



Dear Preschool Families:

Welcome to The Children's Academy Early Learning Center (CA-ELC). The Early Learning Center provides preschoolers the opportunity to grow in all developmental areas. The CA-ELC is the home to many preschoolers and different types of programs. New Albany Floyd County Schools offers a general education preschool class as well as preschool early intervention classes that include spaces for typically developing students. Special education services include special education programming, deaf programming, integrated speech, physical, and occupational therapy and walk-in therapy services. In addition, CA-ELC is home to Floyd County Head Start classrooms.

We encourage you to be a meaningful and powerful part of our school family. You are your child's first and most important teacher. We wish to work with you to give your child a positive preschool experience. It is our job to help your child develop the skills to become an active learner. You will find that everyone at the Early Learning Center is dedicated to your child's school success and promoting a love of learning. Parent involvement is the key to success in school. Reading daily with your child, playing and enjoying simple activities will help promote a love of learning.

We look forward to a great 2021-22 school year and are very excited about sharing this year with you and your preschooler. Please join us in making The Children's Academy Early Learning Center a great place to learn and grow! We will offer Parent and Child Together opportunities and encourage you to join us! Welcome to our school family!

Geradine Schultze

Preschool Early Intervention Coordinator/ Building Administrator

NEW ALBANY-FLOYD COUNTY SCHOOL CORPORATION

MISSION STATEMENT

The New Albany-Floyd County School Corporation works together with parents and the community to provide an outstanding education in a safe, nurturing environment where all are challenged to reach their maximum potential as respectful, responsible, contributing members of a diverse society.

The Children’s Academy Early Learning Center

VISION STATEMENT

The Children’s Academy Early Learning Center provides preschoolers with developmentally appropriate, individualized, educational experiences that will empower each child to become a life-long learner.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Children’s Academy Early Learning Center believes the educational, social, and emotional development of young children is vital to their future. We partner with our families and community to provide a safe and caring learning environment with individualized, research based learning experiences to assist each child to achieve academic and personal potential.

SCHOOL HOURS

Morning Session:

8:40	Doors Open
8:45 to 11:15	Instructional Day
11:15	Dismissal

Afternoon Session:

12:45	Doors Open
12:45 to 3:15	Instructional Day
3:15	Dismissal

Two Hour Delay Schedule: No Morning Session
Early Dismissal: No Afternoon Session

Children's Academy Early Learning Center Office and Certified Staff

Administrator

Geradine Schultze

Office Personnel

Maacah Lambert, Secretary

April Almon, El Clerk

Stacy Zielke, School Nurse

Health Clerk

Early Intervention Teachers

Julie Dye Brewer

Nanci Habermel-Hoolihan

Deborah Lemmon

Jessica Oaks

Carrie Schreck

Pre-K Specialist

Mary Anderson

Teaching Assistants

Whitney Aleman

Makenna Baughman

Jennifer Cherry

Shannon Nichols

Ashley Thompson

Faith Thompson

Michelle Thompson

Angie Walisser

Teacher of the Deaf

Traci Hardy

Teacher of Blind/Vision Loss

Shawn Calloway

Speech Language Pathologists

Yvette Crone, SLPA

Meghan Leezer, SLPA

Maggie Marshall

Leah Sweets

Elizabeth Wooden

Physical Therapy

Debbie Lester

Beth White, PTA

Occupational Therapy

Courtney Wooley

Ashley Zeller

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The Children's Academy Early Learning Center

Welcome to the Children's Academy Early Learning Center. Starting preschool is very exciting and the beginning of a lifelong journey of learning. We are excited to share this adventure with you and your child. Children react differently to preschool. Some may meet it with enthusiasm and eagerness, and others may be apprehensive. This handbook will help you and your child know what to expect in preschool this year and answer many questions you may have as we begin our journey through the school year. We welcome parent and family volunteers and involvement in our programming.

Classrooms

Our classrooms are set up in learning centers to provide a balanced daily program of child initiated and adult directed activities, including individual and small group activities. The curriculum is based on the Indiana Foundations for Young Children for language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education and functional/practical life skills.

