

Preschool Parent Handbook

**Marion, Morrow, Sandusky, Seneca and
Wyandot Counties**



***Serving Children With and Without
Special Needs***

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Welcome

The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center Preschool Programs are integrated programs serving both children identified with special education needs and typically developing children. The preschools are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. The most recent inspection reports are posted in the classrooms for viewing. The NCOESC Preschools are run by the North Central Ohio Educational Service Center in accordance with board adopted policies. It does not discriminate in providing services to children or their families on the basis of religion, national origin, cultural heritage, race, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or disability in its admissions or hiring practices.

Our Philosophy

North Central Ohio Educational Service Center's Preschool philosophy mirrors that of the Ohio Department of Education Division of Early Learning and School Readiness.

We support the following principles:

- All children are born ready to learn;
- Relationships are influential;
- Environments matter; and
- Communication is critical.

Through participation in the NCOESC Preschools, young children develop healthy personalities, self direction, inner control, the ability to express their own ideas, complete tasks, learn to care for and about others and experience cognitive, physical and social growth. The result is young children who reach their full potential to be successful in community, home and school.

Parent Participation

Parents are a vital part of the NCOESC Preschool Program and are always welcome to visit the classroom and help with special projects, snacks and field trips. We do ask that parents limit their time in the classroom



during the school day as it is important to maintain a consistent routine in the classroom for young children. We encourage parents or other family members to share hobbies, collections, talents, professions and traditions with our class. Children's records are available to parents at any time upon request. The school will provide copies at ten cents per copy. No record, in whole or part, will be released to anyone other than the parent or guardian without written parental consent. A log will be kept in each record documenting each release with names, dates and signatures.

Parent concerns and suggestions for the preschool, written or verbal, are welcome at any time. If differences or problems arise during the school year, it is recommended that the parent first meet with the teacher so that both parties can clearly understand the issue involved and seek ways to reach a solution that will be in the best interest of the child. If the parents are not satisfied with the outcome of the parent-teacher conference they should immediately contact the director to arrange a meeting. At that time, parents, the director and the teacher will work together to resolve the issue. If the issues are not resolved at that point, parents may obtain copies of inspection reports or file a complaint. Contact the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at (614)-466-0224.

Attendance

Ohio law requires parents, guardians and persons having custody of preschool children to be accountable and responsible for their child's regular attendance at school. The NCOESC Preschool Program believes that regular attendance is a vital factor in the child's development of self discipline and responsibility. When your child needs to be absent from school, please telephone your child's school the morning of the absence to inform the teacher or school secretary.

Curriculum

The NCOESC Preschools follow both developmentally appropriate practice for three, four and five year olds as documented through the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning and Development Standards. These standards include: Social-Emotional Development; Approaches Toward Learning; Physical Well-Being and Motor Development; Cognitive Development and General Knowledge; Language and Literacy Development. These standards are addressed through the use of the Creative Curriculum. Curriculum instruction, the classroom environment and age appropriate activities reflect the cognitive, social and emotional level of our learners. They also take into consideration the differing abilities or characteristics of all the children including children with disabilities, unique ethnic and/or cultural characteristics and individual life experiences.



Classes



Each NCOESC Preschool class is taught by a professionally licensed teacher who meets the highly qualified teacher standards set by the Ohio Department of Education for serving both children with special education needs and typically developing preschool children. The teachers are assisted by paraprofessionals who participate in ongoing professional training in the area of early childhood development and education. For those children requiring additional special education assistance, the NCOESC Preschools

also have available the services of a speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist and school psychologist. Additional services may be available to those students with hearing, vision and/or mobility needs as well. Identified students with special needs enrolled in other early childhood programs may also qualify for itinerant services.

Parents are invited to visit the preschool prior to registration. Parents may also schedule a conference prior to their child attending by contacting the teacher. Such a conference can enable the teacher to learn some of the unique characteristics of each child so he/she can individualize the child's school experience.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Please be sure that if your child does not ride the bus you make arrangements to have your child dropped off and picked up at the times set by the school. Staff **will not** be available before or after the set school times.

