

New Hanover County Schools

Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center

Family Handbook
2020-2021



Welcome to the Family

Head Start Program
NC Pre-Kindergarten Program
NHCS Exceptional Children's Program

1100 McRae Street * Wilmington, NC 28401 * 910.251.6155 <https://johnson.nhcs.net/>



Parent Orientation Notes



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Dear Johnson Pre-K Families,

Welcome to our school family and the 2020-2021 school year. Our staff looks forward to serving your child (ren) and family. Preschool services play an important role in preparing you and your child (ren) for the next steps of kindergarten and beyond.

At Johnson Pre-K Center, we believe you are your child's first teacher and that you will continue to play a vital role in your child's success. Through active engagement and play, we focus our teaching in the following domains of learning: social and emotional, language and literacy, cognitive, and physical development. In teaching within these domains and considering the age of the child, our staff incorporates the learning of emerging reading and math skills during instruction and play.


Our school is a New Hanover County Public School supported by our school district, Head Start, North Carolina Pre-K, and Title I. In addition, we are a licensed child care facility following the rules of the Division of Childhood Development and Early Education (DCDEE). The policies and procedures found in this handbook are aligned with the laws, requirements, and regulations from those supporting our school. While the policies may not align between the governing agencies, our school follows the most stringent guideline pending the situation. Please visit any of the following sites for more information:

- New Hanover County Schools: www.nhcs.net
- NC Department of Public Instruction: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/>
- Office of Head Start: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs>
- DCDEE: <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>
- NC Health and Sanitation: <https://ehs.ncpublichealth.com/>

Thank you for entrusting us with the lives of your children. We welcome your continuous involvement and expertise as you are your child's first teacher. We are committed to joining you in caring for their needs, preparing them for elementary school, and inviting them to dream big dreams. This year will be different as we start the year in remote learning and with the global pandemic still looming. We have added safety elements to help ensure the health and well-being of our students. We look forward to working with you and your children this year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karen McCarty
Principal, Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center
karen.mccarty@nhcs.net





Mission Statements

“Reaching children and equipping them to achieve their full potential.”

New Hanover County Schools:


The mission of New Hanover County Schools, in collaboration with our parents and the community, is to strive to provide children an excellent education in a safe and positive learning environment where they are prepared with the critical skills to reach their full potential for a world yet to be imagined.

New Hanover County Schools’ Pre-K Program:

The NHCS Pre-Kindergarten Program is committed to establishing a foundation of learning by inspiring, guiding, and teaching the children in our program while serving their families and the community. We believe that all children have individual worth and can succeed in the future when given a positive foundation of learning.

NHCS Early Childhood Program’s Beliefs about Children and Learning

We believe that:

- Children need nurturing caregivers in the home and school setting.
 - Children learn through active involvement with developmentally appropriate materials and that play is an important tool for learning.
 - Children need to be able to identify and communicate their feelings, needs and desires in positive ways in a preschool setting.
 - Children must learn to make decisions and accept responsibility for those decisions and learn to solve real-life problems and not just the right answers.
 - A child’s development and learning is greatly enhanced through a partnership between the school and the child’s family.
 - Your child is in the best possible place to learn and develop!
- 

Head Start and Preschool Philosophy

What we believe about each child in a Preschool Program:

- Each child has unique experiences and strengths and can learn
- Each child needs a comprehensive, interdisciplinary program that fosters development
- Each child needs high quality educational services in a safe and attractive classroom setting
- Each child needs developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials
- Each child needs positive, supportive, nurturing, caring, academically competent teachers and aides
- Each child needs developmentally appropriate socialization
- Each child needs complete and comprehensive health screenings and follow-up treatments as needs indicate.

What we believe about their families:

- Families are the child's first and primary teacher and remain the principal influence on the child's development
- Families regularly participate directly in the child's education
- The child's entire family as well as the community must be involved
- Families must be connected to on-going services within the community
- The child and the family's sense of dignity and self-worth can be enhanced through the program
- The child and the family's ability to relate to one another and others will be increased

What we believe about interagency relationships:

- Cooperation, coordination, and collaboration are essential in order to maximize services to children and their families
- Joint training of staff and parents yields consistency
- There must be written procedures for: referrals, evaluations, IEP development, and placements
- An annually updated written agreement must address transition and the procedure for sharing resources

What we believe about the program:

- The program should strive to meet and exceed quality standards
- The program connects the family with on-going services (i.e. medical and dental) within the community
- Each child's unique experiences and strengths should be maximized through the program

Communication

School Telephone Number 910.251.6155

School Hours

Student Hours: 7:15 am - 1:55 pm
Office Hours: 6:45 am - 3:30 pm

Teachers are not permitted to receive direct phone calls during student hours. If you have time sensitive information, please contact the front office.

Parent / Teacher Communication

Communication between the home and the school is important. Teachers are expected to check email regularly, and these email addresses can be found on the school's website or in the communication folder. All students/families will receive a **RED** communication folder.

Parents are expected to:

- ★ Read and sign papers in the folder
- ★ Communicate in writing any changes related to the student
- ★ Communicate with the teacher regarding concerns

Teachers are expected to:

- ★ Send folders home daily
- ★ Include constructive comments regarding child's day
- ★ Collaborate with families on instructional units, field trips, presentations, etc.
- ★ Check folders daily for information

Changes in Home Life

If your family relationships change, notify your child's teacher. This information is confidential.

