



# Early Childhood Handbook

(ages 3-5)

Full-time & Part-time Preschool Programs



**willamalane**  
Park and Recreation District

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## General Information

### **Welcome!**

The Willamalane early childhood team is dedicated to providing safe, educational, and recreational environments.

Willamalane staff recognize that children need a balance of structured and unstructured activity during the early years of development and strive to provide that variety in programming. Our team also believes in offering choices to children whenever possible to encourage positive decision making skills and social interaction. Staff members will help your child explore areas of interest and create opportunities for lifelong learning and discovery. To achieve these goals, your child will experience:

- Frequent, positive, and warm interactions among adults and children.
- Learning activity options appropriate to children's age and development.
- Specially trained teachers and staff.
- Varied, age-appropriate materials and spaces.
- A positive and safe environment for children.
- Nutritious snacks that follow USDA guidelines.
- Regular communication with parents.
- Ongoing, systematic evaluation of programs and services.

This handbook is intended to provide families and participants important early childhood program information. Please utilize this handbook as a reference tool for anytime you have questions pertaining to our early childhood programs. Please be aware we reserve the right to modify or amend this information at any time and updated material will be provided on our website. You may also contact the program supervisor and request a copy for your reference.

### **Mission Statement:**

To provide exceptional and accessible early childhood and youth programs to support the lives of families.

### **Program Goals**

- Raise self-esteem, encourage independence, foster creativity and imagination, and offer safe and positive social experiences.
- Create a foundation for positive recreational, social, and educational opportunities for children in their early childhood years.
- Create a relaxed, trusting, and fun atmosphere that promotes positive two-way communication.
- Provide exciting, inclusive, and engaging activities which meet the developmental needs of each child.
- Provide families with affordable, convenient, and dependable program choices.
- Provide academic opportunities based on best practices.
- Teach by modeling appropriate problem solving and social-emotional development support.

## Staffing and Supervision

The safety of our participants is our number one priority. Early childhood staff members are experienced in education, recreation, and other child care programs. Everyone employed at Willamalane has undergone a criminal history check, and is a member of the Central Background Registry through the state Child Care Division. Each classroom is staffed to meet the State Child Care Division's requirements for ratios of children to professional staff. Staff are required to possess the following certifications:

- CPR, 1st aid, and AED
- Oregon Food Handlers
- Oregon Central Background Registry
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Intro to Child Health and Safety
- Fundamentals of Learning

As a state license-exempt program, our early childhood programs voluntarily comply with [Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care](#) regulations, Willamalane's standards, and those of the Child Care Licensing Division. Copies of these rules are available from the program supervisor for your reference.

Our staff receives annual training in the following areas of child development, behavior management, active supervision, child safety, and recognizing and reporting child abuse. **Professional development for our staff is essential in order to provide exceptional programs for your child. There are specific days when the program is closed for teacher inservice training. Please refer to the program service calendar to identify these specific closure dates.**

## Registration & Enrollment

### Registration:

Advance online registration is required to participate in youth programs. Check our website or weekly emails for open registration dates. Visit [www.willamalane.org/registration-tips](http://www.willamalane.org/registration-tips) for assistance in creating an online account and registration process.

### **To register online:**

1. Create an online account at [willamalane.org/register](http://willamalane.org/register).
2. Add your child as a family member to your account.
3. Complete your school year 25-26 pass.
4. Choose your program(s) from the list provided online.
5. Register your child for the activity or program you have chosen by adding the activity to your cart and setting up an automatic payment schedule.
6. Read the handbook and waiver (attachment provided online).
7. Bring immunization records and custody documents to Bob Keefer Center, or email documents to the program supervisor [dylan.fitzpatrick@willamalane.org](mailto:dylan.fitzpatrick@willamalane.org)

### **Waitlists:**

There may be times when the program you are interested in is full. You can add yourself to a program waitlist by completing the registration process, and selecting “add to waitlist.” You will be contacted when an opening is available. Upon being notified of space, you will have a reasonable amount of time to contact the Bob Keefer Center front desk staff in order to complete registration. If you have not registered within the deadline given, the next person on the waitlist will be called and you will be removed from the waitlist. **Note:** Waitlists do not guarantee you a spot in the program, and do not roll over into a new registration season.

