



Parent Handbook 2019/2020 School Year

All policies subject to change. Parents will be notified.

MISSION

To provide high-quality preschool education with a focus on developmental, age-appropriate learning in a nurturing, family-oriented environment.

PHILOSOPHY, VALUES & GOLDEN RULES

Operating within the theory of play-based learning, Mrs. O's Preschool helps 3, 4 and 5 year-olds make sense of the world around them as they are encouraged to develop social and cognitive skills, mature emotionally, and gain the self-confidence required for new experiences and environments.

Built around the Core Values of **Determination, Courage, Respect, Confidence, Playfulness, and Community**, our vision is to model and communicate these values while understanding each child's individual needs.

With over 62 combined years of early elementary teaching experience, our philosophy focuses on active involvement, meaningful experimentation, and reinforcement through repetition. Our passion for nurturing children shapes Mrs. O's Golden Rules and are directed by our values and inspire our balance of academic, play, and structured activities.

Mrs. O's Golden Rules:

Golden Rule #1

I think I can, I think I can. (Determination)

"I think I can. I think I can. I think I can. I know I can." The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper

Golden Rule #2

I can read with my eyes shut. (Courage)

"The more that you read, the more things you will know, the more that you learn, the more places you'll go." I Can Read with My Eyes Shut by Dr. Seuss

Golden Rule #3

Treat others how you wish to be treated. (Respect)

"A person's a person, no matter how small." Horton Hears a Who by Dr. Seuss

Golden Rule #4

Believe in yourself. (Confidence)

"The things that make me different are the things that make ME" Winnie the Pooh by AA. Milne

Golden Rule #5

Every day is a new adventure. (Playfulness)

"In every job that must be done, there is an element of fun. You find the fun and the job's a game." Mary Poppins by P.L. Travers

Golden Rule #6

It takes a village to raise a child. (Community)

Piglet: "How do you spell love?"

Pooh: "You don't spell it, you feel it. Winnie the Pooh by AA. Milne

STAFF

Nancy Obidzinski-Lum, Director

Nancy Obidzinski-Lum is a proud graduate of Western Michigan University and has spent 39 years fulfilling her passion for teaching. Nancy's teaching experience has been at St. Joseph Elementary, Kalamazoo Public Schools and most recently 20 years at Moorsbridge Elementary in Portage. Teaching brings her so much joy. She can't imagine her life without teaching small children. Nancy and her husband, Eric, have three wonderful daughters, Meaghan, Katelyn, and Reilly. She is also "Grams" to her grandson, Sawyer. Nancy is so excited to bring Mrs. O's Preschool to our wonderful city of Portage.

nancy@mrsospreschool.com

Katelyn Lum-Cortright, Director

Since Katelyn Obidzinski Lum-Cortright was a young girl, her dream was to become a teacher. Katelyn's dream was fulfilled when she graduated from the School of Education at the University of Michigan and was hired as a 2nd-grade teacher in Portage Public Schools. Katelyn finished her 6th year of teaching in the Spring of 2018. She and her husband, Adam, welcomed their first baby boy, Sawyer Eric David, in

May of 2018. Katelyn cannot wait to begin this exciting journey with her mom and sister. She looks forward to sharing her passion with you!
katelyn@mrsospreschool.com

Meaghan Lum, Director

Meaghan Obidzinski Lum is thrilled to begin this new adventure with her mom, Nancy, and sister, Katelyn. In 2009, Meaghan received her BFA degree in Digital Cinema from DePaul University in Chicago. From there she continued her education at the University of Michigan where she received her Masters in Education. In 2011, Meaghan began her career at Moorsbridge Elementary teaching kindergarten where she shared a classroom with her mom, Nancy. It was a dream come true! Currently, she is completing her 8th year at Moorsbridge teaching Kindergarten and will now venture out to open this new preschool with her incredible family!
meaghan@mrsospreschool.com