Tuition

Tuition fees are applicable for typical peers. Presently tuition is \$400 per year.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided for children with special needs. Our preschool buses are outfitted with car seats and safety belts that are appropriate for preschoolers. Each bus has a Bus Monitor to help keep the children safe and secure. These buses are provided especially for our preschoolers for transporting them to and from school and for field trips. Your child's bus pick-up and drop-off schedule can be found on the NAFCS website. Parents can check student bus schedules on E-link. Use the student's ID number and then you use that number as both the ID and the password. Go to: <https://www.nafcs.k12.in.us/transportation/>

Please allow an extra 10 minutes before and after the scheduled times for pick-up or drop-off and be ready when the bus arrives. Parents or caregivers must walk the child to the bus. Please be waiting at the designated spot for the bus with your child. It is very important to meet the bus at the end of the school day. For the safety of your child he/she will only be dropped off if the parent or caregiver is waiting for the bus. If no one is waiting for the bus, your child will be returned to school and will need to be picked up.

At this time, per Federal regulations, face masks are required on the school bus. Parents should send children to school on the bus in a face mask. We realize that this may be a challenge for some of our students and we will work with your child to help him/her to learn this skill. We have lanyards and masks available to help with this process.

Arrival and Dismissal

Your child's safety is our primary concern especially during arrival and departure. Please follow procedures to ensure the safety of all children. Bus and car riders will be received and dismissed by their classroom teachers in the **Pearl Street** parking lot. Car riders will arrive and depart 5-10 minutes after bus arrival and departure. Car rider arrival is 8:50 and 12:50 and departure is 11:20 and 3:20. Do not pass the busses in the parking lot when busses are loading or unloading.

Bus Arrival and Dismissal

Children will be unloaded and loaded to busses by classroom. Room 101 students (Ms. Carrie Schreck) will enter/exit the building through Door #21. Room 103 students (Ms. Jessica Oaks) will enter/exit the building through Door #20. Rooms 107 (Ms. Debbie Lemmon) and 108 (Ms. Julie Brewer) will enter/exit the building through Door #19.

Car Riders

Car riders, daycare transportation and walkers will be asked to drop-off and pick on the Pearl Street side. Car riders will arrive and depart later than the bus riders. Do not pass the school bus in the parking lot.

Car Rider Arrival: **Morning Class: 8:50** **Afternoon class: 12:50**

Park in a parking spot (on the PEARL STREET side) and wait for your classroom color to be held up before you exit your car. Stand socially distant as you wait to drop off your child at the door.

Room 101 (Ms. Carrie Schreck) - students will enter/exit Door #21.

Classroom Color: **Blue**

Room 103 (Ms. Jessica Oaks) - students will enter/exit Door #20.

Classroom Color: **Red**

Room 107 (Ms. Debbie Lemmon) - students will enter/exit Door #19.

Classroom Color: **Yellow**

Room 108 (Ms. Julie Brewer) - students will enter/exit Door #19.

Classroom Color: **Green**

Car Rider Dismissal: **Morning Class: 11:25** **Afternoon Class: 3:25**

Please wait in a parking spot until busses have departed and your teacher signals that they are ready for dismissal. Approach your child's dismissal door. Stand socially distant as you wait for your child to be dismissed to you at the door.

Safety

Children will be released only to guardians and those designated by the guardian on the student pick up list. In the event Children's Academy Early Learning Center staff suspects this person is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or, impaired in anyway, release of the child will not be granted. Children's Academy Early Learning Center will immediately report the incident to the local police and Department of Child Services.

Check-in/Check-out

Parents are asked to avoid removing students from school during the regular school day. If an emergency occurs and you must remove your child during the school day, parents need to come to the school office to sign out their child. Only the parent, legal guardian, or someone listed on the Enrollment Form will be allowed to sign out a student during school hours. Adults signing students out may be asked for personal identification. This procedure is in place to protect your child. Please try to schedule all doctor and other appointments after school hours. We want your child to receive the best possible education, so every minute of instruction is precious.

*Important Note: Child custody and court orders sometimes dictate that children are not to be released to certain individuals. The school office MUST have a copy of the court's ruling on file so we can honor these orders.