Change of Information

Notify the office and your child's teacher if you have a change in any of the following:

- Address
- Phone number
- Emergency contacts
- Authorization for pick up

It is extremely important that our school has the most accurate information at all times so that we are able to reach you in the event of an emergency.

Child Plus

Our school uses a program, ChildPlus, to communicate with families. The system allows school staff to send text messages and emails to parents with school updates and reminders. To opt out of this service, please submit a written request to the front office.

Connect 5

NHCS has established a county-wide email and telephone system that notifies groups of people regarding events and/or cancellations. Johnson Pre-K uses this system to notify parents about daily attendance, tardies, and other school related events. Please notify the office if your phone number changes.

Custody

It is the responsibility of the legal parent or guardian/caregiver to notify the school of any custody agreements for the child. Court documentation must be provided. Without court documentation indicating otherwise, both parents listed on the child's birth certificate have equal access to the child.

Home Visits and Family Conferences

Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center requires teachers and parents to meet four times a year to review children's progress and needs. Two of the visits are required in the home while the remaining two visits may be scheduled at either the school or the home.

Home Visits are valuable in establishing respectful and collaborative relationships with our families.

- ❖ 1st Meeting: Home Visit - Getting to Know You
- ❖ 2nd Meeting: Fall Conference
- ❖ 3rd Meeting: Home Visit - Child's progress according to developmental progressions, TSG Family Conference Form shared
- ❖ 4th Meeting: Spring conference & Transition to Kindergarten or second year of preschool, TSG Family Conference Form shared

Newsletters

Our classroom and school newsletters seek to maintain and improve family and community partnerships and to keep you informed of many topics including child health and safety, parent involvement and School Readiness activities, Parent Committee Meetings, and access to community resources and other topics of interest.

- Classroom: Each teacher will provide a newsletter informing you of learning objectives and events in your child's classroom and school.

- School: Newsletters from the center/ Family Specialists in coordination with classroom staff are sent for parents and families to enjoy.

Webpages

<https://johnson.nhcs.net/>

Parent resources and other information pertinent to our school can be found by accessing the school's webpage. In addition, all classroom teachers have a web page. Please check this page for additional information about classroom activities, events, and learning outcomes.

Concerns and Challenges

Any time you have a concern regarding your child, please contact your child's teacher. He/she knows your child and will be able to speak directly to you regarding concerns. If you have a concern not adequately supported through the teacher, please contact the principal Dr. Karen McCarty.

In addition, New Hanover County School's has an online reporting system, Ethix 360, that is used to report, investigate, and monitor concerns until a resolution is met. The link may be found at:

[NHCS Ethix360](#)

School Readiness

School Readiness is the process of early learning and development, from infancy to school age, when children gain the skills and attitudes they need to succeed in school. With developmentally appropriate programming, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers make advances that prepare them for school. Early childhood experts describe school readiness in various ways, but typically refer to five areas of readiness: health and physical development; social and emotional development; approaches to learning; language development and communication; and cognition and knowledge.

Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center has a School Readiness Plan, and you are a very important part of the process. The plan is shared with the parents at the *first parent meeting*. We look forward to your input as we work together for your child's school readiness.

Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center serves children:

- who qualify for Head Start or NC Pre-K ,
- who are 3 or 4 years old on or before August 31, 2020, and/or
- who qualify for the Exceptional Children's Program

School Calendar

Johnson Pre-K Center follows the approved [NHCS Pre-K Calendar](#). This matches the NHCS Traditional School calendar with the following **EXCEPTIONS**:

Pre-K students do not attend school when the traditional calendar has a:

- Designated ½ days noted, or
- Inclement weather causing a delayed start day

Attendance

Attendance is very important for success in our school. Parents have the responsibility to ensure regular on-time attendance. Regular attendance is necessary and essential for your child to gain the greatest benefit from this early learning opportunity.

Start great school habits by showing your child that school is an important place to be by being on time to school and attending school regularly (unless your child is sick). Children are expected to be at school on time and stay all day.

- Establishing consistent routines:
 - Gives your child security,
 - Helps to build a relationship between the classroom and home, and
 - Builds value between school and learning.
- Children who have irregular attendance or who are consistently late:
 - Miss breakfast and lunch
 - Miss valuable connection opportunities with teachers and classmates

Absences

We recognize there will be days your child will miss school.

Unexcused Absences: missing the bus, oversleeping, bad weather, car trouble, etc.

Excused Absences: illness, religious holiday, death in immediate family, medical appointments, court, etc. These absences will require a note detailing the following:

1. Date of absence
2. Specific reason for absence
3. Parent/guardian signature

When absences occurs, we ask that the parent or guardian/caregiver to:

- Notify the school as soon as possible on the date of the absence or tardy
- New Hanover County Schools policy is for parents to send a note with the reason for the absence/ tardiness when the child returns to school in the red "Communicator" folder

- Absences because of illness for 3 or more consecutive days may require confirmation from a doctor.

After three (3) consecutive absences, parents will be contacted by the teacher, instructional assistant, family specialists, and/or school social worker.

Termination from the Program

When a family does not abide by the policies of the NHCS Pre-K Program, parents will be called for a family conference to determine appropriate steps to ensure access for their child. If, following the conference, the situation does not improve, your child may be excused from the program.

