

# Parent Handbook



## International Preschools 2021-22

# GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

## School Hours

International Preschools operates Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm. The school year begins August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and ends May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Summer schedules are released separately, and include approximately 8 weeks of summer camps.

## Classes and Ages

Class placement depends on various factors including, but not limited to, age, developmental abilities, readiness, available class space, and parent preference.

K: Kindergarten age students; aligns with performance standards for students entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

5K: IPS Kindergarten curriculum

4K: IPS Pre-K curriculum

3K: IPS Early Pre-K curriculum

2K: IPS Preschool Readiness curriculum

PDO: Parents' Day Out: 2 days maximum per week

Why the K? Kindergarten is a German word meaning "children's garden." It was originally conceived as a means of educating young children through activity and play-based learning. At International Preschools, we strongly believe that children need the rigor of an academic program from a very early age, as young as 2 years old, but understand that all such learning should be guided by the child's natural love for games, songs, and activities. We hope to maintain the mission of kindergarten, carefully balancing freedom and creativity with growth and learning.

## Admissions Information

Registration for each school year begins February 1<sup>st</sup> for in-house applicants, and February 15<sup>th</sup> for the public. The application process is completely online, and classes are filled on a first come basis. Fees are due upon registration. To register and pay by check, please visit the office during regular school hours. A waiting list will be maintained throughout the school year, and open spots will be filled as they become available. Registration is considered complete when International Preschools has received: a completed online application form, one month tuition deposit (held in escrow for May tuition), and payment of annual supply and registration fees.

Welcome packets for the school year are emailed upon enrollment in July. Welcome packets for summer camp are emailed in May.

By August 1<sup>st</sup>, the following documentation is needed to finalize enrollment: an immunization record from the child's pediatrician (GA form 3231), and a Medical Authorization form if the student requires medication while at school.

## School Closings

International Preschools is closed on most national and public school holidays, including but not limited to Labor Day, Fall Break, Thanksgiving week, Winter Break (approx. 2 weeks), President's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Spring Break (1 week), Memorial Day (1 day) and July 4. The school is also closed one week at the beginning and end of summer camps for planning and teacher training.

On rare occasions, closings due to inclement weather or other emergency situations may be necessary. The decision to close school is a difficult one, yet is made with the well-being and safety of students, families, and faculty in mind. Closings or delays due to inclement weather will follow Atlanta Public Schools. In the event that school is delayed or closed, parents will be notified by email. We are unable to offer refunds for days missed due to emergency closings.

## Cancellations and Changing Days

Please let us know if a student will not be in school due to illness or family vacation. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer discounts or refunds for absences.

Parents are free to add or change days at any time, depending on availability. Any additions and changes are considered permanent. As planning and scheduling are done weeks in advance, temporarily changing days to suit a vacation schedule is not permitted.

## Need a Sanity Day?

Parents who know their children will be absent are asked to alert the teacher as far in advance as possible. Then, other parents who have need of an extra day can sign up for the spot vacated by the absent child. Sanity Day fees are \$45, due on or before the date signed in. These fees are non-refundable. IPS does not allow make-up days, but each family will receive two free Sanity Days at the beginning of the school year.

## Important Contact Information

*International Preschools*  
500 Amsterdam Ave., Atlanta, GA 30306  
(678) 705-8355, Fax (678) 705-8082

# PLAY IT SAFE: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Drop Off Procedures

Arrival is scheduled from 9-9:15 am.

We understand that it is difficult to leave a child at school, especially at the beginning of the year, but parents lingering, sneaking out, or saying goodbye and returning will only make it harder for students to adjust to the new environment. Teachers take attendance at 9:15. If you are not able to arrive by 9:15, please call to give us an ETA. Each segment of the day is planned and scheduled for continuity and to maximize children's learning adventure. Children arriving after 9:30 not only disrupt the other students' learning, but also feel disoriented for the rest of the day. Teachers offer any absentees' spots as Sanity Days after 9:30, so it is important to call if you are running late.

## Pick Up Procedures

The school day ends at 1:00pm. Please arrive between 12:40-12:55 for pick up. Students who have not been picked up by 1:00 will be subject to overtime charges.

Only those adults authorized on the enrollment form will be allowed to pick up the child. Any person unknown to the teachers must present a photo ID (this includes parents who teachers have not met!). Written authorization and photo ID are required for anyone not on the enrollment form. In case of emergency, the director will assign a pick-up password over the phone to be relayed from the parent to the person picking up. Even in such cases, photo ID is required. The name on the ID must match the name given in the authorization for pick up.

## Allergy Policy

We ask that each and every family remember some simple rules when it comes to our friends with allergies:

We are a **NUT FREE** school- please leave nuts (of all kinds) and nut butters at home. If your child has a breakfast or snack containing nuts before school, please wash their hands to remove possible allergens. Water alone does not do the trick, so don't forget the soap!

