

Anderson County Schools' Preschool

Early Head Start Head Start & Voluntary Pre-K Parent Handbook

2026-2027



Our Mission:

Anderson County Schools' Preschool creates opportunities for children and families to learn with pride and enjoy happy, healthy, and hopeful lives.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| HS/VPK Classroom Locations and Contact Information | 3 |
| EHS Classroom Locations and Contact Information | 4 |
| Introduction | 4 |
| Tobacco Free Schools | 4 |
| Enrollment Process | 5 |
| Education | 5 |
| Behavior Management | 5 |
| Family Services | 6 |
| Home Visits | 7 |
| Parent Conferences | 7 |
| Attendance | 7 |
| Nutrition | 8 |
| Food-Formula Information (EHS only) | 9 |
| Health | 9 |
| Illness | 10 |
| Medication | 10 |
| Clothing | 10 |
| Outdoors | 11 |
| Emergency Plan and Inclement Weather Policy | 11 |
| Transition | 11 |
| Non-Discrimination Statement | 11 |
| Staff | 12 |
| Parent Involvement | 12 |
| Emergency Numbers & Information | 12 |
| Policy for Releasing Children | 12 |
| How Your Child Is Doing/How to Work With Your School | 13 |
| Extended Care Program (HS/VPK only) | 13 |
| Early Care (EHS only) | 13 |
| Activities for Parents | 14 |
| Grievance Procedure | 14 |
| Child Abuse: Parent Information | 15 |
| Non Federal Share | 16 |
| Pedestrian Safety | 16 |
| Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) | 17 |
| Media Access | 17 |
| Television Display | 18 |
| Visitors to the Schools | 18 |
| Parent/Guardian Signature | 20 |

HS/VPK Classroom Locations and Contact Information

- Anderson County Career and Technical Center (ACCTC)
140 Maverick Circle, Clinton, 37716
865-457-4205
- Anderson County Preschool (Clinton II, III)
708 N Main Street, Clinton, 37716
865-463-2833
- Andersonville Elementary School
1951 Mountain Road Andersonville, TN 37705
865-494-7695
- Briceville Elementary School
103 Slatestone Road, Briceville, 37710
865-426-2289
- Claxton Elementary School (Claxton I & II)
2218 Clinton Highway Powell, 37849
865-945-2222
- Fairview Elementary School
6715 Hickory Valley Rd Heiskell, 37754
865-494-7959
- Grand Oaks Elementary School
1033 Oliver Springs Highway Clinton, 37716
865-435-7506
- Lake City Elementary School (Lake City I & II)
402 Lindsay Avenue Rocky Top, 37769
865-426-2108
- Norwood Elementary School
809 E. Tri County Blvd Oliver Springs, 37840
865-435-2519

EHS Classroom Locations and Contact Information

- House of Littles @ Anderson County Career and Technical Center (ACCTC A, B)
150 Maverick Circle, Clinton, 37716
865-457-7006
- Anderson County Schools Preschool (Clinton A, B, C, T)
708 N Main Street, Clinton, 37716
865-463-2833
- Lake City Elementary School (Lake City A, B)
402 Lindsay Avenue Rocky Top, 37769
865-426-2108
- Norwood Elementary School (Norwood A, B)
809 E. Tri County Blvd Oliver Springs, 37840
865-435-2519

*** Be sure to like us on Facebook and follow us on the ACS website ***

Introduction

Early Head Start/Head Start is federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, at no cost to the families the program serves. Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) classrooms are funded through the Tennessee Department of Education.

EHS classrooms operate 7.5 hours (8-3:30) daily. HS/VPK classrooms operate either 6 hours (average classroom schedule 7:45-1:45) or 6.25 hours (average classroom schedule 7:45-2:00) per day. Your child's teacher will communicate the classroom's operating hours with you during the home visit. Your school's Registration Day/Open House provides you the opportunity to have an on-site visit of the program to review the facility and the opportunity to review the program's policies and procedures prior to your child's first day.

Anderson County Early Head Start and Head Start serves children 6 weeks to five years of age and pregnant women who are income eligible. For Head Start, priority is given to income eligible children that are three years of age. If all slots are not filled then services are offered to income eligible children four years old. Ten percent of the enrolled children can be from over income families. VPK prioritizes enrollment for income eligible four year olds followed by eligible students as outlined in the Scope of Services.

