



EARLY ADVENTURES PARENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021



ROBBINSDALE AREA SCHOOLS

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Early Adventures!

We are delighted that your child is a part of our preschool family! We understand the importance of your decision to entrust us with the care and education of your child. We look forward to getting to know each child as we grow together this year.

Our classrooms will provide each child with a safe and loving learning environment. Each day will be filled with fun and exciting adventures to help your child develop academically and socially. Your child will be learning and exploring many concepts and themes throughout this year and we are excited to begin our journey together.

To ensure that you and your child have a great preschool experience while at Early Adventures, communication between you and our program is important to us. We recognize that together we can create a positive, rich learning experience for your child.

We encourage you to participate often in our inspiring, empowering, and energetic classrooms. We believe your involvement with your child's early education experiences promote success and love of learning for your child. Your involvement is a meaningful part of who we are, and not only do the children take notice, but it strengthens our community in a truly meaningful way.

We look forward to watching your child grow, learn and flourish throughout this year!

Sincerely,
The Early Adventures Team

About Early Adventures

Early Adventures is a part of the Robbinsdale Area Schools. Early Adventures is a full day learning experience which incorporates child care and preschool into one classroom. This program is operated by the Community Education Department and is a collaboration between the child care and early education programs.

Our mission, philosophy and goals were designed to align with the District's strategic plan and statement.

Early Adventures Mission

Early Adventures opens pathways for children and their families by providing individualized education and enrichment opportunities to help build a child's sense of self, community and environment.

Early Adventures Philosophy

In the Early Adventures Community we believe that:

Children

- need opportunities and environments in which to grow and learn
- learn best by participation and involvement
- have the right to explore, accomplish, and make mistakes
- have the willingness and capacity to learn
- need opportunities for healthy interaction with each other

Staff

- influence children's attitudes about themselves, others and school
- are the determining factor in quality program
- maintain their skills through training and experience

Parents

- are partners in their child's care
- desire the best for their children
- deserve our appreciation

Parents, Students and Staff work together to provide the foundation for lifelong learning!

Program Information

- Early Adventures has three classrooms, two located at FAIR-Pilgrim Lane and one at Neill Elementary.

FAIR-Pilgrim Lane

3725 Pilgrim Lane N.

Plymouth, MN. 55441

Neill Elementary

6600 27th Ave. N.

Crystal, MN. 55427

- Early Adventures is a full-week, full-day program throughout the school year with the exception of holidays and a staff development day.
- Early Adventures is available to students who will be eligible for Kindergarten the following year.
- Families are contracting to use the program 5 days a week, unless the program is not in session.
- Families enrolled will be guaranteed placement in Summer Adventure Club upon completing Early Adventures.

Registration

Ways to register:

Online: <https://rdale.eleyo.com/>

If you have already created an account for another Community Education program you may use that account to register. If this is your first time, the program will walk you through the simple registration process.

Openings are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Health & Immunization Records

Immunization Records and Health Summary forms signed by your child's physician or evidence of an appointment for those forms to be signed by your child's physician needs to be provided **before child's entry into the program** and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program. If we do not have a copy of the Immunization and Health Summary Form, we are not allowed to admit the child in school. It is mandated by law that the Immunization Form be kept on file. If you are opposed to immunizations, we must have a Minnesota Department of Health Immunization Form notarized claiming exemption to this law.

Other Requirements for Enrollment

Early Adventures is open to serve all students who are eligible to start Kindergarten the following school year. (Children must be four years old on or before September 1st.) Children must be toilet trained and independent in the restroom to be eligible for enrollment. All children accepted for enrollment must meet developmental expectations in responding to adult direction, be able to participate in a 10:1 student to staff ratio and be able to maintain the safety of his/her self and others.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

To ensure the safety and accuracy of your child's enrollment, we require you to use our computerized sign-in and sign-out system. Early Adventures assumes responsibility for your child after he/she has been signed in by a parent or guardian and retains responsibility until the child is signed out by a parent, guardian, or designated representative of the child's parents or guardians.

For your child's safety, when signing your child in and out, be sure to let the staff person responsible for your child's group know you are either dropping off or picking up your child. Be sure to notify staff if another person will be picking up your child.

Unfamiliar persons will be asked to show a picture ID that will be checked against your authorized pick-up list. Please be prepared to present your ID to our staff the first few days of enrollment and/or when new staff are present.

Pick-Up Authorization

For your child's protection, the only people authorized to pick up a child are those designated by the parent/guardian on the contract. The adult picking up your child will be asked for a photo ID if they are not familiar to us. If the person picking up your child is not authorized, or you have not contacted us, we will not release your child to them.

