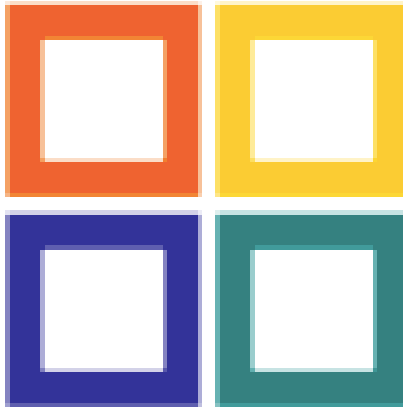


Ann Arbor Public Schools

Early Childhood Programs

Family Handbook



Westerman Preschool and Family Center
2775 Boardwalk Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-994-2303

Preschool @ Allen
2560 Towner Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-994-3382

Preschool @ Thurston
2300 Prairie St, Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-994-1970

Preschool @ Mitchell
3550 Pittsview Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-997-1216

Preschool @ Bryant
2150 Santa Rosa Dr, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-997-1212

Preschool @ Lakewood
344 Gralake Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-994-1953

Preschool @ Pittsfield
2543 Pittsfield Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734 997-1218



Table Of Contents

Welcome	4
Our Program Philosophy	4
Hours of Operation	5
Curriculum-High Scope	5
Sample Daily Classroom Schedule.	7
Full-Day Schedule	7
Ongoing Child Assessment.	9
Screening Process and Special Education Services	9
Meals	10
Physical Activity	11
Family Engagement	12
Visiting the Classroom	12
Home Visits and Family-Teacher Conferences	13
Communication	13
Bus Transportation	14
Bus Safety Requirements	15
Pedestrian and Transportation Safety	16
DO'S and DON'TS	16
Health Screenings	16
Attendance	17
Attendance Policy	17
Illness Policy	18
Immunizations	21
Children with Special Health Needs	21
Medication	21
Over-the-Counter Products.	22
Injuries to Children	22
Behavior Management Procedures.	22

Family Grievances23

Confidentiality23

Mandated Reporting23

Safety Drills24

Pesticides25

Family Notice of Program Measurement25

Recruitment and Enrollment25



*The Ann Arbor Public Schools Early Childhood Programs strives to **SUPPORT, ENGAGE, & COLLABORATE** with families and the community in order to prepare children for future success by providing comprehensive, high-quality early childhood education programs within an inclusive and nurturing environment.*

WELCOME



Welcome to Ann Arbor Public Schools Early Childhood Programs! We believe strong relationships with our families is the key to success for our children. Our Early Childhood Programs work with children at a variety of ages and developmental stages. Our programs include general education preschool programs, including the International Baccalaureate preschool at Mitchell Elementary and Bryant Elementary, as well as Early Childhood Special Education, and First Steps Washtenaw.

We are committed to helping parents provide their children with a safe, nurturing, and educational environment where each child can grow to their fullest potential. We provide responsive and individualized care and believe in building a trusting and safe relationship with each child and a partnership with each family.

During the first few weeks your child is present, our staff will get to know them and informally assess their development and interests. We will make every effort to help your child feel comfortable and enjoy the activities which we provide.

We know, especially if this is your first preschool experience, you will have many questions. In this handbook, we hope to have anticipated some of your concerns, and answered most of your more general questions. Please read this handbook and keep it in a convenient spot for future reference. Also, look for newsletters and/or notes sent home in your child's backpack or school bag. These correspondences contain specific information concerning school, upcoming events, and important reminders.

We know, especially if this is your first preschool experience, you will have many questions. In this handbook, we hope to have anticipated some of your concerns, and answered most of your more general questions. Please read this handbook and keep it in a convenient spot for future reference. Also, look for newsletters and/or notes sent home in your child's backpack or school bag. These correspondences contain specific information concerning school, upcoming events, and important reminders.

Our Program Philosophy

Our program philosophy is based on theories and research in early childhood education. Inherent in this philosophy is our dedication to ensuring a program that celebrates diversity by supporting and respecting cultural, racial, and religious differences. Family participation at all levels is encouraged and valued, as a strong family-school relationship is crucial to our success.

We incorporate cultural and linguistic awareness into our program by exploring developmentally appropriate units of study – such as food, clothing, families, and homes. **We, however, are not permitted to celebrate holidays of any type in our Early Childhood Programs, including birthdays. We kindly ask that you not send in any holiday or birthday treats etc. to school.** We encourage our families to celebrate in their own family settings.

Respecting the diversity of our Early Childhood Programs, we do not celebrate birthdays or holidays at our preschool locations. We will offer anti-bias activities inclusive in nature and nondiscriminatory. Holiday parties and end of year graduation celebrations are not components of Michigan Department of Education approved curriculums, therefore, these events are NOT allowable in the classrooms

Hours of Operation

Our hours of operation vary from year-to-year and based upon your child's class schedule. Since we offer multiple school sites and program opportunities, it is important to check the times for when to drop-off and pick-up your child, either directly from school, or from the bus.

Please know that weather-related school closings may occur. These decisions are made by the school district.