Birthday and holiday parties are a very special time, but can be difficult for our friends with allergies. Please refer to the IPS Birthday Party and Event Policy for guidelines on birthday treats.

## Sick Policy

A child exhibiting any of the following symptoms must be kept or sent home. This exclusion policy is non-negotiable. We follow a strict quarantine and send-home policy for illnesses emerging during the day.

If your child shows any of these signs within 48 hours of his or her return to school, a doctor's note with a "date OK to resume school" is required:

- Runny nose
- Coughing
- Fever of 100 for higher
- Potentially infectious rash
- Cold or flu symptoms
- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Any other contagious conditions

Parents will be notified via email if any contagious disease is reported in the school.

*Any child traveling overseas must be kept home for 14 days following return to US or provide written documentation from his or her doctor verifying wellness.*

## Student Files and Information

In each student's file, the school will keep the following forms:

- Student Information Form
- Consent Form
- Current Immunization Form (GA 3231)
- Any Incident Reports and other records created during attendance
- Medical or Allergy Plan, if applicable

Parents should have a copy of immunization records (GA form 3231) sent to the school before the first day of class. Please keep all contact information updated throughout the school year.





# COMMUNICATIONS



## Daily Logs

IPS has partnered with Kaymbu, an app-based program which allows our teachers to digitally document our students' learning and actively engage with parents. Sent via email, daily logs will integrate a visual interactive format detailing classroom learning. This program also allows us to streamline communication in other areas as well, including potty records and anecdotal notes. PDO daily logs will include diaper changes, food consumption, and naps.

Monthly and weekly content objectives are included in the monthly calendars. This assists parents in discussing school with their children. Content objectives are infused throughout the day so children should have plenty to share with parents about what they did in school. This "remembering" process is

important for cognitive development and parents are encouraged to elicit descriptions about the day from their children.

## Calendars/Newsletters

The school publishes monthly newsletters noting events, meetings, themes, reminders, field trips, and other special curriculum topics.

## Teacher Accountability

Teachers undergo self-assessments and evaluations. These evaluations are conducted by the directors to determine areas of excellence, training needs, and other benchmarks of teacher quality. Teachers must also have current CPR/ First Aid and pass yearly background checks.



# HAVE A BLAST: PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

## **Our Curriculum: The Difference**

We aim to meet the needs of all types of learners each day: auditory, visual, audio-visual, logical, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, tactile, and verbal. We create a community of inquiry in which students are encouraged to explore, discover, encounter, create, and question all around them. Children are taught the procedures needed to self-correct behavior and thought. Independence, empathy, and awareness are emphasized in all activities and through the presence of younger and older children in the program. Problem-based activities develop critical thinking skills and permeate the curriculum. Our research-based approach to curriculum development means that new insights and knowledge about how children best learn and develop can be immediately integrated into the classroom.

## **Language Instruction**

Depending on Covid-19, our curriculum is enriched with foreign language lessons that progress steadily throughout the school year. In addition to regular lessons in foreign languages, International Preschools believes in an exposure approach to culture and language learning, and introduces various languages and customs throughout the curriculum. At this time, at least ten different languages are represented by students and parents of International Preschools (English, Spanish, German, French, Japanese, Hindi, Italian, and Korean, to name a few). Our language program has included instruction in Spanish, German, Italian, Mandarin, and French; these languages are subject to change.

## **Student Assessments**

International Preschools has designed a student assessment process aligned with its curriculum, objectives, research-based developmental stages, and learning styles. Assessments are ongoing, and each student is formally assessed by his or her teacher twice a year in order to gauge the effectiveness of the program and monitor the student's progress.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher conferences are held toward the end of fall and spring semesters. Sign-ups for the conferences will be posted in each class. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these private sessions with the teacher in order to better understand how your child is progressing developmentally, socially, academically, etc. Students may love to hear the glowing reviews, but often have difficulty understanding areas for growth. It is advised that students are not present for conferences.

## **Parent-Director Conferences**

All parents are welcome to communicate with the director at any time. For in-depth conferences, concerning the student, kindergarten readiness, or private school selection, please schedule a meeting in advance to ensure a director has the opportunity to review relevant information prior to the conference.

## **Curriculum Topics for 2021-22**

**August:** Healthy Habits

**September:** Communication

**October:** The Human Body

**November:** Time Machine

**December:** World of Literature

**January:** Dinosaurs

**February:** Art Smart

**March:** Animals and Habitats

**April:** Go Green

**May:** My Community

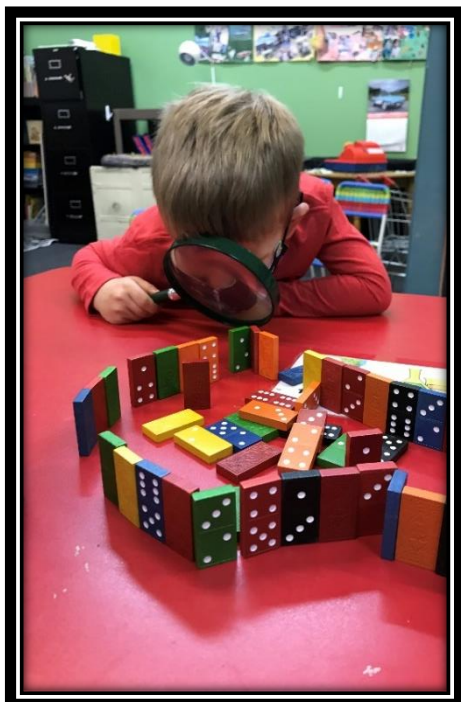
## **Curriculum Enrichment Field Trips**