Alyssa Piñón, Lead Teacher

Alyssa Piñón is honored and thrilled to join the amazing team of teachers at Mrs. O's Preschool! Alyssa fostered her love of educating young children at Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame by earning a degree in Elementary Education with a specialty in Early Childhood Education. She comes to Mrs. O's with nine years of teaching experience, having taught all grade levels from Young Fives through sixth grade! Alyssa is most passionate about working with little ones, and is so grateful to have spent seven years of teaching in Portage Public Schools, most recently as a Young Fives teacher. She believes that a child's learning is most evident through their play and exploration. When she is not at school, Alyssa can often be found spending time with family or friends, cooking and baking, or reading a good book!
alyssa@mrsospreschool.com

ENROLLMENT/ADMISSION

Enrollment for the school year is based on a first-come, first-served basis. Students enrolling at Mrs. O's Preschool in the 3-year-old program must be 3 years old by September 1, 2019, and potty trained. Students enrolling in the 4-year-old program must be 4 years old by September 1, 2019, and potty trained. Students enrolling in young fives/pre-Kindergarten must be 4 years old by September 1, 2019 and potty trained.

To register, please mail the Enrollment Fee & Registration Form with a non-refundable \$200.00 check made payable to Mrs. O's Preschool:
Mrs. O's Preschool
PO Box #1571
Portage, MI 49081

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The school year begins on Wednesday, September 4, 2019 and ends on Friday, May 22, 2020. The morning school hours are 9-11:30. The afternoon school hours are 1-3:30.

Doors will open for arrival at 8:50 a.m. and 12:50 p.m. Feel free to help your child hang coats/backpacks in his/her cubby and drop them off in his/her designated classroom. Our hope is that by October, your child

can independently hang his/her coat and backpack. Please send your child to school with a large backpack that will hold papers and projects.

Dismissal- For security purposes, the front doors will always be locked. Feel free to wait outside the front doors and we will bring your child to you. The younger class will always be dismissed first. We will only dismiss your child to anyone listed on the emergency form. **Also, if you have any dismissal changes for your child, please send in a hand-written note letting teachers know that your child will be picked up by someone different. Please include the note in the Communication Folder we have provided for each student. We will ask for picture ID when there is a change in pick up. Please include all people your child can be released to on the emergency form.**

Vacation Days- Mrs. O's preschool follows the Portage Public Schools calendar for major breaks including Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring Break, and scheduled half days.

DAILY ROUTINE

9:00 / 1:00: Arrival Time

9:00 - 9:25 / 1:00 - 1:25: Free Play

9:25 - 9:45 / 1:25 - 1:45: Circle Time

9:45 - 10:45 / 1:45 - 2:45: Activity Center Time

10:45 - 11:00 / 2:45 - 3:00: Clean-up/Snack Time

11:00 - 11:20 / 3:00 - 3:20: Outside Play, Creative Movement, Show & Tell or Music Time

11:20 / 3:20: Pack Backpacks

11:30 / 3:30: Dismissal

ABSENCES

When your child is unable to attend school, please call and leave a message on our answering machine.

USING THE BATHROOM

All students need to be fully potty trained and able to use the bathroom independently. We understand that accidents do happen so we are asking parents to keep a Ziploc bag of extra clothes in your child's backpack. Please include socks, underpants, pants, and a shirt.

SNACK POLICIES

Birthdays will be celebrated during class time. We will provide a list of approved snacks that can be sent in.

If your child has a food allergy, please provide us with a list of approved snacks that your child can eat. Each child will be served a snack during the day provided by the preschool. Our classrooms will be NUT FREE.

The children will have access to water throughout the school day.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Parent-teacher conferences will take place in October and March. Feel free to discuss any concerns you may have with your child's teacher before our October conferences.

A Communication Folder will be given to your child at the beginning of the year. Please make sure your child's folder stays in your child's backpack every day. Encourage your child to share his/her communication folder with you every day after school. The teachers will be sure to also check the folders every day.

