



FORT DODGE

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

Sites including: Early Childhood Center, Dodger Preschool,
St. Edmond, Community Christian, St. Paul Lutheran School

RESOURCES FOR ALL FDCSD EARLY CHILDHOOD
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FAMILIES

Fort Dodge Community Schools

Vision

Everyone matters, everyone belongs, and everyone thrives in the Fort Dodge Community School District.

Mission

Fort Dodge Community School District strives for excellence daily by creating a compassionate community built on high expectations, quality instruction, and meaningful relationships so everyone feels they belong and are successful.

Mantra

#Proud2bFD

Goals

1. All students will perform at or above grade level
2. Achievement gaps among all student groups will be eliminated
3. All students will graduate ready for college, career, and life in a globally competitive economy
4. All schools will meet or exceed state accountability standards, and the district will meet federal standards and exceed state standards
5. Every child feels they have a safe, meaningful relationship with an adult in the school system who they can go to for guidance and support

Educational Non-Discrimination Statement

If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact Roger Porter, Director of School Safety and Security, 515-574-5731, rporter@fdschools.org, located at Fort Dodge Middle School, 800 N 32nd Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501, or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, Telephone: (303) 844-5695 FAX: (303) 844-4303, TDD: (800) 877-8339, OCR.Denver@ed.gov. (Alternate for Section 504 is Branwyn Greathouse, Director of Special Education/Special Needs, 515-574-5675, bgreathouse@fdschools.org, Central Administration Office, 109 North 25th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501).

If provisions of this handbook conflict with those of board policy, the terms of the board policy shall govern.

Table of Contents

Welcome

- Enrollment/ Eligibility
- Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP)
- Program Options and Fees

General Program Information

- Who Works in the Preschool
- Inclusion
- Daily Activities
- Curriculum
- Varied Opportunities
- Assessment
- Supervision Policy
- Child Guidance and Discipline
 - Challenging Behavior
 - Permissible Methods of Discipline
 - Expulsion/Suspension
 - Prohibited Practices
- Snacks/Foods and Nutrition
- Outside Play and Learning
- Water Activity
- Objects from Home
- Weapons Policy

Communication and Parent Involvement

Communication with Families

- Arrival and Departure of Children
- Transportation
- Field Trips
- Attendance
- Ethics/ Confidentiality/ Children's Records
- Family Involvement/ Volunteer Opportunities
- Families as Stakeholders

Health and Safety

- Health
- Health and Immunization Certificates
- Health and Safety Records
- General Health and Safety Guidelines
- Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children
- Reporting Communicable Diseases
- Medication Policies and Procedures
- Cleaning and Sanitization
- Hand Washing Practices
- Diapering Procedures

Safety

- First Aid Kit
- Fire Safety
- Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents
- Inclement Weather and Cancellations Due to Weather
- Pets
- Smoke Free Facility
- Child Protection Policies
- Mandatory Reporting
- Staff

Welcome to the Fort Dodge Early Childhood Preschool Program (IQPPS 1.1b, 1.7, 1.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.22, 8.4)

Our program's goal is to provide a high-quality preschool program meeting each child's developmental expectations and individual needs, including typically developing children and children with disabilities. Our preschools provide a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and initiative and supports their participation through engagement and persistence as they build new skills. It is a supportive setting where children form secure relationships with familiar adults and feel safe, respected, and cared for. This framework provides an opportunity for children to take part in a curriculum filled with intentional plans and active daily learning experiences, in which they gather information from their discoveries and conduct investigations. Our preschool programs have adopted the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS), administered by the Iowa Department of Education, and use the revised Iowa Early Learning Standards to guide our instructional practices and developmental expectations for preschool-aged children. Before working with children, staff members receive an initial orientation that covers fundamental aspects of program operations.

Enrollment

Eligibility Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP)

Children must be 4 years of age on or before September 15th of the current school year to be eligible for the four-year-old program. Effective July 2026, five-year-olds can be eligible for the four-year-old program if they turn five between March 15 and September 15. Pre-registration will begin in the Winter of the year prior. SWVPP is funded through the Iowa Department of Education. Registration information is available at:

Early Childhood Center

104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-574-5740 (School) 515-576-1161 (District Office)

Community Preschools Offering SWVPP: The same eligibility expectations apply to all community preschools. Tuition for SWVPP will be paid through Statewide Voluntary Preschool. The following locations are private preschools that operate independently yet coordinate with the Fort Dodge Community Schools to provide consistent and comparable programming. All programs meet the requirements set forth by the Iowa Department of Education for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

Early Childhood Center

104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-574-5740 (School) 515-576-1161 (District Office)

Director of Preschool: Nicole Ahrens

Days: Monday - Friday

Hours: 8:00- 2:30

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP)

St. Edmond

2321 6th Avenue North, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

515-955-5850

Tabitha Acree

Days: Monday- Friday

Hours: am- 7:55- 10:55, pm- 11:45- 2:45

Cost: Tuition paid through SWVPP

Dodger Preschool

1611 Williams Drive, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

515-955-6060

Kayla Takatsuka

Days: Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Hours: am- 8:00- 11:20, pm- 12:00- 3:30

Cost: Tuition paid through SWVPP

Community Christian School

2406 9 ½ Avenue South, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

515-573-3011

Jeannette Larrabee

Days: Monday- Friday

Hours: 8:00- 3:00 PM

Cost: Tuition paid through SWVPP

St. Paul Lutheran School

1217 4th Avenue South, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

515-955-7208

Bruce Hartley

Days: Monday- Friday

Hours: 8:15- 11:15 AM

Cost: Tuition paid through SWVPP

General Program Information

Who Works In Preschool? (IQPPS 2.8, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2)

Administrator/Director

The Preschool Programs Administrator supervises Fort Dodge Preschool classrooms and coordinates continuity between the classrooms to meet quality standards. The director meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. The preschool directors in Community Partner Preschools are designated as the program administrators supervising the preschool programs.

