

2025-26

Preschool Program Parent Handbook

Includes information for GHV Elementary, Little Lambs, and Redeemer Preschools

Our Mission

Our mission is to prepare students for a successful future in a kind, caring, and compassionate way.

Our Vision

GHV's vision is to build positive relationships, inspire passion for learning, and prepare for the future.

All students are capable of:

- High levels of engagement
- Academic, behavioral, and social/emotional growth
- Learning at high levels
- Acting in a safe, respectful, and responsible manner

Non-Discrimination Statement

It is the policy of the Garner-Hayfield-Ventura Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status (for programs), socioeconomic status (for programs), disability, religion, and creed in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: GHV's District's Equity Coordinator: **Shawn Miller**, *High School Principal*, 605 West Lyons Street, Garner, Iowa 50438. School Phone: (641) 923-2632 Email: smiller@ghvschools.org

GHV Community Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program

Change of Address/Phone Number

If your address and/or phone numbers (including work and cell phones) change during the school year, GHV parents and guardians should make changes on JMC, at <https://cardinals.onlinejmc.com/>, or by calling our office at (641) 923-2831. Little Lambs parents please call (641) 923-2300, and Redeemer parents please call (641) 829-3615. It is imperative that we know how to reach you at all times for your child's safety. If you plan to move during the school year, please inform the teacher and the office at your earliest convenience.

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I. Welcome

Welcome to GHV Elementary Preschool and the GHV Community Partner Preschools, Little Lambs and Redeemer. This handbook is meant to be a guide for students and parents. It is not intended to contain every rule, regulation, activity and procedure that is followed here at school. If you have questions over content not covered in this booklet, please contact the school office, or your child's teacher. The preschool team is excited to design an early childhood program that meets and exceeds the needs of your child. We are excited to work with you!

GHV Elementary Preschool	
620 West 11th Street Garner, Iowa Phone: (641) 923-2831 Fax: (641) 925-1533	<i>4yr PS Teacher:</i> Kristi Clark (kclark@ghvschools.org) <i>3yr PS and 4yr PS Teacher:</i> Angel Clarey (aclarey@ghvschools.org) <i>Principal:</i> Michael J. Meyering (mmeyering@ghvschools.org) <i>Administrative Assistant:</i> Amber Jenniges (ajenniges@ghvschools.org)
Little Lambs Preschool, Community Partner with GHV	
890 State Street Garner, Iowa Phone: (641) 923-2300	<i>Teacher:</i> Alesha Lentz (alentz@ghvschools.org) <i>Principal:</i> Michael J. Meyering (mmeyering@ghvschools.org) <i>Administrative Assistant:</i> Amber Jenniges (ajenniges@ghvschools.org)
Redeemer Preschool, Community Partner with GHV	
301 South Main Street Ventura, Iowa Phone: (641) 829-3615	<i>Teacher:</i> Kari Markla (kmarkla@ghvschools.org) <i>Principal:</i> Michael J. Meyering (mmeyering@ghvschools.org) <i>Administrative Assistant:</i> Amber Jenniges (ajenniges@ghvschools.org)

II. Philosophy and Goals

a. Philosophy

The preschool uses developmentally appropriate practices to provide a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where children develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively. Teaching methods are based on the following:

- Iowa Early Learning Standards
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards
- My Teaching Strategies, Gold Curriculum

The Four-Year-Old Preschool Program serves students in the GHV area, but is open to any student who qualifies. We currently have 3 sections at GHV, one section at Little Lambs, and two sections at Redeemer.

The Three-Year-Old Preschool Program at GHV serves students in the GHV area, and is also open to any student who qualifies. We currently have 2 sections at GHV.

b. Goals

We will provide interactions and experiences to help children to:

- Develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Develop conflict resolution skills
- Be a member of the preschool community
- Manage emotions and behaviors

Educating the whole child requires a balance between academic, social, and emotional development. The early childhood team that works with the preschool program includes:

- Program Administrator (principal)
- Classroom Teacher
- Classroom Paraprofessional
- Special Education Teacher
- Special Education Paraprofessional
- School Nurse
- Central Rivers AEA support staff to include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, and physical therapist

Educators recognize the important role they play in your child's education and welcome opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, parents, and the community. Parents are valued and encouraged to be active partners in the educational process.

III. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (IQPPS 1.5, 1.6, 2.1 - 2.30, 8.3, 3.1 - 3.18, 9.1-9.4)

a. Curriculum

Our preschool program uses Creative Curriculum as its framework. The Creative Curriculum is a research-based preschool curriculum that focuses on four main developmental areas: Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Cognitive Development, and Language Development. A family's culture and the child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important part of the child's growth and development. The curriculum goals and objectives will guide teachers' planning and instruction based on the Teaching Strategies GOLD® assessment tool. Other assessments include Individual Growth & Development Indicators (IGDIs) and teacher checklists.

b. Instruction

Each day, the children will have choice time among the different interest areas or centers. They will have the opportunity to self-select where they might like to play and work. Examples of interest areas are:

- Library - Students have the opportunity to read and look at a variety of books independently or with peers
- Technology - Each classroom has access to media and technology
- Writing - Students have access to a variety of writing utensils and materials
- Art - Students may choose a variety of art materials to create individual works of art
- Sensory Table - Students can develop their senses and cognitive development through play in a sensory table. Items may include water, sand, snow, rice, pasta, etc. Materials are rotated on a regular basis
- Blocks - Students can build with different types of blocks and engage in imaginary play with items added to the block center
- Dramatic Play - Students may role-play and pretend with props and settings. Materials are rotated to allow for a variety of experiences
- Toys and Games - Children will develop cognitive skills, such as counting, problem solving, categorizing and matching
- Science - Children will explore with a variety of science materials

Teaching staff support children as they help them build friendships by entering into, sustaining, and enhancing play. Teaching staff also assist children in resolving conflict by helping them identify feelings, describing problems, and trying alternative solutions.

c. Assessment (IQPPS 4.1 - 4.9)

Children may be assessed in any of the followings ways:

- Teaching Strategies GOLD© - an online-based assessment composed of observations of each child. This is done twice per year.
- Ongoing observations throughout the year
- IGDIs (Individual Growth and Development Indicators) - three times per year to assess growth of early literacy skills (fall, winter, and spring)
- Child samples and artifacts for portfolios and GOLD© observations
- Information shared by families and parents as families are encouraged to share observations about their child's abilities

The conditions under which children will be assessed may include any of the following: during their time in the classroom, being pulled from the classroom for individual assessments and screenings (i.e., IGDIs), or any combination of the two. GHV believes it is best to measure each child's progress across multiple settings, in a variety of situations, in order to get the best picture of the child's learning. Some assessments will be planned, while others may be impromptu and as needed, including both formative and summative assessments.

The assessment information from above is used to help guide instruction based on the children's needs, interests, and ability in order to plan effective instruction. Preschool teachers meet in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) and plan collaboratively across the district. **(IQPPS 2.5)**

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are welcome and can be requested at any time. If the teacher or family has a concern, assistance can be requested from Central Rivers Area Education Agency (CRAEA) at any time. **(IQPPS 4.9, 7.1-7.7)**

Student records and assessment information is confidential. Methods to protect confidentiality include information being stored electronically with password protection, physical assessment information being stored in locked or secured locations, and a review of privacy and confidentiality with all preschool staff, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and volunteers.

IV. Policies and Procedures

a. Security

Over the years the GHV schools have invested funds to provide for the safety of students and staff. Office personnel are usually available from 7:30am to 4:00pm each day. Parents and other visitors must press the buzzer at the Main Entrance located at door S6, on the South side of GHV Elementary to gain entry into the buildings after the school day begins. The administrative assistant is able to view the person at the door, ask for a name, and determine the purpose for the visit. Parents and visitors must sign-in and sign-out at the main office. If your child arrives late for school, or if he/she has an appointment, you must enter through the door at the Main Entrance, door S6, and walk your child to his/her classroom. While this may be an inconvenience, please be assured that we want your child to be safe at school.

b. Arrival and Departure Times

Morning Section: 8:20am to 11:20am

Afternoon Section: 12:20pm to 3:20pm

c. Arrival Procedures

Students riding the bus will be dropped off in the Bus Loop on the west end of the GHV Elementary building. Students will enter the preschool building through the south entrance on 11th Street.

Parents dropping off their children can park in the parking spaces at the preschool building, and enter the preschool building through the south entrance on 11th Street. At 8:30am, all entrances will be locked and all students, parents, guardians, and visitors will be required to use the Main Entrance (door S6)

Arrival time is from 8:00-8:20am for the morning session, and 12:00-12:20pm for the afternoon session. Please do not bring your child before 8:00am or 12:15pm.

d. Dismissal Procedures

Students from the morning section who qualify for transportation will ride the bus to their destination. The bus picks up students in the West Bus Loop and will take them to their drop off location. This is for the morning section only, and only for students who qualify.

