



Pre-Kindergarten

Handbook

2019/2020



Vision: Inspiring Confidence and Encouraging Success

Mission: Creating an educational environment that promotes CURIOSITY, CRITICAL THINKING, COMMUNICATION and COLLABORATION while empowering scholars to be responsible, contributing members of our community, nation and world.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

The WHCSD Pre-Kindergarten Program is licensed through the Ohio Department of Education, which monitors each classroom at least twice during the school year with an announced and unannounced visit. Each classroom must comply with the Rules for Preschool Programs, Chapter 3301-37, State of Ohio Revised Code. The Pre-K license, a copy of the most recent Compliance report and corrective action plan, if applicable, are to be posted in the room. Copies of the Rules for Preschool Regulations are located in the Pre-Kindergarten classroom and the Office of Special Education. These documents are available upon request.

John Dewey Elementary School's Pre-Kindergarten Program has earned 4 stars from Step Up To Quality Rating. We are also a Universal Pre K Site / Invest In Children. John Dewey Elementary School Pre-Kindergarten Program is a place for children and families. The success of our program depends upon the parent/ guardian engagement. Your participation is required for enrollment, but is necessary for the program to operate effectively, for children to be successful, and to meet funding requirements.

Class SIZE/Child-Staff Ratio:

State preschool regulations require a child/staff ratio of 14:1 and a maximum group size of 28 children per room. However, research indicates that small group sizes and lower child/staff ratios are strong predictors of compliance with indicators of quality such as positive interactions among staff, children and developmentally appropriate curriculum. Consequently, in the Pre-Kindergarten classrooms of WHCSD, class size will not exceed 20 children with a teacher and an Educational Aide.

Parent Roster

A parent roster is developed annually as required by state law. The roster contains each child's name and telephone number. If you do not wish to have your name on the roster, you may sign a waiver at the time of enrollment. A roster is available upon request from the Pre-Kindergarten teacher.

Student Records

Each Pre-Kindergarten site will maintain enrollment, health, attendance, child's progress, child's history and parent/guardian-teacher conference information for each child enrolled in the program. Records are confidential but are available for review by the child's parent or guardian, Pre-Kindergarten Team, and the Ohio Department of Education.

Program Services

All children enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten Program will receive the following services:

1. Academic instruction appropriate to the child's needs and development. This instruction will be aligned to the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards adopted by the State Board of Education, as well as the Scope and Sequence developed through the WHCSD Academic Office.
2. Assessments that will measure each child's progress in the areas of social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language development, such as the Early Learning Assessment and our Developmental Learning Materials assessment.
3. Hearing screening (Parents will receive reports of those screening and referral to community agencies if needed.) This will be coordinated through the school nurse.
4. Vision screening will be done by the school nurse or an Agency. (Parents will receive reports of the screening and referrals to community agencies if needed.) This will be coordinated through the school nurse.
5. The assistance and services of a social worker or psychologist will be available upon the teacher's and/or parent's request.
6. Students will be assessed with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), your participation is required during this assessment.
7. Students will be assessed using the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), your participation is required during this assessment.

Pre-Kindergarten Team

The Pre-Kindergarten Team will consist of the following:

- Principal or Principal Designee
- Teacher and Teacher Assistant(s)
- Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, and Psychologist

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher In-Service

Pre-Kindergarten Teacher In-Service Days are scheduled for teachers throughout the school year for professional development. ***These dates are in addition to the district dates.*** Children do not attend school on these days.

****These dates will be given to you in advance by the Principal and the Classroom Teacher****

Program Description

The WHCSD Pre-Kindergarten is designed to:

1. Provide a safe, healthy nurturing and stimulating physical environment
2. Create an environment where each child can feel confident about himself or herself
3. Provide a pleasant introduction to school through successful personal, social, and academic learning experiences
4. Provide children with basic learning skills in a language-rich environment necessary for success in future learning
5. Prepare children to enter Kindergarten ready to learn with strong academic and social skills for success, including sharing, taking turns and getting along with others in a group setting
6. Help children learn to express themselves, effectively in socially acceptable ways
7. Give children new experiences outside the home and beyond the classroom
8. Help children and their families improve health and nutrition through education, screening and referrals
9. Involve parents in each child's total educational experience by encouraging parent involvement and supporting each parent in their parenting role
10. Encourage each child to assume responsibility and to develop independence
11. Encourage listening skills appropriate to each child's age
12. Establish and maintain strong parent and community involvement and support