Tardiness to School

Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. will not be admitted into the center without documentation of a medical appointment. It is an expectation that parents make this a priority for their children.

Dress Code

Johnson Pre-K Center follows [NHCS Board Policy 8520](#) which states that a student's appearance, mode of dress, or condition of personal hygiene is not permitted to disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to the health and safety of others. In our setting, your child's clothing should encourage movement and active play. In addition, we encourage families to provide clothing that supports child independence of self-dressing.

North Carolina Child Care Licensing Laws require outdoor gross motor engagement for 60-minutes every day. Please dress students appropriately for the weather - this includes rain gear, coats/jackets, hats/gloves. Tennis shoes or close-toed shoes are preferred.

School Supplies

All school supplies are provided by Johnson Pre-K Center. We encourage you to speak with your child's teacher about at-home supplies that might support early childhood learning.

What to bring to School


The following will promote the success of your child:

- An extra set of clothes including underwear, socks, shorts/pants, and shirt. Please ensure your child's name is on everything!
- A bookbag (no wheels, please!)
- A blanket for rest time

What to leave at Home

The following, when left at home, will promote a calmer transition between home and school:

- Toys
- Money
- Animals/Pets
- Candy or any outside food
- Lotions/hand sanitizer
- Balloons
- Aerosol containers of any kind



We try very hard to keep track of all clothing. However, we cannot be responsible for lost or unmarked items. Children have their own cubbies for clothing and other personal belongings. Families should check cubbies and backpacks regularly!

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Authorization for Pick: **No ID = no pick up!**

It is the parent or legal guardian/caregiver's responsibility to provide a list of authorized persons who can pick up their child from the school or the bus stop.

It is the parent or legal guardian/caregiver's responsibility to update the Authorization for Pick Up form **IN-PERSON** when changes are required.

It is the parent or legal guardian/caregiver's responsibility to have a photo ID at all times when picking up a child.

Authorization to Release Guidelines

All students must be picked up by the parent/guardian or someone who has been authorized by the parent/guardian and is listed on the appropriate Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center Authorization for Pick Up form. A picture ID must be shown before a student is released. **NO PHOTO ID = NO Child**

Arrival (7:15 am - 7:45 am)

Our building opens at 7:15 am. Morning drop-off is 7:15 am - 7:45 am.

Your cooperation will ensure a safe arrival each day.

Car Riders: When driving to and from school, enter at the intersection of Nixon and McRae Street (Community Boys and Girls Club), park in a marked space, assist your child out of the vehicle, and hold his or her hand until the child is in his or her classroom. No parking permitted along the curb.

All car rider students will be escorted to their classroom by the person bringing them to school. Once in the classroom, print your name, the child's name, and the arrival time on the sign-in sheet provided.

Tardies (arriving between 7:45 am - 8:15 am)

Children arriving after 7:45 am will be marked tardy, and parents/guardians/caregivers will be required to sign in at the office, receive a pass, and walk the child to the classroom. Excessive tardiness disrupts your child's routine and can jeopardize your child's placement in the program.

Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. will not be admitted into the center without documentation of a medical appointment. *It is an expectation that parents make this a priority for their children.*

Afternoon Transportation Changes

Parents must communicate in writing **all** transportation changes. All transportation changes must be communicated by 1:15 pm. **We do not accept changes over the phone!**

Early Dismissal

If a student must be checked out during the day, the parent/guardian must come to the school and check out the student. The authorized person to pick up will walk to the classroom and sign the child out. Staff will not have your child waiting in the office. Continued early check-outs will be referred to the school social worker, family specialists, and/or school administration. For the safety of all students, staff, and volunteers, parents/guardians will not be permitted to check out students between 1:15 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. as our school is in transition to dismissal.

Daily Dismissal

Our dismissal routine is structured with student and staff safety in mind. Our school day ends at 1:55 p.m. Johnson Pre-K does not provide after school care, and ALL students are expected to be picked up by 2:10 pm. Repeated late-pick ups will be referred to the school social worker, family specialists, and/or school administration.

Car Riders (Parent Pick-Up)

Please enter the school grounds from the intersection of Nixon and McRae Street (Community Boys and Girls Club). Parking will only be permitted in **designated spaces**. NO curbside parking. When the bell rings (1:55 pm), you may enter the building and proceed to your child's room. Each person will sign their name and mark the time you pick up the child.

Daycare Vans

Please notify your child's teacher regarding your child's participation in another child care center after dismissal. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify our school with any changes to after school care.

Bus Riders

The New Hanover County Schools' Transportation Department determines walk zones, bus routes, and bus assignments. Eligible students are assigned morning and afternoon buses to community bus stops (not home addresses).

A parent, guardian or authorized adult on the Authorization for Pick-Up form must be present at the bus stop each day. Due to scheduling, buses cannot wait for parents to arrive at the stop. Children will be returned to school if an authorized adult is not at the bus stop. The parent, guardian, or authorized adult will be required to pick the child up at the school. After a child has been returned three times, bus privileges will be revoked. In addition, for safety, parents will not be permitted to 'bus stop hop' if they are late.

To track bus locations and times of arrival, please download the [EduLog App](#). You will need your child's powerschool number to access his/her transportation information. Please visit your child's teacher or the front office for this information. This information will not be provided over the phone.