Required Documentation at Time of Enrollment

Prior to enrollment in the NCOESC Preschools, parents are to provide the following to the preschool teacher:

- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Copy of the child's immunization record
- Copy of child custody papers if applicable
- All completed registration forms as obtained from the preschool
- Proof of residency

Tuition and Supply Fees

Typically developing children in the NCOESC Preschools are charged tuition. State law does not allow the program to charge tuition to those children who qualify as a Preschool Child with a Disability and who require special education services. Tuition is set by August 1 of each school year. Preschool tuition fees are payable at the beginning of each school month.

Parents will be required to sign a payment contract for audit purposes and will be billed monthly. Tuition fees in arrears of thirty (30) days or more will result in exclusion of the child from the preschool program until payment is received.

In some instances there are supply fees which are also set by August 1 of each school year. Parents may opt to pay the entire supply fee upon enrollment of their child in preschool or they may pay the supply fee in four quarterly installments. Your child's preschool program will issue an invoice each quarter if this payment option is chosen. Supply fees are not to be confused with tuition.

Conference and Progress Reporting

Frequent, open communication between family and school is in the best interest of the child and occurs on an informal basis at drop off and pick up times. Sometimes it is not appropriate to discuss concerns with your child present so the teacher and director are available for conferences. Please speak with your teacher or call the director to set up a mutually convenient appointment time. In addition to informal meetings as necessary, two formal parent teacher conferences will be scheduled either in the home or at school.

Progress reports are sent home every twelve weeks throughout the school year. Parents also receive a portfolio at this time documenting not only your child's progress in the curriculum, but also pictures and work samples that demonstrate your child's emerging abilities.

Release of Information

Information concerning your child's progress in the preschool program may be sent to physicians, local school districts or other agencies with your written permission. Authorization forms must be completed prior to release.



Health and Safety Policy

It is noted that the NCOESC Preschools have at least one staff member who is trained in first aid, recognition and management of communicable disease and in child abuse recognition and prevention available at all times when your preschool child is in attendance at school. Parents are informed that by state law, all preschool staff members are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse/neglect. Not reporting suspected cases to the proper authorities could result in criminal charges brought against the employee and/or loss of their education license.

- All children enrolled in the NCOESC Preschools are required to have an examination by a licensed physician annually, per licensing requirements. *The physical is good for 13 months, from the date of the exam.* A report from the physician indicating the child is in suitable condition to attend preschool must be on file with your child's teacher within thirty (30) days of enrollment in the preschool program. The **physician's report** form is part of the preschool registration packet or can be obtained from your child's teacher.
- State regulations also require a **dental report**.
- An **immunization record** indicating your child's immunizations are current is also required prior to enrollment in the preschool program. Copies of your child's immunization record are acceptable.
- Families are also required to complete enrollment forms which will include: the name, address and telephone number of your preferred doctor, dentist and hospital if your child requires emergency medical treatment while in preschool. It also includes your written permission to transport or not transport your child to the specified hospital or specialist in the case of an emergency and you cannot be located. These forms also require you as the parent to provide the names, addresses and telephone numbers of *at least two persons to contacted in an emergency in the event you cannot be located.* Please note that these procedures are used only in the case you as the parent cannot be reached via any of the contact numbers you have provided the preschool.

- You child's complete health history is also required prior to your child entering preschool. This makes the teacher aware of any allergies and treatments for said allergies, medications, food supplements or modified diets required by your child, any chronic physical problems and history of hospitalization and diseases. This information is essential to ensure that we are meeting your child's health needs while he or she is in preschool.
- **Written administration instructions** from a licensed physician or licensed dentist is required for the administration of any medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement as appropriate. A form can be obtained from your child's teacher. Medication administered in school must be in the original container displaying the correct medication label. We maintain a medication log for any medication administered during school.

Class Roster

A class roster is prepared annually and includes the name and telephone number of the child and of the child's parent. Upon request, this roster is **only** available to each parent of a child registered in the program. Parents are asked to sign a statement with the preschool indicating whether or not they wish to be included in the class roster prior to its development.

Fire Drills and Tornado Drills

Fire drills are practiced monthly throughout the school year and tornado drills are practiced monthly during tornado season. Drill procedures are reviewed and practiced with the children and written procedures are posted in each classroom. A written log is kept of each drill and is available for review by parents upon request.

