



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Hazard Independent Preschool Program! We are so happy that you and your child have joined our family. We appreciate parents/guardians who understand how important it is to give your child an early start in education. Research has proven that early education opportunities, such as preschool, provide a positive and long-lasting effect on children's academic success.

This handbook is designed to answer any questions you might have. You will want to keep this resource and refer to it throughout the school year. We encourage you to be involved in your child's preschool program, and we hope this book will help you learn about our staff, instructional programs, policies, and procedures.

We welcome our preschool children as they take their first steps along the pathway of lifelong learning and education. We look forward to watching them grow this year as we work together to prepare them for success.

Sincerely,

Preschool Department



Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990

Preschool Programs

The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 makes preschool education an important part of every school districts' program.

Preschool Programs are educational programs that focus on the physical, intellectual, and social and emotional development of 3- or 4-year-old children.

Preschool programs offered through the public schools have the following components:

- Preschool services for eligible children at no cost to the parent
- Activities that develop creativity and thinking skills through play
- Partnerships with parents through parent education
- Cooperation among programs and with other agencies to provide services
- Developmental, medical, and health screenings

Children are admitted to the Hazard Independent Preschool Program regardless of race, creed, sex, religion, color, or disability.



MISSION STATEMENT:

To instill a thirst for knowledge and a desire to learn that will last a lifetime.

Non-Discrimination:

Students have a right to be treated as individuals and to expect equal, consistent, and just decisions from employees of the Board and the School Council. No pupil shall be discriminated against because of age, color, disability, parental status, marital status, race, national origin, religion, sex, or veteran status.

Preschool Philosophy:

All children are valued members of the Preschool program with individual needs and interests. The needs of the whole child are addressed by following a developmentally appropriate, child centered curriculum that encourages growth, intellect, social/emotional wellness, physical abilities, self-help skills, communication skills and problem-solving skills. The focus of our program is to develop language and communication skills, social skills, and to build self-esteem. Each child is an active learner. Learning best from activities planned and carried out on his/her own initiative. The role of the adults in the classroom is to plan and provide these experiences, and support and extend learning through play and active exploration of materials.

Goals:

1. To provide high quality early childhood education to all children enrolled.
2. To ensure that the environment is accepting and accessible to all children regardless of ability or disability.
3. To provide a whole-child approach to education.
4. To maintain open communication with the family.
5. To serve as a positive member and representative of the Hazard Independent School System



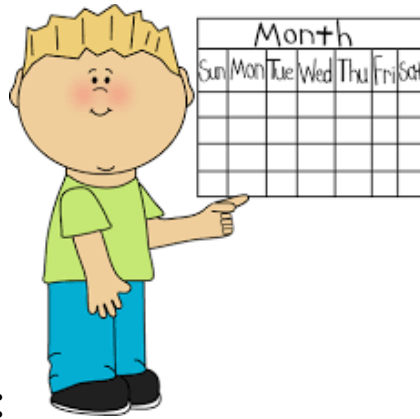
Eligibility Criteria:

Income eligible children (160% below the poverty level) that will be four years old by August 1st can attend preschool. Identified disabled three-year-old children are eligible for preschool services as of their third birthday.

Over income students, four-years-old by August 1st, may be enrolled after enrollment of all income eligible and disabled students, based on available space.

Enrollment Checklist:

1. Enrollment Form
2. Birth Certificate from the Office of Vital Statistics
3. Immunization Certificate
4. Physical Exam
5. Eye Exam
6. Dental Exam
7. Emergency Card
8. Social Security Card (Optional)



Program Operations:

Hazard Independent Preschool will operate on a four-day week schedule with a morning session and an afternoon session. Children come to preschool Monday through Thursday. Teachers attend training, make home visits, and plan activities on Fridays. Morning session 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Afternoon session 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Curriculum:

Preschool classrooms typically follow a consistent daily routine. Instruction is provided in large groups, small groups, and individual activities. Skills are embedded throughout daily routine and activities. The classroom environment is designed for active learning and self-discovery. Activity centers are arranged to encourage and enhance skill development, and include areas such as fine motor, dramatic play, art, science, math, library, blocks, and music.

