

Preschool Programs 2021 - 2022 Parent/Guardian Handbook

RCS Pre - K



Pandas

Rochester Community Schools, Preschool Programs
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Subject to change as we receive updated information related to COVID-19.

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Rochester Pre-K Programs is to provide a secure and caring environment which encourages children to grow in independence, curiosity, self-confidence, and social skills, as they begin their journey of lifelong learning.

Curriculum Statement

Rochester Pre-K provides a quality educational program for a diverse population of children with widely varying levels of development and ability by following the HighScope curriculum. In the HighScope curriculum, adults and children are partners in learning. Through *active participatory learning*, young children construct their knowledge of the world - finding out how the world works through their own direct experience with people, objects, materials, events, and ideas. More information about the HighScope curriculum can be found at www.highscope.org.

Schedule of Operation

- The Pre-K classes follow the RCS school calendar for holiday closings and staff development days.
- Inclement weather or power outages may require that classes be closed. Parents are encouraged to tune in to school closings listed on TV and radio.
- Please note that we do not reimburse tuition costs for these closings.

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather, power outages, or other building problems may require that classes be closed. Families are encouraged to tune in to school closings listed on the local TV and radio stations to learn if school is closed for the day. If school is in session and needs to be closed, families will be contacted via phone and/or electronically to pick-up their child.

Admission

- We recommend that children enrolling in a Pre-K 3 class turn three on or before September 1, 2021.
- We recommend that children enrolling in a Pre-K 4 class turn four on or before September 1, 2021.
- Children enrolling in any Pre-K class must be fully toilet trained.*
- No child will be discriminated against because of race, national origin, sex, or disability.
- A waiting list will be established in the event that a course becomes full.
- Registration is open to families who reside within the Rochester Community Schools district.
- After August 1, if there is availability, registration will be open to families outside of the district.
- Registration is done online; current families will be given priority over new families.
- Health Appraisal forms must be submitted **within 30 days** of initial attendance. (Please be sure that this form is signed and dated by your physician.)
 - Failure to comply with immunization standards will result in the termination of your child from our program. (Immunization record must be on file in order for child to begin.)
 - Licensing requires that ALL sections of all forms be completely filled in.
 - If the Health Appraisal indicates that a child has seizures, diabetes, asthma or allergies, a Medical Management Plan ("MAP") must be filled out and on file in the child's classroom.
- Children are not eligible to begin school until any outstanding monies due have been paid.

*If a child is mostly independent when using the toilet staff will support the child when necessary. In most cases this is done through verbal prompting. When needed staff will offer additional support if a child has an accident and needs help getting into clean, dry clothes. If you prefer that staff not offer this level of support please let your child's teacher know so that an alternate plan can be arranged.

Tuition

- A non-refundable fee, which does not apply toward tuition, is to be paid upon registration.
- The first tuition payment is due July 1 and is not refundable.
- The remaining payments are due according to the following fee schedule:

✓ September 1	✓ October 1	✓ November 1	✓ December 1	✓ January 1
✓ February 1	✓ March 1	✓ April 1	✓ May 1	
- Tuition for Pre-K is an annual fee paid in monthly installments. For families' enrolling after the school year has begun we will remove the tuition cost for the days not attended prior to admission.
- FULL-DAY PRE-K tuition is an annual fee paid in bi-monthly installments (1st and 15th of each month), beginning August 1 and ending May 15.
- A \$10 late fee will be added to accounts for payments received after the 10th of each month.
- If payment is not received by the 15th of each month, a phone call will be made in an attempt to secure a payment. If payment has not been received by the 20th of the month, your bill will be sent to collections and your child will be dismissed from the program.
- In the event that a child is dismissed from the program for non-payment, the child may not enroll in any Children's Programs program until the account has been paid in full.
- We do not reimburse for vacation or illness days.
- A 20% discount in tuition is offered to a second child in the same family (% taken from lowest child's tuition).

Withdrawal Process

- A 14-day notice is required prior to withdrawing your child from one of our programs. (You are required to pay tuition for this time period.)
- We reserve the right to exclude any child from one of our programs who may be injurious to himself/herself, the other children, or the staff.

Extended Vacation

- In the event of an extended vacation you have two options:
 - Withdraw the child from the program. Per the Withdrawal Policy above a 14-day notice is required. If there is space in your child's class when you return, you may register for the same class by calling the office at 248-726-3022. (As a courtesy the Registration Fee will be dropped.)
 - Continue to pay tuition so as to ensure your child's spot in the class upon your return.