Communication

If you wish to contact a teacher or administrator, please do so by calling the school office, directly contacting the teacher through email or placing a note in your child's backpack. The office staff has been instructed not to interrupt our instructional day. Staff members will return calls at their earliest convenience.

Any changes in contact information or transportation must be sent to the school in writing. Please call the office for emergency situations or changes.

Emergency Contacts

Always have at least 2 working emergency contact phone numbers. This will ensure that the school can contact you in case of an emergency.

Attendance

Daily attendance will help your child develop a sense of trust and security during his/her preschool experience. The ability to be successful in school is dependent on following daily routines that are learned through regular attendance. Active preschool learning experiences are of a social nature and include children working and interacting in groups with other classmates. Therefore, it would be difficult for your child to make up work at home. Regular attendance and punctuality are viewed as highly important. Students are expected to attend and be on time except in cases of illness or an emergency.

A statement from a licensed medical professional documenting the reason for the absence will be required after the 10th absence. Failure to do so will result in your child receiving an unexcused absence. A pattern of good attendance should be established as a preschooler. Typical peer models may be asked to withdraw if excessive absences occur.

Report Absences

When your child is absent or tardy please call the school office attendance line at 542-5506 and bus transportation at 542-4707 (bus riders) before school starts.

School Health Services

A school nurse oversees the health services offered at this school. However, a school nurse may not be at the school every day because most nurses travel between multiple school buildings. In case of illness or injury, a child will be cared for by a trained member of the school staff. If your child has a health concern, please include this information on your child's health history information or notify the school as soon as possible. This information remains confidential and is shared with school personnel only on an as-needed basis. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance at the parents' expense. ***Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached must be on file and is vital in reaching parents in the case of an emergency.***

Medications at School

1. A "Request for Administration of Medication" form must be signed and dated by the doctor and parent/legal caregiver. This written request must be on file in the school office before the medication, prescription or over-the-counter, will be administered by the staff. The request must contain the student's name, name of the medication, dosage, and time to be given. The form must be renewed at the beginning of each school year or if the medication changes during the school year.
2. A student may be authorized to possess and self-administer medication for a chronic or acute disease or medical condition if the medication is necessary in an emergency situation. The section of the medication form entitled "Possession and Self-Administration of Emergency Medication Authorization/Approval" must be signed and dated by the doctor and parent/legal caregiver.
3. The medication must be furnished to the school by the parent/legal caregiver on a daily basis. Any exception to this daily dosage requirement must be approved by the principal after consultation with the school nurse. The exception will be limited to a one (1) school week's supply of the medication and must be brought to school by the parent/legal caregiver, or by another arrangement approved in advance by the principal. The medication must come to school meeting the requirements listed in #5 below.
4. All nonprescription medication must be in the original container and be clearly labeled with the child's name.
5. All prescription medication must be in the pharmacy labeled bottle or packaging with the following information:

Prescription number

Child's name

Doctor's name

Name of medication

Dosage

Time to be given.

1. All medication brought to school for administration by staff will be kept in a locked container (unless needing to be secure but accessible for emergency use).
1. School nurses will provide instruction/training as needed to those staff members who dispense medication to students.
1. Non-medicated lip balms and up to 2 cough drops per day (with parent note) is allowed without a doctor's statement.

Routine Illness and Returning to School

Students should not come to school if they are experiencing any of the conditions mentioned below. If at school, students will be sent home from school for the following reasons and require a doctor's statement for readmission:

1. Reddened eye(s) with possible drainage, matting, or discomfort.
2. Recurrent or persistent skin infections – including scabies.
3. Unexplained or undiagnosed rash.
4. Injury involving documented loss of consciousness.
5. Untreated drainage from skin.

