

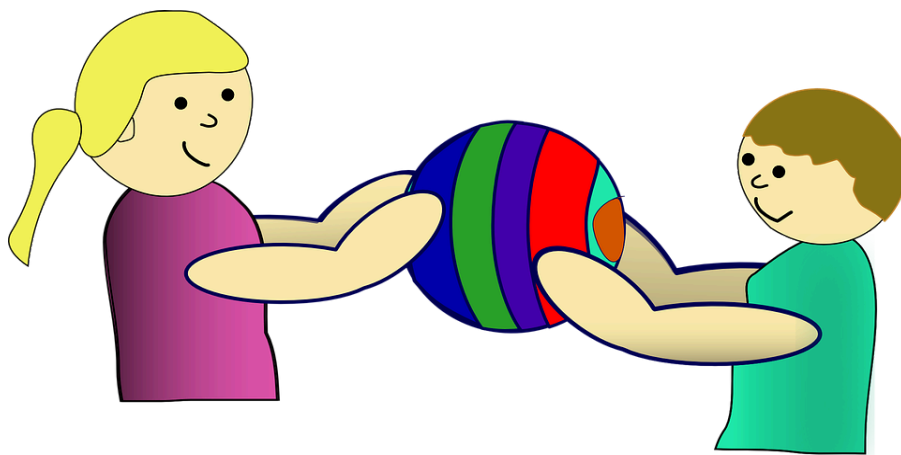


# ER9 Preschool Parent Handbook 2024-2025



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ER9 PreSchool programs are special education programs serving students who receive services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). As an integrated program, the preschool invites peer "role models" to participate.

### **Vision**

The ER9 preschool program strives to support all children to develop self confidence, individuality, a love for learning, and respect for themselves, others and their environment. The program focuses on the development of the whole child; the development of cognitive, physical, social, emotional, creative, skills and abilities.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to provide a consistent, nurturing environment in which children can feel safe to explore and become critical thinkers. Children participate in developmentally appropriate play based learning activities to foster development in all domains. These foundational skills will help prepare your child for kindergarten.

### **Philosophy**

The ER9 preschool program values each child as an individual with unique strengths, needs and interests. It is built on the belief that children learn by doing. The children are actively involved in exploration and discovery, with a hands-on approach to learning. The daily routines are highly structured, consistent and predictable to maximize the learning potential of each child.



## **Program Description**

The ER9 preschool program provides an education to children in the community, who have a broad range of developmental needs and abilities. Student's interests are the springboard for learning experiences. The preschool staff is committed to providing a nurturing, secure educational setting for young children. In a safe, age-appropriate and engaging environment, children learn and explore as they experience their world and its challenges. Our play-based program encourages the development of each child's unique potential. The program enhances physical, emotional, social, creative and intellectual growth. Staff and children learn to value diversity and to foster individuality, self-confidence, love for learning and respect for themselves and others. Together, children learn and grow, each sharing their unique talents and qualities. All classes provide an excellent foundation and preparation for future learning.

## **Program Design**

The preschool classes are staffed by dually certified special education teachers, and paraeducators. In conjunction with these staff, a speech and language pathologist (SLP), occupational therapist (OT), and physical therapist (PT) work with students in and out of the classroom. School psychologists, social workers, and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) consult with the preschool staff to provide additional support when appropriate.

- **Speech and Language Services:** The speech and language pathologists (SLP) work both within the classroom setting as well within small groups outside the classroom, with children who receive services on their IEP for support with expressive, receptive, and social pragmatic language skills. The SLP focuses on facilitating peer interactions, language stimulation, increasing play skills, and improving oral motor skills.

- **Other Related Services:** Direct Occupational Therapy and Physical therapy services are provided to students who are eligible for special education, ages 3 through 21. School-based OT and PT services are provided when significant weaknesses are identified through evaluation that directly affect educational performance. In addition, through consultation with the classroom teachers, the OT and PT support the development of fine motor, gross motor and sensory skills of all preschool students.

## The Goals of our Curriculum

Children enrolled in our program learn through developmentally appropriate interactive experiences. Our curriculum is based on the Connecticut Early Learning and Development standards (ELDS). It fosters the childrens' ability to be actively involved with the learning process. The curriculum supports growth in the areas of communication, social, emotional, cognitive/pre-academic, self help, sensory, creativity, gross and fine motor development. Activities are designed and modified to be individually appropriate. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to develop school readiness skills, such as increasing one's attention, following directions, listening and questioning skills, turn taking, task completion and increasing independence.