Teachers

Teachers are licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and hold both an Early Childhood Endorsement and/or Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement.

Teacher Assistants

Teacher assistants in each classroom carry out activities under the teacher's supervision. The teacher assistants have specialized training in early childhood education and the individual needs of the students.

Assistant Teachers-teacher aides (staff who implement program activities under direct supervision) have a high school diploma or GED and:

1. 25% of assistant teachers/teacher aides have at least a paraeducator certificate with an early childhood concentration, a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA), or an equivalent.
2. 100% of assistant teachers-teacher aides who do not meet these requirements are enrolled in a program leading to a paraeducator certificate with an early childhood concentration or CDA or equivalent, and are actively participating in and demonstrating progress toward the paraeducator certificate or CDA. College-level coursework from regionally accredited institutions of higher education may include distance learning or online coursework. If there is only one assistant teacher-teacher aide, either requirement can be met.

School Nurse/Child Care Nurse Consultant (IQPPS 7.4, 7.5, 7.11)

The Early Childhood Center Preschools have access to an on-site school nurse. The community preschools have access to a child care nurse consultant. The school nurse or center director maintains health records showing that the child is up to date on routine screening tests and immunizations, in accordance with the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The nurse or director also updates students' health records and attends to students' health needs while they are at school. The nurse or nurse consultant is available for parent consultations when necessary. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.

Support Staff

Prairie Lakes AEA cooperates with FDCSD and Community Partner classrooms to support early childhood programming. Such staff may include early childhood consultants, speech-language pathologists, social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and others.

Staff participate in joint and collaborative events with other community programs and service agencies throughout the year. They are encouraged and allowed to participate in community or statewide early childhood affiliations.

Custodian (IQPPS 7.6, 7.8, 9.8h)

The Early Childhood Center has two full-time custodians who work to maintain a clean building, grounds, and surrounding area to promote a healthy learning environment for all students. Community preschools have access to custodians or additional adults. Custodians regularly monitor all environmental safety procedures, equipment, and establish clear protocols for the ongoing sanitation, hygiene, and overall maintenance of the facility and equipment.

Health Records (IQPPS 7.1)

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records documenting the dates of service shall be submitted to show that the child is current with routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. A valid certificate of exemption for medical or religious reasons can be submitted as an alternative. Enrollment and attendance are subject to change if current, up-to-date vaccination records OR exemption form(s) have not been submitted.

Class Ratio (IQPPS 9.9, Iowa Code 16.2(2)(3))

The maximum class size is 20 children in each session, based on the square footage of the current locations. A teaching staff-to-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote children's activity. This ratio will be maintained during all hours of operation, including indoor time, outdoor time, and transportation. During field trips, an additional adult will be added to the ratio.

Inclusion (IQPPS 1.4, 3.10, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.11, 6.2)

Our preschool programs provide for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs, through a variety of center options. Modifications are made to the environment, activities, peer support, staffing patterns, and customized equipment to include children with special needs and to increase executive functioning skills. Staff members are aware of the identified needs of individual children. They are trained to evaluate and adjust their responses based on those children's needs, temperaments, activity levels, and developmental milestones, and to follow through on specific intervention plans. Through intentional instructional strategies, teaching staff promote engagement by explicitly teaching self-help skills, responding to emerging capabilities, expanding repeated activities, and helping children connect prior knowledge to express their ideas and experiences. This includes facilitating learning, play, and communication in their home language, as well as English language acquisition. We believe that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children, and their families. To support this equitable access, our preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Daily Activities (IQPPS 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.10, 6.8, 9.8f)

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. The written schedule is posted, predictable yet flexible, to include both formal and informal learning opportunities. The schedule is aligned with individual children's needs and includes intentional time for child-initiated play, exploration, rest, and creativity. self-expression. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day: small group and large group, self-initiated learning, creative expression, early literacy and math experiences, and fine and gross motor activities. Play is planned for each day, allowing children to develop a sense of competence, persistence, engagement, curiosity, mastery, and an overall positive attitude towards learning. Teaching staff organize the classroom space and select materials to stimulate exploration, discovery, and conceptual learning, and use their knowledge of the children's relationships, interests, ideas, and skills to tailor these learning opportunities, while guiding and supporting children as they learn to participate in the daily cleanup and maintenance of their learning environment. The indoor learning environment is designed, furnished, and arranged to maximize universal design. and support individual, small-group, and large-group activities. The layout and materials are just as intentional as the teaching strategies, ensuring that all students have access to a variety of learning centers.