Bus Transportation Policies

Changes are being made during the first 10 days of school that may impact arrival times for buses. It is important that you adjust accordingly. A responsible adult must be at the stop every afternoon to receive a Pre-K student. No child may ride a bus other than the one assigned. Transportation requires a minimum of three (3) days to set up any transportation changes.

Child care licensing and Head Start required students be assigned seats. In addition, Head Start requires our instructional assistants to:

- Record the time that the child boards the bus.
- Aid the child in securing the seat belt for those buses with seat belts.
- Complete a headcount of students at every bus stop
- Maintain emergency information on each child on the bus

In addition, our buses cannot transport medication. It is the parents responsibility to bring required medication to school.

During orientation, you will receive copies of all the transportation forms. Please visit the following links for more information regarding transportation at our school:

[**Safe Arrival and Departure Procedures**](#)

[**Guidelines for Transporting Children**](#)

[**Transportation Policies for Parents**](#)

[**Off-Premise Activity Authorization**](#)



Discipline & Code of Conduct

Johnson Pre-K Center staff members believe that children learn in many ways. We believe children learn through play and social encounters with parents, staff, and other children. They learn through trial and error as they gain independence and confidence. Children need to know that the adults in their classrooms and home will love them and keep them safe regardless of the negative behaviors displayed. We believe that children develop discipline through many different experiences with loving adults guiding their progress.

Employees and volunteers are critical to the success of our students, and must agree to adhere to the following code of ethical conduct:

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child, family, staff member and volunteer and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability;
- Follow the program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, staff, volunteers, and/or internal operating procedures;
- Adhere to New Hanover County Schools' policies and procedures for filing a community complaint;
- Adhere to New Hanover County Schools' policies and procedures for filing an employee complaint;
- Refrain from accepting or soliciting personal favors, gratuities, or anything else of significant value from contractors or potential contractors and employees or potential employees of the program;
- Assure that no child will be left alone or unsupervised while in my care;
- Use only positive methods of child guidance & will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation.
- Not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as a punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

The use of profanity is strictly prohibited by all visitors to our center. This policy is in accordance with Head Start Performance Standard 1304.52- Standards of Conduct and New Hanover County Schools Code of Conduct.

Bullying

The New Hanover County Board of Education believes that all employees, students, and families should be free from harassment and bullying as part of a safe, orderly, caring and inviting working and learning environment. School Board Policy 8307 expressly prohibits harassment or bullying of students, employees and their parents/families. Any violation of this policy is considered a serious violation and appropriate action shall be taken. Please report using [Ethix360](#). This can be located at www.nhcs.net toward the bottom of the website.

Cell Phone Use

Please do not use your cell phones in the school building. To help build rituals and routines with your child during drop-off and pick-up, we ask that you take this time to spend with your child.

Program Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, all staff members will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy:

We DO:	We DO NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● praise, reward and encourage the children.● reason with and set limits for the children.● model appropriate behavior for the children.● modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems.● listen to the children.● provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.● provide the children with natural and logical consequences for their behaviors.● treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires and feelings.● ignore minor misbehavior.● explain things to children on their levels.● stay consistent in our behavior management program.● use effective guidance and behavior management techniques that focus on a child's development.● use short supervised periods of time-out sparingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap or otherwise physically punish the children.● make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.● shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.● deny food or rest as punishment.● relate discipline to eating, resting or sleeping.● leave the children alone, unattended or without supervision.● place the children in locked rooms, closets or boxes as punishment.● allow discipline of children by children.● criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families or ethnic groups.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being of Students

Johnson Pre-K Center makes every effort to observe and teach healthy practices at school. We encourage you to continue these practices. Some of these good habits include washing hands after toileting and before and after eating. We also teach and encourage children to cover coughs and to use tissues to clean runny noses.

Illness and Exclusion from School

The best way to prevent the spread of illness is to make sure your child stays at home when he/she is visibly ill. We understand that your child may be upset about missing school and that you may be challenged with missing work. However, we need your support to maintain and sustain a healthy school environment. Per DCDEE policy regarding [Communicable Disease and Exclusion from Childcare](#), please keep your child at home if any of the following is present:

- Live lice
- Bedbugs
- Ringworm
- Fever of 100.4
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Pink eye
- Rash or impetigo
- Sore throat with fever
- Communicable illness such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, strep throat, hepatitis, etc.

Children are not permitted to return to school until they are fever free *without medication* for 24-hours.

If you have questions about whether or not your child should come to school, please call the school nurse. In addition, please inform the school if your child is diagnosed with any contagious illness such as chicken pox, flu, strep throat, pink eye, etc. In confidence, we will notify other parents to monitor their own children for symptoms.

If your child becomes ill at school, we will contact you or anyone on the authorization for pick up to

come and take the child home. If your child has a medical emergency, we will call 911 in addition to calling you and anyone of the child's authorization for pick up. It is extremely important that the school has the most updated phone numbers on file.

COVID-19 Information

To ensure a safe and healthy environment, all students and adults entering the building will be screened before being allowed in the building. The screening will include a temperature check and adults will be asked questions related to their health and exposure to Covid-19. Parents will have to attest to their children's health by answering questions on behalf of their children.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy and Procedure

Every person, including parents, teachers, and child care workers, has a legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the proper authorities. A report can be made by calling the NHCS Department of Social Services. Failing to report or knowingly preventing another person from reporting is a crime.

