

Welcome to First Steps Preschool!

Our program is geared to meeting your child's developmental needs in a warm, caring environment. Please read on to become familiar with all the details of our program.

HOURS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Morning Preschool7:30 –11:15
Monday – Thursday

Afternoon Preschool.....12:15-3:15
Monday - Thursday

Full Day Preschool.....7:30-3:15
Monday-Thursday

Friday (As Needed Basis) 7:30-3:00

Who We Are

Our First Steps Preschool is designed to provide children, from 3 to 5 years of age, with a solid foundation for learning and development. We aim to stimulate cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development during the crucial early years of their life. We achieve this by fostering a love for learning, encouraging curiosity, and helping children acquire important skills such as communication, problem-solving, and social interaction. Additionally, we strive to set the stage for future academic success and lifelong learning.

Benefits of First Steps Preschool

Our program is quality-based and both flexible and affordable. Listed below are a few benefits of our program:

- Low child-to-staff ratio: our classrooms maintain staff-to-student ratios that are below the Department of Health Services licensing guidelines. See class enrollment information for your specific staff-to-student ratio.
- Your child's safety is our priority: All preschool staff hold a valid Fingerprint Clearance Card through the Arizona Department of Public Safety. In addition, all Preschool staff are CPR/First Aid certified and TB tested. Staff members participate in formal ongoing training throughout the school year and are supported by the Principal, as well as the Preschool Director.

We offer a variety of activities: Students enrolled in First Steps Preschool classrooms participate in well planned and intentional learning opportunities that help students grow and expand in the following ways:

- Increased social and self-awareness
- Communication and vocabulary development
- Increased self-help and organizational skills
- STEM activities that spark exploration
 - Cognitive skill growth
 - Creative expression
 - Physical development
- Recreational activities and experiences
- Highlight healthy lifestyle choices: Our programs follow the Department of Health Services meal and snack guidelines to promote healthy food choices. Recess is an important part of our day and students are encouraged to enjoy physical activity to increase coordination and motor development.
- We are licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services.
- WE LOVE WORKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN! At the core of this exciting and fun program is the well-being of the total child. Our staff engage with and supervise children in a variety of activities designed to meet their interests and needs.

Arizona DHS Licensing

Our sites are licensed and inspected by the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS). Facility inspection reports are available for public viewing at the Arizona Department of Health Services, 150 N. 18th Ave, Phoenix Arizona 85007. The AZDHS phone number is 602-364-2539.

DHS inspection reports are also available on-site at our tuition preschool sites.

Regulatory Agencies

- Governed by the Willcox Unified School District
- Monitored and Licensed through the Arizona Department of Health Services

Liability

- Liability insurance is carried through the Willcox Unified School Districts and is available for review upon request.
- Our Preschool is a school-year program open to all who meet the attendance requirements. We do not discriminate based on race, national origin, color, gender, or disability.

Our Programs

- Preschool (3 Years Old)
- Pre-Kindergarten (4-5 Years Old)
- Inclusive Special Education

Our Staff

Director/Teacher

Joylene Pando – joylene.pando@wusd13.org

WES Principal

Erin Bowlby- erin.bowlby@wusd13.org

Lead Paraprofessional

Stephanie Gomez

Lead Paraprofessional

Yoli Grajeda

Paraprofessional

Aylin Cordova

Paraprofessional

Angeliana Martinez

ESS Teacher

Janelle Somoso- janelle.somoso@wusd13.org

ESS Director

Farbod Safavi- farbod.safavi.wusd13.org

Occupational Therapist

Sunny Debaun- sunny.debaun@wusd13.org

Speech Language Pathologist

Yvonne Kahl- yvonne.kahl@wusd13.org

Physical Therapist

Shannon Murphy- sreedpt8@gmail.com

Preschool Enrollment Criteria

Preschool: Must be at least 3 years old, no older than 5. 5 year olds who are age appropriate for kindergarten, will be referred to the Elementary school. These are children who will be 5 years old by September 1. Each child must provide their own basic care to include: feeding self without assistance, potty trained, and able to express basic needs to staff.

Children with special needs are usually identified through our Child Find Program or referred by other agencies. All students preparing to attend the Preschool program must complete the registration packet for Preschool and School District.

