THE PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE

PINE STRAWBERRY SCHOOL
P.O. Box 1150
Pine, AZ 85544
928-476-3283

Monday – Thursday
8:00am – 11:00am
2026-2027

PINE STRAWBERRY SCHOOL PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL!

This booklet has been prepared for you and your child as you both begin the preschool experience at Pine Strawberry School. General information contained within this publication is intended to represent an overview of the preschool program.

Preschool is the bridge between home and school. We realize that you are your child's first and most significant teacher. More importantly, you will be their lifelong teacher. We would like to join you and help your child grow, develop and learn.

You, the parent, will play an important role in the successes we are able to achieve, therefore, your assistance and participation is requested and welcomed. Communication between you and the teacher is a vital part of the preschool program. It is through the teamwork of parents and teachers that children will receive maximum benefits from an excellent educational beginning.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of Pine Strawberry Preschool curriculum is that learning is effective when each child works on his/her level of success in an atmosphere which encourages learning by play without pressure. Young children learn by doing. Their work is play.

Learning is a complex process that results from the interactions of children's own thinking and their experiences in the external world, which includes the family, the staff and the community. Based on the work of Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky and numerous other child development experts, the curriculum provides for a developmentally appropriate program emphasizing the importance of play.

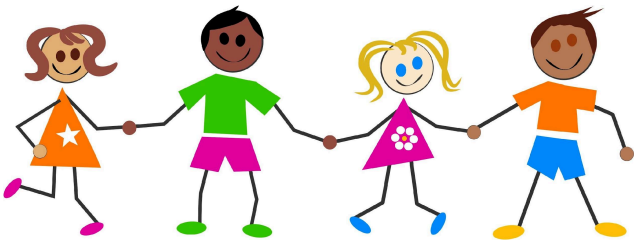
SERVICES OFFERED TO CHILDREN

The preschool program provides a developmentally based curriculum for both general and special education students. Preschool enrollment is capped at 10-12 depending on the needs of the students. Federal Law (The Individuals with Disabilities Act [IDEA]) states that public school districts will establish as their first priority for enrollment, 3 and 4 year old students with special needs. General education students are accepted on a first come, first served until the cap is reached. Should the special needs student population increase to the point where the cap will be exceeded, general education students will be disenrolled with the last general education student enrolled to be the first student disenrolled. Additionally, should the school realize a requirement to provide additional services for a special needs student that exceeds the school's personnel resources, additional general education students may be disenrolled, reducing the enrollment cap as necessary, in order to allow the school to meet the new requirement. The program, located at Pine Strawberry School, facilitates appropriate integration into special programs and activities with general education students.

GOALS

It is our goal that children in the preschool program will:

- develop positive self-esteem
- have fun and enjoy school
- develop a love of learning
- learn to solve problems, take risks, and make decisions
- feel safe and secure in the school environment
- develop independence and initiative
- develop self-expression and creativity through materials, music movement and language
- respect themselves and others
- develop social skills through interactions with peers and a variety of adults and cultures
- appreciate differences in people, cultures and the natural world
- develop language skills by encouraging reading, writing, speaking and listening
- learn through the use of all five senses-seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling
- develop large and small motor skills
- learn the skills of group participation
- observe their environment, ask questions, and think critically
- feel part of the school community
- develop self-help skills and good health habits
- develop intellectual skills through hands-on experiences



It is our goal that families of children in the preschool program will:

- feel secure that their children are in a safe, enriched, loving environment
- become familiar with the public school system and feel part of the school community
- communicate with teachers
- become actively involved in their child's school life
- feel comfortable visiting the classroom at any time after signing in at the office first
- take advantage of school resources on child-rearing and families
- share classroom experiences with their child
- share their talents with the school and children
- participate in parenting education programs

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The preschool operates:
4 days a week (Monday-Thursday)
3 hours a day (8:00 am - 11:00 am)
Regular school schedule/calendar for vacations and holidays
Pine Strawberry Preschool does not charge tuition or fees

