

# Dover City Schools



## Preschool Handbook

2023-2024 School Year

**South Elementary 330-364-7111**

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**Dover South Preschool has been rated in Ohio's Step Up to Quality Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System as a high-quality learning and development program with a *Five Star Rating*. A Step Up to Quality *Five Star Rating* means your child is in a program that has demonstrated the highest level of quality.**

2023-2024

**DOVER CITY SCHOOLS PRESCHOOL CALENDAR**

**August 24th/25th**

**Preschool Visitation**

**Please plan to attend Preschool Visitation from 5:30PM- 6:30PM on Thursday, August 24th or 10:00AM-11:00AM on Friday, August 25th.**

Visitation is a time for parents and guardians to meet your child's preschool teacher and visit your child's preschool classroom. Information will be provided to you regarding preschool guidelines and expectations. You will also be given the opportunity to ask questions and talk with your child's teacher. Preschool students are encouraged to attend visitation.

**August 29th-  
September 1st**

**Preschool Phase-In/Preschool Developmental Screening**

Parents will be notified in August by the preschool teacher of your child's phase-in date and time. The purpose of the phase-in day is to gradually introduce students to the preschool setting.

Developmental screenings for all students are required by the Ohio Department of Education within 60 days of entrance to the preschool program and annually thereafter. The developmental screening will include speech and language, cognitive, gross and fine motor, and social/emotional/behavioral assessments.

Health screenings for all preschool students are also required by the Ohio Department of Education within 60 days of entrance to the preschool program. Health screenings will be conducted after preschool students begin regular attendance.

**Tuesday, September 5th      First regular day for all Preschool Students**

**November 21st                No Preschool in session**

**December 19th-20th        No Preschool in session**

**May 24th                        Last regular day for all Preschool Students**

**PLEASE REFER TO THE DOVER CITY SCHOOLS' CALENDAR FOR ALL OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS AND HOLIDAYS**

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Emergency school closing caused by severe weather or other conditions will be announced on local radio stations. Families may also be notified of school closings or other important announcements via the phone notification system. Schools closed on consecutive days are announced each day. A school not announced as closed may be presumed to be open.

**In the event of a two hour delay, morning preschool classes will not be in session.**

## **OUR SCHEDULE**

Students will attend our preschool class **Tuesday-Friday**. Please be aware that we follow the Dover City Schools' calendar for holidays. Refer to the Preschool Calendar on page 1 of this handbook for specific preschool dates and events. **Our daily schedule for morning class is 9:00AM-11:30AM and afternoon class is 12:30PM-3:00PM.**

## **ABSENCES/TARDINESS**

Regular and punctual attendance is extremely important to a child's success at school. If your child is going to be absent, you must phone Dover South Elementary (330-364-7111) to notify the school by 8:30AM for AM classes and by 12:30 PM for PM classes. A child returning to school shall be requested to present a note signed by his/her parent explaining the reason for the absence. Absent days cannot be subtracted from monthly fees.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION / UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL**

The home-school relationship is crucial to student success and is a very important part of our total program. We will have many special days that volunteers will be needed. When volunteering, you will need to check in at the office upon arrival. Please consider being a part of your child's preschool experience by volunteering time in your child's classroom. In addition, parents are permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation to contact his/her child, and evaluate the care provided by our program and premises. Parents need to check into the office upon arrival.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their children's education. We are aware that only as we work together are we able to provide the best possible education for each child. Beginning with Visitation in August, Open House in October, and parent-teacher conferences twice a year, parents are actively involved in the education of their children. Please check the Dover City Schools' calendar for these special dates. If an individual conference is needed with a teacher, or you'd like to visit a classroom, please make an appointment with the teacher. Teachers are happy to meet with parents; however, it is difficult to have a discussion with a parent at the beginning or end of class time. We thank you for respecting this request.

## **SNACKS**

Your child will be provided with a nutritious snack which will contain items from at least two of the following food groups: meat, bread, milk, or fruit/vegetable. There may also be times when we cook or create our own snack! If your child has a food allergy, follows a modified diet, or cannot eat a particular food for religious reasons, please be sure to notify the preschool teacher. Provisions will be made to accommodate your child's special dietary needs. (See page 6 of this handbook for specific provisions.)

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please label all outer clothing such as hats, gloves, boots, and jackets. It is best if children do not bring extra money to school. Carrying or wearing items of considerable value is discouraged. A "lost and found" is located in the school office.