Interactions between children and staff provide opportunities to develop an understanding of self and others through personal respect, individuality, positive support and responsiveness. Where appropriate, one to one instruction and small groups are provided to introduce, practice and reinforce new skills. Differentiated instruction promotes the transfer and generalization of skills. Purposeful, systematic, and authentic assessments are used to measure and gauge progress of the children over time.

## **A Typical Preschool Day**

**Circle Time/Morning Meeting:** Students meet as a whole group to discuss some of the following: the schedule of the day, attendance, question of the day, calendar, weather, etc. This is also a time to introduce new concepts, sing songs and participate in social emotional lessons.

**Centers:** Students have the opportunity to learn, explore, and discover through play with a variety of materials and manipulatives within a small group. This is a time where students are able to make choices based on their interests. Children may experience centers such as dramatic play, art, sensory exploration, building, academics, etc.

**Meal Time:** Students practice self help skills, independence and social skills during snack and lunch.

**Small Group:** Students work in small differentiated groups to focus on skills that have been taught in a whole group setting.

**Story Time:** Teachers read stories that are rich in vocabulary, oral language, print and number concepts. Children are also exposed to nonfiction material to develop other concepts.

**Playground:** Students practice gross motor skills such as running, jumping, climbing, and work on coordinating motor movements, as well as creative play, practicing social skills and problem solving with peers.

**Music/Movement:** Students practice social skills by playing cooperative musical games. Children express themselves creatively by moving their bodies or creating art to music. They also practice gross motor skills such as balance, coordination and rhythm.

**Dismissal:** Students wrap up the day as a classroom community and will learn to care for the personal property while packing up their belongings. Students will be dismissed to parents or guardians.

## Admission and Placement

The lottery application for the upcoming school year is available on Redding Elementary School and the Samuel Staples Elementary School websites.

Here are some general eligibility guidelines:

- Your child must be turning 3 years old prior to September 1 of the upcoming school year and be toilet-trained to apply for the Easton or Redding Preschool Program.
- The preschool program is open only to children who reside in Easton or Redding School Districts.

Timeline for the 2025-2026 School Year:

- Pre-school Application Process Begins: **November 01, 2024**
- Q&A with prospective parents will occur prior to the application admission deadline.
- **Current** pre-school students confirmation of enrollment for 2025-2026 school year: **December 31, 2024**
- Pre-school Application for **new students** due: **January 03, 2025**
- Priority is given to the following children in this order:
  - Children who require a special education program with related services
  - Children who are currently enrolled in the preschool program
  - Siblings of students who are enrolled in the preschool program
  - Siblings of students who previously went through the preschool program
  - Remaining preschool applicants
- Lottery Drawing: Tuition students are selected by lottery in January for the upcoming school year. Number of placements vary from year to year pending anticipated enrollment of students with special needs, returning students, and siblings.
- Lottery Results sent to parents: **February 03, 2025**
- Parent responses to acceptances due: **February 21, 2025**
- First look at waiting list: **Late June**
- Final look at waiting list: **Mid-August**



## Preschool Staff

<b>Easton</b>	<b>Redding</b>
Kelli Pollock - Supervisor of Special Services, Easton	Jennifer Hankla - Supervisor of Special Services, Redding
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Teachers</b>
Sue McCloat- PreK Teacher	Dorian Cerrone - Preschool (3s) Teacher
Meg Ryan - PreK Teacher	Kayla Melanson - Preschool (3s) Teacher
Jessica Besse - PreK Teacher	Melissa Hojdysz - PreK (4s) Teacher
	Stacey McGee - PreK (4s) Teacher
Rosalba Russo - paraeducator	
Sena Povinelli - paraeducator	Pamela Caraluzzi - paraeducator
Keri Napolitani- paraeducator	Shannon Cormier - paraeducator
Janna Pryce - paraeducator	Heather Gallo - paraeducator
Julia McLaughlin - paraeducator	Cheryl Heffernan - paraeducator
	Margaret Maier - paraeducator
<b>Related Services</b>	Beverly O'Boza - paraeducator
Julianne Skoczylas - Speech and Language Pathologist	Christine Jerry - paraeducator
Olesya Friedman - Speech and Language Pathologist	Nichole Atkins - paraeducator
Marisa Valenti - Speech and Language Pathologist	<b>Related Services</b>
Leah Schatz - Occupational Therapist	Dana Montefusco - Speech Language Pathologist
Mary Ellen Powers - Occupational Therapist	Stephanie Rich - Speech Language Pathologist
Erika Garvey - Physical Therapist	Melissa Campanaro - Occupational Therapist
Monica Bien-Amie - Social Worker	Erika Garvey - Physical Therapist
Danica Charles - Psychologist	Kristin Miller - School Social Worker
Noel McNamara - Psychologist	Sammi Gureasko-Moore - School Psychologist
	Mira Jensen - School Psychologist

	Coral Senes - BCBA Ron Farina - BASES Special Education Teacher
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### **Special Education Placement in Preschool**

Students placed in the preschool program through the PPT process may begin the program at any time after age 3 based on the recommendation of the PPT.

