



## FAQs for A Child's Garden

### **What is different about a Friends school?**

Quakers (also known as the Religious Society of Friends) believe there is that of God in everyone. This belief is intrinsic to the fabric of our preschool and is seen in the daily interactions between all members of our community. Respect for one another is modeled by teachers and experienced as the fundamental piece of who we are as a school. It is evident in the small moments that make up our days.

### **What is your philosophy of teaching?**

At A Child's Garden, we believe children learn through hands-on experiential activities, much of what could be considered play. Our teachers plan units of study with activities that range from language and literature, to sand and clay, to science and nature, and math and motor skills. We begin each unit with finding out what children already know about a topic and what questions they would like answered.

We see value in multiage groupings where older children play alongside and help guide younger children; aiding them in learning the routines and use of classroom materials.

### **How do you encourage the growth of social skills?**

Throughout our school, we use the *Teaching Children to Care* curriculum to help us provide a safe and enriching school experience for every child. We know that to feel safe, to learn, and to grow, children must feel seen. In preschool, attention to social and emotional development is critical to the acquisition of learning skills.

### **Will my child go outside?**

Yes, as often as possible. A Child's Garden is nestled in a lovely setting and we take advantage of the natural lessons that can be taught outdoors, as often as possible. In addition to the nearby woods and trails, we have a playground with many trees, a climbing structure, and a fenced area that includes a sand box and an area for riding toys.

### **What are your classrooms like?**

A Child's Garden is housed in two light-filled rooms with direct access to the playground. We feel strongly that a classroom should be inviting, but never cluttered or overwhelming. Having two rooms gives us the opportunity to have two or three small groups of children paired with a teacher, doing different activities. This allows us to offer a Pre-K and Transitional Kindergarten curriculum within a 3 to 5-year-old classroom.

### **What enrichment activities will be provided?**

As part of the ACG curriculum, our students visit the library, gym, Spanish, music, and art resource teachers every week for developmentally appropriate activities. Additional enrichment in beginning math and reading skills is provided for our Transitional Kindergarten students. A Child's Garden students look forward to our weekly service learning group. Students and teachers from the Guilford and Page-Frederiksen Campus come to visit our classroom regularly; we enjoy sharing music and playing with our guests.

### **Are there field trips?**

Yes, we use the small white buses to for off campus trips and occasionally we use our Spanish skills to visit a nearby Mexican restaurant. Our buses are equipped with seat belts, and while we limit our excursions to a 30 mile radius from the school, most trips are within 15-20 minutes. Parent participation is most welcome on these trips.



**Are parents able to volunteer or observe in the classroom?**

Yes, we are always happy to have an extra set of hands at all times of day. Parents can observe or linger at drop off, if it works well for your child.

**What age children attend?**

Children need to be 3 by August 1 for the preschool and 4 by August 1 to participate in the Pre-K program. Young 5's may also participate in the Pre-K program. We trust our teachers to help determine the best placement for your child.

**What are the hours available?**

Students may attend ACG for half-days: 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.  
Students may attend ACG for full days: 8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Extended Care is available after 2:30 p.m.

**Can my child come to school for a combination of days?**

Children may enroll for 3, 4, or 5 days a week. *The schedule may be tailored to your needs with a combination of full and half days.* Check with the admissions office for more information.

**What will my child gain by attending in the afternoons?**

Our afternoons include extensions of the academic skills presented in the morning and more center-based play, including cooking activities and outside play.

**Can I add additional days as the school year progresses?**

Yes, if space allows.

**Is there a rest time?**

Yes, for full day children, there is a rest time of one hour after lunch. While children may sleep at this time, they are not expected to. This is an opportunity for a child to have a bit of "down-time," to look at books or to draw in a personal journal.

**Is drop-in care available for the afternoons?**

Students enrolled in the half day program do not have drop-in options available, but may be able to add additional hours to their contract. Full day students may use Extended Care beginning at 2:30 p.m.

**What is served at lunch?**

Families can supply lunch for their children or utilize our hot lunch program (<http://www.myhotlunchbox.com/>).

**What is the teacher/child ratio?**

Approximately 1:9

**What training have the teachers had?**

Our two full-time teachers have many years teaching young children in developmentally appropriate early childhood programs. In addition, both teachers have participated in the *Get Set for School* training by *Handwriting Without Tears*. The Pre-K part of our program is based on this curriculum. Further information is available at [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com).

**Will there be times when all children are playing together?**

Yes, during center time, outside time, snack, lunch, and morning meeting.



## **Pre- K**

### **What is the approach to teaching Pre-K skills?**

Working in small groups, we use the hands-on, *Get Set for School* curriculum developed by *Handwriting Without Tears*. This play-based instruction engages young children and provides consistent opportunities for spontaneous and meaningful learning.

### **What skills are taught in Pre-K?**

Pre-reading, pre-writing, and math are taught.

- Literacy includes phonological awareness, letter knowledge, concepts about print, vocabulary, and language. These areas are interrelated so that development in one area supports and is necessary for development in another. *Get Set for School* provides an integrated approach to language and literacy to make learning meaningful and engaging.
- Children learn math concepts based on their interactions with their environment. *Get Set for School* gets children sorting, clapping, counting, measuring, and building numbers to help them understand—and enjoy—math concepts.

Additional information, including the *Get for School Pre-K Efficacy White Paper* is available at:

**<http://www.hwtears.com/gss/why-it-works/research>**