



New Garden
FRIENDS SCHOOL

A Child's Garden

(Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten,

Transitional Kindergarten)

Handbook

2022-23

A Child's Garden Handbook

Welcome to A Child's Garden Preschool. This class has children ranging in age from three to five years old. Class groupings include Preschool (Crocus), Pre-Kindergarten (Iris), and combination Pre-Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten (Sunflower). We believe that school should be a place where children feel safe and nurtured and are able to learn at their own pace. We also believe that education is a partnership between families and school; we welcome your involvement, interest, and support.

For the most up-to-date health information throughout the year, please consult the NGFS COVID-19 Handbook located on our [website](#). We will continue to use a rigorous, layered approach to COVID-19 mitigation, introducing and revising strategies in response to current data and trends.

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Arrival and Dismissal

Our school day begins at 8:30 a.m. Students arriving between 7:30 a.m. and 7:59 a.m. should go to [Extended Care](#) in the Iris classroom. Students can arrive for the regular school day between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

Students attending ACG for half-days: 8:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Students attending ACG for full days: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Children remaining in the classroom after dismissal will be counted as attending **Extended Care**. Extended Care for ACG students takes place in the Iris classroom and is open until 6 p.m.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- You will be given a name card to display on your car window visor. Please be sure to clearly display this card on the visor in the morning and afternoon; we appreciate your assistance in helping drop-off and pick-up run smoothly and efficiently.
- Drop-off will begin at 7:30 a.m. for Extended Care and 8 a.m. for the regular school day and will continue until 8:25 a.m. Please plan to arrive during this window of time.
- Crocus and Iris parents: Please pull around and park behind Guilford Hall. Parents/guardians can walk their child over to the playground gate where children will be

greeted and escorted to the classroom by school staff. Parents/guardians can take a minute at this transition point for a quick goodbye hug.

- Sunflower parents: Please pull around and park in the spaces behind the Sunflower building (Parker Young). Parents/guardians can walk their child to the sidewalk near the Parker Young building and take a minute at this transition point for a quick goodbye hug. A staff member will be present to escort your child to class.
- If your child arrives late, parents/guardians should bring their child to the office to sign in. The student will be escorted by staff to their classroom.
- **Half-Day Dismissal at 12:45 p.m.:** Parents/guardians can park in the spaces near the ACG classrooms. Parents/guardians can pick up their child at the gate.
- **Full-Day Dismissal (2:30 p.m.) and Extended Care Dismissal (up to 6 p.m.):** Crocus and Iris parents/guardians should pick up their child at the playground gate. Sunflower parents/guardians should pick up their child at the classroom door. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick-up list in ParentsWeb or in CampSite if picking up from Extended Care. Instruct them to have identification with them; staff will check the ID of anyone unknown to them.

Extended Care Note: ACG Extended Care combines with K-6th Extended Care in the afternoons, typically between 4:15 and 5:15 p.m. At that time, a sign is placed in the driveway, at the top of the breezeway, to notify families so they know to pick up their ACG student at the front gate rather than the classroom playground gate.

- If you must pick your child up before school is over, please come to the office to sign your child out. If this early pick-up is for a scheduled appointment, please coordinate with your student's teachers in advance so they will have their belongings packed and ready to go at the designated time of pick-up. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up early, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick-up list in ParentsWeb.

Parking Lot Safety

Please help us keep everyone safe by observing the parking lot rules.

- When driving in our driveway or parking lot, please do not use a handheld or hands-free phone. Phone use, even hands-free, can distract drivers and make accidents more likely.
- Please drive slowly and slow down for speed bumps.

Social Curriculum

The social curriculum at NGFS flows directly from a book written by Ruth Sidney Charney called "Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom". For more information, please ask a teacher to help you locate a copy. This curriculum helps students become empathetic, ethical thinkers as they learn to interact successfully in the school environment.

- We value the social curriculum as an integral part of our overall program.
- Positive social interactions and a strong sense of community enhance cognitive growth.
- There is a set of social skills that students need in order to be successful academically and socially: cooperation, self-advocacy, responsibility, empathy, perseverance, self-control, and peaceful conflict resolution skills.
- Knowing the students we teach individually, culturally, and developmentally is essential to students' education and to developing community.
- Knowing the families of the students we teach and inviting their participation is essential to students' education and to developing community.
- Adults model the above skills through positive interactions with each other and with students.

At A Child's Garden, play is the most valuable activity our students engage in during their time with us. We spend a conscious and concentrated part of our day playing. Play provides children with a myriad of opportunities to develop emotional, social, intellectual, and physical skills. Teachers foster independence through numerous activities: children take turns leading their peers in songs, greetings, calendar work, and the practice of silence. Children choose where they would like to play from a wide variety of areas in the classroom. They are also encouraged to share their own ideas for activities, and teachers make necessary supplies available to carry out their work. When conflicts occur, teachers calmly encourage students to talk about what is happening (or has happened); they listen to all involved and offer appropriate responses to bring about peaceful solutions. A peaceful solution might be an apology, a picture drawn to express their concern, or an offer to rebuild or recreate.

