all day school age days they also will have a 30 minute quiet time in order to relax and calm their bodies.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will provide individual sheets for the cots. They are laundered at least weekly. We also provide a blanket for each child that is washed at least weekly and assigned to a specific child.

Parents can provide a soft naptime toy if desired. All items must fit in the container provided with the lid securely closed. These containers are too small for sleeping bags, full sized pillows or large stuffies. We discourage bringing items back and forth from home on a daily basis to prevent spread of illness. Nap items may not be kept in cubbies and when in lockers must be kept in a closed cloth bag.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare offers a large variety of toys and educational supplies. We request that children do not bring toys-or any other items (coins, jewelry, stickers, coloring books, etc...) from home.

Toys from home can be lost or broke and often cause difficulty in sharing. In addition we are unable to verify the safety or appropriateness of toys brought from home. If a child brings toys from home staff will place the toy in the child's locker.

Children may bring nap time cuddle toys (stuffed animals) that are small enough to fit in their nap buckets with the lids closed.

Occasionally teachers request children bring items from home for sharing days, alphabet museums or other activities. Please read your classroom newsletter and Facebook page to be sure the item your child wants to bring meets the request of the teacher. Bring it only on the day requested and take it home the same day.

## **PET POLICIES**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare does not allow pets (other than fish and non-poisonous caged insects (such as butterflies, caterpillars, walking sticks, etc...)) to reside on the premises. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare does not allow pets to visit the premises unless prior notice is given to parents and consents received. Please do not bring your pet onto the playground or into the building to pick up your child.

## **SCREEN TIME**

We do not watch television, movies, DVD's etc. at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare unless related to a subject incorporated in our lesson plans. Children who do not wish to watch have alternate activities available. If computers and iPads with educational software and internet connections are available in the rooms screen time is limited to 30 minutes per week, with the exception of school age kids participating in virtual learning. Families are expected to review and complete our acceptable use and social media policy forms.

## **BATHROOM ACCIDENTS POLICY**

Children of all ages may have a bathroom accident. These include zippers getting stuck, sudden diarrhea and other mishaps. Teachers will assist in such situations as needed. The child's clothes will be changed immediately. Gloves will be worn for the protection of both parties. Soiled clothing will be bagged and sent home for washing. We do not have wipes, changing tables or other facilities necessary for changing some types of bathroom accidents and parents may be called to either clean up the child or take him/her home.

Diarrhea is a cause for children to be sent home. It is a sign of many illnesses, including COVID-19. While we understand it may not be a sign of illness we must treat it as such until the cause is determined.

## **INSURANCE**

In the event of an accident or injury, the child's family insurance coverage will be primary.

### **CHILD ABUSE STATEMENT**

According to state law, a childcare worker in any daycare center or child caring institution is a mandated reporter and must report if they have reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected (Wisconsin statues, Chapter 48.981(2)). Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare asks that parents/guardians explain to the teacher at drop off any injuries their child sustained outside our school. All unexplained injuries are reported to the appropriate agency.

If the child comes to the center with an injury that is out of the ordinary or repetitive in nature it will be documented in the medical log book upon the child's arrival at the center.

Policies are in place for staff who are concerned about abuse or neglect within the center. All Mandated Reporter laws as well as additional DCF licensing laws apply and will be followed.

## **BABY-SITTING**

It is a violation of our center policies for staff to baby sit or provide child care to enrolled children outside of the center. Disciplinary action can be taken against staff who choose to violate this policy. Should a family and staff person choose to violate this policy be aware that the center does not accept any responsibility for incidents that occur outside of contracted childcare at the center. Staff is not covered by liability insurance under these conditions. Please do not ask staff to violate our policies.

Please be aware that when staff leave our center we cannot provide you with reasons for their dismissal, resignation or actions taken while at our center due to confidentiality. Do not assume that because a staff member previously worked at our center and is now released from our baby-sitting policy that they would be appropriate caregivers for your children. Follow any and all common sense procedures before hiring him/her including background and reference checks.

