



Thrivalaska Enrollment Policy

About Thrivalaska

Welcome to Thrivalaska! Thrivalaska is a parent run, non-profit organization that began providing services to families in Fairbanks in 1974. Thrivalaska has operated a School Age program at Pearl Creek for over 20 years. We currently offer a before and after school program for children 5 – 12 years old during the school year.

Thrivalaska has an elected Board of Directors, which consists of parents from each program and community members all of which volunteer to govern the program and determine policies and fees. Board meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month. All parents, staff and public are welcome to attend. Our major funding sources are parent tuition fees, federal, state and foundation grants, and community donations.

Thrivalaska's mission is "Helping Children & Families Thrive." We are a learning organization for children and adults where children, families, and staff are valued. We advocate for children, families, staff and early childhood educators in Fairbanks, the Interior, Northern and Southeast regions of Alaska. As a community-based corporation, we are actively involved and contribute to the early childhood profession.

Admission - as required by State of Alaska Child Care Licensing Regulations

At enrollment and before your child begins Thrivalaska, the following documents must be provided to the program Director:

- Information about any allergies to medication or foods
- Information about any medication the child is taking or medical or other treatment the child requires
- Information on how to contact the child's parent and at least one other local emergency contact individual
- Permission slips for emergency transport to health care facility and for the provision of emergency care, signed by parent
- Permission for emergency treatment signed by parent
- Thrivalaska will collaborate with families of children with special needs in developing and implementing a plan of care for the child
- Current shot record

If your child will not be attending on a given day for any reason, parents should notify teachers. It is the parent's responsibility to notify Thrivalaska staff of absences or late arrivals for sickness, vacations, field trips, late busses or any other reason including after school enrichment activities.

Persons not authorized by you will not be permitted to take your child from the program. Anyone who is not known by staff will be asked to show a valid ID. It is very important to notify the program regarding persons who will be picking up your child.

If there are changes in custody status during enrollment with Thrivalaska, we ask that you bring a copy of court orders so that we may restrict access to your child if necessary.

Thrivalaska staff recognize families have individual needs. We will work with families to formulate a plan of care that meets the needs of the child and the program.

Behavior Guidance

At Thrivalaska we use guidance methods which convey respect, honesty, trust and caring for others. It is our goal to help children develop age appropriate patterns of behavior that will help build relationships and increase their ability to deal with everyday life. We also:

- Create a child-oriented environment that encourages cooperation rather than conflict
- Establish clear and consistent guidelines for behavior
- Tell children what we expect in positive ways
- Model and teach empathy for others
- Help children learn to negotiate their differences
- Teach natural and logical consequences to older children
- Do not allow any corporal punishment that includes spanking or verbal humiliation by any staff, volunteers or parents with any child at the program.

Thrivalaska's first responsibility is for the safety and well-being of the children and families that we serve and our employees. Exclusionary practices will only be used as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety concern that cannot be reduced or eliminated with reasonable accommodation.

While every effort will be made to work with children, families may be required to find other care if any of the following incidences occur.

- A child's continuous behavior is cause for serious injury to himself, another child, or teacher
- A child's behavior is cause for serious emotional distress to another child, group of children, or teacher
- A child is unable to listen or follow directions that could lead to endangerment for the child, another child, or teacher

Parents will be informed immediately when concerns arise in the classroom. Teachers will provide a report about the concern and when necessary

a positive behavior support plan will be developed between the Director, the child's teacher and parent(s) with the intent to reduce challenging behavior and prevent suspensions and expulsions. The written plan will include methods for understanding the child's behavior, and developing, adopting and implementing a support system for the child that provides individualized social and emotional interventions, with an agreed upon timeframe.

When a child has a pattern of out-of-control behavior, the child may be removed from the company of other children until the behavior is stabilized. Thrivalaska will not provide care for school age children while they are suspended from school.