Child Abuse Hotline: 910.798.3420 or 911

All New Hanover County School employees are MANDATED reporters - **We are required to report suspected child abuse and neglect.**

Emergency Care Plans

Parents will need to notify their child's teacher regarding serious medical conditions such as allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc. In collaboration with the parent, teacher, and other medical professionals, an emergency care plan will be developed. It is important that we have the necessary medical care plan in place if the need arises while your child is at school.

Medication Administration

If it becomes necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, the following procedures must be followed:

Parents:

- Must bring the medication to the school in the original container along with the "Permission to Administer Medication at school" form signed by the parent and doctor.
- Medication cannot be sent to school in the child's book bag or on a Public School Bus.
- All medication given to children by the facility staff must be prescription medication and be in the original container.
- Preschool personnel cannot administer nonprescription drugs or over the counter medicines to students.
- Parents may be asked to come to class to dispense their child's medication.
- Ensure the pharmacy includes enough for the school in the proper container with all pertinent information.
- Please make arrangements at the end of the year to come to the school and get your child's medication. Medication not picked up from school will be discarded.

Staff:

1. School Nurse will bring medication to assigned staff following "check-in" of medication

2. Complete a log showing the date, time, person assisting, and any observations or comments any time medication is used.
3. Epi-pens and medication for children with asthma and severe allergies is kept in the emergency backpack with the doctor's orders. This is kept at school and will travel on the bus and on field trips.

NC Health Assessment and Required Immunizations

In order to comply with North Carolina Child Care Licensing Regulations (See Appendix) and New Hanover County Schools requirements, Dorothy B. Johnson requires that all children entering the program have an Early Childhood Education Health Assessment with the results recorded on the Preschool Health Assessment form. This form must be completed by a Medical Doctor, Physician's Assistant, Health Dept. or other licensed medical personnel or facility to the authority to complete and sign this form.

North Carolina General Statutes #130A0440 and #130A-155, North Carolina Child Care Licensing Regulations (Appendix ???), and New Hanover County Schools require that all students enrolling in public schools must provide an Early Childhood Education Health Assessment and a certificate of immunizations. If documentation is not presented on or before the student's first day of school, school staff will notify the parent or guardian that they have 30 days to present the required items or the student will be excluded from school.

Your signature on the Receipt of Policies and Procedures Form indicated that you have received a copy of the Health Assessment form when you enrolled your child and that you understand that the Health Assessment as well as all required immunizations must be completed with documentation provided to the school by the first day of attendance or within thirty (30) days.

Immunizations may be obtained from a family physician or the NHC Health Department.

Health Insurance

- Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center works to assist families who do not have private medical and/or dental insurance to apply for Medicaid/Health Choice insurance options to help ensure that children's health and dental needs are met.
- Please keep the program notified of any changes in the child's health insurance.
 - We can send home Medicaid/Health Choice applications if needed.
- It is very important for families with Medicaid/Health Choice to keep the insurance current and not let health coverage lapse.

- During the year, parents may be asked for a copy of the recent Medicaid/Health Choice card.

Shaken Baby Syndrome and Head Trauma

New Hanover County Schools' policy for Shaken Baby Syndrome and Head Trauma is included in Appendix F.

Sunscreen

School staff are not permitted to apply sunscreen nor can students have sunscreen in their backpacks. Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at school

Parent Authorization for Health Services

- Parents will be advised of all planned health and dental services in advance.
- Children may not receive health or dental services without advance parent authorization.

<p>Hearing and Vision Screening If a child does not have a hearing and vision screening completed on the Health Assessment form, they will receive a hearing and vision screening within 45 days of enrollment by appropriate staff members. Parents will have agreed or disagreed to this on the initial application.</p>	<p>Dental Program Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center offers dental services through the New Hanover County Health Department Mobile Dental Clinic for families who have not already established a dental home. We send home written reminders that the 6 month dental checkup is due.</p> <p>Each child enrolled in the program who has not already had a dental examination will receive, <i>with parental permission</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A dental examination by a dentist; ● Follow-up treatment as indicated; ● Demonstration of proper tooth-brushing and flossing techniques; ● Daily tooth-brushing in the classroom with supervision.
<p>Growth Assessment If a child has an outdated growth assessment, they will receive a growth assessment within 30 days of enrollment by the appropriate staff member. Children will receive a growth assessment at the completion of the year to measure their growth. Parents will have agreed or disagreed to this on the initial application.</p>	
<p>Behavioral Observation Screening An initial classroom observation by a licensed mental health practitioner is completed within 45 days of enrollment. Parental consent is obtained for all mental health observations. Parental</p>	

consent is also obtained for a referral to school based mental health services if desired by the parent or guardian.

It is very important for you to follow-up with any recommendations from the dentist including future visits.