Students should not come to school if they are experiencing any of the conditions mentioned below. For each condition marked with “*”, see #6 for additional details. If at school, students will be sent home from school for the following reasons:

1. *Temperature of 100.4 or over. Students must be fever-free for 24 hours *without the aid of fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol/Ibuprofen* before returning to school. See #6.
2. Temperature of 96.5 or lower.
3. Lice (pediculosis) – Students will be sent home if live bugs are found. If a student has nits, he/she may remain at school for the day but should be treated before returning to school. According to New Albany-Floyd County School Board Policy, classroom head checks will not be done.
4. *Vomiting. Student must be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school unless documentation has been provided to indicate an underlying, non-contagious cause. See #6.
5. *Diarrhea. Student must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school unless documentation has been provided to indicate an underlying, non-contagious cause. See #6.
6. During periods of community spread respiratory illness such as COVID-19, guidelines for being excluded from school and returning to school may be extended and include additional symptoms. Input will be taken from the Floyd County Health Department, NAFCS medical advisor and the Indiana Department of Health.

Severe Allergies at School

If your child has a potentially life threatening allergy to food, insect sting, latex, or other allergen, please be sure to have your child's health care provider complete an Allergy Action Plan for your child and provide the school with an EpiPen/autoinjector. A school nurse or other trained school employee may give the EpiPen/autoinjector according to the directions on the Allergy Action Plan.

But, what if your child has an allergic reaction for the very first time at school and has never been diagnosed with an allergy? New Albany Floyd County school nurses are prepared to handle these potentially life threatening allergic reactions as well. If your child experiences a life threatening allergic reaction at school that involves severe swelling of lip, face, tongue, or throat, severe difficulty swallowing or breathing, or unconsciousness, 911 and a parent will be notified. A school nurse or trained school employee under the direction of a school nurse may use a lifesaving medication called an EpiPen/autoinjector according to orders from the medical advisor. If you do not want your child to receive the life saving measure of medication, please contact your school's nurse in writing.

Health and Wellness in the Classroom

According to the NAFCS Wellness Policy, all foods that are provided, not sold, to students on the school campus during the school day, must comply with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards (<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>). Individual school buildings are allowed up to three (3) exemption days from this policy for the purpose of classroom parties. Each building will independently decide the three (3) days in which food may be served (provided) that do not comply with the USDA guidelines. However, schools are encouraged to serve water and provide fruit or vegetable options as part of the celebration. All food items for parties or celebrations must be store-bought and have a label that includes ingredients, allergens, and carbohydrate counts. If classroom birthday celebrations are allowed, non-food items such as a classroom book, bouncy balls, party favors, or pencils rather than food items are encouraged.

Immunizations

A number of immunizations are required by state law for students admitted to public school. Evidence of receiving these immunizations or a letter of medical or religious objection is required before starting school. Your child could be excluded from attending school with other students if the required proof of immunizations or objection is not given to the school.

Meningococcal Disease

Indiana law requires each year that parents/guardians be informed “about meningococcal disease and its vaccine” (IC 20-30-5-18). Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth. The disease can progress rapidly and within hours of the first symptoms, may result in death or permanent disability including loss of hearing, brain damage, and limb amputations.

Symptoms of meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, and stiff neck, making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that cause meningococcal diseases are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. Fortunately there is an immunization available and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and prevention recommends routine meningococcal immunizations at 11 to 12 years old (prior to starting 6th grade), with a booster dose at 16 years old (prior to starting 12th grade). The meningococcal vaccine is required for 6th-12th grade students to attend school.

Parents, Volunteers and Guests

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit. Parking is available at the Pearl Street and State Street parking lots. To provide a safe environment for your child, guests may only enter the building at the Pearl Street entrance, door # 1. All visitors in the school must have a valid picture I.D. and sign-in at the school office and obtain a visitor's badge. The badge identifies a guest in the building. At the conclusion of their stay, the visitor is asked to sign-out and return the badge to the office. Please remember all adults who volunteer are required to pass a Limited Criminal History (LCH) check which can be easily arranged through our school office.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills for fire are held monthly. We practice and prepare the children for emergency drills. Tornado and take cover drills for civil disturbances, earthquakes or intruder drills will be conducted quarterly. Children are given limited knowledge on what these drills are about. The drills are presented as learning experiences and described as things we do to practice ways to keep safe. The purpose of these drills is to teach children to respond in a rapid, orderly and safe manner in emergency situations. In the event of an actual building evacuation all the children will walk to the HOPE Building, 1200 Bono Road, New Albany, Indiana 47150.

