

**Duplin County Schools
Pre-Kindergarten Program
Family Handbook
2024-2025**



Children Are Our Most Valuable Resource!

Dear Parents:

Welcome to our school family and the 2024-2025 school year! Our staff looks forward to serving your child and family! Duplin County Schools Pre-K Program is designed to provide age-appropriate, high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for four-year old children. Our Pre-K teachers are certified by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants must meet rigorous safety and professional development requirements by the NCDHHS Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). Curriculum activities are centered around five developmental domains:

- Approaches to Play and Learning - Preschoolers show interest in learning many things. They ask questions to learn how to do things, how things work, and how they fit into the world around them. Preschoolers use many types of play—building, pretending, exploring—to experiment and solve problems.
- Emotional and Social Development - Preschoolers are also learning how to get along with others. They begin to understand and talk about “rules” in friendships and can cooperate in play. They can understand their feelings, as well as the feelings of others, and show that they care how others feel.
- Health and Physical Development - Preschoolers are learning to care for themselves. They can feed themselves and dress themselves with assistance with buttons and zippers. They can understand rules about health and safety.
- Language Development and Communication - Preschoolers use watching, listening, and talking to learn about the world. They begin using longer sentences and including more details in their speaking. Preschoolers ask questions using “Why”, “How”, and “What.” They listen to adults read books and use the pictures to develop meaning. Preschoolers draw pictures as a pre-writing skill and begin to use some letters to write their name. They also begin to connect letters to sounds.
- Cognitive Development - Preschoolers play, explore, and ask questions to learn. They develop interests in special things (dinosaurs, insects, faraway places, etc.) and new skills (writing their name, building with blocks). They can count objects and answer the question, “How many?”. They compare sizes, shapes, and amounts of objects.

Our Pre-K classrooms are supported by our school district, Head Start, North Carolina Pre-K, Smart Start and Title I. In addition, they are licensed as child care facilities following the rules of DCDEE. The policies and procedures found in this handbook are aligned with the laws, requirements, and regulations from these agencies.

The Duplin County Schools Pre-K Program believes you are your child’s first teacher and that you will continue to play a vital role in their success. We welcome your involvement and look forward to joining you in caring for their needs, preparing them for elementary school, and inviting them to dream big dreams!

Sincerely,

Dr. Ileana Hilton

Dr. Ileana Hilton
Pre-K Coordinator

DUPLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS

Vision

The vision of Duplin County Schools is to become an exemplary school system where all students and staff excel in a globally competitive society.

Mission

The mission of Duplin County Schools is to work collaboratively with the community to prepare all students for career, college, and life success.

Motto

“A Unified Approach to Academic Excellence”

DCS PRE-K BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe it is necessary to address a child’s total learning environment to include social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.

We believe that a child develops positively in a success-oriented environment; that a child learns through repetition; that a child learns through new experiences; that a child learns through self-selected and individualized activities; and that each child learns at different rates and in different ways.

We believe parents and families are the primary educators of their children, having the greatest influence on and responsibility for their children. Our program will make regular home visits and provide continual opportunities for parents to develop competence in parenting, child development, and other topics of interest to families.

We believe our staff’s effect upon children and their development are greatest when all staff are committed to the program’s goal. We believe that the program, and hence, the children, depend upon an atmosphere of teamwork, cooperation, communication and the feeling of trust, respect, and confidence in self and others. We believe that....

We Are A School Family!!

SUCCESS IS A TWO WAY STREET

Our part...

The goal of Pre-Kindergarten is to provide an environment that stimulates each child's curiosity and learning. We encourage each child to develop his or unique pattern of interests, talents and skills. We know that children learn best through interaction with people and objects, and it is through play that they will achieve their educational goals.

While we recognize that each child grows and develops at different rates, their individual goals will focus on the following:

- Language Development: Listening, understanding, speaking and communicating
- Literacy: Phonological awareness (the sounds of words), book knowledge, appreciation of books, print awareness, pre-reading concepts, early writing and alphabet knowledge
- Mathematics: Geometry, spatial sense, patterns, measurements
- Science: Scientific skills, methods and knowledge
- Creative Arts: Music art, movement and dramatic play
- Social and Emotional: Self-concept, self-control, cooperation, social relationships, knowledge of families and communities
- Approaches to Learning: Initiative, curiosity, engagement, persistence, reasoning and problem-solving
- Physical Health and Development: Fine and gross motor skills, health status and health practices

Your part...

- Make school attendance and being on time a priority.
- Make sure your child is well rested. Ten to twelve hours of sleep is recommended for children going to preschool.
- Model healthy diet and exercise habits, and encourage the same for your child.
- Dress your child appropriately for the weather. Outdoor play occurs daily. Flip-flops or crocs are discouraged.
- Keep your child home if he/she is sick.
- Label your child's belongings/clothing.
- Check your child's bookbag daily for school communication.
- Find a variety of opportunities to be involved in Pre-K.

GENERAL PRE-K RULES

- Children should arrive at the center by 7:45 a.m. and should be picked up by 2:45 P.M. each day (**Please abide by the schedule of your principal/building**) School is in session Monday-Friday and will follow the DCS calendar. You must sign your child in/out every day (if transported by parent). **Do not leave your child with older siblings. Pre-k students must be signed in by their parents/guardians.**
- Please do not leave siblings in the car while dropping off or picking up your child.
- Park only in designated areas when bringing or picking up your child.
- The decision to phone a parent and have an ill child removed from the classroom is based on both the needs of the ill child and the need to protect the other children in the classroom from any exposure. A parent will be called to pick up their child that has a fever or other contagious condition. Children will be playing outside on a daily basis.
- Children must be dressed in weather appropriate, washable, comfortable clothing and shoes. For safety purposes, flip-flops, sandals, or crocs that may cause them to slip or fall are discouraged.
- All children will be required to have a rest time.
- A change of clothing for your child is requested. This is all that your child will need. There is no charge or cost for anything associated with PreK education.
- Although efforts are made to keep your child's clothes clean, we cannot guarantee that children's clothes will not become soiled or stained.
- Check for notes each day for information concerning your child and reminders of teacher workdays and holidays. Check any APPs (Class Dojo, Ready Rosy, etc.) your child's teacher is using to communicate with families.
- Inform staff of any change in living situation: including but not limited to, change of name, address, and home or work telephone numbers.
- Our center is a smoke and drug free environment. Smoking is not allowed on premises or any center functions.
- Children are not to bring toys or food to the center except with approval from the child's teacher.
- Staff is not allowed to discuss confidential family information with anyone outside the immediate family without signed consent.
- Spanking, cursing, and other inappropriate language is not allowed in the center or on the playground by staff or parents.

ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE (1305)

Attendance (1305.8)

It is very important that your child attend the program every day. Through consistent attendance, children and families are able to make the maximum use of services; children learn the importance and value of being in school and children develop responsibility early. Federal regulations mandate that each center maintain an 85% attendance rate each day. When the monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85%, the Director is required to analyze the causes of absenteeism in order to initiate appropriate family support procedures for all children with two or more consecutive unexcused absences.