## **EMERGENCY DRILLS – FIRE, TORNADO, LOCKDOWN AND EVACUATION**

Emergency drills are held in compliance with the Revised Code of Ohio. The drills are planned to provide practice at varying times and under differing conditions. Order and speed are stressed during the drill. No talking is permitted as an emergency situation requires being able to hear directions given by a staff member. The intent is that the response to the signals for emergency drills will become a routine so that the procedure will be carried out rapidly, automatically, and in an orderly manner, to maximize safety for all occupants of the building in the event of an emergency.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

In the event additional information about the preschool is needed, a need to express concerns, or a need to discuss rules and regulations as stipulated by the State Department of Education, please contact your child's teacher; Mrs. Tracie Murphy, On-Site Preschool Director at 330-364-7111; or Mrs. Gina Franks, Director of Special Education at 330-364-7124. Copies of inspection reports and information regarding the filing of complaints are posted and available in the preschool classrooms. In addition, our preschool program is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education. Department personnel are available to discuss any concerns or complaints you have as a parent. If you have concerns regarding the classroom environment, teacher qualifications, health and safety concerns, the number of children or care of the children, please call: 614-466-0224 and ask for Preschool Program Licensing. If your child has an IEP and you have concerns regarding your parental rights or your child's program, please call the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at 614-466-0224.

Our philosophy at Dover South Preschool is based on the belief that all children can benefit and learn from developmentally appropriate practice. All children have the ability to learn, and each child is unique with specific interests, experiences, and learning styles. Understanding these individual differences allows us to provide different strategies so that all children will succeed as learners.

The learning environment is designed so that children feel a sense of safety and belonging. The space is created so that children may explore, create, experiment and pursue individual interests. We strive to provide a program that will allow each child to progress as far as possible each school year, and rely on input from families to assess our program and set goals for the next year.

We feel strongly that home and school are a preschooler's two most important worlds. If home and school are connected in positive and respectful ways, children feel secure. At Dover South Preschool, we strive to develop a relationship with every family so that we may focus on children's healthy development and learning.

## **CURRICULUM**

Our curriculum is derived from The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. It is aligned with the Ohio Early Learning Development Standards. This is our blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program based on theory and research. We use this program as a guide in developing the structure of our day, which includes a balance of quiet/active, small/ large group, and child-initiated/teacher-directed activities. What remains consistent is our philosophy and decision making structure and our knowledge of how and what children learn, the importance of the learning environment, and the role of the teacher and family. This research-based curriculum also focuses on several interest areas (learning centers), such as blocks, dramatic play, toys & games, art, library, discovery, sand & water, music & movement, cooking, computers, and outdoors. These centers are incorporated into our daily schedule and meet children's developmental needs so that they may become independent and confident learners.

## **GOALS**

- To provide a quality program using developmentally appropriate practices that meet the individual needs of each child
- To provide a safe and predictable environment that allows each child to develop a positive self-image, a love of learning, and acceptance for individual differences
- To develop a positive relationship with families to extend learning at home

## **Program Activities**

Preschool objectives are best covered through integrated thematic units. These units are cross-curricular and learning outcomes will vary based upon developmentally appropriate practice. These units will change each month based upon the interests and development of the students as well as alignment to the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning Development Standards. Your child's day will include time for large group and small group activities, learning centers, and snack. Daily schedules are posted in individual classrooms and are on file in the school office. Daily classroom schedules are available to parents upon request.

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PRESCHOOL PROGRAM LICENSING RULES 3301-37-10: Behavior Management/Discipline**

- (A) A preschool staff member in charge of a child or a group shall be responsible for their discipline.
- (B) The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the center's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for review. Constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are to be used at all times and shall include such measures as redirection, separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation and praise for appropriate behavior.
- (C) Behavior management/discipline policies and procedures shall ensure the safety, physical, and emotional well-being of all individuals on the premises.
- (D) The center's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:
  - a. There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
  - b. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
  - c. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
  - d. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
  - e. No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
  - f. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
  - g. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
  - h. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
  - i. Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
  - j. The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.
- (E) The parent of a child enrolled in a center shall receive the center's written discipline policy.
- (F) All preschool staff members shall receive a copy of the center's discipline policy for review upon employment.