Inclement Weather

There may be times when it will be necessary to delay the start of the school day or to close school due to extreme weather conditions. If a working phone number is maintained in your child's school records you will receive a phone call in the event of school closure. Beginning at 6:00 a.m., this information will be shared on the major television or radio stations. You may log onto www.nafcs.k12.in.us for weather related information. We will follow the New Albany Floyd County Schools announcements. **If there is a 2 hour delay, we will not have morning preschool sessions. Afternoon sessions will remain the same.**

Breakfast and Lunch

Children are served a nutritious breakfast or lunch that is designed to provide 1/3 of their daily recommended dietary allowance. Meals are an integral part of our curriculum and enhance communication skills, social-emotional skills, and fine and gross motor skills. Parents may choose to send breakfast or lunch from home.

Children in the morning program will receive breakfast. Children in the afternoon session will receive lunch. Prices may vary depending on your eligibility.

School Picture Days

School pictures are taken twice each year. Notice of the designated days will be sent home in advance.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are an important part of your child's preschool program. Your participation in parent teacher conferences is expected and will continue to be important every year that your child attends school. The success of your child's education is dependent on your follow-up at home. Parent Teacher conferences will be held in the fall and spring.

Parent Events and Family Fun Nights

Throughout the year there will be special classroom activities and celebrations or Family Fun nights with short parenting networking sessions and educational topics addressed by staff members. We encourage you to attend these functions when possible.

Minds in Motion Maze

Indoor movement and coordination is challenged daily in an ever changing maze of obstacles located in the Mezzanine. This maze is designed to develop fine and gross motor (small and large muscle) skills, balance, coordination, sensory integration, awareness in space and visual tracking. These skills are crucial in the development of the skills necessary to read and write. There are additional mazes in the hallways as well.

Field Trips

We may take one field trip outside of the school. Additionally, if COVID restrictions allow we hope to invite visitors from the area to come to Children's Academy Early Learning Center for presentations. If you have a special talent that you would like to share with our children please contact the school office.

Items from Home

We request that children do not bring toys, blankets or special items (such as fidget spinners) to school. Special arrangements may be made with the teacher if items are designated on an IEP or needed to help a child transition to school. Your child's class may have a special day for show and tell or a special event. The office or teacher will send home a notice about these special days.

Holidays

Holiday celebrations vary greatly depending on families' culture and religion. At Children's Academy Early Learning Center we will respect family cultural values and differences and welcome you to share your ideas with the staff, keep all activities developmentally appropriate and plan activities that promote self-esteem and a sense of fairness.

Dress for Active Learning

Outside play is a highlight of our preschool program. When the weather turns cooler, please remember to put a sweater, coat, hat and gloves on your child. When weather permits, we go outside daily and play on the playground or in the outdoor classroom. We are fortunate to have a playground, climbing equipment and multiple tricycles and riding toys. Inside movement areas and the gym will be used during inclement weather. Please keep this in mind when selecting shoes and clothing.

We have an outdoor classroom area. The area has water and sand tables and hands-on and “messy” science and math activity areas. There will be lots of messy play. We encourage you to always send your child to school in play clothes. Children may get dirty or wet during these activities. Children should always have an extra set of clothes at school in case they get wet or muddy during their exploration!

Dress Code

Parents are responsible for seeing that their children arrive at school appropriately dressed and ready to learn. We have adopted the following dress code for students:

1. Clothing is to be clean, properly fitting, and appropriate for the weather.
2. Clothing with inappropriate writing or pictures is not permitted.
3. All skirts and shorts are to be of appropriate length.
4. Students must wear appropriate shoes or boots. No flip flops, high heels, “backless” shoes, or shoes with wheels are allowed at any time for safety reasons. Sneakers or tennis shoes are encouraged.
5. Students may not wear baggy clothing, tank tops, or belly shirts.
6. Students may not wear hairstyles/colors, hats, jewelry or other clothing that may distract from the educational process.
7. Hats are not to be worn inside the school building.