Attendance procedures are as follows:

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends the program on a regular basis.
- After two or more consecutive unexcused absences, the Family Specialist is responsible for contacting the family and making a home visit to offer supportive services to the family if needed.
- The following conditions will constitute an absence being considered excused:
 1. A child is hospitalized
 2. A child is incapacitated due to serious illness or injury
 3. Child contacts a communicable disease
 4. A child has other health impairment that is being treated by a physician and prevents the child from attending temporarily
 5. A death in the child's family
 6. The child cannot attend class because he/she has to receive medical treatment or therapy at the time the class is being held
 7. Other cases that may be determined by special family situations. Parents must request special consideration through the Pre-K Coordinator.
- When a child has reached **5 consecutive unexcused absences**, a parent conference will be held to explain that **after 10 consecutive unexcused absences, the child will be dropped from the program**. This conference will address the reasons for the unexcused absences and possible solutions to prevent further absenteeism.
- **After 10 consecutive unexcused absences, the child's slot is considered vacant and can be filled with a child on the waiting list.** The Family Specialist will send a letter informing parents about the decision-making and ensure that a copy of said letter is placed in the child's file.
- The Pre-K Disabilities Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that children with a documented disability may attend classes on a modified attendance schedule when such schedule is documented in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Additional Attendance Guidance

An elevation of the body's temperature is generally considered a possible sign of illness, although variations occur. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an agency of the US Department of Health and Human Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, provide the following guidance to help reduce the spread of illness in the school setting:

Students should be excluded from school under the following conditions:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher

OR

- An elevation of temperature when accompanied by other indicators of a beginning illness, including, but not limited to:
 - Known exposure to communicable illness
 - Malaise/Fatigue/Change of Behavior
 - Headache
 - Chills/Body Aches
 - Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
 - Respiratory symptoms (congestion, cough, runny nose, sore throat, and green or yellow drainage)
 - Flu-like symptoms (It is important to note that not everyone with the Flu will have a fever. Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways.)

Please Note:

- Students sent home for fever, vomiting, or diarrhea must remain home for 24 hours after the last episode and remain fever/symptom free without the use of medicine.
- If your child had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea overnight or the morning prior to attending school, please **DO NOT** give them medications and send them to school. Please keep them home to prevent the spread of germs.
- After the assessment of the student's symptoms, the school nurse will use her discretion to determine if the student should be sent home. In the school nurse's absence, school staff will follow the above-mentioned guidelines.
- Staff with signs of illness should follow the same guidelines as above.

Tardiness

Prompt arrival and departure are crucial to the educational benefits of the program. **Each three times (3x) you are unable to arrive/depart at the agreed upon time it will result in one (1) unexcused absence, as well as a conference between the staff and the parents to address why the child is unable to arrive/depart at the agreed upon time.* We make an effort to remain sensitive to any special family circumstances influencing attendance patterns; however, in circumstances where chronic tardiness persists, the child may need to be dropped from the program to allow waiting children the opportunity to participate in the program. All information regarding causes of tardiness/absenteeism and efforts to contact the family to offer support will be documented in the child's file.

CHILD RELEASE PROCEDURES

For the safety of all children, an authorized adult must accompany a child to and from school each day and sign that child in and out of the classroom if delivered/picked up by car.

If the child rides a bus, an adult must be present at the bus stop at both departure and arrival. You will be asked to provide names of individuals who are authorized to accept your child in the afternoon from the bus. If an individual is not on the list for pick-up, then the child will be returned to school.

Staff may release children only to parents, guardians, or those listed on the child's Release Form as authorized to pick up the child. Parents are responsible for notifying the Family Specialist of any changes to the Release Form immediately. Anyone picking up the child must be at least **16** years of age, unless the parent/legal guardian is a minor. If a parent needs to call to authorize someone to pick up their child who is not on the form, the following procedures will be followed:

- If changes are made over the phone, the parent must be able to identify themselves to the Family Specialist or designee by providing requested information asked by the Family Specialist for identification.
- After a Family Specialist or designee has identified the parent, then the Family Specialist will write down the name of the person whom the parent is authorizing to pick up the child. The Family Specialist or designee will inform the parent that the person picking up the child will need photo identification.
- When the person arrives to pick up the child, the Family Specialist or designee must verify the person's photo identification with the name written down, before the child will be released from the center.
- An outside agency representative will not remove a child from any center without the written consent of the child's parent or guardian, except during a child abuse or neglect investigation. In such cases, the Family Specialist or designee may release a child to an authorized Child Protective Services worker or law enforcement representative with agency picture identification. A Family Specialist or designee will be present during any Child Protective Services child interview if the investigator allows.
- For children in foster care, the PreK Coordinator and the Family Specialist will receive a copy of the foster care paperwork. The program will release the child only to foster parents or to a worker from the Division of Child and Family Services. The DCFS worker must verify any additions or changes in writing.

Custody Orders

Duplin County Schools PreKindergarten Program requires copies of all custodial agreements and visitation schedules for our enrolled children. By law, our program is required to follow all existing court orders and court imposed visitation schedules. If no visitation schedule has been imposed by the court, we reserve the right to require the custodial and noncustodial parents to sign a written document setting out their agreement regarding visitation. Without prior written approval of the custodial parent, we will not release a child to a noncustodial parent outside their normal visitation schedule. PreK

reserves the right to contact the police if a noncustodial parent enters the facility outside his/her normal visitation schedule and without prior written approval of the custodial parent.

If the center is in possession of a restraining order, order of protection, or a no-contact order against any person including a noncustodial parent and staff sees that person near the center, staff will call 911 immediately to report their presence. After the 911 call, staff will record the license number and make of the vehicle if possible. They will call the parent/guardian.

(1303)

Children Riding the Bus

No child will be released from the bus unless an authorized person is there to receive him/her. It will be the responsibility of each parent/guardian to:

- Arrive at the morning and afternoon bus stop (15) minutes before your child's drop-off time.
- Call the Family Specialist/Site Manager one (1) hour before your child is to be dropped off if undue circumstance or an emergency situation prevents parents/guardians from waiting at the bus stop to receive the child.
- Info Transportation or the Family Specialist/Site Manager of the alternative person(s) authorized on the emergency card that will be picking up your child at the bus stop.
- If the person receiving your child is not on the emergency card, parents/guardians must send a signed note authorizing that person to pick up your child. (The bus driver will ask for picture identification before releasing your child.)

NOTE: When children are returned to the center by the bus driver, because the parent, guardian or designee was not present to receive the child, suspension and possible termination from the bus may occur.

First Occurrence: Warning

Second Occurrence: Child suspended two (2) days from riding the bus.

Third Occurrence: Child suspended three (3) days from riding the bus.

Fourth Occurrence: Child's bus privileges terminated for the remainder of the school year.

Transportation Safety Education

Transportation Safety education is provided to each family on an on-going basis starting at enrollment. Pedestrian Safety education is given to parents at enrollment and is taught during the first few weeks of school. It is the law that a school bus may stop to pick up children only at a designated bus stop. Please do not ask the bus driver to pick your child up or drop your child off at any other place.

If you drive your child to the bus stop, please park on the same side of the street as the bus in a safe place. This is to avoid your child having to cross the road.