Head Start is a comprehensive program that involves parents and the community in the areas of: education, health, and family services.

Tobacco Free Schools

All uses of tobacco, electronic/battery operated devices, vapor products, and all other associated paraphernalia are prohibited in all of the school district's buildings and in all vehicles that are owned, leased, or operated by the district. Smoking and vaping shall be

prohibited in any public seating areas including, but not limited to, bleachers used for sporting events or public restrooms. (ACBOE Policy 1.803).

Enrollment Process

To enroll your child in our EHS, HS, and VPK program, your family must meet either the federal Head Start guidelines or the guidelines outlined in the VPK Scope of Services. The family's income must be verified as part of the application process. The previous year's W-2's or copy of income tax forms are required to verify income. The last 12 months of income may also be used. Award letters, TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), SNAP, check stubs, child support, Social Security and SSI checks are used to verify that type of income.

Once a family is determined eligible by income, the "selection criteria" determines the family's need for Head Start or VPK. Once a child is enrolled, the eligibility lasts the full year. A Head Start child enrolled as a three-year-old will be eligible for the following year, if they complete the program year. VPK children must verify income eligibility annually. An infant or toddler enrolled in the Early Head Start Program will remain eligible until he/she is three years of age. After re-determination of eligibility, the three-year-old may transition to Head Start, when a slot becomes available.

Education

The education component provides a learning environment that helps children develop socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate to their ages and stages of development. An individualized approach is taken toward assessing a child's needs and designing a daily program that will respond to those needs. The parent is encouraged to be an integral part of the child's learning process.

The preschool program supports a "play-based learning" curriculum. We believe children learn best through active exploration and hands-on activities which to an adult looks like play. Young children make connections when they are actively involved and their hands are busy. They aren't "wired" to sit still for long periods of time. Your child's teacher works hard to establish an environment that fosters each child's social and emotional well-being.

Behavior Management

The outline for behavior management includes preventive, instructive, and supportive components. In situations involving frequent and persistent challenging behavior, teachers work together with families, the Behavior Interventionist, the Education Coordinator, the Mental Health Manager, and the Disabilities Manager to design a behavior plan. The general components of behavior management procedure include:

1. Designing an engaging environment.
2. Relationship building among teachers and children.
3. Socializing children to the daily schedule, classroom procedures, and classroom expectations.
4. Teaching children the communication skills and problem solving skills they need to be successful.

5. Monitoring the environment and schedule as either supportive or as a contributing factor to challenging behavior.
6. Providing corrective feedback, instructional support, redirection or other immediate intervention as needed.
7. In situations involving frequent and persistent challenging behavior, analyzing observation information from teachers, families, the education coordinator, the mental health manager, the disabilities manager, and/or the mental health consultant.
8. As needed, designing and implementing a behavior plan.

Promoting children's success in developing positive behavior begins with building relationships and creating supportive environments. Classroom environment and practice for supporting positive behavior and for supporting children with challenging behavior is informed by the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL) and Conscious Discipline.

The program severely limits the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. The program cannot expel a child because of a child's behavior until after the program has explored all possible steps and documented all steps taken as described in HS PS 1302.17 (b) (2) and it is determined by the mental health consultant that the child's continued enrollment presents a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children.

Biting:

Biting is a developmental stage that some children exhibit. Infants and toddlers lack the language skills needed to communicate their needs and sometimes bite to express themselves. When a child bites another child in our centers, we are concerned and do all that we can to prevent it from happening. Our low child-adult ratio helps to safeguard incidents of this nature. However, if biting does occur, our staff will notify you if your child is involved in a biting incident on the day the incident occurs. We maintain confidentiality and will not reveal the name of the other child involved in the incident. Once a child has begun biting, the child will be shadowed. This means that the teaching staff will follow the biter closely to prevent this behavior from recurring. We also have a biting procedure that will be followed.