Depending on Covid-19, throughout the second semester, some classes (5K and older) take field trips to venues that supplement and enrich the curriculum. Examples include art museums, puppet theaters, the zoo, the aquarium, libraries, parks and gardens. Students must have signed consent forms to participate in field trips. International Preschools does not provide transportation to and from field trips.

Special guests also visit the school several times a year to provide hands-on and authentic learning experiences for the students. The guests are selected to align with the curriculum content and goals.







*So much to learn and so little time! Each class from the toddlers to kindergarteners learns about the same topic every day, with activities that are appropriate for the developmental level of the class.*

Schedules of the day and week are available from your teacher. Each child will have art, music, and kinesthetics daily. Multicultural, science, nature, mindfulness, and technology lessons occur weekly. Literacy and math are fostered from the beginning of the program, with teachers planning multi-tasked

activities promoting a variety of skills, objectives, and subject matter.

IPS believes strongly in the value of pluralism and diversity in the program. Teachers and parents are asked to be mindful of these differences during the instructional day and discuss them with students in open and meaningful ways.

# WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

## International Preschools Parents

International Preschools is proud to boast of the success of its Parent-Teacher Organization, International Preschools Parents (IPP). Meeting regularly, IPP offers excellent opportunities for parents and teachers to build community and support the school. IPP begins meetings in August aimed at enriching the educational experience at International Preschools, raising funds and assisting in the growth and development of the school. For more information, please contact [ipp@internationalpreschools.net](mailto:ipp@internationalpreschools.net).

## Volunteer Opportunities

Parents are welcome in our classrooms when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. Come in with a story, project, activity, or something interesting to share! Teachers will try to accommodate parents' schedules. Students feel a strong sense of ownership in their school when parents are active and present in the classrooms. During Covid-19, your teacher will have alternative fun and creative ways for you to get involved.

## Monthly Paper/Supply Donations

Parents assist with our copious but necessary use of classroom and cleaning supplies by donating items such as paper towels, wet wipes, hand sanitizer, and tissues, etc. School Supply kits containing these items and classroom necessities will be for sale online at the start of the school year. Parents may participate in this fundraiser or bring in these items. Find a complete list of these items in your second welcome packet.

## Parent Rights and Responsibilities

International Preschools believes strongly in upholding and enforcing

parent rights to observe classes, to schedule conferences with teachers and administrators, to be free from harassments from other parents on school premises, and to ensure the safety and high standard of the learning environment.

Along with these rights stems a set of responsibilities: picking up and dropping off on time, following the policies set forth in this handbook, and demonstrating respect and courtesy for the teachers, administrators, children and other parents. Malicious behavior and/or consistent disregard for parental responsibilities are grounds for dismissal from the program.

## Auction

IPP usually holds an annual auction in the spring and/or smaller fundraisers throughout the year. The proceeds from these events fund the curriculum enrichment projects, field trips, and other special events and purchases agreed upon by the parent group. Participation is strongly encouraged, as it benefits the children directly! Parents are encouraged to not only attend the events, but to help out with event planning. Contact IPP directly at [ipp@internationalpreschools.net](mailto:ipp@internationalpreschools.net) to find out more about these opportunities to get involved and support the school.

## Behind the Scenes

We love the support and partnerships that have developed over time with many of our parents at IPS. The school thanks all of the parents who have shared their expertise in marketing, web design, real estate, business consulting, insurance, and finance. Please let the director know if you have an area of expertise and would

like to be involved in a more behind-the-scenes way with the school.

## Scholarships

IPS aims to provide at least three scholarships each year to students who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. These scholarships are a fantastic way to embrace socioeconomic differences, supplementing the already present international, cultural and language diversity of the program. If you would like to donate to the scholarship fund, please contact the director.

## Community Outreach

IPS works to establish partnerships with local, national and international organizations to establish a strong sense of community for our children. Parents are strongly encouraged to get involved in these endeavors as well, modeling ways to connect with their community for their young learners.

## Room Parent

Each class has a parent (or team of parents) who act as the liaison between the Parent-Teacher Organization and the other parents in the class. A Room Parent's responsibilities include party planning, communicating with other parents in the class, and supporting special class projects the teacher may plan.