Child Abuse Reporting

Alaska State Statutes require that all people who care for children immediately report all incidents of suspected or actual abuse and/or neglect of children, regardless of whether or not they occur in or are related to care provided at Thrivalaska. All Thrivalaska staff are obligated by law to report such incidents within 24 hours by telephone, in person or in writing to the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services (OCS). The Program Director and Executive Director are notified when an incident of child abuse or neglect has been reported to officials.

Classroom Information - as required by State of Alaska Child Care Licensing Regulations

- Parents are always welcome in our classroom.
- A daily schedule is posted on our classroom bulletin board. The schedule includes specific examples of quiet and active play, group and individual activities with adequate time for meals, snacks, indoor and outdoor play, and at least 20 minutes of vigorous play for every 3 hours children are in care and daily supervised outdoor activity when weather permits.
 - The daily schedule typically shows parents the usual daily routine of activities and snacks.
 - Individual attention, good nutrition and healthy habits are included as part of our daily routine.
 - The schedule includes a balance of indoor/outdoor play, quiet/noisy activities, individual/small group/large group times, large muscle/small muscle development and both children initiated/staff-initiated learning opportunities
 - We provide activities and materials that are age and developmentally appropriate
- Weekly lesson plans and activities are also posted on classroom bulletin boards.
- Individual storage of each child's personal belongings is available.
- Electronics, television, cell phones, video, and computer time will not exceed 1½ hours in a 24-hour period.
- Small domestic animals such as guinea pigs, hamsters, fish, or finches may be present as class pets.
- Announcements of field trips and special events will be posted.

- Field trips and guest speakers are included in the curriculum – parents sign a general permission when they enroll; additional permission may be required for special activities. Thrivalaska has an emergency evacuation plan posted.
- Thrivalaska programs conduct emergency evacuation drills each month.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Your child will be involved in many activities throughout the day, both inside and outside. Our active curriculum often involves messy play. Provide tennis shoes or other closed-toe shoes so your child may safely climb and run. Please keep at least one extra set of clothing in your child's cubby (appropriate to the season of the year). This will ensure your child will have dry clothes available.

For easy identification, please label everything with your child's name. Please discourage your child from bringing personal toys from home to avoid the distress of losing or breaking a favorite possession.

Communication with Parents

Families will receive emails from our program. Teachers are expected to communicate daily with families regarding children in the program and will communicate about special events, meetings, schedules, calendars, menus, as well as other updates. The best way to keep informed about your child's progress is to visit the classroom. We also realize that work and family schedules can make this difficult. If you have questions, concerns, or comments about your child or the program, please talk with your child's teacher or the program Director.

Families come to Thrivalaska with their own beliefs, values and experiences in life. We encourage everyone – children, parents and staff – to talk to each other using the following guidelines:

- Show respect to others
- Be a good listener
- Honor differences

Parents will be notified in writing of any changes in enrollment policies 10 days before changes are made.

Confidentiality

Thrivalaska respects each family's right to privacy and maintains confidential records. The use or disclosure of any information pertaining to a child and his/her family is restricted to purposes directly connected with administration of the program. Parents can approve release of information pertaining to their family by signing a release.

Information on children enrolled is kept in a locked file cabinet. Access is controlled by the program Director and is limited to relevant administrative staff. Exceptions to access include situations of child abuse/neglect or during program audit or reviews.

Emergency Closure

Extremely cold weather, ice fog or difficulty with a building can pose safety hazards for children, their families and for staff, and we feel it best to discontinue service until the situation is resolved. To ensure safety for children, families and staff, Thrivalaska programs will close when:

1. The air temperature is –45 or colder at 6:00 AM
2. The program Director determines it is unsafe to operate based on heavy snow or ice conditions, other inclement weather, lack of utilities (such as heat, water and electricity), frozen water pipes, vandalism, and building or structural problems.
3. The FNSB School District determines there will be a school closure or delayed opening.
4. There is a natural disaster such as earthquake, flood or fire.