The child who has been bitten is comforted and the wound is cleaned with antibacterial soap and water. The child who is the biter is talked to and redirected. He or she is given something to bite, if needed. The biter is not sent to time-out and is not shamed. ***We do not suggest that another child bit back.***

Family Services

Head Start family services involve serving as an advocate for Early Head Start and Head Start families, and providing them with the tools and knowledge to seek out and put community resources to work for themselves and their families. Early Head Start and Head Start ***must*** provide parents with opportunities to develop and implement individualized family partnership agreements that describe family goals and strategies for achieving them. Each Early Head Start and Head Start family will be assigned a family advocate.

VPK families are provided with the tools and knowledge to seek out needed resources as requested.

Home Visits

The child's teacher must make a minimum of two home visits per program year for Early Head Start and Head Start students and one home visit per program year for VPK students. Other staff members working with the family make home visits as appropriate. If you have any questions about home visits, please discuss them with your child's teacher.

Parent Conferences

Two parent conferences are required during the school year. The program offers three parent teacher conferences each year. During this time teaching staff and parents share information about the child's development. These conferences are usually held at the center and at a time convenient to the parents and staff. The parents may also feel free to request additional parent conferences if they have a question or concern about their child.

Attendance

Attendance above 90% is expected. The purpose of preschool is to give children the tools necessary to be successful in school. This can only be accomplished through regular attendance. Therefore, if a child does not maintain regular attendance, another child on the waiting list is kept from benefiting from these services. Poor attendance could result in the child being removed from the program. The program will make every attempt to assist a family to ensure the child will be at the center on time and are only absent when they are sick or there is some other type of emergency. This will also establish good attendance habits to help them throughout their educational experience.

Attendance Contract:

When a child is absent and no contact has been made to the teacher from a parent/guardian within the first hour of daily program operation, the following process will be followed:

- After 1 hour of absenteeism (with no family contact): Teaching staff contacts family
- 2 consecutive absences (with no family contact): Teacher involves Family Advocate to make contact with the family.
- 3 consecutive absences (with no family contact): a home visit is made by the Family Advocate and Teacher.
- 4 consecutive absences (with no family contact): the ERSEA manager sends a letter of termination stating that the child will be dropped from the program after 10 consecutive unexplained absences unless the parents make contact with the teacher or ERSEA manager.

Parents should contact staff when an advance absence will be taken (WIC, doctor's appointments, etc.). Parents must provide an excuse statement upon a child's return to school after each absence. (We use this data to determine program goals). Doctor or parent notes are required in order for absences to be considered excused, parents may write up to 6 notes a year.

Late Pick Up:

Program operating time or classroom hours are scheduled and posted. Families should arrive on time so as to not disrupt the daily schedule or miss instructional time. Should late pick up become frequent (3 times or more), a meeting will be set with the parent, teacher, and family advocate to ensure the program is meeting the needs of the family. If the situation does not improve, a second meeting will be held for the parent and administrative staff to work on solutions or look at other program options.

Nutrition

Your child will participate in a meal service routine at all meal times: breakfast, lunch, and snack. Mealtime is a rich learning experience for children. Your child will be encouraged to develop sound and nutritious eating habits, as well as increase their skills in self-help, hand-eye coordination, and language development. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided daily and meet the USDA requirements for the Child of Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the School Nutrition Program (SNP). No snack is provided on Wednesdays due to the early dismissal (**VPK/HS only**).

MEALS

| Breakfast | Lunch or Supper | Snacks (Two of the four groups) |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Milk● Fruit or Vegetable● Grains or Bread | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Milk● Meat or meat alternate● Two different servings of Fruits or Vegetables● Grains or Bread | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Milk● Meat or meat alternate● Fruit or Vegetable● Grains or Bread |

CONTACT INFORMATION: If you have questions about CACFP, please contact the following:

Sponsoring organization/Center State Agency:

Child and Adult Care Services
TN Department of Human Services
400 Deadrick Street
Nashville, TN 37248-9500
615-313-4749

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Due to the potential of food allergies, outside food/drink intended for the whole class must be store bought with clear ingredient labels and be approved by the program nurse prior to the date of the event.