Safety on all vehicles

- Never hold your child on your lap when riding in a car. A crash will throw your child from your arms, no matter how hard you try to hold on.
- Protect your child – it's the law
- Children under the age of eight (regardless of weight), or weighing less than 80 pounds (regardless of age), must be in an approved child car seat.
- You may be cited for a violation of the car seat law. If you are cited your automobile insurance could go up.
- Duplin County Partnership for Children participates in the “Buckle Up!” program. can tell you if your car seat is installed properly. (910) 296-2000

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Family Partnership (1340.40) Parent Involvement (1304.40) (d)

Collaboration between our parents and staff is very important for the success of the program. Staff will engage in a process of collaborative partnership-building with parents to establish mutual trust and to identify family goals, strengths and support. Pre-K requires teachers/parents and family specialists/parents to participate in two home visits during the year; however, contact with the family will be ongoing during the year to reinforce goals and strategies. Home Visits last approximately 1 ½ hours. This gives you time to catch up on what is going on in the classroom and to help the teacher plan and develop goals for your child and to help the family specialist plan with you concerning goals that you would like to achieve. The partnership process will involve family goal setting, support and recruitment for parental involvement and participation in program offerings. Linkage to appropriate resources as well as crisis intervention services will be offered in both group and individual settings relevant to expressed needs. Parents will have ongoing opportunities to be involved in a wide range of activities designed to support parents through provisions of health, nutrition, child development, and mental health educational activities.

MALE ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Father engagement is a vital and integrated aspect of parent, family, and community engagement work. Father refers to fathers and male role models who play a significant role in raising a child. This person may be a biological, adoptive, or stepfather. He may be a grandfather, another adult male family member, foster father, guardian, or the mother's significant other. He may be the expectant partner of a pregnant woman. Head Start staff engage fathers as advocates, lifelong educators, and first teachers of their children. Male family members and father figures serve key roles in the healthy development of their children and families, and have much to add to their Head Start communities. Duplin County PreK is committed to cultivating a welcoming environment to all father figures and being intentional about engaging and including them. More importantly we want to ensure that fathers are being honored for the critical role they play in their children's lives. Please support Male Engagement activities at your child's PreK. For more information on father engagement visit www.fatherhood.org

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Duplin County Schools PreKindergarten is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our staff and the families we serve. In keeping with this philosophy, we maintain a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free work environment. Possession or use of firearms, explosives, dangerous chemicals, substances, instruments or other weapons on Duplin County School property or leased sites are prohibited. Any child found in violation of this policy will be suspended from the program pending an investigation. Any parents found in violation of this policy will be removed from the campus.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Our staff is committed to value, understand and respect diversity and cultural differences in order to create an environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all children and families. Staff recognize that there are differences across many dimensions, including language, family structure, religion, and educational and socioeconomic background. Staff becomes familiar with the ethnic backgrounds of our families they serve and are able to communicate to the extent feasible with children and families with no or limited English proficiency.

Principles Supporting the Framework for Multicultural Programming in Head Start

- Every individual is rooted in culture.
- The cultural groups represented in the communities and families are the primary sources for culturally relevant programming.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming requires learning accurate information about the culture of different groups and discarding stereotypes.
- Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice.
- Every individual has the right to maintain his or her own identity while acquiring the skills required to function in our diverse society.
- Effective programs for children with limited English-speaking ability require continued development of the primary language while the acquisition of English is facilitated.
- Culturally relevant programming for children enables children to develop awareness of, respect for, and appreciation of individual cultural differences. It is beneficial to all children.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming examines and challenges institutional and personal biases.
- Culturally relevant and diverse programming and practices are incorporated in all components and services.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (1302.5)

Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten program takes an active role in the community and encourages strong communication, cooperation, and the sharing of information with our community partners in an effort to improve the delivery of services to our children

and families. We encourage our families to get involved in our programming, planning and communication efforts in any way they are comfortable. We value the opinions of all family and staff.

IN-KIND

“In-Kind” is used to describe the various donations we receive. These donations can be received in many different ways, and we separate them into two broad categories: Goods and Services.

Goods refer to actual donated items. They can only be counted if they are items we would otherwise have had to purchase. Most of the time, these items come from the community. Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- Meeting space
- Land for service provision
- Buildings for storage
- Equipment such as computers, cookware, or tools
- Office supplies such as paper, ink, or pens
- Classroom supplies such as paint, glue, or scissors

Services would include any time a parent or any other person/group spent working on behalf of our program. Examples of this include but are not limited to:

- A dentist providing free exams at a center
- Parents spending time on specific activities structured to help the child at home
- A high school/college student spending time volunteering in the classroom
- Parents helping to clean or do laundry for the center

Without the generosity of parents and the community, the program would cease to function. The federal government grants a specific dollar amount for the program to operate but requires the program to match that grant by 20% each year. If our program fails to make that match, we would be required to return the grant money and would not be able to operate the following year. This seems strict, but it is done to ensure that parents and members of the community take part in the program and realize its value.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

All Volunteers are required to submit to a criminal background check prior to volunteering. The form for this background check is available from the Family Specialist and must be completed a minimum of two weeks prior to the volunteer activity. This background check is provided by Duplin County Schools and is free of charge to potential volunteers.

Parents who volunteer in the classroom for two or more hours can eat lunch with their children at no charge. We encourage parent participation and would love to have parents share mealtime with the children.

TRANSITION (1302.7)

To assure that children and their parents are prepared to enter Duplin County Schools, our program will provide various opportunities for children and their parents. Activities that prepare children, such as field trips to a kindergarten class and reading about kindergarten, are some of the ways that children learn what to expect. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education as they enter Duplin County Schools.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Child Health & Development Services (1302.3)

Immunizations

Children must be current on all immunizations as recommended by the EPSDT program of the State. Children will not be allowed to attend a center until they can document appropriate immunizations, document exceptions or are in the process of completing the minimum requirements.

Developmental Screening

Each child enrolled will have a developmental screening, which will be completed by a staff member. Further follow-up, assessment and/or referrals will be completed as needed.

Child Health

Our health goal is to involve your family in an ongoing health care system. Your child is expected to have a complete physical upon enrollment. Any follow-up services needed should be completed as soon as possible. A dental exam is required to be completed by the first 30 days after enrollment. Any follow-up work needed should be completed as soon as possible. Your child will also receive a vision and hearing screening within the first 45 days after enrollment by the nurse and/or family specialists.

EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY (1302.3)

DCS Pre-K firmly believes that the lives of young children and their families can be enriched and strengthened by the quality of the educational program provided to them. The quality of the program depends on several factors:

- Providing a safe and nurturing environment
- Providing a developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses all areas of development - social, emotional, cognitive and physical.
- Providing learning experiences within the context of children's culture and community and working in partnership with parents to plan, implement and evaluate the educational experiences provided for children and families.

CURRICULUM

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is implemented using a center based approach in which children work with materials in the indoor and outdoor environment, interact with other children and adults and participate in routines building trust, autonomy and initiative. Challenging experiences such as being asked open-ended questions,

participating in exploration and discovery, classification and patterning activities allow children to succeed. The learning environment is organized around eight interest areas: blocks, dramatic play, table toys, art, sand and water, library, music and movement. Children are able to actively explore materials for sustained periods of time.

Our classrooms are vibrant, active, engaging, interactive learning environments where teachers maintain high expectations for children. Children are empowered with a high level of personal responsibility for solving their own problems, initiating their own learning, and reaching out to care for others in the classroom. Teachers encourage language exploration and communication. Children are encouraged to talk with each other and with adults, to ask questions and to make predictions.

In addition, there is an emphasis on early literacy skills such as vocabulary development, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, phonemic awareness and listening comprehension. We use *Waterford Early Reading Program*, a comprehensive, research-based curriculum designed to teach children to read, write and keyboard.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool and *Waterford Early Reading Program* are used in harmony to meet the learning needs of each child and the goals in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Information gathered from observations and ongoing assessments guide us to respond to the needs of each child. Use of *The Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment System*, coupled with reports generated by *Waterford Early Reading Program*, allow instructional staff to gather information on children's progress and to measure children's growth over time. Both formal and informal observations occur daily.