Students who participate in the program through the PPT process do not pay tuition or participate in the lottery. In order to qualify for the full preschool program, a student must have academic IEP goals overseen by a Special Education teacher. Students who qualify for related services only (OT, PT, and speech) will receive those services as an itinerant student. Itinerant students may enroll in the preschool program as a tuition paying student if there is an available spot.

For students with IEPs who are not yet toilet trained, a planned approach will be developed for both school and home to ensure consistency.

If your child receives early intervention services through birth-to-three, a transition PPT will be scheduled prior to your child's third birthday. Should your child be found eligible for continuing services in the preschool program, an IEP will be developed to address his or her needs.

If you have any questions about your child's development or eligibility for special education services, please contact his or her teacher or reach out to the Special Services department.

- Redding - Marilyn Caruso (203) 938-9026
- Easton - Eileen Canestrini (203) 459-9689

### **Transfers from Another School System**

If your child has moved into Redding or Easton and has an IEP for special education services from a previous district, please provide a copy of the IEP to the Special Services office so that the IEP can be reviewed and implemented. A PPT will be convened within thirty days of enrollment to revise the IEP if necessary.

### **Transfers to Another School System**

If your family is moving away from Easton or Redding, please notify the school office of the move. We will ask you to complete a withdrawal form and sign a release form which allows us to send your child's school records to the new school.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Program Hours:**

- **Easton** - Hours are 8:50-1:50 daily. On regularly scheduled early dismissal days, preschool ends at 1:00.
- **Redding** - Hours are 8:15-1:15 daily. On regularly scheduled early dismissal days, preschool ends at 12:00.
- **School Cancellations** - All school closings and delayed opening announcements in the event of inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances are broadcast on the following stations: WLAD (AM 800) WEZN (FM 99.9) WFSB (Channel 3) WTIC (AM 1080) WTNH (Channel 8) NBC CT (Channel 30) Cablevision (Channel 12) FOX (Channel 61) Announcements are also posted on the ER9 website, individual school websites, and messages will be sent home through the school communication system, which may include email, text messaging and voice messaging. This is broadcast to the numbers we have on file for you based on your emergency contact information or your initial registration card. Please be sure you update the school office if there are any changes to your contact information including phone numbers and email accounts.
- **Delayed Openings** - Delayed openings will generally be 2 hours later than the normal start time, but will occasionally be 3 hours later based on the decision of the Superintendent of Schools. On delayed opening days, afternoon dismissals are at the normal time. Please be considerate of the situation should bad weather develop or be predicted to develop during the course of the school day.

### **Arrival and Dismissal procedures:**

- Both arrival and dismissal will take place at the designated door for preschool (please refer to your child's welcome letter, which will arrive during the summer).
- At arrival, you must park your car and walk your child to the door of the building. A staff member will be at the doors to greet you. Children will separate from parents at the door and walk to their classroom supervised by

preschool staff. Should you arrive later than the designated window for arrival, please enter the school through the Main Entrance and a preschool staff member will be called to escort your child to class.

- Dismissal will occur at the designated location. Please be prompt. Please park your car and come to the door. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child from school, a written note must be submitted to the teacher on the day there is a change, and that person will need to bring personal identification.
- Should you have an emergency and need to be late or have someone else pick up your child, you must call the Special Services office to let them know [Redding \(203\) 938-9026](tel:(203)938-9026) [Easton \(203\) 459-9689](tel:(203)459-9689).
- If your child qualifies for specialized transportation per his or her IEP, you will receive information regarding pick up and drop off from First Student. If you have any questions, please contact Mike D'Agostino at (203) 261-2513.

#### Health Policies:



- A student with an oral temperature of 100 or higher is to be sent home at the discretion of the school nurse. A child with no fever who manifests symptoms of an illness may also be sent home.
  - A student who has a fever at home should NOT be sent to school until at least 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal (98.6 ) without the use of fever reducing medication.
  - A student sent home with a fever is to remain home the following day and should not be sent to school until at least 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal.
- A student who has vomited during the night or at school is not to be sent to school the following day. Students should remain home until there has been no vomiting for 24 hours.
- A student who has diarrhea during the night, or at school and is sent home, should remain home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

- If your child has special health care needs, please notify the school nurse.
  - SSES: **Carolyn Kearney 203-261-3607**
  - RES: **Jennifer Connelly 203-938-2519**
- For further information, please refer to the school health policy, available on the school website in the Elementary Handbook.