Preschool Food and Drink Tip Sheet



We kindly ask families to pack snacks, meals and drinks for their children that fall into these categories

Fresh, sliced fruits and vegetables
(*Sliced apples, bananas, strawberries, oranges, cucumbers, broccoli)

Whole grain breads or crackers
(*Wheat sandwich, whole grain crackers and cheese)

Protein
(*Turkey, chicken, cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese)

Healthy snacks
(*Granola bars, mini rice cakes, pretzels, mini muffins, cereal)

Water only in daily water bottles, please avoid juice, flavored waters, soda, caffeinated or carbonated drinks

 *food items listed are just examples-many other options may fit into each category

Avoid

Caffeinated drinks
Soda or carbonated drinks
Candy
Sugary drinks
Please only put water into water bottles

Why

Food and drinks high in sugar and fat do not support growing bodies and minds. Help us support your child's growth and learning. Pack items to help keep your child energized and feeling good throughout their day. Choose low sugar items. Cut foods into small, safe pieces and have foods prepared to serve. Make it fun and let your little one help pack healthy choices, teaching them at home about making healthy choices to build strong bodies. Teaching children about this early on can build lifelong, healthy eating habits.



Food-Formula Information (EHS only)

Once a child is enrolled in a center, we provide formula until the child reaches the age of one year. A child must have his/her 1st birthday before receiving whole milk. If a child is on special formula or milk, a signed statement from the doctor must be received in the preschool office as to what formula or substitute milk is available for the child to have. For a parent who is breastfeeding, a private area is available. The center accepts breast milk for the child for one day at a time. Frozen breast milk can be stored for up to 5 days. Bottles cannot be brought to the center already mixed

Infants will not be introduced to fruits, vegetables, or meats until these foods are introduced at home, due to possible allergic reactions. **The EHS program can only accept homemade baby food one day at a time.**

Health

A comprehensive health program is provided to promote preventive health services and early intervention. The child's family is provided with the necessary experiences and referrals to link the family to an ongoing health care system to ensure continued comprehensive health care. Early Head Start/Head Start health support services for children include: medical and dental exams, screenings and follow-up treatment, nutrition, and mental health services. The program also monitors students' well-visits with their physicians and supports parents to keep immunizations up-to-date. Federal guidelines and state licensing require well baby check-ups and immunizations be kept up to date. Occasionally, an infant or toddler is ill and the doctor does not feel that an immunization is advisable. In this case, please ask for a doctor's statement for our

records and a new appointment time.

Illness

In the event your child becomes ill at school, a parent will be notified. Injuries of more than a minor nature, fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, and other serious illnesses must be immediately reported to the parent. Be sure the center has **current telephone numbers** where you can be reached. If the school contacts you regarding your child becoming ill at school, please cooperate with us in making arrangements to pick him/her up as soon as possible. Although your child will make better progress in preschool by attending regularly, one cannot have a good day if one is ill. Please watch for signs of fever, nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, rash, paleness, earache, or severe colds. Allow enough time for recovery from an illness before sending your child back to school. A child must be symptom/ fever free without medication for 24 hours before they can return to the classroom.

Medication

Medication is kept in locked containers out of the reach of children. Trained staff assist the child with taking medication. If medications are to be given at school, you **MUST** have your child's doctor sign a medication authorization form for the specific medication to be administered. Only the Anderson County Schools Medication form can be used.

The permission form must state:

- what the medication is
- how often it is to be given
- possible side effects of the medication
- the amount to be given
- the doctor must sign it
- The medication must be in the original bottle from the pharmacy.

No over-the-counter medications, ointments, or powders can be used without doctor's orders (this includes diaper rash ointment). A form will be provided for the doctor to complete and sign. The parent completes the lower portion of the form.

Do not send medication with the child. An adult must deliver the medication to a staff member with the required signed medication authorization form.

Clothing

Play clothing should be worn because children paint at easels, play outdoors, and need the freedom of not worrying about getting their clothes dirty. Due to safety concerns, we expect your child to wear **athletic shoes** instead of sandals or flip flops. As all parents realize, accidents do happen. A change of clothing is required, marked with your child's name, and should be left at the center. If a child is going through toilet training several pairs of dry underclothes are recommended. Clothing should be appropriate for the season and follow ACS student dress code.

