

# **Pendleton County Schools Preschool Program Handbook 2023-2024**

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## **Preschool Locations**

### **Northern Elementary School**

925 Highway 177 East  
Butler, KY 41006  
859.472.7341

Darell Pugh:	Principal
Jane Begley:	Preschool Teacher: email: jane.begley@pendleton.kyschools.us
Traci Bradbury:	Preschool Teacher: email: traci.bradbury@pendleton.kyschools.us
Brittanie Razor:	Paraeducator
Ashlee Singer:	Paraeducator

### **Southern Elementary School**

320 Fairgrounds Road  
Falmouth, KY 41040  
859.654.6981

Mark Hegyi:	Principal
Mindy Platt:	Preschool Teacher: email: mindy.platt@pendleton.kyschools.us
Stephanie Denton:	Preschool Teacher: email: stephanie.denton@pendleton.kyschools.us
Kristel Traylor:	Paraeducator
Lucy Moore:	Paraeducator

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Pendleton County Preschool Program is to meet the individual needs of its students through a culture of expectation, engagement, and ongoing growth towards kindergarten readiness.

## **Eligibility**

The Pendleton County School District Board policies address each requirement in the administrative regulations concerning Preschool Education for Four Year Old Children (704 KAR 3:410) and Preschool Education for Children with Disabilities (707 KAR 1:150).

The Pendleton County Preschool Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, or handicapping condition. Children are eligible for enrollment in the preschool program if they are:

1. Residents of the Pendleton County School District
2. At least three (3) or four (4) years old with an identified disability or potential developmental delay
3. Or, if they are four (4) years old on or before August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year and meet federal guidelines for income eligibility criteria (160% of the poverty level). Once determined eligible, these students remain eligible throughout the school year regardless of any changes in financial status.

It should also be noted that the preschool program offers a limited number of tuition-based slots to four-year-old children who are not eligible to participate in the program free of charge (via disability or financial status). The number of tuition-based slots is limited, and are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. If preschool becomes filled to capacity at some point during the year and a qualifying student (i.e., income or disability) subsequently enrolls, the last tuition-based student enrolled will be exited from the program. Preschool tuition for the 2023-24 school year is \$75 per month and is due on the 1st of each month. A delay in payment may result in the child being exited from preschool.

## **Child Find**

The Pendleton County School District has an ongoing "child find" system which is used to locate, identify, and evaluate any 3 or 4 year old child suspected of a disability and who reside within the jurisdiction of the district. There are developmental screenings scheduled at the beginning and end of each school year (July and May). Additional screenings are scheduled periodically throughout the year (Sept., Dec. and in Feb., if needed). Information about screenings is distributed throughout the community via flyers, school marqueees, the local newspaper, the preschool and district website and elementary school face book pages. Please contact preschool staff if you or someone you know needs assistance or needs preschool information presented in another language.

During the developmental screenings, children participate in stations with preschool teachers, paraeducators, and other staff to assess vision and hearing, as well as cognition, communication, and motor skills. Also, parents/caregivers are asked to provide additional information in the areas of social skills and self-help skills.

## **System of Interventions**

Research-based instruction and intervention are required prior to or as part of the preschool special education referral process. When the results of a developmental screening indicate a potential delay in one or more areas, the Preschool Coordinator meets with parents to discuss and explain the preschool Response to Intervention (RTI) process. In such cases, the parent has the option to allow the child to participate in the preschool program temporarily in order to receive instruction and intervention in targeted areas. This intervention process continues for approximately six to eight weeks, during which time teachers implement instruction and interventions, and collect progress monitoring data. At the end of the intervention process, a meeting is convened with the parent to analyze the data and discuss how the child has responded to instruction and intervention. Children who have made adequate progress with no further concerns are dismissed from the intervention process and are not eligible for preschool services unless otherwise eligible e.g. 4 year old income based eligibility. Children who have not made adequate progress may continue in the intervention process for appropriate next steps, which may include additional interventions and/or a referral for an evaluation to determine whether the child presents with a disability and is eligible to receive special education services and supports through the preschool program.

## **Admission and Required Documents**

Once a child is determined eligible for preschool, enrollment is optional and at the discretion of the parent. The following documents must be completed and health documents submitted.