Monthly newsletters will be sent home by the teacher. Each teacher maintains their own communication log system for individual students' families. Early Childhood Center teachers will log communication in the PLP tab.

Curriculum (IQPPS 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.8, 6.5, 6.6)

Our preschool programs use The Creative Curriculum as their framework. Aligned to the Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS). The Creative Curriculum is a research-based, developmentally appropriate preschool curriculum that utilizes child-directed play and focuses on all areas of development. The curriculum guides teaching staff's intentional implementation of learning opportunities, which foster development in four main domains: emotional well-being, physical development, cognitive development, and language development. Other key content areas include literacy, mathematics, science, technology, creative expression and the arts, health and safety, and social studies. A family's culture and the child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as important parts of the child's growth and development. Program staff use their knowledge of the families and community to adapt the curriculum, environment, and materials to provide varied learning experiences for children. This ensures the curriculum is implemented in ways that reflect family home values and beliefs, children's experiences, and languages. The curriculum goals and objectives guide teachers' planning and instruction, informed by the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool.

Each day, the children will have the opportunity to choose where they would like to play and work. Children are offered opportunities to decide what the class will do together, and teaching staff incorporate children's interests throughout daily activities and routines, helping children feel accepted and develop a sense of belonging in the classroom community. We ensure there are adequate learning materials in all environments to promote focused individual play or play with peers, to engage each child in activities that meet individual interests, and to provide access for children with disabilities and those who need individual accommodations. Materials are rotated as preschoolers' skill levels change over time and are available indoors and outdoors for children throughout the day, including gross motor equipment for activities.

Here is a list of some of our centers and typical activities: Materials encourage students to study and explore in ways that reflect a variety of family structures representative of society. Writing and books are embedded in each center, but can also be standalone centers. Materials are rotated regularly to reflect changes in the curriculum, new interests, and skill levels, which also helps sustain interest and maintain cleanliness.

- **Art:** Students may choose a variety of art materials to create works of art.
- **Blocks:** Students can build with different types of blocks and engage in imaginary play with play people, dinosaurs, animals, etc.
- **Dramatic Play:** Students may role-play and engage in dramatic play with dramatic play equipment. They can use props and settings and utilize social skills.
- **Library:** Students can enjoy a variety of books independently or with peers.
- **Science:** Children will explore their world with a variety of science materials. These materials encourage and allow for exploration, experimentation, and discovery.
- **Sensory:** Students can develop their senses through play in a sensory table with a variety of materials. Items may include water, sand, snow, pasta, or rice.
- **Technology:** Students will have learning opportunities using various media and technology.
- **Toys and Games:** Children will develop cognitive skills, such as counting, problem-solving, categorizing, and matching, as well as play rule-based games using a variety of toys and learning materials. These offer a wide variety to promote interaction and independent use while accommodating children's individual needs and abilities.

Varied Opportunities (IQPPS 3.9- 23)

The varied opportunities our preschool programs provide all students include, but are not limited to;

- a. Develop a sense of competence and positive attitudes toward learning, including persistence, engagement, curiosity, and a commitment to mastery.
- b. Develop competence in verbal and nonverbal communication by:
 - i. responding to questions
 - ii. communicating needs
- c. Develop vocabulary through varied opportunities, which may include:
 - i. conversations
 - ii. experience
- d. Support fine motor development to acquire:
 - i. hand strength
 - ii. grasp
 - iii. eye-hand coordination
 - iv. finger dexterity and control
 - v. bilateral coordination
- e. Engage in large motor experiences which:
 - i. stimulate a variety of skills
 - ii. enhance sensory-motor integration
 - iii. develop controlled movement
 - iv. enable children with varying abilities to have large motor experiences similar to those of their peers
 - v. range from familiar to new and challenging
 - vi. help them learn physical games with rules and structure
- f. Develop phonological awareness by:
 - i. playing with the sounds of language
 - ii. learning letters and the sounds they represent
 - iii. recognizing and producing words that have the same beginning or ending sounds
 - iv. self-initiated efforts to write letters that represent the sounds of words are supported
- g. Engage with books in a variety of ways, including;
 - i. access various types of books, including adaptive books, storybooks, factual books, books with rhymes, alphabet books, and wordless books
 - ii. explore books on their own and have places that are conducive to the quiet enjoyment of books
 - iii. have books engagingly read to them at least twice a day in full-day programs and at least once daily in half-day programs
 - iv. read the same book on repeated occasions
 - v. read regularly in individualized ways, including one-on-one or in small groups of two to six children
 - vi. engage in conversations that help them understand the book's content. Teaching staff provide children with opportunities to:
 1. identify the parts of books and differentiate print from pictures
 2. ask and answer literal and inferential questions about books
 3. retell and reenact events in storybooks
 4. link books to other aspects of the curriculum
- h. Become familiar with and understand the purpose of print by:
 - i. labeling items belonging to a child with their name
 - ii. using print to describe rules and routines
 - iii. labeling materials throughout the classroom
 - iv. recognizing print and connecting it to the spoken word with adult support
- i. Write which includes:
 - i. writing materials and activities in all learning centers
 - ii. support to write on their own with access to the alphabet at eye level
 - iii. access to printed words around topics of current interest, environmental print, and names of the children
 - iv. daily opportunities to write their own name with appropriate scaffolding
 - v. supporting the developmental stages of writing
 - vi. daily opportunities to write words and messages or dictate their ideas
 - vii. teaching staff model the functional use of writing
 - viii. discussing ways in which writing is used in daily life
- j. Build an understanding of foundational math skills and practices related to:
 - i. number sense, counting, and subitizing
 - ii. recognizing, creating, and extending patterns
 - iii. beginning operations (joining and separating sets)
 - iv. measurement e. geometry and attributes
- k. Think, question, and reason while engaging in scientific practices, including:
 - i. observation
 - ii. prediction
 - iii. collecting data
 - iv. analyzing results
 - v. drawing and inferring conclusions
 - vi. representing information
- l. Learn key content and principles of science, such as:
 - i. the difference between living and non-living things
 - ii. life cycles of various organisms
 - iii. earth and sky
 - iv. structure and property of matter
 - v. behavior of materials

