

2025-2026
Parent Handbook

2414 Westchester Avenue

Oella, MD 21043

(410) 465-3777

www.mdowpreschool.com

mdowpreschool@yahoo.com

2025 – 2026 MDOW Calendar

August, 2025

8/17	Open House, 1pm-3pm
8/19	Parents Meeting, 7:00pm

September

9/2	Classes begin at 9:00am
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October

10/14, 15	School Pictures
10/24	Fall Festival 4:00-5:30 pm

November

11/18	Family Art Night 6-7:30 pm
11/26-28	Closed for Thanksgiving

December

12/1	School re-opens 9:00am
12/8-12	Scholastic Book Fair
12/22 - 1/2	Winter Break

January 2026

1/5	School re-opens 9:00am
1/9	Registration begins for Summer 2026 and School Session 2026-27. Current families only.
1/11	Open House - New families
1/30	Alumni/Waitlisted registration

February

2/6 New Family registration for Summer 2026
and 2026-27 School Year begins
2/16 MDOW Reads begins

March

3/6 BINGO FUNDRAISER

April

3/30-4/3 MDOW Art Show

May

5/22 Sing-a-long, 11:15 (Students only)
5/22 Final day of school session
5/26 Pre-K Graduations

June

6/1 Summer Session begins

July

7/1 September tuition payment due
7/10 Final Summer tuition due

August

8/21 Final day of summer session



MDOW Early Learning Center

Board of Directors

MDOW Early Learning Center is a state-licensed non-profit community outreach program.

Decisions and policies are made by the MDOW Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving on the MDOW Board or have ANY concerns or suggestions, please feel free to contact one of the Board members. Any interested or concerned parent may attend a meeting of the MDOW Board of Directors. MDOW board members are:

Bonnie Bahr	bonniebahr81@gmail.com
Heather Bateman	batemanh763@gmail.com
Rachel Clingerman	rclingerman2@gmail.com
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Philosophy Statement

MDOW Early Learning Center

The philosophy of education set by The Board of Directors of MDOW Early Learning Center begins with the whole child. At MDOW we see every child as successful and firmly believe that every child can learn. Each individual child has a uniqueness that makes every part of that child special. While being part of a group, each child is respected for their individuality, gender, religion and cultural identity.

As educators, we view ourselves as facilitators as well as teachers and learners. We believe it is important to be child-centered, child-sensitive and respectful to all who enter the classroom. We believe that self esteem is an important part of the education process. We support this process by providing an environment that is safe and rich in learning opportunities, presented in a way that allows children to be successful and grow more confident through their experiences. Confident students are willing students. They believe they can succeed and will attempt things and explore new avenues. Developmentally appropriate practice will be used in every area of the classroom, creating an environment that will lead toward success for every student. This will include an interactive environment that will provide for many different learning styles existing within a group of students.

We feel that an educational environment should be positive, nurturing and well planned. Our classrooms are equipped with a wide variety of reading materials, manipulatives and other hands-on activities for the students. We include displayed materials as well as materials that are student-generated. Materials are theme-oriented and change throughout the school year.

We believe consistency is first and foremost in setting the tone of the classroom. The students will know what to expect and what is expected of them. Self control and tolerance for others is stressed. Consistency within the classroom through routine and positive choices provides a secure environment, giving every child an opportunity to grow to their fullest potential without ridicule.

At MDOW we believe that educators make an impact on every student they encounter. Our job is to make that impact a positive one.

The ABC's of MDOW



Absences: Please notify MDOW by phone, email or brightwheel when your child will be absent from school.

Allergies: All allergies must be noted on medical records and emergency forms. A child with a food intolerance or sensitivity will be considered to have an allergy if they have experienced symptoms. Examples: a fruit intolerance, causing rash, or vomiting after ingesting yogurt. etc. Children with food allergies requiring an EPI-PEN need to supply their own safe snack and lunch--no exceptions. A student with a peanut/tree nut allergy where a physician does not prescribe an EPI-PEN will still need to provide their own snack/lunch. It must be labeled and placed on the snack room counter. It is important that you notify your child's teacher of any allergies. It is your responsibility to have all appropriate and updated Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action forms required by the State of Maryland completed by your child's healthcare provider on file at MDOW, along with physician prescribed medicines for your child. Medications and required forms need to be provided to MDOW prior to attending class. Failure to provide these will result in your child being sent home until forms and medications are provided. All medical forms must be reviewed and updated annually.

