



Transition/Progression of Children Policy

The transition/progression period, whether it is from home to the program, within the program, or from the program to school, is a partnership process that involves families and Watch Me Grow staff.

WMG's school year will run from the end of August to the end of June. Majority of the transitions will take place at the beginning of the school year (end of August/beginning of September). The WMG summer program will be a continuation of the high standard education that occurs during the school year and will be enhanced with on-site presentations, activities and off-site field trips for Preschool and Pre-K classrooms.

Transition from Home to Program

Once a child is enrolled into the Watch Me Grow program, they are offered and encouraged to attend two visiting days before their actual start date. Each visiting day is 2 hours long and provides an opportunity for the child and family to meet their classroom teachers and peers, as well as allows the child to engage within the classroom environment at their own pace. Families are welcome to stay during one or both of the visiting days if the child needs family support during the transition.

The visiting days also allow the family to become accustomed to the classroom environment and daily drop-off and pick-up procedures.

The visiting days also allow families to discuss any developmental concerns or health concerns with the classroom teachers and staff. Any necessary training from the family to the staff involving any health concerns will also be done on these days.

New classroom teachers are required to assess new students within 30 days of their start date. This information is shared with families and only those staff members who work closely with that child.

Transition within the Program

Families will be notified in writing approximately 30-days before a child begins the transition process. Children are transitioned gradually over the course of a week from one room to the next. The week will begin with a 2-hour visit, increasing the amount of time in the new classroom each day. By the end of the week the child will spend a full day in their new classroom. The transition week allows the child to experience different time periods of the day in the new classroom and acquaint themselves with their new surroundings.

As children grow and progress down the Center's rainbow hallway it is important that families be informed of the development requirements of each classroom in the center. The developmental requirements must be met before children can transition into the next classroom. WMG has made a commitment to stay aligned with the public school system when it comes to

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the age requirements for progression of children to the next classroom. Parents may request an exception in writing to the Center Director by April 30th, but please understand that making a request will not guarantee the exception.

Outlined below are the developmental requirements for classroom transitions:

Butterflies (4 year olds/Pre-K) - The child must turn 4 by September 1st and be fully potty trained. The teacher/child ratio for this classroom is 1:10, with a maximum of 20 children in the room.

Grasshoppers (3 year olds/Preschool) - The child must turn 3 by September 1st and be fully potty trained (if the child requires a pull up at nap time a discussion will need to take place with the Director before transition can occur). Please note, transition to the Pre-K classrooms will not occur until the following September. The teacher/child ratio for this classroom is 1:10, with a maximum of 20 children in the room.

Bumble Bees (2 year olds) - The child must turn 2 by September 1st and show signs of being ready to start the potty training process. The teacher/child ratio for this classroom is 1:6, with a maximum of 12 children in the room.

Rolly Polly Beetles & Ladybugs (1 year olds/Toddlers) - When your child turns 12 months he/she will start their transition into a toddler classroom room provided that the child's preceding teachers feel that your child is ready to move and there is space available. The toddler classrooms are divided by younger toddlers and older toddlers. Efforts are made to keep children in classrooms with other children that are within 6 months of age. A child in the Rolly Polly Beetles classroom (younger toddler), may transition to the Ladybugs classroom (older toddlers) during the school year if an opening becomes available and the child is developmentally ready. It is possible that children will remain in the Rolly Polly Beetles classroom for the entire school year and then transition to the 2 year old classroom the following September without ever going to the Ladybugs classroom. The teacher/child ratio for the toddlers is 1:3, with a maximum of 6 children in the Rolly Polly Beetle classroom and 9 children in the Ladybug classroom.

Caterpillars (Infants) - The infant classrooms are divided between younger infants and older infants. Efforts are made to keep children in classrooms with children that are within 6 months of each other. A child in the Caterpillars A classroom (younger infants), may transition to the Caterpillar B classroom (older infants) during the school year if an opening becomes available and the child is developmentally ready. It is possible that children will remain in the Caterpillars A classroom for the entire school year and then transition to a toddler classroom the following September without ever going to the Caterpillar B classroom. The teacher/child ratio for this classroom is 1:3, with a maximum of 6 children in the room.

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**Please Note: Transition to the next age-group classroom will not occur until the following September. If your child turns the required age for the next age-group classroom, they will not necessarily transition to the next classroom at that time. However, there may be times during the school year when an opening becomes available in the next age-group classroom before the September transition date. When this occurs, the Center Director will offer the space to the child who is most developmentally ready (not necessarily the oldest child).*

At the beginning of a child's transition, the previous classroom teacher will communicate any developmental concerns or health concerns regarding the child. The previous teacher will also conduct any necessary training associated with any health concerns.

Previous assessments will also be shared with the new classroom teachers. New classroom teachers are required to assess new students within 30 days of their start date. This information is shared with families and only those staff members who work closely with that child.

Transition from Program to School

When information becomes available regarding Kindergarten Orientation, WMG will forward this information onto families. WMG management will be available to parents who have questions concerning the transition of their child to the public school system. Throughout the proceeding school year, WMG will work closely with each local school to ensure that children are ready for Kindergarten and families have the information they will need to make the transition from Preschool to public school. During the month of April, WMG will host a Kindergarten Readiness Workshop for families of children entering Kindergarten in the fall when a representative from Montgomery County Public Schools is available.

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