Program Curriculum

The Pre-Kindergarten curriculum is guided by the Ohio Department of Education's Early Learning Current Standards. We are currently using Creative Curriculum as one of the resources for learning. The Early Learning Standards follow themes of early childhood education that:

- Communication is critical. Children learn to communicate effectively with others through language, writing, and expressive arts. It is important that children are read to on a daily basis.
- Relationships are influential. The relationships that children have with adults and peers at a young age are the building blocks of healthy development needed to successfully function in our society.
- All children are born ready to learn. Current brain research suggests that we often underestimate what young children can do. Although humans learn throughout their

lifetime, they will never have the capability to learn as much as they do in the early years.

Skill Development

Development skills are based on the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool students published by the Ohio Department of Education. Children's experiences in the (The WHCSD) Pre-Kindergarten Program include but not limited to practicing skills in the following domains:

Social/Emotional

- Follows simple directions
- Selects an activity, without help
- Shares toys and materials
- Cleans up after an activity

Physical Well-Being / Motor Development

- Learns to hop, skip, jump and run
- Learns to handle scissors to cut
- Develops eye/hand coordination
- Learns to dress independently – zips, buttons, snaps, ties (shoes)

Language and Literacy

- Uses and recognizes full names
- Speaks using complete sentences
- Names objects and uses words to describe them by size, shape color and use.
- Begins to understand relationships (i.e. long/short hair, big/little, tall/short, soft/hard. Rough/smooth, slow/fast, smooth/bumpy, here/there)
- Classifies (groups) objects and pictures
- Follows a series of three directions
- Relates experiences in the group
- Retells a story
- Understands position words (i.e. under, over, top, down, bottom. Above, below, in, out, besides, behind and in front)
- Identifies and names shapes (circle, square, rectangle and triangle)
- Recognizes and names colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, brown, black and white)
- Relates feelings and understands the terms happy, sad, angry, afraid

Cognitive

- Science
- Mathematics
- Social Studies

Parent Engagement

John Dewey Elementary School is a Universal Pre K (UPK) site and is a member of the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS)

The UPK/NNPS Family Engagement Model provides a variety of activities and opportunities for families through six types of involvement as follows:

Type 1-Parenting

Help families meet their basic responsibilities of housing, health, nutrition, clothing, safety, parenting skills, and home conditions which support positive growth and development of their child (ren).

Type 2-Communicating

Ensure that schools and family child care providers regularly communicate with families through an "open door policy," regular family conferences (at least 2 per year), a parent website, memos, newsletters, phone calls, and other two-way communication interactions.

Type 3-Volunteering

This includes providing families with opportunities to be involved in and for the school, through classroom participation and attendance at site events that celebrate the children's growth and development. Volunteers may conduct activities at school, in classrooms, at home or in the community.

Type 4- Learning At Home

This includes having child and family activities that can be shared in the home and promote positive child growth and development.

Type 5-Decision Making

This includes providing opportunity for families to be involved in program decision-making through the Action Team for Partnership, where a yearly plan is developed by families and staff for program enhancement.

Type 6-Collaborating with Community

This includes activities that help families connect with community resources in order to enhance their family life.

****Please see the Principal to participate on the Pre K Action Team which will work to provide meaningful activities for families and children****



School and home connections are important to your child's development. Warrensville Heights City Schools is partnering with the SPARK program. The SPARK is based on a home visitation model. Trained home visitors call parents to provide conduct prescribed lessons, based on Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards, with preschool-age children and their parents. They educate parents on how to get children ready for kindergarten, evaluate children's skill levels, and enhance parents' abilities to be their child's first and most important teacher.

The SPARK program is a **required**-component of your pre-kindergarten program

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Visitation Policy

Parents or guardians of enrolled children in the Pre-Kindergarten Program are welcome to visit the classroom at any time. Upon entering the school building, parent/guardian must sign in and present a state issued identification in the school office and adhere to school policy.