Arrival: To enter the building push your child's classroom button. Smiley-4, Bear- 5, Heart-6, Ocean-7A, Jungle-8. If there is no answer, wait until buzzing stops and then try another room. Please state your child's name and classroom name. Children must be taken to their classrooms by an adult. Please wait until the scheduled time to enter the room.

Asthma: Children who have been diagnosed with Asthma require an Asthma Action form completed by the child's physician. An Albuterol rescue inhaler may be prescribed to remain at school. It is important that parents notify their child's teachers of this diagnosis.



Before-school care: Available daily, 7:30am-9:00am, \$12 per session, billed at the end of each month. This service is open to all registered students and can be used regularly or as needed. No advance notice is required. For regular before-care

attendance, you may opt to be billed a monthly fee of \$180 to attend an unlimited number of before-care sessions, charged in advance with your child's tuition.

Birthdays: Children love to celebrate their birthdays with their class! You may arrange with your child's teacher to bring a special snack on the day you plan to celebrate. Cupcakes are OK (no candles, please!).

brightwheel: Secure platform through which MDOW currently administers billing, payment, messaging, registration and enrollment functions for its students, accessible to users logged into the brightwheel on-the-go app or online at brightwheel's website: <https://schools.mybrightwheel.com> . More robust features, tools and functionality, as well as tutorials and interactive help functions, are available through the brightwheel website than through the app. Accessing brightwheel via a Chrome browser on a laptop/PC is recommended for optimal performance.



ChildFind: State of Maryland's early intervention program administered by individual counties/city providing no-cost observation, evaluation and one-on-one services to children 3 - 21 years of age experiencing developmental delays/disabilities and their families.

Class Options and Sessions Offered at MDOW:

Before-care	7:30 AM - 9:00 AM
Morning session	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Afternoon session	12:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Full Day	9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Aftercare	3:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Pre-K sections:

Monday & Wednesday 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

or

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 AM-3:30 PM

Clothing: Please dress your child in clothes appropriate for climbing, running, bike riding, painting etc. Children should wear shoes that will allow them to climb safely on playground equipment. Flip-flops and crocs that easily slip off the feet are not safe. Classes go outside in dry weather, so please provide hats and mittens on cold days. **Write your child's name on all jackets, sweaters, coats, hats and mittens.** All children need at least one complete change of clothes, including socks, shoes & underwear, to be kept at school. Please label all clothing and put them into a labeled bag. Children in diapers and pullups need to keep a supply at school.

Curriculum: Our philosophy at MDOW is that children learn best through play. Our curriculum designed around weekly themes provides learning through literature, art and music. We provide many opportunities for creative expression, dramatic play, social growth, science exploration, language and math development.

D

Discipline Policy: Please refer to MDOW's Discipline and Behavior Policy document linked on brightwheel.

Dismissal: Parents and other authorized adults must come into the classroom at dismissal. For the safety of the children, an authorized adult must initial a sign-out sheet before leaving with a child. Only individuals listed on the emergency card will be permitted to pick up a student unless the parent provides written permission for a different pickup who will need to bring a valid photo ID to the classroom.

Donations: Donations of craft items, snacks, toys, books, tissues, diapers, wipes, paper towels etc. are always appreciated! Please check ahead with your child's teacher or the office.

E

Email list: All families are placed on the school's email contact list for outgoing messages. The email addresses used are the contacts entered at registration in each child's brightwheel profile. Let us know if you'd like additional email address(es) added to, or deleted from, MDOW's email contacts list.

Extra Sessions: If you would like to have your children stay for an extra session please coordinate in advance with the office or your child's teacher, who will know if there is space in the classroom.

Charges for additional morning and afternoon sessions (\$28 per session), in addition to a lunch session (\$5) for all-day attendance if your child is not already registered to attend the full day, will be billed at the end of the month through brightwheel.