To find out if the Ann Arbor Public School is closed, you may:

- Call AAPS' school closing hot-line phone number at **(734)-994-8684**
- Visit the AAPS district website at **www.a2schools.org**
- Check your voicemail for a Schoolmessenger notification and an email (keep information up dated in PowerSchool)
- Watch your local news station-WJBK channel 2, WDIV channel 4, WXYZ channel 7
- Visit Social Media Sites on Twitter (@A2Schools) and Facebook (@AnnArborPublicSchool)
- Tune in via home/car radio to: WAAM 1600AM, WTKA 1050AM, WNRS 1290AM, WJR 760AMWQKL 107.1FM, WUOM 91.7FM, WEMU 89.1FM



Curriculum



The curriculum our classroom teaching teams use is called HighScope.

HighScope is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. It is designed to provide a developmentally appropriate, content-rich program for children with diverse backgrounds and skill levels.

The goals and objectives for HighScope are research-based and can be found in the chart below. Through ongoing observation, or authentic as-

essment, teachers plan weekly lessons individualized to each child's strengths and needs.

Our curriculum and schedule focus on giving children:

- Time to learn through observation, imitation, exploration, playing and practicing.
- A nurturing environment with positive role models where they can feel physically and emotionally safe.
- A curriculum that includes experiences to enrich and enhance cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development.
- Opportunities for children to be engaged and challenged, and ultimately to feel a sense of achievement and self-worth.
- Language development to enhance problem solving and critical thinking skills, and English as a second language.

We provide what we believe children need to learn best:

- Small class sizes with low child-teacher ratios and highly qualified teachers.
- Individual attention along with small-group and large-group activities.

- An emphasis on individual learning styles and pacing.
- Opportunities to create, manipulate, and explore in a sensory-rich environment.
- An environment sensitive to learners who are developing social skills.



HIGHSCOPE

HighScope Preschool Curriculum Content Key Developmental Indicators

A. Approaches to Learning

1. **Initiative:** Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.
2. **Planning:** Children make plans and follow through on their intentions.
3. **Engagement:** Children focus on activities that interest them.
4. **Problem solving:** Children solve problems encountered in play.
5. **Use of resources:** Children gather information and formulate ideas about their world.
6. **Reflection:** Children reflect on their experiences.

B. Social and Emotional Development

7. **Self-identity:** Children have a positive self-identity.
8. **Sense of competence:** Children feel they are competent.
9. **Emotions:** Children recognize, label, and regulate their feelings.
10. **Empathy:** Children demonstrate empathy toward others.
11. **Community:** Children participate in the community of the classroom.
12. **Building relationships:** Children build relationships with other children and adults.
13. **Cooperative play:** Children engage in cooperative play.
14. **Moral development:** Children develop an internal sense of right and wrong.
15. **Conflict resolution:** Children resolve social conflicts.

C. Physical Development and Health

16. **Gross-motor skills:** Children demonstrate strength, flexibility, balance, and timing in using their large muscles.
17. **Fine-motor skills:** Children demonstrate dexterity and hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.
18. **Body awareness:** Children know about their bodies and how to navigate them in space.
19. **Personal care:** Children carry out personal care routines on their own.
20. **Healthy behavior:** Children engage in healthy practices.

D. Language, Literacy, and Communication¹

21. **Comprehension:** Children understand language.
22. **Speaking:** Children express themselves using language.
23. **Vocabulary:** Children understand and use a variety of words and phrases.
24. **Phonological awareness:** Children identify distinct sounds in spoken language.
25. **Alphabetic knowledge:** Children identify letter names and their sounds.
26. **Reading:** Children read for pleasure and information.
27. **Concepts about print:** Children demonstrate knowledge about environmental print.
28. **Book knowledge:** Children demonstrate knowledge about books.
29. **Writing:** Children write for many different purposes.
30. **English language learning:** (If applicable) Children use English and their home language(s) (including sign language).

E. Mathematics

31. **Number words and symbols:** Children recognize and use number words and symbols.
32. **Counting:** Children count things.
33. **Part-whole relationships:** Children combine and separate quantities of objects.
34. **Shapes:** Children identify, name, and describe shapes.
35. **Spatial awareness:** Children recognize spatial relationships among people and objects.
36. **Measuring:** Children measure to describe, compare, and order things.
37. **Unit:** Children understand and use the concept of unit.
38. **Patterns:** Children identify, describe, copy, complete, and create patterns.
39. **Data analysis:** Children use information about quantity to draw conclusions, make decisions, and solve problems.

F. Creative Arts

40. **Art:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through two- and three-dimensional art.

41. **Music:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through music.

42. **Movement:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through movement.

43. **Pretend play:** Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through pretend play.

44. **Appreciating the arts:** Children appreciate the creative arts.

G. Science and Technology

45. **Observing:** Children observe the materials and processes in their environment.
46. **Classifying:** Children classify materials, actions, people, and events.
47. **Experimenting:** Children experiment to test their ideas.
48. **Predicting:** Children predict what they expect will happen.
49. **Drawing conclusions:** Children draw conclusions based on their experiences and observations.
50. **Communicating ideas:** Children communicate their ideas about the characteristics of things and how they work.
51. **Natural and physical world:** Children gather knowledge about the natural and physical world.
52. **Tools and technology:** Children explore and use tools and technology.

