

# Family Handbook

2016–2017 School Year



Program Address: 2000 D Street  
Days and Hours: M-F 7:30-5:30  
Office Address: 2045 E Street  
Office Hours: M-F 8:00-5:30  
Phone: 402-476-8304  
Michelle Zimmer, Director

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*We're glad your child will be a part of our program this year. Read through this handbook carefully. It will help us all work together to provide the best possible experience for your child. We welcome any questions, suggestions or concerns you may have. Your input is valuable as well as essential in achieving a successful year. Feel free to call the office any time. Thank you.*

Dimensions Education Programs believes in a hands-on, experiential approach to learning that is based on the needs and curiosity of young children. In our programs children are involved in creative, interest-based experiences which provide them with many opportunities to:

- Develop a foundation for life-long learning.
- Grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
- Improve problem-solving skills.
- Begin developing conflict resolution skills.
- Make decisions and begin taking responsibility for those decisions.

Our Education Programs are part of the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, so on-going research and new resources are always available to our children. We work collaboratively with the Arbor Day Foundation on the Nature Explore Program. Our cadre of consultants conducts research-based educator workshops and designs outdoor classrooms throughout the country. (Visit [natureexplore.org](http://natureexplore.org) for more information)

We use the nationally respected research-based HighScope Foundation Early Education Curriculum as a base for program activities along with resources developed through Dimensions Foundation research. A pluralistic mentality and an appreciation for all people and cultures is encouraged. Divergent thinking is valued as the children are supported in using their own good ideas and creativity.

Dimensions Education Programs are planned to work well whether children stay for part-time sessions or longer days. Our teachers are professionals who spend many hours planning and studying together each week. Our goal is to provide the best early education experience possible for each unique and special child.



# Who We Are

***At Dimensions, we are teachers, families, neighbors and friends coming together as a community to provide the best quality experiences for our children...***

## ***The Arts***

It has been a long-standing tradition at Dimensions to provide meaningful, thought-provoking experiences for children that inspire creative thinking and support cognitive, perceptual, emotional and imaginative development. An integral part of our regular curriculum development, experiences with visual art, creative movement, story telling and music are incorporated to help children make sense of their environment and to provide a format for children to express their interpretations of the world around them. Engaging in artistic experience becomes part of the children's language as they communicate their thoughts, ideas, perceptions and knowledge.

## ***Connecting with Nature***

Through our ongoing research and field testing we have learned that a thoughtfully designed and well planned outdoor classroom becomes the framework or backdrop that supports holistic development and learning. It is a space where children grow and learn physically, intellectually and emotionally during everyday interactions with the outdoors. Our certified Nature Explore Classrooms and Greenhouse accommodates all age levels as children have opportunities to explore, experiment, create and discover. As children work in the Nature Explore Classroom, meaningful learning takes place. Children learn through their creativity and imaginative play. As they develop important skills that support their developmental growth, they learn to be innovative thinkers.

## ***Language & Literacy***

We strive to provide a language-rich environment. Children have the opportunity to learn words of different languages, such as Spanish and Sign Language, based on their interests and the language(s) spoken by the children in the group. Research has shown that language and literacy development begins in the first three years of life with their earliest experiences with books and stories. It is important to provide reading and literacy materials, as well as adults to support children's interests.

*"Early literacy skills develop in real life settings through positive interactions with literacy, materials and other people."*

**From Early Literacy/[www.zerotothree.org/BrainWonders](http://www.zerotothree.org/BrainWonders)**

## ***Teaching Collaboration Groups***

Continuing research shows that the quality of an early childhood program is directly related to the professionalism and knowledge level of the staff. Our teachers meet on a regular basis in teaching collaboration groups to:

- Plan experiences based on the interests of the children.
- Work on documentation for research and portfolios.
- Keep up on the latest research in the early childhood field.

## ***Research and Documentation***

Dimensions Education Programs serves as the primary research classroom site for Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. This research is used to support Foundation workshops, outdoor classroom design, and the development of natural products. Teachers closely observe children and document their learning as forms of authentic assessment. This documentation is shared with families in children's portfolios.

# Involvement Opportunities

At Dimensions, we understand the importance of a strong partnership between family and school to provide a successful and inspired education for your child. Your involvement is critical to both the school and your child's development and growth while here at Dimensions. We encourage you and anyone else in your child's life — grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends—to volunteer. If you have talents or interests to share, please let us know. We look forward to having a strong partnership with all our families. There are many ways in which you can be involved in the program.



We have a variety of events and fundraisers during the year. Your involvement at these events is a vital part of the health of our program and an opportunity to build friendships with other families. Call our office at **(402) 476-8304** or email [jeanp@dimensioned.org](mailto:jeanp@dimensioned.org) if you have questions.