## **RECORDS POLICIES**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

All information contained in your child's file is confidential. A child's file is open to parents/guardians, office personnel, the child's teacher and the state licensing specialist. Your written permission must be given before anyone else may see your child's file.

### **TRANSFER OF RECORDS POLICY**

Upon parental request and a written release of information, Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will transfer copies of the child's records to a child's new child care center or school.

### **AUTHORIZATION TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION**

If necessary or helpful to exchange or provide information with an outside party such as a doctor, social worker, family member etc., parents or legal guardians must sign a Permission to Release and Exchange Information form for Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare.

Employees of Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will not provide any information (verbal or written) on a child that involves a conflict over custody or placement of a child unless court ordered.

## **COMMUNICATION POLICIES**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare considers communication to be an important foundation of building meaningful relationships with families who attend our program. All resources will be provided to families in their native languages if requested. Please indicate any language other than English which your family may need materials on the online enrollment form. Google translate and other internet sources may be used to translate documents. Translators are provided for families enrolling in school district programs and personal translators are always welcome.

Staff have access to our secured electronic message board on personal phones and center iPads and will post any pertinent messages to the board so that all staff can access the information. Because of our electronic message system you may see staff reading or entering information on their

phones. Staff are also allowed to use personal phones for curriculum purposes-looking up information, music, videos, etc., however, staff are not allowed to use phones for personal communication while supervising children.

Communication preference forms are distributed during enrollment as part of the online enrollment form. Please complete this form prior to your child's first day of attendance. Communication forms will be updated annually. Should any information on your Communication Preference form change please come to the office to update the information.

Parent/teacher conferences are available twice a year. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to make an appointment with the teacher any time they are interested in their child's progress. Parents/guardians are welcome to visit Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare any time.

Each classroom emails weekly newsletters, paper copies will be provided to those who request them. White boards outside the classroom, emails, Facebook pages, notes in your child's cubby and/or folders are also used to communicate with families.

A family information bulletin board in the entryway informs parents/guardians of daily, weekly and monthly activities as does the closed Center Parent Facebook group.

Each classroom and the center has closed Facebook parent groups. These pages are by invitation only and only parents or legal guardians of children currently enrolled are able to access these pages. A Social Media Comment Policy must be signed in order for parents to access the page. For children to have their pictures posted on the board a Social Media Consent Form must be signed. No children will have their picture posted unless the consent form is signed. Pictured children will not be named or tagged. Children whose parents do not consent to placement on the page may occasionally be pictured with their faces obscured or blocked out.

Parents may not post pictures of children, other than their own, taken at the center or center events on their personal social media pages unless they have consent from that child's parent.

Center staff may not "friend," "follow," or otherwise connect with parents of currently enrolled children via their personal social media pages unless a relationship existed prior to the child's enrollment. Please do not request this of staff and help them to follow our center's policies.

Preschool intake forms are provided to families as part of the online enrollment forms. Intake forms should be completed prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare believes strongly in creating consistency between home and our program's culturally/linguistically appropriate practices. We acknowledge families cultures/values and their rights to make decisions for their children. Please help us to foster these values by completing this form. Intake forms are completed at enrollment and annually thereafter.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in our program and provide any input you may have.

Annual family satisfaction surveys are typically emailed in June, please take the time to complete them and provide us with valuable feedback for future planning.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare has an open door policy for families to visit and observe at any time during the center's hours of operation, unless access is prohibited or restricted by a court order or current policies related to public health.

Families are welcome to participate in our program in several ways. Families can join us for lunch, snack, special days, field trips or family events. Parents are encouraged to share a hobby or interest with our children, lead a classroom activity or to come in and read a book during story time. If you have any other suggestions please know our center is very open to family involvement and participation.

## **DISCHARGE POLICIES**

We reserve the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for any of the following reasons:

1. Non-payment and/or lack of adherence to center tuition payment policies.
2. Special needs of a child which the center cannot meet including but not limited to disruptive/dangerous behaviors which require a disproportionate amount of one to one attention or that puts the safety of themselves, other students, staff or center property in jeopardy.
3. Failure to provide necessary enrollment forms/paperwork.
4. Non-compliance with Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare Center's policies and procedures including current COVID-19 policies.
5. Abusive behaviors and/or verbal threats by the family towards staff, other families and/or children.
6. Lack of cooperation from the family adhering to policies and procedures relating to arrival and pick up.
7. Unwillingness to work with staff on issues relating to the child, including but not limited to disruptive/dangerous behaviors, excessive amount of one on one time, etc...

