



Dear Triton Families,

Welcome to Triton Elementary Preschool. We are pleased to offer a full-day learning program for pre-K students in our community. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the procedures and policies that are implemented to ensure your child's safety and access to high quality instruction. We revise the handbook annually based on changes in local or state requirements and feedback from stakeholders. We are committed to continuous improvement and desire to create an environment that will produce the best possible outcomes for students.

We ask you to become familiar with the guidelines and assist us in implementation. If you ever have any questions that are not covered by the handbook, please don't hesitate to reach out to the office at 574-342-2355.

Cordially,

*Christine K. Cook, Principal
Triton Elementary*

Preschool Staff

Christine Cook, Principal
Melissa LaShure, Director of Curriculum and Assessment
Josh Van Houten, Social Worker, Administrative Assistant
Stacy Scheetz, School Counselor
Kimberly Kelley, Teacher
Casey Yarbrough, Instructional Assistant
Johna Snyder, Part-time Instructional Assistant
Sarah Heinlein, Part-time Instructional Assistant
Allison Stuart, Part-time Instructional Assistant
Stephanie Andrews, Part-time Instructional Assistant
Brenna Cook, Nurse
Naomi Mulligan, Nurse
Angie Williamson, School Secretary
Ashley Doll, School Secretary

Mission

Triton Elementary Preschool will provide for the physical, mental, emotional, and social needs of each child while preparing him/her for success in kindergarten and the world beyond.

Philosophy

Triton Elementary Preschool staff believes that all children benefit and learn from active participatory learning and meaningful adult-child interactions. The learning environment supports student interests and provides a variety of materials for free and structured play in addition to child-initiated and teacher-guided experiences.

Curriculum

Triton Elementary Preschool uses *High Scope Preschool Curriculum* and the Indiana Early Learning Foundations to create experiences that foster creativity, problem-solving, and discovery. Small-group and whole-group activities are offered daily that provide students with a blend of child-directed and teacher-guided experiences.

The curriculum offers learning experiences in the areas of language/literacy, physical and social-emotional development, mathematics, creative arts, science and technology, social studies, and approaches to learning.

Triton Elementary Preschool uses *Second Step for Early Learners* to help students learn skills for listening, paying attention, managing their emotions and behavior, getting along with others, and transitioning to kindergarten.

Teachers observe students as they explore materials, play, and participate in teacher-guided experiences and look for key developmental indicators that demonstrate their progress. COR Advantage is used throughout the year to document progress and report to parents.

Discipline Policy

A child's development should be nurtured through caring, patience, and understanding. Preschool children learn to follow directions, work and play with others, and use self-control. However, while caring for your children, we may have to respond to your child's misbehavior. Hitting, kicking, spitting, hostile verbal behavior, and other behaviors which will hurt another child or adult *are not permitted*.

In response to these behaviors, we will not

- Use threats or bribes
- Use physical punishment
- Deprive your child of food or other basic needs
- Use humiliation or isolation

In response to misbehavior, we will

- Respect your child
- Establish clear rules
- Be consistent in enforcing rules
- Use positive language to explain desired behavior
- Speak calmly while bending down to your child's eye level
- Give clear choices
- Redirect your child to a new activity
- Move your child to a Response-Ability Mat (See explanation on back)

If your child's behavior is very disruptive or harmful to him/herself or other children, we will discuss the issue with you privately. If the situation can be resolved, the child may remain enrolled. If we are unable to resolve the issue, you may be asked to make other arrangements for your child. As a parent, you may have some concerns or wish to offer suggestions. Using the lines below, we may modify the above plan with agreed upon suggestions.

Child's Name

Date of Birth

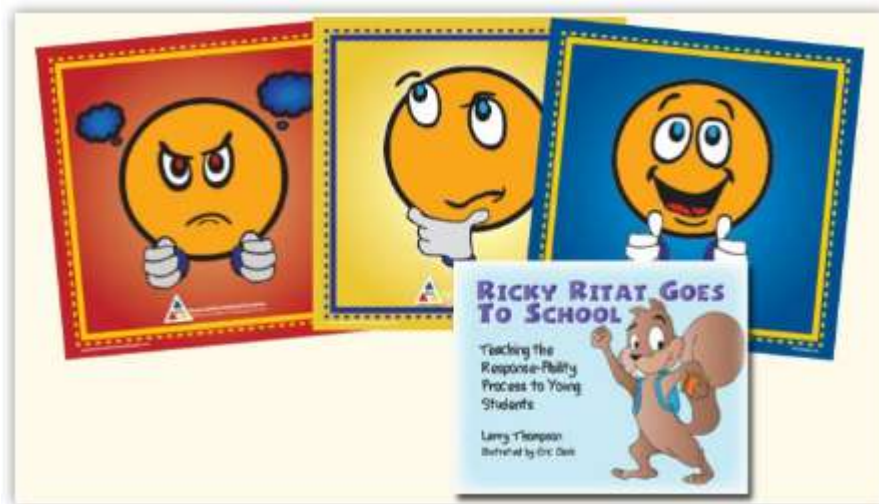
Additional techniques to be used with my child:

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Response-Ability Mats

These mats are part of the Response-Ability Centered Discipline program which consists of three colorful 12-inch mats designed to develop self-regulation skills in students and to help students take ownership of their own behaviors. The Response-Ability Process is sometimes confused with traditional time-based processes; including timeout and detention. Response-Ability Mats are not intended to be used as a punishment or consequence. The objective is to teach students to recognize when they are too emotionally charged to make the best decisions and to get them to a point where they can handle situations in a positive manner.



The child sits or stands on the first mat to regain composure, then moves to the second mat when he or she is ready to begin processing what happened and what he or she could have done differently. The child moves to the third mat when he or she is ready to work with the teacher.

We will help your child as he/she learns the thinking process behind the mats. The mats serve as reminders for thinking through each stage. As your child masters the process, the mats may not be necessary.

Expulsion and Suspension Policy

High quality child care and early learning programs are important to preventing suspensions and expulsions in the early learning setting. The policy uses a pyramid model designed to promote healthy social and emotional development in all children, to prevent challenging behavior problems, and to intervene successfully when behaviors pose a serious concern.

Tier 1:

Recognize and give most attention to positive behaviors.
Communicate regularly with parents, noting their child's positive behaviors.
Greet children by name, engage in frequent conversations with them, and use a caring tone.
Provide a nurturing and responsive environment with a consistent daily routine
Provide age-appropriate materials and spaces to support small and large group activities
Use playtime to intentionally teach social-emotional skills

Tier 2:

Utilize Second Step lessons to help children recognize and label feelings and teach strategies to handle strong emotions
Teach students to use the Responsibility Mats when problems occur
Actively teach and model problem-solving
Teach, post and practice a few positively stated classroom/hallway rules

Tier 3:

Conference with parents/guardians to discuss interventions and develop goals
Complete health, vision or hearing screening
Document frequency and patterns related to child behaviors
Ask another staff member to observe child and offer suggestions
Provide reasonable accommodations
Make referral to the Student Assistance Team or an outside agency for additional services
Reduce the amount of time in care

A copy of this policy is contained in the Parent Handbook and will be reviewed each year during Parent Orientation or as new students are enrolled.

Special Education Policy

2460.02 - LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

It is the philosophy and position of the School Board and its administration that the primary responsibility for the administration and delivery of special education programs and services should be within the Corporation and at the school a student would regularly attend, whenever appropriate.

Further, the Board endorses a commitment to the provision of a continuum of special education programs and services to disabled students in cooperation with JESSE.

Placement options shall follow a continuum of services model to ensure that each disabled person is provided a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). To that end, every attempt will be made to first serve disabled students in the context of a regular education classroom. Other more restrictive environments such as: resource rooms, self-contained categorical classrooms, or settings outside of a Corporation school will be considered only when placement in the regular classroom has been documented by the Case Conference to be inappropriate for the student's educational needs.

20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.

511 IAC 7-27-9

Triton Elementary Preschool operates under the same policies as Triton School Corporation 2460.02. The preschool staff will make every attempt to provide accommodations for students' needs in accordance with an IEP or 504. Triton preschool students with IEPs may be served at the ACT Preschool in Argos as determined by the Case Conference Committee.

Daily Schedule *(May be subject to change)*

8:00-8:25	Arrival
8:25-8:45	Breakfast in Cafeteria/Classroom Activities
8:45-9:00	Bathroom Break/Prepare to go Outside
9:00-9:25	Recess
9:30-10:00	Large Group Activities
10:00-11:15	Plan/Do/Review (Centers)
11:20-11:50	Lunch/Bathroom Break
11:50-12:20	Small Group Activities
12:20-1:20	Rest Time
1:20-1:35	Bathroom Break/Prepare for Recess
1:30-1:50	Recess
2:00-2:20	Afternoon Snack
2:20-2:45	Large Group Activity
2:45	Walkers Dismiss (2:15 on Fridays)
2:55	Bus Riders Dismiss (2:25 on Fridays)

General Policies and Procedures

Arrival: Staff will greet students arriving by bus at Door 2 and escort them into the building. Students walking or arriving by car should arrive at 7:55am at Door 3 (Thayer Street) at the back of the building and will be escorted inside by preschool staff. In the event that students arrive after the preschool has already entered the building, parents must bring their child to the main office (Door 1). Office staff will escort their child to the preschool room.