**DOVER CITY SCHOOLS PRESCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline techniques will be positive and emphasize the development of self-discipline. Redirection, verbal prompts, modeling, and when needed, physical prompts will be used for teaching skills as well as discipline programs. It is our goal to give the child effective techniques to develop self-control. They include:

- Praise for appropriate behavior
- Guiding the child before the problem develops
- Offering reasonable choices to the child
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior whenever possible (not when instances of safety are questionable)
- Redirecting the child to more appropriate activities
- Reminding the child of the rules and consequences when needed; to allow the child to choose the way he/she will handle the situation
- Discussing with the child privately about his/her actions and feelings, and other ways he/she could have handled the situation
- Providing an opportunity for "time out" away from the group or situation
- Consulting with the parent or supervisor to discuss alternatives which may involve the development of an individual behavior management program
- Physical prompts with care for their bodies and feelings until they have regained self control

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Preschool staff will be trained annually to recognize signs and symptoms of communicable disease. Charts on communicable disease, hand washing, and disinfecting are posted in each classroom. Should an illness arise, we follow the Department of Health "child day care communicable disease chart" for the appropriate management of suspected illness. When a child becomes ill at school, he/she is referred to the office/clinic and made as comfortable as possible until parents or guardians arrive. To return to school after an illness, a child should be free of the following symptoms for 24 hours:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever

You will be notified by telephone if your child displays any of the following symptoms at school:

- Elevated temperature and temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Severe coughing and/or a whooping sound, causing the child to become red or blue in the face
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea two or more times in the same day
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Untreated infected skin patch(es)
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Stiff neck
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation

A notice to all parents or guardians will be provided when children within a program have been diagnosed by a physician with a reportable communicable disease.

## Healthchek

Parents and Guardians are provided with the Healthchek Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment services information and fact sheet upon enrollment. Healthchek services are required by the federal government and include comprehensive health and developmental history to assess physical and mental health, screenings for potential health problems – including vision, hearing, and dental screenings.

## MILD ILLNESS OR INJURY AT SCHOOL

If your child is displaying mild illness (such as minor cold symptoms) we will practice and promote proper hand washing and implement disinfecting procedures.

Staff members refer pupil health concerns to the school office. In the event of an accident or illness requiring consultation, attempts are made to contact parents. When a parent cannot be reached, an effort is made to contact other persons listed on the Emergency Medical Authorization Form. The Emergency Medical Authorization, which is completed on-line as part of the enrollment process, is consulted for parental instructions if medical help must be sought immediately.

## DIAPERING / TOILETING

Non-toilet trained children will be changed in an area that has hand-washing facilities. An individual area to keep clean diapers and extra clothing will be provided for each child. Soiled diapers are placed in a plastic lined, covered container that is disinfected daily or more frequently if needed. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily. Preschool staff will practice proper hand washing and disinfecting procedures at all times.

## IMMUNIZATION

Ohio law requires all children to be immunized or in the process of receiving immunization before they enroll in school. Local Health Departments are responsible for inoculating children whose parents cannot afford to have vaccinations administered by a private physician. The following vaccinations are required for pre-K children:

- 4 doses of combination Diphtheria, Tetanus and Acellular Pertussis (DPT or DTaP)
- 3 doses of Polio vaccine
- 1 dose of MMR
- 3 to 4 doses of HIB OR 1 dose if given after 15 months of age
- 3 dose series of Hepatitis B
- 1 dose Varicella (Chicken Pox – given on or after 12 months of age)
- Hepatitis A
- Pneumococcal (Prevnar)
- Rotavirus
- Annual Influenza Vaccination

The immunization schedule for preschool is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/downloads/parent-ver-sch-0-6yrs.pdf>.

Parents may contact the Tuscarawas County Health Department to make arrangements for necessary immunization. If any parent would prefer a list of local physicians, please see the preschool teacher.

