



HANDBOOK

Welcome

Welcome to the Rainbow Experience Preschool. We look forward to having you and your child join our preschool program. We hope this handbook will help you and your child have the best experience possible.

Learning at home is one of the most important factors in a child's development. You are the most important teacher to your child. By working together, we can build a foundation for your child's learning throughout his/her school years. We look forward to building a positive attitude about school.

This is Your School

You are now part of a unique preschool, which is sustained and developed through the cooperative efforts of parents like yourself. You will share the satisfaction of planning and working to create an enriching and happy environment in which children can learn and grow.

General Description

The Rainbow Experience, Inc. is a private, non-profit preschool incorporated in the State of Kansas. It is federally tax-exempted as a 501(c)3 corporation. Rainbow is licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Contact information is as follows:

The Rainbow Experience, Inc.
115 6th Street, P.O. Box 526
Baldwin City, KS 66006
(785) 594-2223
rainbowexperiencebaldwin@yahoo.com
www.rainbowexperiencepreschool.org

Philosophy

At The Rainbow Experience, we believe that children learn best by doing. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in. This learning takes time and needs to be reinforced by repetition. We also believe that children learn best when they feel good about themselves. Self-acceptance and self-confidence encourage children to improve their skills, to try more challenging tasks, and to become more self-reliant.

Goals

Our goals are to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive, and enthusiastic learners. They are provided many firsthand experiences to learn about the world around them and to explore using their five senses. Play provides the foundation for self-expression, working out feelings, learning how to work out relationships, learning about roles, and cognitive learning.

Children are allowed to develop at their own pace, in ways that are best for them. We strive to help them develop good habits, attitudes, and self-esteem, which will make a difference throughout their lives. By working on these goals together, we can help prepare the children for their future in the elementary school program.

More specifically, our goals are to:

1. Provide socialization with peers
2. Help the child accept authority from someone other than parent
3. Develop skills in listening and following directions
4. Promote growth in language skills
5. Develop a sense of responsibility
6. Improve coordination and motor skills
7. Promote an interest in learning and an enjoyment of school

GENERAL POLICIES

As a cooperative preschool, all parents of children enrolled agree to follow all policies, participate in school functions, and aid with needed maintenance and repair of the Preschool.

Admissions and Enrollment

Admission policies shall be nondiscriminatory in regard to race, religion, national origin, ancestry, or sex in accordance with Kansas Civil Rights Statute KSA #44-1009, and comply with the American's With Disabilities Act.

Children with disabilities may be enrolled if we are able to adequately meet the child's special needs. If we are unable to meet a child's special needs because necessary facilities, services, or staff is not available, we will assist the family to find a more appropriate placement. In many cases, special services are available from the child's local school district and the East Central Kansas Cooperative in Education. This source provides a free screening for children under 5 years of age in the following areas: motor skills, self-help skills, speech-language skills, personal-social skills, pre-academic skills, hearing and vision. If the child meets Kansas State qualifications for a child with special needs the Cooperative may be able to provide services unavailable at the Preschool. If an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P) is required, it will be developed by Cooperative personnel in cooperation with Preschool staff.

Children are eligible for admission in the full-day class (Dragonflies) or the two-day class (Bee-ginners), if they are at least 30 months or 2 1/2 years of age and they are toilet trained. Children are eligible for admission in the three or five-day class (Busy Bees), if they are at least 3 years of age by August 31st of the school year. Children are eligible for admission in the three or five-day, pre-K class (Teddy Bears), if they are at least 4 years of age by August 31st of the school year.

Applications will be reviewed beginning April 1 for the following school year and will be processed in the order in which they are received. Current families will receive priority when filling classes.

Applications will be accepted all year round and enrollment will be processed if/ when there are openings.

You will be notified of the status of your application by April 10. If accepted, a \$50 non-refundable enrollment fee and all required enrollment paperwork must be submitted by May 10 to guarantee your placement. The enrollment fee and enrollment paperwork must be submitted by all students, regardless of the time of year for their enrollment.

Arrival and Departure

Please, do not let your child off at the sidewalk. It is important to bring your child into the classrooms and make sure the teachers are aware of their arrival. The Preschool will not accept responsibility for the child unless he/she is personally brought in. Also, please check the sign-in sheet and note who will be picking up your child. Any changes in your child's riding schedule must be communicated to us. A note is required if someone not listed on the pick-up authorization form will be picking up your child.