Calendar

A Pre-K program calendar is available on the Pre-K webpage (RCS website).

<https://www.rochester.k12.mi.us/schools/pre-k/parents> This includes dates for orientation sessions, first days of school, school breaks, and other days the classroom may not be open. Additionally, your Pre-K "course" in the Eleyo system offers an at-a-glance look at the dates and times your child's class meets.

Attendance

Please make every effort to arrive at school on time. When children arrive after the day has started, they miss out on important parts of the routine. Children who consistently arrive on time and are in school every day quickly master the routine, learn more, are happier to be in school and receive the maximum benefit from our preschool program. If your child will not be in attendance, please call the classroom before the program day begins and let them know your child's name and the reason for not attending.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures

- In accordance with the Preschool Programs current COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan, teachers will meet children curbside and escort them into the building and classroom at the beginning of the school day and escort them to a parent's car at the end of the school day. Care will be taken to support children in transitioning to and from the classroom successfully. (This may change before or during the 2021 - 22 school year. We will inform parents as soon as we have guidance from RCS, OCHD, and/CDC.
- The Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), Child Care Licensing Bureau requires that children are signed in and out of Full-Day Pre-K. (This may be done by parents or teachers.)
- Children will only be dismissed to those persons listed as authorized pick up persons.
- We reserve the right to question the release of a child to any adult under the suspected influence of drugs, alcohol, and/or medication.
- If a child is not picked up by the end of the session, parents will be assessed a late charge of \$5.00 per five minutes per child. This will be added to your next tuition payment. If your child has not been picked up and parents cannot be reached after 30 minutes, the police will be called.

Typical Daily Routine

This is a sample daily routine for a Pre-K classroom. The daily routine for your child's classroom is posted in the classroom as well as displayed at a child's level inside the classroom.

- Arrival/Greeting/Wash Hands** Children spend time with books, or interact with their peers.
Children wash and dry their hands.
- Large Group** All adults and children participate in music and movement activities, storytelling, finger plays, or cooperative games planned around children's interests and development.
- Planning** Children indicate their plan to adults and peers. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning.
- Work Time** Children are encouraged to follow their plan or revise their plan as they work. Children make many choices about where they want to work and decide how to use materials. Adults participate as partners and encourage children's problem solving with materials and social conflict.
- Clean-Up** Children and adults clean up together, keeping it fun. Children make many choices where and how to clean, with adults supporting children's level of involvement.
- Recall** Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they encourage children to talk about their experiences during work time.
- Small Group** In a small group, children explore, play, and work with materials in their own way. Adults support children as they talk about what they are doing and scaffold their learning experiences.
- Outside Time** Children have many choices outdoors, as much as work time indoors. Adults supervise children to keep them safe as well as join in their outdoor play.
- Lunch/Snack** Children choose where they want to sit, they serve and clean up after themselves.
- Quiet Resting Time** Children are resting or sleeping. Children who are awake choose quiet play such as, books, soft music, or fine motor manipulatives.

Curriculum

Pre-K classrooms use the research based HighScope Curriculum that aligns with Michigan's Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-Kindergarten. Curriculum areas include Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development and Health; Language, Literacy, and Communication; Mathematics; Creative Arts; Science and Technology; Social Studies; and English Language Learners. In the HighScope curriculum, adults and children are partners in play. More information about the HighScope curriculum can be found at <http://www.highscope.org>.

Assessment

Developmental Screening: We ask that parents complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) developmental screening as a part of the enrollment process. This information is entered online where it can be automatically scored. Families will receive their child's results and recommended activities within two weeks of completing the screening. Teachers and families will partner to use the information to plan for each child's success. If further evaluation is indicated by the results of the ASQ, the parents will be notified and a plan of action will be developed. ASQ Link: <https://www.asqonline.com/family/89357c?single=true>

Ongoing Assessment: We use the HighScope on-line Child Observation Record (COR) to support and plan for each child's progress throughout the school year. The COR is an observation tool that helps tell the story of your child's growth and development throughout the program year. Notes are recorded and entered in all curriculum areas for each child. Families receive a COR Report twice each year.

Rest Time

All children will be provided with a mat on which to rest. Families are welcome to provide their child with a small blanket. A large blanket or pillow should NOT be sent. Talk with your child's teacher if you would like to bring other rest items for your child. Please remember to label all items sent to school. Rest items provided by families will be sent home at the end of each week for laundering.