Our classrooms are places where all children thrive. Children are ensured of reading, cognitive and emotional success through a print-rich environment. Appropriate accommodations for English Language Learners and children with disabilities are included in instructional planning.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips enhance classroom curriculum and provide opportunities for parents to spend time with his/her child. All field trips require prior approval by the Pre-K Coordinator. A parent/legal guardian must sign a Field Trip Permission Form in order for his/her child to participate. Only children enrolled in the Pre-K Program may participate in Field Trips. When parents participate in Field Trips, they should not bring children (other than the Pre-K child) on the Field Trip.

HOME VISITS

Classroom teachers will arrange a home visit two times per year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The purpose of the home visit is to discuss each child's progress. Meeting in the home allows parents and children to communicate in a comfortable setting. Family Specialists may also arrange additional home visits if needed.

Pottying Protocol

While the expectation is that children be potty trained prior to entering Pre- Kindergarten, the Duplin County Schools Pre-K Program will not deny services to children who are not potty trained. This is with the understanding that parents/guardians continue working with their child daily on potty training. In addition, because our facilities are not licensed for changing tables, parents/guardians must provide pull-ups.

Please note our procedure in case of an accident is to:

Accompany the child to the restroom and leave the door open, ensuring they are in the view of another staff. At no time will staff be alone in the restroom with a child.

Instruct/assist the child to step out of their soiled underclothes.

Staff will only perform surface wiping of the child's soiled areas.

Instruct the child to step into the clean underclothes/pull-up and redress.

Parents will be notified by a staff member each time there is an accident.

*Please ensure your child has extra clothing, underclothes, socks, and pull-ups.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions or concerns please call the PreK Office @ (910) 290-7005 or (910) 296-8781.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences will be conducted at least twice yearly. The initial conference acquaints parents with the teacher and the program. During the second conference, classroom teachers will share children's progress as well as ask parents to help identify specific goals they would like to see their child achieve.

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY (1304.21)

Daily outdoor activity is very important for young children and is a regularly planned daily activity. The North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education stipulates that a child who is well enough to be in the center is well enough to play outdoors. This provides the fresh air and movement that children need for general well-being and healthy development. We will make an attempt to provide outdoor experiences in a variety of weather scenarios, including rain and snow. You can help your child enjoy our outdoor activities by making sure that he/she is properly dressed for the weather.

Hot Weather Outdoor Play Policy

In order to provide a safe outdoor experience in hot weather conditions, we recommend parent/guardians apply SPF 15+ broad-spectrum sunscreen to your child prior to their arrival. Children will be encouraged to play in shaded areas whenever possible. Children will be reminded to drink plenty of water, as they can dehydrate quickly during hot weather. The length of time spent outdoors will be appropriate to the conditions, and at the discretion of the Pre-K Coordinator.

Cold Weather Outdoor Play Policy

Temperature and wind chill are two factors that determine the safety of children being outdoors during winter months. Because the temperature can actually be quite cold and still be conducive to outdoor play, it is our policy to determine the wind chill factor. The key to appropriate outdoor play in extreme weather conditions is that children be ACTIVE and appropriately dressed. Proper attire for outdoor play in all extreme cold temperatures should include a warm coat, sweater, mittens and a hat, as well as boots if there is snow on the ground. Children should also have proper attire for rainy weather including rain boots, raincoats, rain hats or umbrellas. For children who are not mobile or have special health considerations, this policy would be modified at the discretion of the school nurse. The length of time spent outdoors will be appropriate to the conditions, and at the discretion of the Pre-K Coordinator.

MEDICATION

Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program will follow the Duplin County Schools Policy on Medication. However, the Director and nurses are responsible for ensuring that NO medication is given to children without a Physicians/Dentists order for medication. If the Physician/Dentist approves a medication, (by filling out the medication permission form) the following procedure will be followed:

- No medication will be given without advance written parental consent and a prescription that includes dosage, frequency, storage, etc. and a copy of the pharmacist's medication information sheet.
- The designee at the center will be responsible for giving the medication. In the designee's absence, the Family Specialist assigned to the center will give the medication. The parent will be told who will be giving the medication.
- The person giving the medication will check the label three times;
 1. First, check the child's name, the name of the drug, and the amount and time of the dosage on the bottle when it is removed from storage.
 2. Second, read the child's name as the medication is given.
 3. Third, check the above information again when the bottle is returned to storage.

Each dose is recorded on the Medication Administration sheet as soon as it is given. All medication is to be inaccessible to children, in a locked cabinet, or in a locked case in the refrigerator if it needs refrigeration. When the course of the medication is completed, the forms are filed in the child's folder.

Medication Administration Procedure

No medication will be given without advance written parental consent and a prescription that includes dosage, frequency, storage, etc. and a copy of the pharmacist's medication information sheet (for over-the-counter medication).

Procedure:

- All medication must be authorized by the parent/guardian prior to administering them at the center.

- All medication must be authorized by a licensed physician or dentist prior to administering them at the center.
- Parents are responsible for giving the initial dose of any medication, so that its effects can be monitored. We will NOT administer an initial dose of medicine.
- All medication is to be inaccessible to children, in a locked cabinet, or in a locked case in the refrigerator, if refrigeration is needed.
- Appropriate training for medication, storage, handling, or administering (including the use of any necessary equipment needed to administer the medication) will be provided for staff annually.
- Over-the-counter medication needs a documented recommendation by a health provider, and parents must provide instructions and information on a label.
- Medication will be clearly labeled with their first and last names, and kept in a locked cabinet.

HEALTH EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Child health and safety are important both in the home and our centers. All center staff are required to maintain a current First Aid and CPR certification in order to remain familiar with proper emergency medical and dental procedures. In addition to this training, First Aid and CPR instruction can be found posted in each classroom for quick reference. The agency emergency policies, procedures, evacuation routes and local emergency phone numbers are posted at each center for parents' information.

We strive to provide a safe environment by conducting safety audits, monthly emergency drills and teaching children safety rules (only walking inside the center, please do not climb up the front of the slide; slide down on your bottom, etc.). If a child does experience a "boo-boo", an incident/injury report will be completed by the staff and sent to the Lead Nurse and the PreK Program Director. In spite of our efforts, an emergency may arise. For this reason, we require that parents complete emergency contact information.

Any child who is injured will have immediate attention. Parents will be notified of all injuries. Injuries that require the attention of medical personnel will be reported to the parent immediately and to NC DCDEE.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

It is the responsibility of the staff to help keep children safe. Sometimes a staff member may suspect that a child has been sexually or physically abused, or neglected. Sometimes children will tell teachers, staff members or other adults that they have been abused. North Carolina law G. S. 115C-400 requires that any citizen that suspects a child has been abused or neglected **MUST REPORT** to the proper authorities. Duplin County Schools employees are required to obey the law by reporting suspected incidences of abuse or neglect. All reports are kept confidential.