For all other students, they'll need to be picked up, or ride the regular bus routes home.

Dismissal at the end of the day:

- Preschool students should be picked up at the south entrance on 11th street, where the teacher can ensure that the student is going with the parent/guardian, as well as share any information about the day.

e. Clothing

1. Students are expected to come to school clean and well groomed.
2. Clothing with inappropriate expressions and language, as well as clothing that promotes alcoholic beverages or any other substances, are inappropriate for students and will not be permitted.
3. Recess is usually outdoors, unless one of the following criteria are met:
 - When the air temperature is 0°F or below
 - When the wind chill is 0°F or below
 - When there is active, wet precipitation, or if the the outdoor playground is too wet to play on

As such, please dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Snow pants and boots are needed when there is snow on the ground. See "[Recess Clothing Expectations](#)" at the end of the handbook.

4. Please keep at school an extra set of clothes (including underwear) at the school in case of an accident. Please label clothing with your child's name.

f. Snacks, Birthday Treats, and Allergens (IQPPS 5.13)

Preschool students are offered a daily snack and milk. There is a nominal milk fee, charged at registration, for your child's daily milk. Parents are able to opt out of having milk and may choose for their child to drink water at snack time instead. Birthday treats are allowed, and should be peanut-free, prepackaged snacks with the nutrition information still attached for the class. If there are any food allergies, please be sure to notify the school nurse and your child's teacher. From here, a plan will be created to ensure that your child does not come in contact with their allergen.

g. Field Trips

Field trips are designed to enhance the curriculum for each grade level. Notices will be sent home when there is a field trip, but parents will not be required to sign a permission slip and return it to school.

h. Objects From Home

Because the preschool program has ample toys and learning materials for children, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. Please do not allow your child to bring gum, candy, money, and/or toy guns to school. The preschool program is not responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

V. Cancellation of School

School closings or early dismissals will be shared through School Messenger notifications. To sign up to receive text messages or email updates, visit this link: <https://bit.ly/3F12aHG>

Closings and dismissals will also be announced on these TV and radio stations:

News Channel 3 (KIMT)	93.9 FM (KIAI)	98.7 FM (KSMA)	102.7 FM (KYTC)
106.1 FM (KLSS)	107.3 FM (KIOU)	1300 AM (KGLO)	1490 AM (KRIB)

In the event of a late start, early dismissal, or a cancellation, Preschool will be impacted in the following ways:

- 2-hour late start, morning preschool is canceled
- 1-hour early dismissal, afternoon preschool dismisses 1 hour early
- 2-hour early dismissal, afternoon preschool is canceled (Usually this call is made prior to lunchtime.)
- Cancellation - both morning and afternoon preschools are canceled

VI. Health

At GHV Elementary and GHV Middle School, our Health Office is located in the Main Office. At GHV High School, our health office is located by the District Office. We have a School Nurse, as well as a Health Office Assistant. Both are excited to help your students in the coming years!

The health office is concerned with all aspects of the physical health of students because good health is critical to attendance and learning. The school nurse coordinates programs in vision, hearing, developmental changes, immunization, dental health, first aid, and CPR. Students are automatically screened unless the parent submits a note asking the student to be excused from the screening. The grade levels included in the screenings are determined annually. A student who feels ill or wishes to discuss some health problem with the school nurse should ask for a pass from their classroom teacher. Students should have permission to go home because of illness from either office or nursing staff. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents/guardians according to the information on GHV's student information system. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student is released according to the parents' directive. Please notify the school if the parents will be out of town for a period of time.

a. Required Paperwork for Health Records (IQPPS 5.1, 5.13, 10.8, 10.10)

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school health office. The health office maintains student health records that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics and/or the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least yearly. It is parent/guardian responsibility to update health office staff with changes to your child's health needs and/or diagnoses throughout the school year. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administration or education team as guided per Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Required Paperwork for Health Records Includes:

- Dental Certificate of Screening: The state of Iowa (code 507.1) requires that all kindergarten students and all 9th grade students have a dental screening and submit a certificate of the dental screening to the school office. All out of state transfer students, at any grade level, entering elementary, middle school or high school are also required to have a dental screening. For students in kindergarten, a screening is valid from age 3 years to 4 months after enrollment date. For students in 9th grade, a screening is valid from 1 year prior to enrollment to 4 months after enrollment date.
- Physical: The state of Iowa (code 507.1) requires students enrolling in preschool or kindergarten or desiring to participate in athletic activities in the school district to have a physical examination by a licensed medical provider and provide proof of such an examination to the school district.