**Parents should be advised that failure to complete the required immunization in a timely manner (no later than the first day of attendance) is a basis for excluding pupils from school.** Parents should be further advised that re-admittance will not take place until proof of immunization is submitted.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE and FOOD SUPPLEMENT, MODIFIED DIET OR FLUORIDE SUPPLEMENT

Rule 3301-37-07 of the Ohio Administrative Code / Preschool Program Licensing Rules specify the requirements for administering medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement to children in preschool programs, in public school or chartered non-public schools:

1. The principal and his/her designees are all authorized to administer medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement at school when deemed necessary.
2. The school nurse and his/her designee will coordinate the receipt of **written instructions** of a licensed physician or licensed dentist by the completion of a Medication Administration Form (MAR).
3. **Written instructions** must be obtained from a physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage and the time interval the medication is to be taken. A copy shall be on file in the Nurse's Office.
4. **Written instructions** must be obtained from a physician detailing the nature of the child's dietary need, the reason this need prevents the child from eating the regular school breakfast or snack (including foods to be omitted from the child's diet), the specific modified diet prescription along with the needed food or fluoride substitution and/or supplement.
5. **Written permission** must be received from the parent or guardian of the pupil requesting the school comply with the doctor's orders, with a statement clearly stating that the school or its personnel will not be held responsible for administering any of the prescribed medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement.
6. Medication must be brought to school by an adult in a labeled container.
7. Liquid medication shall be the responsibility of the parent and will be administered only at the principal's discretion.
8. The Board of Education shall provide secure, lockable storage facilities in each building.
9. The school nurse will inform school personnel of potential benefits and side effects of the drug being administered.
10. Teachers should make a note in their daily lesson plans which pupils are to take medication and might accept the responsibility to remind the child should he/she forget to administer the medication.
11. The employee responsible for administering the medication shall keep a daily record including dosage, date and time. Parents may request at any time, in writing, a copy of the Medication Documentation Record from the school nurse, preschool director, or preschool teacher.

Schools may not administer over-the-counter medicines unless the Medication Administration Form (MAR) is completed and signed by the physician and parent. The school nurse and his/her designee will coordinate the receipt of this form.



## **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Students ages 3 – 5 who qualify for special needs preschool services as determined by a multi-factored evaluation, may enter the Dover City Schools' center-based preschool program if all of the following criteria are met. Typically developing preschool students must meet the following criteria: #2, #3, #4, and #5.

1. A multi-factored evaluation has been completed and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) has been written by the IEP team, indicating Dover City Schools' center-based preschool as the least restrictive environment.
2. A current physical is on file at the school.
3. Must present a birth certificate or comparable certificate.
4. Must have the necessary immunizations that are mandated by the Ohio State Board of Health. (See immunizations page)
5. Must present proof of residency in the form of a current utility bill, rental or purchase agreement, or notarized letter from a relative.
6. Must have current emergency medical information on file.

Admission of students into the preschool classroom is based on available space in each classroom. As stated above, students with special needs will be placed based on IEP team decision. Typical students will be placed per preschool director discretion and based on compliance with the criteria above. Should a classroom become full, a waiting list will be started which will be good until March of that school year. At that time, availability will be determined for the following year. Withdrawal of a student from the program by either the district or a parent results in loss of placement for the student. However, the student may be added to the waiting list if mutually agreed upon by the parent and the district.

## **FEES**

Please refer to the **Dover City Schools Integrated Preschool Student Program Agreement** for information regarding fees. Questions regarding fees may be directed to Mrs. Murphy, On-Site Preschool Director.

## **REGISTRATION, ENROLLMENT, WITHDRAWAL**

Preschool enrollment must be completed online. Additional forms will need to be completed during the orientation process. Ohio law requires that the parent present the child's birth certificate at the time of enrollment. The following documents may take the place of the birth certificate: (1) a passport or attested passport transcript showing the date and place of birth of the child, (2) an attested transcript of a birth certificate, (3) an attested transcript of a baptism certificate or other religious record showing date and place of birth of the child, (4) an attested transcript of a hospital record showing the date and place of birth, (5) a birth affidavit.

School records cannot be released without a parent's signature. Parents of students transferring or withdrawing to any other school are asked to notify the school office.

If you move, get a new home or business phone number, or wish to change persons to be contacted in the event of an emergency, please submit these changes in writing to the school.

## **CUSTODY – DIVORCE DECREE**

If you have any legal papers regarding custody of your child, please provide the school with a copy. The school cannot provide protection beyond the law. If we do not have such papers, we must assume that rights are extended to all parents/guardians. If we have the legal paperwork, we will then follow the most recent court decisions. This is very important for the safety and concern of all.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents may request, in the presence of a school official, to view a child's cumulative records file to verify, amend or contest the accuracy of the data collected in the student's folder. Either parent of each student shall have access to the student records unless, by court order previously filed with the Dover Board of Education, one of the parents has been specifically denied access to said records.