Two-Hour Delay: Preschool staff will greet students at Door 2 and escort them to the classroom. Breakfast will not be served on two-hour delays.

Dismissal: Bus riders will be dismissed at 2:55 pm (2:25pm on Fridays). Preschool staff will escort students to buses and help them get buckled in seat belts.

Students who walk or are picked up by parents will be dismissed at 2:45 (2:15pm on Fridays) and escorted by preschool staff to the back of the school (Door 3). Parents will walk up to the playground entrance to pick up their child.

Transportation Changes: Any changes in mode of transportation must be made through the school office at 574-342-2355 by 1:00pm. This enables the appropriate people to be notified so that each child may get home safely.

Illness/Absences

Parents are requested to notify school personnel by telephone, between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. if a student is absent due to illness or other emergency. The telephone number is 574-342-2355. Parents who do not contact the school will receive a phone call to verify the child's absence. Any unverified absence is considered unexcused.

Breakfast

Preschool students who choose to eat breakfast will do so in the cafeteria at 8:25am each day except when there is a two-hour delay. Parents will be given the opportunity to indicate whether their child should or should not have breakfast. In the event that decision should change, they will need to notify the teacher in writing. The cost for breakfast is \$1.20.

Snacks

A daily afternoon snack will be offered to all students. If they choose not to eat it, they may take it home provided it can be easily transported. There is no cost for snacks.

Lunch

All students will be offered a school lunch in the classroom at 11:20am or students may pack their own lunch. Students will bring home a menu on the back page of the weekly Friday Newsnote. . We encourage students to try new foods as much as possible. Lunches cost \$2.20.

If parents choose to eat lunch with their child, they must first sign in at the office before coming to the classroom. If the parent brings take-out food, the parent will be asked to eat in the cafeteria with his/her child instead of eating in the classroom.

Fee Schedule/Assistance

Parents will be asked to pay preschool fees on a weekly or monthly basis. Payment envelopes will be sent home on Fridays in student take-home folders. Payment is expected the following Monday. Please send any cash or checks in an envelope or baggie marked with your child's name.

Parent Vouchers

Triton Elementary Preschool qualifies as an On My Way Pre-K Provider. This means that eligible families may receive state vouchers to cover the cost of preschool. Families must apply online (onmywayprek.org) and schedule an appointment with a Brightpoint office. Find out more about this funding source by contacting the Triton Elementary office.

Late Payments

Timely payments are expected. If you have unusual circumstances and are unable to make a payment, please contact the school office as soon as possible to work out a feasible plan. If payments are not being made regularly, enrollment may be suspended until back payments are made in full.

Grading/Reporting/Conferences

Triton Elementary Preschool will conduct two parent/teacher conferences each year (October and May). Parents will be provided with progress reports at least three times each year and weekly updates on what students are doing in school.

Hand Washing Policy

Proper handwashing is essential for preventing the spread of illness. Indiana state regulations require child care providers and children to wash their hands before and after certain duties and activities – primarily eating, toileting, and playing outside.

SAFE CONDITIONS POLICY

Authorization to Pick Up a Child

Parents are required to provide the names and relationships of people who they authorize to pick up their child. Name cards will be provided to parents to distribute to authorized persons. At dismissal, authorized persons will be required to show their card prior to leaving with the child.

Authorization to Visit a Child

The preschool has an open-door policy and welcomes parents to visit their child in the classroom at any time, but the visit may not interrupt the class. Before proceeding to the classroom, the parent must sign in and receive a visitor's pass. During the visit, the teacher will continue with the scheduled activities and will not be available for discussion. When possible, parents are encouraged to call ahead to schedule visits.

Building Evacuations

In the event of a fire, gas leak, extended power outage, or chemical spill, the building will be evacuated and the preschool may close if necessary. Parents will be notified and given a reasonable amount of time to pick up their child. The preschool will follow the Triton Elementary Emergency Preparedness Plan for evacuation and reunification.

Building Security

All entrances to Triton Elementary are kept locked during school hours. Visitors may enter by pressing the intercom at Entrance 1 and stating the reason for their visit. Office personnel will determine if entry is allowed. All visitors to the building during school hours are required to sign in and out and will be given a visitor's badge.

Child Abuse (Reporting of)

Indiana law (IC 31-33-5-1) requires anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it to authorities. Individuals who knowingly fail to make a report required by this law commit a Class B misdemeanor and may be subject to a fine.