- m. Access and use a broad range of technology tools individually and collaboratively to:
 - i. explore and inquire
 - ii. integrate and enrich the curriculum
 - iii. extend learning within the classroom
- n. Express themselves creatively through:
 - i. music
 - ii. drama
 - iii. dance
 - iv. two- and three-dimensional art
- o. Encourage good health practices such as:
 - i. serving and feeding themselves
 - ii. rest
 - iii. good nutrition
 - iv. exercise
 - v. washing
 - vi. tooth brushing

Assessment (IQPPS 1.1, 2.3, 2.4, 5.1-7, 9.7)

Children may be assessed in a variety of ways as part of the district's written assessment plan, which encourages families to take an active role in assessing their child's development and learning.

- Teaching Strategies GOLD
- Ongoing observations help to ensure a child's progress during daily activities.
- GOLDFinch Literacy Screener
- Ox Ed Oral Language Screener
- The teaching staff organizes child portfolios and may include assessments and child work samples that are collected on an ongoing basis.
- Information shared by parents/families - two-way communication is encouraged.

The assessment information above is used to guide instruction based on the children's needs, interests, and abilities, enabling individualized and effective planning. Teaching teams meet at least weekly to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of the children.

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Family/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time. Teachers will provide informal progress updates and be available to answer questions or address concerns families may have. If the observation and/or assessment data indicate a need for further assessments or screening, the teacher can assist the family through the process. The preschool team, along with the parents/families and Prairie Lakes AEA staff, will come together to discuss concerns and create an action plan. Likewise, if a parent or family member has concerns about their child's progress, they are encouraged to share them with the teacher. Parents and teachers can then work together toward making an action plan.

Supervision (IQPPS 6.1, 6.4, 7.2)

Indoor and outdoor learning environments are designed so our preschool staff can supervise by sight (predominantly) and sound at all times. No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, provided teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (such as those who can use the toilet independently). Staff will make every reasonable effort to protect the children in their care from hazards. Each preschool classroom provides at least 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child and at least 75 square feet of outdoor space per student.

Child Guidance and Discipline (IQPPS 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 4.4, 4.5)

Teaching staff will foster a respectful and positive learning environment by treating all children with respect, implementing activities and discussions that build confidence and a positive sense of self, and using appropriate, respectful language in interactions. They will encourage appropriate behavior at the universal level through intentional environmental design, predictable schedules that meet children's needs, clear and consistent classroom expectations, visuals, effective transitions, and engaging activities. Staff will focus on supporting children's appropriate behavior by teaching communication, interaction, and executive functioning skills; using environmental or activity modifications and adult or peer support; and providing guidance consistent with the child's developmental level. Teaching staff will intentionally support children as they practice social skills and build friendships, helping them enter into, sustain, and enhance play. They will assist children in resolving conflicts by helping them recognize and label their own and others' feelings, employ strategies to manage feelings, describe problems, and try alternative solutions. Teachers will work together to assess the function of the child's behavior, work with families and other early childhood professionals to develop individualized plans to address behavior, and use positive behavior support strategies.

Rather than focus solely on reducing the challenging behavior, teachers focus on

- a. teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and
- b. using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.

Teaching staff help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting children to;

- a. persist when frustrated.
- b. play cooperatively with other children.
- c. use language to communicate needs.
- d. learn turn-taking (e.g., gain control of physical impulses)
- f. express negative emotions in ways that do not harm others or themselves.
- g. use problem-solving techniques.
- h. learn about self and others.
- i. understand that others may have different thoughts and opinions from their own.

Challenging Behavior

The teaching staff in our preschools is highly trained in behavior management. Challenging behavior will be addressed using positive behavior support strategies and work to identify the function of the behavior. Aggressive physical behavior toward children or staff is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Teachers will communicate with parents about their child's behavior and seek their input. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff and parents, with support from AEA consultants, problem-solve to determine the most effective strategies to help the student participate successfully. All teachers and assistants will be trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention strategies. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention focuses on prevention strategies, equipping staff to defuse behaviors at the earliest possible stages safely.