Birthdays and Holidays

As indicated on the monthly calendar, certain days are reserved to celebrate holidays and birthdays. On the day we will celebrate your child's birthday you are assigned snack. You may choose to bring a

"special" snack on that day. Unless all children in the classroom will be invited, please DO NOT bring party invitations to school.

Several holidays will be celebrated throughout the year as indicated on the school calendar. Holidays will be celebrated in various ways and may include special books, crafts, foods, songs, or games. Holiday parties that include families are usually held two or three times a year and invitations are extended in the parent newsletter.

Parents who do not wish their child to take part in holiday or birthday celebrations should discuss possible options with the Lead teacher.

Board Meetings

Preschool Board meetings are held monthly, typically at 6:30 p.m. the first Thursday at the Preschool. All parents are welcome. The schedule and agenda for upcoming Board meetings and a summary of the minutes will be published in Rainbow's newsletter. Minutes from the Board meetings can also be emailed upon request.

Calendars

A calendar for the coming month will be sent home near the end of each previous month. On the calendar you will find: snack providers, birthdays, special events, weekly and/or daily themes, activities to do at home, Show and Tell assignments, reminders, and vacation days. The staff reserves the right to change the school calendar to respond to unforeseen circumstances that affect the program.

Class Schedules

Full day students may arrive anytime after 7am and before Morning classes begin at 8:15 a.m. Full day students shall be picked up no later than 6pm.

Morning preschool classes begin at 8:15 a.m. and dismiss at 11:15 a.m. Parents are asked to bring their child no earlier than 8:15 a.m. and to pick up their child promptly at 11:15 a.m.

Please pick up your child promptly. If you are late, you will be charged a minimum of \$5 for each five minute increment until the child is picked up. This fee will be added to your monthly tuition charge.

Communicating Parental Concerns

If you have a concern or complaint, please set up an appointment with the Lead Teacher and/or Program Director to communicate your concerns. Additionally, please talk with the classroom representative. If you do not feel that your concerns have been adequately alleviated, contact the Board President. The President may choose to appoint a grievance committee consisting of members of the Board of Directors to hear your complaint or present your complaint directly to the Board of Directors.

Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Spring. However, parents should feel free to consult with the Lead Teacher at any time. If you want to talk with the Lead Teacher about your child, ask to make an appointment, send a note to school, or leave a message on the answering machine. It is important for your child's self-esteem and self-confidence to consult the Lead Teacher about your child's progress in private. Please do not ask the Teacher how your child is doing in the presence of your child, other children, or parents. Please make an appointment to speak with the Teacher at a time other than class time.

Diapers (Toilet Training)

Rainbow Preschool will not change diapers or pull-ups. It is our policy that all children attending Rainbow will need to be completely toilet trained. A child is considered completely toilet trained when he or she initiates going to the bathroom and can adjust clothing necessary to urinate or have a bowel movement.

Further, we require that the child has been completely accident free for a minimum of two full weeks before attending school.

We understand that accidents sometimes happen. Parents are required to have a clean change of clothes (shirt, pants, socks and underwear) in their child's backpack at all times. The clothes should be appropriate for the season.

If a child has more than one accident within two weeks at school, the child will be asked to leave school and not return until the child is completely accident free for a minimum of two full weeks. Tuition will still be due during this time. If a child has repeated accidents, it could result expulsion. Special situations should be brought to the attention of the director.

Discipline

The discipline policy adopted by the Preschool is in accordance with the Kansas Department of Health Department and shall be posted at all times. The use of corporal punishment is never permitted. The following techniques for behavior guidance will be used:

1. clearly stated instructions
2. modeling appropriate behavior
3. positive reinforcement
4. redirecting
5. providing choices
6. invoking logical consequences
7. separation or removal from toy, activity, or area
8. quiet time for regaining control.

Forms

For your child's safety and to comply with Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations, all enrollment papers must be completed and on file at the Preschool BEFORE your child can attend classes. The necessary forms include a medical record completed by you and your child's physician, authorization for emergency medical care (which must be notarized), authorization for field trips, information release form, pick up authorization, general background information, and parental involvement form.