You may add authorized pick-ups to your account by logging into your account at:

<https://rdale.eleyo.com/>

Sibling Pick-Up

If a sibling is sent to pick up a child, they must be at least 16 years of age AND listed on the registration form as someone with permission to pick up your child.

Late Pick-up

- After 6:00 pm a charge of \$1.00 for every minute will be assessed until a child is picked up.
- A child may be dismissed from the program if late picks ups become an ongoing issue.
- If children have not been picked up within 15 minutes and the staff member is unable to reach parents, the staff person will try to contact other emergency contacts to pick up. If the staff person is still unable to reach anyone, they will contact a Coordinator for assistance. As a last resort, staff may need to contact police for assistance.

Failure to Pick up

Should your child still be at Early Adventures after closing time, we will make every attempt to contact you and all other authorized pick-up people listed on your Emergency Form. We cannot allow any "other authorized pick-up" person to authorize a third party to pick up your child. If we are unable to confirm that an authorized person is on the way to pick-up your child, we will contact the Police Department. You will be billed for any related late pick-up fees.

If you know you are running late it is imperative that you inform site staff.

Restricting Parental Custody of Child

Early Adventures staff will not restrict parental custody or visitation rights to the child without a certified court order.

In the case of a Temporary Restraining Order, custody may be withheld only for the duration and per specifications of the order. A copy of these documents needs to be in your child's file. If either parent's condition at the time of pick-up clearly poses a threat to the child, staff will attempt to contact alternate authorized persons and may, ultimately, contact the authorities.

Visitors

Early Adventures welcomes parents to come and visit their child's classroom during the course of the school year and encourages participation of many kinds.

Curriculum and Assessment

Early Adventures uses curriculum that is aligned with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress and all lead teachers have completed at least 8 hours of training on implementing curriculum.

The program conducts assessments, using an approved tool, with all children at least twice per year in the following domains: social emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, and physical development. In addition, all lead teachers have completed at least 8 hours of training on authentic child assessment.

Although children develop in similar stages, it is important to remember that each child will develop at their own pace. This development is influenced by their family, their culture and the community they live in. (NAEYC 1996).

Liabilities

Early Adventures is a part of the Robbinsdale Area Schools and carries liability insurance to protect the interest of Early Adventures. Parents who wish to carry health and accident coverage on individual children should consult their own insurance agent.

Financial Aid

Fee assistance may be available through Hennepin County Child Care Assistance. For information please call 612.348.5937.

Nondiscrimination

Early Adventures enrolls children on a first-come, first-served basis and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, age or disability in administration of its admission or program policies, or financial aid programs.

It is our policy to not discriminate against persons with disabilities on the basis of disability, and to provide children and parents with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in the center's programs and services, in compliance with state law and the federal Americans with

Disability Act. If a translator is required for parent communication Early Adventures will work to provide one as needed.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

- Children’s play is messy so be sure to send your child in comfortable clothing suitable for adventure!
- Please send your child in shoes that are appropriate for running and climbing.
- We encourage families to send an extra set of clothing in case of accidents or spills.
- We encourage your child to not bring toys from home, however if there is something, i.e. blanket or stuffed animal that your child likes at rest time, please label it and send it along.

Disclosure of Information

Information about an individual child, or the parents or guardians of that child will not be disclosed to persons other than the facility staff or the Department of Human Services (DHS) or the Department of Education, unless the parents or guardians of the child grant written permission for the disclosure. This includes concerned family members who do not hold legal guardianship. A “Release of Information” form is available for parents or guardians to sign.

In an emergency situation, information will be shared with EMT, Police or other emergency responders as needed.

The Robbinsdale Area Schools District policy on data privacy also applies to students enrolled in Early Adventures.

Screening

Based on parent/staff observations of the child, developmental screening is available on request at the Community Education Office.

Referrals to Early Childhood Special Education

When concerns are noted by staff in regards to the early development of a child, the staff notifies the parent and asks for parent input and whether they also have concerns at home or in community settings.

Site staff may recommend preschool screening and provide contact information. Site staff may complete a Help Me Grow Referral. Staff will notify the parents if this occurs.

Site staff may provide families contact information for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).

Early Adventures staff do not diagnose students and do not receive special needs funding for additional services.

Children with Special Needs

Early Adventures will ask parents for input should information be necessary to help their child succeed in the program.

If a concern arises, staff will document all behaviors of the child to use as data when considering program accommodations.

Staff will communicate with parents on a regular basis regarding the child's status.

Every effort will be made to collaborate with Early Childhood Special Education staff or other agencies as appropriate.

Transportation

Early Adventures students may have the opportunity to go on fieldtrips throughout the school year. We will inform you in advance of all trips.