Illness and Communicable Diseases

Daily Health Checks are conducted by a preschool staff member trained in the recognition of communicable diseases. Children are greeted at the beginning of the day and are observed for such things as sores, discharge from the nose, ears or eyes, rashes, coughing, bruises, bites, swelling, activity level and general mood. If there are any noticeable concerns, parents will be contacted immediately. The NCOESC Preschools follows the Department of Health "Child Daycare Communicable Disease Chart" for appropriate management of suspected illnesses. The following rules are observed in the preschool program to limit the spread of contagious illnesses. If you have any doubts about your child's illness, please do not send him or her to school to help us limit illness being spread to other children.

Do not send your child to school if he or she has any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Untreated infected skin patch or patches
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasites
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Nasal discharge having a greenish tint (sign of infection)
- Vomiting
- Yellowish skin or eyes

Children showing any of these symptoms or appear to not feel well when in school will be immediately isolated from the rest of the class and cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used by the preschool program but within sight and hearing of an adult at all times.

The child will be made comfortable, provided a cot and observed carefully for worsening conditions. Parents will be notified immediately of your child's condition and you or the person designated by you, in writing, will be required to pick up your child as soon as possible. This is for the protection of your child and the protection of all your child's classmates.



Children sent home due to illness can be readmitted to school once they are symptom free for twenty-four (24) hours or on the written/verbal permission of the family's physician. The NCOESC Preschools will notify, in writing, all parents of enrolled children when their child is exposed to a diagnosed communicable disease such as pink eye, ring worm, chicken pox or lice.

Cots will be cleaned with soap, water and disinfectant. Any linens and blankets used will be laundered prior to being used by any other child.



Disease Prevention

Hand washing is the most effective measure to prevent the spread of disease.

All children and staff use thorough hand washing before handling or eating food, after toileting or wiping noses and after changing diapers. As much as possible, children are encouraged to manage their own hand washing. Having soap and towels within reach, a step stool and watching other children and adults use good hand washing techniques assists children in learning this personal skill.

Behavior Management

All discipline and guidance is based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of each child in the NCOESC Preschools. We are maximizing the growth and development of the children while protecting the group and the individuals within it. If a child behaves outside of the set limits, the teacher will quietly take the child aside and explain why the behavior is inappropriate and give suggestions to resolve it. A child may be removed from a particular activity for a period of time appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and then redirected to more appropriate choices. Praise is also used to help reinforce appropriate behaviors. NCOESC employees will never use techniques of discipline that humiliate, shame or frighten a child. We are consistent, firm, fair and understanding in order to help children develop self control and problem solving abilities. The NCOESC Preschools discipline techniques apply to all persons in the preschool.

Parents are assured of the following:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- Discipline is only administered by a program adult.
- The only physical restraints used to confine a child are techniques in which the staff has been certified to use to ensure the safety of the child and others.
- **No** child will be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet or other cubicle as a form of discipline.
- **No** child will be subjected to profane language, threats or derogatory remarks about himself or his family.
- Discipline is **not** imposed on a child for failure to eat, sleep or for toileting accidents and does **not** include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- The program shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance.

Do You Have Concerns About Your Child's Development?

If you have concerns in any of the following areas, please talk with your child's teacher:

- **Motor Skills:** How your child moves and coordinates the use of large and small muscles.
- **Cognitive (Thinking) Skills:** How your child reasons and understands.
- **Communication:** How your child expresses and understands what is said.
- **Adaptive Behavior:** How your child can care for his/her personal needs and interacts with their environment.
- **Social Emotional Behavioral Functioning:** How your child relates to other children, adults and their surroundings



If a parent or preschool staff member is concerned about a child's learning or behavior, they can initiate a referral to the teacher or director. Observations will be documented in writing and concerns reviewed. The teacher, parent and/or director will meet to review the documentation and discuss the concern. If necessary, a plan of action to help the child with the learning or behavior concern will be developed and a screening can be arranged. Parent permission is voluntary and can be revoked at any time.

Dressing Your Child for School

Comfortable play clothes are most suitable for preschool. Clothing should be easy for children to manage as this will increase their self-help skills. Warm outer clothing, including hat and mittens or gloves, for outdoor play is essential in cold weather. Certain backless sandals, such as "flip flops" are not appropriate due to safety reasons. Please label all jackets, hats, boots, etc. with your child's name to minimize loss. When your child is enrolled in the preschool, please send in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name, a full change of clothing to be kept at school for emergencies. Please include underwear and socks. Children learn by doing. They should not have to worry about getting "dirty" while exploring paint, clay, mud, etc. Please dress your child accordingly.



