

Friends Preschool Program 2020-2021



PARENT HANDBOOK

Operated through the Greene County Educational
Service Center

Updated March 2020

FRIENDS PRESCHOOL

150 E. Herman St.
Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387
(937) 767-2327

AM: 8:15 -10:45

PM: 11:45 – 2:15

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The preschool program at Friends Care Center is operated by the Greene County Educational Service Center (ESC). The Educational Service Center provides educational programs and services to public schools throughout Greene County. The program is founded on the concept of providing high quality preschool experiences in an enriching environment. A comprehensive curriculum is provided that addresses child development and Ohio's Early Learning Development Standards.

The preschool program is open to children ages 3-5 who are residents of either the Yellow Springs Exempted village or Cedar Cliff Local School Districts. The preschool program is state licensed. Children learn best through meaningful play; therefore a developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum is followed to foster intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth. An integrated program allows children who have many types of strengths and needs to

- model various skills for each other,
- interact with a variety of children and
- establish friendships with one another.

The program is designed to meet the needs of each child.

Our program is uniquely located in our community nursing home. We are dedicated to helping students and seniors learn and care together through intergenerational activities. Our children and residents develop friendships and relationships and a special magic is created. Our program has earned Regional, State, and National attention. We have an excellent documentary video on our program available for you to view.

The preschool program is state licensed and adheres to program guidelines as recommended by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Children learn best through meaningful play. Therefore, a developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum is followed to foster intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth. An integrated program allows children who have many types of strengths and needs, to model various skills for each other, to interact with a variety of children and to establish friendships with one another. The program is designed to meet the unique needs of each child.

The child's first and best teacher is the parent. We strongly believe that family involvement is critical to a child's growth. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in our programs.



Any parent of a child enrolled in the program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during program hours of operation to contact his/her child, evaluate the care provided by the program, the premises, or for other purposed activities approved by the director.

STAFF:

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

Teacher

Janice Kumbusky
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Teacher Assistant

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Supervisor

Traci Womack
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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 social and emotional development, physical well-being and motor development, language and literacy, cognition and general knowledge, and approaches toward learning 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).

ADMISSION:

Children must be residents of the Yellow Springs or Cedar Cliff school districts and be 3 – 5 years of age. Our program serves a diverse population of children and families. The program is open to children regardless of ability, race, religion or ethnic background. Children with delays or disabilities must be evaluated and placed by the school district. Private pay children are also accepted on a first come-first served basis. Private pay children must be toilet trained.

Parents must provide a legal birth certificate upon enrollment. All children must have a physical within 30 days of enrollment. Dental and vision screenings are also required. The medical form and registration form must be completed annually. Children without a current medical form may be excluded from the program.

TUITION AND FEES:

Our program is partially funded through the Ohio Department of Education, Early Childhood Special Education. The program is free (except for snacks and supplies) to children with documented disabilities.

The tuition cost for private pay children in the program is \$125 per month with no bus transportation and \$150 per month with bus transportation. We operate on a "flat fee schedule". Full monthly tuition is due by the 5th of each month. If the 5th of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, tuition is due the preceding work day. If the monthly tuition is not paid by the 15th of the month, the child may be excluded from the program and a late fee may be assessed. Since preschool is a school, tuition paid to the school should NOT be an eligible IRS dependent

expense. All fees must be paid by deadlines. **Upon enrollment, the first and last months' tuitions must be paid in full for tuition pay students.**

Private Pay Students

- Your monthly check for \$125 (or \$150 with bus) should be mailed to: **Tina Saunders, Greene ESC, 360 E. Enon Rd., Yellow Springs, OH 45387**. The tuition checks should be made payable to **GREENE County ESC**. Do not give tuition checks to your child's teacher. Tuition fees for September and May are due prior to enrollment.

All students are charged an annual fee to cover the cost of daily consumables and special activities. This fee is included in the monthly tuition fees of private pay students. All other children must pay an annual fee of \$72 for snacks and supplies. Checks should be made payable to **Greene County ESC**. Please contact the preschool director if you need to make payment arrangements or need a refund due to withdrawal from the program.