Transportation will be provided by First Student Inc.

Fieldtrip costs are included in your Early Adventures fees.

Request for Copy of Records

Your child's completed registration forms and sign-in/out sheets are legal documents and kept for seven (7) years after your child leaves the program. Copies of these forms will be provided only to parents with legal custody of the child or through legal measures. The request must be submitted in writing (include the range of dates for which rosters are needed and the date by which they are needed) along with a \$15 service fee.

We may require up to ten (10) working days to process your request.

Continuity of Care

We strive to provide consistency of care by having qualified staff working set schedules with their assigned groups of children. When your child's teacher or caregiver does need to be absent, we will have another staff member or substitute available to provide care. Our substitutes go through the same screening and new hire training as all other staff.

Ratios

Early Adventures maintain staff/child ratios that comply with or exceed state licensing regulations. Ratios are 10:1 with a maximum class size of 20. Every attempt to lower the ratio of teacher to child during high risk activities is made to ensure the safety of every child.

Pets in the Program

Staff will notify families when a pet/animal is part of Early Adventures, or if a pet will be visiting the program on a given day.

Sleeping Arrangements

The program provides opportunities for sleep/rest for all children. Early Adventures will make available a regular rest period for children, if the child desires. For children who are unable to sleep, the program will provide time and space for quiet play.

Transitioning New Students

If a child enters the program in the middle of the year, we recommend a few short visits, gradually lengthening the visit time, prior to full day enrollment. This helps your child become familiar with the environment and also helps us get acquainted. Each child is unique in his/her patterns and ease of adjustment to new situations. Be sure to talk with the staff daily during the transition phase.

A consistent daily schedule (arrival and departure routines) also helps children adjust to a new routine and environment. When transitioning your child into our classrooms during the initial visit, we ask that you stay with your child as they will not be officially enrolled and are not included in the teacher child ratio. It is suggested that visits last, on the average, 2-3 hours. If you would like your child to experience different times of the day, schedule your visits accordingly. For liability purposes, parents may not leave their child unsupervised during visits.

Emergency Closings

- If Robbinsdale Area Schools are **closed** due to **snow**, Early Adventures will be closed.
- If Robbinsdale Area Schools are **closed** due to **cold**, Early Adventures will open at 8 am.
- If there is a **2 hour late start**, Early Adventures will open at 8 am.
- If school is **released early** due to weather, Early Adventures will also close early.
- If **evening activities are cancelled** but elementary school remains in session all day, Early Adventures will be open until 6:00 pm. However, we encourage parents to make arrangements to pick up as early as possible.

There will be no refunds or credits for severe weather related absences.

Tuition Information

Parents are responsible for payments during their contract.

Payments are due bi-weekly, on Mondays. Invoices will be sent via email on Monday one week prior to the due date. Payments not received within **3 days** of the due date will incur a \$5.00 late fee. Parent/guardians are responsible for **all** days contracted regardless of attendance.

A list of specific due dates will be included upon registration. Due dates correspond with Adventure Club due dates.

Holidays

Early Adventures will be open most week days with the exception of the following days:

Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
Presidents' Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Memorial Day

A detailed calendar of days will be shared with parents each year.

Communication

Open House/Orientation: This is a time to introduce your child and family to the classroom and facility. This time also facilitates relationships between families and among families and staff.

Parent Boards: Weekly lesson plans, lunch menus, detail about an upcoming event, and much more. The bulletin board in your child's classroom contains current information about the school and other topics of general interest.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Parent-Teacher Conference are available throughout the year to meet with your child's teacher and share information on your child's development.

You will receive a written report regarding your child's development during the year.

Translation services are available upon request.

Other: Please don't hesitate to share any information with staff throughout the year. Email is one of the easiest way to communicate with your child's teacher, but notes and phone calls are also encouraged.

Family Involvement

Families are a valuable resource for our program. An Open House will be offered prior to the start of the program. Parents are invited to visit the classroom at any time. If you are interested in participating in classroom functions, trips, or sharing ideas with the class, let the staff know. All offers of involvement are appreciated and welcome!

How can you do more? See below!

- **The Community Education Advisory Council:** the perfect avenue to express your views on how we can improve our program! Parents, community members, and Community Education staff come together to share ideas and suggestions regarding the content and quality of Community Education programs.
- **Assist with Field Trips:** Early Adventures will always solicit parent help in advance. There may be times when we need parents to help us.

- **Share Your Talents:** Does your family have a special cultural tradition? Do you possess a talent you'd like to share with us? We encourage you to share with us.