Health Requirements

A pre-entrance health assessment conducted within six months prior to enrollment shall be required for each child. Immunizations shall be current in accordance with the child's age and time of enrollment and shall be maintained current. A record of each child's immunizations shall be maintained on the child's health assessment form.

Illness and Abuse

In accordance with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations for licensing of preschoolers, the policy as stated in their handbook is as follows:

1. When a child is absent due to a communicable disease, the staff shall inform other parents of the nature of the illness.
2. Communicable diseases shall be reported to the County Health Department.
3. Each staff member shall be trained to observe symptoms of illness, neglect, and child abuse, and shall observe each child's physical conditions daily.
4. Symptoms of illness shall be reported immediately to parents.
5. Any evidence of neglect or unusual injuries, including bruises, contusions, lacerations, and burns, shall be reported immediately to the Director.
6. The Director shall report immediately to the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation services any evidence of suspected child abuse or neglect (this is mandated by law). When the local offices of the department services are not open, reports shall be made to local law enforcement agencies.

Inclement Weather

Should weather conditions become severe enough to threaten the safety of the children, we will dismiss school. We will follow the direction of U.S.D. 348. Please tune to KLWN 1320 a.m., KOFO 1220 a.m., and area television stations.

Meals

Breakfast or an early morning snack will be provided for full day students who arrive before 8am.

Each full day student will be required to bring a sack lunch. We will keep a "spare" lunch at the preschool. If you forget to bring lunch, you will be asked to replace the supplies used.

Children in full-day care are required to brush their teeth following meals. Parents will need to provide toothbrushes for their child.

Medication Policy

Since our school day is only three hours, medication will routinely be administered outside school hours by parents or caregivers. If there are special circumstances, they will be evaluated on an individual basis as needed. Please inform the Director if your child has a chronic medical condition.

Naps

Children in full-day care are required to rest. Rainbow will provide nap-time cots/ pads and waterproof covers. Parents will need to provide a pillow, sheet, and blanket for their child. Bed linens will be sent home each Friday to be laundered and returned Monday.

Passive Media

Passive media, such as books-on-tape or short videos, will occasionally be included in the student's school day as part of the curriculum. This material will be developmentally appropriate and be relevant to the curriculum. Please inform the Lead Teacher at the beginning of the school year if you object to your child's participation in these activities.

Photography Policy

The Preschool reserves the right to use any photos or videos of your child taken during class activities for the promotion of the school or as a learning tool for the child. Any objections to this policy must be made known to the Lead Teacher at the beginning of the year.

Referrals and Dismissals

If a serious adjustment or behavior problem occurs after a child is enrolled, a conference will be scheduled with the child's parents to discuss the situation. The Lead Teacher may recommend a screening by the child's local school district and the East Central Kansas Cooperative in Education. If the child meets Kansas State qualifications for a child with special needs the Cooperative may be able to provide services unavailable at the Preschool.

The Rainbow Experience reserves the right to issue to the parent(s) a notice indicating termination of enrollment at the end of 21 days if:

1. the above recommendations are refused,
2. these services are provided and the child's condition does not improve satisfactorily,
3. continued enrollment of the child does not represent the best interest of the child, the staff, or the other students.

If the child's behavior is physically or emotionally dangerous to other children or staff, immediate termination may be necessary. Enrollment may also be terminated immediately if the behavior of a parent or other primary caregiver is verbally or physically abusive to a staff person or children in the program.

Self-help Skills

We encourage each child to take care of his/her own needs and personal belongings. We encourage them to put on and take off their own coats and hang them up, put away their own backpacks, use the bathroom unaided, and help put away toys after playtime.

Children are encouraged to wear informal, comfortable clothing that can be easily managed for bathroom needs. We have outdoor play if it's not raining, too muddy, or below 20 degrees, and appropriate clothing should be provided (hats, gloves, mittens, etc.). All outerwear and backpacks should be labeled with the child's name.

Show and Tell

"Show and Tell" is important in language development and general knowledge. It helps children become more comfortable speaking in front of others and helps develop listening skills. When it is your child's turn, please encourage your child to bring science items, educational or favorite toys, pictures, books, etc. We prefer that children do not bring toys guns, knives or items that are very breakable. The teacher may ask the children to bring a specific type of item, an item that starts with the letter being studied, or one that goes with the theme for the week.

Snack Program

Each parent agrees to participate in the morning snack program for their child's class. **Afternoon snacks will be provided by the preschool.** Snacks should meet all KDHE requirements.