The following must be submitted to the Preschool office upon enrollment:

- Birth certificate
- Immunization records or Exemption
- Proof of district residency (i.e., utility bill, or driver's license)
- Elementary Registration
- The Health History Form, current immunization records, and all other enrollment paperwork must be filled out completely and on file at the site before the child can attend Preschool.

Communication

Staff will communicate with families, mostly by using the app CLASS Dojo. At times notes home, phone calls, email, and newsletters, may be used. Each room has a parent communication board featuring information about the program, weekly lesson plans and upcoming events. Formal conferences will be scheduled per family request. Children with IEP's, will have one annual meeting scheduled, and may request additional meetings as needed. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or the office if you have any questions or concerns.

Preschool and After Care Policies and Procedures

Morning Preschool7:30 –11:15
Monday – Thursday

Afternoon Preschool.....12:15-3:15
Monday - Thursday

Full Day Preschool.....7:30-3:15
Monday-Thursday

After Care(additional \$10 daily).....3:15-5:00 pm

Friday (As Needed Basis,Additional \$30) 7:30-3:00

***Until Further Notice, First Steps Preschool will follow the WUSD School Calendar
(Daily Rate of \$40, if extended dates are requested)***

First Steps Tuition and Fees

3-5 Year Old Weekly Rates

- Half Day \$120
- Full Day \$150

After Care Daily Rates

- PreK- \$10
- Friday School - \$30
- Extended Calendar-\$40

DES Certified

Daily Schedule

AM CLASS

7:30-8:00	Arrival / Bellwork
8:00-8:30	Breakfast
8:15-9:00	Greeting, Calendar, Large Group Lesson
9:00-9:15	Restroom
9:15-9:40	Recess
9:40-10:20	Restroom/ Snack Time
10:20-10:30	Story/ Brain breaks
10:30-11:00	Worktime/Small group
11:00-11:15	Clean Up,Review the day/ Dismissal

(FULL DAY CLASS)

11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-1:00	Restroom/ Nap Time
1:00-2:00	Worktime / Small Groups
2:00-2:40	Clean up/Restroom/Snack Time
2:40-2:50	Clean up/ Review The Day
2:50-3:15	Gather Belongings/ Recess/ Dismissal from playground

PM CLASS

12:15-12:30	Arrival/ Bellwork
12:30-1:05	Greeting/ Calendar/ Large Group Lesson
1:05-2:00	Worktime/Small Groups
2:00-2:35	Clean up/ Restroom/ Snack Time
2:40-2:50	Story /Brain Breaks/ Review the Day
2:55-3:15	Gather Belongs/ Recess/ Dismissal from playground

After Care

3:15-5:00 pm
Snack, Sensory play, outdoor play

Billing and Payment Information

To ensure your child has the opportunity to attend all of the classes offered, please remember that tuition needs to be paid in a timely manner. before. The first payment should be paid before school starts. Monthly or biweekly options are available, Payments can be made at the district office.

Tuition is waived when a student meets and qualifies for Exceptional Student Services.

(Special Education Services will not be provided on Fridays or scheduled breaks)

Students with an IEP will automatically qualify for a half day , full day option would then incur a half day tuition.

Discounts

- WUSD-employees will receive a 30% parent discount on total fees incurred.
- Sibling – A 10% discount is given on the lesser fees for each additional child from the same family.
- DES payments – Our Preschool is in the process of becoming DES certified. We will notify you when this becomes available. **Any tuition not covered by DES will be your responsibility.**

Late Fees

- **Pre-K students who remain after 3:15 PM will be transferred to aftercare and parents will be charged the daily fee.**

Additional Payment Information

- Families are charged the full weekly rate, while following the WUSD school calendar for weeks with 2 or more school days.

Extended schedules may be available, upon timely request. At that time, daily rates would apply.

EX: \$40 per day, as needed during Christmas Break, Spring Break

Refunds/Credits

- Refunds or credits are not given for regular illnesses or vacations/out of town plans, or scheduled school break.