H. Social Studies

53. **Diversity:** Children understand that people have diverse characteristics, interests, and abilities.
54. **Community roles:** Children recognize that people have different roles and functions in the community.
55. **Decision making:** Children participate in making classroom decisions.
56. **Geography:** Children recognize and interpret features and locations in their environment.
57. **History:** Children understand past, present, and future.
58. **Ecology:** Children understand the importance of taking care of their environment.

¹Language, Literacy, and Communication KDIs 21–29 may be used for the child's home language(s) as well as English. KDI 30 refers specifically to English language learning.

All Students have quiet/rest time daily for a minimum of 20 minutes to a maximum of 60 minutes

— Sample Daily Classroom Schedule —

A Sample Daily Classroom Schedule is shown below and provides some context about the learning environment and classroom routines. The order of the schedule will vary by classrooms.

Full-Day Schedule

Arrival/Breakfast/Greeting Time

Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to eat, spend time with books, or interact with adults and one another. Once all children have arrived, adults share the daily announcements.

Large-Group Time/Music and Movement

All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, and developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects; and events meaningful to children.

Planning Time

Children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, singing, planning individually, in pairs, in small groups).

Work Time

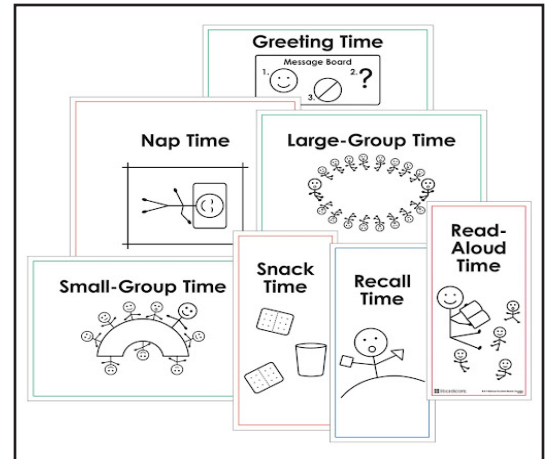
Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During Work Time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.

Cleanup Time

Children and adults clean up together keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean up. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.

Recall Time

Gathered in small group settings, children choose Work Time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones



or periscopes, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete Recall Time with four or five children each day.

Small Group Time

An Adult-initiated learning experience based on children's interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.

Outside Time

Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment, much as they do during Work Time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their active outdoor play, supporting their initiatives and problem solving. We have large play structures, a grassy play area, and natural outdoor opportunities.



Bathroom/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch

After toileting and washing hands, children assist in preparation and setup.

Lunch/Brush Teeth

Family-Style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

Quiet/Resting Time

This is a time for quiet-solitary play or sleeping. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulative.

Wake/Bathroom/Snack

As children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots and set up for snack time. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.

Small Group Time

An afternoon or supplemental Small Group experience can support a tiered model of instruction where some or a few children are homogeneously grouped to meet developmental needs.

Plan/Work/Cleanup/Recall (Described above).

Outside Time/Dismissal (Described above).

Please do not send your child to school with any toys or personal items. We have toys at preschool for play and want to ensure that your child's special items do not get damaged or lost.

Ongoing Child Assessment

The teaching team will work with you and your child from the first home visit until the end of the school year – documenting your child’s work and progress through an ongoing observation-based assessment system called COR Advantage.

COR Advantage is built on 36 items that best prepare children for school success. The COR curriculum focuses on what matters most in the early childhood assessment process. Teachers capture and record child development in the COR Advantage online tool and then use that valuable insight to create individualized lesson plans and detailed reports on child and classroom progress. The online tools built-in support increases scoring accuracy, delivering consistent data administrators can rely on to meaningfully guide their program to the next level.

The COR Advantage focuses on 8 assessment categories:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development and Health
- Language, Literacy, and Communication
- Mathematics
- Creative Arts
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies



Your child’s progress will be shared with you throughout the school year using COR Advantage, providing you with comprehensive reports in the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Completing a Behavioral and Developmental Screening within 45 days of your child’s first day is an essential part of providing an individualized learning experience for each student.

Screening Process and Special Education Services

Ann Arbor Public Schools Early Childhood Programs provides special education, support services and programs to students from birth through 5 years of age. Referrals for special education are made to the preschool from parents, physicians, and/or preschool teaching team.

For children in our Early Childhood Programs, developmental and behavioral screenings are conducted within the first 45 days of school. Currently, our program uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) for both our behavioral and developmental screenings. Students are scored as pass, monitor/re-screen, or need follow-up.



If there are any concerns about a child’s results, the teaching team will contact the parent-family regarding a child’s development and/or achieve-

ment. The teaching team will gather information about the child, their strengths, interests, and areas of concern and will then work to implement various strategies/interventions within the classroom/school setting to address the area(s) of concern.

Service Providers (Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapist, Early Childhood Special Education Teachers, School Social Workers and School Psychologist) may be a part of the classroom's educational team. Team members make observations, suggestions, and classroom level interventions, as needed.

Meals

Breakfast is served until 9:45am. Lunch is served until 12:45 pm. Snack is served until 2:45pm

For children in our **Head Start program:**

- Breakfast, lunch and a snack will be provided. Reminder, we eat family-style.