Being a parent is a tough job, and sometimes it becomes overwhelming. If you feel that you or someone in your family needs help to avoid abusing your child, or you have issues of domestic violence in your home, talk to a member of your child's center staff who can direct you to someone that can help you. If you or someone in your family has been

reported to Child Protective Services and you feel that you need support, please contact your Family Specialist for assistance, information, and guidance. If you are suspicious that a child is either being neglected, abused or is present during a domestic violence incident, it is your responsibility to call and make a report.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

Reporting child abuse or neglect:

Duplin County Department of Social Services (910) 296-2200

Duplin County Sheriff's Department (910) 296-2150

If you need a shelter due to domestic violence:

Sarah's Refuge, Inc./Warsaw, NC (Hot line) (910) 293-3206

(Office) (910) 293-3467

(FAX line) (910) 293-3973

Duplin County Schools is required to inform parents in writing that their child is/may be subject to interviews by NC DCDEE, Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement officials for the purpose of determining licensing compliance or for investigative purposes. Child interviews do not require parental notice. Child Protective Services may look at your child's records as part of an investigation.

FIRST AID KITS

Every center has a first aid kit. At least monthly (or as used) the first aid kit is inventoried, expiration dates checked and inventory is restocked. All first aid kits will contain at least the following items: Adhesive band-aids, sterile gauze squares, adhesive tape, roll or gauze, antiseptic, thermometer, scissors, disposable gloves and tweezers. This Kit must be stored in a locked area or at least five feet high.

CHILD NUTRITION (1302.44)

Our staff helps families in meeting each child's nutritional needs and in establishing good eating habits that nurture healthy development and promote life-long well-being.

All meals follow USDA guidelines. Meals must be consumed during mealtime only. Food items high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt are offered to the children. All meals are served with children and a teacher sitting together at the table. Children are taught proper handwashing. They participate in table setting, practice table manners and clean up after themselves.

If your child has a special dietary need, (e.g. food allergy, religious preferences, etc.), a special dietary prescription form must be filled out and signed by a physician and/or religious clergy before we can honor the request. Without the signed documentation, your child will receive the same food on the menu as the other children.

Family Style Meals

Head Start Performance Standards state staff must ensure that nutritional services in center based settings contribute to the development and socialization of the child. All children, classroom staff, and volunteers eat together family style and share the same menu to the extent possible.

- Children are encouraged to taste all foods, but never forced. The right of a child to refuse food is to be respected.
- Food must never be used as punishment or reward. A child is never to be deprived of a meal or snack for any reason.
- Children are to participate in meal service. They can make centerpieces, wipe tables, set tables, wipe up spills, and clean up.

Staff encourages a relaxed atmosphere for mealtime, making conversation with the children. Children are allowed at least 30 minutes to finish their food. Basic table manners are modeled at every meal. Children who have finished may be excused from the table. All staff and children wash their hands before eating. If food is dropped on the floor, it is thrown away and if a utensil is dropped on the floor, a clean replacement is provided.

United States Department of Agriculture

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, OFFICE of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5924. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

TOOTH BRUSHING

Good oral health for pre-school children serves as a precursor to adult oral health and is essential for a child's behavior, speech language, and overall growth and development.

- For children ages two and over, once daily after a meal, staff will assist children in brushing their teeth using a small smear of toothpaste and will make sure children rinse their mouth and do not swallow the toothpaste.
- Each child will have his/her own labeled toothbrush.
- Brushes will be stored in a holder and kept out of the reach of children when not in use.
- Children should never perform tooth brushing without adequate supervision.
- Tooth brushing is to be done at a sink in front of a mirror.
- To prevent cross contamination of the toothpaste tube, staff will ensure that a pea-sized amount of toothpaste is always dispensed onto something other than the toothbrush first (wax paper, paper cups, or paper towel).
- Classroom staff must ensure that each child picks up only his or her own toothbrush.
- Each child will be provided with a new toothbrush at least two times a school year and when the bristles are frayed or if a toothbrush is dropped on the floor or in the trash can.

REST TIME

Children sleep on a cot labeled with their name. The sheet is changed every week. Children have a blanket and pillow. Soft music is played. Rest time is supervised by the staff. The children sleep at least three feet apart. If the children do not feel like sleeping, they rest quietly with a book or puzzle.

SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (1302.6)

Every effort is made to meet the needs of all children. Ten percent, or more, of our enrollment are children with specific special needs or disabilities. There may be times when a referral for diagnostic assessment of a child may be indicated. Parents, teachers, and the Pre-K Mental Health Specialist or other staff will work together to determine whether a referral or assessment is needed. We will work with our Exceptional Children's Program or other agencies or health care providers, as well as families, to best ensure that the child's needs are being met.

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's development, please discuss them with your child's teacher. All information is kept strictly confidential. No information from a child's file is released to anyone without written permission from the child's parents.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Program Governance and Parent Committees (1301)

Shared decision-making is a critical component of the Head Start program. Parents play an important role by participating in parent meetings and by electing other parents to the policy council.

Policy Council

The Policy Council is composed of one Parent Representative from every center and three Community Representatives. The Policy Council meets quarterly and helps to develop plans that affect the entire program.

Parent Grievance Policy

If you are concerned things are not going as well as you would like in the program, there is a process to have your concerns addressed. First, please discuss the issue with the person/persons involved. For example, if you feel that something is not right in the classroom, please talk to your classroom teacher first. If they are unable to help you, or you feel that the issue has not been resolved, please address your concerns to the PreK Coordinator. Remember that your opinion and viewpoint is important, and we would like to hear suggestions that might be helpful in improving the program.

The Duplin County PreK Office is located at [305 Beasley Street](#) Kenansville.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES (1302.9)

Human Resources Management Organizational Structure/ Standards of Conduct

All staff, consultants, and volunteers must abide by the program's standards of conduct. These standards specify that:

- They will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability:
- They will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- They will ensure that no child is left alone or unsupervised while under their care.
- They will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation.
- They will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as a punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

Behavior Guidance Policy

Conscious Discipline

The heart of Duplin County Schools Pre-K Program's Discipline policy is to encourage self-control, self-esteem, and respect for all children and adults. For this reason, we are training our staff to implement the principles of "Conscious Discipline" by Dr. Becky Bailey. This program takes a different approach to traditional classroom management. It is based on the basic idea that developing discipline with children, instead of applying discipline to them, will help them become more emotionally healthy and happy adults.

The program is designed to help teachers take everyday discipline issues and turn them into teachable moments that convey the importance of impulse control, anger management, and conflict resolution. Conscious Discipline gives children the tools to understand that their emotions are not only important and deserving of attention, but they are also controllable and the power to control them lies within the child. We are striving to teach children how to progress from physical or verbal aggression to calm self-regulation, how to make better choices with cooperation and compassion, and the importance of respecting and empathizing with others.

We would encourage you to check out the website www.consciousdiscipline.com to see how Dr. Bailey's brain research is changing the way we think about discipline and classroom management.

Discipline Philosophy

We believe that all domains of learning are supported during play and through strong, positive interactions with adults and peers. Promoting healthy social and emotional development, including self-control, is one of the fundamental responsibilities of our program.

The preschool period is a critical time for children to learn to control their thoughts, feelings, attention, impulses, and behavior. They are learning how to get along with others and how to be friends. Children are not born with these skills. Teachers and caregivers must teach social and emotional skills just as they teach washing hands or learning colors and shapes. We know that when children are given the opportunities and support to develop (learn, practice, discuss, etc.), self-control and other social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation needed for academic and life success. Our teachers will model and demonstrate these strategies throughout each day in our classrooms.