DIVERSITY

The program and services shall be fully inclusive in addressing the needs of all children, including those that arise from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. The environment shall be safe and accessible, where all children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued and considered. The program and staff shall be responsive to and honor individual uniqueness and differences (personality and learning styles, family background, culture). Activities shall ensure the success of every child, including adaptations for children with special needs. Staff shall weave culturally appropriate traditions and activities throughout the curriculum. The contribution of families to our understanding of equality and diversity shall be valued. Classroom materials and activities shall be non-stereotypical and celebratory of diversity.

STRUCTURE:

The preschool class meets Monday through Thursday for 2 hours and 30 minutes morning or afternoon. The morning session is from 8:15-10:45a.m. The afternoon class meets from 11:45 a.m.-2:15 p.m. The program does not meet on Fridays. The teacher participates in trainings, assessments, and conducts home visits on Fridays.

There is a maximum of 16 children in each class with a certified teacher and teacher assistant. A developmentally appropriate, play based curriculum will be implemented. Children will receive both individual and small group instruction. The children benefit from both the individual attention the small group can provide and the more informal experiences offered in a large group situation. These interactions also foster the development of friendships and social skills.

It is important for children to be in attendance in order to fully benefit from the program. Poor attendance may result in dismissal from the center-based program. Attendance is reported to the Ohio Department of Education. Please contact your child's teacher before school to notify her of an absence. Also, please call transportation (Cedar Cliff 766-3811, Yellow Springs 767-7381) as early as possible.

I.E.P.- "Individualized Education Program"

An Individualized education plan (I.E.P.) is 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 their 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.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Bus Bus service will be provided for all children as requested, route schedule permitting. Students are required to wear seat belts. **Parents or another responsible adult must escort students to and from the bus.**

An adult must fasten the child in/out of their seat. The bus operates on a time schedule. This schedule does not permit the bus to wait for you if you are late or to change drop off/pick up points. All school rules are to be obeyed on the bus. The bus driver has complete authority while students are in his/her care. Any student who repeatedly violates the safety precautions and/or bus conduct rules may be denied the privilege of riding the bus. You must be home to get your child at the scheduled drop off time. If no one is home, the child may be taken back to the school or directly to the police station to await his or her parents. Children who ride the bus will be met by the preschool staff at school and will be escorted to and from the classroom. Please discuss bus safety rules with your child at home. The phone number of the transportation department is 766-3811 (Cedar Cliff) or 767-7381 (Yellow Springs).

Self-Transport

Please escort your child to and from the classroom. Children should never be left unattended. Please arrive at the scheduled time. Cars may not be left with keys inside. Cars shall not idle near building entrances where children are loading and unloading.

STUDENT PRESCHOOL ORIENTATION PROCESS

Beginning of the School Year

The teacher will attempt to make home visits to each new family prior to school beginning. Families will receive the Preschool Handbook and information on completing required forms. A preschool open house will be held for students and their parents prior to school beginning. They will participate in a variety of preschool activities to become familiar with the staff, routines and building. Children will have an opportunity to see the bus and meet the driver prior to school beginning.

Throughout the School Year

New children enrolled throughout the school year will be requested to visit the classroom with their parent(s) during their scheduled class time prior to beginning school. The child will participate in a variety of preschool activities to become familiar with the staff, routines, and building. Families will receive the Preschool Handbook and information on completing required forms.

If parents are unable to bring the child for a preschool visit, a home visit may be conducted prior to the child beginning school.

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.

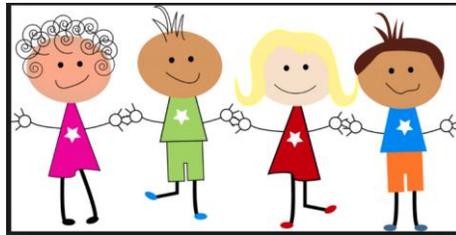
The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) supports our preschool programs and believes that the preschool program lays the foundation for continued educational success. ODE is committed to continuous improvement and holds staff highly accountable for addressing the needs of young children. ODE requires 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 assessments are completed annually by teachers for children with disabilities. It is a measure of children's progress in early language/communication/early literacy, social emotional and behavioral skills.