Biting

While most children have progressed beyond biting by the time they enter a 4-year-old program, it is still a normal part of child development. If an incident of biting occurs: 1) provide aid; 2) complete an incident report; 3) notify parents. For more serious injuries that break the skin, you can also inform your supervisor and have your nurse look at it. For very serious injuries, such as when the bleeding won't stop, call 911.

Incident Reports

Incident Reports will be compiled for the following situations:

- Injury-Any injury that is observed or occurs at the Center, including any injury that you are unsure of when or how it happened.
- Sexualized Behavior-Includes touching peers, exposing themselves, etc. (Note: These behaviors are normal in young children, and staff will work with children to understand their bodies, gender differences, and social norms, and what is acceptable behavior.) Parents will also be informed.
- Significant Behavioral Acting Out/Changes: Behavior in which the child engages in actions outside normal expectations for their age group (such as throwing chairs around the room, with no injury). It can also include a child who is normally outgoing but suddenly becomes very depressed, and you have concerns and want to talk to the parents about it.

Permissible Methods of Discipline

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting), staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual approach to managing children with challenging behaviors, rather than punishing them for problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

The creation of an atmosphere characterized by respect, safety, and belonging requires the active participation of everyone in our district. Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that promotes a positive learning environment by practicing courtesy and tolerance toward all; proactively ensuring safety by following rules and immediately reporting threats or bullying; actively working to include peers; engaging responsibly in the educational process; and respecting all property. Parents and Guardians are essential partners who must review the student handbook, model and reinforce respectful behavior, ensure their student's consistent attendance and readiness for learning, maintain open communication with staff regarding any concerns, and cooperate fully in resolving behavioral issues. Practitioners (teachers and staff) must consistently model professional behavior, uniformly uphold and enforce the Student Code of Conduct, provide a physically and emotionally safe and inclusive learning environment, promptly address instances of unacceptable behavior, communicate effectively with families, and implement fair, corrective, and consistent consequences for all violations.

Expulsion/Suspension

Preschool and administrative staff will provide alternatives to expulsion and suspension so they are infrequent or unnecessary. Expulsion and suspension will be used only as a last resort when a serious safety concern cannot be eliminated through reasonable modifications.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children, nor make threats or derogatory remarks—physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
- Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
- Do not withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition (IQPPS 7.16-21, 9.8e-g)

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, physical growth, ability to learn, and overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, enjoy and request a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed, social atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to develop. Snack is also an excellent time for language modeling.

Children are offered a snack during the preschool session. Our preschools serve a wide variety of nutritious snacks and encourage children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snacks need to be commercially packaged. Snacks and meals are scheduled at least two hours apart and no more than three hours apart. Breakfast and lunch are provided for children who attend a full-day program, and provide adequate nutrition for students and staff. Special diets are followed with a physician's orders. Menus are sent home each month, posted at the center, and kept on file for review.

Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff take steps to ensure food safety. Staff will discard any foods with expired dates and ensure sanitation and hygiene in food preparation and handling. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach, and foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served. All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Staff will work with families to ensure that foods brought from home are held to the same standards.

For every child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and a specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses, serving as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. When any child with a disability has special feeding needs, the program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and will provide parents with that information.

High-risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. Restricted items include (but are not limited to) whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, and chunks of raw carrots.)

Our preschool staff will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline. An appropriate snack is offered to all children.

If children are refusing to eat or try foods, below is a list of some options recommended by the Iowa Child Health Specialty Clinic:

- Allow the child to lick the food.
- Allow the child to put the food to their lips.
- Allow the child to touch the food with a utensil or their finger, then touch it to their lip or tongue.
- Allow the child to smell the food.

Outside Play and Learning (IQPPS 6.1, 6.5, 6.9-11, 7.12-13)

We have daily opportunities for up to 50 minutes of outdoor play at the Early Childhood Center, weather permitting. Partner sites have similar times adjusted for half and full-day schedules. This gives children the opportunity to develop their large-muscle skills, get exercise, and be active together. Parents are informed about appropriate outerwear and encouraged to provide it. Staff will ensure that children are appropriately dressed for outdoor play and the weather. Sunscreen and/or insect repellent may be applied at school with written parental permission. A first aid kit is taken outside for each outdoor play session.

The outdoor play equipment is age and developmentally appropriate, and provides access to activities such as dramatic play, block building, manipulative play, and art. It is at least 75 square feet per student, ADA-accessible, fenced to prevent hazards, and arranged so that staff can easily supervise children. A playground safety checklist has been completed and is on file. In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather or other conditions), children are allowed to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside. They are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

Water Activity

When a water play table is present in the classroom for the children to stand and play with their hands in the water, the following procedures will be followed. Children will wash their hands before and after water play. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate in water play with others. Children are not allowed to drink the water from the water table. When the activity is complete, the water table is drained, sanitized, and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children participates. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs, buckets, and containers, as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children both visually and audibly during such water activities.

Objects From Home

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you limit the number of toys brought from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside their backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Weapons Policy

Please reference the FDCSD district discipline policy.