For children in our **Great Start Readiness program:**

- You can fill out an electronic lunch application by visiting **www.a2schools.org**, clicking on Students & Families; in the drop down select Parent and Family Resources then on the left choose Food Service; on the next left choose Free and Reduced Meal Application.



For children in our **Tuition and Early Childhood Special Education programs:**

- You can fill out an electronic lunch application by visiting **www.a2schools.org**, clicking on Students & Families; in the drop down select Parent and Family Resources then on the left choose Food Service; on the next left choose Free and Reduced Meal Application.



Mealtimes provide much more than nourishment for young children. Healthy habits are encouraged as children learn to wash their hands, eat with utensils and choose nutritious foods. Social interactions and fine motor skills are nurtured as children practice passing, pouring and socializing. Healthy foods provide children with the energy they need to play and learn. A menu will be provided to you each month and you are encouraged to provide feedback.

- **Our preschool classrooms are tree nut and peanut free.** In addition to not sending food to school with your children, please make

sure that if your child eats any nuts before going to school that they have brushed their teeth and washed their hands thoroughly. Nut allergies are often severe and life-threatening and any tree nut or peanut exposure could be fatal for some of our students.



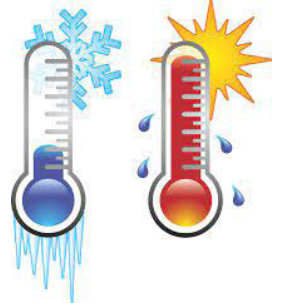
Please tell us if your child has a special diet or food allergies.

Physical Activity

Physical activity is a regular part of your child's day. Please dress your children in clothing suitable for both active play and messy play. Although we take precautions, this does not guarantee that clothing will not get soiled with paint, water or dirt. Access to active and messy play is important to a child's development; therefore, we provide a variety of these activities every day and participation is an important part of your child's development.

Children go outside every day, weather permitting, both on the playground as well as by taking "supervised walks" so please dress your child accordingly.

- On days when the temperature and/or wind chill are below 0°F: Students will not have recess outside.
- On days when the temperature and/or wind chill are below -20°F (20 below zero): Schools will be closed.
- AAPS Board of Education policy requires the cancellation of outdoor activities when the temperature is over 85 degrees AND the humidity is over 70%.
- Temperature 85° to 100° F, humidity under 70%: all students should be monitored constantly and carefully.
- Temperature 85° to 100° F and higher, humidity over 70%: students should remain indoors.



If you need warm weather clothing for your child such as boots, gloves, or snow pants, please let us know and we can assist you.

Please send the following seasonal clothing with your child (**PLEASE label everything!**):

- Coat/Jacket
- Hat
- Waterproof Mittens/Gloves
- Snow Boots
- Snow Pants



Please remove any hood strings and do not send scarves as they can catch on playground equipment and become a choking hazard. Please send an extra set of clothing every day. This includes underwear, socks, shirts and pants. Even if your child is fully toilet trained, children sometimes get wet during water play, art activities, snack, or outside play. If the extra set of school issued clothing is sent home, please launder and return it the next school day.

Family Engagement

Family Engagement is a critical part of children's success at school. Families are their child's first and best teachers. Children do best when families and school staff form a cooperative team with common goals. We offer an environment which fosters participation and encourages interaction. The more that our staff and your family communicate, the more we can ensure continuity and coordination between home and school.

Family engagement includes specific "transition planning" for students moving to Kindergarten to ensure that children are registered and ready for Kindergarten when the time arrives. This "transition planning" will include sharing information within the district for planning and placement purposes.

All Families Participate in a Collaborative "Family Partnership" and work with classroom teaching teams and other school staff on "Family Goals"

Some ways for you to get involved include:

- Join a Policy Advisory Committee to help make decisions about program design and structure*
 - Family Committee, Policy Committee, or Policy Council
 - School Readiness Advisory Committee
 - Health Services Advisory Committee
- Volunteer to help with special classroom projects
- Volunteer to spend time in the classroom
- Help with field trips
- Share your culture/honoring your family heritage
- Prepare materials for the classroom teachers
- Share special interests or hobbies with the children
- Help to plan special events
- Help recruit other parent volunteers
- Participate in our "Parent Curriculum", Preschool U



* For information on committees and how to get involved, see your assigned Family and Community Resource Specialist (FCRS)

Visiting the Classroom

Visiting the classroom can be another way to be an active part of your child's educational experience. We do have some important guidelines to ensure the safety of the children and to help maintain a focus on learning.

- Please arrange classroom visits ahead of time with the teacher so they are expecting you.
- Always sign in at the main office when visiting the building. Please bring a photo identification

(Driver's License, State of Michigan Identification or County Identification Card. Your identification will be scanned in the main office and a visitor's badge will be provided.

- Follow all directions provided by the teacher – they are there to teach and need to be able to maintain focus on learning.
- If you have any follow-up questions or concerns about your visit, please schedule a time with the teacher when they are not teaching.
- Please remember that the learning environment can be a sensitive space. We are able to share details about your children with you. Anything you see or hear in the classroom should only be discussed with the appropriate school staff.
- Taking photos, or video/audio recordings in the classroom are not permitted.
- Please also remember that while we appreciate you sharing your time with us, there are times when visiting or observing the classroom is not always appropriate. If your planned visit may potentially have a negative impact on the learning process, we may request that different arrangements be made.