Transitioning into rest time, children are encouraged to gather their nap belongings and place them on their cot. The lights are dimmed and soft music may be played. Rest time is scheduled to last no longer than sixty minutes. After thirty minutes children that do not rest are welcome to participate in a variety of quiet activities on their mat, or at a table. After an hour, the lights are turned on and children are encouraged to return their rest items to their cubbies. Children that are still resting will be gently encouraged to wake up but not forced to get up.

Toys from Home

We recognize children may want to bring an item from home to school. As a program, we do not take any responsibility for damage to or loss of items brought from home. If challenges in the classroom are created by bringing toys from home we will work with the child and parent to determine a solution.

Conflict Resolution/Discipline

Staff supports children as they begin to understand their behavior choices and learn acceptable ways of interaction with others. The approach we use promotes and encourages self-regulation, self-direction, self-esteem, and a spirit of cooperation. We use a six-step process to resolve conflicts. The steps are:

1. Approach children calmly and stop any hurtful actions
2. Acknowledge children's feelings
3. Involve children in identifying the problem by gathering information
4. Restate the problem in children's vocabulary
5. Ask children for solutions and encourage them to choose one together
6. Give follow-up support when children act on their decisions

We encourage you to help us give children a consistent message by trying to use the six steps at home.

Staff is prohibited from using these forms of punishment:

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities.
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.

Outdoor

Your child will go outside every day. Outdoor play time is structured to be a healthy, educational and enjoyable time for children. Please make sure your child is dressed in clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions. If it has recently rained, your child will need to have a pair of boots to wear outside. If there is snow on the ground and/or the temperature outside is very cold, your child will need a snowsuit, hat, gloves or mittens, and snow boots. Each child must have a complete change of clothes (underwear, socks, shirt, and pants) that will be kept in the classroom. Each piece of clothing must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. If you are in need of any of these items please let your classroom teacher or program administrator know. Kindly remember if your child is too sick to go outside and play he/she is too sick to come to school.

Holiday Policy

When we celebrate we hope that children and families will feel connected by feelings of respect, joy, and community. Our classroom celebrations include Halloween, Thanksgiving, Holiday, Valentine's Day and Year-End.

Halloween Celebration - On the last class day prior to Halloween children are invited to come to school in a costume. Parents may be invited to stay with their child for the first 15 minutes of the school day. During this time each child will stand at the front of the classroom and tell the group about their costume (teachers or parents may talk about costumes in some classrooms). Some classrooms may have students sing a song for their parents. Parents will then leave and the normal routine of the school day will begin. Teachers will follow the established Daily Schedule, shortening Work Time or Outdoor Time to accommodate for the costume activity. The Small Group and/or Large Group activities may be related to Halloween.

KDIs: 7 - Self Identity; 11 - Community; 41 - Music; 43 - Pretend Play

Thanksgiving Celebration - On the last day of school prior to Thanksgiving break children are asked to contribute one food item of their choosing to a community snack (in accordance with the District Food Policy). Through stories and Large Group and Small Group activities students will learn how people came together for the first Thanksgiving and shared food.

KDIs: 11 - Community; 36 - Measuring; 53 - Diversity; 57 - History

Holiday Celebration - On the last day of school prior to the Winter Recess break children will participate in special activities that are incorporated into their normal Daily Schedule. The Small Group and Large Group experiences may include simple seasonal activities (candy cane patterning, using wrapping paper and scissors in the sensory table or wrapping blocks from the Block Area in wrapping paper, creating gifts for families, and/or singing songs for example). Some classrooms may encourage children to wear pajamas and show a winter theme movie and eat popcorn (during Work Time or Snack Time). Some classrooms may invite parents to join the students for the last 30 minutes of the school day (in place of Outdoor Time).

KDIs: 10 - Empathy; 11 - Community; 17 - Fine-Motor Skills; 38 - Patterns; 40 - Art

Valentine's Day Celebration - On the school day closest to February 14 children will celebrate Valentine's Day by listening to stories about friendship and talking about what it means to have a friend and be a friend (Small Group), and singing songs and/or playing games that teach about friendship (Large Group). For the days preceding this celebration materials will be available in the Art Area and/or at Small Group Time for children to create cards or pictures for friends and/or family members if they wish to do so. Teachers may provide a special snack on this day.