Structure is extremely important to children of all ages. Knowing what to expect from the surroundings and being able to predict what will happen next is a source of comfort to us all; it makes us feel safe. Preschoolers are no different. A predictable classroom routine and consistent rules allow children to take initiative, problem solve, and develop independence and self-esteem. Positive reinforcement, redirection, verbal reminders, and visual cues are used consistently in the classroom to encourage appropriate behavior. Preschool students will spend time outside each day when possible. By doing so, they develop balance and coordination. Be sure to dress your child in clothing that is appropriate to the weather.

Daily Preschool Schedule:

7:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. - Arrival, Wash Hands
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. - Indoor Enriched Free Play
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. - Breakfast
9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. - Circle Time/Small Group
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. - Outdoor Enriched Free Play
10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. - Small Group Activity
11:00 a.m. - Dismissal
11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Lunch/Planning
11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Arrival, Wash Hands
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Indoor Enriched Free Play
1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. - Lunch
1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Circle Time/Small Group
2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. - Outdoor Enriched Free Play
2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Small Group Activity
3:00 p.m. - Dismissal



Assessment:

Preschool students are assessed throughout the year with Teaching Strategies GOLD. While data is collected on an ongoing basis, parents will receive a detailed report in the fall, and spring. Progress reports are sent home and/or discussed during home visits two (2) times per year for all children in the preschool classroom.

Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect:

Any teacher, school administrator, or other personnel who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused or neglected must make a report.

To see the full policy, go to policy.ksba.org;policy#09.227.



Special Education Services:

Hazard Independent Preschool believes early intervention makes it possible for children with special needs to be identified and their individual education needs met. Before entering preschool, each child is screened in the areas of vision, hearing, speech and language concepts, motor, social/emotional, and adaptive development. Research based interventions are planned and carried out by general education personnel if a potential delay is suspected. Parents are involved in the process and receive updated data on the student's progress. Special education services are available for children, age 3 to 21, who have a developmental delay or disability. Children must meet state and federal guidelines and criteria to be eligible for preschool special education services. Preschool special education services are provided for 3-year-old and 4-year-old children who either have a:

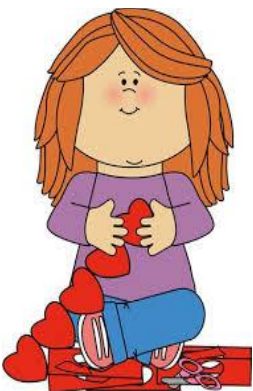
Developmental Delay or DD means that a child within the ages of three (3) through eight (8) has not acquired skills or achieved commensurate with recognized performance expectations for his age in one (1) or more of the following developmental areas: cognition, communication, motor development, social-emotional development, or self-help-adaptive behavior. Developmental delay includes a child who demonstrates a measurable,

verifiable discrepancy between expected performance for the child's chronological age and current level of performance. The discrepancy shall be documented by: (a) Scores of two (2) standard deviations or more below the mean in one (1) of the areas listed above as obtained using norm-referenced instruments and procedures; or (c) The professional judgement of the ARC that there is a significant atypical quality or pattern of development. Professional judgement shall be used only where normal scores are inconclusive and the ARC documents in a written report the reasons for concluding that a child has a developmental delay.

OR

Disability

“Child with a disability” means a child evaluated in accordance with 707 KAR 1:300, as meeting the criteria for autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional-behavior disability, hearing impairment, mental disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment which has an adverse effect on the child's education performance and who, as a result, needs special education and related services. Eligibility for special education services due to a disability or developmental delay is determined through specific evaluation procedure according to state criteria, regulations and guidelines. All evaluations to determine a child's eligibility and need are planned by the Admissions and Release Committee (ARC), require parental permission, and are provided at no cost to parents.



Children With Special Needs:

Preschool programs are designed to meet the needs of children across a wide range of abilities in an inclusive setting. All children will be screened during

registration or upon enrollment. If no concerns are noted on the screening, these children do not continue any further with the screening process. If concerns are noted, the children will then proceed to the intervention process as outlined by the KSI (Kentucky Systems of Intervention).