Payment Past Due Tuition and Plans

- A payment plan contract will be created and agreed upon for all invoices that are a **month past due**. If the payment listed on the invoice and all accrued charges are not paid in full by the date listed on the payment plan contract, your child will be withdrawn from the program.
- **Payment must be made on a bi-weekly, or monthly basis. Your child will not be allowed to attend until a tuition plan is made to address any tuition balance more than a month late. These absences will be marked as unexcused. 10 consecutive unexcused absences, will result in an automatic withdrawal.**

Emergency Plan

In order to be prepared in the case of a fire or other emergency, an “emergency drill” occurs once monthly. Each location has a site-specific emergency plan in the event of a crisis or emergency situation. Lock down and/or evacuation procedures will be followed if necessary and parents will be notified via a phone call, text and/or email. Portable parent contact information is kept in a notebook easily accessible to staff. In the event that access to communication is interrupted, children will be kept safe until parents can be contacted. An evacuation map with fire department and law enforcement contact information is posted in each room.

Absences

In the event that a child will not attend school, it is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to contact the office to report the absence.

Illness

Parents must inform the preschool teacher or school attendance clerk when an absence is due to illness. Please inform the child’s teacher or office when a child’s absence is due to a potentially infectious illness. A child who exhibits signs of illness or infestation will not be permitted to attend or remain in preschool as stated in the Arizona Department of Health Services Revised Statutes for Childcare Facilities:

Illness: ● Fever within the past 24 hours

- Contagious infections, Pink eye, hand,foot and mouth disease
- Vomiting and/or Diarrhea
- Undiagnosed Rash

Infestation:

- Lice
- Pinworms

- Scabies
- Other parasites

If a child becomes ill while attending preschool/aftercare with a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or onset of a rash, a parent/guardian/emergency contact will be notified to pick-up the child.

Nurse

The nurse is available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. school days. She is on call for the other two schools and conducts health programs there. The health programs offered to the preschool students are vision and hearing screenings.

Arizona State Law requires parents or guardians to provide the school a complete history of immunizations prior to student attendance. This information is designed to improve the health and care of each student. General and first aid are given in the director's office. The school nurse will be contacted by the director as needed, in case of a serious injury or illness, the nurse or ambulance will transport the student to the doctor of the parent's choice in Willcox. This is done only if the school has been given permission to take prudent action in case of an emergency.

Accidents & Emergencies

If a child is injured while in attendance, first aid will be administered. If a physician must treat a child, every effort will be made to contact the child's parent/guardian and the doctor indicated on the "emergency information card." In the event of an emergency, a child will be given the necessary emergency treatment until a parent/guardian can be contacted. If contacted in the case of an emergency, please be sure you and your emergency contacts know which medical facility should be receiving your child for treatment.

Health Records

Any changes and revisions to health records must be made immediately in the Primary School office. Please remember to keep all records updated. A child's immunization record must be provided at the time of registration. The immunization record provided by the parent shall contain all information required by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Medication Administration & Emergency Procedures

Prescription Medication

Medications may be administered to children during the school day when circumstances require that the child must take medicine at school. A parent must fill out the DHS Medication Consent Form and the appropriate WUSD Medication Form (available from the district Nurse) requesting administration of the medicine. In order to administer medication, we must receive written authorization signed by the enrolled child's parent or healthcare provider that includes the following:

- Name of the enrolled child

- Type/Name of medication
- Prescription Number (if applicable)
- Instructions for administration specifying the:
 - Dosage and route of administration
 - Indicated, starting and ending dates of the dosage period
 - Times and frequency of administration
 - Reason for the medication
 - Date of authorization
- All instances of administration of medicine to children must be documented in a log.
- The medication must be stored in a locked storage container or cabinet unless orders from the physician indicate otherwise.
- Any unused or expired prescription medication will be returned to the parent or guardian. If a parent/guardian chooses to not replace the medication promptly, BUSD is released of all liability. Medications will be disposed of two weeks after the expiration date or a child's withdrawal from the program.
- In case of an emergency, as determined by program staff, the paramedics will be called and a parent will be notified immediately. We are not responsible for any charges incurred (ambulance transport, etc.).

Child Abuse Reporting

DHS requires staff members to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement and/or the Department of Child Services whenever there is a reasonable belief, or a child discloses that he/she, or another child has been abused or is a victim of physical injury or neglect, regardless of the identity of the perpetrator. A "reasonable belief" is when there are facts that cause a staff member to form the suspicion that a child is or has been the victim of abuse.

