Itinerant Preschool Program 2019-2020

Parent Handbook
Operated through the Greene County Educational Service Center

Updated March 2019
What is an Itinerant Preschool Teacher?
An Itinerant Preschool Teacher is an Early Childhood Intervention Specialist who provides services to 3, 4, and 5-year-old children who qualify for services on an Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.). Students who qualify may have goals in any of these areas:

- Fine motor
- Gross Motor
- Communication
- Social-emotional behavior
- Adaptive behavior
- Cognitive skills

The Itinerant Teacher will work with the child and parents or teachers for a minimum of one hour per week to monitor the child’s progress on I.E.P. goals and to help the parents or teachers continue activities throughout the week. These strategies and activities can then be used in the child’s daily environment. This is called the “Consultative Approach” and is supported by the Ohio Department of Education as a preferred method of instruction. Itinerant services can also be provided by the speech therapist or other therapists as determined by the IEP team.

Where are Services Provided?
Services can be provided in a variety of locations including Head Start Programs, early childhood centers, preschools, or homes (when necessary). By providing services in these environments, your child’s interventions occur in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). This allows your child to remain in the program he/she already attends rather than going to a centralized location to receive services.

Who Provides Itinerant Services?
Itinerant teachers have degrees in Early Childhood (ages 0-8) and Special Education. Additional related services may be provided as warranted.

How Are Itinerant Services Delivered?
Itinerant services may look different for each child depending upon the child’s needs and I.E.P. services. The Itinerant teacher will divide the time between one-on-one instruction and observation/consultation with the preschool staff. If services are provided in the home, the Itinerant teacher will work with the child
and parents providing needed resources and/or activities to assist in reaching I.E.P. goals.

**STAFF:**
One of the most important components of high quality preschool programs is the competence and quality of the early childhood staff. Our staff members receive ongoing support and continued professional development opportunities that result in increased quality within their programs and services. Our teachers have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in education. All staff have extensive training and years of experience in early childhood education.

**Director**
Dr. Kathy Harper, Preschool Director
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**PHILOSOPHY:**
It is the philosophy of the Greene County Educational Service Center Preschool Programs that children are encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment.

We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children learn. Our preschool programs provide inclusive settings that recognize children's varied abilities, interests, needs and learning styles.

We believe children learn best through meaningful play. Our play-based, child-centered program reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery, and problem solving which provides the opportunity for individual growth and the development of a positive self-image.

We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

The statement and beliefs in this philosophy reflect the position of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

**Required Forms**
We require a birth certificate, proof of custody (if applicable), registration, family information, and completion of the child's health history forms, as well as Ohio's Poverty and Ethnicity forms.
**I.E.P.s – “Individualized Education Programs”**

Individualized education plans (I.E.P.s) are written for each child that attends the preschool with an identified disability or developmental delay. The I.E.P. is a plan that outlines the services the child will receive and the specific goals needed to enable the child to access and benefit from the general curriculum. The goals are developed by the parent, teacher, and other team members (ex. speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, etc.) based on the observations of the child and other assessment information that exists. Parents are a vital part of the I.E.P. development process. Parents are encouraged to add the goals they believe should be addressed and actively participate in writing the I.E.P. An I.E.P. is developed for each year the child is in the preschool program.

**SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS:**

Our preschool program fosters and enhances all children’s development in the following domains: social and emotional development, physical well-being and motor development, language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, and approaches toward learning. We are committed to supporting the health and well-being of each child.

Health assessments will be obtained upon a child’s entry into the program and each year thereafter. Vision and hearing screenings will be provided periodically throughout the year.

Developmental screenings will be administered to each child upon entry into the program. Information from the screening will assist the teacher in focusing on each child’s strengths, as well as their needs, in all domain areas. Parents will have opportunities to provide input through parent questionnaires.

The teacher is required to conduct ongoing assessments of the children’s progress and performance throughout the year. Progress is documented. The ongoing assessments help the teacher plan instructional activities. Examples of ongoing assessments are charts, anecdotal notes, checklists, and work samples. Many of these items will be compiled into a portfolio for your child. The information will be reviewed during parent/teacher conferences and is available for review by parents as requested throughout the year.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) supports our preschool programs and believes that the preschool program lays the foundation for continued educational success. ODE is committed to continuous improvement and holds
staff highly accountable for addressing the needs of young children. ODE requires that teachers administer the following assessments:

**Early Learning Assessment**
This is designed to assess children in seven developmental domains including social-emotional development, physical motor development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, and the arts. It measures children’s progress and it is designed to be accessible to young children with a wide range of background experiences and developmental needs. It is administered in the fall and in the spring.

**Early Childhood Outcomes**
Early Childhood Outcomes are completed by teachers upon the child's entrance and exit from preschool and once a year for children with disabilities. It is a measure of children’s progress in early language/communication/early literacy, social emotional and behavioral skills.

**Calendar**
Itinerant services are typically provided within the school district calendar. Services are not provided on holidays, during breaks, or calamity/weather days.

**Attendance**
Sessions are not rescheduled due to a child's absence. If the staff member misses a session due to staff member’s illness or a schedule conflict, he/she will attempt to reschedule as the schedule permits and parents agree.

**Confidentiality**
It is our responsibility to keep information that parents share with us regarding themselves and their children confidential. All personal records such as admission, progress, health, and I.E.P.s shall be kept confidential, unless we have written permission for disclosure by the parent or guardian.

**Progress Reports**
Your child’s progress will be reported to you on a Progress Report, following the preschool reporting schedule. This should be indicated on your child’s IEP.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**
Parent Teacher conferences are conducted twice a year as per the adopted calendar.
Preparing for an Itinerant Session

**In Your Home**

**DO:**
- Turn off the T.V. Have a quiet space that the teacher and your child can work in
- Refrain from smoking during the visit
- Try to encourage siblings to not interrupt
- Follow through with any activities or suggestions that the teacher gives
- Have your child ready to work when the teacher arrives (be fed, bathroom, etc.)
- Find or create a quiet space for teacher to work with the child
- Keep pets in a separate area

**At a Center or Community Building**

**DO:**
- Give the itinerant teacher any themes or related vocabulary the classroom is working on if the child attends another school
- Share any events in the child’s life that the itinerant teachers need to be aware of (i.e. parent separation, etc.)
- Collaborate with the itinerant teacher and provide follow through activities
- Let the itinerant teacher know how she can best assist you in addressing the child’s needs.

If your child is ill, please call the itinerant teacher. Feel free to observe activities that the teacher is doing with your child so that you can give additional practice. If we’re working together, your child will make more progress.

**GRIEVANCE POLICY**

A parent who wishes to report or discuss a grievance concerning any aspect of the program shall request a meeting with the Director. The Director will attempt to address the concern in an expedient manner and will discuss the grievance as appropriate with individual staff members, staff as a whole and/or the Superintendent. The parent will be provided a written summary of the grievance. If at any time the parent feels that the Director is not addressing his or her concerns, that parent should contact Terry Strieter, Greene County ESC Superintendent at 767-1303 ext. 1112. The preschool program is licensed by Ohio Department of Education. Concerns, complaints or violations can be addressed by calling Ohio Department of Education at (614) 466-0224 or the Department Ombudsperson at (877) 644-6338.