KINDERLIME

Kinderlime is our online portal in which we will use for parent communication, billing, attendance, important family/student information, etc. Download the app on your devices to create an account. Kinderlime is compatible with both Android and Apple devices.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition is due on the 5th of every month. Tuition is not affected by absences due to illness, vacations, snow days, or school breaks. If your tuition payment is not received by the 5th of the month, it will be considered late and a late payment fee of \$30.00 will be assessed. If your account is not brought up to date by the 1st of the next month your child will be withdrawn from the program.

If you choose to withdraw your child, a one month's written notice is required. If a withdrawal is made anytime after the first of the month, full payment for the month is required.

HEALTH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In order to keep everyone healthy at school, we ask that you please keep your children at home when they are not feeling well. Please make sure your children are fever-free for 24 hours before you send them back to school.

Should your child acquire head lice, we will call you to pick up your child. Your child must be free from lice before returning to school. This is a very common and contagious condition.

The Department of Child Care Licensing requires that each child have a full physical every two years, and that those records be kept on file at Mrs. O's Preschool. Immunizations need to be current according to state law and the medical form signed by a physician.

Each staff member has received medical clearance from a primary care physician. Medical clearance forms are kept on site. All lead staff members are trained in first aid, CPR, AED, and dealing with blood borne pathogens.

SAFETY AND WEATHER RELATED POLICIES

Mrs. O's Preschool will follow the Portage Public Schools closing recommendations. You can sign up for text/email alerts through wwmt.com. You will know we are closed if Portage Public School has cancelled school for the day (Mrs. O's Preschool will not be listed). If in the event that weather conditions and/or road conditions worsen during the course of the day, and the decision is made to close the school, you will be notified as soon as possible via email.

Emergency Weather Procedures:

*We will practice each drill twice between the months of September and April.

Tornado- In the event of a tornado warning, students will be escorted with their teacher to the child bathrooms located in the classroom. These bathrooms do not contain any windows. Each teacher will conduct a head count and have a cell phone on hand.

Fire- In the event of a fire, students will exit through the nearest emergency exit. Each classroom contains an outside door with a walkway. Students would be escorted the neighboring parking lot (Raymond James). There are two additional doors located on either end of the building.

Other Serious Accidents/Injuries and Other Emergencies

Man-Made Disaster including a person wishing to do harm to the school - All teachers have been trained in ALICE Training. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate. Please visit Alicetraining.com or contact us for more information.

Child Injury- Despite our best efforts to keep your child safe, sometimes accidents happen. We are trained to assist your child for minor injuries. However, if the injury is more severe, we will contact you immediately and call 911 if necessary.

Power Outage - In the event of a power outage, all families will be contacted to pick up their children and the facility will close for the remainder of the day.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Volunteers will be accompanied by a staff member at all times. Prior to volunteering in the school, all volunteers will be required to go through a basic background check.

No volunteers will be allowed into Mrs. O's Preschool if he/she has been convicted of the following:

- Child Abuse/Neglect
- A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual

FIELD TRIPS

We will go on occasional field trips. Transportation is not provided for field trips. A parent or another approved adult is required to stay with your preschooler.

SHARING

We will be sharing in school. No toy guns or weapons, please.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

At Mrs. O's Preschool, we follow, model, and expose each preschooler to our six core values: respect, courage, determination, confidence, playfulness, and community. All discipline actions will be positive in nature. The method of discipline will vary with the age and action of the child. Individual teachers are given discretion in how to handle each situation as it arises. As a matter of policy, the following is a general framework for discipline.

- Separate the child from the behavior
- Redirect the child's behavior
- Give acceptable choices
- Use positive language
- Look for a deeper problem

Our priority is your child's safety. If we feel a child is struggling with following the classroom directions is putting themselves or others in a dangerous situation he/she will be moved to the "Take A Break Station".

If the behaviors continue, a meeting will be scheduled between the parents and teachers. Parents will be asked to withdraw their child if the behaviors are not corrected.

LICENSING NOTEBOOK

Should you wish to view the licensing credentials for Mrs. O's Preschool, our notebook is kept on site and is available upon request.