KDIs: 11 - Community; 12 - Building Relationships; 26 - Reading; 29 - Writing; 40 - Art

Year-End Celebration - On the last day of school families may be invited to join children and teachers for the last 30 minutes of the day to celebrate the end of the school year. Children may sing a song for their families and certificates will be given to children at this time.

KDIs: 6 - Reflection; 8 - Sense of Competence; 11 - Community; 13 - Cooperative Play; 16 - Gross-Motor

Birthday Policy

We know that birthdays are important to every child and that children like to celebrate with their classmates. However, sending in a food treat to the classroom to celebrate can exclude those children who have food allergies, diabetes, celiac disease, or other dietary restrictions. In addition, frequent sugary snacks do not contribute to achieving our goal of healthy bodies and healthy eating habits for all students. We ask that you do not send any snack (or other item) on your child's birthday. On their birthday (or half birthday for summer birthdays) each child will receive a small book and will be acknowledged by his/her teacher.

Spirit Wear

Pre-K has partnered with Land's End to provide spirit wear with our Panda logo. If interested, you may purchase items at www.landsend.com/school, using the "Preferred School Number" of 900133778. More information can be found on the Pre-K page of the RCS website in the "Parent Information" folder ("Land's End Spirit Wear").

Food Service

- Snack time is an important part of the day, during which teachers focus on building social and emotional skills, language and literacy skills, fine motor skills, and math skills.
- In traditional Pre-K classes, parents are asked to provide a nutritious snack for their child each day. We are unable to prepare or warm any item for children's snack; the child must be able to eat whatever is packed in the manner that it is packed.
- In Full-Day Pre-K classes, parents will need to send a lunch and two snacks daily. We are unable to prepare or warm any item for lunch or snack; the child must be able to eat whatever is packed in the manner that it is packed.
- In Extended-Day Pre-K classes children need a snack and a lunch daily; please be sure that your child's lunch box is clearly labeled with his or her first and last name. We are unable to prepare or warm any item for a child's snack or lunch; the child must be able to eat whatever is packed in the manner that it is packed.
- If your child has a food allergy, it needs to be included on the Health Appraisal form and a Rochester Community Schools Medical Management Plan must be submitted. (Available on the RCS website.)
- **Individual snacks are to be pre-packaged and labeled by the manufacturer.**

Referrals for Child and Family Needs

We strive to meet the individual needs of all children in the program. To determine each child's needs, the program encourages parents to partner with us to complete a screening that assesses children's behavioral and language development. (See page 6.) If these screenings - as well as information gathered from observations or provided by parents, doctors, or other specialists - result in a concern about the child's development or functioning, we will begin a process to follow up on that concern, including further evaluation if needed.

In case of a suspected disability (including moderate developmental delays or concerns that persist after intervention), parents may request an evaluation. Upon written request from the parent, the school district has 10 school days to inform the parent in writing of the intent to evaluate, and seek consent. Evaluations may only take place with written parental consent.

Once all information is gathered, it is reviewed with the parents. If the results recommend an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a meeting will be scheduled with parents and other personnel involved. Any additional services to be provided and who will provide such service will be determined at this meeting. Your child's teacher, administrator, and the school district team will work together throughout the year to ensure that the IEP is being implemented with fidelity, including the use of special modifications and strategies to support your child in being a fully participating member of the classroom community.

Medication

In order to establish and maintain a system of safe storage, handling and administering of medications at school, an Authorization to Administer Medication Form is required. We will follow all steps noted in the Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers, Rule 400.8152, including:

- Medication, prescription or nonprescription, shall be given to a child by an adult caregiver only.
- A caregiver shall give or apply medication, prescription or non-prescription, only with prior written permission from a parent. A physician's permission may also be required.
- All medication shall be in its original container, stored according to instructions, and clearly labeled for a named child.
- Prescription medication shall have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication and shall be given according to those instructions.
- Topical nonprescription medication, including, but not limited to sunscreen and insect repellent, requires written parental authorization annually. Any nonprescription medication needs to be provided by the parent.

Accidents/Emergencies

In case of an accident/injury a staff member will identify the injury and notify the certified CPR/First Aid staff member. An incident report will be completed by staff and submitted to the office by the end of the school day. A parent can obtain a copy of the report by request.