Parent/Guardian Participation

- Each parent/guardian may feel free to contact the teacher, school principal when assistance is needed for concerns related to the Pre-Kindergarten Program.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to provide information about the child during the intake process. Parents and guardians will need to attend an orientation meeting prior to the child beginning school as well as meetings during the school year.
- Parents/guardian will be asked to attend scheduled conferences at least twice during the school Year to discuss the child's progress. Teachers or parents/guardians may hold an informal conference when deemed necessary by either party.
- Parents/guardians are asked to check their child's backpack or folder each day. Important information such as permission slips will be sent home via the backpack or folder. Failure to return requested paperwork in a timely manner may result in your child being excluded from an activity if permission is not received.

- Parents/guardians may volunteer in the child's classroom. Pre-K classrooms buzz with activity and provide many opportunities for you to get involved. Speak with the teacher if you have time to lend a hand.
- Parents/guardians may participate in PTO-Parent / Teacher Organization or other school parent meetings.
- Parents/guardians may volunteer to participate on field trips.

“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child's success is the positive involvement of parents.”

-----Jane D. Hull

Support Outside of the Classroom:

Parents/Guardians may provide support outside of the classroom by:

- Listening to what your child has to say;
- Reading to your child every day;
- Taking the child to interesting places such as the zoo, farm, parks, supermarket, airport, beach and the library;
- Providing opportunities for language development by having the child talk about his/her experiences;
- Appreciating his/her efforts with the use of creative materials;
- Establishing an early bedtime;
- Teaching child to dress/undress himself or herself independently;
- Limiting and carefully monitoring TV programs;
- Seeing that the child attends school regularly and on time;
- Labeling boots, raincoats and other clothing that the child may need to remove at school
- Helping the child to complete homework sent home by the teacher and returning it on time.
- Keeping the child home when he/she is ill;
- Notifying the teacher of a situation that may have an adverse effect on a child's behavior.

Guidance and Classroom Management

Sensible and consistent limits need to be set in any group to help children feel safe, secure and comfortable. Children need to feel confident that WHCSD will protect them when the need arises. This policy applies to all staff as well as parents.

Classroom Management

Basic classroom rules will be established with the children's input. The rules will be relatively few in number and will deal with matters of importance for group and individual well-being. Limits will be consistently enforced. Areas such as safety, fairness, respect for individual and group rights and needs, use of equipment and materials will be considered.

Adults in the classroom will model appropriate behavior and positive communication skills so that the children will know the most appropriate way to handle potentially negative situations.

John Dewey Elementary School's Pre-Kindergarten program uses PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention Support) to encourage students to demonstrate behaviors which are safe and increase academic achievement and increase positive relationships.

When a direct approach is called for, the sequence of action by the teacher will be:

1. If a child is not aware of or is not certain of a behavior limit, the teacher will state the rule to the child and provide reasons for the rule so that the rule makes sense to the child. Redirection can help children find a more acceptable behavior or activity.
2. If a child is ignoring a limit, staff members should state it firmly and enforce the limit based on the consequence that has been established.
3. When reasonable and firm reminders fail, the child will be removed from the situation. She/he will sit or be taken somewhere away from the group. The child will always be in view of an adult until she /he feels ready to return to the group and observe the limits of the situation. The period of the situation will be short and determined by the child's readiness to cooperate.
4. Should negative behavior continue, a parent conference will be requested.

5. Parents must be cooperatively involved in order to accomplish the goals for the child. Further professional referrals may be made to the parents.
6. The program reserves the right to exclude a child based on health and safety issues, attendance and failure to adhere to program policies and regulations.

Discipline

Any method of discipline shall be restricted as follows:

1. There will be no cruel, harsh or corporal punishment or any unusual punishments or any unusual punishments such as but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
2. No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
3. 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 gain control.
4. 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.
5. No child shall be subject to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself/herself or his/her family or other verbal abuse.
6. Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep or toileting accidents.
7. Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
8. Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
9. Separation, when used as discipline, will be restricted to one minute apart from the class for every year of age of the child. For a four-year old child that means the child could be given time-out for a maximum of 4 minutes. The child be within sight and hearing of a Pre-Kindergarten staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
10. The staff shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Medical and Communicable Disease

Medical Examination

- A medical examination by a licensed physician is required for each child. The Medical Examination Form must be signed and dated by the physician certifying that the child is free from communicable disease, including tuberculosis. The medical form must also include a record of all immunizations required by state law. The physical examination must occur within 12 months prior to admission.