Parts of our Day

Free Choice
Calendar, Song, Good Things
Breakfast
Specials
Instructional Learning
Centers
Story
Recess
Snack
Whole Group
Clean Up

Preschool begins on Wednesday July 29, 2026 and ends Thursday May 20, 2027
Family/teacher conferences will be held at the end of 1st and 3rd quarters.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENT AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Each child is screened by a team of professionals to determine developmental needs and eligibility for special services. *Students who qualify for special education services are given first priority in program placement.* The classroom enrollment is limited to 10-12 students depending upon the needs of students.
Enrollment papers are available in the school office. Parents should bring their child's birth certificate and immunization record for the school to copy. A date will be set to screen the child in the developmental areas. If there are concerns in any developmental area, further assessment will be offered, subject to parent approval.

Children without concerns are admitted to the program with the following priority:
Priority is as follows:

Three and four year old special needs students
Four year old general education students

General education preschoolers are eligible for enrollment the month they turn four years of age.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunization is a required condition for acceptance for all public school students Preschool – 12th. There must be an immunization record on file for every student. The only exceptions to this law are if the child's physical condition is such that immunizations would seriously endanger the child's health or if the child is being reared as an adherent to a religion, the teachings of which are opposed to immunizations.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

The preschool program is designated to meet the needs of every child. Individual assessments are developed for each child with classroom curriculum reflecting these individual and class needs. The classroom environment and lessons are structured to enhance and maintain individual needs and provide appropriate opportunities for all students. Program plans are developed for special education students which provide for the Least Restrictive Environment.

TRANSPORTATION

No transportation is provided for preschool students. Preschool students must be dropped off and picked up by a parent or guardian.

FIELD TRIPS

Preschool students participate in field trips throughout the school year. Parents will be notified in advance and will receive a permission slip to sign and return. Students must have a completed permission slip prior to participating in the field trip. Parents are encouraged to participate on field trips. A parent or guardian will be required to accompany a student that has had difficulty in class which might translate into difficulty on a field trip.

DISCIPLINE PROGRAM

Pine Strawberry School staff members hold high expectations of all students. Children are expected to come to school ready to learn and are held responsible for their actions. The preschool experience is a time to learn appropriate behavior through instruction, modeling and practice.

We believe that:

- The best education results from a partnership of family and school
- All students are capable of success
- Student success results from making appropriate choices and taking responsibility for those choices

Preschool children will be given many opportunities to observe and practice appropriate behavior. The following guidelines will be followed when dealing with inappropriate behavior in the preschool setting:

1) One reminder
2) Redirection to another area or activity
3) Time away from the group
4) Persistent inappropriate behavior will result in a conference with parent(s)

TIME AWAY:
If a student chooses to take time away from other students he/she will be asked to take a break from the academic setting. The student is to spend a short time period quietly thinking about the problem he/she had. The student will be reminded of the classroom expectations and guided to talk about appropriate behavior options after a short time period quietly thinking.

Pine Strawberry Elementary School District Aggressive Behavior Policy

Preschoolers displaying aggression towards other children is common and often difficult to predict. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the student, the victim, the parents, and staff. Aggressive behaviors may also cause severe injury to the victim. A child demonstrating aggressive behaviors including but not limited to biting/spitting, hitting, kicking, or pinching will be addressed promptly. These aggressive behaviors cannot be tolerated at Pine Strawberry School.

For many preschoolers, the aggressive stage is just a passing problem. Preschoolers try it out as a way to get what they want from another preschooler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. They discover that certain behaviors are a sure-fire way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the student can pick it up. However, they experience the disapproval of the adults nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings.

For other children, aggressive behaviors are a persistent and chronic problem. They may display behaviors for a variety of reasons: frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power. No matter what the cause, in a group situation causes strong feelings in all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur.

The early childhood staff of the Pine Strawberry School, after consulting child care experts and manuals, has developed the following plan of action to be used if and when aggressive behaviors occur in any of our rooms.