HOME VISITS

Home visits are offered at the beginning of the year, with a visiting day sometimes scheduled throughout the year. Both are intended to help ease transitions and provide opportunities for sharing information between families and the teacher. Home visits allow children to see teachers in the comfort of their own home or yard. They are a way for teachers to learn about your child's interests and passions, as well as gather information on sleep, toilet, and eating habits. It is also a chance for you to ask questions and get to know the person with whom you are entrusting your child's care. Home visits are optional, but highly recommended. Children often recall "the day the teacher came to my house" and the visits are invaluable in helping to make personal connections.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are sent home two times per year.

CURRICULUM:

The program adheres to the course of study adopted for the Greene County ESC Preschool Programs. The program adopted the Creative Curriculum along with a variety of supplemental materials (i.e. More Than Counting, Science Made Simple, Much More Than Counting). The curriculum is aligned with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards and is reflective of curriculum content suggested by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Our curriculum addresses the following areas: social-emotional; physical; language; cognitive; literacy; mathematics; science and technology; social studies; and the arts. The curriculum is used with all children, including children of diverse backgrounds and differing abilities. Parents are provided with a booklet on Ohio's Early Learning Development Standards upon their child's enrollment in the program.

In implementing the curriculum, we follow a thematic approach to instruction. Learning centers/interest areas are developed. Instructional strategies are individualized in accordance with the diverse needs, abilities, interests and backgrounds of the children. We believe children learn at their own rate through real life and hands-on experiences. Encouraging each child's sense of individual worth is an important part of the learning process.

Sample Preschool Schedule

8:15 – 8:30	Welcome -morning class children to the classroom. Social interaction.
8:30 – 8:50	Meeting time <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Helpers, songs, sharing, phonemic awareness, story, math concepts
8:50 – 9:45	Small and large group centers with an emphasis on the curricular weekly theme, teacher directed projects
9:45 – 10:00	Outdoor play
10:00 – 10:15	Snack
10:15 – 10:30	Meeting time <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Review of the day, story, goodbye song
10:30-10:45	Social Interaction
10:45	Dismissal



11:45	Welcome- afternoon class children to the classroom
11:45- 12:00	Social Interaction Time
12:00 – 12:35	Meeting time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Helpers, songs, sharing, phonemic awareness, story, math concepts
12:35 – 1:15	Small and large group centers with an emphasis on the curricular weekly theme, teacher directed projects
1:15 – 1:30	Outdoor play
1:30 – 1:45	Snack
1:45 – 2:00	Meeting time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of the day, story, goodbye song
2:00- 2:15	Social Interaction
2:15	Dismissal



PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Parents are our most important resource! We strongly encourage parent participation in our program. Your child needs to know that he/she is an important part of your family life. Your child needs to feel that he/she is secure, that he/she can depend on your love and your support. By visiting our room, you will be giving concrete evidence of your interest. Also, it will give you more understanding of the things your child tells you.

Teachers will work in partnerships with families establishing and maintaining regular, ongoing, two-way communication in order to learn about children's individual needs and insure a smooth transition between home and the program. Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher at school or by requesting a telephone call or note of response. No question or comment is too small. An open communication system is encouraged between parents and teachers. Matters of concern should be discussed as they occur.

It is our belief that parents have both the right and responsibility to share in decisions about their child's care and education. Families are strongly encouraged to become actively involved in their child's educational experiences. Our preschool program will encourage parent involvement in the following ways:

1. Including parents as integral members of the screening process.
2. Informal communication in the form of:
 - a. Personal contact

- b. "Good work" notes or charts sent home
 - c. Phone communication
 - d. Articles of interest shared with parents
 - e. Monthly or weekly calendar of events
 - f. Sharing of community resource information
3. Formal communication in the form of:
 - a. Parent handbooks
 - b. Social media (Bloomz)
 - c. Student progress reports sent home 3 times a year
 - d. Open house
 - e. Parent/teacher conferences (2 times per year)
 4. Encouraging parent observation and volunteerism in the classroom.
 5. Parents may request copies of the inspection reports of the program by contacting the Preschool Director at 767-1303 ext. 1113.
 6. Parents will be invited to attend workshops, parent support groups, and training programs.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY:

Health is high on the list of priorities for most people. We would like to call your attention to some do's and don'ts that we believe will help your child be a happier and healthier person at school.