## **Barnes & Noble Book Fair (November 12, 2016)**

Barnes & Noble will host our book fair this year at the 29th & Pine Lake location and online. Join us in the store for fun activities and a story time. All purchases made will benefit Dimensions. (When you check out, don't forget to mention that you would like your purchase to go towards Dimensions.)

## **Eat & Explore Night and Classroom Visits (February 3, 2017)**

Enjoy an evening of food and fun. There will be many nature-inspired activities for all ages and an open house so families may visit classrooms.

## **Nature Walkathon (April 20 & 21, 2017)**

Dimensions will hold its fifth annual Nature Walkathon this spring. This fundraiser is a great way for family, friends and neighbors to help enhance our Nature Explore classrooms and support our overall Programs.

## **Family Potluck Picnic (May 12, 2017)**

Gather with your friends, family and neighbors for an evening of fun in the Nature Explore Classroom.

## **Preschool Classroom Involvement**

*(Because of separation issues, we utilize Classroom Volunteers for Preschool only. However, we welcome and encourage parents of infants and toddlers to be involved in many other ways.)*

Helping in our indoor and outdoor classrooms is one of the many ways parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles might enjoy being involved in Dimensions Education Programs. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn first-hand what children are experiencing during their time at Dimensions and a great way to support the teachers and the program.

There are several ways for you and other family members to be involved in the classrooms. These opportunities enhance children's experiences and support teachers. Visitors and volunteers should be planned in advance so that our classrooms will not be too full of adults and we can always provide the best possible experiences for children. **All volunteers and visitors MUST sign in and out at the East or West office.**

- **Classroom Volunteers\***: Help with the groups **MORE** than one time throughout the year, in the classroom by serving snack and meeting other needs of the teachers.
- **Group Volunteers\***: Coordinate with the teacher and plan to come in **MORE** than one time throughout the year; to help with a project, read to the group, share an interest, etc.
- **Group Visitors**: Coordinate with the teacher to schedule a one-time visit with a group to share an interest, read to the group or help with a project.
- **Lunch Visitors**: Notify the teacher ahead of time, if possible.
- **Visitors**: Notify the office (in advance, if possible). It is important for the office to know who is in the classrooms as well as make sure the number of adults in the classrooms is not distracting for children.

Due to licensing regulations, **all volunteers coming more than one time** during the year must complete required forms and read required information **BEFORE** they can be in the classrooms. It is not possible for children to bring friends to visit for a day.

*\*Classroom and Group volunteers will receive an email to sign up online for the day(s) that work in their schedule.*



### ***Nature Explore Classroom/ Greenhouse Volunteers***

You can help take our outdoor classroom to the next level by helping to maintain our spaces. We welcome any adult volunteers – grandparents, neighbors, past parents of the program, current families, friends, etc. There are many areas in which we need help, such as working with children as they learn to care for the space, helping on grounds and gardens, organizing workdays, and finding materials donations.

### ***Staff Appreciation***

This committee helps our staff feel supported by providing meals during conferences, treats and other small tokens of gratitude throughout the year.

### ***Children’s Library***

At Dimensions, we want to provide appropriate quality literature for your children and are fortunate to have a large children’s library. We need volunteers to help shelve books after children and teachers have used them and to repair our much-loved books.

### ***Advisory Council***

The appointed Advisory Council meets at least four times a year. They advise on budget, program mission and goals, and help to ensure successful events throughout their two-year commitment. Contact Michelle Zimmer if you are interested.

### ***Sponsor-a-Child Fund***

We work very hard to keep our tuition affordable. However, our tuition covers only part of what it actually costs to provide a quality early childhood program. We do have many requests from families who would like to attend our program, but simply cannot because of the cost. Donations to this fund help families in many situations provide a safe and nurturing environment for their child. Contact the office at any time to make a tax-deductible donation to this fund or visit [dimensionsed.org](http://dimensionsed.org) and click on the “Donate” tab.



# Important Information

## Communication

With everyone's busy schedules, we strive to communicate efficiently with our families. We have several ways in which we will keep you informed about what your child(ren) are doing and what is happening in the program. We ask for your help to take time to read the information that comes to you.

**Email:** This will be our primary form of communication with you. It is **IMPERATIVE** that we have one email address that is **current and checked regularly**. (If you are not receiving emails from us, check your junk mail and make sure you add us to your contacts list.) Please set up a "Dimensions" folder in your inbox and save our emails there for easy future reference.