### **DISCHARGE FOR NON-PAYMENT**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare distributes weekly invoices on Monday and payment is required by 530 pm on Fridays. Payments not received by 530 pm on Friday will result in a \$30 late fee. Children whose bills have not been paid in their entirety by 530 pm on Friday will not be able to attend beginning the following week until complete payment has been made. If a child is on the waiting list for the classroom they may be moved into any unpaid spots immediately.

Any accounts past due for more than 30 days are automatically turned over to collections unless an agreement is made with the center and families are actively paying per the agreement.

In situations where there are divorced parents, or other situations where the bill is split and paid for by more than one party, both portions of the bill must be paid by the last day of the week for the child to attend on the first of the month. Both parties will be informed if any portion of the bill has not been paid.

### **DISCHARGE FOR NON COMPLIANCE WITH REGISTRATION AND HEALTH FORMS**

Your child must have a completed ONLINE ENROLLMENT FORM AND IMMUNIZATION FORM on file before his/her first day at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. **No exceptions will be made as these forms are required by state law.**

You are also required to provide an updated physical form (Child Health Report) completed by a physician within 90 days of your child's first day at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. The physical must have been completed within 1 year prior to enrollment or 90 days after to be valid. These forms must be updated every two years. **A child will be considered officially withdrawn if not in compliance with Wisconsin State Health Regulations.**

In addition to state required forms there are center required forms that help us to better serve your child and meet our guidelines and state regulations, please see the director for current requirements.

**Our center strives to be deficiency free with our state licensing agency and any items pertaining to licensing are non-negotiable regarding dates, completion, etc... Please do not ask us to violate our license or state licensing laws as we will not do so.**

### **DISCHARGE FOR DISRUPTIVE/DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS**

There are times when an individual child may not function appropriately in our environment. Group child care is not always the best choice for every family as some children may require smaller, quieter environments, less structured schedules, more one to one attention or may have other needs that require smaller teacher to child ratios. This should not be considered a failure of the center or parent, rather a collaborative effort to meet the needs children have.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare reserves the right to dismiss a child for any reason.

Parents will be expected to pick up their children whose behavior is endangering students, staff or property. These behaviors are grounds for dismissal. Students who require a disproportionate amount of one to one attention for behavior issues may also be subject to dismissal.

Dismissal will occur after communication with parents/guardians has occurred, incidents have been documented and new procedures have been tried with the child to eliminate behavior problems. The safety and welfare of all children and staff will be paramount when considering such decisions. If necessary, an immediate dismissal will occur.

### **SECURITY CHILD CHECK IN/OUT**

Daily sign-in sheets are on a clipboard in each classroom. ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE REQUIRED NOTIFY TEACHERS WHEN THEIR CHILDREN ARRIVE AND DEPART EACH DAY and teachers will complete the attendance sheet. Children need to be signed in and out each day so teachers can account for each child at all times of the day. When leaving Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare for walks, field trips or when practicing an evacuation, the teachers take the sign in sheets to take roll call and account for each child. Emergency information is also taken along in case we need to contact parents.

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will not release a child to anyone other than his/her parent/guardian or other authorized persons listed on the online enrollment form. A written permission slip signed by the parent/guardian must be provided before a child is released to anyone else. Authorized people picking up children must be at least 18 years old. We expect people we do not know to furnish a form of identification when picking up a child.

Children will not be released to anyone if the person

- Appears too ill to drive.
- Appears to be under the influence of alcohol.
- Appears to be under the influence of drugs.

If any of the above situations occur, another authorized pick up person will be contacted. If a second person cannot be reached the Fort Atkinson Police Department will be notified. We understand this can be a potentially embarrassing situation for families but we will put the safety of the child above all else so please do not attempt to pick up your child if any of these circumstances apply.