Rest Time

If your child is enrolled in a classroom that is an all day program, there will be a rest time after lunch. We are aware that many children may not be able to sleep, however, we only ask at this time that they lie down for awhile. Some children rest better if they have a pillow or blanket. We do not have the storage space for full size blankets or pillows so please send in small blankets and pillows if you so choose. If your child wishes, they can rest with their stuffed animal from home. Please write your child's name on their nap items.

Snacks

For all of our programs, **except Mount Gilead Preschool**, we ask that once a month each family sends in snack items for the whole class in lieu of sending a daily snack with your child. We encourage simple healthy snacks. Please avoid snacks that are high in sugar or chocolate. Below you will find some snack ideas. We realize that everyone is on a tight budget, so please do not feel it is necessary to provide name brand products. Please let us know if your child has food or other allergies. In addition to providing nutrition, we use snack time to practice math, reading and fine motor skills.

Drinks: 100 % fruit juices, any flavor, juice concentrate, juice boxes, milk or small bottles of water.



Munchies: crackers (graham, Ritz, saltines, animal cracker, fish crackers etc.), Fig Newtons, pretzels, bagels, bread sticks, English muffins, cereal, bread, microwave popcorn, waffle sticks and Chex Mix.

Extras: peanut butter, cheese spread, fresh or canned fruit, carrots, jelly, fruit leather, fruit snacks. Other ideas include: string cheese, yogurt or cheese slices.

Lunch

For the all day programs: The preschoolers may purchase their lunch at school or you may pack your child's lunch. Please mark your child's name on his/her lunch container. Free and reduced lunches are also available to those who qualify. A morning snack will be given to your child.

Special Parties

Occasionally, the classroom teacher will decide to have a party for a special holiday such as a birthday, Halloween, Christmas, etc. The teacher will notify parents in advance when a party will take place. If you do not want your child to participate in these activities, please inform the child's teacher by calling or writing. In addition, sometimes on special occasions



families want to send in special treats. Please let your child's teacher know in advance so we can make those accommodations.

Diapering

In some instances, NCOESC Preschools enroll non-toilet-trained children. Parents are to provide an adequate supply of disposable diapers and diaper wipes for use by your child when in school. These supplies are stored in a space assigned exclusively to your child's belongings.

Diaper changing in school takes place in a space that contains a hand washing facility. Soiled diapers are disposed of daily. Any soiled clothing will be placed directly in a plastic bag, sealed tightly and sent home with your child. If your child requires topical ointments or creams, written instructions must be provided to the preschool in order for them to be administered. These instructions should include the name of the ointment, cream or lotion, name of the child, birth date of the child; parent signature and date of signature. These written instructions are valid for three months only. Parents can cancel their authorization by submitting a request to do so at any time to your child's teacher.

928 W. Market Street, Suite A, Tiffin, OH 44883
 419-447-2927

www.ncoesc.org

Family Learning Center

797 E. Clinton Twp. Rd. 201
 Tiffin, OH 44883
 419-448-5079

Marion County

333 East Center Street
 Marion, OH 43302
 740-387-6625

Mount Gilead Exempted Village Schools

335 Park Avenue
 Mount Gilead, OH 43338
 419-946-1646

**Programs & Services for Fremont City
 School District**

500 W. State Street, Suite A
 Fremont, OH 43420
 419-332-3689

Wyandot County

11028 County Highway 44
 Upper Sandusky, OH 43451
 419-294-4901

Inclement Weather

Please tune into your local radio or television station during inclement weather to learn if the schools are delayed or closed. Please keep in mind that schools may be delayed or closed due to fog, ice, snow or flooding. Below is a chart of our preschools and what district to follow.

<u>Preschool</u>	<u>District to Follow</u>
Carey.....	Carey Exempted Village Schools
Family Learning Center.....	Sentinel Career Center
Fremont	Fremont City Schools
Marie English Early Childhood Center.....	Marion City Schools
Mt. Gilead.....	Mt. Gilead Exempted Village Schools
New Riegel.....	New Riegel Local Schools
Upper Sandusky.....	Upper Sandusky Exempted Village Schools