**Online Forms:** When you receive the email and link to fill out the forms, it is very important that you do this as soon as possible. We must have those forms completed and reviewed before your child can attend our program.

**Dimensions Connection:** We will periodically email our **Dimensions Connection**. This will have general information and news of upcoming events. Please forward this on to others who may drop off and pick up, etc.

**Facebook:** Visit our Facebook page often for news of what is happening throughout our classrooms.

**Group notes:** Teachers will communicate to families in a variety of ways about experiences happening specific to their group.

**Phone:** We share our phone system with First-Plymouth Church. Dimensions phones will be answered from 8:00am-5:30pm. If you call before or after hours, you may leave a message on the First-Plymouth Church voicemail and they will forward it to us. If we place a call to you, it may show on your phone as either First-Plymouth or Dimensions. If we leave a message on your voicemail, please listen to the message before returning our call.

## Daily Arrival and Pick-Up

- Teachers come early and work hard to set up all the wonderful activities that take place during the day.
- Please do not bring your child until the session begins.
- It is important that children walk with an adult through the parking lot and into the building. Please do not use the ramp in the east parking lot.
- Please wait in the hallway for your child(ren)'s session to end for a teacher to dismiss your child to you (so we know all children are with the right person).
- Remind your child to walk in the hallways so everyone is safe.
- Do not leave your car running or with unattended children in the parking lot.
- Do not leave purses in unlocked cars. If you leave your purse in your car, be sure it is out of sight.

We take every precaution possible to ensure children are being released to an authorized person. After enrolling, you must fill out the Online Forms and **indicate both parents' or guardians' names, if applicable**, and list your emergency contact names. **Your child will be released ONLY to people listed on this form UNLESS you call to notify the office. A photo ID will be required for everyone listed other than parents or guardians.**

**Preschool Program Entrance:** Use the East Entrance. Thank you for not parking in front of the steps or in reserved spaces. For safety's sake, **do not allow your child to use the handicap ramp**. This is reserved for wheelchairs and strollers only. This entrance is monitored by a camera and intercom system, and you will be asked who you are here to pick up.

**Infant & Toddler Program Entrance:** Use the West Entrance. Park in the cut-out or along the street for drop-off and pick-up. The door by the northwest parking lot will be locked for safety reasons; use only to exit. This entrance is monitored by a staff person located in our West Office.

### **Pick-Up**

Your child must be picked up at the time in which you have enrolled. We must remain in teacher/child ratio at all times based on licensing regulation and therefore expect that you will be on time.

### **Late Fees (August-July)**

If you are late picking up your child:

- After two times, you will receive an email from the office letting you know that each time you are late from that point, a \$25 late fee will be charged on your next ACH payment.
- You may want to consider adjusting your child's schedule if it is difficult for you to pick them up on time. Please contact the office to see if our teacher/child ratio will allow for your child to stay later. If we cannot accommodate the time change, we expect you to be on time.

### **Change Fees (All changes are based on space availability)**

There will be a \$25.00 charge for:

- Permanent changes in session or hours made AFTER September 1st.
- Any short-term or daily schedule change.

Please contact Linda Maack at [lindam@dimensioned.org](mailto:lindam@dimensioned.org) for any change requests.

### **Dimensions' Offices**

**Our West Office** is located in the church on the west side of the building. One of our staff will be there from 8:00–5:30 to greet families and visitors using the west entrance. They will also be monitoring the east doors with our camera and intercom system as well as answering all calls for Dimensions and First-Plymouth Church.

**Our East Office** is located at 2045 E Street (the brick house next to the east parking lot). This is office space for our administrative staff. Teachers work and meet here also. The office may be locked, please ring the doorbell if you need assistance.

### **Tuition and Payments**

Tuition payments will be automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the first business day of the month. Tuition for the school year (August-May) is figured on your basic session total plus extended hours (if requested and approved) and then divided into ten equal payments.

In the case of a returned payment, there will be a \$30 fee. Your tuition payment (cash or cashier's check) and fee will need to be brought to the Dimensions East Office (2045 E Street) or the Dimensions Foundation Office (1010 Lincoln Mall, Suite 103) by the third business day after the returned payment. The parent who signs the contract will be responsible for all payments.

There will be no deductions/refunds for illness, absence, holidays, severe weather or prescheduled Dimensions' days off (see calendar online or the last page of this booklet). If you have billing questions, please contact **Tony Guerrero**, [tonyg@dimensionsfoundation.org](mailto:tonyg@dimensionsfoundation.org) or **(402) 474-8511**.

