

Elkhart Elementary School

Early Childhood

Parent Handbook

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Elkhart Elementary School

Box 778

Elkhart, Kansas 67950

620-697-2133

STAFF

ADMINISTRATORS:

Lynn Thrall-Elementary Principal

CLASSROOM:

Kristy Gourley: Early Childhood 4-year old classroom

Jonetta Forbes: Paraprofessional

SUPPORT:

Janie Shelden – ECSE

Tania McNabb – Speech

Keri Crawford – Speech Pare

QUALITY PROGRAMS

You have chosen an early childhood program for your child that is based on the Kansas Early Learning Standards. This program is a high quality program that provides a nurturing and safe environment while promoting the social, physical, emotional, and intellectual development of your children. In this program you will see:

Specially trained teachers

Enough adults to respond to individual children

Frequent, warm, positive interactions among children and adults

Effective administration

Nutritious snacks and meals

Ongoing system evaluations

Regular communication with parents, who are welcome to visit the classroom at any time

Planned learning activities that are developmentally appropriate as well as age appropriate.

PHILOSOPHY

The Elkhart Elementary School's mission is to provide quality instruction to all students. We share with students, parents, and our community the responsibility that all students obtain the basic skills needed for life long learning.....“Every Child Learns”.

The Elkhart Early Childhood programs use the Creative Curriculum, which focuses on developmentally appropriate programs for young children. We want preschool students to be able to achieve a positive sense of self and learning in a nurturing and safe environment. The staff provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials that are selected to emphasize active experiential learning. Through their interactions in our program the children will show positive self-expression, blossom in social skills, enhance reasoning and problem solving, refine large and small motor skills, build communication/language skills, and develop independence. These goals can only be achieved by the support of the family and school working together for the betterment of the child.

CLASSROOM SCHEDULE

Class schedules for the preschool programs will be posted in each classroom. The schedules may change as needed to share different areas of the school with the older children and teachers in the elementary school and playground.

All morning sessions of preschool will begin at 8:00 am and dismiss at 11:10 am. Afternoon sessions will begin at 12:15 and dismiss at 3:25. The staff asks that parents and others who transport preschool children to and from school are conscientious and stick to these times. The 4 year old preschool program will be Monday –Friday this year. There will be no preschool on Early Dismissal days unless days need to be made up.

The preschool programs will follow the USD 218 Elkhart school calendar. Likewise, when the Elkhart School District 218 cancels school because of bad weather, we will not have class. Please listen to the local radio and TV stations for information concerning school closings.

PARKING

The circle drive outside the preschool classroom is strictly for dropping off and picking up children. The driver must not leave the vehicle. If the driver needs to leave the vehicle to assist the student then you must park on the opposite side of the street or in one of the church parking lots. This will allow for the smooth flow of traffic through the circle drive. Please enter from the west and exit to the east. We ask that you demonstrate extra caution during arrival and departure so that all of the children can be transported to and from school in a safe manner. If there are individual circumstances why you cannot follow this procedure, please see Mr. Thrall.

SAFETY ISSUES

Throughout the school year, children will participate in different activities that might cause them to become “messy”. Because of this, we ask that you provide a change of clothes for your child at school. Please put your child’s clothing (under garments, socks, shirts, and pants) in a baggie and write your child’s name on the baggie with a permanent marker. Children’s clothing should be washable and free of complicated fasteners. If your child’s clothing is changed at school, please send another set as soon as possible. Your help with this is greatly appreciated.

Outdoor time will be part of the daily schedule, except under extreme weather conditions. Weather can change quickly and with little warning so please send your child prepared with warm clothes for outdoor time. Mittens or gloves are also needed since the outdoor equipment is metal. Please mark your child’s clothing with their name so that we are able to prevent mix-ups.

Along with the entire elementary school student body and staff, the preschoolers will practice and participate in emergency drills for fire, tornadoes and lockdowns. These drills are necessary to provide a safe environment for students and staff alike.

If someone outside of the regular transportation arrangements will be picking up your child, please let the staff know. This will assure your child’s safety and eliminate upsetting situations. I WILL NOT release any child to ANYONE who is not on the contact list. The only exception to this rule will be when you contact Mr. Thrall or Mrs. Coen with instructions to have someone else pick up your child.