○ — Home Visits and Family-Teacher Conferences — ○

The purpose of these family contacts is to involve you in your child's education at school and to assist you in providing educational experiences to your child at home. These opportunities also allow your child's teachers to share assessment information, discuss your child's progress, recommend strategies to use at home, and answer any questions you may have about your child's development.

- (2) home visits and (2) family/teacher conferences, both of which are **required in-person** meetings
 - Home visits are about one hour and takes place in your home prior to the start of the school year. The second home visit will occur mid-winter.
 - Conferences are usually about 45 minutes in length. They are usually scheduled for Fall and Spring, but can be scheduled when requested by you at other times.



○ — Communication — ○

Communication is regular and ongoing. After the first few weeks of school you will receive a general classroom schedule detailing our basic routines. You will also receive a variety of forms such as classroom newsletters, curriculum updates, monthly calendars, and occasional notes.

It would be helpful if you would send us notes about anything special or unusual happening at home. This would include fun, exciting things your child enjoyed such as special trips, shopping, visitors, presents, special meals or holidays, or even things that might make your child upset or fussy, such as lack of sleep, doctor's visits, or **changes in his/her environment**. This will give us topics to talk about with your child and help us to know what to expect.



Send your child to school with their backpack every day and check their backpack after school! We often send messages home through “Backpack Mail”.

When your child comes home from school, plan to spend some time talking about what he/she did at school. Try to ask specific open-ended questions, for example: “What did you have for lunch?” “Where did you play outside today?”

It is a way to make a connection between home and school and a way to help your child with language, memory, sequencing, etc.

In addition to those communications, Ann Arbor Public Schools uses a communication system called **“SchoolMessenger.”** The district and each school send messages to parents by way of phone and email for important school information including school closings or early release days as well as reminders for key events such as health and dental screenings, parent workshops, and family activities. In order to receive these important messages, make sure our school has all your updated contact information.

Always keep your address, phone number, and email up-to-date with the school and inform us of any changes as soon as possible.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is available **only for children living within the Ann Arbor Public Schools district boundaries.**

If you have requested transportation, there are a few things for you to remember:

- Your child will receive a bus tag to wear on their backpack. Please make sure that your **child has their bus tag and their backpack with them for school every day.**
- Your child will have a consistent drop-off and pick-up location. Weather and traffic permitting, they will also have a scheduled time for both drop-off and pick-up.
- **Times do vary and sometimes shift month-to-month.** Please be outside and ready at least 10 minutes before drop-off and pick-up times.
- As with picking up your child from school, only people that are on your child’s emergency information record and who are able to present photo identification are able to retrieve your child.
- If there is no one present at your designated stop, or the person there is not authorized or does not have a photo ID, your child will be returned to school. At that point, you will be responsible for retrieving your child from school. Your child may also lose bus privileges.
- **Only three (3) changes in drop-off or pick-up locations are permitted per school year.** Changes are only permitted when there is a permanent change in your address or a permanent change in the location of your child care. Temporary changes are not allowed.



- We will not drop off or pick up your child from a place of business, with the exception of a licensed day care. Your care provider will need to be listed by name on your child's emergency information record.
- **Changes to your child's bus pick-up or drop-off location are only processed monthly.** Please check with your child's school or in-school newsletter for deadlines to submit changes.
- You can now also track your student using the district's bus tracking application, which can be downloaded on your phone.

If there is no one present at your designated stop, or the person there is not authorized or does not have a photo ID, your child will be returned to school. At that point, you will be responsible for retrieving your child from school. Your child may also lose bus privileges.

○ ————— Bus Safety Requirements ————— ○

Per program requirements, we are only able to transport preschool children on an official school



bus with 5-point “star” harnesses. **Please remind your child not to attempt to remove their harness or un-belt themselves while on the bus.**

Note that our bus transportation is subject to both state and federal regulations through the State of Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) through the Department of Health and Human Services

(DHHS).

To avoid potential safety issues such as children being accidentally left on a bus, released to an unauthorized person, sent home on the wrong bus, we have “redundant” safety systems including children counts, face and name child checks, and bus tags. Our transportation and school staff also complete bus walkthroughs, safety ride-a-longs, seating charts and bus attendance and sign in/out sheets.

All buses have both a driver as well as a bus monitor for all preschool routes. Preschool students are transported separately from other grade levels and we have one bus aid for each 10 students on a bus.

All transportation staff also receive annual safety training, including routine safety and emergency procedures, active supervision, and loading and unloading procedures.

All children riding the bus are also taught safe riding practices, safety procedures for boarding and leaving the bus, bus “danger zones”, and emergency evacuation procedures.

Please remind your child not to attempt to remove their harness or un-belt themselves while on the bus.

○———— Pedestrian and Transportation Safety ———○



Pedestrian and transportation safety is very important. Please make sure that you know the rules and that you speak with your child about how to be safe.

Please obey all traffic laws while transporting your child, including using seat belts and car seats/boosters. If you need assistance in acquiring or setting up a car seat or booster seat, we can help.

Never leave a child alone in your vehicle unattended for any amount of time.