When a child incurs a minor injury, staff will take the following steps:

1. Immediate care is provided to the child
2. A phone call, written report ("Ouch Report"), or both will be provided to the parent at or before dismissal on the day of the minor injury

When a child incurs a serious injury, staff will take the following steps:

1. A staff member calls 911 and then immediately phones any other required personnel that need to be notified when 911- is called, while the certified CPR/First Aid staff member remains with the injured child.
2. Ensure the scene is safe. If so, provide care and comfort to the injured child until EMS personnel arrive.
3. EMS personnel will determine if the injured party needs to be taken to the hospital.
4. The parents will be contacted by phone once the situation is under control. If the parents cannot be reached the next person on the emergency card will be contacted until either the program is able to talk with someone or all individuals have been phoned.
5. A staff member will ride in the ambulance if the parent is unable to do so.
6. Within twenty-four hours of the injury, a call will be made to the Department of Regulatory Services Licensing Division followed by a written report within three days of the injury.

Health Guidelines

~ Please note that it is important for your child to be regularly seen by a physician. ~

Regardless of the precautions taken at home or school, your child may become ill during the course of the school year. If your child becomes ill, you will be called and asked to pick up your child. If you are unavailable, we will call someone on your Child Information Record. The child should be picked up within one hour of being notified. If your child has been absent due to a communicable disease, such as strep throat or pink eye, you may be required to present a doctor's note documenting that the child is able to return to school.

There are times when a child should not be sent to school. These times include when a child has:

- A fever (temperature of 100 or more)
 - Child must be free of fever for 24 hours (without fever reducing medication) in order to return.
- Diarrhea or vomiting
 - Child must be symptom free for 24 hours in order to return

- Discharge or redness of the eyes
- Discharge from the ear
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose
- Persistent or productive cough
- Sore throat
- Skin rash
- Ringworm (exclusion is not necessary unless the contact with others could promote spread), lice, hand-foot-mouth or any other communicable disease listed on the Oakland County Health Division Communicable Disease Reference Chart

Parents must notify the school if a child has a communicable disease or an extended illness. When applicable, the school will notify families of an illness. A doctor's note for treatment of a communicable disease or an extended illness may be required for re-admittance to school.

Children should stay home and self-isolate if they show symptoms of COVID-19.

If your child exhibits symptoms of COVID-19, or possible exposure is suspected, or an individual tests positive for COVID-19, the individual must stay home until at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Please refer to the Preschool Programs COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for additional guidelines pertaining to COVID-19.

If a child has a toileting accident while at school Pre-K staff will support the child in removing wet clothing and changing into dry clothes. Staff will place wet clothes in a plastic bag for you to take home and launder. In the event of a bowel movement parents may be called to come to school and support the child in getting cleaned.

Health Care Resources

Oakland County Health Division	248-858-1280	1200 North Telegraph	Pontiac, MI 48341 https://www.oakgov.com/health
Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital	248-652-5000	1101 West University Drive	Rochester, MI 48307
National Capital Poison Center	1-800-222-1222		www.poison.org
General Health & Wellness	American Academy of Pediatrics		www.aap.org
	Healthy children		www.healthychildren.org
	Bright Futures		www.brightfutures.org
Nutrition	My Plate (USDA)		www.choosemyplate.gov
	American Dietetic Association		www.kidseatright.org
Violence & Bullying			www.stopbullying.gov

Respecting Cultural Diversity

We encourage you to share information about your cultural background. We invite you to share your traditions, music, and stories with your child's teacher and classmates. We would like to work with you to create a list of common words in your home language that we could use in the classroom. Please be sure to fill out the **Pre-K Information Form** so that together we can best support your child in the classroom.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. Under the act, our employees are considered Mandated Reporters and are required, by law, to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Under the Act, Mandated Reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. Our employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents before reporting the matter, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition before making a report. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

Confidentiality

Out of respect for the privacy of each family in our program, all information pertaining to students and families will be kept confidential. If a student is attending a program administered by a public school, the student's COR assessment and attendance records may be passed on to the students' Kindergarten school building. The only instance in which information will be shared about a child or family without a parent's written consent is when staff has reason to suspect the child may have experienced abuse or neglect.

Licensing Notebook

The program maintains a "Licensing Notebook" that contains all Inspection Reports, and all Corrective Action Reports since May 2010. This Notebook is kept in the School Age Care Office located at Caring Steps Children's Center and is available to parents or guardians to review during regular business hours.

Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are also available on the child care licensing website at: <http://www.michigan.gov.michildcare>.