Communication and Parent Involvement

Communication with Families (IQPPS 1.1, 2.8)

The program will promote communication between families and staff through written notes, informal conversations, and email. All teachers use Seesaw, Teaching Strategies, or a similar platform for two-way communication with families. Through Seesaw and MyTeachingStrategies™ Family, teachers communicate about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Photos, notes, and daily reports can be shared with families. Families can also share information, photos, videos, and notes with teachers, enabling two-way communication between school and home. Families have ongoing opportunities to share observation results from home to contribute to the assessment process. In addition to using MyTeachingStrategies™ Family, teachers will also communicate via email, in person, notes, and phone calls. Parents are encouraged to communicate in a way that is best for the family.

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high-quality early childhood program. Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school or the director's office. The preschool staff wants parents to feel confident that their child is well cared for and receiving a high-quality experience at school. Parents are always encouraged to address concerns with the child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may request assistance from the Building Administrator or the Director of Preschool. School staff will utilize established partnerships with community organizations, consultants, and agencies to meet better the needs and interests of the children and families we support.

Arrival and Departure of Children (IQPPS 9.11)

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization may pick up a child from the school. Anyone unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

FDCSD welcomes visitors to its school buildings. However, since school is a place of work and learning, certain expectations must be met. Parents/guardians who wish to visit their child's classroom must arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher. They may not disrupt or interfere with the class in progress or discuss individual concerns when students are present.

All visitors to the school shall enter the building through the front door and check in at the office to pick up a visitor badge. All visitors must have approval to be in a designated area. Failure of a visitor to follow these expectations or other regulations established by the building principal or the Director of Preschool may result in removal of the visitor from school grounds and/or contact with law enforcement, as appropriate. Please see the FDCSD Building Entry Management Protocol listed on our website for more information.

Transportation (IQPPS 7.7, 9.11)

All school vehicles, buildings, and grounds are tobacco-free environments. Smoking of any kind is prohibited. If your child is eligible for and uses district transportation, teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus. All students will be in an appropriate harness, seat belt, or restraint system. Parents or legal guardians are asked to keep their information up to date by reporting any changes to the preschool teacher or the elementary school secretary.

Preschool students are expected to arrive and depart from their preschool site at the designated beginning and ending times for their classroom. Children should be secured in appropriate safety car seats when arriving and departing from the preschool.

Field Trips (IQPPS 6.3, 9.9)

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. FDCSD buses may be used for these field trips at preschools located in District buildings. Parents will be informed of each field trip, and must sign a consent form before each trip. Increased supervision and an extra adult will be added to ratios.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that gives the program name and phone number. A first-aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children may use a public restroom only if accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

Attendance

Students who are enrolled in classes in the FDCSD preschool programs are expected to be in school for the full session. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance hinders the progress of your child and others, as teachers often spend class time repeating necessary information and making adjustments for absent students. Please call your

child's attendance center when your child will be absent, with the reason for the absence. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence.

According to Iowa Code 256C.3 1a "A child who has reached the age of four by September 15 and who is enrolled in the statewide preschool program under chapter 256C shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child submits written notice to the school district implementing the program of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the child from enrollment in the preschool program." The preschool director/principal and the Preschool Administrator reserve the right to review students' attendance.

Ethics, Confidentiality, and Children's Records (IQPPS 9.13)

Staff members follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. The preschool staff members will refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. Any information provided to the center by a parent/guardian regarding their child/children is maintained in accordance with confidentiality requirements as established by Iowa Code and/or DHHS Licensing Standards.

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Family Involvement / Volunteer Opportunities (IQPPS 2.1, 2.2, 2.4-6, 5.6, Iowa Code: 281-16.3(12), 256C.3(3))

We encourage families to be involved in their child's education. Teachers use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure, preferred child-rearing practices and communication, and any information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds that they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year for all Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program students. Family/Teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters for all students. At least one Family Night is held during the year. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences, or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

The preschool invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways and welcomes other ideas as well.

- Collaborate to support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities.
- Keep the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child, and allow the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
- Attend family meetings
- Return all forms and questionnaires promptly
- Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the fall and spring semesters
- Take time to read the family bulletin board
- Check your child's backpack each day
- Participate in field trip activities
- Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or items from trips you have taken.
- Share any of your family's cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs
- Help with special events
- Read all the material sent home with your child
- Come to play!

It is the policy of Fort Dodge Community School District not to discriminate based on race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation by families of children with limited English proficiency and by families of children with disabilities. This will include providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent possible, in a

language the family understands.

In our preschools, we believe that families should be supported in making decisions about the services that their child may need. Each district and community preschool program supports families so that they may best advocate for their child. The teaching staff will provide families with information about available community resources and, as requested, assist them in making connections.

Home-school connections are crucial for the transition to kindergarten or other programs, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child, whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Preschool staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will also provide information about enrollment policies and procedures and program options, and arrange a classroom visit whenever possible.

Family as Stakeholders (IQPPS 2.6)

Not only do we encourage families to be involved in their child's education, but we also invite them to assist with decision-making regarding our Preschool programming. There will be a survey sent to all families in the spring to evaluate our Preschool program and gather feedback to improve our PK program.

Volunteers (IQPPS 2.2)

As mentioned earlier, there are many ways family members can volunteer in the preschool programs. Please contact your child's teacher, the main office, or your center director for more information.