DO'S and DON'TS

Riding the Bus

- Always listen to the bus driver and bus aid.
- Always use the handrail when getting on and off the bus.
- Stay in your seat when the bus is moving.
- Keep your safety harness on when riding.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Don't go near the bus while it is moving.
- Don't cross in front of the bus.
- Don't enter the bus "danger zone"
- Don't get on or off the bus without help from the bus aid.
- Don't get on the bus unless you are a student.

In the Parking Lot

- Hold hands with a grown-up at all times.
- Look both ways before walking across the parking lot.
- Don't open car doors. Doors are for adults.
- Don't run in the parking lot.

○———— Health Screenings ———○

Health screenings are also completed annually in our Preschool programs. Children who fail any one of these screenings may be referred for further assessment and/or treatment. Families requesting support with health, dental, or mental health services may also receive a referral for ongoing assessment and support.

A Physical and Dental Exam is required for all preschool students. If your child does not have a doctor or dentist, we can help!

We are required to have an unexpired physical exam on file at school for your child. Physical exams are required annually and should be submitted prior to enrollment and updated as needed during the school year.

Students are also expected to have a dental provider and to receive regular dental exams. Families are expected to provide an unexpired dental exam to be kept on file at school.

All students are expected to be screened for Vision, Hearing, Lead Exposure, Tuberculosis, Iron levels, and physical growth (Body Mass Index). These screenings are critical for determining whether a child needs additional services.

All students are expected to be screened for Vision, Hearing, Lead Exposures, Tuberculosis, Iron levels, and Body Mass Index (BMI).

Mental Health screenings, Speech and Language Screenings, Dental Screenings, Occupational and Physical Therapy evaluations, may also be needed and your teacher may discuss obtaining permission for these evaluations.

Attendance

Your child’s regular attendance at school is very important to their educational and social growth. Frequent absences disrupt your child’s adjustment to the classroom routine and affect their learning. If your child is ill please keep them at home. If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please call the attendance line with the reason for the absence, and the anticipated date of return. If your child will need to be absent or is absent for more than three days, please call to determine the plan for your child to return. You may be required to provide a doctor’s note.

If your child will be absent or tardy, please call 734-997-1245. We must receive a reason for your child’s absence.

Attendance Policy



School success starts
with attendance

Upon acceptance into our programs, **we expect all children to attend class every day and arrive/depart on time.** We are aware that children get sick, family emergencies arise and occasional late arrivals are unavoidable. However, student academic achievement is dependent on school attendance, and repeated late arrivals are disruptive to the classroom and to the students’ educational program. **If your child will be absent or tardy, please call 734-997-1245. We must receive a reason for your child’s absence.**

Please note the following:

- Students are considered tardy for preschool if they arrive at school after the start of the daily session. Parents must check in at the front door and we will escort your child to class.
- When students arrive to the school more than 30 minutes late, there is significant disruption to the classroom routine. Please call the office ahead of time in such cases.

- **When a child is out ill for more than 3 days a doctor's note must be brought into school in order to return.**
- Patterns of excessive absences will result in a written agreement/plan to improve attendance. Failure to comply with the plan may result in being dropped from the program.
- **If you have plans for your child to be absent for an extended period of time, you must complete a written request prior to your child's absence to ensure that your child will be able to remain enrolled.** Absences beyond 15 school days are not permitted, and all extended absences are subject to review and approval by staff.

○————— **Illness Policy** —————○



The following policies were written with the health of everyone in mind. Specific illness information was provided by the Washtenaw County Health Department. If your child contracts a communicable disease, please notify us as soon as possible. Parents of other children will be alerted to exposure to the disease. Your privacy is assured. The following is a list of specific communicable diseases or illness symptoms that exclude a child from attending school.

Please refer to the following charts for guidance on when your child should be kept home from school and at what point they would be considered healthy enough to return.

Disease/Illness symptoms	Your child may return...
Bed Bugs	• After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment
Candida (mouth or buttocks)	• After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment
Chicken Pox *	• After all skin lesions have dried or scabbed.
Cold Sore or fever blister	• No fever for 24 hours and no drainage from cold sore
Croup	• After free of viral infection and child is no longer having difficulty breathing.
Diarrhea	• No loose stool for at least 24 hours, may need to be excluded longer than 24 hours.
Fever	• After 24 hours fever free and no medication
Fifth Disease	• Typically when a rash appears the person is no longer contagious.
Hand, Foot & Mouth	• When lesions heal, no fever, drooling ceases and no loose stool.

Impetigo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With physician's written clearance, no fever, after medication for 24 hours and infected parts covered
Influenza *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With physician's written clearance
Lice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please notify the school nurse as soon as possible to discuss treatment and return to school
Meningitis *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With physician's written clearance
Nasal Discharge((yellow/green mucus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge is not thick yellow or green and/or if the child has been on antibiotic for 24 hours
Pertussis *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After antibiotic for 5 days
Pink Eye or Conjunctivitis (Bacterial, viral or allergic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When eyes are mucous free or on medication for 24 hours prescribed by a MD
Pinworms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment
Ringworm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment and kept covered
Scabies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 24 hours of physician prescribed treatment
Staph Infection *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sores and possible antibiotic treatment
Strep Throat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 24 hours of antibiotic treatment
Unidentified Rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With physician's written clearance
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After 24 hours symptom free
	<p>. * Mandatory Reporting to the Health Department by your child's physician.</p>

When Should a Child be Kept Home or Sent Home from School for Illness?