Mental Health

Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center staff strive to work collaboratively with parents to:

- Ask for parental input about their child's mental health through parent observation and/or concerns.
- Share staff observations and have discussions with parents when needed to anticipate children's behavior and development, including separation and attachment issues.
- Discuss and identify with parents appropriate responses to their child's behaviors.
- Discuss how to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships in the home and at the program.
- Help parents to better understand mental health issues and community supports (See Appendix).
- Supporting parents' participation in any needed mental health interventions.
 - The school provides this service to our families by regularly utilizing the services of mental health professionals. The goal of mental services is to enable the timely and effective identification of and intervention in family and staff concerns about a child's mental health
 - Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center does this by including on-site mental health consultation involving the mental health professional, program staff, and parents.
- Ultimately, the program will:
 - Design and implement program practices responsive to the identified behavioral and mental health concerns of an individual child or group of children;
 - Promote children's mental wellness by providing group and individual staff and parent education on mental health issues;
 - Assist in providing special help for children with atypical behavior or development; and
 - Utilize other community mental health resources, as needed.

Child Nutrition

Breakfast, lunch and all snacks served at our center are provided at **no cost to our families**. Child care licensure requires that meals be nutritionally balanced. To ensure compliance, we encourage all students to eat the meals and snacks served at school. Outside food and beverages are not permitted. Our meals will include the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">Breakfast</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>milk, juice or fruit, bread or cereal</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lunch</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>milk, two or more fruits/vegetables, meat or meat alternative, bread or bread alternative</i></p>

Families may request to opt out of this nutrition program. However, you must schedule a conference with the principal to ensure understanding of what this will require of you.

If your child has any special dietary restrictions or food allergies due to a medical condition, please communicate this to your child's teacher and the school nurse. Documentation from a physician is required before accommodations or changes can

be made to meals. You may obtain the required form from the front office.

School Safety

Public Schools and licensed child care facilities are required to conduct routine safety drills in preparation for emergency situations. We will be conducting the following drills:

- Fire: monthly
- Tornado: Annually
- Earthquake: Annually
- Lockdown: Quarterly

Emergency bags are located in each classroom which contains plans, contact information, and emergency supplies.

Tobacco Free Campus

It is the belief of the New Hanover County Board of Education that the use of tobacco is harmful to general health. The Board desires that all New Hanover County School facilities and properties be free from the use of tobacco products. The use of tobacco and all smoking devices is NOT permitted on school property.

Instruction

Staff at Johnson Pre-K Center utilize Conscious Discipline and Creative Curriculum to address 38 learning objectives within five learning domains. The Creative Curriculum enables children to develop confidence, creatively, and lifelong critical thinking skills. It is based on 38 learning objectives for development and learning which are fully aligned with both Head Start standards and our state's standards for early learning: reading, math, social-emotional, physical, and language.

Teaching and practicing appropriate student behavior is a very important component of early learning experience. Appropriate student behavior is required in order to provide a school climate that is safe for your child and conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Our program goals for helping children develop self-control and learn acceptable forms of social behavior are:

1. Learn empathy through language concepts such as "same-different," and "why-because," identifying feelings and how to recognize them in others, as well as showing care and concern for others.
2. Learn emotion management through identifying strong feelings, ways to calm down, managing anger and belly breathing.
3. Learn the basic steps to problem-solving (1 - How do I feel? 2 - What are the problems? 3 - What can I do?), learning prosocial behaviors and skills for making and keeping friends.

We help children resolve conflict and develop problem solving skills with peers by:

- Helping children acquire the language concepts needed to resolve conflict
- Being a mediator throughout the problem-solving process
- Encouraging children to try to work out problems with their language skills.

Domains of Learning

Head Start	NC Pre-K
Approaches to Learning	Approaches to Play and Learning
Social and Emotional Development	Emotional and Social Development
Language and Literacy	Language and Communication
Cognition	Cognitive Development
Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	Health and Physical Development

Curriculum

Conscious Discipline

Our Social-Emotional Core instruction comes from the philosophies of Conscious Discipline. Our goal is to assist students with learning self-regulation. Students will learn to recognize their emotions, engage in breathing techniques, and participate in connection-based activities. From the moment students enter the building, staff help support their development with these strategies. One thing that sets Conscious Discipline apart from other behavior management programs is the belief that changes, self awareness, and self-control begin with the adults. Even as a staff, we are constantly engaged in this learning process and work to continue growing in our abilities to connect with each other and remain aware of and in control of our executive functioning and emotional states.

Creative Curriculum

The philosophy and goals of our program are reflected through our curriculum. The Creative Curriculum 5th Edition is used in all classrooms. Modifications are made in the curriculum, environment, and staffing pattern as needed in order to meet the special needs of all our children. Ongoing assessment of the objectives from Creative Curriculum is documented in a program entitled, Teaching Strategies Gold. Reports from this program will be available after Fall, Winter, and Spring Checkpoints to ensure your understanding of your child's progress. Not only do we measure academic skills associated with cognition, literacy, and mathematics; but we also include gross and fine motor skills and social emotional development.

The daily schedule provides a balance of activities including individual, small group and large group activities. Activities alternate between quiet and active play. Transitions between activities are used as learning opportunities. To encourage large and fine motor development as well as social skills, there are daily outdoor activities (weather permitting).

The classroom is bright, safe, clean and comfortable. This fosters a secure environment in which learning and play can take place. We encourage good safety and nutritional practices. Children's artwork is displayed to brighten the classroom as well as to foster self-esteem and to encourage an appreciation of the arts. We incorporate culturally diverse toys and materials into our environment and promote a positive view of each child's diverse background.