Before aggressive behavior occurs:

1. Discuss the issue of aggressive behaviors with all parents at the time of enrollment.
2. Distribute written policy to all families and include it in the enrollment packet.

When a child is displaying aggressive behaviors:

For the victim:

1. Separate the victim from the student.
2. Comfort the child.
3. Administer first aid.
4. Write an accident report and notify parents of the victim.

For the student:

<u>Step 1</u>

- The student is immediately removed from the situation firmly saying “No!”.” Avoid any immediate response that reinforces the behavior or calls attention to the student. The caring attention is focused on the victim.
- The student is not allowed to return to class for approximately 3-4 minutes, and is talked to on a level that the child can understand.
- Write an accident report and notify the parents of the student.

<u>Step 2</u>

- Repeat Step 1.
- Call parents, request a face to face meeting (may be held the same day).

- The student cannot return to school until a successful meeting is conducted. If the student has special education needs, refer to the ESS Coordinator for guidance on student attendance and/or change of placement issues.

Step 3

- Repeat Step 2.
- Call parents and have them pick up their student.

Step 4

- Repeat Step 3
- Request a face to face meeting
- Student may be disenrolled from preschool

LIABILITY COVERAGE

Pine Strawberry School has $1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence liability coverage.

MEDICATION

On occasion, students must take medication during school hours. Board policy requires that the medication be administered in the office. Written instructions signed by the parent and physician will be required for prescription medication. Written instructions, signed by the parent or guardian will be required for over-the-counter medication. Medicines should be sent to school in original, properly labeled containers and will be kept in a locked cabinet. Any change in medication should be properly reported to the health aide or secretary.

HEALTH AIDE (Emergency Procedures):
Pine Strawberry School has a school health aide. The family and Pine Strawberry Fire Department are called immediately if an emergency exists. Upon registration of the student, an Emergency Medical Treatment form and a Medical Permission Form listing medication used in treatment of minor injuries is completed by the parent or guardian.

FEVERS - Students sent home from school with a fever are not allowed to return until he/she has been **"fever free" for 24 hours** without medication. Students are sent home when their fever is higher than **100.1**.

PHONE AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURE

Phone messages to change pick-up person will be taken by the school office and must be received by 9:30am. **Anyone other than parent or guardian, who will pick up your child, must be authorized on the emergency pick-up card.** Please have them bring their photo ID for safety purposes.

NEGOTIATING DIFFICULTIES AND DIFFERENCES

Families are encouraged to directly express any concerns regarding their child or the program to the preschool program director. If you wish, conferences with the teacher can be scheduled. If further communication is needed, please contact the Special Education Director or the school Superintendent.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Program improvement is important to any program in order to provide quality educational services to students. Parents are asked to evaluate the preschool program at the end of each year. Questionnaires are given to each family and filled out anonymously.

STATE LICENSING

State licensing inspection reports available upon request in the preschool teacher's licensing file. This facility is regulated by:

Arizona Department of Health Services
1500 E. Cedar, Suite 22
Flagstaff, Az. 96004
(928) 774-2707

Fire, Gas, and Pesticide Application Reports are available upon request

PARENT VISITS

Parents and guardians are invited to visit the school. Children who are not enrolled as students may not visit or attend classes. We do ask that classroom visits be scheduled with the principal and teacher before entering the classroom. It is for the safety of all our students that parents and visitors are required to sign in at the school office every time they enter the school and receive a visitor's pass.

Students may not have friends or other school-age family members visit during the school day. Parents and guardians should park in designated visitor parking in the main parking lot. Please do not leave unattended cars in the drop-off area and pull forward to expedite the pick-up/drop-off process. Parents and community members are invited and encouraged to participate in the school program as volunteers. Volunteer applications and guidelines are available in the office.

PARENT SIGNATURE PAGE
2026-2027

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ABIDE IN THE:

____ Preschool Handbook ____ Discipline Program

____ Aggressive Behavior Policy

My child and I understand the rules, policies and provisions stated herein.

Student Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date_____