All parents will be assigned an equal number of days to bring snacks. We keep a "spare" snack at the preschool. If you forget to bring snacks on your assigned day, you will be asked to bring a snack to replace the supplies used.

SUGGESTED SNACK LIST

- Crackers with cheese, dips or peanut butter
- Sandwiches: peanut butter and jelly, cheese, etc.
- Popcorn
- Cinnamon toast
- Biscuits with butter, jelly, or honey
- Cookies made with oatmeal, peanut butter, nuts, or raisins
- Muffins or breads made with fruit, nuts, oatmeal, or peanut butter
- Fruit: apples, oranges, bananas
- Canned fruit: favorites are applesauce, fruit cocktail, and fruit in Jell-O
- Yogurt
- Mixes: raisins, marshmallows, nuts, dried fruit, peanut butter chips
- Toothpick treats: fruits, marshmallows, cheese, and meat
- Veggies: celery with cheese or peanut butter, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes
- Granola Bars
- Milk: pasteurized, 1% or skim

**Gum and candy are not allowed at preschool.

***If your child has a food allergy, please inform the Lead Teacher.

SRS (Kansas Department of Children and Families)

The Rainbow Experience Preschool, Inc. is a DCF eligible childcare center. If your family qualifies for an DCF childcare benefit, contact your local DCF office to complete the required paperwork.

Student Health

Parents are asked to keep home from preschool, those children who have:

1. contagious diseases such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, etc
2. skin eruptions or suspicious rashes

3. vomiting and/or diarrhea
4. temperature above 100 degrees within the last 12 hours.

Please call the preschool to report an absence due to any illness. If your child becomes ill during preschool hours, parents will be contacted.

Transportation

Parents/grandparents/guardians are encouraged to accompany their preschooler on field trips. Regardless, signed permission slips are required for all field trips to be taken by preschoolers. Slips must be in the possession of the Lead Teacher before your child can participate in the field trip. Booster seats are required for children who weigh less than 80 pounds by Kansas's law. You will be asked to leave your child's car/booster seat, if your child will be riding with someone else.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is due on the first day of each month. Tuition should be mailed to P.O. Box 526 or placed in the box provided at the school. Please pay with a check, cashier's check, or money order. On each check, please write the name of your child and month for which payment is being made.

If tuition is more than 10 days late, there will be a \$10 late fee, unless prior arrangements have been made. If tuition is consistently late, it could result in the expulsion of your child. A \$30 fee will be charged for any returned check. Cash or a cashier's check will be required to pick up a returned check. After two returned checks, your tuition must be paid with a money order or cashier's check.

Households with more than one child enrolled are eligible to receive a \$50.00 discount on tuition for each additional child.

A \$35 Art & Supply Fee will be due each semester: Fall, Spring, and Summer. The Art & Supply Fee is due with the September tuition payment, the January tuition payment, and the June tuition payment, respectively. Summer semester fees apply only to Dragonflies.

Additionally there may be nominal participation or activity fees for field trips and special events, yet to be determined.

Tuition Reduction Program

The Tuition Reduction Program (TRP) was created in 2004, thanks to a grant from Douglas County Community Foundation and other corporate sponsors. This program will rely on fundraisers and donations to ensure its continuation. The TRP has 2 levels of discounts available and eligibility is based on total household income and the number of family members.

To apply for tuition reduction, you must complete an application and provide the required financial documents. All information gathered will remain completely confidential. Applications can be received anytime of the year. The applications will be reviewed and approved by the President and Treasurer.

Withdrawal

Once a student is placed on a class roster and enrollment procedures are completed, it is understood and expected that the student will be enrolled for the entire school year. If a parent decides to withdraw their student from Rainbow, even before the school year begins, two weeks written notice is required. If proper notice is not given, the amount equal to 1/2 month's tuition will be due, in addition to any current tuition due. Special situations should be brought to the attention of the director.

COOPERATIVE PARTICIPATION POLICIES

There are five aspects to the work requirements of the Cooperative Association. Parents/ Guardians shall be responsible for fulfilling their obligations as outlined in the bylaws. Obligations shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors, based on a point system. Failure to fulfill any of the following

obligations to the Board's satisfaction may result in the application of up to a \$75 participation fee. In addition, the Board may review the child's enrollment status. Consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances and the cooperative attitude of the family toward school responsibilities.