For weather or closure information check the following resources:

- Ft. Wainwright weather report @ 6:00 AM – 353-7121
- Thrivalaska Facebook page
- Fairbanks School District app or website
- News or radio stations

For all emergency closures and late openings parents are expected to pay full tuition since employees are paid for the regular hours they would have worked.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of any major emergency that might occur area wide, all parents will be contacted as soon as possible, and children will be supervised safely until their parents arrive. (See Thrivalaska Disaster Preparedness Plan) Our classroom is equipped with a Plan, contact information, emergency supplies and fresh water.

Enrollment Requirements

Thrivalaska welcomes all families and does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, differing abilities, national origin, sex, age, marital status, change in marital status, pregnancy or parenthood. Enrollment priorities are established by management per site. To enroll your children, we ask you to take the following steps:

- Tour the program with the director

- Speak with the teachers who will work with your children
- Observe the classroom
- Return all paperwork including immunization records (see Admission)
- Read all policies; ask questions
- Prior to the first day of attendance, pay the registration fee and first month's tuition to the Centralized Billing Accountant
- Establish the first day of attendance with the Centralized Billing Accountant

Family Involvement

Parents and family members play a vital role at Thrivalaska in planning and implementing programs and policies. You are encouraged to actively participate in decision-making through membership on committees and the Board of Directors.

Parents and family members are always welcome and encouraged to participate in every aspect of their child's early education program. Some of these opportunities are listed below:

- Assisting in your child's classroom
- Encouraging activities at home that reinforce and support your child's learning experiences
- Helping with special events, projects, fundraisers
- Preparing classroom materials
- Reading to your children at home, and in the classroom
- Helping as a parent volunteer during field trips

Fees

Fees are established by the Board of Directors and are subject to change. Parents will be given at least 30 days notice of fee increases. Non-payment of tuition can result in your child being dropped from Thrivalaska enrollment and assigned to a collection agency.

Tuition – Tuition is due by the 25th of the current month for the next month. For example: tuition is due by April 25th to cover May tuition. If current tuition is not paid by the 25th of each month, your child cannot attend next month until paid in full.

Tuition is not reduced due to holidays, children's absences, illnesses, vacations, or emergency closures.

Subsidized Tuition – A pre-approved subsidy authorization must be provided to Thrivalaska prior to enrollment and the first day of attendance.

Parents who qualify for state or tribal subsidy must pre-pay their co-pay and parent portion of tuition not covered by subsidy, by the 25th of the current

month for the next month. For example: co-pay and parent portion are due by April 25th to cover for May. If current co-pay and parent portion are not paid by the 25th of each month, your child cannot attend next month until paid in full.

Tuition is not reduced for parents with subsidy authorizations due to holidays, child absences, illnesses, vacations or emergency closures. You will be notified the amount due for the next month prior to the 25th of each month.

Registration – A non-refundable \$50 registration fee is charged for all children when enrolling.

The registration fee will be waived for currently enrolled families, who register for the upcoming school year prior to the end of the current school year. Registration is complete when the Contract for Care is signed, and tuition is paid for August.

Enrollment is considered attending monthly and paying tuition each month. A break in payment or attendance for longer than 30 days or drop from the program would require re-enrollment.

2 Week Notice – All parents are required to provide 2 weeks written notice prior to leaving the program or changing their schedule for care. If a parent fails to provide the required 2-week written notice they are still responsible for paying their child's regular tuition for the full 2 weeks of care, even if the child does not attend.

Multiple Child Discount – Families with more than one child, who are enrolled before and after school, have a current account and pay with auto-pay by the 25th each month, will receive a discount of \$30 per family, per month.

School District Early Dismissal and Closures – School district early dismissals are included in Before and After school rates. Children attending before OR after will be charged an additional fee of \$25 to attend on full days. Care is provided on a space available basis and is first come, first served.

Lost Checks – If a check issued by Thrivalaska is lost by the parent, the amount of the bank stop payment fee will be deducted from the reissued check.

Returned Checks – Parents will be charged a \$50 fee for processing any check returned by the bank for non-sufficient funds.