Pesticides

We limit the use of pesticides and herbicides in our program. If it is necessary to use pesticides or herbicides, they are applied by a licensed professional when children are not present. Notice of Pesticide Application with dates of application is posted at all sites. Changes to these dates will be posted within 48 hours advance notice.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES AND REMOVAL PROCEDURES

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

We believe all students can behave at school and on the way to and from school. All students have a responsibility to behave in a manner that allows teachers to teach and students to learn. Student behavior should not violate the best interest of any individual in the school community.

The total school community (parents, students, school personnel and community members) share in the responsibility for maintaining a positive campus climate. The administration, teaching staff and other school personnel have the responsibility to determine when a student's behavior is inappropriate, disruptive, unsafe, or in violation of school rules/regulations. Staff members are trained in methods of positive behavior supports.

Staff members will use communication, redirection, role-modeling appropriate behavior, and problem solving techniques when helping a child deal with conflict. Parents will be notified if a child is endangering the health and safety of him/herself and others. If the child continues to engage in harmful behavior, parents will be asked to meet with staff to formulate a behavior plan. Continued inappropriate behavior can result in loss of or modified services as per district expulsion policy.

A child may be removed from the program for the following reasons:

- **Discipline**-Reasons as stated under District Discipline Expulsion policy.
- **Age**-A child will no longer be enrolled in the Preschool after entering Kindergarten.
- **Non-Attendance**-Any child who is absent for a period of two weeks (unexcused) more than two times may be removed from the program.
- **Late pick-up**-Any child picked up after 3:15 pm will be charged a \$10.00 after care fee.
Any child picked up late (after scheduled end time) more than three times may be removed from the program.

COWKID CREED

We Are Safe
We Are Responsible
We Are Kind
We Are Willcox!!!

At WES and First Steps Preschool, a **Cowkid** is **Safe, Responsible and Kind**. These expectations are defined across school settings in the expectations matrix.

The Willcox Elementary School Cowkid Matrix is used to guide lesson planning and teaching of prioritized behavioral expectations across settings. In PBIS, instruction of social behavior is viewed in much the same way as academic instruction. The same principles of effective academic instruction apply for teaching social behavior. In the same way that we shouldn't punish kids if they can't do math problems, we should not punish students for not knowing the behavioral expectations or routines... instead we must teach them. It is our responsibility to prepare our Willcox Cowkids to be successful socially by teaching behavioral expectations and school routines from the beginning of the school year, followed by periodic review throughout the year.

1. A restatement of teacher or staff directions to ensure clear communication. Positive redirection will always be used.
2. Breaks or quiet spaces will always be offered to help the child regulate. The child will not be separated from group for more than three minutes.
3. Further problems with misbehavior may result in the teacher contacting the parent or guardian and possible dismissal from school for the day.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If a conflict arises between a student and a teacher, or if a parent or guardian has a complaint, the issue should be resolved as soon as possible. Parents or guardians are encouraged to set up a conference with the teacher and express their concern directly.

Withdrawal

Students withdrawing from the preschool program are required to complete a withdrawal form in the Office. Upon completion of the form it is to be returned to the Office to be processed. All bills must be paid.

Change of Address or Contact Information

Please notify the Elementary School Office and the Preschool Office if your phone number or address changes.

Special Education

Child Find Screenings are available to children in the areas of speech and language, cognitive, adaptive, personal-social, and physical development. Parents who have concerns about their child's progress should call (520) 384-8600 to get information on our Child Find Screenings. If a child is eligible for special services, an Individual Education Program (IEP) with written goals and objectives will be developed by a team of specialists, including parents.

Personal Belongings

We do not assume responsibility for personal items. Please label your child's belongings with their first and last name. Children should leave toys, electronic games, and electronics at home.

Parent/Family Responsibilities and Participation

We believe the key to the success of the program involves both staff and parents:

- Parents may request a conference with the site staff and/or the building principal to discuss any concerns.
- We encourage you to share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns regarding the preschool program. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the building principal.
- Please contact your child's preschool teacher or the front office at your child's school for a copy of your child's preschool schedule.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER

Classroom volunteers are welcome, but could be at the discretion of the director. Each child has a unique learning style and circumstance.

You will receive details about our volunteer program after the start of school. Classroom volunteers need to complete certain forms, not only for the district but the AZ Dept of Health Services as well, before they can volunteer in the classroom.