Confidentiality

All employees of the preschool will maintain confidentiality relating to staff members and their families, students and their families, volunteers, and others visiting or in association with the preschool. No details of any student, parent or guardian, volunteer, or employee should be discussed either within or outside the preschool including on social media.

Employee Background Checks

All preschool staff members must consent to a criminal history background check. Guests are not to be left alone with children or counted within the staff for purposes of teacher/child ratios. Volunteers and chaperones must also submit to a Background Check prior to volunteering or chaperoning.

Emergency Drills

Monthly fire drills are conducted to prepare staff and children in case of a real event. The drills keep the preschool up to code and show the staff and children how and where to escape from a fire. Evacuation plans are posted in the classroom and in other areas that children occupy, such as the restrooms and cafeteria. In all cases of drills or actual events, preschool will follow the standard onsite evacuation plan and wait for clearance by administration or emergency response officials before reentering the building or classrooms. Each semester, students will participate in tornado drills and lockdown drills with the rest of the Triton Elementary student body.

Indoor Safety

Triton Elementary Preschool ensures the safety of children inside the building by following these procedures:

- Non-authorized people are prohibited from being in the classrooms or from having contact with the students.
- The building is kept securely locked and monitored for non-authorized access to the classrooms and students.
- Cleaning supplies and other hazardous materials are kept locked and out of reach of children. Custodians are available throughout the day to assist with cleaning up after spills or accidents.
- Classrooms, restrooms, cafeteria, and other areas occupied for preschool use are kept clean and in a sanitary condition at all times. Custodians clean and vacuum the classroom nightly.
- Tables are cleaned and sanitized with food-safe products after snacks or meals or immediately if they become contaminated or soiled.
- Toys, furniture, and other equipment used by children are kept in good condition and removed if broken, loose, rusted, splintered, etc.
- Discipline policy is followed to prevent children from physically hurting one another.

- Children are in the care and supervision of authorized adults at all times and are accounted for throughout the day by the sign in and out process and by conducting head counts.
- Repairs, construction, remodeling, and painting are done only during non-daycare hours, or during times when the children are not present in the areas where the work is being done.

Illness and Injuries

Students who become ill at school may be seen by the corporation nurse. To prevent spreading of germs/illness, children will be excluded from school with a temperature of 100 degrees or more and should be fever-free, diarrhea-free, and vomit-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Minor cuts, bruises, and abrasions may also be treated by the corporation nurse as needed. A report will be sent home with students who are seen by the nurse. The nurse will contact parents directly when needed.

Medications

School policy ensures the proper containment and dispensing of medications, ensures that proper procedures are followed for sick children and contagious diseases, and that universal precautions are followed for maintaining a healthy environment. All prescription drugs to be administered at school must come in a prescription bottle or have a written doctor's order. Behavior modification drugs must be brought in by a parent and delivered to the office.

Naptime

The preschool schedules a 1- hour naptime each day. All children are required to rest quietly on individual mats for at least 30 minutes of that time. After 30 minutes, students who are not napping may be directed to a quiet activity such as coloring, puzzles, or looking at books. Preschool staff will actively supervise students during naptime and maintain adequate teacher/child ratios. Mats are sanitized and put away after each use.

Outdoor Safety

Outdoor play is scheduled daily for all children when possible. Indoor play will be provided during inclement weather. Staff-to-child ratio applies on the playground and other outside play areas. School playground and custodial staff monitor playground conditions to ensure that the playground is kept free of glass and other hazardous items and the playground fence and equipment are in good condition. Teachers are instructed to engage with the children during play and be alert and watchful to the surroundings. Radios ensure staff have quick and reliable communication with the office.

Restrooms

When possible, the restroom inside the preschool classroom will be used by one student at a time. In the public restrooms, students will be accompanied in groups by an authorized adult at all times. Visitors or older students cannot go into a restroom occupied by preschool students.

Security Threats and Emergencies

Safety measures are in place for threats, acts of violence, and other emergencies in the Triton Elementary Emergency Preparedness Plan. Staff members have copies of the plan which is updated annually.

Severe Weather Closings

Delays or closings will be communicated through School Messenger, the school website, and local TV and radio stations.

Smoke-Free Environment

Triton Elementary is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited in all buildings, including all outdoor spaces.

Staff Training

Preschool staff keep current on required CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training and first aid certification. Staff are required to have at least 12 hours of training each year, including completing modules on health, safety, and child development.

Transportation

Some students may be transported to and/or from school on school buses. Buses are inspected annually and drivers are appropriately licensed and trained. *Preschool students are required to use a five-point harness for their own safety.* Students require written parent permission to ride a bus for a study trip offered during the school day.

