



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
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# PRESCHOOL ENRICHMENT ACADEMY PARENT HANDBOOK

Jerry Long Family YMCA  
2026-2027

YMCA OF NORTHWEST NORTH CAROLINA

**Our mission:** "Helping all people reach their  
God-given potential in spirit, mind and body."

## **Greetings Parents!**

On behalf of the Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy, we would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to educate your child with our Christian preschool program. We provide this program as a ministry to your family. Our goal is to offer developmentally appropriate early-learning environments, rich in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. The Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy has been designed with the young child in mind. Our goal is to provide a safe, wholesome, Christian environment where children will grow in spirit, mind, and body. Your child's success depends on close cooperation and understanding between parents and staff. This handbook has been created as a resource for the parents. It will help you know and understand our policies, as well as support our program, so that your child will have a successful year at the Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy. Again, thank you for allowing us to minister to you and your family! We're glad you're joining us for your child's preschool adventure!

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## **YMCA Mission**

"Helping all people reach their God-given potential in spirit, mind, and body."

## **Our Focus**

Our focus at day camp is to encourage campers to meet their potential by demonstrating five key character traits: caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith.

## **Our Purpose**

To provide a quality, Christian-oriented experience that is safe, convenient and creative. These programs present age-appropriate opportunities and activities that enhance the child's spiritual, physical, social, intellectual and emotional growth.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY/GOAL**

The goal of the YMCA Preschool is to provide a safe, wholesome, Christian environment where children will grow in spirit, mind and body. Teachers focus on teaching your child the YMCA's Five Building Blocks: socialization, fine and gross motor skills, education and healthy choices. YMCA Preschool strives to enhance each child's self-esteem, helping them reach their God-given potential.

## **ABOUT OUR PROGRAM**

YMCA Preschools provide developmentally appropriate early-learning environments, rich in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth and learning opportunities. The Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy offers a variety of activities that include circle time, centers, creative play, music and drama, physical fitness, while also incorporating fine and gross motor development. All our classes are planned to develop each child's self-esteem and a strong image of self-worth through learning and sharing in a fun, structured environment. Children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and solve problems in a warm, Christian setting.

We believe that through play and other process-oriented experiences, children gain confidence in their ability to learn. From Circle Time to their adventures through the Learning Centers, from the organized classrooms to the playground, we strive to provide an atmosphere where children can laugh, learn and play; a place where a child can be a child, growing intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually every day.

YMCA Preschools are not licensed and regulated by the State Department of Child Development. The YMCA of Northwest North Carolina Preschools adheres to YMCA Quality Standards.

## **CLASSROOM RATIOS (Teacher: Children)**

Toddler Twos - 2:12

Three/Four year olds - 2: 20

Pre-K - 2: 20

## **CURRICULUM**

The Jerry Long YMCA Preschool Enrichment Academy prides itself on a play-based curriculum. Our goal is to provide a safe, wholesome, Christian environment where children will grow in spirit, mind and body. We provide many age-appropriate resources to enrich their learning through play and exploration. We believe that children learn best through hands on experiences. All activities are child centered. This program encourages self-expression and exploration. The daily activities will consist of circle time, stories, centers, art, music and small group work. The three/four year old class and the Pre-K class will experience swim Fridays. These classes will begin in the month of September and will last throughout the year.

A daily class schedule will be given to you at the beginning of the year by your child's teacher. This schedule will include times of activities.

## **TODDLER TWOS CLASS**

The main focus of the Toddler Twos program is to help children adjust to a caregiver other than their parents. The children are given lots of love and playtime. They will participate in age appropriate crafts, music and dance. During nice weather they spend time on the playground, practicing their gross motor skills (walking, running, climbing). In these classes too, the children are beginning to learn how to relate to peers and teachers. We begin to focus on social interactions and listening skills. We will concentrate on the following:

- Following the daily routine
- Beginning to learn to share
- Participating in circle time
- Painting, pasting and coloring
- Beginning to recognize colors and simple shapes
- Following a one-step direction
- Recognizing own name and friend's names.