### **Donating Toward the Full Costs of Our Program**

Since our tuition covers only part of what it actually costs to provide a quality early childhood program, additional donations from parents are gratefully accepted at any time. Many parents choose to contribute something each month toward these costs. Please call or email **Linda Maack at (402) 476-8304 or [lindam@dimensioned.org](mailto:lindam@dimensioned.org)**. This is a tax-deductible contribution. We appreciate and need your help if this is something you are able to do.

### **Supplies**

To help with our supply budget, we ask each family to provide a few basic supplies. You will receive a supply list. If you would like to provide donations throughout the year, a teacher list of requests will be online. All donations are needed and appreciated, and they are tax-deductible.



# Health

In order for us to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children, it is important that we all follow our illness policies. Please refer to these when you are making decisions about whether or not you should send your child to school. **Please notify the office at (402) 476-8304 (not by email) if you are keeping your child home for any reason.** The Health Department encourages us to keep records of the types of illnesses in our program so we will ask you why your child is absent.

## **Keeping Your Child At Home**

The following are symptoms that require your child to stay home from school:

- Misery with a cold, including mattery, watery eyes, running nose or other physical symptoms
- Undiagnosed rash
- A deep or chesty, croupy or constant cough or wheezing
- Draining of ears or open sores
- Any symptoms of possible infectious disease (such as red or mattery eyes, loss of appetite, fatigue, aches)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (*Refer to the Definition below*)
- Fever (*Refer to the Definition below*)  
Taken axillary/under the arm (99° - Infants / 100° - Toddlers/Preschoolers)
- Inability to cope in group situations because of not feeling well
- Head Lice

**If your child has been sick with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea we require a waiting period of at least 24 hours without any of these symptoms, without medications, before returning to school.**

Occasionally, some of the above symptoms occur for reasons that are not contagious and are not illness-related. If this is the case, send a note from your child's doctor stating that your child is not contagious. However, if we feel a child's condition could cause other children or staff to become ill, we will ask that your child remain at home until all symptoms have cleared. We use the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department's guidebook as our over-arching policy for when children should be kept home. Staff and parent helpers should also adhere to the same illness policies.

**Definition of a fever:** Any child who has a fever of 100°F (99°F for infants) or more will be sent home and should remain home until he/she has been fever free for 24 hours without medication. If your child has a fever which has been recurring more than 48 hours (goes down with medicine then back up again when medicine wears off) the child will be sent home and we'll recommend consultation with a physician. We are not able to administer medicine to regulate a child's temperature. If acetaminophen or ibuprofen is prescribed for pain, the container's label must reflect dosage for your child's age. For labels reading "if under age \_\_\_\_\_ consult physician" we must have a doctor's note stating dosage amount and reason for administering.

**Definition of Diarrhea:** Loose, watery, or uncontained bowel movement. Uncontained meaning leaks out of diaper or the child is not able to control enough to use the toilet. Should the following occur, 2 per hour, 3 within 24 hours, or 1 uncontained, the child will be sent home and we ask he/she not be brought back until having a solid bowel movement at home. Bowel movements must continue to be solid when returning.



**Head Lice:** If a case of head lice is discovered the child will be sent home immediately and can return after successful treatment, meaning when there are no live nits. Our office has helpful information regarding treatment and infestation prevention. It's crucial to report any case to our office immediately at (402) 476-8304 so that we can take steps to prevent infestation. We respect your right to privacy and will ensure your family and child will remain anonymous.

### ***Sending Your Child Home***

If we need to send your child home because of illness:

- They will get an "Illness Form" in their cubby. This sheet will help eliminate any confusion about why your child was sent home and when they can return to school.
- If we call you to come and pick your child up, we ask that you make arrangements to come as soon as possible. (It is difficult to keep children isolated for more than one hour because of staffing limitations.)
- **Do not bring your child back to school until they are symptom-free and fever-free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.**
- There may be times when your child does not have a fever, but we still feel they are not able to participate in daily activities because they are not feeling well. We will call and ask that you come and pick them up.

*For some illnesses, it will be necessary to present a doctor's note to indicate your child is no longer infectious. In some cases, even if your physician has cleared your child to return, we will ask that you keep them home. As a program, we must look out for the health of ALL the children attending and the final decision regarding your child's attendance will be made by the Director. If you have questions, please contact Michelle Zimmer at michellez@dimensioned.org or (402) 476-8304.*



### **Handwashing**

When arriving and checking in with a teacher, please take your child into the classroom and help them wash their hands. This helps prevent the spread of illnesses.

### **Medication**

If your child needs medication administered during his/her time at Dimensions, you will need to fill out the medicine authorization form completely.