When any child in our program presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall follow the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Observe the children, and then identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior with the aid of the PreK Mental Health Specialist.
- Rather than focus only on eliminating the behavior, teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child and the safety of others in the classroom. Our response will be calm, respectful, and provide the child with information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not.
- We will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a behavior tracking log.
- Teacher-parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private and shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- If necessary, intervention shall ensure each child has access to appropriate therapies or interventions provided by the school system or through community or private sources.

We Support This Through

Our Environment

- We provide children with interesting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive.
- We develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity.
- Our schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs. We do our best to not let any child get bored or disinterested.

Our Teachers

- We work to develop a relationship with each individual child, including those needing higher levels of support.
- Teachers always speak to children in a calm, respectful tone, especially during redirections.
- We help children put words to their emotions. (For example, “Madison, I can tell you were mad when James took your block.”)
- We use stories about young children in social situations to teach healthy social skills.
- We teach social emotional learning through both whole group and individual interactions as part of our positive behavioral support interventions.

Our Families

- Communicate regularly with staff to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school
- Partner with us and allow us time to work with all children, including those needing higher levels of support
- Understand and acknowledge that we do not suspend or expel children as they are learning these skills. We strive to serve individual needs while ensuring the safety of all the children and staff in the program.

Discipline Procedures

We have found that behavior concerns usually indicate that a child needs more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children’s social and emotional health, which could include our mental health specialist, school nurse, or social worker. Outside therapists, physicians, or other providers may also be included, given parent or guardian consent.

When a child is unable to control their actions in the classroom, one proactive method utilized by Conscious Discipline is the “safe place.” When children are upset, angry, or being disruptive, they will be given a choice to go to the “safe place.” This is a quiet spot in which they can allow themselves to take the time to relax, breathe, and try to get their emotions under control. Teachers will continue to watch children while they are in the “Safe Place” to make sure they are not hurting themselves or others. They will encourage the child to talk about their feelings and help with calming techniques, so the child will be able to return to the classroom setting. The “safe space” is not designed as time-out or punishment for misbehavior, it is utilized as “teaching time” to individualize for a child’s emotional well-being.

If a child is unable to use these calming techniques and continues to be disruptive, the teacher will then notify the Family Specialist, who will be called in to help the child and avoid disruptions in the classroom. Other school staff may be utilized if necessary. Staff may need to utilize Active Calming (5- Step Method: Step 1: I AM, Step 2: I CALM, Step 3: I FEEL, Step 4: I CHOOSE, Step 5: I SOLVE). After going through the 5 Steps of Active Calming, if the child has calmed down, they may proceed to the Safe Place.

We may consult with parents or guardians, so they can speak with the child and/or be notified of the circumstances. If further guidance is required, actions taken will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's level of understanding. **No physical punishment of any kind will be administered on DCS property. This policy restricts parents and staff from using physical punishment on their own children while on DCS property. In addition, staff may not yell at, shame, or humiliate a child in any way.** Our goal is to correct children's behavior in a way that will help mold and perfect a child's mental faculties or moral character. Negative nonverbal cues or verbally demeaning terms, such as "bad" or "mean" shall not be used about a child.

Unsafe Behavior

Should a child engage in a behavior that is dangerous to the safety of adults or children, **the child may be sent home from school for a short period of time, but not permanently.**

- **The parents would be called immediately and required to come pick up their child if school staff are unable to calm the student.**
- **Before a child can return to the classroom, a parent/guardian and the child will be required to meet with staff to develop a plan to support the child in being successful in the classroom.**

Behavior which may result in a child being sent home may include, but is not limited to: **physical aggression towards adults or children such as hitting, biting, choking, spitting, scratching, throwing things which may injure someone, or running away from class or the school property.**

PLAN TO PREVENT SUSPENSION and/or EXPULSION POLICY for the NC PRE-K PROGRAM

Purpose

Research shows that student behavior typically does not improve as a result of out-of-school suspensions. Additionally, students who miss instructional time due to suspension often fall behind to such a great degree that they never catch up with their peers. Furthermore, students who are suspended or expelled during the early learning years miss the opportunity to learn appropriate behavior. The failure to learn these skills during the early, formative years could potentially affect the future academic success of these students. Therefore, preventing children from being suspended or expelled from the Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program is of utmost importance. The goal of this plan is to provide families, staff, and program administration, with guidelines to support the development of the social, emotional and behavioral health of our children so that they can enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

The Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Program will be proactive in its effort to prevent suspensions and expulsions. Our main emphasis will be to ensure that each classroom in the Pre-Kindergarten Program creates environments that are conducive to the development of positive relationships with children and families. Families and children should feel safe, secure, supported and valuable members of the Pre-K community. Establishing and maintaining positive relationships will be the main deterrent to behaviors that warrant suspension or expulsion.

Administrators will ensure these relationships by:

- Orienting staff to Head Start, Head Start Performance Standards, Child Care requirements and the overall operation of the center.
- Responding to identified needs and goals within the organization and intervening on behalf of families and staff, providing expertise and support in developing a high quality childhood environment, materials and practices.
- Coordinating with appropriate staff in the implementation of the transition process.
- their Supporting staff concerning issues of classroom environments, behavior management, inclusion of children with special needs, transitioning children and families. This includes, but is not limited to phone, email, written reports, classroom consultation, coaching, record keeping and tracking of data.
- Securing written and web based materials for children, parents, employees and community partners within the areas of: developmentally appropriate practices, child and family literacy, child development, screening, assessment, behavior management, curriculum, learning environments, special education, disability laws and services.
- Collaborating with service providers in the area of mental health, abuse prevention, and parenting education.
- Providing technical support in the area of parent involvement, family services and mental health on a program-wide level.
- Promoting family involvement in all aspects of the program.
- Research computerized and other library searches for current materials in the field.
- Maintain and update social service and mental health files.
- Provide support for specialty staff training/orientation and assist in the development of training materials for staff, parents, and community partners.
- Organize and prioritize in-coming referrals and other communication.
- Provide site visits as required to monitor performance standards in specialty areas and conduct child observations as needed.
- Designing and delivering training to staff and parents and discussing topics that will include both specialized and transdisciplinary subject matter and promote collaborative teaming, integration and inclusive practices.
- Collaborating with community organizations to collect and disseminate additional information, and to arrange ancillary training and services.

Family Specialists will ensure these relationships by:

- Conducting personalized home visits to discuss child development, and helping parents understand what to expect in each stage of a child's development. They will also offer practical tips on ways to encourage learning, manage challenging behaviors, and promote strong parent-child relationships.

- Arranging parent meetings to allow parents to gain insights and to share their experiences, common concerns, and successes. Parenting meetings will also provide families opportunities to participate in parent-child activities.
- Maintaining standards of confidentiality regarding children, their families, and fellow staff members.
- Assisting parents with follow-up and providing support by utilizing the human service agencies available in the community.
- Monitoring children's attendance records and following up on home visits.
- Ensuring that all social service information is kept current and monitored regularly.
- Meeting the needs of all children; including those who are at risk, those with special needs, those who are gifted, and those who are culturally diverse.
- Encouraging experimentation, exploration, problem-solving, cooperation, socialization, and choice making.
- Individualizing one-on-one and group activities to reflect the unique needs and strengths of parents.