3 Year Olds

If your child makes progress during the interventions, they will not proceed any further in the screening process and will not be eligible to attend preschool. If after the interventions, the child continues to have areas of concern; the child may then be referred for evaluation or interventions may be continued in the preschool classroom. The intervention services will be 1) provided by qualified staff, 2) directly related to the area(s) of concern, and 3) delivered within the context of preschool classroom setting for two (2) days per week, three (3) hours per day.

4 Year Olds

If your child makes progress during the interventions, they will not proceed any further in the screening process and will not be able to attend preschool unless they meet the income guidelines. If after the interventions, the child continues to have areas of concern; the child may then be referred for evaluation. After the evaluation is completed, the ARC will then meet to determine if the child disability. Children who have disabilities may then be eligible to attend preschool. However, we take over income four-year old children as space is available



Steps For Determining Eligibility Based On Needs Include The Following

1. Screening: The assessment process includes an initial development screening to determine whether further evaluation may be needed. Developmental screening is provided at no cost to the parent.
2. Response to Intervention: The screening instrument may identify areas of need for further evaluation. In response to those needs, the preschool teacher will provide research-based interventions and collect data to determine your child's progress with instruction. Parents will receive a copy of intervention data. If warranted, the referral process may begin, which will include an Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meeting to determine any need for further formal evaluation.
3. Referral: A child may be referred to Hazard Independent Schools by a parent, teacher, professional, human service agency, physician or other individual. A referral should be made to the public school when there is any possibility of a developmental delay or disability.
4. Evaluation Planning and Parent Permission for Assessment: Once a referral has been accepted and a suspected disability determined, the ARC team will plan a formal evaluation. Evaluations may be offered and only conducted with parental agreement and express written consent.
5. Evaluation: An assessment across developmental areas or skills, including observations, direct testing and parental interview will be conducted to determine a child's skills, educational abilities, and educational needs.
6. Individualized Education Plan: If the ARC determines your child is eligible for special education services, an IEP will be developed to meet his/her needs. Related services may be provided to support the IEP such as physical therapy, speech/language therapy, etc.
7. Parent Permission for Services: Permission for placement and service must be acknowledged by signature of the parent prior to enrollment within the special education program or providing of special needs services.



***Admissions and Release Committee (ARC):** A committee made up of the District Representative/ARC Chair, General Education Teacher, Special Education Teacher and/or Speech Language Pathologist and others who may be relevant to assessment or instructional needs of your child. The committee accepts referrals, rejects referrals, determines if more data is needed before proceeding with a referral, determine eligibility or not, and are responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an individual education program (IEP) for a child with a disability.

Health and Safety:

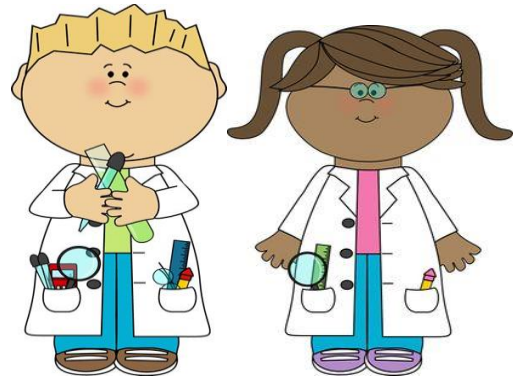
In the event of an accident or emergency, every effort is made to notify the parent/guardian immediately. We must have an emergency number on file for every child. In order to reduce the spread of contagious disease, please do not send your preschooler to school with:

- a. Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- b. Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- c. A severe cold with fever, sneezing, nose drainage, bronchitis, and/or croup
- d. Contagious eye or skin infections

Meals:



Meals are served during both preschool sessions. Morning preschool sessions are served breakfast, and afternoon preschool sessions are served lunch. Hazard Independent Schools participate in the Community Eligibility Option Program. Therefore, meals are provided to ALL students at no cost to the parents. However, you are still required to complete a Household and Income Form.