Students who arrive or depart from Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare by school bus are required to have an Alternate Transportation Form on file. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare staff will meet the buses and ensure any scheduled children are put on or taken off the bus. If a child is not on the bus parents will be called immediately. Please be aware that Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare does not provide any supervision or accept any responsibility for students while they are on the buses or transferring between buses at the public schools. Any problems that occur with the buses should be directed to the bus company.

During drop off and pick up times **THE PARENT IS IN CHARGE OF THE CHILD!** Please make sure your child (and any siblings or other children who are with you) remains in your sight and sound at all times as is required by licensing law. Children may not run ahead of parents up the stairs or go to their lockers, the bathroom or the kitchen without parental supervision regardless of age. Parents should not pick up, carry or otherwise physically roughhouse with children who are not their own. Please enforce our center rules during these times to provide for the safety of your child as well as our other children and staff. Consistency in enforcing rules will increase children's respect for staff and parents alike.

## **FAMILY EVENTS**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare hosts many Family Events throughout the year. Events are posted on the family bulletin board near the door, in classroom newsletters and Facebook pages and on the center parent Facebook page.

Please be aware some events require families to RSVP or pre-register in order to attend. This is usually done via Facebook, email or Sign-up genius. Families who do not communicate electronically should be certain to monitor newsletters and bulletin boards to be aware of the events. Pre-registration is required to keep our costs for food and supplies to what is necessary and to provide adequate staffing.

While attending Family Events children are the responsibility of parents, not staff. Please ensure your children follow the rules of the event and stay with you at all times. While we encourage parents to visit with each other, please remember this is a time to interact with your children and be a part of



their school experience. Children who are not with their parents during Family Events will be re-directed by staff to stay with you and families who are not adequately supervising their children may be asked to leave the event.

## **CUSTODY ISSUES**

Legally we must release children to parents/legal guardians who are divorced or non-custodial. The only way you can prevent a parent/legal guardian from picking up a child is if we have a SIGNED COURT ORDER in writing in your child's file. If parents were never married we still ask that you provide us with any custody arrangements or agreements to provide for your child's safety.

## **SIBLINGS/FRIENDS/RELATIVES OF CURRENTLY ENROLLED CHILDREN**

Many times when families drop off or pick up they have other children along who are not enrolled in the center. It is essential that these children stay with the adult at all times. We ask that you ensure that the children you bring into the center follow our rules and policies-walking feet, quiet voices, respect for center materials, etc... Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is not responsible for the care and safety of children who are not enrolled.

## **EMERGENCY POLICY**

In case of an emergency, we will notify you immediately to make arrangements to pick up your child. If we are unable to reach you or any of the designated people listed on your child's enrollment forms, we will contact Social Services to pick up and care for your child.

## **BUILDING SECURITY**

Parents and authorized pick up persons will be provided the code to the security door. Please do not share this code with anyone else. Please do not hold the door for other families unless you know personally they are enrolled. Do not let your child know the code or operate the key pad for the check in computer.

## **PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

### **PROGRAMS**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare offers preschool, school district sponsored 4K, wraparound care and a school-age program.

Curriculum is child-oriented and developmentally appropriate, directly involving the children in the learning process. All activities encourage growth in social/emotional development, language/cognitive skills, physical/gross motor skills, fine motor, academic and self-help skills.

Parent-teacher conferences are available to families twice a year.

An individual portfolio containing examples of the child's work along with summaries of developmental progress and anecdotal notes is sent home at the end of the school year.

Children between the ages of 2 ½ and 4 will first experience the SPROUTS ROOM. A major focus at this age is the child's independence, developing capacity to share, social skills and the use of imaginative play.

Children between the ages of 4 and 5, and those receiving wraparound care, move into the ACORN ROOM. The major focus is preparation for kindergarten. The child is becoming self-reliant and has the capacity to absorb things easily. The child is introduced to the upper and lower case alphabet learning to print his first and last name. Concentration is placed on cognitive and social skills.

4K students are in either the DETECTIVE or EXPLORER classrooms. The curriculum in the 4K classrooms are provided by the Fort Atkinson School District and include the Fountas and Pinnell curriculum. These students will move to kindergarten the following year.