In addition, necklaces, anklets, bracelets and other loose jewelry are not allowable on infants/toddlers because of the safety concerns to all children. The classroom staff reserve the right to remove any loose jewelry for return to the parent and staff will not

be held responsible for lost, stolen, or broken jewelry.

Outdoors

Children are to be taken outside every day. The minimum expectation is that children go outside when the temperatures (adjusted for wind chill and heat index) are between thirty-two (32) degrees and ninety-five (95) degrees and not raining. If the wind chill is 30 degrees or below, children should only be taken outside for a brisk walk and should be limited to no more than 10 minutes. Parents and staff must ensure each child is dressed appropriately.

Staff will also monitor the Air Quality Index (AQI) to ensure children are outdoors when the air quality is at satisfactory levels. Information about the AQI can be found at: [Air Quality Index \(AQI\) | AirNow.gov](#)

Emergency Plan and Inclement Weather Policy

The Board authorizes the director of schools, assistant director, and transportation supervisor to close schools in the event of hazardous weather or any other emergency which presents a threat to the safety of students, staff members or school property. As soon as the decision to close schools is made, the director of schools/designee will notify the public media and request that an announcement be made. If school is not in session or is dismissed early due to inclement weather, participation in scheduled activities in which students are involved will be determined by the principal with approval of the director of schools. ***Please be sure to keep contact information up-to-date with your child's teacher.***

Transition

EHS to HS/VPK

When an EHS child reaches the age of 30 months a meeting is held and a transition plan is developed for your child's preschool experience. ***Income will be verified again to determine if your child is eligible for Head Start.*** If your child is eligible for HS and will transition during the current school year, classroom transition visits will be scheduled before your child begins full time in the HS program.

HS/VPK to Kindergarten

When a child is at the appropriate age to transition into Kindergarten, he/she may be invited to visit the Kindergarten classroom, meet a Kindergarten teacher and get information for the upcoming year. The preschool staff will assist the parent to make sure that the child is registered at the appropriate school for the next school year.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The Anderson County Schools' Preschool program does not discriminate against employees or clients because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age or disabling conditions.

Staff

All preschool support staff are involved in the preschool program and will be glad to help you at any time. Central office staff can be contacted at 865-463-2833 and will direct you to appropriate staff.

Parent Involvement

Parents are an essential part of the preschool program and they are encouraged to participate in classroom and parent group activities. Parents are involved in the program planning and decision-making process. Regular parent activities are posted in each center.

Parents must give prior permission if they would like for someone other than those listed on the emergency list to visit their child/children.

Emergency Numbers & Information

Although emergency numbers are taken upon enrollment of your child, we find the numbers sometimes change. It is most critical that you **always** keep the preschool center staff and family advocate informed of the **most current and correct home phone numbers and emergency numbers**. If you have a cell phone, please give the number to the preschool staff. This is a state licensing regulation/requirement and we must have these for your child's safety! Many families have private, non-published numbers and we must have these for our records.

Staff will keep all phone numbers confidential. Please keep the teacher informed of any changes that occur during the school year that affect who will be picking up your child. If a situation should occur where one of the parents **is not allowed** to pick the child up, we must have official court papers such as custody papers and/or a restraining order.

Policy for Releasing Children

Our program is responsible for the safety and well-being of each child enrolled in the program once they have been signed into the classroom until signed out again.

Children may be released to an authorized adult (18 years or older*) and will be allowed to leave the center under the following conditions:

- with the parent
- with an individual listed on the emergency information form (on the application) after picture identification has been provided
- as custody authorization defines; or
- if the parent gives written or verbal permission for someone not listed on the emergency information form to pick up the child. (If a request is made by the parent over the phone, the caregiver should be confident they are speaking with the parent.) When the individual arrives at the center they must provide picture identification..

Children will not be released to anyone whose behavior may place the child in imminent danger (improper child restraint in the car or under the influence of drugs or alcohol).