- If the physical expires (13 months from the date of examination) and it is not updated, the child will be excluded from class until the new examination is on file at the school.
- Vision, Dental, Hearing, Hemoglobin and Hematocrit levels should be assessed by your physician and forms need to be turned submitted to your Pre-Kindergarten teacher.

Management of Communicable Disease

- In order to minimize the transmission of illness and infection, the Pre-Kindergarten Program will follow the policies and procedures set forward by the State of Ohio and reflected on the Ohio Department of Health's "Communicable Disease Chart." This chart is posted each Pre-Kindergarten classroom.
- All Pre-Kindergarten personnel have been trained in the recognition, prevention and management of communicable diseases. A quick "health check" will be done as the child enters the classroom each day.
- A child with signs or symptoms of a communicable disease will be isolated immediately in a designated area of the classroom but within sight and hearing of an adult.
- The school nurse or principal will be notified of all suspected communicable disease symptoms.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of the symptoms.
- Parents of the other children in the class will be notified of exposure to the communicable disease by letter or telephone so they can watch for symptoms in their own child.
- Research has shown that frequent hand washing is the best defense against the transmission of infection and disease. The Pre-Kindergarten staff will encourage the children to wash their hands as often as possible to keep from spreading germs and infection.

Signs or Symptoms of Illness

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated, taken to the school nurse office by an adult and/or discharged to the parent or guardian:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24-hour period);
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;

- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Yellowish skin or eyes;
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye);
- Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken under the arm when in combination with other signs of illness;
- Untreated infected skin patches (ringworm, etc.);
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool;
- Stiff neck, or
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children and taken to the school nurse by an adult. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the principal and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed in paragraph (B) (2) of this rule as well as the following:

- (a) Unusual spots or rashes;
- (b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;
- (c) Elevated temperature; or
- (d) Vomiting

Any child sent home with diarrhea and vomiting should be symptom free for 24-hour period before returning to school.

Please do not pre-medicate your child and send him/her to school sick. It is best for your child and for the other children in the class that he/she stays home until free from symptoms.

Health and Safety

Immunization Requirements

The state of Ohio Immunization Law requires that all pupils must have the following immunizations to attend school:

1. Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (DPT).....4 doses required
2. Oral Poliomyelitis (OPV).....3 doses required
3. Measles, Rubella (MMR).....1 dose required
on or after 1st birthday

4. Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV).....3 doses required
(4 months from beginning to end of series)
5. TB Test (Mantoux) required for all students entering or reentering the school district from outside the country.
6. HIB3 or 4 doses
(depending on type and age started)

Immunizations may be given through your private family physician or free at the following Cleveland health clinics (Monday through Friday).

Miles-Broadway Health Center

9127 Miles Ave.

216.664.7487

Mc Cafferty Health Center

4242 Lorain Avenue

216.664.6603

Cleveland Clinic School Based Health Unit

(Contact the School Clinic for dates and availability)

Administering Medication

The WHCSD Pre-Kindergarten Program procedure for administering medication, vitamins or fluoride supplement and the modification of diets are governed by WHCSD's policy. With the exceptions noted below, no employee of the Warrensville Heights City School District shall, in the course of employment, administer any drug to a student.

Students requiring prescription medication during the period when they are under the direct supervision of the principal shall be permitted to administer to himself or herself, in the presence of a school nurse / school employee, provided that the following document have been received:

1. A physician's statement verifying the necessity for the medication to be taken during school hours and identifying the medication, dosage and the time interval at which it is to be taken; and
2. A statement from the parent or guardian granting permission to take medication and absolving the Warrensville Heights City School District and school personnel from any and all liability for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the presence of medication in the school or its used by the student.