Updating Records

Be sure to keep your records up-to-date. Please make changes to phone numbers, authorized pick-ups or billing information by logging into your account at: <https://rdale.eleyo.com/>

This ensures we are able to reach you in the event of an emergency.

Comments, Concerns or Complaints

We work hard to provide you and your child the highest quality care, but we also understand that situations can arise which may need special attention. Please let us know, either in person or in writing, about anything with which you are particularly concerned.

In order to address your needs at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following steps:

1. First, speak with the staff member involved or the Site Supervisor.
2. If concerns persist, or discussions with the Site Supervisor are insufficient, contact the Program Director, 763.504.5321.

A Parent Survey is also conducted yearly.

Classroom Management Goals

We strive to maintain a safe and comfortable environment for your child. During their early years, your child is learning about the world around them and how they fit into it. Children need adults to help them develop self-control and empathy. The ultimate goal is for every child to learn to monitor his/her own behavior and feelings and to understand how their behavior impacts others.

It's natural for children to test limits that adults set for them. Early Adventures will use positive guidance techniques, including redirection and logical consequences to help guide children's behavior. An important part of this process is providing children with the support they need to learn to express their feelings and needs in acceptable ways.

Young children occasionally bite, hit, kick, scratch or throw things at others for a variety of different reasons. When this behavior becomes persistent and/or extreme, Early Adventures will ask for parent cooperation in efforts to resolve differences. In normal situations, staff will use positive behavioral guidance to address behavior. No physical punishment will be used.

Guidelines for Persistent Inappropriate Behavior

Early Adventures defines persistent inappropriate behavior as any inappropriate behavior that continues after the use of the guidance listed above; any behavior that threatens the health and safety of other children or staff; or a continuous inability to conform to the rules and guidelines of our program.

We will use the following procedure:

1. We will observe and record the child's behavior.
2. We will document what we have done to try to change the behavior. We may use a variety of tools such as a sticker chart, duration map or other reward system.
3. If the inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to participate in a parent-teacher conference. Early Adventures will work with the parents to develop a behavior plan.
4. If the inappropriate behavior continues or a severe situation which threatens the safety of others occurs, parents will be asked to pick up their child early.
5. If a student's behaviors require fundamental alterations to the program, Early Adventures is not able to provide care.

Guidelines for Immediate Dismissal from the program

Early Adventures may require immediate removal from the program if:

- A parent refuses to follow Early Adventures or District policies as described in the handbook and the contract.
- A child's behavior creates a significant risk of harm to other children or staff
- Failure to make payments.

Illness

For the protection and comfort of your child, the other children and staff at Early Adventures we cannot permit sick children to attend the program.

If a child becomes ill while at Early Adventures it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for pick up as quickly as possible.

According to District Policy, the following symptoms indicate the need to remain at home or be sent home:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more, should **remain at home for 24 hours after temperature returns to normal without medication to keep it down**
- Undiagnosed rash
- Severe cold or sore throat
- Inflamed or mattering eyes
- Unexplained lethargy
- Vomiting/diarrhea, should **remain at home for 24 hours after it has stopped**

If your child has had a fever of 100 degrees or more, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours, they may not attend Early Adventures.

Communicable Diseases

If your child comes down with a communicable condition, (i.e. lice, scabies, chicken pox, strep throat, ringworm, pink eye) please let us know within 24 hours so that we may notify other parents. These notices will be posted in the parent area and/or a copy sent home with your child. Any communicable disease must be reported to the school nurse. Robbinsdale Area Schools follow Minnesota Department of Health guidelines to assist in management/control in the school setting.

Medication

In accordance with state licensing requirement, parents or guardians are required to complete a Medication Form before medication can be given to their child. Staff are not qualified or allowed to decide whether a child requires medication or not.

Based on State regulations we must follow the procedure listed:

- Only medication prescribed by licensed physician may be administered.
- It must be given to the school in its original prescription bottle, showing child's name, date filled (must be a current prescription) and directions for use.
- The child's parent/guardian must complete and sign an authorization form specifying time and dosage of medication to be given.
- Parents should inform staff the last time the medication was given.
- Medication will be given in private.
- Staff will document each time the medicine is given.
- All medications will be stored in a locked cabinet.
- Medications will NOT be given after the expiration date.

Health Practices

We take great care in our efforts to limit the spread of illness in Early Adventures. In addition to cleaning and disinfecting toys and surfaces on a regular basis, both staff and children will practice appropriate hand washing throughout the day. Adults and students are required to wash hands:

- When arriving.
- Before and after eating, before preparing and serving food, or setting the table.
- Before and after preparing or giving medication.
- After using the toilet or after assisting a child with toilet use.
- After handling items soiled with body fluids or wastes (blood, vomit, stool, urine, drool or eye drainage).
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- After playing with or caring for pets or other animals.
- After playing outside.
- Before and after using water tables or moist items such as clay.
- After handling garbage or cleaning.
- Whenever hands look, feel or smell unclean.
- Before going home.