School age children between the ages of 5 and 10 are in the KIDS UNITED ROOM. This program offers before and after school care and a full day summer program. During times when the Fort Atkinson School District is closed an all day virtual learning program for school age children may be offered. At this age, children are utilizing their independence, rely on natural curiosities and are enthusiastic about learning.

## **SCHEDULES**

All children must arrive at the center by 8 am daily unless prescheduled with the director. If your child will not arrive by 8 am please phone the center or email the director. State law requires us to attempt to ascertain the whereabouts of children who are scheduled to attend but do not arrive. Avoid a phone call by letting us know when your child will be absent.

Please be aware that coming in late to class is disruptive to the other students and teachers and can convey a lack of importance regarding school to your child. Children whose schedules vary greatly from day to day have a difficult time settling into the classroom routine and integrating into play groups.

## **TRANSITIONING**

When new children begin at the center parents are encouraged to bring them for at least one visit to the classroom prior to their start date. Parents will stay with the child during this visit. Please arrange visits with the office.

When transitioning from the Sprouts Room to the Acorn Room age is not the sole determinant. Available space, social, emotional, behavioral and academic readiness will also be considered. A parent conference with the primary teacher and/or director will be scheduled to discuss the possibility of transition at an appropriate time. Transitions typically occur in June or September and ideally involve an entire cohort of children moving together.

When a child is transitioned from one room to another, primary teachers will meet to discuss the child's current assessment, goals, likes/dislikes, health/allergies, daily routine and any other pertinent information. The child's assessment and portfolio will be given to the new teacher on the child's first day. Office staff will ensure emergency contact information is transferred to the new classroom.

When individual transitions occur during the school year the child will gradually be transitioned into the new classroom over a two week period. The child will be allowed to experience different portions

of the day in the new classroom one at a time. These portions will include snack, free play, gross motor time, nap, circle time and/or shared reading. Primary teachers will confer with each other during the transition process and discuss ways to make the transition easier including sending favorite toys, nap items, photos from home, art work, etc... The transition plan will be documented in the child's portfolio. Transitioning mid-year is not the preferred method as we believe strongly in primary caregiving and the bond the children have with their particular cohort.

Large group transitions, when many students move from one classroom to another, generally occur at the beginning of the summer session and at the beginning of the fall session (depending upon when the child begins). Large group transitions will be handled in a similar manner although the transition will generally be easier on children who are moving with their current classmates. In this situation transitioning may include switching classrooms as an entire class or talks from the new primary teacher.

Our primary caregiving team includes a fifth primary teacher who spends two days per week in each preschool classroom. This teacher will aid in the transition from the Sprouts to Acorn Room.

Within 45 days of transitioning into the program we will contact families to determine how they feel the transition is going. Please feel free to reach out before then to your child's teachers or the director if you have questions or concerns.

Families transitioning out of the program have the opportunity to meet with the director to complete an exit interview either in person or online, please let us know if you are interested in participating.

## **PRIMARY CAREGIVING**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare believes in and supports primary caregiving. This means that each classroom is assigned one-three primary teachers, depending upon the number of children enrolled in the class. These teachers are regularly scheduled to lead the classroom the majority of the program day. These teachers are responsible for child assessments, goal writing, assessment summaries, parent-teacher communication and behavior and classroom management. Assistant teachers will carry out the directions and philosophies of the primary teachers in their absence.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

The main purpose of our behavior policy is to encourage the individual child to grow, develop socially and to achieve a secure and safe environment for all children and staff.

Through consistent positive guidance by the teachers, the child is given guidelines that are appropriate to the child's ability to learn and understand. Each child is encouraged to respect him/herself as well as others. Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will not accept behavior causing danger to another person or property. Staff encourage children to use words to express their feeling and desires rather than use physical force or inappropriate language. Staff teach sharing and cooperation and encourage assertiveness rather than aggressive behavior.

Parents are expected to inform staff of changes in their child's life that may affect his/her behavior. Example: Parent out of town, child taking medication, family situation (separation, divorce, new sibling, job change, etc.) Staff can be extra sensitive and proactive to meeting the child's needs if they are aware of the circumstances surrounding the child's unusual behavior.