- Medication must be in its original, labeled container with the child's name on it.
- **If your child has any type of food allergy or medical condition** that would require us to administer any type of medication, such as an epi-pen, you **MUST notify the office immediately** so that we can send you our allergy and medical conditions information. You will be required to meet all the requirements before your child may attend the first day.

### **Nebulizer Treatments**

If your child needs a breathing or nebulizer treatment, we ask that, if possible, these treatments be spaced so that they can be given at home or a parent or guardian can come to school to do the treatment. If this is not possible, call the office and talk with Michelle Zimmer to make other arrangements.

### **Sunscreen Policy**

Dimensions' mission is to help children connect with nature. Since we are committed to spending as much time outside as possible, it is important that children are protected from the sun's harmful rays.

- Parents **must** apply sunscreen to their child BEFORE bringing their child each day.
- If permission authorizing the application of sunscreen is on file, sunscreen will be reapplied to children by teachers or staff if outside longer than usual.
- One brand/type of sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 will be provided for all children for whom we have been given authorization to apply sunscreen.
- If your child has a sensitivity to certain sunscreens, you will be responsible for bringing your own labeled with your child's name. **Please give it to a teacher. It may NOT be kept in a child's cubby. It must be kept out of reach of children.**



# Safety

We always want to make sure the children at Dimensions are safe and it is important that families are informed and aware of the policies that help us to achieve this goal.

## **Phone Numbers and Emergency Contacts**

When you filled out your forms, you listed your phone numbers and emergency contacts. Please make sure these are updated at all times. It is important that we have current phone numbers each time you drop your child off. Remember to let both your child's teacher and the office know if the number is different for the day.

We must always know where to reach at least one parent/guardian during the sessions. Notify the office if you need a phone number changed.

## **CPR & First Aid**

Teachers are trained in CPR and first aid procedures but are glad that they rarely, if ever, need to use their training. Safety is always stressed. In the event of a bump or scrape, teachers will fill out an incident report and place it in the child's cubby. If teachers feel the injury is more serious, they will contact a parent/guardian. Our policy is to always call a parent/guardian in the case of any sort of head bump or injury.

## **Emergencies**

If you need to contact your child's teacher DURING the session, you may call the Dimensions office at (402) 476-8304. Be sure to leave a detailed message if necessary. If you indicate that it is an emergency, your call will be put through to the teacher if possible. If it's not an emergency, you can leave a message and the teacher will call you back when she is not with children.



### ***Photo ID's***

We require anyone other than parents or guardians picking up your child to show a photo ID. Please inform them to make sure they have their ID with them. It is important to keep the list of people picking up your child(ren) updated. We will NOT release to older siblings unless we have talked to a parent first.

### ***Snow Emergency/School Closings***

We follow the Lincoln Public School emergency weather closings. If LPS is not in session, please follow the Catholic School closings. Listen to the local radio and TV stations for updates. You may also check our website or Facebook page.

### ***Emergency Response***

Emergency plans have been put into place for many different types of situations. Our staff is trained in the appropriate actions necessary during these emergencies and in helping children deal with their feelings during these situations. If any of these emergencies occur, it is important that you know what your job will be to help us keep the children safe and maintain order until the situation is over.

### ***Lockdown***

This plan would be put into place in the event of unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, children will be cared for indoors and the building will be locked to restrict entry.

### ***Evacuate***

If it is not safe for the children to remain in the building, we have a plan in place to evacuate to a predetermined alternate site within walking distance. If we are not allowed back in the Dimensions building, parents will be notified to come and pick up their children at the alternate site.

In the event of an actual emergency, we recommend that you please not call the office. It is important that we keep the phone lines open and all of our staff will be focusing on the emergency situation.

### ***Fire Drills/Tornado Drills***

Fire and tornado drills are practiced according to licensing and fire code. It is important to us that we do this in a way that does not scare children.



# Dimensions' Expectations

## **Clothing**

At Dimensions, children are active learners both inside and out. We provide many experiences based on the interests of the children and some of them can get a little messy. It is also our mission to inspire children to connect more deeply with nature and we will be going outside in all kinds of weather. We want to make sure that all children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Please make sure you:

- Dress your child so that they are comfortable for play both outside and inside.
- **Send your child in appropriate shoes for running and climbing. (No flip flops or crocs.)**
- Label all clothing
- Send appropriate winter weather clothing:
  - Coat
  - Hat
  - Mittens/Gloves
  - Boots
  - Snowpants (Snowy weather)

## **Toilet Training**

**Toddlers:** As you begin to toilet train your child at home, let the teachers know what routines you use at home so that we can be consistent with your child at school. Please make sure that you have several changes of clothes at school.