F

Facebook: MDOW has a Facebook group page. Search for Mother's Day Out of Westchester (MDOW) and ask to join! Postings are made by the staff to keep parents informed of what the students are doing. Some pictures are posted, but only of students with signed photo permissions on file in brightwheel. To protect the privacy of our students, please do not copy, share or print any of the photos.

Federal Tax ID #: 52-1930491

Fundraisers: Fundraisers are planned several times a year. Proceeds from fundraisers are used to finance major expenditures and supplies that directly benefit your children. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer to assist with any of our fundraisers!

H

Hours of Operation: MDOW is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. The school session runs from September to the end of May. The summer session is optional, June-August. MDOW is closed for one week after the end of the summer session, and one week after school year session end. Please see the school calendar for other holiday closure dates.

I

Immunizations: All students must be immunized in line with current CDC recommendations unless there is a medical contraindication.

Interns/Volunteers: Occasionally, Early Childhood/Education student interns or high school volunteers may work at MDOW, under the supervision of the director and classroom teacher at MDOW, and in coordination with their school's field placement manager. All interns/volunteers will have passed a complete background check and are never left alone unsupervised with MDOW students.

L

Late Pick-up: Unless prior arrangements with the teacher are made, all children must be picked up at 12:00 or 3:30. Children not picked up on time will be brought to the lunchroom or aftercare classroom and charged either the lunch or aftercare fee.

Late Tuition Payments: If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a 10% late fee will be added to your account balance. Your child will not be permitted to attend beyond the end of the month until the account balance is paid.

Lunches: Children who attend MDOW for the full day need to bring a lunch. Lunches are to be put on a refrigerator shelf designated by your child's teacher. Please be sure that your child's name remains visible on the outside of the lunchbox. Please label all containers, lids & thermoses. Peanut butter, peanut and tree nut-products are not permitted at MDOW. If you send sun butter, wow butter or some other butter, please include a note so that we will know it isn't peanut butter. Thanks!

M


Maryland Infants & Toddlers Program: County-administered early intervention program providing no-cost observation, evaluation and one-on-one services to children up to 3 years of age experiencing developmental delays/disabilities and their families.


Materials/Supply Fee: At the beginning of the Summer Session and at the beginning of the School Year Session, a Materials/Supply fee is charged each family to help cover costs incurred by MDOW for high-turnover consumables, such as daily snacks for each classroom, cleaning supplies, paper products, and art supplies. The Summer Session fee is \$50; the School Year fee is \$150.


Medication Policy: Do not send any prescription medication to school for your child without a completed medication administration authorization form (see the MDOW website). Medication must be in its original container. For a topical cream, lotion, lip balm, etc. that is not a prescribed medication, please complete the Topical Basic Care Product Application Authorization Form (linked on website "Consent for non-medicated creams", also available from your child's teacher or the office) and return it along with the item in a zip-loc type bag.

MDOW Discovery Aftercare: Available daily, 3:30 - 5:30, \$18.00 per session. This service is open to all registered students and can be used regularly or as needed. Please tell your child's teacher or call/email the office to request that your child stay and attend the MDOW Discovery Aftercare session on the day it is needed. There is an optional monthly fee of \$270 to attend an unlimited number of aftercare sessions in any month, charged in advance with your child's monthly tuition.

MDSE COMAR: In Maryland, child care regulations are governed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE): <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/child-care-centers>, specifically its Office of Child Care (OCC). These regulations are found in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), primarily in Title 13A, Chapters 14-18. These regulations cover various aspects of child care, including family child care, child care centers, and residential child care programs.

 **Naps:** Children in the Smiley, Heart and Bear Rooms who attend school from 9:00 to 3:30 will rest after lunch from 12:30-1:00/2:00 and will need to bring a crib sheet and blanket labeled with their name to cover their cot. Please place these nap items into Ziploc-type clear bag. This will stay at MDOW and will be returned at the end of each week for laundering. Students in the Jungle and Ocean Rooms do not nap unless a parent requests.

 **Oops!** Minor accidents and injuries do happen from time to time in the active lives of energetic little ones! When this occurs during your child's school day, the type of injury and how it occurred and was addressed by the teacher is described on a paper "Oops!" slip sent home in your child's bag and a copy of this is kept in the student's file. Whenever there has been a more concerning injury or any injury to the head, a parent will be promptly contacted by phone.