Community Resources (IQPPS 2.7, 2.9)

A list of community resources is available on the school website for any of our preschool programs. This is the most current and up-to-date list of resources within our community, including support for health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, early intervention/special education, screening and assessment services, and basic needs such as housing and child care subsidies. Additional resources, programming, family-friendly events, and other important information will be shared with families regularly. You can request resources and support at any time by contacting your child's teacher, building admin, or Director of Preschool.

Health and Safety

Health

Our preschool programs are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguarding the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. To provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines set by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies, and pediatric authorities in the field.

Health and Immunization Certificates (IQPPS 7.1)

Within six weeks of a child beginning in the program, health records documenting the dates of service must be submitted to show the child is current with routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. A valid certificate of exemption for medical or religious reasons can be submitted as an alternative. Enrollment and attendance are subject to change if current, up-to-date vaccination records OR exemption form(s) have not been submitted.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child enters into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization, for which parents are using a religious exemption.

Prairie Lakes AEA will conduct its annual Hearing Conservation Program during the school year. Students in the following grades will receive a hearing screening: Preschool- 2nd grade, and again in 5th grade. Students who do not pass this screening may receive individual hearing tests by the Prairie Lakes AEA Audiologist. Parents will be notified of the hearing test results only if their child does not pass. This is a screening process only and does not identify all hearing or ear problems. If your child has had hearing or ear problems recently, please send this information to the school nurse for the Audiologist to review. If you do not want your child to participate in this screening program and follow-up assessments by the Prairie Lakes AEA Audiologist, please notify the school. If you have any questions about the hearing testing program at our school, please contact the school nurse.

Health and Safety Records (IQPPS 7.4)

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. The school nurse or center director maintains student health records that show the child is up to date on routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parent or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, upon request.

- Child Health and Safety Records will include:
- Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results.
- Current emergency contact information for each child is kept up to date by a specified method during the year.
- Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs, such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes).
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergies, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions), and for conditions that require regular medication or technology support.
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to promptly exclude the child if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines (IQPPS 7.3-4, 7.9-10, 7.12-13, 7.15, 9.8b,d)

All staff must be alert to each child's health, known allergies, and any special medical conditions. Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.

- All staff members are to follow proper procedures for handwashing, use of disinfectant, and universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff members are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.

- All teaching staff complete “Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens” annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of CPR and pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff member who has successfully completed CPR training is present in the program at all times.

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children (IQPPS 9.8b,d)

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms in the previous 24 hours, they will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- fever greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eye with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge
- unexplained rash

The center’s established policy for an ill child’s return:

- fever-free for 24 hours
- chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- vomiting/diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child’s ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably, if the illness requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group, or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please ensure the preschool has current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact, and your child’s pediatrician. A staff member (who is familiar with the student) will provide the child with a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian, or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then they will be kept in an appropriate area where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases (IQPPS 7.11, 9.8a)

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation indicating that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to stay current on relevant health information and to arrange for advice when outbreaks of communicable diseases occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures (IQPPS 7.5, 9.8b)

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval from the parent and an order from a health provider for that child. Because administering medication in the school poses a safety hazard, it will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be reached. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian and health provider have given written consent and the medication is available in an original, labeled prescription or manufacturer’s container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional, on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording the five rights each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child’s parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child’s school record.

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

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

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

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

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

Cleaning and Sanitization (IQPPS 7.10, 9.8g)

Classroom areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated will be removed immediately and disinfected before being used again. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected with an approved, safe disinfectant. Machine-washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers, such as gloves, and proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials.

The preschool teacher will supervise routine cleaning and will follow the [Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the IQPPS manual](#). A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning that requires potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize their exposure. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Non-toxic substances will be used whenever possible.

Hand Washing Practices (IQPPS 7.9)

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

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required for all staff, volunteers, and children to reduce the risk of transmitting infectious diseases to themselves and others.
- Staff will assist children with handwashing as needed to ensure they successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day.
- after diapering or using the toilet (wet wipes are acceptable for infants).
- after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose; coughing on a hand; or any touching of mucus, blood, or vomit).
- before meals and snacks, when preparing or serving food, or when handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry).
- before and after playing in water that two or more people share.
- after handling pets or visiting animals.

Diapering Procedures (IQPPS 7.14, 9.8g)

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. The teacher and/or director will work with the family to develop a toileting plan for a child who is not toilet-trained before school begins. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines outlined in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area (which has an elevated surface). Staff will follow all diapering guidelines outlined in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 5:
- Clothing soiled with urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or unnecessary handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff will check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every two hours.
- Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding. Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be displayed in the changing area, showing procedures using visuals and text. The program administrator uses these procedures to evaluate the teaching staff who change diapers.