Time outs are generally ineffective. Staff will be educated in the use of time-outs through the licensing regulations for the state of Wisconsin. A center may use a time-out period to handle a child's unacceptable behavior only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The child is 3 years of age or older.
2. The child care worker offers the child the time-out period in a non-humiliating manner.
3. The time-out period does not exceed 3 minutes.
4. The child is not isolated.
5. The child is not removed from the classroom setting.
6. If the child care worker needs additional adult support, another child care worker comes to the classroom setting.

If a child prefers to leave the classroom to take a break, teachers or administrators may take a walk with the child or go to the Zen Den where the child will be allowed to play and regroup. Staff will discuss social emotional strategies with the child to help them cope with his/her emotions.

Staff will follow any directives indicated in the child's Individualized Education Plan regarding behavior management.

While parents may choose certain discipline methods at home please be aware we are bound by Wisconsin licensing laws as well as professional standards. Parents may not "give (us) permission" to use forms of discipline that do not meet licensing laws or center policies.

**Parents will be expected to pick up their children whose behavior is endangering students, staff or property and who cannot be managed through the above methods. These behaviors are grounds for dismissal.**

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

Additional Financial Policies found under "discharge criteria" in this handbook.

### **REFUND POLICY**

A refund will only be given after a two week written notice of withdrawal from Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. Fees must be paid in full. Refunds will be given if a child is dismissed from Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare.

### **NON SUFFICIENT FUNDS**

After a second returned NSF check, or automatic withdrawal NSF, families must pay in money order only going forward, no additional checks or automatic withdrawals will be accepted.

### **UNPAID ACCOUNTS**

Any accounts past due for more than 30 days are automatically turned over to collections unless an agreement is made with the center and families are actively paying per the agreement.

### **RATE INCREASES**

Each year an automatic increase of 1% will be added to tuition costs on 1/1/20---. Church council may elect to increase rates beyond 1% based upon the needs of the center.

### **REDUCTION IN CHILDCARE HOURS**

If you have a reduced need for childcare hours your contract requires two weeks' notice in writing. During this two week period you will continue to be billed for your contracted hours-personal days may not be used during your final two weeks. Please notify us as far in advance as possible of your changing needs. Waiting lists for our services can be long and we like to keep our slots filled. No child will be allowed to attend for less than three part time days per week. Families may opt to pay for days they do not use to maintain their placement.

### **PAID HOLIDAYS**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, an inservice day with date to be determined (between summer and fall sessions), Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Families are responsible for those days and will be billed if the holiday falls on a day their child is normally scheduled. Personal days may not be used for paid holidays. Families on a varying schedule will be billed for all holidays.

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the previous Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday. Two consecutive holidays falling on Friday and Saturday will result in either a Thursday/Friday or Friday/Monday closure. Each year a list of closure dates will be published in January and distributed to current families.

### **PERSONAL DAYS**

Children are required to enroll for specific days of the week. A minimum of a three day per week enrollment is required. Parents are financially obligated to those days whether or not the child attends. Full time children are allowed 5 personal days per year. Part time children and school age children are allowed the number of days per year they are enrolled. One personal day will be allowed for children enrolling for the summer session only. Personal days are used for vacations, illness, etc. Personal days may not be used for the eight paid holidays when Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is closed. Personal days may not be used for any part of two week notice of termination. They may not be carried over to the next year. Personal days are granted at enrollment and annually on the child's enrollment date after the enrollment fee has been paid.

### **ADDITIONAL DAYS/DROP-IN SIBLING CARE**

Requests for additional days outside of your contracted days should be made as soon as possible. If space allows permission will be granted.

On no-school days siblings of currently enrolled children may request school age drop in care. If space is available drop in days for siblings will be billed at \$36/day. Siblings must have all necessary paperwork on file in order to attend. During public health emergencies siblings will not be allowed to attend for drop in care in order to protect the classroom cohort.

## **FAMILIES IN NEED OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare does not offer reduced rates based on income or for siblings.