Conscious Discipline

All teaching staff will work to develop skills with the children that reflect the principles of Conscious Discipline. This program was developed by Dr. Becky Bailey and is widely used across the United States to create a school family of problem-solvers by actively teaching anger management, helpfulness, assertiveness, impulse control, cooperation, empathy, and problem-solving. Children are treated with kindness, respect and dignity. Behavior management is positive and will focus on teaching and developing appropriate behavior and problem-solving skills. S.T.A.R. (**S**mile, **T**ake a deep Breath, **A**nd **R**elax) breathing and calming techniques will be modeled by teachers and practiced by students in calm times to facilitate skills in times of distress.

Behavior Management Strategies

Behavior Management at Children’s Academy ELC is positive and based on Conscious Discipline. Children are treated with dignity and respect. There is a strong emphasis on teaching and practicing appropriate behavior. Children are taught to use their problem solving abilities to resolve conflicts. Adults will use encouragement and empathy to build the skills of composure and problem solving. Appropriate social-emotional skills will be taught and practiced. Misbehavior is seen as an opportunity to teach social skills. Removal and restraint strategies might be used in accordance to NAFCS policy when a child is in danger to himself or others, and then only by a trained staff member. Research tells us children typically have an attention span on one minute per year of age. The behavior learning process is immediate and brief. We strive to develop appropriate behaviors. It is a learning process with an emphasis on teaching and practicing appropriate behavior.

Lost and Found Children often lose and misplace things. We suggest you put your child's name on items brought or worn to school. When a lost article is turned in, we place it in a large box in the office. Parents are welcome to check this box for lost items.

Library/ Media Center

Each class may visit the school library/media center. During that time, they will work with their teacher and teaching assistants on a variety of activities and will be assisted in making appropriate book choices. Students may "check out" one book each week. All books should be returned the following week during their regularly-scheduled library time. Students who do not return their books on time will not be allowed to check out another book until the original book is found and returned. If a book cannot be found, please let you teacher know as soon as possible.

School Newsletter and Webpage

The school newsletter will be sent home with each student for the first few weeks of school. This year we will be e-mailing the newsletter and attach it to our webpage <https://childrensacademy.nafcs.k12.in.us>. Consult this newsletter for important information, special activities, and other events that occur throughout the school year. It is a valuable means of communication between the school and home. Your classroom teacher will also have frequent communication with you.

Transition into Kindergarten

Young children must adjust to many changes. Among them, the transition into kindergarten from home or preschool programs stands as a major milestone for both children and their families. Planned activities can help children and families cope with necessary changes and negotiate transitions successfully. Transition planning helps to assure that the special needs of children and families are met, necessary information about children's learning characteristics are shared, and special equipment (along with training in its use) is provided in a timely manner.

It is helpful for you to set up an appointment sometime in the fall to observe a Kindergarten class at the elementary school your child will be attending next year. This will give you an opportunity to meet with the kindergarten teachers and see what your child will be doing when they begin Kindergarten. If you decide to observe in the spring, please keep in mind that those children are approximately a year ahead of your child's current developmental level. Be sure to attend March Kindergarten activities at your neighborhood school.

Reporting Child Abuse

Our staff is responsible for the health and welfare of all children participating in the program. And as such are mandatory reporters of any suspected child abuse and neglect. Reporting child abuse is the responsibility of all staff members. It is required by law that anyone "with reasonable cause to believe" any form of abuse has occurred to report the concern to the Department of Child Services. If necessary Children's Academy Early Learning Center will provide the following information to the appropriate state Department of Child Services: Child's name and birthdate, home address, parent's full name and telephone number, and any relevant details.

New Albany Floyd County Attendance Policy and Procedures

The New Albany Floyd County Consolidated School Corporation requires that students attend each day the school is in session. Each day of school is part of a sequential learning process; therefore missing even one day without a good cause should be avoided.

Reporting Absences to School

Parents are to notify the office of the student's absence. When reporting the absence please use the attendance line (812)542-5506 and provide complete information as to the child's name, teacher and the reason for absence. Failure to contact the school office with information regarding the student's absence may result in an unexcused absence.