- Immunizations: Students enrolling for the first time in the school district shall also submit an up-to-date certificate of immunization. Failure to meet the immunizations requirement will be grounds for suspension. Exemptions from the immunization requirement will be allowed only for medical or religious reasons recognized under the law. The student must provide a valid Iowa State Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Exemption to be exempt from this policy.
- Annual Health Update: Parents are asked each year to complete the annual student health update via online registration, as part of the registration process.

b. Illness Policy (IQPPS 5.3)

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not attend school. If your child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- Fever of 100.4°F or greater
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eye with drainage
- Excessive cough or nasal discharge

The GHV Community School District's established policy for an ill child's return to school:

- Fever free for 24 hours without medication
- Strep Throat: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Pink Eye: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage.

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. When a child develops signs of an illness during the school day, parents, legal guardians, or another person authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. Your child can be picked up from the Health Office, which is located in the Main Office at GHV Elementary/Middle School, and can be accessed at door S6. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's doctor.

c. Medication Policies And Procedures (IQPPS 5.8)

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and with an order from a health care provider for a specific child as directed on pharmacy label. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside school hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian and health care provider has given written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has medication administration training from the school nurse. Documentation of medications will be kept in the student's electronic health file.

For prescription medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child resistant container that is labeled by the pharmacist with the child's name, name and strength of the medication, date the prescription was filled, name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription, the medication's expiration date, and the administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer, and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

The school health office carries: Tylenol, Benadryl (for allergic reactions ONLY), Calagel, Bacitracin, Aquaphor hydrocortisone cream, Vaseline, hydrogen peroxide, cough drops, contact solution, Refresh eye drops, eye wash and icy hot. All over-the-counter medications carried by the school health office will be administered as directed per manufactured label, unless otherwise directed per student's medical provider via written order. Parent/Guardian permission will be obtained yearly upon completion of the student health update via online registration in order to administer your student these medications throughout the school year. The school nurse, health office assistant, or medication administration trained staff will administer medications. If permission is not obtained, a phone call to parent/guardian will be made to obtain permission. If unable to reach a parent/guardian, medication will not be able to be administered during the school day.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the health staff in writing (by signed note or prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other persons legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies to both prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medication will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used as needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

ALL medications must be transported to/from school via parent/guardian. There is a locked dropbox outside GHV E/MS and GHV HS Main Entrances where parent/guardians can drop off medications after school hours.

d. Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves or does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, the student shall not attend class or participate in school activities without their personal licensed medical provider's approval.

Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to whooping cough, mumps, measles and chickenpox. Please contact the health office with any questions/concerns you may have. Please view child illness and Exclusion criteria for education and child care settings at

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/2819/download?inline=> for further details.

e. Student Illness or Injury at School

A student who becomes ill or is injured at school must notify his or her teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents/guardians. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student will be released as per parent directives.

While the school district is not responsible for treating medical emergencies, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school will contact emergency medical personnel, if necessary, and attempt to notify the parents/guardians where the student has been transported for treatment.

g. Physical Education/Extra-Curricular Activities/Recess:

If your student is unable to participate fully in physical activities, extra-curricular activities and/or recess then a healthcare provider's note is required. A copy of the note should be provided to the school health office. The school health office staff will provide updates of student's activities to proper staff.

Parents/Guardians may request his/her student to sit out of PE/Recess up to 3 days. If said student needs to sit out of PE/recess longer than 3 days, a note from your student's healthcare provider is required.

a. Cleaning and Sanitization (IQPPS 5.18, 5.19)

Classroom areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated will be removed immediately and disinfected prior to using again. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using an acceptable and safe disinfectant. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Staff

will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers, such as gloves, and proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III of the IQPPS manual. A checklist will be completed.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label.

b. Hand Washing Practices (IQPPS 5.6)

Frequent hand washing is key to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand washing procedures.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children as hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff will assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- After diapering or using the toilet
- After handling body fluids (blowing nose, coughing on hand, or any mucus, blood, or vomit)
- Before meals and snacks, preparing food, or serving food
- Before and after playing in water

c. CPR/First Aid (IQPPS 5.2)

At least one person at all times is present who is certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.

d. First Aid Kit (IQPPS 9.12)