DO send your child to school with:

- o A smile on his/her face
- o A hug from you
- o A good breakfast/lunch
- o Appropriate clothing for the weather and any forecast changes
- o Enough sleep so that he/she is eager to get up and get the day started

DO NOT send your child to school with:

- o Diarrhea
- o Conjunctivitis
- o Vomiting
- o Untreated infected skin patches
- o Unusual spots or rashes
- o Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- o Severe coughing
- o Discolored nasal drainage
- o Difficulty or rapid breathing
- o Elevated temperature (temperature should be normal for 24 hours without medication)
- o Stiff neck
- o Head lice (children must be free of nits)
- o Unusually dark urine or grey or white stool
- o Bed Bugs

HEALTH/SAFETY:

Upon a child's enrollment in the program, the staff will collect and review health histories provided by the parents. Within 30 days of enrollment, the child must undergo a comprehensive health screening, consisting of vision, hearing, dental, height, weight, lead and hematacrit screenings. A physician must complete a medical form on each child within 30 days of the child's enrollment. This will list immunizations and will state that the child is free from communicable disease. The child's medical form must be completed and returned within 30 days of enrollment. Failure to do so may prevent your child from attending school

A program registration form must also be submitted annually. This form lists identifiable information and addresses, medical authorization, the student's health record and various consents.

Children shall be allowed to leave the classroom only with parents and designated persons. If someone other than those listed on the registration form is to pick up the child, the teacher must have written or verbal permission from the parent. Proof of identification must be shown.

The preschool teacher is trained in first aid and communicable disease identification. Staff trained in recognizing symptoms of communicable disease and illness shall observe each child daily. If a child becomes ill or is injured during the day or is suspected of having a communicable disease, he/she will be isolated and attended to by an adult until the parent or responsible person is contacted by telephone and arrives to take the child home. While awaiting departure, the child shall be observed carefully for a worsening condition. A child isolated due to a communicable disease shall be made comfortable and allowed to lie down on a cot or mat. All linens, cots or mats shall be disinfected after use.

Children must be free of fever for at least 24 hours before returning to the preschool. Please contact the preschool if your child has a contagious illness so that the other parents may be alerted. All parents shall receive written notice if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease such as pinkeye, ringworm, chicken pox, or lice.

In case of an accident, an adult shall remain with the child until parents or the responsible individual arrives. If the parent or the responsible individual cannot be reached, emergency medical treatment shall be obtained if necessary, as designated on the emergency medical form. A first aid kit is readily available to each classroom. An incident report is completed when an accident or injury occurs.

Children are closely supervised throughout the day and their health and safety is of utmost importance to us. All children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene will be taught hand-washing procedures and will be periodically monitored.

In the event that your child is injured or involved in a serious controversial incident, parents will be notified via a telephone call from staff. An incident report will be filed.

Medications

Our medication policies are firmly enforced.

- a. We will give medication only from its original container which is from a prescription written by a licensed physician specifically for a child.
- b. Parents must complete our MEDICATION FORM and hand it directly to the child's teacher.
- c. We will NOT give non-prescription medication unless accompanied by a note from a physician stating specific dosages for a specific child. All over the counter remedies are included.
- d. When medication is administered, a written log or record, including date, dosage, and time shall be made and kept on file for one year.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

The State of Ohio has instituted Emergency Response Drills for all school districts. We will practice "lock down" and evacuation procedures in response to any exterior or interior intruder threat. During "lock down" you will be unable to arrive or leave with your child until the procedure ends. You will be notified when a lock down drill has been held.