A student who is having difficulty following the classroom guidelines may talk with the Division Head about the exhibited behavior and make a plan for improvement upon transition back to the classroom. Using the restorative practices model, we focus on finding solutions, applying logical consequences, and providing opportunities for reflection. The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships. Natural consequences for serious behavior may include missing a school activity or field trip. Depending on the severity of the behavior, students may be sent home for the remainder of the day. A student demonstrating disruptive behavior may be asked by the Division Head or Head of School to remain at home until a plan can be put in place to help the student safely transition back to the classroom. If necessary, Student Threat Assessment Procedures (STAP) will be initiated (see Appendix, All School Handbook).

Snack and Lunch

Each child needs to bring both lunch and snack. Our classrooms are nut-free. Please do not send any foods containing peanuts or tree nuts (*updated 12/15/2022*). For snacks, healthy items such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, and crackers are appropriate. We ask that you do not send desserts, chips, or candy. Please send a refillable water bottle with fresh water with your child daily as we will be spending a great deal of time outside.

Soft drinks and glass containers are not safe and therefore not permitted. Be sure to label your child's lunch box and any plastic containers so that we can return them to you if they are lost. We suggest sending a small ice pack in the lunch box to keep items cold.

We have a hot lunch program available for students. The hot lunch provider is MyHotLunchBox.com. All orders and payments are made directly through them. My Hot Lunch Box is available for purchase and will drop off food orders through contactless delivery, or students can bring their lunch.

Clothing

We ask that you dress your child in play clothes and comfortable shoes with good soles that protect them and stay on their feet (e.g., tennis shoes). When you choose clothes for school, please keep in mind that our activities include painting and outdoor play. During preschool many situations occur that could cause a child to need a change of clothes. In order to diminish discomfort and potential embarrassment, each child should have a complete, seasonally appropriate change of clothes at school (including top, bottom, underwear, and socks) in a ziplock bag. Both the clothes and bag should be labeled. When the clothes are used, please be sure to replenish the supply.

We do go outside in all kinds of weather, even for just a few minutes. Please be sure your child has the necessary mittens, gloves, boots, hat, and a warm coat.

Cubbies

Students will keep their tote bags, lunch boxes, jackets, and other personal items in their cubbies and on their hooks.

Personal Possessions at School

We ask that children leave toys at home. ACG students are allowed to bring a personal blanket or small stuffed animal for rest time. We will ask that students take the blanket or stuffed animal home each weekend, have it washed, and then bring it back to the classroom each week.

Rest Time

Rest time is scheduled after lunch and lasts approximately 55 minutes. Children are not expected to fall asleep, but some do nap, especially at the beginning of the year. During this time we listen to relaxing music or look at a book. Children often enjoy having a small stuffed animal (no taller than 12 inches) and a small blanket for rest time.

Birthdays

- Parents/guardians may send in birthday treats for the class and are welcome to visit the classrooms to be part of the birthday celebration.
- Balloons, party favors, etc. should be kept at home for the child's at-home celebration. At school the children will make a card to present to the birthday child.

- Because we want to give students with summer birthdays equal attention, we will celebrate “half-birthdays” for students with birthdays between June 1 and the start of the next school year. For example, if your child’s birthday is July 23, please check in with your child’s contact teacher before January 23.
- We know that it is difficult and often impossible to have at-home birthday celebrations that include the whole class. Please be advised that not being invited to a birthday celebration can be devastating to children at this developmental level. Please send invitations through the mail or outside of school and ask your child not to discuss preparations/plans at school in order to protect classmates' feelings. Please refrain from bringing in gifts for parties or sending in thank you notes that are only for party guests. Gifts and thank you notes can be taken care of outside of school.

Field Trips

We frequently walk in our nearby woods or over to the Guilford College farm for fun and to learn about birds, wildflowers, and trees. When leaving campus, we will travel in buses. Parents/guardians will be notified when students are going off campus. Travel between campuses and to New Garden Friends Meeting is not considered off-campus. Background checks are required for any parent volunteers, including field trip chaperones.

Visitors and Volunteers

All volunteers are required to complete a background check done through NGFS. Classroom volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality.

Questions and Communications

Please read email communications from NGFS as they contain important information. Families should check the Community Newsletter which is emailed weekly. In the newsletter, Rainbow teachers will provide a weekly update informing you about classroom learning, special events, field trips, and other announcements. The newsletter will also provide you with information on whole school events and calendar reminders. The NGFS website posts a whole school calendar and other whole school information. We will regularly share photos through Vidigami. Please subscribe to the NGFS mobile app and enable notifications. Rainbow teachers will periodically send reminders through the app about class events.

On Monday, August 29, from 6-7 p.m., we will have a required parent meeting to familiarize parents/guardians with A Child’s Garden.

Opportunities to Conference with Contact Teachers:

Hopes and Dreams Conference: Friday, Sept. 2

End of 1st Trimester Conference: Friday, Dec. 9

End of 2nd Trimester Conference: Thursday, March 2, and Friday, March 3