## **Program Fees and Financial Agreement**

You can find our current program fees at [willamalane.org/preschools](http://willamalane.org/preschools). Program fees vary depending on the program you are enrolled in and the enrollment option that you have chosen. ‘School Year 25/ ‘26 fees will be posted soon and may differ from what is currently posted on the website. Program fees also vary based on your residency location. An in-district pricing is identified as “ID” and our out of district pricing is identified as “OD” in the charts listed below. By registering your child for a Willamalane program, you agree that you are responsible for the payment of all program fees and costs. If your account is assigned to a collection agency, you agree to pay all collection costs, including fees, to the collection agency. If your account is placed in the hands of an attorney for collection, you agree to pay the reasonable attorney fees and collection costs, regardless of whether an action is filed, and if action is filed, you agree to pay Willamalane’s reasonable attorney fees at trial and on any appeal.

Additional children in the family will receive a 20 percent sibling discount for siblings in the same program, and scholarships are also available for up to \$150 per person per fiscal year. They are limited to not more than 50% of the program fee. Apply for a scholarship at any Willamalane facility. For more information, visit [willamalane.org/scholarships](http://willamalane.org/scholarships).

### **Automatic Payment Schedule:**

When registering online, you will enroll in automatic payments to complete your registration and reserve your spot in the program. When using automatic payments, your card on file will be automatically charged on the payment due date ( 1st of the month for monthly programs and two weeks prior to start of program for weekly programs). Payment can not be accepted in the classroom. Fees are due at the time of registration completion. Online registrations will not be completed without payment or enrollment in automatic payments, and your child will not be enrolled.

If a payment is not received on the payment due date, a follow up email will be provided by the district’s finance department outlining district policy and payment requirements. Payment must be received within five days of this email to avoid being considered a late payment. Two late payment violations will result in the participant being dropped from the program and losing their spot for all future months of care.

If you have an outstanding account balance with Willamalane, you will not be eligible to register for programs until your account has been paid in full. In situations where the cost of care is shared by multiple parties, the total balance must be paid in full prior to the start of the program. If payment is not received in full, the party that registered the participant will be responsible for the remaining balance.



## Withdraw & Refunds

No refunds, credits, or reallocation of funds will be given for missed days, extended absences, or program cancellations. Program fees will not be prorated. To receive a refund or credit for withdrawing from a program, please see the following procedures.

- All requests for refunds or credits must be made at Bob Keefer Center front desk or by contacting 541-736-4544.
- Requests to withdraw from a program to receive a 100% refund or credit must be done at least 14 calendar days before the start of the program.
- Requests to withdraw from a program to receive a 50% refund or credit must be done at least five calendar days before the program start date.
- Requests to withdraw from the program less than five calendar days prior to the start of the program will not receive a refund or credit.
  - A \$5 fee will be charged for processing all requests to withdraw from a program. This \$5 charge will be deducted from your total refund amount at the time of withdrawing from the program.

**Note:** In the event of an unforeseen emergency that may require us to close our programs, refunds and credits will be made at the discretion of Willamalane Park and Recreation District. All Willamalane Scholarship funds that are being used for approved programs will be returned to that participant's account when a withdrawal request is made. Mentioning an intent to withdraw to site staff is not sufficient notification. Site staff do not have the authority to issue or authorize credits or refunds.

### **Third Party Child Care Assistance Payments:**

If all or part of your fees will be paid through a third party, such as Employment Related Day Care (ERDC), you must connect with our accounting clerk to determine your provider number. Once eligibility is met, you will follow our online registration process. It is your responsibility to make any necessary co-payments and fees beyond DHS, or third party payments. Co-payments are due by the 1st of each month that care is provided, or your child will be unable to attend the program. For additional assistance, please contact 541-736-4550 or [joyces@willamlane.org](mailto:joyces@willamlane.org).

All DHS and third party patrons will be billed for all registered days. If you wish to add or withdraw from a program, you must call our office no later than two weeks prior to the start of the program. If notification is not given, or if ERDC will not provide payment for any given program, you will be responsible for all program fees. If payment is not made and we are forced to send the account to a collection agency, you will be responsible for all unpaid program fees and collection fees.

### **Participant Records Requests:**

*Willamalane offers the community several childcare programs through our Early Childhood and Youth Programs department. These programs are considered Licensed Exempt Child Care Providers and Regulated Subsidy Providers under the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division Office of Childcare and comply with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#) regarding student education records information.*

Parent(s) may request participant records at any time.