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, videos, coloring books or money to school. These things are not easily shared and discourage the use of the creative materials at preschool. The only exception to this rule is on your child’s show and tell day. Guns, knives war toys, and other toys of destruction are strongly discouraged from school and WILL NOT BE SHARED.

Field trips will be planned throughout the year. A note about the field trip plans will be sent home in advance. The parent or guardian will need to sign a field trip permission form on parent’s night.

ARRIVAL & PICKUP

You are welcome to come into the classroom anytime you are bringing or picking up your child from school. You are also welcome to visit the classroom at any time during the day. We do ask that you follow the scheduled arrival and pickup times as closely as possible. We want to make sure that the preschool staff is in the classroom when the children arrive. We ask that you never leave a child unattended. Please make sure that one of the preschool staff knows that your child has arrived. It is best if parents plan on bringing the children into the school, particularly during the first few weeks of school. I will be at the 4 year-old pre-school door to let your child into the building. Patience and courtesy are appreciated throughout these times during the day.

HEALTH ISSUES

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home or you will be notified to pick up your child:

1. A contagious disease (Such as Impetigo, pink eye, lice, chicken pox, strep throat, etc.)
2. A fever of 100 degrees or higher
3. Diarrhea
4. Vomiting
5. A constant cough and/or sore throat
6. Skin rash

Please notify us if your child has been exposed to or contacts a communicable disease. Likewise, we will inform you if your child has been exposed to a disease at the school. If your child has a fever, please keep them home for 24 hours after their fever has broken. We would appreciate a call if your child is absent for any reason. In case of an emergency, we would request that you provide an emergency contact and any other work/home number. It is also important that parents inform the school of any changes in address and telephone numbers.

COMMUNICATION

We hope that this handbook is the beginning of good communication between the staff and your family. To continue to keep you informed we will provide letters to notify you of new themes, field trips, and other special activities. We will also have two parent-teacher conferences throughout the year. These conferences will be in the fall and spring. In addition to these conferences, we will have two different pre-school performances. These performances will be at Christmas and the end of the year.

Good communication works both ways. The staff appreciates knowing when your child may be experiencing changing family circumstances. If a student is under the restriction of a court order the school must have a copy of the court order on file. Remember to keep the school informed of your address or phone number change. If your family makes the choice to move from Elkhart, please notify the staff ahead of time and leave a forwarding address. We would still like to keep in contact.

SNACKS AND MEALS

The children will be provided with a nutritious meal each day that they attend school. The morning session will eat breakfast and afternoon session will eat lunch. If your child has a food allergy please notify the preschool staff. The meals will be eaten in the lunchroom at the preschool sized tables. Snacks will be eaten in the classroom. The children will brush their teeth after meals. Snacks and mealtime can be a source of learning to share responsibility in setting the table and serving food. Use of family style dining can promote socializations and conversation between children and adults. Another benefit is that adults can model appropriate mealtime behavior and will help the children develop manners.

Please make sure that all childcare providers are aware that our children will eat meals at school so that the children will not be fed twice. All children, whether they have eaten or not, come to the table. Children are learning to serve themselves as well as pour their own drinks. Children may want to start modeling these behaviors at home. We do not force the children to eat. They are asked to take one bite of each food that they have served themselves. We want to encourage the children to start becoming more independent as well as teaching responsibility.

VOLUNTEERS

We are very interested in having parent volunteers to help in our classroom. Training would be provided. Please let us know if you are interested. If you have unique talents, skills, interests, or an interesting career that you would like to share, please let us know. It is exciting for the children to have their parent/guardian in the classroom. When volunteering in the classroom please stop by the office to check in and get a visitor badge.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is defined as “the ongoing processes of helping children develop inner control so that they can manage their own behavior in a socially approved manner”. It contributes to the healthy growth and development of a child and establishes positive patterns of behavior needed throughout their lives. Discipline is a positive growth experience when it is approached as a developmental concept and facilitated through guidance, teaching, and role modeling. Guidance plays an important role in positive discipline.

Children should be familiar with what is expected from them. Rules will be simple, consistent and developmentally appropriate. When there is inappropriate behavior, the child will be redirected or guided through positive behavior strategies. Immediate feedback will be provided. For aggressive or out of control behaviors the teacher may use time out. The teacher will keep communication open with the parents and the principal about positive and negative social events in the classroom.