Medication Procedures:

If a student is required to take medication during school hours, the following procedure is followed:

- *If your child must take medication at school, a parent or guardian must bring in the medication and leave it with the school nurse. A parent or guardian must sign a permission form allowing the nurse to dispense the medication to the student.
- *If your child has medication at school, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to pick up the medications when you need them back home. The medication will NOT be sent home on the bus with the child.
- *When bringing prescriptions medications to the school nurse, please bring them in the original container with the child's name clearly labeled. Remember an adult needs to bring them to the school.
- *If your child is taking medications three times a day or less, they should be administered at home unless otherwise specified by a doctor.
- *Many over the counter (OTC) medications are kept in the school nurses station such as Tylenol and Ibuprofen. A parent or guardian must sign a form giving the nurse permission to dispense these medications to students.

Arrival and Departure: If your child does not ride the bus, you will need to sign a check in/check out form upon arrival and departure. For the written policy, go to policy.ksba.org;policy#09.1231.

Attendance Policy:

Children must be in regular attendance to gain the greatest benefits from the preschool program. Attendance is taken daily by the teacher. If your child is absent for four (4) consecutive days or your child has irregular attendance., the preschool teacher will contact you to discuss your child's attendance. Additionally, the teacher may conduct a home visit to discuss any issues related to your child's attendance.



Weather Policy:

The changes in weather require the preschool staff to monitor the health and safety of the children. Parents should clothe children to maintain a comfortable body temperature. When the wind chill makes the temperature feel like 35 degrees or below, students will have recess inside. When the heat index is 92 degrees or above, students will have recess inside.

Weather Delays:

When Hazard Independent Schools are closed, Preschool will be closed. When Hazard Independent Schools are on a one-hour delay, morning preschool will be on a one-hour delay and afternoon preschool will operate on regular schedule. When Hazard Independent Schools are on a two-hour delay the morning preschool session will be closed and the afternoon preschool session will operate on regular schedule.



Bus Transportation:

Preschool children may ride the school bus. Any changes to transportation must be communicated to the teaching staff and the transportation department. Students will not be dropped off unless an adult is present and is on the pick-up list of the student. If an adult is not present, the child will be returned to the school. If the problem is persistent, bus transportation privileges may be suspended. Sometimes problems do occur on the bus. If a child engages in behavior that may be harmful to himself or others, the bus driver or aide will notify the school. The school will then notify the parent about the behavior. If the problem is persistent, bus transportation may be suspended for that child.

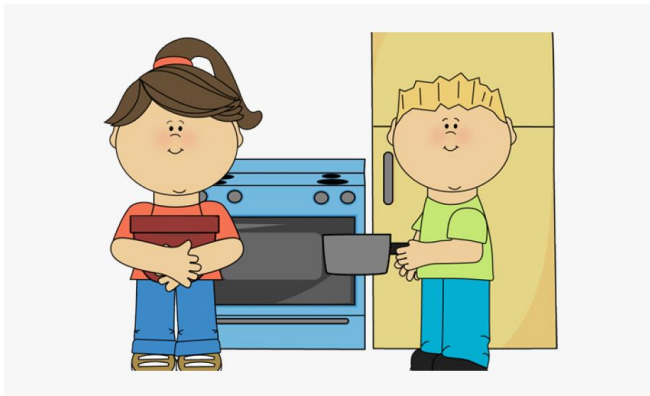
Confidentiality:

Hazard Independent Schools will not release educational records to any outside agency without your written permission. Teachers and teaching assistants must have confidentiality training as a part of their professional development each year.



Parent Involvement:

One of the most important things you can do to help your child be successful in school is to be involved in his or her education. The research evidence is now beyond dispute. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life. In fact, the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in schools is not income or social status, but the extent to which that students' family is able to (1) create a home environment that encourages learning, (2) express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for the children's achievement, and (3) become involved in their children's education at school. Keep the communication lines open between you and the teacher. Attend parent meetings that are scheduled. Come to parent workshops and volunteer in the classroom whenever you can. We will schedule parent involvement activities throughout the year. At the end of each year, a parent survey is sent home to you. Please complete the survey and return them to your child's teacher. Your input is valuable and a tool in making our program the best it can be.