The State of Wisconsin offers financial assistance for childcare for qualified families through the SHARES program. We are a licensed five star center who accepts SHARES payments.

Information on the SHARES program can be found at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares> .

Information on how to apply for SHARES can be found here <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/apply>

New SHARES families must show they have been approved for SHARES before the child is able to attend or sign an agreement indicating they will assume financial responsibility for any care not covered under the SHARES program. Current families who apply for SHARES are financially responsible for their bills until SHARES begins your coverage.

SHARES families are issued EBT cards to pay for their child care each month. It is your responsibility to pay online or by phone. They are expected to abide by all the same financial policies as private pay families. All rates and fees are the same for SHARES families as for private pay families. Any balance that remains after SHARES payments are paid are the financial responsibility of the family. Failure to pay the balance by the last business day of the month will result in termination of your child's enrollment.

SHARES families must pay the remainder of their bill with personal funds by the last day of the month in order to continue enrollment. SHARES payments will only be applied to care for the month in which it was intended. For example-if you have a remainder of \$150 after SHARES pays in January, you may not use your February SHARES allotment to pay the January remainder.

### **LATE PICK UP**

**Students who are not picked up by 5:30 pm will be charged a late pick up fee of \$10 for each 10 minutes past 6 pm.**

### **SUMMER ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT**

Fall session students who are not enrolled in the summer session but require additional days during the first or last week of the summer session may request additional days. If space is available additional days will be charged at \$36/day.

Students enrolled in the fall session will be given preference provided enrollment deadlines are met.

Students electing to withdraw during summer months are not guaranteed their places upon return in the fall. Preference is given to full-time year round students. Families who withdraw may hold their spot over the summer by paying for a minimum of three days. If families choose to withdraw from summer care and do not pay the minimum, they will be placed on a waiting list and notified by August 1 if there is a space available for the fall session.

### **CHARGES DURING CLOSURES REQUIRED BY PUBLIC HEALTH**

If a classroom, or the center, is closed by Jefferson County Public Health Department due to a COVID related illness or situation, or a lack of available staff due to a COVID related situation, fee based families will be required to pay our minimum charge of \$108/week during the closure. Families can opt to give their two weeks' notice at this time but their place will not be held and will be offered to any families currently on the waiting list. If a family reenrolls after giving notice they are subject to the current enrollment fee regardless of when this fee was last paid.

If a child is excluded from care during a possible COVID exposure investigation or due to a COVID quarantine of him/herself, or a family member, which does not affect the operation of the classroom or the center, the family is expected to pay the child's contracted weekly rate during his/her absence. Any available personal days can be used during this time period.

### **AVOIDABLE FEES/CHARGES**

Late pick up fee-\$10 for every 10 minutes past 6 pm.

\$5/month convenience fee for families who opt for paper billing or payment (no charge for families using email billing and Tuition Express)

### **TAXES**

Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare will prepare an end of the year tax statement for each family which will be emailed. Paper copies can be requested. The tax id # for Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare is 39-1133789.

### **PROBLEM RESOLUTION**

The following is a guideline for teachers and parents who may have a concern or question regarding activities at Fort Atkinson Preschool and Childcare. It is our intention to have any issues brought to our attention immediately and resolved to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

1. Discuss the matter with the person (teacher, parent, director, assistant director) involved in the situation. Explain your concern and explore possible remedies together.
2. The director and assistant director should always be informed and made aware of the issue immediately.
3. If you are unable to reach a mutual agreement, the director will meet with you and the person involved. Our goal is to always resolve issues at this level.
4. If a mutual agreement hasn't been accomplished, please give a summary of your concerns in writing to the director and/or a member of the First Congregational Church Personnel Committee. A thorough discussion will occur exploring all possibilities of resolution. The resolution will be determined using current employee and center policies, licensing and employment law as a basis for the decision.
5. The director and/or a member of the personnel committee will meet with the parties involved again to finalize the resolution.

6. If the issue is a violation of licensing regulations and has not been resolved at this point, the licensing bureau may be contacted. Our license specialist is Michelle Garcia. Her phone number is 608-422-6728.