**Preschool:** We are not equipped to change diapers during the Preschool sessions, but we certainly are prepared to deal with "accidents" from time to time. Emergency clothing is on hand for just that reason. We do require, however, that your child be out of diapers and pull-ups.

## **Snacks**

Your child will be provided a healthy snack each day. Each month, you will receive a link for snack sign-up. **(All snacks must be unopened, store bought items).** If you bring fresh fruit or vegetables, please **DO NOT** prepare or cut it at home.

Our philosophy is to promote healthy eating for all of the children and because of the rise in childhood obesity, related complications, and for medical reasons, such as diabetes, allergies and other medical conditions we ask that you do not bring any of the following:

- **no sweets**
- **no peanuts, tree nuts or peanut butter**
- **no home-made items**
- **no high-sugar content foods**

## **Birthdays**

We try to make birthdays special days for every child by making decorated tags and singing to each birthday person. If you would like to send a non-food treat, consider stickers or special cups or napkins. **Healthy, fun snacks** are always welcome for birthdays. **Sweet treats (such as cookies, cupcakes, etc.) will NOT be served.** Because of safety issues, no gum or balloons.

Invitations to classmates should be sent through parents' emails. You will receive a class list. Please contact parents individually if you would like mailing addresses. This helps avoid hurt feelings.

## **Toys**

We work very hard at providing wonderfully enriching materials and experiences for your child. Please help us by keeping your child's toys at home.

## **Field Trips**

Children may take walking field trips to areas around our neighborhood such as: Sunken Gardens (off D Street between 26th & 27th) or Hazel Abel Park (at the corner of 18th and E Streets). Parents will be notified in advance if children leave the building grounds.

## **If Your Child Stays for Lunch...**

- You will need to send a lunch and beverage with your child each day (remember eating utensils, if needed).
- Children will not have access to a refrigerator or microwave for lunches.
- If you have foods that need to stay cold, you could use a frozen cold pack (available in grocery stores).
- Be sure to put your child's name on the outside of his/her lunch box or sack.
- Help us by keeping sweet, sugary foods to a minimum.
- Lunches do not need to be large. We provide nutritious snacks. *Most young children usually don't eat much at one time.*

*Due to licensing changes and our increased awareness of the value of a balanced diet, we encourage families to send lunches that meet the USDA requirements. (These requirements are listed in the back of this handbook.)*

## **Sleep Policy: Infants under 12 months**

- Teachers will put infants under the age of 12 months on their backs when placed in cribs.
- A doctor's statement will be required if a child needs to sleep in alternative positions for medical reasons.
- All teachers will follow the steps for SIDS prevention.
- Parents will need to provide a winter and summer sleep sack for their child to use during naptime.
- Please bring a crib sheet to use at naptime.
- Blankets or soft toys will not be used in the cribs at naptime.

## **Sleep Policy: Infants over 12 months, Toddlers, Preschool**

- Please bring a SMALL pillow, blanket and crib sheet for your child to store at school.
- Label all items.
- Please choose items that do not need to go home each night.

## **Infant Room—Shoeless Environment**

The infant room is a shoeless environment. This allows for a cleaner floor surface for children to enjoy while exploring in the classroom. When you drop off and pick up your child simply remove your shoes and join us in the classroom. There is a place provided for your shoes near the entry. Shoe covers will be available if you prefer that option. You might notice the teachers might be wearing shoes. This is because they have brought them to wear only in the infant room.



### ***Behavioral and Developmental Challenges***

It takes time for children to adjust and settle into a routine. It is important for teachers and parents to remember that some children's behavior might be challenging, but most children respond when consistency and routine are in place.

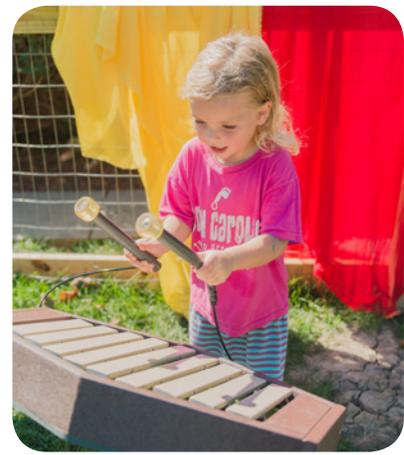
**If your child is already receiving special education services from Lincoln Public Schools or another provider**, we want to make sure that we are implementing and following the strategies and goals of the IEP or IFSP. Please notify Michelle Zimmer at [michellez@dimensioned.org](mailto:michellez@dimensioned.org) or (402) 476-8304 **BEFORE** your child's first day.