### **Clothing:**

Preschool children are encouraged to explore, create, and experience learning through a variety of activities. Please keep this in mind when you dress your child for school. Sometimes things get messy!

- **Please label all of your child's belongings (coats, hats, sweaters/sweatshirts, etc.)**
- Children will play outdoors for recess whenever possible. Please make sure they are dressed appropriately for each season. Please dress your child in sneakers or closed-toe shoes - **NO** flip-flops, sandals, or crocs. In the wintertime, boots, snow pants, hats, and gloves or mittens are necessary.
- Please provide an **extra set of clothing**, labeled with your child's name, to be left at school. Extra clothing should include underwear and socks. Bathroom accidents and spills can occur during the day, which would require your child to change outfits. The clothes will be returned at the end of the school year. You may wish to change the set of extra clothes to coincide with the season. Your child's teacher will provide you with more information about this process.



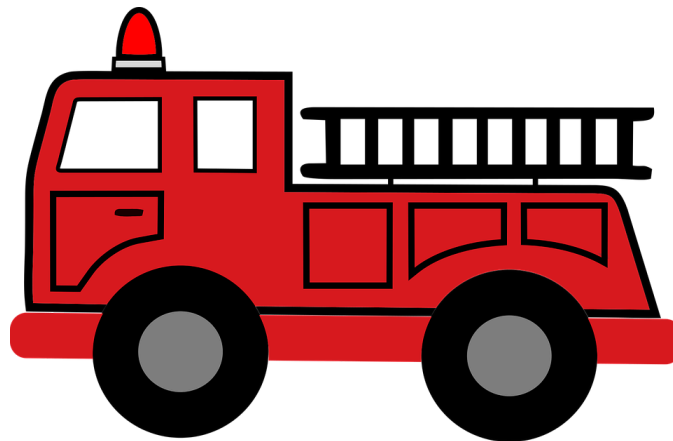
### **Snack/Lunch:**

- Students bring snacks and lunch from home daily. Parents are encouraged to pack nutritious food that will promote healthy eating. Classrooms do not have the capacity to refrigerate students' food or heat it up prior to eating.
- **Please alert the classroom teacher and school nurse of any food allergies prior to the first day of school.** If appropriate, please ensure that the

school nurse has an order from your pediatrician and any necessary medications in the event of an allergic reaction.

### **Fire Drills/Lockdown Procedures:**

- Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students will be instructed on different emergency procedures including evacuation, lock down drills, and weather drills. During evacuation drills (such as a fire drill), children learn the proper procedures for exiting the building. Emergency exit plans are posted in every room. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner.
- Lock down, relocation, and weather drills are held at regular intervals throughout the year. These drills allow staff and students to practice safety procedures in the event of an emergency. During a lockdown drill, students are instructed to remain in their classroom and follow adult instructions. Relocation and weather drill procedures vary based on the situation, but they include moving the students quickly and quietly to safety under adult supervision.
- Parents/Guardians who are present during any drill must follow instructions from school staff or emergency personnel and avoid all cell phone use until the drill is complete.



## **Home-School Support and Communication**

- Beginning of the year opportunities: Dependent upon current health and safety regulations, there may be classroom visits possible prior to the beginning of the new school for students to meet their teacher and see their classroom. Information will be provided over the summer.
- Open House: Open house occurs in September, and provides an overview of curriculum, and information specific to each classroom.
- Newsletters: Periodic newsletters/emails will be sent to families with information such as upcoming events, what the students have been working on in the classroom, and important dates.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent teacher conferences are held twice per school year, in accordance with the ER9 schedule. Classroom teachers will provide an update on your child's progress and answer any questions or concerns you may have.

## **Parent-Teacher Organization/Association (PTO/PTA)**

If you would like to join the RES PTA go to  
[RESCTPTA.MEMBERSHIPTOOLKIT.COM](https://www.resctpta.org/membership-toolkit).

If you would like to join the SSES PTO go to <https://www.eastoncptto.com/>

## **Kindergarten Transition Plan**

PreK and Kindergarten staff collaborate to place children in appropriate classrooms. PreK teachers share information about each child's strengths and areas for growth with Kindergarten teachers and/or school administration. Students with IEPs will have a transition PPT meeting in the spring to plan appropriate programming for kindergarten.