Parents often ask when a child should be kept at home or sent home from school or childcare for illness. Here are EIGHT reasons a child should stay home or be picked up from childcare or school as soon as possible.

- 1. Severely ill appearance:** This could include a child that is not himself or herself, persistent crying, or difficulty breathing.
- 2. Fever:** A child with a temperature of 101 °F or greater. The child should not return until 24 hours of no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- 3. Diarrhea:** A child has two loose bowel movements, even if there are no other signs of illness. The child should have no loose stools for 24 hours prior to returning to school. **Exception:** A healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious. Diarrhea may occasionally be caused by antibiotics, new foods a child has eaten, or teething. Call the parent to find out if there is a non-medical reason for the loose bowel movements.
- 4. Vomiting:** A child that has vomited two or more times. The child should have no vomiting for 24 hours prior to returning to school. **Exception:** A healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious.
- 5. Rash:** Any rash illness and fever should be checked by a health care provider. Exclude until the rash subsides or until a healthcare provider has determined it is not infectious. There are different rules for returning to childcare or school depending on the cause of the rash. A child with scarlet fever should be treated with antibiotics for 12 hours (at least 2 doses) before returning to childcare or school. If a health care provider diagnoses a child as having Fifth disease, the child does not need to stay home if s/he feels well. **Exception:** Allergic rash and mild diaper rash that are already known to the parent are not reasons to send a child home or keep a child home.
- 6. Injury:** Whenever an injury is serious enough to need a health care provider's attention, a parent should be contacted to take the child home.
- 7. Skin sores:** A child with weeping sores on an exposed area that cannot be covered with waterproof dressing.
- 8. Certain communicable diseases:** Children and staff diagnosed with certain communicable diseases may have to be excluded for a certain period of time.

Caregivers should:

- Isolate children if they have any of the above symptoms.
- Wash hands well to prevent the spread of disease to caregivers and other children.
- Use a paper towel to turn off faucets and open bathroom doors and then dispose of the paper towel in the wastebasket.
- Encourage parents to keep children home if they are ill.

While not an emergency situation (no need to have the child picked up immediately), children with the following diseases should remain at home until successfully treated: impetigo, lice, ringworm, and scabies.

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

Immunizations

All students are required by state law to have at least one type of each required school vaccine before starting preschool and must be “up-to-date” within 120 days. Parents who have philosophical or medical concerns about their child receiving immunizations may request and obtain an Immunization Waiver from the Washtenaw County Health Department. Waivers are required to be updated annually.

Children with Special Health Needs

Please notify the nurse if your child has a special health need. **Any student that has a history of food allergies, asthma, diabetes or seizure disorder must supply a plan of care from your child’s doctor.** Please refer to the AAPS Board Policy number 5600.R.01 for further information.



Medication



We will not give the first dose of any medication.

We do not give over the counter medicine, or prescribed medicine without a written permission from your child’s doctor and the parent/guardian.

If it is necessary for your child to take medication while attending our programs the following applies:

1. All prescribed medication **must** be in the original unexpired pharmaceutical container with the doctor’s name and child’s name, with the prescribed dosage and directions for use.
2. Medication consent **must** be filled out and signed by the doctor and parent/guardian every year, stating the name of the medication, the time and dosage of medication to be administered with guidelines for use.
3. All non-prescription medication **must** be in the original unexpired container.
4. Medication consent **must** be filled out and signed by the doctor and parent/guardian every year, it must include the name of the medication, the time and dosage of medication to be administered with guidelines for use.

Please DO NOT send any medication with your child in their backpack (this includes cough drops).

○ — Over-the-Counter Products — ○

A Medication Permission Form must be completed in order for school staff to apply sunscreen, body lotion, Vaseline, chapstick, etc. Please contact your child's teaching team if you have any questions.

○ — Injuries to Children — ○

Injuries to children may occur while at school. Staff will contact the family by telephone for typical minor injuries and an Oops Injury Report will be sent home. These injuries will be treated with first aid such as rinsing a cut or applying a cold compress to a bump.

If a child has an injury involving the head, the family will be contacted immediately by the nurse/classroom teaching team. For all head injuries, the district concussion protocol will be followed and shared with the child's family. All programs have staff trained in CPR and First Aid.

If a child has an injury that might result in the child needing to be picked up, the nurse/ teacher will call the parent when the concern is observed and complete an incident report.

In case of a serious injury or accident the teacher and or nurse will immediately begin first aid, direct another staff member to contact an administrator and call 911 if necessary. Parents will be contacted immediately.

○ — Behavior Management Procedures — ○



The Ann Arbor Public Schools Early Childhood Programs believes in using positive behavior supports to foster the development of self-regulation in each child. These positive behavior supports focus on providing classroom structure such as consistent daily schedules, consistent classroom and building-wide expectations, and activities that are developmentally appropriate for preschool age children.