A first aid kit is located in every preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. The first aid kit is appropriately and fully equipped according to the nurse's guidance. Following use of the kits, contents will be inspected and missing or used items will be replaced. The first aid kit will be inspected monthly. The kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips.

e. Fire Safety (IQPPS 9.13)

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating this annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, carbon monoxide detectors are tested. Fire drills are conducted and recorded in the school office.

f. Bathroom and Diaper Changing Procedures (Iqpps 5.5)

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, the old nurse's office, with an adjustable height changing table. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
- Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards:
 - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
 - Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
 - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
 - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
 - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
 - Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
 - Diapering and gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
- Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
- All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

g. Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

Weather permitting we will be going outside. If you would like your child to have sunscreen and/or insect repellent, please apply before sending him/her to school.

VII. Students and Families

a. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

All students are taught the school wide expectations of being on the ROSTER (respect, ownership, safety, trustworthiness, empathy, and responsibility). They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

Challenging Behavior

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

b. Attendance - Absenteeism - Tardiness

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes during the school year except for illness and family emergencies. **If a student is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school by phone before the preschool session (please call (641) 923-2831 to report absent children).** If we do not receive notification, the student will be marked as unexcused. We will then try to call the parent to verify the absence. It is ultimately the principal's responsibility to determine if a child is considered excused or unexcused.

In case of any emergency or unusual need to leave the school before the end of the day, a parent should call the school and they will pull the child. The child can be picked up at the Main Office at door S6. Every attempt should be made to schedule health care appointments outside of regular school hours.

c. Attendance and Truancy Intervention

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes during the school year except for illness and family emergencies. Not only is this important for your child's education, but it is also a law in Iowa ([Iowa Code, chapter 299](#)). **If a student is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school by phone before school begins (please call (641) 923-2831 to report absent children).** If we do not receive notification, the student will be marked as unexcused. We will then try to call the parent to verify the absence. It is ultimately the principal's responsibility to determine if a child is considered excused or unexcused.

In case of any emergency or unusual need to leave the school before the end of the day, a parent should call the school and they will pull the child. The child can be picked up at the Main Office at door S6. Every attempt should be made to schedule health care appointments outside of regular school hours.

Changes in Iowa Law Code (SF 2435) regarding absenteeism have been put in place beginning with the 2024/25 school year. The intent of this law is to assist with providing students with a quality education that can be achieved best through regular attendance. The following guidelines have been put in place by the state. **Please note that there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences by the state law.**

GHV is required to implement the following procedures in conjunction with the county attorney as required by law.

10% Absenteeism	When a student's absences reach 10%, parents will be sent a letter regarding attendance and the county attorney will also be notified. <i>Note: For these designations, there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.</i>
15% Absenteeism	If the absence rate reaches 15%, a mandatory meeting with the county attorney will be held to set attendance agreements and expectations.
20% Absenteeism	If the absence rate reaches 20%, legal consequences and actions by the county attorney (which could include community based supports, fines, and in extreme cases a child's removal from the home and or jail time for the parents) will be enacted.

Please note that if the state provides guidance that this goes by quarterly grading periods, 4.5 absences for any reason (with the exception for absences for items such as school activities or the specifics ones already allowed by the law) would trigger those steps above as required by the state.

GHV will continue to label absences as excused and unexcused for our own tracking purposes. However, it is important to remember that total absences, excused or unexcused, is what will be considered for attendance guidelines.

Excused Absences

These absences include, but are not limited to: illness; family emergencies; recognized religious observances; school-sponsored or approved activities; court appearance if validated by the assigned time on the ticket, and the appearance is validated by the Clerk of Court; for high school students only, college visits with the approval of the guidance counselor or principal, and family trips or vacation approved by the principal and provided that the student's work is finished based upon the agreement with the principal.

For illnesses, the nurse's office may request a doctor's note for any absences of 3 days or more or more frequently if absences are chronic. If notes are not provided, the absences may be unexcused.

Students whose absences are excused will make up the work missed and receive full credit for the missed school work according to the deadline established by the teacher.

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the parent knows the student will not be attending school on that day. The building principal may request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence in addition to the times previously mentioned.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence that occurs without parental knowledge, or without a reasonable excuse, will be classified as unexcused. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to: tardiness, shopping, hunting, concerts, preparation or participation in parties and other celebrations, hair and other grooming appointments, senior pictures, employment, and other reasons deemed as unexcused by the building principal.

