



WALLINGFORD

United Methodist

CHILD CARE CENTER

TOUR INFORMATION FOR

PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES

2023

Introduction to WCCC

Thank you for your interest in joining our Wallingford Childcare Center Community (WCCC). We are a non-profit organization offering quality childcare for infants to preschool aged children. Our program offers an innovative early learning environment and emergent curriculum modeled by The Educaring Approach (RIE) and Reggio Emilia Approach. Children are provided a nurturing environment that meets their self-care, social and emotional needs while encouraging autonomy and confidence to explore the world around them. Our goal is not only to provide a strong early learning foundation for children, but to ensure their safety and well-being, while in our care.

History of WCCC Including Relationship with the Church

Wallingford Childcare Center was founded by Wallingford United Methodist Church in 1968 to serve families of the community. While the church and childcare center remain separate from sharing a religious affiliation, both organizations uphold a strong partnership of support for one another and as active members of the Wallingford community with common goals of inclusion, social justice work, and working towards a more peaceful world.

WCCC has an onsite administrative team and is supported by the childcare board composed of community members, school administrators, staff, and church representatives. Parents of the children are invited to join the childcare board as well.

Our Anti-Bias and Anti-Racist Mission

Wallingford Childcare Center values inclusion and diversity as the basis for our mission of being an Anti-Bias and Anti-Racist childcare organization. Our mission is ongoing as we recognize and acknowledge the existence of prejudice and racism against minorities and people of color and we vow to consciously and actively support movements for social and racial justice in our community and communities everywhere. We as early childhood educators are committed to elevating discussions and educating ourselves about the ongoing racial and systemic injustices of disproportionate communities, and sharing resources for learning and involvement with staff, children, and families. Together as a collective, we will continue to be active in our efforts for social and racial justice which will translate into the guidance, support, curriculum, and care we have for your children.

WCCC Program and Curriculum

WCCC's curriculum is inspired by the principles of Magda Gerber's Educaring Approach, Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) and the Reggio Emilia Approach.

Resources for Infant Educators (RIE) through the Educaring Approach:

Our infant and toddler teachers model their care for children after RIE, with the goal of supporting children to feel secure, independent and able to explore their environment. Teachers value building trusting relationships with the children through consistency in routine and daily self-care activities encouraging autonomy and active participation. Teachers respect the child's ability to learn and develop naturally with time, space, materials to do so, which allows children to feel competent and connected to the environment around them. Sensitive observation allows teachers to best understand their own communication in helping to meet their needs. In these early years, teachers understand the importance of communication with parents and strive to build strong relationships with families, helping to build a connection between home life and the classroom.



The Reggio Emilia Approach:

Our teachers in the classrooms caring for children 2 and a half to 5 years old, incorporate The Reggio Emilia Approach into their curriculum which is an educational approach based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery through a self-guided curriculum. Through this philosophy, we aim to focus on the image of a child as a

human being possessing strong potential for development and is a subject of rights who learns and grows in their relationships with others.

Children are believed to:

- Be active participators in their own learning
- Have unique reciprocal relationships with their teachers

With the Reggio Emilia Approach, the educators are known to be three things:

- The Teacher
- The Child
- The Environment

Teachers value non-contact time to talk together about the children, document observations and plan curriculums based on what will be offered to the children next. Teachers value and encourage child initiated activities, challenge and provoke ideas through open-ended questioning, respect the child's own ideas and allow each child to make mistakes, and observe and judge appropriate moments to intervene.

Children are innately curious and must learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing. Learning is an active process, and children have multiple ways to obtain their knowledge and express themselves.

Our environment aims to be welcoming, nurturing, homelike and inspiring. It is a place for encounter and connection, interaction and dialogue. The Reggio Emilia Approach to teaching young children puts the natural development of children as well as the close relationships that they share with their environment at the center of its philosophy.



How RIE and Reggio Emilia are connected:

The principles of RIE and the Reggio Emilia approach share many of the same core principles that support a child's development from infancy to preschool age. The Reggio Emilia approach views the child as capable, independent learners, with the support of teachers and the environment. The basis for RIE is having respectful interactions and communication with children as they explore the environment around them. Both philosophies empower children to be their authentic selves, with the support of teachers, materials and natural environment around them as a foundation for learning.

Early Achievers:

Wallingford Childcare Center participates in Early Achievers, a quality care rating system created by the Department of Youth and Family Services (DCYF) for Washington State child care providers. By participating in Early Achievers, we are committed to improving quality of care through the learning materials we offer, the spaces and environments we create and maintain, and our meaningful interactions with the children. We work in close partnership with our Early Achievers coach yearound, and participate in a centerwide observation and evaluation every three years. Early Achievers offers resources and funding to help the professional development of teachers as well. Some of our educators have received their Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education or are in the process of doing so, with funding offered by Early Achievers.

For more information about DCYF and Early Achievers, please visit:

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-childcare/early-achievers>



Our Classrooms and Teacher to Child Ratios

WCCC serves 58 children, ages 8 weeks old to 5 years old. The high quality of care in our program is assured by the optimal staff/child ratios:

- Infants (Cloud Room)
 - 8 weeks to 16 months
 - 1:3 ratio
- Toddlers (Sunshine Room)
 - 12 months to 2.5 years
 - 1:4 ratio
- Young Preschool (Rainbow Room)
 - 2 years to 3.5 years
 - 1:5 ratio
- Preschool (Star Room)
 - Ages 3 and 4 year olds
 - 1:7 ratio
- Pre-Kindergarten (Rocket Room)
 - 4 and 5 years old
 - 1:8 ratio



Classroom Schedules:

Classroom schedules vary among age groups but all incorporate a consistent balance of independent free play, community meal times, nap and rest time, and outdoor play time. For our classrooms with children ages 2.5 to 5 years old, schedules include time for more organized small group and large group activities and circle time. In the infant classroom, schedules are driven by the individual children's care needs. Therefore the class schedule is flexible and may differ from day to day.