### **THREES/FOURS CLASS**

Our main goal in the Threes/Fours Class consist of making an easy transition from home to school, developing good listening skills, learning to follow simple directions and beginning to become more self-reliant. This class proves a time for your children to practice newfound independence as well as introducing them to limits and schedules. Gross and fine motor skills, communication, listening and self-help are emphasized and encouraged. We will also concentrate on:

- Following simple instructions
- Sharing and playing with others
- Manipulating a paintbrush, cutting with scissors and experimenting with other art mediums
- Recognizing their first and last name and names of others in their class
- Beginning to recognize some letters of the alphabet
- Recognizing numbers 1-10
- Knowing primary colors and basic shapes
- Being self-reliant with their clothing
- Developing large motor skills through games and activities on the playground

These skills are the focus of the first half of the school year. The second half of the school year focuses on the following:

- Further develop fine motor skills
- Recognize primary and secondary colors
- Recognize letters of the alphabet
- Write first name
- Recognize last name
- Participate in the whole language experience (listening to stories, sharing experiences with class, answering questions about stories)
- Master simple math manipulations
- Writing numbers 1-10
- Participating in the whole language experience
- Following complex instructions and sitting and listening
- Working oil their own for a limited time as preparation for school
- Developing an awareness of the world around them through science
- Having good health habits and manners

### **PRE-K CLASS**

Our Pre-K Readiness class prepares children for a successful kindergarten experience by introducing readiness skills in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics; combined with socialization activities and character development.

- Write first name.
- Establish Phonemic Awareness, including beginning and ending sounds, letter blends and rhyming.
- Recognize all letters (capital and lower case) and most letter sounds.
- Recognize common sight words
- Simple reading comprehension by retelling a story and naming main characters.
- Recognize numbers 1-20.
- Write numbers 1-10.
- Counting to 100
- Complete and create simple patterns.
- Completing simple addition and subtraction.
- Develop knowledge of the world around them in relation to science.
- Encourage positive social and cooperation skills.

### **STUDENTS**

While the Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy will make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for mentally and physically handicapped children, the Academy cannot accept children that are (1) of danger to themselves, (2) of danger to others or (3) a disruption to the normal activities making it unreasonably difficult for other children to learn and participate in our programs. Any of the above reasons will be grounds for dismissal from the Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment

Academy. A parent/guardian must discuss with the Coordinator any special conditions or circumstances involving their child. This must be discussed prior to registration, so that we can advise you as to whether or not we can make reasonable accommodations for your child.

## **TEACHERS**

Our preschool is staffed with experienced and trained teachers who are eager to work with your child! Our teachers are ASHI Certified in CPR and First Aid, and are recertified annually. They have all undergone a criminal background check. We have searched high and low for teachers who exemplify outstanding character, compassion and love of children. We take pride in the high expectations we set for our preschool staff each year and evaluate them on an annual basis.

## **ADMISSION**

Children will be enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Additional space may become available in classes, as the school year progresses if individual participants leave the program (please ask if you would like your child's sibling or friend to be added to our waiting list.)

The Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Academy reserves the right to deny preschool admission or continued participation if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The child's registration form is incomplete
- Monthly installments not paid on time
- The child is not participating in or benefiting from the program
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for the child
- The staff cannot provide adequate or safe care for other enrolled children due to the behavior of the child

## **CANCELLATION**

If you need to cancel your enrollment in the Preschool, you must notify the preschool director in writing or email. Cancellation at any time will result in the loss of registration fees.

## **MONTHLY TUITION PAYMENTS**

Nine equal monthly tuition payments will be due on the 1st of every month from September through May. There will be a \$10 late fee charged to your account if monthly tuition is paid after the due date. A \$25 fee will be added for any insufficient fund transaction. Refunds are not given for days missed due to illness, snow days or vacation. Your child has an assigned spot in our program (we cannot give your child's spot away to outside children on days your child does not participate). Should you find that you need financial assistance, please contact our Member Services desk and a Member Specialist will be able to assist you with our Open Doors Program.