**If there are challenges that continue** after the teachers, Director and parents have used the strategies that have been outlined for them, Dimensions Education Programs will ask parents to:

- Call Lincoln Public School at (402) 436-1920 to start an evaluation process. (At that time, parents will be given two weeks to request an evaluation.)
- If a child qualifies for LPS services, all meetings with LPS staff must be scheduled through our office at (402) 476-8304.
- It is important that all requests from LPS and Dimensions be followed through by parent(s) or we may need to ask you to give up your spot in the program.

**If your child has been identified for special services while attending Dimensions** and we have not yet been part of the process, please notify Michelle Zimmer at [michellez@dimensioned.org](mailto:michellez@dimensioned.org) or (402) 476-8304.

It is our goal to work together as a team to best meet the needs of every child.



## Our Staff

All of our staff work together to help our entire program function as a unified whole. As your family joins our program, we want to work together as a team to make sure your child has the best experiences possible while at Dimensions. Please do not ever hesitate to contact any of our staff if you have any questions, concerns, ideas or if we may help in any way.

### **Teaching Staff**

Shannon Beal	Heather Guess	Katie Logan	Hayley Raatz
Tami Britton	Suzan Haley	Kathy Marshall	Kristi Reitz
Kristin Burnett	Cindy Heinzman	Sherry Miller	Emily Salistean
Katie Dietz	Candace Kastrup	Holly Murdoch	Cassie Thelen
Laurie Flynn	Amanda Kelly	Molly Nelson	Abbie Whisler
			Joyce White

### **Office Staff**

Our Executive Administrative Assistant, Jean Pancharoen, is available in the office to answer questions. Her office hours are Monday–Friday from 9:30–5:30. If she happens to be unavailable, leave a detailed message at (402) 476-8304.

### **Education Director**

Michelle Zimmer has been with the program since 1993. She oversees the daily operations including registration, scheduling and the many aspects of program planning for the Preschool, Infant and Toddler and the Summer Discovery Days programs. She facilitates the scheduling of student teachers from Southeast Community College, Concordia, UNL and Doane who will be doing their practicums in our Research Classrooms. Please do not hesitate to contact her with your questions and concerns.

### **Administrative Director**

Linda Maack has been with our program since 1982. She facilitates scheduling of staff in the classrooms and handles other administrative duties.

### **Education and Outreach Liaison for Dimensions/Nature Explore**

Chris Kiewra has been with our program since 2000. She supports our community through local outreach and facilitates professional development and research projects with our teaching staff. As part of her liaison role, Chris coordinates family and volunteer involvement, and research projects, and incorporates Dimensions research into new Nature Explore resources.

### **Executive Director**

Nancy Rosenow has been with our organization since 1982 and serves as Executive Director of the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, Nature Explore, and Child Care Exchange Magazine. She works closely with Dimensions Foundation researchers and consultants in the development of resource materials and training. Nancy presents Dimensions Foundation workshops and consultations throughout the United States.

## Session Schedules and Fees

We operate on a school-year calendar (August–May) with sessions for ages 6 weeks–5 years and offer summer sessions through grade 3. (See Summer Brochure)

Three and six hour sessions are offered. Extended hours from 7:30am to 5:30pm are available on a limited basis. Contact Tony Guerrero at [tonyg@dimensionsfoundation.org](mailto:tonyg@dimensionsfoundation.org) or (402) 474-8511 for extended hour rates.

### Registration Fee - \$55.00 for Current Children / \$65.00 for New Children

<b>Infant</b>	<b>6 wks–18 months</b>	<b>Ten monthly payments of:</b>
M–F	9:00–12:00	\$378.10
	9:00–3:00	\$727.70
M/W/F	9:00–12:00	\$239.40
	9:00–3:00	\$449.35
T/Th	9:00–12:00	\$169.10
	9:00–3:00	\$309.70
 <b>Toddlers</b>	 <b>18 months–3 years</b>	 <b>Ten monthly payments of:</b>
M–F	9:00–12:00	\$345.80
	9:00–3:00	\$663.10
M/W/F	9:00–12:00	\$220.40
	9:00–3:00	\$410.40
T/Th	9:00–12:00	\$156.75
	9:00–3:00	\$284.05
 <b>Preschool</b>	 <b>3yrs by Oct. 15 &amp; potty trained*</b>	 <b>Ten monthly payments of:</b>
M–F	8:45–2:45	\$503.50
M/W/F	9:15–12:15	\$195.70
	9:15–3:15	\$361.95
T/Th	9:15–12:15	\$147.25
	9:15–3:15	\$264.10

**\* Exceptions may exist**

# Lunch for Children Ages 1–12

*Must include all four components*

<b>Food Components</b>	<b>Ages 1–2</b>	<b>Ages 3–5</b>	<b>Ages 6–12</b>
<b>1 Milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
<b>2 Fruits/Vegetables</b> juice, fruit and/or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
<b>1 Grains/Bread</b> bread or cornbread, biscuit, roll, muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta, noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
<b>1 Meat/ Meat Alternate</b> meat, poultry, fish or alternate protein product or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans, peas or peanut, other nut/seed butters or nuts and/or seeds or yogurt	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. 1/2 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp 1/2 oz. 4 oz.	1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 3/4 3/8 cup 3 Tbsp. 3/4 oz. 6 oz.	2 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz. 1 1/2 cup 4 Tbsp 1 oz. 8 oz.