Mealtime, Food Program and Kitchen:

At WCCC, meal times are not just a source of balanced nutrition throughout the day, but are also an important part of our curriculum. WCCC participates in the “Child and Adult Care Food Program or CACFP. CACFP is a federal assistance program provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in which we abide by health regulations in order to subsidize food for our center. CACFP provides free, reduced rates, or paid rates for 3 eligible meals per day, per child, targeting those most in need. Children are offered a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Additionally CACFP regulations limit our sugar and white breads intake while encouraging whole grains and well balanced meals. Kitchen staff and administrative staff are provided with continuing education each year to help uphold the expectations and regulations of the program.

CACFP provides a great foundation for a healthy and delicious menu that is prepared daily by our center chef. Meal times are a significant part of our curriculum and occur within a community-style setting and support social development that allow for moments of empathy, a sense of community, and self-care.

Outdoor Play and Exploration:

WCCC values learning in nature through outdoor play. Our center has two outdoor play areas used by each classroom, during their scheduled play times in the morning and in the afternoon. Each classroom is guaranteed at least two hours outside each day in all weather conditions...rain or shine! Areas include space for running, climbing, digging, riding bikes/scooters, water and sensory play, pretend play and a sandbox. Outside time also includes residential neighborhood walks, and planned trips to Wallingford Playground and Playfield located two blocks away.





Field Trips and Walking Trips:

All classrooms participate in neighborhood walks. Rainbow Room (2-3.5 years old), Star Room (3-4 years old), and Rocket Room (4 and 5 year olds) organize longer walks often to Wallingford Park and Meridian Park. And in late August, families are invited to attend our Wallingford Farmers Market trip to mark the end of summer.

Teacher Qualifications:

At WCCC, all of our staff members maintain the ongoing certification levels and expectations that would be required of a “lead teacher”. We believe it is valuable for all of us to share in that training and knowledge so we are well equipped to support our children and families in various situations that might arise. These trainings and certifications include:

- Adult, Infant and Child CPR
- First Aid
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Portable Background Check
- TB Test
- Food Handler’s Permit
- Safe Sleep Certification
- Annual 10 hours of ongoing STARS training
- STARS 30 hours basics course

Parent Communication

Parent-Teacher communication is a daily priority within each classroom and extends beyond connecting in the morning during drop-off and in the evening at pick-up. Teachers are available to connect with via classroom email and phone calls to the center on an as needed basis, and in person conferences can always be scheduled as well in addition to the scheduled conferences

that occur in the Fall and Spring. Each classroom sends out a monthly Newsletter to parents about their classroom's emergent curriculum, news, information, and reminders.

Transitions Into School and Between Classrooms

Whether you are a new family joining our Wallingford community or your child is ready to transition into their next classroom, our Administrative Team works to connect families and their prospective classroom teachers with a *Welcome Email*. Each classroom then has their own unique way of welcoming families, which may include a welcome packet or personal message and a scheduled Welcome Meeting intended for families and teachers to officially meet, discuss details about the classroom, and ways teachers can support them and their child through this exciting transition.

Sick Child Policy

As a licensed early learning provider, WCCC is in accordance with the foundational quality standards set by Washington Administrative Code (WAC). Our Sick Child Policy follows WAC's guidelines below:

Children are required to stay home if:

- They have a fever of 100.4 degrees or more AND have a cough, sore throat, earache, headache, rash, vomit, diarrhea, or just not feeling well
- They experience vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours
- They have 2 loose/watery stools more than normal, in 24 hours, or any blood/mucus is present in stool
- They have a body rash (not related to an allergic reaction, diapering, or heat), oozing open sores or wounds
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Untreated head lice, ringworm or scabies

Laundry

Each child joining the center will be given a cot sheet to be used during naptime. We ask that you send a light blanket, small pillow (if the child wants one) and possibly a stuffed animal. Each Friday these items will be sent home for you to wash and return the following Monday.

Community Events

Fall Fun Night

Winter Craft Night

Teacher Appreciation Week

Community Celebrations

Rocket Room Graduation Celebration

End of Summer Wallingford Farmers Market Trip

Center Closures

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and Family Day

Winter Closure (Christmas Eve through New Year's Day)

Martin Luther King Jr's Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Independence Day

*Fluctuating Quarterly Staff In-Service Days

Opportunities to get Involved at WCCC

WCCC places the highest priority in partnering with families to support the care of children in the classroom as well as develop the school community as a whole. While it is not a requirement to be involved, there are many opportunities to participate at WCCC including but not limited to:

- Joining the WCCC Board which supports the director and staff in fundraising and large-picture decision making for the program.
- Volunteering to lead or participate in fundraising projects for things like teacher appreciation week, or a staff winter gift.
- Coordinating with your child's classroom to participate in the classroom's day. For example: reading a story to the class, leading a circle time, joining on a field trip, enjoying a meal with your child's class, etc.
- Participating in WCCC's private parent Facebook group page and the parent WhatsApp group, which organizes things like impromptu park trips, happy hours, farmers market meetups, parents night out, celebrations, and volunteer opportunities.