- **Parent** - A “parent” is defined as a natural or adoptive parent, a legal guardian, an individual authorized in writing to act as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian, or a surrogate parent appointed to represent a student with disabilities. **Important: “parent” includes both the custodial and non-custodial parents.**

Participant records that may be requested include the following information:

#### Student Records

- Attendance Records
- Patron (student) Incident Reports
- Written statements or permissions regarding the child by parent
- Any document included in the student’s record

#### Financial Reports

- Student/childcare tax reports\*
- Student/childcare proof of payment or payment history

\*Tax information is available through your personal online registration account. Our tax ID number is: 93-6002078. If you need to request participant records from Willamalane, please complete our [records request form](#) and we will respond within 5 business days of your request.

Costs for copies, postage, and copying time of student education records shall be charged to the requester as follows:

#### Standard Copies

- Black & White \$.05 per page
- Color \$.10 per page
- Oversized (larger than 11x17) Actual Cost
- Copying time: \$25 per hour

#### Postage

- Current postage rate per 1 oz
- Certified Mail \$5

## Health and Safety

### Medications:

All medication is required to be logged with site staff. If your child is required to take any prescribed medications while in our programs, a staff member will assist your child in administering them. If this administration requires additional medical training, or a medical action plan as a response, please follow our accommodations request at [willamalane.org/accessibility](http://willamalane.org/accessibility). The medication must be checked in with the program staff in the original and properly labeled container.

#### **The label must include:**

- The date the prescription was filled
- Child’s name
- Physician’s name
- Drug name and dosage
- Instructions on when and how to give the medication

In addition, a medication release form must be on file before any medication can be administered. Without prescriptions stating otherwise, medication will only be dispensed up to labeled limits.

### **Illness & Communicable Diseases:**

Guardians and staff share responsibility for reducing exposure to and stopping the spread of infectious diseases. Children must be free and clear of illness and symptoms of illness for 24 hours before returning to the program.

#### **This includes, but is not limited to:**

- Fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)
- Vomiting
- Lice
- Nausea
- Severe cough
- Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping or pus-filled
- Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Difficulty breathing or abnormal wheezing
- Complaints of severe pain

If your child shows any of the above signs, they will be isolated, and you will be notified. You are responsible for immediately picking your child up or making arrangements for someone else to do so. These precautions protect the health of your child, staff, and the other children in Willamalane early childhood programs.

If your child presents an illness in alignment with two or more COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test, including but not limited to a new cough, fever, loss of taste or smell, they will need to stay home for five days after the onset of symptoms and a positive COVID-19 test. Please note that we will always align our COVID-19 response efforts with the direction from Lane County Public Health, as well as the Office of Childcare guidelines. We will inform families in writing if these guidelines and recommendations change.

If your child has an infectious disease, please notify us so we may inform staff and other families to watch for symptoms. Your child may return to the program 24 hours after the resolution of both fever and cough.

### **Sun Protection:**

Willamalane encourages families to apply sunscreen prior to dropping off participants. Willamalane will supply the participant with approved sunscreen. If you would like to inspect the product and active ingredients, please talk to your classroom teacher. A staff member will provide assistance as needed. Sunscreen must be given to your child's leader in its original container with your child's name on it.

### **Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse:**

All staff are mandatory reporters by the state of Oregon and are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. Willamalane will work with DHS and families, as appropriate, to ensure the health and safety of children in the program. Willamalane will continue to work with and support the child and family when a report is made. The report will be treated with confidentiality.

### **Emergency Procedures:**

Evacuation procedures for each program have been established in a significant emergency that would necessitate removing children from the site. During an evacuation or other emergencies, individual families will be contacted utilizing our communication app, "[Remind](#)". In general, program procedures for anything more than a bump or minor scrape include calling Mobile Health or 9-1-1.



### **Incident Reports:**

An incident report is taken any time a child is injured in the program. The report documents the date, time, nature of the incident, and treatment provided. Every effort will be made to inform you if your child has an incident on a particular day. You are responsible for keeping emergency information updated.

### **Change in Vital Information:**

Please notify the program staff or the Bob Keefer Center office with any changes in address, phone number, job, authorized guardians or emergency contact information. Emergencies may arise with your child and it is very important that staff have updated, accurate information with which to reach you. Please be sure to include all updated information during the online registration process.

### **Immunization Records:**

Immunization records are required by law for children in attendance at preschools and child care facilities. For more information regarding immunization requirements, you can visit the [Oregon Health Authority](https://www.oregonhealthauthority.com) website. Please provide a copy of immunization records, or a copy of exemptions to the program supervisor. You may email them: [dylan.fitzpatrick@willamalane.org](mailto:dylan.fitzpatrick@willamalane.org).