Children age 12 and older may be served larger portions based on their greater food needs. They may not be served less than the minimum quantities listed in this column.

Milk served must be low-fat (1%) or non-fat (skim).

Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength.

Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.

A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

Nuts and seeds may meet only one-half of the total meat/meat alternate serving and must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the lunch or supper requirement.

Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.

## Snack for Children Ages 1–12

Must include two of the four components

<b>Food Components</b>	<b>Ages 1–2</b>	<b>Ages 3–5</b>	<b>Ages 6–12</b>
<b>1 Milk</b> fluid milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
<b>2 Fruits/Vegetables</b> juice, fruit and/or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
<b>1 Grains/Bread</b> bread or cornbread, biscuit, roll, muffin or cold dry cereal or hot cooked cereal or pasta, noodles or grains	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/4 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1/2 slice 1/2 serving 1/3 cup 1/4 cup 1/4 cup	1 slice 1 serving 3/4 cup 1/2 cup 1/2 cup
<b>1 Meat/ Meat Alternate</b> meat, poultry, fish or alternate protein product or cheese or egg or cooked dry beans, peas or peanut, other nut/seed butters or nuts and/or seeds or yogurt	1 oz. 1 oz. 1 oz. 1/2 1/4 cup 2 Tbsp 1/2 oz. 4 oz.	1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 1 1/2 oz. 3/4 3/8 cup 3 Tbsp. 3/4 oz. 6 oz.	2 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz. 1 1/2 cup 4 Tbsp 1 oz. 8 oz.

Children age 12 and older may be served larger portions based on their greater food needs. They may not be served less than the minimum quantities listed in this column.

Milk served must be low-fat (1%) or non-fat (skim).

Fruit or vegetable juice must be full-strength.

Breads and grains must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

Cereal must be whole-grain or enriched or fortified.

A serving consists of the edible portion of cooked lean meat or poultry or fish.

One-half egg meets the required minimum amount (one ounce or less) of meat alternate.

Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened.

## Lunch for Infants 6 weeks–11 months

<b>6 weeks–3 months</b>	<b>4–7 months</b>	<b>8–11 months</b>
4–6 fluid ounces of formula or breastmilk	4–8 fluid ounces of formula or breastmilk  0–3 tablespoons of infant cereal and  0–3 tablespoons of fruit or vegetable or both	6–8 fluid ounces of formula or breastmilk  2–4 tablespoons of infant cereal and/or  1–4 tablespoons of meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas or  ½–2 ounces of cheese or  1–4 ounces (volume) of cottage cheese or  1–4 ounces (weight) of cheese food or cheese spread and  1–4 tablespoons of fruit or vegetable or both

Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

Breastmilk or formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered if the infant is still hungry.

A serving of fruits or vegetables is required when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

# Important Dates for 2016–17 School Year

Updated July 12, 2016

## 2016

<b>August 1–12</b> .....	Closed
<b>August 10 &amp; 11</b> .....	Orientation Nights
<b>August 15</b> .....	First Day of School Year Sessions
<b>September 5</b> .....	Closed
<b>September 26 &amp; 27</b> .....	Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences
<b>October 17 &amp; 18</b> .....	Closed
<b>November 12</b> .....	Barnes & Noble Book Fair
<b>November 24 &amp; 25</b> .....	Closed
<b>December 21–January 2</b> .....	Closed

## 2017

<b>January 23 &amp; 24</b> .....	Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences
<b>February 3</b> .....	Eat & Explore Night and Classroom Visits
<b>April 14</b> .....	Closed
<b>April 20 &amp; 21</b> .....	Nature Walkathon
<b>May 12</b> .....	Family Potluck Picnic
<b>May 24</b> .....	Last Day of School Year Sessions
<b>May 25 &amp; 26, 29</b> .....	Closed
<b>May 30</b> .....	Summer Sessions Begin
<b>July 4</b> .....	Closed
<b>Aug 4</b> .....	Last Day of Summer Sessions