Parents will be notified anytime a student is absent from school. It shall be within the discretion of the building principal to determine, in light of all relevant circumstances, whether a student may make up work missed because of an unexcused absence.

d. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;

- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

e. Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents

If the custodial parent indicates that the non-custodial parent should not visit the school, or the non-custodial parent does not have authority to take the child from the school, it shall be the custodial parent's responsibility to immediately provide the school of attendance with documentation regarding any restrictions applicable to the non-custodial parent, such as a custody agreement, court order, or decree. When in doubt about releasing the student, the district shall call the custodial parent. The custodial parent will be required to come to school if there is any dispute about whether the non-custodial parent may take the child off school premises. The non-custodial parent shall be kept informed during this situation. Throughout the process, the school's primary concern shall be looking after the best interest of the student.

If a non-custodial parent is subject to a court order or other authority restricting his or her access to, or custody of the student, the non-custodial parent will not be entitled to visit or pick up his or her child at school. If a parent resists the school's actions or becomes disruptive, the school administrator will seek all reasonable and necessary assistance, including law enforcement. Copies of newsletters and/or progress reports will be provided to the non-custodial parent upon request.

f. Preschool Advisory Committee (IQPPS 10.15)

The GHV Community Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets two or three times during the school year to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services.

g. Parent-Teacher Communications

- Preschool Home Visits are scheduled prior to the start of each school year, usually during the final weeks of August

- Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled two times per year, once in the fall, and once in the spring
- Newsletters will be emailed weekly
- Teachers may be contacted by email, school phone, or notes sent in your child's "take-home folder"
- Parents are urged to contact the teacher whenever the need arises; this may include, but is not limited to, concerns, issues, suggestions, or feedback.
- If you need to meet with the teacher in person, please schedule ahead. Teacher schedules do not allow time for drop-in conferences.

h. Fire, Tornado and Emergency Drills

A minimum of two fire and two tornado drills are held each semester, as well as one emergency drill per semester. Drills are always announced to the students, by the principal. This is so students understand that any time an alarm is sounded without warning, it should be taken seriously and not considered a drill. It is also to help ease the minds of the students, so they know that the drill being run is "practice".

i. Reunification Procedures

In the event that students need to be moved off campus due to an emergency event, a message will be sent out via School Messenger and/or JMC. The message will be sent out to parents notifying them of where students will be located and procedures that need to be followed to pick up their child(ren).

VIII. Transportation

a. Bus Qualification

Your child qualifies for preschool busing if you live on an existing rural route. To find out if you live on an existing route, please contact our transportation center at (641) 923-2718. If your child does qualify for transportation, they will be scheduled into the morning section. They will be picked up at the rural route location, and dropped off after the morning section concludes. If you are not able to make the morning section work for your schedule, then your child will only be transported home. We currently do not offer a midday pick-up route. For any questions about this, please contact our office at (641) 923-2831, or call the transportation center at (641) 923-2718.

b. Bus Rules

Each student is expected to follow the bus rules and obey the driver. Failure to do so could result in a three-part disciplinary action such as: 1) Discussion with the student and parent about the issue; 2) Suspension of bus riding privileges for five school days; and 3) Suspension of bus riding privileges for the rest of the school year.

IX. General School Rules & Information

The following general school rules apply daily. They are not all-inclusive, but cover a majority of our expectations.

1. Prior to your child beginning preschool, a list of approved guardians will be kept on file. These individuals are those that the parent approves to allow for picking-up from preschool.
2. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than usual, a dated, written permission note is needed. This note should be given to your child's teacher.
3. Documentation of child custody agreements, if it exists, for those whose parents are split should be given to your child's teacher or the office. Without this notification, children of either parent could legally pick them up from school. Please see the Guardianship/Rights Section.
4. The following items are not permitted:
 - Fighting or bullying
 - Weapons or other dangerous objects including look-alikes
 - Explosive devices
 - Other types of property that would present a safety or health threat to others
 - Hard balls (baseballs, footballs, skateboards and rollerblades)
 - Electronic devices
5. Students will not use or possess tobacco products, alcohol or drugs
6. Gum and candy on school buses are not allowed
7. Party invitations may be sent to school to pass out if there is one for every child in the class. If only a few students are to be invited, arrangements must be made at home by phone or mail.
8. Students are not allowed to receive flowers or balloons at school.

Recess Clothing Expectations



60's
or higher

Your Choice

50's
Layers



40's
or lower
Coats, Hats, &
Gloves



or colder

Inside
Recess