Field Trips

Kindergarten and school age children may participate in field trips throughout the year. All field trips must be pre-approved by the Executive Director. While on the fieldtrip, staff are required to take attendance frequently and turn in their forms to the program Director when returning. A field trip permission slip must be completed and in your child's file. Parents are encouraged and welcome to attend.

Health

- Thrivalaska isolates children who become sick and then calls the parents
- Parents are expected to come promptly to pick up ill children
- Thrivalaska is required to post a notice of communicable illness (per licensing regulations) for all enrolled families when a child is diagnosed or sent home with a contagious illness.
- Staff are certified to administer first aid and CPR
- If serious medical conditions are suspected, parents will be referred to an appropriate specialist
- Good nutrition, rest and exercise are an essential part of our program
- Employees follow Standard Precautions to prevent the transmission of blood-borne diseases
- To ensure children are in a safe environment while attending Thrivalaska, smoking, substance use, poisonous plants and weapons are prohibited on all Thrivalaska property and vehicles

To ensure the health of our children and staff, children or adults who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from the classroom until the condition subsides, or we determine that they are no longer contagious.

- An oral temperature of 101, or 100 If taken under the arm
- A painful, red throat, even if no fever is present
- A deep, hacking cough
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing (call or see your doctor)
- An unexplained rash
- Vomiting (more than one time in last 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (runny, watery or bloody stools)
- Complaints of a stiff neck and headache (with one or more of the above symptoms call or see your doctor)
- Thick green drainage from the nose along with sinus pressure, fever or tiredness
- Yellow discharge from the eyes
- An unusual yellow coloring to the skin or eyes (call or see your doctor)
- Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing
- Lice or nits
- A contagious illness. If you know or suspect your child has a contagious illness, please call your child's teacher or the Program Director.

Parents who feel their child is too ill to participate in outdoor activities should keep their child home an extra day to insure a complete recovery. If a chronic health condition limits participation in outdoor activities, a plan will be developed with the family.

Holiday Closures

The following holidays are observed at Thrivalaska, and the program will be closed.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- 2 days during Spring Break, when school is closed
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day and either the day before or after Christmas
- One week during winter break
- One teacher in-service day

Insurance

Thrivalaska carries liability insurance. If your child is injured at Thrivalaska and requires a visit to the doctor, Thrivalaska will act as the primary insurance carrier if you have no other medical insurance. Thrivalaska will act as the secondary insurance carrier if you have other medical insurance. Each program has insurance forms available.

Late Pick Up

It is imperative that your child be picked up by 5:45. Parents will be charged a late fee of \$2.00 per minute, per child after closing. The late fee is required of all parents, regardless of the services or subsidies their child receives.

If you think you may be late picking up your child, call the program immediately. You will need to arrange for someone else to come for your child. Parents who are habitually late in picking up their child may be asked to find other care. Failure to pay late fees could result in immediate termination of services.

Additional steps will be taken when a child is not picked up; the Executive Director, licensing, Office of Children's services and the police will be notified.

Medication

Thrivalaska is not required to administer medication but may do so as a convenience to families. There may be some circumstances when it is inappropriate for staff to administer medication. Medication may be administered for non-contagious symptoms. Thrivalaska encourages parents to work with their medical professionals to find medicines that do not need to be given during the hours their child is in care. Medicine should be administered at home by parents,

whenever possible. If medication is administered, Thrivalaska adheres to State of Alaska child care licensing requirements regarding authorization, storage, and administration.

Thrivalaska will only administer medication under the following circumstances:

- Parent will give written permission by signing a “Medication Authorization” form with instructions for administering the medication
- Medication authorizations are only valid for 30 days and must be renewed when they expire
- The authorization form must be approved by the Executive Director prior to medication being administered
- The Thrivalaska staff member who is authorized to administer medication must be listed on the authorization form
- The authorized staff member will administer the medication and record the time each dose is given
- Thrivalaska will only administer medication as indicated on the label or with written documentation from a medical professional
- Parent will provide the medication in the original container which is labeled with the child’s name, dosage and time
- Medication will always be kept locked while on Thrivalaska premises
- At no time are children allowed to transport or dispense medication
- Unused or outdated medication will be returned to the parent

Mental Health

Mental Health is defined in our program as a way of describing one’s emotional and social well-being. Mental health affects our relationships with everyone around us. Our goals for children and families are to:

- Respect children and adults as individuals.
- Provide a safe, secure, nurturing environment for children, parents and staff.
- Encourage the learning of social skills, which lead to positive self-esteem.
- Seek help when needed.