 **Parent Conferences:** Although not scheduled routinely, you may request a conference with your child's teacher at any time. Please call or inquire in person to arrange a time to meet.

Parking: Parking is available along the sidewalk in front of the playground, in the parking lot near the field and in the lower parking lot next to the school building. Only cars with handicapped designations may park in the handicap parking area (blue curb). Please do not park next to the mailbox, along the side of the building, inside the circle, or along Westchester Ave. in front of the circle.

Project ACT (All Children Together): Nationwide, 17% of children have a developmental or behavioral disability, like autism spectrum disorders, but only 50% are identified before starting school, missing out on early intervention. Preschool-aged children are suspended or expelled at 3x the rate of their school-age peers. Project ACT, through the Abilities Network, an organization founded in 1964 by passionate physicians and parents to assist individuals in Maryland to reach their maximum potential through customized support and community. provides free consultation and support to prevent expulsion, support inclusion, and provide resources to families and care providers. This enables parents to maintain employment and provide a stable home and school environment for their children.

R **Registration:** Registration for current students and their siblings is held each year in January for the upcoming summer and school year sessions. All returning students must submit a new registration request at this time for enrollment into the next summer and/or school year sessions. An application fee of \$25 is charged for each student's registration submission. A \$50 registration fee is charged when a student's class placements are confirmed. Registration enrollments occur on a first come/first serve basis.

Religion: MDOW does not teach any religious doctrine or theology.

S **Siblings:** During the September-May school year session only, a sibling tuition discount of 5% is applied to the lowest monthly tuition of one sibling per family.

Sick Policy: Children must be kept at home when they have a fresh cold, a cold with yellow/greenish nasal discharge, eye discharge, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or fever.

If your child has an acute change in behavior, elevated temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, mouth sores or rash you will be called to come get your child. **Please be sure that at any time you or your emergency contacts can be reached to promptly pick up your child from school.**

Children with an unknown skin rash or eye redness/discharge need to be seen by a healthcare provider for identification and evaluation regarding when they can return to school--with a note from the healthcare provider upon their return regarding the nature of the skin or eye irritation.

Children should not return to school until they are fever-free without fever-reducing medications, diarrhea-free, vomiting-free for at least 24 hours or cleared by a medical provider. This includes flu and COVID illness.

MDOW follows CDC and MSDE guidelines for any COVID illness or flu.

In the case of flu, children should stay home for at least 5-7 days from the start of symptoms to prevent further spread at school. Flu symptoms include: fever, body aches, headache, sore throat, a cough that gets worse, tiredness and runny or stuffy nose. If a child is experiencing any of these symptoms or lethargy, aches/pains, fatigue and/or nausea, they may still be contagious and should remain home until symptom-free. For more information on acute illness regulations please refer to The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.16.11.01. Regulations are linked at <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/regulations>.

COVID symptoms are similar to the flu. There may be additional symptoms such as shortness of breath, diarrhea or nausea and vomiting. Testing your child is a good idea if they have had a known exposure. If they are positive for the COVID virus, monitor symptoms as you would for the flu. Your child may return to school when symptom-free.

If 30% of staff or students at MDOW are absent due to illness, MDOW reserves the right to close school for 3 days to control further spread of illness and to regain acceptable child care center staffing ratios required by the State of Maryland.

Snacks: A snack provided by MDOW is served to the students of each morning and afternoon classroom session. Parents may still bring in a birthday snack (cookies or mini-cupcakes) and snacks for special parties. Please check with your child's teacher in advance and avoid any peanut or tree-nut products or ingredients. If a homemade snack is brought in, please provide a list of ingredients used.

Snow/Inclement Weather Policy: An email and brightwheel message will be sent and a Facebook posting made for weather-related closings and delays.

MDOW follows Baltimore County Schools. **If schools are to open 1 or 2 hours late, MDOW will open at 10:00 AM, with no before school care.** If Baltimore County schools are closed, MDOW is closed. If schools close early, MDOW Discovery is cancelled. Please pick your child up as soon as possible.