Parent Responsibility #1- Committee Work

Each family will be designated to serve on one committee. Committee preference cards will be distributed at the Fall Meeting. Every effort will be made to get families assigned to a committee of their preference. Priority will be given to returning families. As an alternative, a parent may be elected to the Board of Directors.

Committee work is a great way to put your unique skills and knowledge to work for the preschool. Below is a general list of committees and a brief description of the duties. Please note that committees may be added to or dropped from the list and the number of families within each committee may change from year to year depending on enrollment and the school's needs.

1. **Advancement Committee-** Families on this committee will be responsible for facilitating alumni relations and the solicitation of grants, community partnerships, and corporate sponsorships. Committee work will include research of available grants, proper and timely submission of applications, and calling on alumni, community groups, local businesses, and corporations for support.
2. **Building Maintenance & Outdoor Environment Committee-** Families on this committee will be responsible for participating in parent work days. Parent work days can include maintenance of the playground, raking pea gravel, repairing playground equipment, general maintenance of fencing/ outdoor storage, and indoor/ outdoor painting, etc.
3. **Fundraising & Event Committees**
Fall/Spring Flower Sales- Families on this committee will be responsible to organize the flower sales, promote the flower sales, and to assist in delivery and distribution of the flowers.

Grocery Grab- This fundraising event will be open to the community and held in the fall. The event will involve ticket sales, both by individuals and at booths. Booths can be located around town or at other community events, with approval of the appropriate parties. Families on this committee will be responsible to organize the event (typically in conjunction with The Baldwin City Market), sell ticket at the booths, promote the event, and will work the event.

Spring Fling Party- This fundraising event will be open to the community and held in the spring. The event will involve dinner, dancing, and a silent auction to raise money for Rainbow. Families on this committee will be responsible to solicit donations for the silent auction, to organize the event (including scheduling the location, hiring the DJ, planning the meal, planning additional entertainment, etc), to promote the event, and will work the event.

Easter Egg Hunt- This community event is planned in conjunction with the Baldwin City Recreation Commission. The event will be open to the community and take place the Saturday prior to Easter Sunday. Families on this committee will be responsible to organize the event (including an egg hunt, games and activities, and pictures with the Easter Bunny), to promote the event, and will work the event.

4. **Teacher Appreciation Committee-** Families on this committee will be responsible for different teacher appreciation activities during the year (including teacher appreciation week, Christmas gifts, conference meals, etc).

Parent Responsibility #2- Fundraising

Each family will be expected to participate in school fundraisers. Families may be asked to work the fundraiser, sell tickets/ items, or collect donations (monetary or otherwise), etc. It takes the participation of the entire membership raise the funds needed to support our school.

Parent Responsibility #3- Community Events

Each family will be expected to participate in events sponsored by The Rainbow Experience. Participation in community events serves as an outreach to the Baldwin community and gives prospective families the opportunity to learn about the preschool. Therefore, it is necessary for the membership to support the event committees by attending the event, volunteering to work the event, and/ or soliciting donations or supplies.

Parent Responsibility #4- Association Meetings

At least one parent/ guardian of each child enrolled must attend all mandatory meetings as outlined in the Bylaws, i.e. Fall Meeting

Parent Responsibility #5- Cleaning

Participate in cleaning common areas, classrooms, and toys. Either a parent/grandparent/guardian will volunteer their time to clean 1-2 times yearly per each child enrolled. This process will take place after school and sign up sheets will be posted. This process is to assist in providing a clean and comfortable space for our children. It is also essential in keeping the effects of colds/flu's to a minimum. We want to have our children in the classroom versus sick at home with parents. Therefore, this step is critical in stopping the spread of germs.

Point System

A point system will be utilized to ensure participation is as objective as possible. There will be points assigned to committee work, participation in fundraisers, attendance at events, attendance at meetings, and performing cleaning duties, etc. These point values will be distributed at the Fall Meeting.

Each family must attain a total of 75 points per year to fulfill their obligations to the Cooperative Association. Each Committee Chair will keep a log of their committee members and the number of participation points earned. In the event of an emergency situation, requiring a family to be absent and not fulfill their obligations, the Committee Chair must be informed. The absence may be excused at the Board's discretion.