## Program Code of Conduct

### **Commitment to Nonviolence:**

Corporal punishment will not be used or tolerated in Willamalane programs. Staff or guardians will not hit, spank or humiliate another staff, guardian, or participant. We want to ensure all participants, staff, and guardians that Willamalane programs are safe spaces and violence is not tolerated or accepted.

### **Guidance & Disciplinary Action:**

Our guidance and discipline procedures are based on encouraging positive behavior and facilitating empathic social learning. Strategies such as redirecting children and setting clear limits are the basis for promoting self management when difficulties arise and developing self control and problem-solving in children. All children are encouraged to "use words" to express what they want, what they need, and how they feel. Appropriate behavior is acknowledged through positive consequences such as verbal praise, positive recognition, and special incentive programs and rewards. Corrective consequences for not following expectations will be implemented. They may include verbal reminders of appropriate behavior, reteaching the desired behavior, redirection to the desired behavior, and/or a phone call check in with guardians. As a final measure, children may be directed to spend time away from activities to provide them an opportunity to self-regulate and safely return to the activity.

If the above strategies are not working, staff, guardians, and the child will work together to maximize the potential for the child's success in preschool. Guardians are expected to be active participants in the behavior management of their children. In some behavioral situations, such as running from the group, posing a physical threat to themselves or others, or other actions which place themselves or other children in danger, we may call the guardians to pick up the child. The guardians will be expected to arrange for immediate pick up of the child.

**Please note: We reserve the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program if the program supervisor determines that a child is a physical or emotional threat to themselves or others, or if the child's behavior**

consistently impedes the normal daily functions of the program. Children may also be dismissed from the program if their guardian(s) demonstrate inappropriate behavior or fail to cooperate with staff. Guardians cannot be involved in disciplining any child other than their own. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the program.

### **Bathroom Independent:**

All preschool participants must be bathroom independent before beginning school. Here are some ways to tell if your child is ready:

- Can they tell an adult they have to go potty before they have to go?
- Can they pull down their undergarments and clothing and get them back up without assistance?
- Can they wipe themselves after using the restroom?
- Can they get on and off the potty by themselves?
- Can they wash and dry their hands independently?

We understand that children at this age do have occasional/infrequent accidents. In this case, we will have your child change their own clothing. If the child is unable to change their own clothing and appropriately clean themselves, we will contact the guardians to come help. **Note:** Our facility and staff are not equipped for diaper changing, this includes pull-ups.

### **Attire & Grooming:**

A participant's attire and grooming are the responsibility of the participant and their guardian. When attire and grooming disrupt Willamalane programs, the program staff or supervisor will take appropriate action. Such action may include asking the participant to change clothing and possibly sending the participant home for the day.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Articles of clothing and accessories may not create a safety hazard to the individual or others and must be appropriate in content
- Participants should arrive in the appropriate attire for the day's activities. Play clothes and closed-toed shoes are recommended
- Articles of clothing that advertise or promote the use of alcohol, tobacco, or drug products, weapons, or that display sexually suggestive words or pictures, are not permitted in Willamalane programs

### **Confidentiality:**

Information about the health, behavior, or abilities of any child will be confidential. Such information will be shared with staff only as necessary to meet the child's needs. Occasionally, family information may also be shared with regulatory agencies.

## General Program Information

### Daily Check-in & Check-out:

Children must be signed in and out by a guardian or other authorized person daily. For the safety of your child, we vigorously enforce this rule. Only those listed on the child's authorized pick up list will have access to picking up the participant. You may add or drop people from this list at any time by filling out a patron change form that can be provided onsite. All authorized adults picking up any child must be prepared to show identification. All participants must be picked up by the closing time for each program. Late pick ups will be assessed a charge of \$1 per minute. Repeated failures to pick up a child by the closing time could result in your child being removed from the program.

The Door Access Monitoring System provides additional security to the staff and children in our programs at the Bob Keefer Center. The monitoring system controls access to the Early Childhood Wing by key code. Each family is responsible for maintaining its code, granting permission only to authorized parties.