Home Visits:

State Preschool Regulation requires a minimum of two home visits by the teacher for each child every year. Teachers will schedule a home visit each semester to discuss your child's progress. Teachers will share your child's progress and answer any questions that you might have. We look forward to these visits and would greatly appreciate your cooperation in scheduling them in advance.



School Safety:

Hazard Independent preschool teachers' first concern is your child's safety. The following are procedures we must follow to ensure your child's safety.

- A. All adults, picking up your child at school or from the bus, must be listed on the Enrollment/Emergency Card and show a valid picture ID until the school and/or bus staff is familiar with you or the person picking up your child.
- B. Please notify your child's teacher if your address, home telephone number, cell phone number, or work number changes. Also, notify us if any of the otherer information on your Enrollment/Emergency card changes,
- C. If the child is absent from school for four (4) consecutive days and that teacher has not heard from the parent, the teacher will contact the Family Resource Coordinator for a follow-up with the family and/or a home visit.
- D. Each school has safety drills for fire, tornado, and earthquakes scheduled throughout the year. These drills teach students and adults to be alert at all times and know what to do in case of emergency weather. All aspects of safety are outlined and taught to students regularly.

How Children Learn from Activities:

When you visit your child's classroom, you see a room full of children playing. Like most parents, you wonder what your child is learning. To answer your questions, we have made an activities chart. On the left side, we've listed typical things children do while they play in each area of the classroom. On the right side, we've listed the concepts and skills children develop from this play. Please remember that it is against state preschool regulations to use workbooks or ditto sheets in preschool classrooms.



When Children Do This:	They Are Learning To
<p>Building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Put blocks in trucks and dump them out *Use blocks and wooden animals to create a zoo *Balance one large block on top of another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Understand size, weight, and number concepts (math and science) *Recreate the world around them (geography and social skills)
<p>Dramatic Play:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Put on dress-up clothes *Pretend to be grown-ups *Separate cups and plates at clean-up time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use their small muscle skills (self-help and writing) *Understand their experiences better (abstract thinking) *Group objects in categories
<p>Art:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Use play-doh *Gather paper, scissors, and glue * Draw a picture of a person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Recognize how materials change (science) *Plan and carry out a task (study habits and independence) *Use symbols (reading and writing readiness)
<p>Outdoors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Catch and throw balls *Talk about changes in plants, people, and things outside as seasons change *Climb on outdoor equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Coordinate eye and hand movements (physical development) *Sharpen observation skills (science) *Use their bodies in challenging tasks (self-esteem)
<p>Fine Motor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Put pegs in a pegboard *Finish a puzzle *Sort pictures that are the same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Coordinate the actions of their eyes and hands (reading and writing) *Complete a task (study habits & self-esteem) *Match and classify (math)



Transition:

All four-year-old children who have completed the preschool program will be involved in transition activities prior to kindergarten/primary enrollment. Listed below are activities that will ensure a successful transition for all students and staff:

1. The preschool children will visit the kindergarten/primary classroom at a minimum if two times per year. This activity will allow the children to meet the kindergarten/primary teacher and familiarize themselves with the classroom surroundings.
2. Preschool children will have the opportunity to attend school-wide assembly programs with other primary students (when appropriate).
3. Preschool teachers will plan and implement instructional activities that prepare preschool students for the primary.
4. Preschool children will be invited to Kinder Boost summer camp.
5. Kindergarten/primary teachers and Early Childhood Assistants will attend ARC meetings regarding preschool students.
6. Invite kindergarten/primary teachers to attend preschool staff meetings and provide opportunities for primary teachers to attend Early Childhood training offered through Ashland RTC (Regional Training Center) or other resources.
7. Primary preparation activity for parents which includes information packets given to parents at kindergarten registration, and preschool staff will conduct parent meetings to introduce kindergarten teachers at the end of the school year.