** If someone under the age of 18 is to pick up a child, written permission from the parent must be on file.*

How Your Child Is Doing/How to Work With Your School

Knowing how your child is doing at school is important for understanding his/her growth and development. Some of the things you can do to know how your child is doing include:

- Attending scheduled parent conferences and taking an active part in planning individual goals for your child.
- Requesting a parent conference if you have any questions or concerns
- Looking at your child's papers he/she brings home
- Talking and listening to your child about his school day
- Be alert to communication from school and respond promptly when called upon. Update home and work phone numbers, and home address as needed.
- Become an active participant in center parent meetings. Your local center parent group is referred to as the center committee. A representative of this committee attends monthly policy council meetings for Head Start held at the Clinton Preschool Office. Be an active VPK parent by attending CPAC meetings each Fall and Spring. By participating in these groups you can take an active part in the planning and decision-making within our program that affects you and your children.
- Volunteer! Parent volunteer help in the classroom is essential to the success of your child and the preschool program. Please be sure when you volunteer or contribute to the program in any way (playground upkeep, events, anything donated) that you sign a non-federal share form.
- Share information with your center staff that might give insight into your child's needs or problems. Feel free to ask questions or offer suggestions.
- Share your talents and abilities with center staff and children.
- "Advertise" your support of preschool in the community.

Extended Care Program (HS/VPK only)

Families may apply for extended care until 2:30 p.m. (1:30 p.m. on Wed) with your child's teacher. Families qualify for this service after approval from an employer or school agent and based on slot availability.

Early Care (EHS only)

To better serve parents that are working, receiving job training, and/or attending school, early drop-off will be available from 7:30-8:00 am. Spaces are limited. In order to be served outside of regular hours the following conditions must be met:

- Your child will maintain regular attendance.
- If attending school or enrolled in a job training program, a copy of the schedule for the current semester is required.
- School schedules must be updated each semester.

- If working, the employer must complete a Verification of Employee's Work Schedule for (provided by the program).
- Work and school schedules may be updated each 9-week period.

Activities for Parents

Our program is designed to offer activities of interest to the parents as well as the children. If you, as a parent, have suggestions for any of these listed activities, please feel free to call the preschool office or let your family advocate know. These activities change and evolve with each new school year, based on family and parent needs.

Here is a list of activities that were designed by parents for parents:

- **Center Parent Meetings** - These are held regularly at each school site, depending on the parents' request. This is a great opportunity for parents to have a "say" into their child's educational experience.
- **Parenting Classes** - Parenting classes are offered at the preschool site in Clinton and at other locations. Transportation may be provided to these events at the parent's request and with sufficient notice to staff.
- **Parent Training/Workshops** - Based on parent interest surveys, workshops are held on a variety of topics on days/times convenient to parents.
- **Policy Council** - Policy Council is the governing body for the Head Start program. The council consists of at least 51% current Head Start parents with the rest of the body being members representing the communities and agencies interested in children and families in the county. The council approves the yearly budget, staff hiring/dismissal, program plans, current enrollment, etc. Each classroom elects a representative and an alternate to serve on the council. The meetings are held once a month, or as needed and are open to the public.
- **Newsletters** -A program newsletter is available for parents each month. The newsletters keep families informed of important upcoming events for the parents and the children. The staff also includes information from recent workshops or on topics parents have requested. Please read the newsletter so that you will always know what is going on in the Head Start program.
- **Program Self-Assessment** - Head Start is required to conduct a self-assessment, annually. The self-assessment consists of collecting information about the program from parents, staff, and community agencies. Families are asked to share their opinions of the program and any suggestions they may have to improve the services offered to children and families. From the program's self-assessment the policy council and Head Start staff develops the program goals for the coming year.

Grievance Procedure

If a problem arises, or you are not satisfied with the services or decisions of the Preschool Program, there are three (3) steps you may follow to register your concerns:

- a. You may discuss the situation with the center staff;
- b. You may contact the family advocate--Preschool office staff--or program director;
- c. You may also request a hearing by the Preschool Advisory Council/Policy Council if the problem has not been resolved through the previous two (2) steps.

Child Abuse: Parent Information

The Department of Children's Services receives numerous calls to its child abuse hotline. The Child Protective Services division strives to protect children whose lives or health are seriously jeopardized because of abusive acts or negligence. This division also supports the preservation of families.

How do I contact the Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline?

Phone: 1-877-237-0004

Web: <https://apps.tn.gov/carat/> - Non-emergent situations only

Who is a Mandated Reporter?

Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-403(i) (1) requires all persons to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. "Any person who has knowledge of or is called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, or physical or mental condition, shall report such harm immediately if the harm is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality abuse, or neglect or that, on basis of available information, reasonably appears to have been caused by brutality, abuse, or neglect."

Anderson County Preschool staff is considered "mandated" reporters of suspected child abuse.

Failure to report

Tennessee Code Annotated 37-1-412 (a) states any person who knowingly fails to make a report of suspected child abuse commits an offense.

What is child abuse and neglect?

Physical Abuse - Non-accidental physical trauma or injury inflicted by a parent or caretaker on a child. It also includes a parent's or a caretaker's failure to protect a child from another person who perpetrated physical abuse on a child. In its most severe form, physical abuse is likely to cause great bodily harm or death.

Neglect - Failure to provide for a child's physical survival needs to the extent that there is harm or risk of harm to the child's health or safety. This may include, but is not limited to abandonment, lack of supervision, life-endangering physical hygiene, lack of adequate nutrition that places the child below the normal growth curve, lack of shelter, lack of medical or dental that results in health-threatening conditions, and the inability to meet basic clothing needs of a child. In its most severe form, physical neglect may result in great bodily harm or death.

Sexual Abuse - Includes penetration or external touching of a child's intimate parts, oral sex with a child, indecent exposure or any other sexual act performed in a child's presence for sexual gratification, sexual use of a child for prostitution, and the manufacturing of child pornography. Child sexual abuse is also the willful failure of the parent or the child's caretaker to make a reasonable effort to stop child sexual abuse by another person.

Psychological Harm - A repeated pattern of caregiver behavior or extreme incident(s) that convey to children that they are worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, endangered, or only value in meeting another's needs and may include both abusive acts against a child and failure to act. Neglectful behavior when age-appropriate action is required for a

child's health development (e.g. child is shown no affection) includes verbal assaults, ignoring and indifference or constant family conflict. If a child is degraded enough, the child will begin to live up to the image communicated by the abusing parent or caretaker.

Non Federal Share

The EHS and HS programs are federally funded which enables the program to provide services in the community. Included Non-Federal Share examples are below:

Classroom Activity Preparation

- Cutting projects for the program
- Washing the children's blankets for the program (15 minutes per blanket or 2 hours for entire classroom blankets)
- Mending/fixing books, toys, and furniture for classroom
- Make flannel board stories for classroom
- Washing and sanitizing classroom and items in the classroom
- Translating information (verbally or written)
- Preparing labels for cubbies, tables, etc.
- Other activities deemed beneficial to the program

Donated Classroom Materials

- Any classroom related item such as crayons, markers, paint, scissors, paper, etc.
- Books, craft items, or instructional items to be used in the classroom
- Any items deemed beneficial to the program, and would be bought with program funds

Program Self Assessment

- Participating in the program's annual Self Assessment (ask your Policy Council representative how you can be involved)

Recruitment

- Handing out preschool applications

For every \$1.00 that we receive from the Federal Government, we must earn \$0.25 in non-federal shares.

Pedestrian Safety

Morning Arrival and Afternoon Departure

As you know, young children are small and may not be seen by other drivers. The parking lot can be busy. Your child needs you to help keep them safe. Please hold your child's hand when getting out of your car and when crossing the parking lot. You can help your child to develop understanding and safe habits by talking to your child about stopping to look both ways before crossing the parking lot. The following steps will help ensure safe arrival and departure for your child.

1. Please drive slowly in the parking lot. Be alert for young children.
2. Develop the habit of holding hands. Holding hands strengthens the connection and relationship. It helps your child feel a sense of closeness and security.
3. Hold your child's hand when getting out of the car and when crossing the parking lot.
4. When you are signing out your child, your child must remain in the room with you until you leave together. Hold hands walking to the car.