The following exceptions shall be permitted:

1. The administration of medication to handicapped students shall comply with the provisions outlined in the Federal Education Act for Handicapped Children of 1975.
2. All dental disease prevention programs sponsored by the Ohio Department of Health that utilize prescription drugs for the prevention of dental disease and are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Ohio Department of Health shall be exempt from all requirements with this policy.

Child Abuse Reporting and Prevention

Staff has completed a required course in child abuse reporting and prevention. They will, as required under Section 211.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline at 216.696.5437.

Toileting Policy

All children must have mastered toileting. No diapers or pull-ups are to be worn. Toilet mastery can be defined as the control over one's bladder and bowels. Because we are not a licensed diapering facility, children must know how to change themselves in case of a toileting accident. If your child has an accident by means of a bowel movement, you will receive a call to come and change your child. Excessive accidents (more than once a week) may require evaluation by the staff and could result in your child's exclusion from the program.

Safety

1. General

- No Child will be left alone unsupervised. She/he will always be within sight and hearing of an adult.
- There will be a posted plan for medical, dental, fire emergencies and weather alerts.
- There will be a monthly fire drill and procedures for rapid dismissals and tornado drills.
- At least one staff member trained in first aid and child abuse prevention will be available at all times the children are in attendance.
- No spray aerosols will be used when children are in attendance.
- Protective mats will be placed under climbing equipment.
- Electrical outlets will be covered when not in use.

- Spilled liquids or food will be wiped up immediately to prevent slippery spots on the floor.
- Glass objects, plastic garment bags, wire coat hangers or broken toys will be removed from the classroom.
- All chemicals and potentially dangerous materials will be kept out of the reach of the children.

2. Field Trips

- Parents will be asked to give permission for each trip away from the center that requires transportation.
- State approved staff-child ratios will be maintained.
- A first aid kit will be taken.
- Each child, when away from the school will be identified with a tag including the center's name, address and telephone number.
- Each child's Emergency Information Form will be taken in case of an accident or illness.
- Parents will be asked to sign a blanket permission slip for routine walking trips.
- A staff person trained in first aid will always be present on the field trip. All buses and vans used for transportation will meet the Ohio Motor Vehicle code.
- No child shall be transported in a private car by school personnel.

Emergency Procedures

At the time of enrollment, parents will be requested to sign an Emergency Authorization Form for permission to transport your child in case of an emergency. When an accident or injury occurs, staff will complete an incident report and parent/guardian is given a copy of that report the day of the injury. A copy will also be on file in the school office.

School Arrival and Departure

- Parents or guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. Each child must be signed in upon arrival, walked through the breakfast line and signed out before departure from school by an adult.
- Designated times and location for arrival and departure are determined by each school.
- Children will not be released to anyone other than parents/guardians or those listed on the Child Release information form unless the parent notifies the teacher in writing.

Attendance Policy

Excused Absences

Absences that are in the Best Interest of the Child (Limited to 10 days per fiscal year)

1. Non-court ordered visitation with non-custodial parent.
2. Special Day with parent
3. Vacation
4. Work/School Holiday for parent scheduled on a day, which differs from the center's observance.

Unexcused Absences (Limited to 10 per fiscal year)

1. Illnesses lasting more than ten (10) consecutive days, which have not been verified by a medical doctor
2. Preschool child did not want to go to school
3. Parent/child overslept
4. Any absence for which a specific reason is not given

More than ten (10) days of unexcused absences in a fiscal year will subject the family to termination of services.

Kindergarten Transition

All children enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten Program are enrolled in the Warrensville Heights City School District and are assigned a student identification number that will follow them as long as they are enrolled in the District.

It is our desire that the transition from Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten be a smooth one. At least quarterly or more often if feasible the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children will participate in an activity together that will help the Pre-Kindergarten child transition to the next grade. During the month of March or April, you will be invited to visit the Kindergarten room at your child's school. At this time, the Kindergarten teacher will share information with you and answer any questions you may have about the Kindergarten program. You will also participate in completing a Pre K to Kindergarten transition form.

At the end of the school year, the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten children and their parents may participate in a combined school program to share special songs, stories and fingerplays learned during the school year. Transition from the Pre-Kindergarten Program to Kindergarten is a grade advancement or promotion within the school system. Consequently, a graduation exercise with a cap and gown is not appropriate.