We have 3 common expectations for our students to follow in school, on the playground and on the bus. All children are expected to:

- **BE A GOOD FRIEND**
- **FOLLOW DIRECTIONS**
- **BE SAFE**

Children are taught these expectations through role play and practicing what it means to, BE A GOOD FRIEND, FOLLOW DIRECTIONS and BE SAFE. Teachers and other adults also “model” these behaviors for the children. When students do not follow the rules, or they have difficulty making good choices, they are redirected and reminded of the appropriate behavior expectations at school. We do not believe in “time out”. At times children may need to move away from an activity in order to calm down and think about a better choice.

Family Grievances

Family grievances are handled through our grievance procedure. A grievance procedure is the process by which solutions are sought to resolve disputes in a fair, equitable and prompt manner. Grievances should be resolved as informally and quickly as possible by the parties involved. When the persons directly involved cannot resolve grievances informally, a formal grievance process is implemented.

Not all disputes can be handled in one particular format and judgment needs to be made on what particular style is appropriate to suit each individual dispute.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH FAMILY/STAFF CONFLICT:

- The family should discuss the problem with the relevant staff member concerned.
- If the family still feels further action is necessary after discussion with the relevant staff member, they should take the matter up with the preschool administration.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH FAMILY/ADMINISTRATION CONFLICT:

- The family should discuss the problem with the relevant administrator.
- If the family still feels further action is necessary the family can make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Principal's direct Supervisor, Executive Director for Elementary Education.

Confidentiality



The program is required to keep records for all children to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations and to maintain accurate information. In the course of normal duties certain employees have access to confidential (protected) information about students and their families. Your information is protected by **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** which requires the program to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's educational records. For more detailed information, you may contact a building administrator.

Mandated Reporting

All employees of the Ann Arbor Public Schools including Early Childhood Programs are mandated reporters. This means that if there is suspected abuse or neglect of any child in our care, staff will make a report to Child Protective Services. Child Protective Services will make a determination to investigate the report.



Safety Drills



Safety drills are an important part of maintaining a safe environment. We participate in multiple safety and security practice drills during the school year including fire, severe weather and security lock down drills. The practices for these drills are outlined. Families who are in the building and/or arrive or are exiting a building at the time of a safety or security drill are required to participate in the practices as detailed below. If you have questions about participating in the safety/security practices, please contact your child's service provider, the First Steps office or the main school office.

Fire Drills

Five drills are scheduled each school year. Classrooms have designated meeting locations. Visitors to the building are required to exit the building to one of the designated evacuation locations when the alarm sounds. Staff members will direct visitors to an evacuation location. Ann Arbor Fire department mandates the parking lot and road surrounding the building remain clear of students, staff and visitors.

Severe Weather

Two severe weather drills are practiced each school year. Designated shelter areas have been identified throughout the building. Drills typically last approximately five minutes. All persons in the building at the time of severe weather drills must take shelter. Staff members will direct all visitors to a shelter location.

Security

Three security lockdown drills are practiced each school year. Persons who are in the hallways at the time of the lockdown will join the nearest secure room with the children and staff.

During lockdown drills, the objective is to follow the **A.L.I.C.E. Protocol**:



Alert

Get the word out! Use clear, concise language to convey the type and location of the event.

Lockdown

Lock the doors. Continue to lock down students in a secure area.

Inform

Keep staff and students informed of the location of the intruder.

Counter

Apply skills learned in training to confuse or gain control of the active intruder situation.

Evacuate

Reduce the number of potential targets for the shooter.

Pesticides

Ann Arbor Public Schools conducts regular inspections for pests and will use pesticides when necessary. Families will be notified via SchoolMessenger when pesticides are being used on school grounds.

Family Notice of Program Measurement



Family notice of program measurement is a required disclosure of the Michigan Department of Education. AAPS Early Childhood Programs are required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families.

Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask families questions about their child and family.
- Observe children in the classroom.
- Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, etc.
- Ask teachers how children are learning and growing.
- Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law.

Questions? Please contact:

- Westerman Preschool and Family Center at: (734) 994-2303
 - The MDE Office of Great Start, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, at mde-gsrp@michigan.gov or by phone at (517)-373-8483.
- Address: 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

Recruitment and Enrollment



The process for recruitment and enrollment is listed below.

- Recruitment occurs year round through www.washtenawpreschool.org
- Once an interest form is completed the intake coordinator forwards the interest form to the family's first choice.
- Families are contacted, by the Family and Community Resource Specialist (FCRS), for an initial phone screening.
- The family is provided with a list of documents they will need to bring to their scheduled appointment.
- The FCRS meets with the family to determine if they are income eligible and assign risk factor points according to the Michigan Department of Education guidelines.
- Once determined eligible, the child is put on the waitlist.
- Waitlist selection is based on the percentage of Federal Poverty Level (FPL), with the lowest

number and risk factors receiving the highest priority.

- Children are enrolled as space becomes available.
- The waitlist is revolving based on current intake, serving the children with the lowest FPL.
- Children will not be denied enrollment or excluded from GSRP or Head Start programming based on challenging behavior, developmental delays or identified disabilities (e.g., toileting needs, speech, motor function, aggressive behaviors, and cognitive delays).



Clip Art Attributes:

<https://clipart-library.com/>

<https://www.clipartmax.com/>

<https://pngtree.com/>