Supplemental Curriculum and Learning

Remote Learning Platform

Reflecting on the aftermath of COVID-19 from last year, helping our families work with their children at home is important to sustaining student learning when children are not in school.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned to supplement and enrich our instructional program. In an effort to ensure student safety, transportation is provided by our school buses. Every child must have written permission from a parent or legal guardian before he/she can attend a field trip. No verbal permissions (in-person or via phone) will be accepted.

Parents of currently enrolled students may be able to attend some field trips. However, students will remain in our supervision and care. Siblings and students not enrolled in our school cannot attend any of our field trips.

MTSS Team

The mission of the Multi Tiered System of Support Team (MTSS) is to design and implement timely

intervention strategies targeting improved performance of an individual student. The Team uses a collaborative approach to support students, teachers, parents, and others as a vehicle to ensure the success of each student. Parents and staff members with concerns about a student may request assistance from the team. The primary responsibility of the team is to support the classroom teacher in meeting the needs of the student and parent. This may include developing interventions, proposing and designing services, requesting evaluations, and possibly proposing an individual education plan.

Homework

Parents of children attending New Hanover County Schools' pre-k programs should spend time reading each evening. In addition to reading, teachers may provide activities for at-home practices that connect to in-school learning. It is important to follow through with these activities as they will reinforce what your child is learning. Review the previous section titled Remote Learning for more information.

Parent and Family Engagement

We believe that parents/caregivers are the students' first teacher. Our goal is to help you help your child succeed. Parents will be asked to attend committee meetings, workshops, and other meetings designed to benefit the learning of children.

Our school will implement strategies designed to enhance partnerships with families. In order to make this happen, our staff will use different forms of communication to keep parents/guardians informed. Some of these forms include:

- Newsletters
- Daily Notes
- Phone calls
- Texts (child plus)
- Email
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Bulletin Boards (main hallway)

Orientation


This is a required event each year. Orientation provides parents/caregivers the opportunity to learn about policies, procedures, committees, and our school. This is also a time for parents to sign all remaining paperwork necessary for our program. Students may not start school unless the parent/caregiver has attended orientation.

Parent Committees

Parent committees included officers such as a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. In addition, these committees advise staff on programming, provide input for classroom activities, help with parent activity fund ideas, and help implement daily operations and activities.

Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is to provide every parent of an enrolled child with opportunities to assist in the development of activities that address their interests and needs and that support the education and healthy development of their children. The Health and Safety Committee is composed of parents, community resources and family specialists. During the first meeting offices are selected by the committee (chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary). The Health and Safety Committee will meet quarterly to discuss the following, but not limited to

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- Upcoming school events (field day, health day)
 - NHCS Food Menus
 - Healthy options at Johnson (heights, weight, vision screens, mobile dental unit)
 - Community resources for family

Policy Council

The Policy Council is the governing body for large-scale programmatic issues. The council is composed of parents of currently enrolled students and community representatives. The Policy Council community representatives are limited to a five-year term while parents must be elected each year from the Parent Committee. All other representatives are selected annually. At the beginning of each year, parents are elected by parents and no staff or members of their immediate family can serve on the council. In addition, 51% of Policy Council membership must consist of Head Start parents.

School Improvement Team

The School Improvement Team is responsible for developing a school improvement plan. The team meets monthly to review previously established goals and progress and to discuss concerns or areas that need to be developed. School improvement planning provides a manner for identifying needs and establishing a common approach to meeting the needs of the school. The team is made up of representatives of school staff and parents of currently enrolled students.


Parent/Family Engagement Events & Activities

We encourage and welcome your participation in your student's activities. Volunteering is a great way to familiarize yourself with our school and its philosophy, goals and curriculums. In addition, we encourage you to participate in any school event. The following is a few of our events:

- Open House
- Block Fest
- Fall Festival
- Raising a Reader
- Literacy Night
- Math Night
- Transition Night
- Health Day

Parent Visitation at Lunch

We welcome family members to eat lunch with their children. Please sign in at the office and get a visitor's sticker. Most of our classrooms eat lunch in their classrooms, so parents will need to coordinate with their child's teachers. Because of child care licensing regulations, we ask that you eat the same meals as your child and that you do not bring food from fast food restaurants.





Celebrations and Birthdays

Classroom celebrations are held throughout the year. Your child's teacher will communicate with you regarding these celebrations. If you do not want your child to participate, please notify your child's teacher and the child so all stakeholders are aware that the child will not participate.

If you would like to bring refreshments for your child's birthday or other celebration, **ALL** items must be store bought and in the original packaging. Per child care licensing requirements, we are not allowed to have balloons in our school.


Family Goal Setting

The intent of Family Goal Setting is to help parents set goals related to their child or their family. These goals will be addressed and progress will be made throughout the year to achieve those goals. Teachers and other staff will serve as motivators as well as helpers providing information and services to parents and families to achieve their goal. This will help families experience how to properly set goals, where to find the needed resources, and to document and celebrate the progress made until the goal is reached.