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **School Hours:**

School hours are 9:00 AM to 12 PM for Toddler Twos and Threes Classes.

Kindergarten Readiness class is from 9 AM to 1 PM.

Children may be dropped off 9 AM and 9:15 AM at the Preschool Youth Development Entry. The doors to the Preschool Entry will be locked at 9:15 AM. You may not bring your child in through the Preschool Entry after 9:15 AM. After 9:15 AM, please park your car in a legal parking space and enter the building at the main lobby entrance. Children will not be allowed into the classroom prior to 8:55 AM. The teachers use this time to prepare for the day and may not be in the classroom. Preschool pickup is between 11:45 AM and 12 Noon for Toddler Twos and Threes. All children in these classes must be picked up by 12 Noon; A late fee of \$1 for every minute late will be charged and placed on your Daxko account. Pick up for the Pre-K Readiness class/ Lunch Bunch is between 12:45 PM and 1 PM. All children in this class must be picked up by 1 PM; late fee of \$1 for every minute late will be charged and placed on your Daxko account.

### **Rides In and Out Procedure**

The car line forms at the side Preschool/ Youth Development entrance door. Please remain at your car and in the car line. A teacher will come to your vehicle door and get your child from your car. Please do not park and walk your child to the preschool door. It slows our line down and is not fair for parents who have been patiently waiting in the car line. We ask that you do not use the car line for conference time; we have a great number of children to get into the building to begin our day. If you have an issue or concern please consider using our Remind App to contact your child's teacher. Rides out is located at

the same preschool door as rides in. We will bring your child to your vehicle. To keep the line moving, we ask that you quickly buckle your child or choose to pull forward to the round front entrance to buckle. Please remember to place your carline tag on your rear view mirror to assist teachers with moving the car line quickly.

### **Authorized Pick Up**

For the safety of your child, participants will only be released to the legal guardian or a person listed on the approved pick up list. Every adult must give a predetermined code word. If an adult other than the known parent picks up the child, that adult must give the code word to the teacher before the child will be released. Please share the password only with adults you approve to pick up your child. If you do not know your code word please let us know. If there is any change in who may pick-up your child, especially if someone who has been regularly signing your child out is no longer allowed custody, please contact the Preschool Director immediately to change your approved list and to turn in copies of official court documents (required by the YMCA). You may want to consider changing your code word at that time as well.

Please note: The Jerry Long Preschool Enrichment Program follows the Winston Salem Forsyth County School System schedule. If the WSFCSs are closed, the Preschool is closed. If the WSFCSs open on a day originally scheduled off to make up a snow day, the Preschool will be open.

### **Daily Apparel**

Clothing for your preschooler should be simple, comfortable, washable and easy for your child to manage. Rubber soled shoes are a must. No sandals, flip flops or slick bottom shoes, please. We go outside daily, weather permitting. Please send appropriate outerwear for the morning's weather conditions. Make sure your child's name is on sweaters, coats, hats, mittens, etc. Please be mindful that while at school we play and discover many new things and although our staff takes great care in preventing paint spills, messes, etc. We ask that you not dress your child in their best new clothes and expect them to remain spotless. If an accident occurs, your child will be dressed in the extra set of clothes you send to school at the beginning of the year. Please don't forget to send an extra set of clothing back if we use the original outfit.

### **Things to Bring to School Each Day**

Your child needs a backpack (no wheels) each day, to transport their folder, crafts they complete, and store their extra set of clothing. Please provide a FULL change of clothes in a labeled bag. Children who are not potty trained need diapers in their bags as well. The Preschool provides wipes. Pre-K Readiness class and students staying for Extended Care should bring their lunchbox labeled with your child's name.

Snack is provided, but you are welcome to send in a snack from home if desired. Children will need to bring in a labeled water bottle every day.