5. Stop at the edge of parked cars, the curb, or other vehicles and look Left-Right-Left for moving vehicles. Talk with your child about this critical safety habit.
6. The law states that your child must be in the proper car seat or restraints:

For information on Tennessee's Child Restraint Laws, visit:

<https://www.tn.gov/safety/publicsafety/>

Children must be properly secured in the right type of car seat or seat belt based on their age, weight, and height:

- Under age 1 or 20 pounds or less: Use a rear-facing child safety seat in the back seat, if available. Follow the seat manufacturer's instructions. If the seat allows a higher rear-facing weight (such as 30–35 pounds), the child may remain rear-facing until they reach that limit.
- Ages 1–3 and over 20 pounds: Use a forward-facing child safety seat in the back seat, if available, or follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ages 4–8 and under 4'9" in height: Use a belt-positioning booster seat in the back seat, if available.
- Ages 9–12, or any child 4'9" or taller: Use a seat belt. Riding in the back seat is recommended when possible.
- Ages 13–15: Must use a seat belt or other approved passenger restraint.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Release of Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows school districts to publish certain demographic information about students without securing parental or eligible student permission, provided parents or students have had the right to refuse the publication of all parts of all information. The Anderson County Preschool program will only publish the child's name, parent's name, participation in activities, and videos/photos of the child/parent participating in classroom or program activities.

Website and Social Media Display

Anderson County Schools and Anderson County Schools Preschool showcase information about our schools by posting pictures, and audio/video recordings of students on the ACS website (www.acs.ac), the Anderson County Preschool site ([Anderson County Head Start - Home](#)), and the Anderson County Schools Preschool Facebook page. The school district or preschool program does not identify a student by listing his/her full name in the posting.

Due to confidentiality and safety of all children and staff, personal videos and photographs in the classroom may only include your child.

Media Access

Anderson County Schools' preschool may seek opportunities for or provide material for news media about our schools. Any access to students while at school for this purpose is closely monitored by preschool staff.

Television Display

Anderson County Schools has their own television channel. Channel 95 on the Comcast network is dedicated to broadcasting information for Anderson County Schools. The Preschool Department would like to air information and pictures from special events on the channel. However, before we can place children’s names or pictures, we must have the parent or guardian’s permission.

| Anderson County Board of Education | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Monitoring: Review: Annually, in August | Descriptor Term: Visitors to the Schools | Descriptor Code: 1.501 | Issued Date: 08/08/24 |
| | | Rescinds: 1.501 | Issued: 06/11/09 |

General

Except on occasions such as school programs, athletic events, open house, and similar public events, all visitors will report to the school office when entering the school and will sign-in. Authorization to visit elsewhere in the building or on the school campus will be determined by the principal/designee. Guest passes shall be issued for all persons other than students and employees of the school.¹

In order to maintain the conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no other person shall enter onto the grounds or into the school buildings during the hours of student instruction except students assigned to that school, the staff of the school, parents of students, and other persons with lawful and valid business on the school premises.²

VISITOR CONDUCT

Persons who come onto school property shall be under the jurisdiction of the site administrator/designee. Individuals who come onto school property or who contact employees on school or district business are expected to behave accordingly. The Director of Schools shall develop a visitor code of conduct to be presented to the board attorney, and then, approved by the Board.³ This code shall prohibit the following:

1. Cursing and use of obscenities;
2. Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school or office operations;
3. Acting in an unsafe manner that could threaten the health or safety of others;
4. Verbal or written statements or gestures indicating intent to harm an individual or property; and
5. Physical attacks intended to harm an individual or substantially damage property.

The visitor code of conduct shall be posted on the district’s website as well as the school’s website, and

copies of the code shall be provided to all teachers, counselors, administrative staff, and other school employees. In addition, each school entrance shall have the visitor code of conduct posted prominently along with the phone number of someone in the school's administration who can answer questions about the code.

Annually, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided with a printed copy of the code of conduct, along with the phone number of someone in the school's administration who can answer questions about the code. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall sign a statement acknowledging that they have read and understood the code of conduct.

CONSEQUENCES FOR CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION

The principal/designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act.²

The principal shall contact law enforcement officials when he/she believes the situation warrants such measures.

Preschool parent(s)/guardian(s) may call (865) 463-2833 with questions about the code of conduct.

Anderson County Schools Preschool

My signature indicates the receipt of the policies outlined in the parent handbook, including the ACBOE Visitors to the Schools Policy 1.501, and the Standards for School-Administered Child Care, Chapter 0520-12-01.¹

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

¹ Signature sheet included on the First Home Visit form