Visitor & Volunteering Procedures

Parents and visitors will check-in with the main office before visiting classrooms or the cafeteria. Visitors/volunteers will be required to show a picture ID and sign in on a computer in order to receive a visitor's badge that must be visible during their time in our school. These procedures are critical to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and community volunteers.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services routinely conducts sanitation and safety inspections. Any purse, backpack, briefcase, etc, in our building is subject to inspection. With this in mind, we ask that all personal belongings (except for a photo ID) remain locked in your vehicle.



Nondiscrimination Policies

Each child, regardless of developmental level or physical challenges, learns best in an inclusive environment, Therefore, no otherwise qualified child with a disability, solely by reason of the disability, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination from any program or activity of New Hanover County Early Childhood Education Program. Dorothy B. Johnson Pre-K Center seeks to locate and identify children with disabilities who may qualify for the program.

NHCS Notice of Nondiscrimination (2020-2021)

In compliance with federal law, New Hanover County Schools administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities, and admissions without discrimination because of disability, race, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, color, age, or military service and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

New Hanover County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (Title IX) and federal regulations to not discriminate in such a manner. This requirement extends to admission and employment. The board will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of sex, including any form of sexual harassment as that term is defined under Title IX, in any of the school system's educational and employment activities and programs.

The board has designated a Title IX coordinator to coordinate its efforts to comply with its responsibilities under Title IX and its implementing regulations. The contact information for the Title IX coordinator is:

Title IX coordinator
6410 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington, NC 28412
titleix@nhcs.net
(910) 254-4200

Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its implementing federal regulations may be referred to the Title IX coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education.

Notice of Rights Under Section 504 1973 Rehabilitation Act

1. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act is a non-discrimination statute barring discrimination on the basis of disability.
2. It is the policy of the New Hanover County Schools (NHCS) not to discriminate on the basis of disability in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by the Act.
3. The 1973 Rehabilitation Act requires the school system to locate, evaluate and determine if the student is a qualified individual requiring accommodations necessary to provide access to educational programs. The accommodations will be provided in the least restrictive environment for the student.
4. Parents are entitled to have the opportunity to review relevant educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The requirements are described in the local board of education policy manual and implementation procedures.
5. Parents or guardians disagreeing with the decisions reached by school personnel regarding necessary accommodations for access to educational programs may request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer by notifying the school principal.
6. Compliance with Section 504 is managed by the Exceptional Programs Office which can be contacted by calling 254-4445.

Grievance Procedure 1973: Rehabilitation Act

Section 504

When parents or guardians and the school are unable to agree about services proposed under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, it is expected that the disagreement will be resolved at a level closest to the student. The first attempt to reach an agreement should be through a meeting involving the classroom teacher(s) that serve the student and the principal at the local school level.

If no resolution is reached, the parent or guardian may request, in writing, a review. Address the written request for a review to NHCS Section 504 Compliance, Exceptional Programs Office, 1802 South 15th Street, Wilmington, NC 28401. As a part of this review, the parent or guardian will receive the formal Grievance Procedures adopted by New Hanover County Schools.


At any point in this grievance procedure, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

New Hanover County Schools Annual Notice about Educational Records

The Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires New Hanover County Schools to annually notify parents and students who are 18 years of age or older about their rights concerning educational records. The following information summarizes these rights. Parents and students 18 years of age or older have the:

- Right to confidentiality of the Official Record at the collection, storage, disclosure and destruction stages
- Right to inspect, review and obtain free copies of the Official Record
- Right to have a representative of your choosing inspect and review the Official Record with you
- Right to a full explanation, interpretation and analysis of the Official Record by the principal or designee

- Right to add data or information to the Official Record which explains or clarifies information contained in the Official Record
- Right to a list of the types of and the location of all records maintained and disclosed by New Hanover County Schools
- Right to know that written consent is required to disclose the Official Record to others EXCEPT for the following: NHCS officials, teachers and other employees (list posted at each school), other schools where a student intends to enroll, state and federal education authorities, financial aid applications, studies and research, accrediting organizations, judicial order or subpoena, health or safety emergency, and Directory Information
- Right to request the correction or removal of information from the Official Record if you believe it is inaccurate, outdated, irrelevant, misleading or violates privacy
- Right to a hearing, if NHCS refuses your request to correct or remove information from the Official Record
- Right to file a complaint regarding records with the U.S. Department of Education, FERPA Office, Washington, D.C. 20202. Complaints must be written and specify allegations of fact
- Right to obtain copies of the New Hanover County School Board Policies on records from the New Hanover County Schools Superintendent's Office
- Right to know that the New Hanover County Board of Education has designated a student's name and school of enrollment as Directory Information
- Right to know that Directory Information is disclosed as a part of officially designated school activities such as: team/activity rosters, scholar athlete awards, athletic eligibility, honor society, honor roll, good citizens, academic scholars, presidential awards
- Right to refuse to allow New Hanover County Schools disclose Directory Information by notifying the principal within 10 days of receipt of this notice
- Right to know that when records are no longer needed, NHCS destroys them according to a destruction schedule. NHCS permanently maintains only the following information:



student name, address, phone number , grades, attendance, classes attended, grade levels completed, date of birth and identification numbers

- Right to know that a graduating seniors name, address, phone number and school name are disclosed to the military

NHCS has designated the Deputy Superintendent as the school official responsible for ensuring confidentiality of the Official Record. A student's principal also is responsible for maintenance and security of the Official Record. Please direct any questions or requests concerning your rights and the Official Record to the principal.