Staff: All MDOW Senior Staff Teachers meet the requirements mandated by the State of Maryland with most teachers exceeding the educational criteria. Most of our staff are certified in First Aid and CPR. All staff members attend continuing education classes annually.

Sunscreen: Morning-only and afternoon-only students should have sunscreen applied before coming to school. For full-day students to have sunscreen (stick-form only, please!) applied at school, please complete the Topical Basic Care Product Application Authorization Form (linked on website "Consent for non-medicated creams", also available from your child's teacher or the office) and return it along with the sunscreen stick in a labeled zip-loc bag to your child's classroom.



The Toddler Times: Our newsletter is published bi-monthly to keep you informed of all that is happening at MDOW.

Tuition: Tuition is paid one month in advance by the 10th of the month. To determine your monthly payment, count the number of sessions your child is registered to attend on a weekly basis and then find your payment on the tuition payment table. One session is equal to one morning 9-12 session or one afternoon 12:30-3:30 session. If your child attends all day, 9-3:30, that is 2 sessions.

3-to 5-year-old Rooms (Heart/Bear/Ocean/Jungle)	monthly payment		sibling payment (1 per family)
2 sessions/week	\$ 196.00		\$ 186.20
3 sessions/week	\$ 294.00		\$ 279.30
4 sessions/week	\$ 392.00		\$ 372.40
5 sessions /week	\$ 490.00		\$ 465.50
6 sessions /week	\$ 588.00		\$ 558.60
7 sessions /week	\$ 686.00		\$ 651.70
8 sessions /week	\$ 784.00		\$ 744.80
9 sessions /week	\$ 882.00		\$ 837.90
10 sessions /week	\$ 980.00		\$ 931.00

2-year-old Room (Smiley Room)	monthly payment		sibling payment (1 per family)
2 sessions /week	\$ 210.00		\$ 199.50
3 sessions /week	\$ 315.00		\$ 299.25
4 sessions /week	\$420.00		\$ 399.00
5 sessions /week	\$ 525.00		\$ 498.75
6 sessions /week	\$ 630.00		\$ 598.50
7 sessions /week	\$ 735.00		\$ 698.25
8 sessions /week	\$ 840.00		\$ 798.00
9 sessions /week	\$945.00		\$897.75
10 sessions /week	\$1050.00		\$997.50

Extra sessions: \$28.00, Lunch session: \$5, Before care: \$12.00 per session. MDOW Discovery Aftercare: \$18 per session. Fees will be billed after the end of each month.

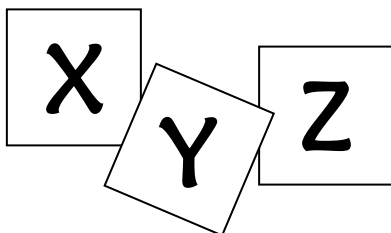
The monthly tuition has already been adjusted for scheduled holiday closings. If your child is absent due to sickness or vacation, or if school is closed due to weather, tuition is still paid in full.

All payments are made through the brightwheel app using ACH debit or credit card. **Credit card payments will incur an additional 3% fee.**

For additional details, please refer to the MDOW Tuition Agreement which must be reviewed and signed upon applying to attend MDOW.



Website: MDOW's website has calendar, tuition and classroom information, as well as student forms. To view, please visit: www.mdowpreschool.com



FAQS:

What does my child need for school? Each student should have a change of clothes to be kept at school. Children using diapers or pull-ups need to keep several at school with the extra clothes.

Should I stay or leave when I drop off my child? We suggest that you develop a drop-off routine with your child. For example: bring your child into the classroom and then go to the playdough table. Say "Have fun, I will be back at 12:00," give a hug & kiss good-bye and then leave.

What if my child cries? Unfortunately, some children will cry. Usually, the teachers can get them involved in an activity and within a few minutes they are fine. If your child is crying, try to reassure them that they will be fine, give them an extra hug and tell them you will be back at 12:00 (or 3:30). If you are concerned, you can call the school anytime.

What about security blankets, toys? If you feel your child needs a security blanket it is fine to bring it to help them feel comfortable. However, we do not want children bringing their own toys to school because frequently they get broken or lost, and other children may regard them as classroom toys to be played with.