Physician, dental and counseling appointments should be scheduled after school hours whenever possible. If unavoidable, please notify the office and have the child attend classes both before and after the scheduled appointments. A physician's statement of diagnosis may be required at any point for an absence or extended absences. After ten (10) days absence, a doctors statement is required each time a student is absent for the remainder of the year. A statement from a licensed medical professional documenting an absence may allow an unexcused absence to be changed to an excused absence.

If one or more of the following occurs, your child will be sent home: temperature of 100 or higher, vomiting, sever pain in the chest or stomach, fainting, live lice is found in the hair, and/or injury. Please have two (2) current emergency contacts listed on your child's enrollment form. Please contact the school immediately if this information changes during the year.

Excused Absence-Definition

Absences for the following reasons will be considered as excused absences:

- Illness that involves fever, vomiting, injuries, or situations when a physician recommends the students be absent from school. The reason is to be reported to the school day (a written doctor's statement is to be given to the school office)
- Death of an immediate family member
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be scheduled outside the school day (a written doctor's statement is to be given to the school office)
- Religious holidays
- Court ordered absence
- Other unusual circumstances when approved by the principal and requested in advance of the event.
- Travel for a limited time period involving new educational experiences for a student, which is requested on an infrequent basis by parents or guardian at least one week in advance of the proposed absence. Letters should be submitted to the school principal for approval.

Unexcused Absence-Definition

Absences for the following reasons will be considered as unexcused absence:

- “Long weekends” and vacations without prior approval
- Moving days (change of residence)
- Transportation problems
- Medical or dental appointment without a doctor’s written statement
- Appointments for non-essential activities such as haircuts, shopping, etc.
- Extended absences for head lice treatment

Tardy to School-Definition

Students who arrive at school after the school start times are considered tardy. Those who arrive late are to report to the office to obtain a Tardy Slip that will permit them to the classroom. The student’s parent or guardian is to sign in at the office and indicate the reason the student is tardy. The tardy will be documented in the office.

Excused tardies are those that are verified in writing by a medical professional, counselor, or those that have been approved by the building principal due to extenuating circumstances.

Early Dismissal-Definition

Request to release children from school early creates a disruption to the learning environment. Excused early departures are those departures that are verified in writing by a medical professional, counselor or those departures approved by the building principal for extenuating circumstances. If early dismissal is unavoidable, please follow this procedure:

- Send a note to your child’s teacher including the date, time and reason for early dismissal
- Report to the office at the designated time. Your child will be called to the office when you arrive.

Procedure for Dealing with Excessive Absences, Tardies, or Early Dismissals

Once a student obtains ten (10) unexcused absences, a referral will be submitted to the Department of Child Services per Indiana Code. Referral documentation includes:

- Evidence that the school has communicated attendance concerns to the parents
- An Academic Impact statement including grades and performance concerns
- Attendance records

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

In play, children are much freer to master new knowledge at their own rate and in their own way. Play contributes to children's development in a number of ways:

Play provides the opportunity for children to practice new cognitive, social-emotional, and physical skills.

Play offers numerous opportunities for children to act on objects and experience events.

Play enables children to use their real experiences to organize concepts of how the world operates.

Through playing with peers, children develop skills for seeing something from another person's point of view, cooperating, helping, sharing and solving problems.

Much of young children's learning takes place when they direct their own play activities.

Adults who work with children need to be aware of what they can do to provide the proper environment and support for play.

Some general principles:

Let children choose their activities. Provide a variety of toys, activities, and materials, but let children decide which comes to explore and use in play.

Let children determine how long they will play. Young children need notification that play time will end in five minutes so they will finish up.

Make sure physical environment is safe.

Allow children to use objects and try out new skills in unusual ways.

Always allow choices-never require pretend play.

Focus on the process, not the product. Comment on the method used, colors, feel of materials, etc. Ask the child to tell you about it and listen without judging his work. Do not use models for children to copy-encourage creative expression.

Give children the freedom to be messy. Show them its ok by allowing yourself to get messy too.

Adults often try to help children by doing things for them. But when children struggle through problems themselves, they are experiencing the active learning process.