1. Preschool enrollment form
2. Transportation form
3. Home Language Survey
4. Proof of residency form and proof of residency (copy of driver's license, utility bill, etc.)
5. Certified copy of birth certificate
6. Income verification (for 4 year old children)
7. Copy of social security card (optional)
8. KY physical examination form
9. KY immunization form
10. A vision examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist

In terms of preschool materials, we ask that every child have a backpack and a folder. Teachers send notes, student work, and important information home in the folder/backpack, so be sure to check it each night. We also ask that each child have a complete change of clothes, in the event of accidents. If your child is wearing pull-ups or diapers, we ask that you send in a supply of pull-ups and wipes so that we may address his/her bathroom needs. Please put your child's name on any item brought to school. Please do not send toys or candy to school.

## **Calendar and Hours of Operation (calendar subject to change)**

The preschool program is currently providing classes for two full days per week. Students will attend either on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday of each week. The preschool start date for 2023-24 is August 2<sup>1st</sup> for M/W students and August 22<sup>nd</sup> for T/Th students. The end date is April 18, 2024 however, this is subject to change due to weather cancellations throughout the year. On Fridays and during the periods at the beginning and end of the school year when staff are present and preschool students are not, know that teachers and paraeducators are engaging in various activities on behalf of students and families (e.g., parent/teacher meetings, home visits, teacher/para-educator planning, trainings, etc.).

In the event of inclement weather, preschool classes may be cancelled as determined by the superintendent. Please refer to local radio and television stations, as well as the district website for information on school delays and closures.

## **Attendance**

The preschool program believes that consistent attendance is critical to child development. If your child cannot attend school on a given day, please contact his/her teacher so she will be aware. Absences of four consecutive days (or attendance that is otherwise inconsistent and cause for concern) will result in a phone call and/or home visit from the teacher so that the district can be aware of the situation and lend any assistance or support as appropriate.

## **Health**

To maintain a healthy environment, the preschool program requires that children who are sick stay at home. Children are sick if they have a fever of 100.4 degrees or more, are vomiting, are experiencing diarrhea, or have unidentified rashes or other symptoms which can be transmitted to other children. If a child becomes sick at school, parents will be notified so arrangements can be made to pick-up the child. In the event of a medical emergency involving the administration of first aid, the building principal and parents will be notified so that further decisions can be made as appropriate. Please be sure your child's contact information is accurate and remains current so that staff can contact you in a timely fashion.

## **Medication**

If your child requires medication while at school, please bring it to the attention of the preschool teacher. Do not send it to school in your child's backpack. Medication must be in the original bottle with prescription label. Know that appropriate forms must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian before any medication can be administered at school. Any over-the-counter medications must follow the same guidelines, and physicians must sign paperwork before any over-the-counter medication can be administered. The school nurse handles all of the medication and has the appropriate forms to complete.

## **Classrooms**

All preschool classrooms are staffed with a certified teacher and a paraeducator (i.e., instructional assistant). These educators participate in professional development activities relevant to their job responsibilities and as required by the Pendleton County School District. Decisions regarding student placement and group size are made with consideration given to the individual needs of students; however, the maximum class size is 20 students, and staff follow established procedures for back-up assistance to be sure that the ratio of students to adults does not exceed 10:1 (i.e., an additional preschool paraeducator is contacted for assistance; if that paraeducator is unavailable, the school office is contacted for assistance).

## **Curriculum**

The preschool program is developmentally appropriate and utilizes Creative Curriculum, a research-based early childhood curriculum. Creative Curriculum emphasizes hands-on learning and provides developmentally appropriate experiences in the areas of cognition, communication, social/emotional development, physical development, and creative expression. In preschool, children are encouraged to explore, experiment, and problem-solve in a supportive and caring environment. Our program promotes a positive self-concept, an acceptance of all children, and the facilitation of friendships. Classrooms provide a language-rich environment, and staff teach, guide, and model appropriate adult and peer communication and interaction at all times. Classroom instruction and materials are reflective of various people, places, cultures, and abilities. The program utilizes teaching and learning activities as appropriate to meet the needs of students with disabilities, and supports and accommodations are in place for all children as appropriate.

Due to the nature of the preschool program and individual student needs, the schedule must have both structure and flexibility. Classroom rules and expectations are communicated clearly in developmentally appropriate language. Students participate in a variety of large-group, small-group, and individual activities, some being teacher-initiated and many being student-initiated. The preschool program includes opportunities for ongoing student observation and developmentally appropriate assessment, including information from parents, for the purpose of informing instruction to address student needs, both individually as students and collectively as classes. Student progress and assessment information in the various developmental areas is shared regularly with parents via meetings, phone calls, daily communication, etc.