### **Lunch Bunch... WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL.**

Kindergarten Readiness students eat lunch at the Preschool daily, in order students to get used to a longer school day and eating in a group setting as they prepare for Kindergarten. The Toddler Twos and Threes/Fours classes have the option to pay for Lunch Bunch daily, for an additional charge. You may sign up for Extended Care at Membership or on your YMCA portal account. Extended Care runs from 12 PM to 1 PM. Children must be able to feed themselves (finger food is ok), they must be able to sit independently in a chair at a table, and they must be able to eat without disturbing others (no throwing food or containers on the floor, no banging on tables, etc.). Teachers do not have access to microwaves or refrigerators, so please keep that in mind when packing lunch. Reusable lunch containers are a great way for your child to manage lunch on their own without having to wait for teachers to open packages and containers. Please send a nutritious lunch that is easy for your child to manage. We strive to teach healthy eating habits and appreciate your help from home.

Here are some other lunch reminders:

- **Do not send candy! Chewy and hard candies are choking hazards.**
- **Do not send soda**
- Students are asked to finish all healthy food before eating treats.
- Teachers will send back any uneaten food in the child's lunch box
- Please cut up grapes, carrots, etc. that are potential choking hazards.
- Please label all reusable food containers and ice packs, so they do not get put in the wrong box. If you are using reusable food pouches for applesauce, yogurt, etc. please leave a note to remind teachers not to throw them away.

**Screen Time**

We believe that screen time should not be a part of the preschool day. Occasionally, our teachers will use technology to show a quick video about a subject being studied, or to play music for the class. We provide opportunities for light, moderate and vigorous play throughout the day. We do not allow any technology from home to be brought to school.

**Labeling**

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of labeling all your child's personal belongings. Very often if an item is not labeled, teachers are unable to determine its owner. Therefore, if your child brings it to school, make sure that their name is clearly written on it. Please label jackets.

**Take Home Folders**

Your child will be provided a folder to transport papers, newsletters and messages from school. Please check the folder daily. If you need to communicate with the teacher, please send notes to school in the folder or the Remind App.

**Emergencies**

All of our staff is CPR and First Aid Certified. Our preschool staff will treat routine cuts, scrapes and bumps. In the case of serious illness or an accident involving your child, we will contact you immediately. In the event that you cannot be reached, your signed authorization waiver (which you completed at registration) allows us to secure prompt treatment. Please be aware that in the case of a life-threatening emergency, 911 will be called FIRST.

If your child develops symptoms of illness during their stay, parents will be notified and will need to pick up their child immediately. Children who have the following symptoms should remain at home until they are unmedicated, symptom free for 24 hours unless a written note from the child's physician is given, stating that their symptoms are not contagious.

Some symptoms include: continuous or colored nasal drainage, (more than 3 wipes), coughing, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, skin rash, open sores, pink eye, active head lice. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will call an emergency number listed on the child's registration form.

Program participants will wash/sanitize their hands upon entering the classroom at the beginning of each day and before eating food. Participants will also wash hands after each visit to the restroom. Please be considerate of the students and teachers in the classroom and do not send your child to school sick.

**Medicines**

No medication will be administered in preschool unless a Medication Form has been turned in along with instructions and medication. Please put all medications, along with Medication Form, inside a labeled Ziploc bag. Medications will be kept in your child's book bag.

**Absences**

We love communication! Should your child be out sick, due to illness, vacation or emergency, your child's teacher would like to know, in advance. While this is not required, our teachers do get concerned when a child is out, especially for an extended amount of time. You can reach them via the Remind App, or leave a message at the Membership Desk by calling (336) 712-2000.

**Inclement Weather**

As with the school calendar, the Jerry Long YMCA Preschool Enrichment Academy also follows the Winston Salem Forsyth County School system's inclement weather policy. If the WSFCSs are closed, so are we. If there is a delay in start for the schools, we will open at 10 AM. The coordinator will make every effort to send an email, text or message on the Remind App as soon as possible so you can plan your day.