Please find additional information near all hand washing sinks for detailed information.

All classrooms are cleaned by custodial staff daily.

Child Health Records

Parents are responsible for all updates to health immunizations and any follow-up required for abnormal results. Emergency contact information must be kept current and up-to-date. The names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to their child's health information must be submitted by the parent/legal guardian in writing.

If a child has been diagnosed by a professional with special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g. asthma, hearing impairments, feeding needs, seizures, diabetes, etc.) Early Adventures needs written instructions on how to handle the child's special health need as well a doctor's note.

First Aid Procedure

We make every effort to maintain a safe environment for children. Staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and general emergencies (i.e. fire, tornado).

In the event of an injury, our first and foremost concern is always the health and safety of your child. We will follow these procedures in administering first aid to your child:

1. Staff will don the appropriate personal protective equipment, which must always include gloves, and may include a face mask and/or gown to prevent your child's blood from entering staff's system through cuts/hangnails or a splash into eyes/mouth.
2. Any clothing which is bloodstained will not be rinsed out; it will be placed in a sealed bag and labeled to ensure that it remains sealed until you take it home.

In the event that staff believes that your child's blood may have entered his/her system, we are required to provide him/her with a confidential medical evaluation. Unless we are able to verify that your child received the Hepatitis B vaccination series, the HBIG vaccine must be administered to staff immediately. Should your child be exposed to another child's blood, we will notify the parents of both children involved immediately and strongly encourage you to contact your physician for a follow-up.

Reporting and Recording Injuries

If a minor accident or injury occurs, first aid is administered and a "Boo Boo Report" is filled out. The report will describe the nature of the incident and the follow-up care that was provided. This information will be shared with you upon arrival to pick up your child.

In the event of a more serious accident or injury, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

Injury Prevention and Risk Management

Even in the highest quality preschools, accidents can and do happen as children explore the world around them. Many precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment for your child.

A safe environment free of hazards will be maintained at all times. Safety and health hazard inspections will be conducted daily. Our staff have also been trained in pediatric first aid and CPR as well as receiving proper orientation on safety rules.

Emergency Medical Care

In the event of a serious injury we will make every attempt to contact a parent. If parents cannot be reached, we will contact those listed as your emergency contacts.

If necessary, 911 will be called for emergency care and your child will be transported to an emergency hospital if needed. Such procedures will be reserved for extreme emergency situations and every attempt to notify the parent/guardian will be made. If your child needs immediate transportation and a parent or guardian has not arrived, a staff member will go with the child in the ambulance.

It is vital that you keep your emergency contact information up to date and notify us in writing immediately with any changes.

Emergency Drills

All Robbinsdale Area Schools have detailed crisis plans. Students enrolled in Early Adventures will take part in drills along with the rest of the building.

Fire, tornado and lock-down drills will take place throughout the school year. Staff will prepare students for these drills ahead of time with simple explanations and practice.

Allergies

Please make sure staff are aware of any allergies your child may have. Early Adventures will make every effort to accommodate the needs of all children.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent/Outdoor Activities

Outside time is an integral part of children's developmental learning, health and well-being. Children must be prepared to go outside every day. Staff will assess the weather conditions to determine whether the children will go outdoors.

To protect against heat, cold, sun injury and insect borne disease Early Adventures will:

- Have children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather.
- Provide opportunities for students to play in the shade. When in the sun, they will wear sun-protective clothing and apply sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher and only with parental permission to do so.

Early Adventures does **not apply insect repellent. If you would like your child to wear insect repellent, we recommend that you apply the repellent before bringing your child to school.

Mandated Reported Information

Early Adventures staff are required by law to report evidence of child neglect or abuse. Those who fail to report according to state regulations can be held accountable under the law. No one, including school management and/or a child's parents can interfere with this reporting requirement.

Meals and Snacks

A light breakfast and afternoon snack will be provided daily for your child. A menu of these snacks will be posted in the classroom monthly. If your child has dietary needs, please contact the Site Supervisor.

Lunch may be brought from home or purchased through District Food Services. A detailed menu, as well as directions for purchasing lunch will be available near the beginning of the school year.

Nutritional Guidelines

Early Adventures works to support lifelong healthy eating habits by ensuring that healthy snacks are available for children during regular snack times. Children have the opportunity to learn about healthy food choices during snack and meal times as well as during cooking projects.