State law requires that all volunteers who do not have children in school must have fingerprints taken. A level one fingerprint clearance card, a TB skin test, and updated vaccine record, will be needed if you are directly working with any preschool student, who is not your own. Volunteers will need to register at the office each time they are on campus.

Field Trips and Transportation Policy

Preschool classes do not take field trips or transport students. Those students who meet certain special education requirements will be provided bus transportation.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The decision to delay opening of school as a district or to dismiss school early, due to weather or emergency situations, will be made by the Superintendent.

If the Superintendent decides to delay the opening of school, the director or office staff will relate this to parents in a timely manner. Messages will be sent through Class Dojo or phone calls.

The decision to delay or cancel preschool class, in the event of staff illness or emergency, can be made by the director and school principal. If this were to occur, the director will contact parents through text or Class Dojo.

Snacks and Lunches

Parents are welcome to provide a daily nutritious snack for their child. Cold gel packs and insulated bags should be utilized by parents to keep food items fresh. **Refrigerators are not available to keep student's food cold.** Due to Health Department regulations, staff are not allowed to warm, cut, or stir any food items. During the school year, children staying all day need to bring a lunch from home or a school lunch will be provided free of charge. Morning half day students will be provided with a school cafeteria menu, breakfast and snack. Afternoon students will be provided with a school cafeteria menu, lunch and snack. ***Students should bring a clearly labeled water bottle, we will send it home at the end of the week.***

Please check with your student's teacher for classroom allergies, before sending any snacks to share.

Rest Time

A rest/quiet time will be provided for all children who are full-time. Children should bring one blanket to be used as a cover. Please take the pillow and blanket home weekly for laundering and make sure all items are clearly labeled with the child's name.

Recess

Preschool students play on the preschool playgrounds only. Preschool students will have recess with other preschool classes accessing equipment that is age-appropriate for their use.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

For the safety of your child, any individual removing children from the program will be required to show proof of identification to the site staff. A child will not be released to an individual refusing to show ID upon request, or an individual who is not on the emergency contact list or DHS card. Always bring a valid (state) picture ID to the site.

- DHS requires that a parent or an authorized party sign a child in/out of the program before and after each preschool class. Only the enrolling parent can designate authorized pickup parties. To sign a child out, the parent or authorized party must sign his/her full name along with the date and time within Procure. The child must leave the site with the parent/authorized party once he/she has been signed out.
- An enrolled child will be released only to those persons specifically authorized on the emergency information form. A sibling may not sign out a child unless he/she is listed on the emergency form as an authorized party and is 16 or older.
- Under the laws of the state of Arizona, both parents may have the right to pick up a child, unless a court order restricts that right. The enrolling parent who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, or divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, the school staff may release the child to either parent, provided that the parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.
- If only one parent has sole legal custody of a child, the school office must have court orders on file.

PETS AT SCHOOL

No pets are allowed at school .

What to Bring

- Please label all items with your child's name
 - Backpack
 - Water bottle
- Change of clothes (top, bottom and underwear)
 - Diapers or pull-ups and wipes if needed
 - Jacket or sweatshirt for cooler weather
- One pillow and blanket for rest time if child is in full day childcare

- Pillowcase to contain all rest items

Classroom Wish List:

Lead paras in each classroom, may put out an occasional wish list. No items on the list are ever obligatory.

First Steps Preschool Tuition and Fees Contract

I/We have read and understand the policies placed in this handbook. By signing and returning this page I agree to the policies stated in this handbook. I/We understand that should there be updates to this handbook, I/We will be given a copy of the page with the updated information and a new copy of this page to sign and return. I/We will fill out, sign and return the enrollment form and contract in their entirety. By doing so I/We are enrolling my/our child/ren in the WUSD First Steps Preschool.

Payments for all programs are due the first day of the week for biweekly payments. There is no tuition reduction for holidays or days absent. Payment plans will be made for all tuition payments a month behind. The family will have to be terminated if the tuition plan is not followed.

Child's name: _____ Age: _____

Child's name: _____ Age: _____

Signature (Mother or Guardian) _____ Date: _____

Signature (Father or Guardian) _____ Date: _____

Signature (Authorized Staff) _____ Date: _____