## **Meals**

Preschool students are provided breakfast and lunch. Be sure to contact your child's teacher regarding any food allergies, and provide her with medical documentation so that appropriate substitutions and accommodations can be made. All meals are served under the supervision and guidance of the preschool staff. For the 2023-24 school year, there are no charges for preschool meals. Of course, children may choose to bring their own breakfast/lunch to school. At such times we ask that parents give careful consideration to the contents of their child's meal, and remember that preschool staff work hard each day to teach and model healthy, nutritious eating habits.

## **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play promotes a healthy lifestyle and is an important part of child development. The preschool program uses the preschool playground areas year round, weather permitting and provided the “feels like” temperature (accounting for wind chill and heat index) ranges from 40 to 90 degrees. Please dress your child appropriately for weather conditions (and contact preschool staff or Family Resource staff at your child’s school for assistance as needed). Know that preschool students have access to suitable indoor play areas when weather conditions prevent the use of the outdoor preschool playgrounds.

## **Transportation**

Parents who are interested in district transportation for their child should know that the Pendleton County School District provides transportation for preschool students (morning and afternoon).

The preschool program follows all applicable policies relevant to the transportation of preschool children. Each school bus that transports preschool children includes a bus monitor (at least sixteen years of age) who is trained to assist in the transportation, care, and supervision of preschool children. The monitor is responsible for delivering and receiving the child safely to and from the parent, guardian, or a person authorized by the parent (in writing). If the parent, guardian, or person authorized by the parent is not present to receive the child at drop-off, the child will be returned to school at the completion of the bus route and parent will be contacted to come pick-up the student.

Parents may, of course, choose to transport their children to/from preschool. Know that children will only be released to parents and caregivers on the student pick-up list. If under other circumstances someone new will be picking up your child, your child’s teacher must be notified in writing ahead of time. That person will be required to show a photo ID before your child will be released to him/her.

## **Parent Involvement**

Parents and families are children’s first and most important teachers. We ask that parents/guardians share information concerning their child with the classroom teacher and any related service personnel so, that staff may better work with their child. Home visits and parent teacher conferences are conducted to involve parents. Learning activities may be sent home for parents/guardians to interact and work with their child. Parent trainings will also be offered throughout the school year to assist in student learning.

## **Home Visits**

Preschool teachers are required to conduct at least two home visits each year for each child. Teachers will contact families to schedule the visits. Please feel free to contact the teacher for questions, concerns and progress related to your child’s education.

### **Collaboration with Community Agencies**

The preschool program collaborates with school-based Family Resource Centers and local community agencies (e.g., childcare, healthcare, social services) to help coordinate resources and services for children and families. For example, the preschool program participates in the Pendleton County Early Childhood Council, a group of community agencies that work cooperatively to coordinate services for young children and their families. Also, the preschool program works cooperatively with the local Head Start facility to ensure the full utilization of both programs. In addition, the preschool program coordinates with the First Steps program to ensure that eligible students have a smooth transition to preschool and an IEP in place prior to their third birthday. The preschool is happy to include First Steps coordinators and service providers in preschool eligibility meetings as requested by the parent.

### **Program Evaluation**

The preschool program engages in ongoing efforts to evaluate program effectiveness. Towards the end of each school year, parents and staff complete program evaluations. The results are analyzed and used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and to improve its ability to serve students and families as effectively as possible.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Parents/guardians are provided with progress updates through a variety of methods. Written progress reports are sent home three times per school year. Parents and teachers may also communicate during conferences or planned meetings via phone calls, emails or teams meetings. Individual questions or concerns are often addressed via email or phone calls.

### **Questions/Concerns**

If you have any questions or concerns about preschool, feel free to contact your child's teacher by phone or email. Or you may contact Lisa Aulick, Preschool Coordinator at 654-6911.

**Pendleton County Preschool  
Handbook  
2023-24**

As the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name).  
I verify that:

\_\_\_ I have received a copy of the preschool handbook.

\_\_\_ I have read and reviewed the preschool handbook.

If you have questions concerning information in the handbook, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or Lisa Aulick, Preschool Coordinator.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date signed