### What to bring each day:

Participants will be assigned a cubby in which to put their belongings. **Any items from home should be clearly labeled with your child's name.** Below is a sample of items that are appropriate for early childhood programs:

1. Healthy lunch
2. Durable water bottle
3. A backpack
4. A ziplock bag that has an extra set of clothes (underwear, shirt, socks, pants/shorts, and shoes)
5. A jacket appropriate for the season
6. Swimwear and towel for water play (staff will notify parents in advance for days that have water activities)
7. Footwear appropriate for running, jumping, and playing
8. A small blanket and comfort animal if your child will be napping
9. Clothing that is ok to get a little messy. We like to keep our activities new, adventurous and exciting. Occasionally, this could result in a messy, goopy, or sticky finished product. We make every effort to keep the ingredients and supplies safe, non-toxic, and washable. As these items make their way home they may still react with certain fabrics and surfaces. Please use care when supervising your child with projects they may bring home
10. We will provide the rest! If you don't see an item on this list please check in with us before sending your child to our program

### Snacks and Lunches:

Snacks will be provided in the morning and afternoon. Children must bring a sack lunch and a water bottle each day. If lunch is not provided, you will be called and asked to provide a lunch for your child. All lunches should be nonperishable and not require heating. Please notify program staff if your child has any dietary preferences or restrictions.

**Please be advised that our programs are nut-free programs. If you would like to provide the group with a special treat for your child's birthday or another occasion, please notify staff members in advance. Health regulations require that all food brought in by parents must be commercially prepared and packaged. The snack schedule varies by program and can be provided by request.**

### **Rest Time:**

We provide an afternoon rest time for children attending our full-time programs. Please send a small blanket, pillow, and stuffy with your child on Mondays. We will store rest items for the week and send them home to be washed each Friday or as needed. If your child is absent on Friday, we will provide laundry service for you. We understand that not all children continue to nap at this age; however, we require that all children have a rest period. After a short rest, children will be provided with appropriate activities.

### **Activities:**

Staff members meet regularly to plan activities and to share resources for programming. Whenever possible, kids are given choices to help them learn to make positive decisions and to allow them to do the activities they enjoy the most. Here is a sampling of activities:

- |                          |                       |                |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| ● Sensory Play           | Painting and drawing  | Drama          |
| ● Games and sports       | Outside/gym play      | Music          |
| ● Nature and science     | Crafts                | Theme projects |
| ● Guest leaders/speakers | Literacy/storytelling |                |

### **Program Closure Information:**

Willamalane programs are closed in observance of the following holidays and staff training days. In addition to these scheduled closure dates, there may be instances where programs are forced to close due to unforeseen events such as inclement weather or emergencies. For specific program service dates please see the specific calendars for each program on our website or by clicking the link below.

[Tiny Ducks Program 25-26 Calendar \(Full time programs\)](#)

[Friendly Finches & Ready Robins Program 25-26 Calendar \(Part time programs\)](#)

[Cheery Chickadees Program Calendar 25-26 \(Part time program\)](#)

### **Emergency Closures:**

During snow, other inclement weather, or in the event of unforeseen circumstances, please visit [willamalane.org/alerts](http://willamalane.org/alerts) for the most updated program closure information. We will also notify families utilizing our communication app "Remind". Willamalane closures will also be publicized by [FlashAlert](#).

### **Photo Policy:**

Willamalane Park and Recreation District reserves the right to photograph classes, community events, programs, and community members at any Willamalane facilities, properties and at any activities or events sponsored or hosted by Willamalane. Photos may be used by Willamalane for promotional purposes, in publications, or in media communications in any format without any obligation to provide compensation to those photographed.

For more information about this photo policy, visit [willamalane.org/photo](http://willamalane.org/photo). You can elect to opt out during the registration process.

If you have questions about this policy, contact the Community Engagement team by calling 541-736-4531 or sending an email to [communityengagement@willamalane.org](mailto:communityengagement@willamalane.org).

## Inclusion and Accommodations

Willamalane Park and Recreation District's goal is to provide **ALL** people the opportunity to recreate together in environments that are appropriate, non-restrictive, and beneficial for all. All individuals, who meet the program prerequisites, are welcome to attend Willamalane Park and Recreation District programs regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender, or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practices, we aim to reflect on our wider community and promote positive attitudes toward the similarities and differences in each other.

Willamalane partners with [EC CARES](#) to provide the most inclusive learning environment for all children. Meeting the needs of every child is our goal and Willamalane will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for participants.

## Program Contact Information

### **Early Childhood Programs Supervisor**

Dylan Fitzpatrick      [Dylan.Fitzpatrick@willamalane.org](mailto:Dylan.Fitzpatrick@willamalane.org)

Phone: 541-735-1272

### **Early Childhood Programs Coordinator**

Candice Baker      [Candiceb@willamalane.org](mailto:Candiceb@willamalane.org)

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