Safety

Our preschool programs are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguarding the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. To provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines set by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies, and pediatric authorities in the field. (IQPPS 6.7, 6.10)

First Aid Kit (IQPPS 6.3, 9.8c)

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

Fire Safety (IQPPS 7.6, 9.12)

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are in each classroom and are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents (IQPPS 9.12)

Our preschool programs have written Emergency Plans for all children, as well as printed plans for emergency health procedures. These documents follow district procedures and include the following:

- emergency phone numbers
- fire procedures
- severe weather
- bomb threats
- physical threats/armed intruder
- evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures — FDCSD buildings
- accidental injury or illness procedures for life-threatening and non-life-threatening situations
- school crisis team members and a checklist — FDCSD buildings
- list of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

If your child receives a minor, non-life-threatening injury during their time at preschool (Scrapes, bumps, minor cuts/scratches, etc.), the teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water, and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. The school nurse or parent/caregiver is immediately consulted for more significant events or illness. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an "Injury and Illness" form, and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

Procedures for standard precautions will be used and include the following:

- a. Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized.
- b. Staff use barriers and techniques that minimize contact between mucous membranes or openings in the skin and potentially infectious body fluids, reducing the spread of infectious disease.
- c. When body fluid spills occur, staff clean them up immediately with detergent, then rinse with water.
- d. After cleaning, staff sanitizes nonporous surfaces by using the procedure for sanitizing designated changing surfaces described in the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table.
- e. Staff clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning.
- f. Staff disposes of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie, which is placed in a closed container.

In the event of a major injury, such as:

1. bleeding that won't stop
2. broken bones
3. injury to the head/face
4. chipped/lost/loose tooth

Provide immediate care, contact the school nurse (if applicable), and call 911 (if necessary). Parents will be notified within 1 hour. An incident report will also be completed.

All staff will have immediate access to a telephone to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the fire department, police department, hospitals, and poison control will be posted by each phone with an

outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, copies of emergency contact information, and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Inclement Weather and Cancellation Due to Weather

For Students in Community Centers - Center Directors will provide you with information regarding cancellations and dismissals.

Late Starts, Early Dismissals (NAEYC 9.C.15, 10.D.06, 10.D.07)

We follow the Fort Dodge Community School District's calendar. In the event of a school cancellation, the closing will be announced on the radio and on area TV stations. Please listen to:

Radio Stations: KWMT, KKEZ, KXFT, KZLB, KIAQ, KVFD, KTLB, KQWC

TV Stations: WHO, KCCI & WOI

Messenger's Social Media Page

FCSD Facebook and Twitter

www.fdschools.org

If your child attends a Community Partner Preschool, please contact the preschool's director for their policy on delays and cancellations.

Pets/Service Animals

Student safety and the building's cleanliness are at risk when animals accompany their owners on a drop-in visit to school. Other than a few exceptions, pets are not allowed in FDCSD buildings. In keeping with state and federal law, FDCSD recognizes there may be a need for employees or students to use or have access to qualified service animals. Students who need a service animal, as defined by law as "animals that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities," are welcome to consult with their building administrator.

Smoke Free Facility (IQPPS 7.7, 9.8)

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008, FDCSD buildings and grounds are smoke-free. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children. At community preschools, the facility and outdoor play areas are smoke-free, and no smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

Child Protection Policies

The health, well-being, and protection of every child is of the utmost importance. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program (who has direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children) must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any crimes against a child or family. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

Sex Offenders: Offenders (who are not enrolled students) are barred from campus property and events unless they obtain explicit permission from the administration. FDCSD requires formal written requests and has established procedures for reviewing such visits on a case-by-case basis.

Mandatory Reporting (IQPPS 9.10)

FDCSD strongly supports Chapter 232 of the Iowa Code and requires that all employees who are mandatory reporters under this Chapter be familiar with its requirements.

The Code of Iowa requires mandatory reporters to report to the Department of Human Services all instances of suspected child abuse involving students. The law further states that any person required to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so, or who knowingly interferes with the making of such a report in violation of section 232.70, is civilly liable for the damages caused by such failure or interference.

The Code provides immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, to anyone participating in good faith in the making of a report or in the judicial proceedings that may result from the report.

Public Conduct on School Property

Intoxication on school property is prohibited for all students, staff, and visitors. If an adult suspects intoxication, 911 will be called immediately, and an effort to remove the person from any student learning space will be made. Please see the board policy on the district website for more information on public conduct on school grounds.

Staff (IQPPS 8.3, 8.5-6, 9.3-6, 9.8)

Our preschool programs comply with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our programs follow the staffing requirements of Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards, which require maintaining an adult-to-child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. Student-to-teacher ratios may differ at each site based on

the continuum of services provided. Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks:

1. criminal record check
2. free from a history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check
3. education credentials
4. verification of age
5. completion of high school or GED
6. personal references
7. a current health assessment.

Teachers must hold an Iowa teaching license issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) and an early childhood endorsement that reflects their current teaching assignment.

The preschool staff will be provided space and time away from children during the day. When staff work directly with children for more than 4 hours, they are provided with at least 15 minutes of break time. In addition, preschool staff may request temporary relief if they are unable to perform their duties.

All teaching staff continuously develop and strengthen their skills by participating in a wide range of staff development opportunities. In addition, teaching assistants receive ongoing early childhood-specific training throughout the school year and uphold strict confidentiality policies outlined on the district website. Staff are evaluated annually and given feedback.

All teachers will need to complete training as required by the Department of Ed and/or DHHS Licensing Standards, which may include:

- 1st Aid CPR
- Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter
- Universal Precautions
- Essentials of Child Care
- Program Orientation

These trainings must be completed within 90 days of employment. Teachers must complete ongoing professional development training each year.