Teachers will ensure these relationships by:

- Meeting the needs of all children, including students who are at-risk, gifted, culturally diverse, or have special needs.
- Integrating all Head Start Performance Standard components into classroom time.
- Developing and utilizing lesson plans, which reflect mandated elements, parental and cultural influences, and promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of Pre-K children.
- Individualizing one-on-one and group activities to reflect the unique needs and strengths of all children in the classroom.
- Following a consistent schedule, which includes small and large group experiences, choice time, music and movement, large and small motor skill development, meals, and effective transitions between activities.
- Encouraging experimentation, exploration, problem-solving, cooperation, socialization, and choice making.
- Providing an atmosphere that promotes and reinforces parental involvement in the classroom.
- Working with appropriate agencies and people in developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) when needed.
- Coordinating with special needs staff to define their role in the classroom and developing a collaborative approach that benefits all children in the classroom and meets needs as specified on the IEP.
- Supervising and monitoring children at all times.
- Responding to crisis or emergency situations that may occur and accessing emergency services as needed.
- Maintaining accurate written records including assessments, IEP documentation, screening instruments, anecdotal observations, and other required forms.
- Participating in regularly scheduled team meetings to plan for and deliver collaborative services across all components.

- Meeting regularly with parents, and other staff regarding each child's status and progress.
- Conducting regular home visits for the purpose of assessment and support, and to share information on parenting, educational strategies, and classroom progress.
- Sharing progress information with team members, and gathering information on home issues.
- Attending parent committee meetings.
- Assessing individual and group needs, attending to special needs, specific interests, strengths and concerns.
- Developing balanced lesson plans, which are developmentally appropriate and intellectually challenging.
- Adapting curriculum to address and meet individual goals for children as identified on the IEP.
- Attending meetings, training, and appropriate professional development activities.

Teacher Assistants will ensure these relationships by:

- Assisting in setting up the environment (indoor/outdoor) for the activities of the day.
- Using developmentally appropriate practices to facilitate activities with groups and individuals.
- Observing and recording behaviors of children to assist the teacher in the identification of each child's strengths and areas to grow.
- Utilizing lesson plans that reflect mandated elements, parental and cultural influences, and promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of Head Start children.
- Following a consistent schedule which includes small and large group experiences, choice time, music and movement, large and small motor activities, socialization, and choice-making: ask open-ended questions, and respectfully listen to answers.
- Providing an atmosphere that promotes and reinforces parental involvement in the classroom.
- Responding to crises or emergencies that may occur.
- Maintaining accurate written records, including; assessments, IEP documentation, screening instructions, anecdotal observations, and other required forms at the direction of the teacher.
- Participating in regularly scheduled team meetings to plan for and deliver collaborative services across all components.
- Assisting the teacher in making home visits for the purpose of assessment and support, and to share information on parenting, educational strategies, and classroom progress.
- Attending parent committee meetings.
- Attending meetings, training, and appropriate professional development activities.

Families will participate in this collaborative process by:

- Being available for home visits as scheduled.
- Participating in goal setting.
- Attending Parent Meetings and other program offerings.
- Taking part in making decisions that affect the planning and operation of the program.

- Expecting and accepting guidance from teachers and staff that will help the individual development of the child.
- Taking advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development.
- Taking part in the classroom as an observer, volunteer worker, and to contribute my services in whatever way I can to contribute to the enrichment of the total program.

The Exceptional Children's Program will participate in this endeavor by making certain that every effort is made to meet the needs of all children. The Exceptional Children's Department will be a valuable component in this process. Ten percent, or more, of program enrollment are children with specific learning needs or disabilities. There are many times when a referral or diagnostic assessment of a child may be indicated. Upon the recommendation of parents or teachers, the mental health specialist and/or Exceptional Children's staff will work with them to determine whether a referral or assessment is needed. When necessary, other agencies or health care providers may be consulted.

ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

Steps/Strategies to help prevent suspension/expulsion of children with unique needs and challenging behaviors are:

1) Implement Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies:

- a. Use praise, encouragement and other means of recognizing appropriate behavior
- b. Clearly stating expectations for appropriate behavior
- c. Teach children alongside competent peers and include social emotional curriculum in lesson plans.
- d. Provide children alternative choices and redirection away from inappropriate behavior, and avoid power struggles whenever possible.
- e. Develop classroom rules that are clear, responsible and consistent, establishing rules at the beginning of the program year and as new children begin the program.
- f. Plan a safe and developmentally appropriate environment that supports pro-social behavior.

2) Supplement Positive Behavior Intervention With More Intensive Strategies

Occasionally, young children present dangerous behavior in the educational setting, with the potential to injure themselves or others. In such circumstances, children may need higher level behavioral strategies or specific intervention plans to help them learn appropriate behavior. Examples of such strategies might include, but not be limited to:

- calm the child
- debrief what just happened
- problem solve with the child about how to handle similar situations in the future, and
- plan how the child will re-enter the play environment.

3) Respond to Unanticipated Dangerous Behavior

Occasionally, staff may be unaware of a child's potential for dangerous behavior, which may occur very quickly and with little warning. In response to these incidents, teachers:

- a. Go to the safe place or other quiet place in the classroom with the student
- b. Move other children to another area of the room and have the co-teacher continue with instructional programming if possible until the student can safely be integrated into class.
- c. If necessary, remove the student that is upset from the room. If this is not possible, remove the other students from the classroom, with the assistance of the Family Specialist or other staff.
- d. Have designated locations outside the classroom to take a child that needs time alone with supervision.
- e. Have a means of communicating with the rest of the team with a walkie-talkie or phone using code words to protect the privacy of the student.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The use of corporal punishment is strictly forbidden. Use of such methods will result in disciplinary action.
- Withholding food or access to the bathroom, name-calling or any other form of demeaning treatment is strictly forbidden. Use of such methods will result in disciplinary action.
- Continuous communication with parent(s)/guardian(s) must be maintained concerning the child's behavior, and ongoing documentation and progress reports are required. Staff will be sensitive to different cultural beliefs and values.
- Behavior that is not age-appropriate may be an indicator that further support and assessment is needed.
- If a child's behavior requires special support during the time of referral and assessment, the Site Manager/Family Specialist, the Pre-K Mental Health Specialist and the Pre-K Coordinator should plan for support. At no time should a student be suspended or expelled without the consent of the Pre-K Mental Health Specialist and the Pre-K Coordinator.

PREVENTION OF SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME AND ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA

We, Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten, believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care, and educating families.

What is AHT

Abusive Head Trauma is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds, but can result in severe injury or even death. According to North Carolina Child Care Rule (child care centers, 10A NCAC 09 .0608, family child care homes, 10A NCAC 09 .1726), each child care site licensed to care for children up to five years of age shall develop and adopt a policy to prevent Abusive Head Trauma.

Procedure Practice

Recognizing: The signs and symptoms of AHT include:

- Irritability and/or high-pitched crying
- Difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness
- Difficulty breathing
- Inability to lift the head
- Seizures
- Lack of appetite, vomiting, or difficulty swallowing
- poor eating habits/difficulty in sucking from a straw
- No smiling or vocalization
- Inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone
- Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

Responding to (Emergency Response): If ABT is suspected, staff will:

- Call 911 immediately upon suspecting Abusive Head Trauma and inform the Site Coordinator
- Implement school-wide Emergency Response Procedure
- Call the parents/guardians
- Site Coordinator will contact the Pre-kindergarten Administrator and on-site Administrator.
- If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

Reporting: Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov. Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the Duplin County Department of Social Services. Phone number: 1-910-296-2200

Strategies for Staff and Parents

A child is usually shaken out of frustration, often when the child is irritable and persistently crying. The strategies listed may work some of the time, but sometimes nothing will comfort a crying child. First, the staff member must determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, or sick. If no physical need is identified, the teacher will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Hold the child close, or walk with the child.
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend the knees.

- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Allow another staff member to attend to the child.
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back.
- Offer a developmentally appropriate activity or item to occupy the child's attention.
- Take the child for a walk.
- Turn on music or white noise.

In addition, the Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate, break away from the children.
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

Prohibited Behaviors

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):

- shaking or jerking, a child
- tossing a child into a chair, mat or floor
- pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

Resources

- The American Academy of Pediatrics:
www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention-at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome:
<http://dontshake.org/family-resources>
- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info>
- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma,
<http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm?StdNum=3.4.4.3&=+>
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/kbtrprev/Preventing__508-a.pdf
- Early Development & Well-Being, Zero to Three,
www.zerotothree.org/early-development
- NC DCDEE: <http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us>
- American Red Cross: www.redcross.org

DUPLIN COUNTY RESOURCES

Duplin County Board of Education
P.O. Box 128
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-1521

Duplin County Schools
Pre-K Program Director
PO Box 128
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 290-7005

Duplin County Partnership for Children
149 Limestone Road
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2000

Register of Deeds
118 Duplin Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2108

Clerk of Superior Court
112 Duplin Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-1686

Vidant Duplin Hospital
N. Main Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-0941

New Dimension Group
Intensive-In-Home Service
416 W. Ridge Street - P.O. Box 880 - Rose Hill, NC 28458
Phone: (910) 289-2610

Goshen Medical Center, Faison
444 SW Center Street · Faison, NC 28341

Duplin County Emergency Services
213 Duplin Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2160

Duplin County Health Department
340 Seminary Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2130

Duplin County Social Services
423 N. Main Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2200

Transportation Dept. – Transit
119 Middleton Cemetery Lane
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2333

Duplin County Sheriff's Dept.
112 W. Hill Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2150

James Sprunt Community College
Hwy.11
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2400

Tax Collection
118 Duplin Street
Kenansville, NC 28349
(910) 296-2112

Phone: (910) 267-0421

Fax Number: 855-208-4965

Faison Dental

460 SW Center Street · Faison, NC 28341

Phone Number: 910-267-0951

Fax Number: 855-208-4965

Goshen Medical Center, Wallace

Address: 110 Eastwood Drive, Wallace, NC 28466

Phone: (910) 285-2330

Fax Number: 910-267-8995

Goshen Medical Center, Plainview

360 E. Charity Road · Rose Hill, NC 28458

Phone Number: 910-289-3086

Fax Number: 910-267-8992

Goshen Medical Center, Beulaville

119 Crossover Road · Beulaville, NC 28518

Phone Number: 910-298-3125

Fax Number: 910-267-8980

Goshen Medical Center, Warsaw Wellness

113 S. Pine Street · Warsaw, NC 28398

Phone Number: 910-293-7246

Fax Number: 910-267-8988

Goshen Medical Center - Clinton Medical

906 US-421, Clinton, NC 28328

Phone: (910) 592-1462

Goshen Medical Center – Goldsboro

2701 Medical Office Pl, Goldsboro, NC 27534

Phone: (919) 739-8680

Clinton Medical Clinic

403 Fairview St, Clinton, NC 28328

Phone: (910) 592-6011

Clinton Family Dental

320 Northeast Blvd, Clinton, NC 28328

Phone: (910) 596-0606

Dr. Hunter C Joh

123 Bryan St, Kenansville, NC 28349

[Phone: \(910\) 275-1880](tel:(910)275-1880)

Vidant Pediatrics Kenansville
144 Liberty Square Shopping Center, Kenansville, NC 28349
Phone: [\(910\) 275-0060](tel:(910)275-0060)

Stoppelbein & Hardison: Stoppelbein William DDS
121 Duplin Professional Ct, Warsaw, NC 28398
Phone: [\(910\) 293-4940](tel:(910)293-4940)

Rose Hill Medical Center
600 S Sycamore St, Rose Hill, NC 28458
Phone: [\(910\) 289-3027](tel:(910)289-3027)

Vidant Family Medicine Wallace
125 River Vine Pkwy, Wallace, NC 28466
Phone: [\(910\) 285-2134](tel:(910)285-2134)

Mount Olive Family Dentistry
236 Smith Chapel Rd, Mt Olive, NC 28365
Phone: [\(919\) 658-9511](tel:(919)658-9511)

Mount Olive Family Medicine Center
201 N Breazeale Ave, Mt Olive, NC 28365
Phone: [\(919\) 658-4954](tel:(919)658-4954)

Kinston Pediatric Associates PA
110 E Park Drive, Beulaville, NC 28518
[Phone: \(910\) 298-6550](tel:(910)298-6550)

Pink Hill Medical: Little Edwin P MD
103 S Central Ave, Pink Hill, NC 28572
Phone: [\(252\) 568-4111](tel:(252)568-4111)

Goldsboro Pediatrics. PA
2706 Medical Office Pl, Goldsboro, NC 27534
Phone: (919) 734-4736

**(If additional assistance is needed in identifying a resource to meet your needs,
please contact your Family Specialist.)**

***Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten
Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma
Parent or Guardian Acknowledgement Form***

I, the parent or guardian of _____
Child's Name

acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the **Duplin County Schools
Pre-Kindergarten Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma Policy.**

Date policy was explained to parent/guardian

Date of Child's Enrollment

Print Name of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Parent/Guardian

***Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten
Prevention of Suspension and/or Expulsion
Parent or Guardian Acknowledgement Form***

I, _____, the parent/guardian of

acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the Behavior Guidance
Policy and Policy: *Prevention of Suspension and/or Expulsion*.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

**DUPLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM
INSURANCE RELEASE FOR SCHOOL TRIPS**

We, _____, the parent(s) or
guardian of _____, who is enrolled in the
_____ PreKindergarten Program, have adequate personal
hospitalization and accident insurance. The name of our insurance company is
_____ with policy number _____.

**WE ASSUME ACCIDENT AND HOSPITALIZATION INSURANCE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR CHILD ON SCHOOL SPONSORED TRIPS AND
DO NOT WISH TO TAKE OUT SCHOOL INSURANCE.**

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent or Guardian)

Is there any medical information the school needs to be aware of? **YES NO**
If yes, please explain.

In case of emergency, please list a phone number where you can be contacted.

My child, _____, has my permission to
participate in this scheduled school trip.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent or Guardian)

IMPORTANT

Please complete the following and return it to the Pre-K Staff

I have received a copy of the Duplin County Schools Pre-Kindergarten Family Resource Handbook and agree with the following statements:

- In the event that the Pre-Kindergarten Program has activities planned outside the fenced area of the facility, I will allow my child to play outside the fenced area.
- I have read and received a copy of the Pre-Kindergarten Behavior Guidance Policy. If there are any changes to this policy, I understand that I will be notified in writing 30 days prior to effect.
- I have been provided the Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law for Child Care Centers.
- I will sign permission forms for each field trip prior to my child being able to leave the school campus.
- When bringing my child to school, I will walk my child into the facility and will sign the child in. When picking my child up from school, I will come into the facility to sign my child out.
- When putting my child on the bus, I will walk my child to the bus. When receiving my child from the bus, I will walk out to the bus to meet him/her. I understand that not following the bus policies may jeopardize my child's opportunity to be transported on the bus.
- I understand and will follow the Policies included in this Handbook.

Child's Name _____

Date of Enrollment _____

Parent Signature _____