In the event that we must vacate the building due to a fire or other emergency, the children will be taken to a designated area. In the event of a national or local emergency, please monitor public notices on radio and T.V. for implementation of emergency procedures for being reunited with your children. Student and staff safety are our first priority and all emergency preparedness procedures are designed for their protection.

GUIDANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The preschool classroom environment, materials, and activities are designed to maximize the success children will experience and minimize opportunities for frustration or aggression. Children are provided with direct guidance, instruction and modeling to facilitate appropriate interaction with environments, peers, and adults. Staff shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while they are in attendance. Preschool staff members that are in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for the children's discipline.

In order to ensure the children's safety and to help them learn responsibility and consideration for others, the following guidance and management methods will be used.

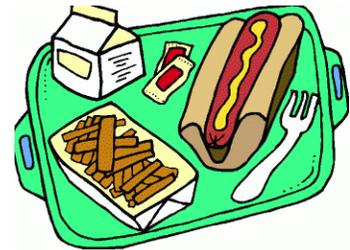
- a. Class rules are explained to the child during the first week of school and reviewed as necessary. The staff shall state the rules positively and apply

them consistently. The staff shall communicate directions and expectations clearly. The staff shall model appropriate behaviors.

- b. A continuum of classroom management strategies shall be implemented. The least restrictive, least intrusive strategies shall always be implemented first. The staff shall first focus on opportunities to praise the children for good behaviors, utilizing positive reinforcers. Staff members shall engage in nondirective (i.e. modeling), meditative (i.e. supportive) and directive (i.e. demonstration) behaviors across settings. Strategies designed to decrease inappropriate behaviors shall be implemented as necessary. These strategies may include: redirection to a more appropriate activity; planned ignoring; rule reminder; reinforcement of other students; simple reprimands; time out (not to exceed 3 minutes); brief removal of activities; quiet time; natural and logical consequences; withholding of routinely given items, materials, and/or activities which were not earned. Children will not be left unattended in a room.

NUTRITION:

Nutritious snacks will be served. Individual dietary restrictions are upheld. Please alert the teacher if your child has food allergies or dietary restrictions. Weekly menus are available at the beginning of each week.



Children are permitted to bring in treats to share with their classmates on their birthday. **However, all treats must be store bought and individually packaged. NO peanuts or peanut products are allowed.** Due to changes in our health regulations, we can no longer serve food prepared at home. Please let your child's teacher know in advance if you plan to do this.

SMOKING/DRUG/ALCOHOL/WEAPON POLICY

Smoking, alcohol consumption and/or possessing or using illegal drugs are prohibited on the premises, both inside and out. No weapons are permitted on school property

CLOTHING:

Children should be dressed in comfortable, easily-manageable play clothes. Shoes should be comfortable for climbing, running, and jumping (no thongs, jellies, or sandals that may easily slip off feet, please.) Some time will be spent outdoors each day (weather permitting) so appropriate outdoor apparel should be worn. Children should bring an extra change of clothing that can be kept at school.



PLEASE LABEL ALL BOOTS, SWEATERS, MITTENS, AND HATS with the child's name.

Children are encouraged to have a backpack. This will greatly assist them in getting their daily notebook, papers, artwork, etc., to and from school.

BAD WEATHER:

School is closed when it is determined it may be unsafe to transport the child to and from school. The program will follow the snow day schedule announced by **Yellow Springs Schools**. The morning class will be canceled if schools are on a delay greater than one hour. This information will be broadcast on WHIO, WONE, and WING.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasional field trips are conducted. Bus transportation will be provided although parents may choose to self-transport and accompany their child on the trip. Written parent/guardian permission is required for all trips.

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 IEPs shall be kept confidential, unless we have written permission for disclosure by the parent or guardian. Parents have access to their child's records at any time. Student records relating to identification, evaluation and educational placement are maintained in secure locations. The class roster is not shared with other families without your signed consent. Parents seeking contact information for other families (as in the case of a birthday party invitation) should contact their child's teacher.

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.