**Discipline**

Please encourage your child to follow the instructions of the teachers. The philosophy of our program is based on the "Golden Rule", with respect being shown to all. Good manners and personal empathy are traits we will foster. Encouraging good behavior helps discourage unacceptable behavior. Therefore, using the principle of positive reinforcement, each child will be praised for good work and made to feel important and successful. Negative behavior will be confronted and redirected toward positive behavior.

In order to provide the positive kind of discipline desired, we must first begin with the proper student-teacher ratios. The next step is ensuring that our teachers understand the age group they teach and are well-prepared with a variety of activities. Within each classroom positive rules and guidelines are established. When a child does not follow the rules, he/she will be reminded. If the reminder is ineffective, the child's attention will be redirected or there will be some time allotted out of the activities for a child to think and prepare himself for appropriate behavior. Discipline problems that persist or are disruptive to the class will be shared with the parents so teachers and parents can work together to correct the inappropriate behavior.

Even though we have loving care and plenty of age-appropriate toys and activities, children will sometimes show aggressive behavior (hitting, kicking, pushing, biting, etc.) toward a classmate. All signs of aggression are unacceptable but are not considered abnormal for your children who are learning to get along in group situations.

Our desire is to work with families through any difficult stage their child may be going through. If a behavioral problem is recurring, the parent may be called in for a conference with the teachers and director. Our goal is always to come up with a plan that can provide the child with consistency at home and at school. We reserve the right to request temporary or permanent withdrawal of a child whose parents are unable or unwilling to work with the school or a child whose behavior is dangerous to him/her and/or others.

Please note: Children often bite others because they do not have the words to express their emotions. He/she may have been frustrated or wanted attention. As a staff team, we are dedicated to helping your child use his/her increasing vocabulary to work through this phase. However, for the safety of other children your child may be asked to take a day off from the Preschool should the bite break the skin or should biting occur three times in the same month. Thank you for your understanding.

We strive to guide children in becoming happy, responsible and cooperative participants through positive reinforcement and teaching techniques.

### **Birthday Special Treats**

You may celebrate your child's birthday in class by making advance arrangements with your child's teachers. We believe that children deserve to celebrate their birthdays. When sending in special snacks, please keep in mind our commitment to healthy habits and children with dietary restrictions or limitations. Parents are welcome to send in a special treat to be enjoyed during scheduled snack time at drop-off. If you bring cupcakes, the miniature ones are the perfect size. Other great healthy birthday treats are fruit kabobs, banana muffins, fruit salad, yogurt cups/tubes and fruit juice popsicles. **WE are a NUT-Free school.**

If you are planning an off-site party and would like to invite some classmates, please send party invitations to the teacher so that they can distribute them discretely into backpacks/folders, so as to prevent hurt feelings. Presents as well, are not permitted to be exchanged in the classroom.

### **Class parties**

The classes will celebrate various holidays and special events throughout the year. If additional items are needed for the party your teacher will send out Sign- Up Genius links. When purchasing or making party treats, please remember that we are teaching healthy eating habits at preschool and are a NUT-free school.

### **Contact Directory/ Communication**

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the Preschool or other YMCA programs, you can reach our Youth Development Director, Magan Russell, at [m.russell@ymcanwnc.org](mailto:m.russell@ymcanwnc.org) or the Lead Teacher, Abby Whitley at [a.whitley@ymcanwnc.org](mailto:a.whitley@ymcanwnc.org)

Our Preschool Academy utilizes the Remind App to communicate changes in the schedule, pick up areas (pick up will be on the playground in good weather), closings or delays and reminders for upcoming activities and events. Please refer to the sheet sent home from Preschool to set up your account. You can contact any of the teachers or our Site Supervisor via this app.

### **Remind App**

Our main form of communication is through the Remind App. To sign up for your child's class, follow the below instructions. For the Kindergarten Readiness class, send a text to 81010 and text this message (with @ included) @jlkreadi For the 3's class, send a text to 81010 and text this message (with @ included) @25263s For the 2's class, send a text to 81010 and text this message (with @ included) @25262s