Nutrition

Providing nutritious snacks and introducing new foods to the children are important aspects of our nutrition program. School age children are required to bring their own lunch during full days of care. Thrivalaska will provide a nutritious morning and afternoon snack.

There is no additional charge for snacks. All snacks are served family style. Menus are posted weekly. It is important for us to know if your child has food allergies. We encourage food to be brought from home in place of food served by the program if your child has allergies.

Sample Menu:

AM Snack - Toast, blueberries

PM Snack - Crackers with cheese, apple juice

Outdoor Play

Children go outdoors daily, when temperatures and staffing permit, to support healthy growth and development. Outdoor play is part of our daily curriculum – even in the rain, snow, or cold temperatures. Children can have fun playing outdoors in any kind of weather. Outdoor play is an extension of what goes on in the classroom. Outdoor experiences are exciting, child oriented, and fun for children and staff.

The outdoor environment offers places to: slide and roll, dig, pretend, discover, watch, wonder, run, grow, build, jump, throw, kick, bounce, balance, ride and transport.

Temperature Guidelines:

- Children go outside at 20 below and above – considering wind chill
- All children must be appropriately dressed when playing outdoors in cold temperatures: hat, coat, gloves, snow pants, and boots.

Parent Responsibilities

Get involved! Thrivalaska is a parent run organization! When parents generously share their talents and resources the children benefit tremendously. Here are some of the ways you can help:

- Donations of used clothes for dress-up, lumber for carpentry, and class computers are especially appreciated
- Donate time to repair class materials
- Recycle with us!
- Bring in educational materials related to themes of study
- Share your culture, talents, skills, and hobbies; the children love it
- Talk with the teachers at least daily about your child
- Sign up to help with parties, picnics, and special events
- Volunteer to help on field trips or teacher training days
- Volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors
- Attend parent conferences and board meetings
- Support advocacy efforts to improve child care
- Read all paperwork sent home
- Keep your child's file current
- Promptly return all forms and questionnaires
- Speak to the teacher or program Director about ideas or concerns

The more each parent contributes and becomes involved the better the program will be for all the children.

Complaints or concerns about the quality of care are best discussed with Thrivalaska first. The teachers and program Director are usually best able to help solve a problem. If the problem is not resolved, parents are encouraged to work with the Executive Director and then the Board of Directors. If concerns are still not satisfied you may wish to write or call the local licensing representative as listed below. A representative investigates all complaints brought to their attention. If you have a serious concern over regulatory issues you have the option of contacting them at any time during this process.

State of Alaska – Child Care Licensing
542 4th Ave., #212
Fairbanks, AK 99701
451-3198

If Thrivalaska has concerns, we will speak with you about them and try to seek solutions. Historically our concerns have revolved around children who need a different care situation, parents not understanding or following policies, and parents not paying their tuition on time. If we cannot resolve the issues, parents may be asked to find other care. A copy of the State of Alaska, Child Care Licensing Regulations are located at each Thrivalaska program.

Private Child Care Arrangements

Thrivalaska does not endorse the solicitation of employees for after hours care. Thrivalaska will not be held responsible for an employee's behavior or integrity outside the work place. If you associate with a Thrivalaska employee during non-work hours, employees are always obligated to keep Thrivalaska information about families and staff confidential.

Further, Thrivalaska discourages parents or guardians from entering into private child care arrangements with employees that would remove them from our employ. This creates undue hardship on the program, affects consistency for the children, creates unwelcome turnover, and undermines our ability to provide quality care.

School Age Program

Before School Care - Thrivalaska's responsibility for your child begins when your child arrives to the classroom and is signed in. Thrivalaska's responsibility for your child ends when your child leaves to attend school at Pearl Creek Elementary and a staff member signs your child out.

Your child must be accompanied into the classroom by you or an adult authorized by you. Children may not be dropped off curbside for any reason. Parents or guardians are required by State of Alaska licensing regulations to sign children in each day, by recording the time and signing your name or initials.

After signing your child in, please take your child to their teacher or other staff member on duty. Never leave your child without ensuring a staff member knows they are present.

After School Care - Thrivalaska's responsibility for your child begins when your child arrives to the classroom and is signed in by a teacher. Thrivalaska's responsibility for your child ends when your child leaves the classroom with an authorized adult and is signed out.

Parents or guardians are required by State of Alaska licensing regulations to sign children out each day, by recording the time and signing your name or initials. Let staff know that you are taking your child home. Please do not permit your child to leave the program without you. All other persons who have been authorized by you to drop off and pick up your child should be instructed to follow this procedure.

In the event a bus is late, please instruct Thrivalaska whether you wish your child to return to the classroom to be picked up by you - or if you want your child to wait with school staff for the bus to arrive. Sign the Bus Permission form, indicating your choice.

SAMPLE SCHOOL AGE DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 - 8	School age children arrive - free play activities: blocks, dramatic play, reading, puzzles, games, computer, music, etc.
8 – 8:30	Morning Snack
8:30 – 9	Planned activity – art, science, math, games - depart for school
3:30 – 4	Return from school, afternoon snack
4:00 – 4:30	Outside play or active play inside depending on weather
4:30 – 5	Planned activity – art, science, math, games, music
5 – 5:45	Free play activities/children departing

Special Needs

Thrivalaska accommodates the special needs of children and their families whenever possible. A special need can include but is not limited to concerns regarding a child's: diet or feeding, toileting, rest, behavior, activity level, physical or positional limitations, language and communication, medication, or social/emotional interactions with others. Parents are required to fill out Thrivalaska's "Plan of Care for a Child with Special Needs" form. Confidential information is shared only with necessary staff and maintained in the child's file. Parents who have children with individual education plans (IEP) are requested to provide a copy for the program.

When special needs are identified, Thrivalaska will work with parents and other qualified representatives to evaluate how we can best meet the needs of the child. The program abilities and limitations are explained to the family.

Staff Qualifications

The quality of child care is based on the qualifications of the staff and management. We believe children need consistent care from people who understand child development and use techniques appropriate to the level of development in the child.

To promote longevity, staff who stay with Thrivalaska are given opportunities for increased responsibility, ongoing professional development and compensation. Our goal is to hire, train and retain qualified staff. We accomplish this in the following ways:

- References, background checks, and program orientation
- Paid benefits which include: health insurance, personal leave, holiday pay, and child care
- Flexible working conditions
- Employee recognition and support
- Extensive support for professional development
- Career ladder: assistant, teacher, lead teacher, supervisor, management

Supervision

Caregivers ensure that the children in their care receive responsible supervision appropriate to their age and developmental needs, according to the following guidelines:

- Children are always under adult supervision, except when providing a degree of freedom to a school age child appropriate to the child's age and developmental level.
- Caregivers are within proximity to children.
- Children are never left unattended.
- The following caregiver-to-child ratios are maintained:
 - One caregiver for every 14 kindergarten children, maximum group size of 28
 - One caregiver for every 18 school age children, maximum group size of 36
 - When kindergarten and school age children are grouped together, the caregiver-to-child ratio will be dependent on the age of the majority of the children

For a detailed "Supervising Children Guideline" which includes indoor play and field trips please request a copy from the program Director.

Visitors and Volunteers

Parents of children currently enrolled are welcome to visit unannounced at any time. Other visitors are expected to make appointments to tour the program, observe classes, or work with children.

Students from the university and other community members often come to observe the program and interact with the children. Regular staff members supervise all visitors.

Volunteers are screened and placed to assist staff members with specific assignments. We have especially benefited from the thousands of hours our foster grandparents have donated.