

Table of Contents

Philosophy	2
Program Goals	2
Curriculum.....	2
Staff	3
Facility	4
Step Up To Quality	4
ADMISSION	4
Fees.....	5
Sliding Fee Scale Policy	6
Late Fee Policy	6
Withdrawal From The Program By Parent/Guardian.....	7
Attendance	7
Arrival and Dismissal.....	7
Delays and Calamity Days	7
Transportation.....	8
Supplies	8
Example of A Daily Schedule.....	9
Safety.....	9
Medical/Enrollment Information.....	11
Hygiene	12
Health/Communicable Disease.....	13
HEAD LICE POLICY.....	14
Diapering.....	15
Nutrition.....	15
Field Trips	15
Behavior management.....	16
Screening, Assessment and Monitoring Child Progress	18
Home-School Communications/Local Resources	22
Parent participation	23
Parent Complaint Process.....	24
Records Retention	25
School Calendar.....	25

BOARD ADOPTED-FEBRUARY 1993

Revised-February 2019

Updated-January 2024

EARLY DISCOVERY PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

PHILOSOPHY

Early Discovery Preschools are based on a developmental approach to education. Teachers create opportunities for a variety of active learning experiences, which nurture the child's intellectual, physical, social/emotional, and artistic development. With teacher guidance, children participate at their own developmental level.

Early Discovery Preschools recognize and value the diversity in children and families in our community. Programs include children with varying needs and differing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. This provides opportunities for children and families to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of differences among all people.

Families are important to the programs. Their involvement, as partners with the preschool in their child's education, is encouraged and supported.

The Putnam County Educational Service Center supports preschool as part of the educational programs offered by school districts. The transition from preschool to kindergarten for these children and families is a natural process.

PROGRAM GOALS

Our goal is to provide quality preschool programs that nurture children while fostering an excitement and curiosity for learning.

The goal and purpose of all Early Discovery programs, based on our philosophy, include:

- promoting feelings of self-confidence and self-worth in the young child,
- promoting the development of decision-making, problem-solving, critical thinking, reasoning, and communicating skills,
- promoting learners who are active participants in the learning process,
- promoting early literacy, math and science concepts
- promoting partnerships with families, and
- fostering the development of responsibility toward society and feelings of belonging to a community.

CURRICULUM

The instructional approach used in Early Discovery Preschools follows guidelines in the Ohio Early Learning Program Guidelines (Ohio Department of Education, 2005), Ohio's Early Learning Academic Content Standards (revised October, 2012), Creative Curriculum for Preschool (2002), and the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (2002).

The curriculum addresses all aspects of development including social-emotional, language, thinking, problem-solving, and physical skills. Skills related to early reading, math, & science and creative arts are incorporated in learning experiences and daily activities.

The curriculum provides opportunities for children to pursue their own interests, however, interactions between adults and children are key elements for learning. Teachers are responsive to child-initiated communications, encourage language development and create a learning environment that meets a variety of needs. Strategies that stimulate thinking skills and problem solving, such as open-ended questions, are routinely used.

Play materials promote experimentation, cooperation with others and the development of thinking and communication skills. Children are encouraged to explore a variety of roles and themes. Program materials are sensitive to ethnic, cultural and gender issues.

Families are important in the lives and education of young children. Family involvement, as partners in education, is viewed as an integral component of our program's curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to plan a variety of activities, which involve families including home visits, newsletters, individual conferences/orientation and other special activities such as parent/child time together activities.

Assessment of children is viewed as an on-going process that involves gathering information from the child's work samples, checklists and classroom observations. Assessment is essential to providing appropriate activities and measuring child progress. Children's progress shall be reported to parents at parent-teacher conferences, scheduled twice a year. For more information about early learning content standards, please go to Ohio Department of Education – Early Learning and School Readiness website, education.ohio.gov/topics/early-learning.

STAFF

Early Discovery Preschool Teachers have training in early childhood education from accredited universities. They are certified according to Ohio Department of Education public preschool and special education standards. Teacher and classroom assistants participate in on-going professional development.

When a child qualifies for specialized services, the classroom teacher works with specialists from the Putnam County Educational Service Center and the school district. Putnam County Educational Service Center staff includes preschool supervisor, a speech language therapist, a school psychologist and occupational/physical therapist.

Parent participation as a team member in their child's education is important. Your involvement is encouraged. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or the ESC Preschool Staff at any time should you have questions and/or something to share with any of the school team members.

FACILITY

Classroom physical space is organized in safe, attractive discovery centers where children are encouraged to explore a variety of interesting materials and interact with others. The centers and activities planned are designed to promote learning at all levels. Children have access to the school gym and an outdoor play area.

All Early Discovery Preschool classrooms are licensed by the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood and are inspected twice a year to ensure that they meet safety and educational requirements.

STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is a tiered quality and improvement rating system administered by the Ohio Department of Education. SUTQ recognizes and promotes learning and development programs that meet quality program standards that exceed licensing health and safety regulations. The Educational Service Center participates in this program and has earned a five-star rating at Columbus Grove, Continental, Leipsic, Ottawa-Glandorf and Ft. Jennings.

ADMISSION

In accordance with State of Ohio Department of Education guidelines, children with disabilities and children 4 years of age from families with limited income will be given priority. Children living within the school district of school location will be given first priority as well as 4-year-olds. Children must be at least 3 years old and toilet trained (independent with toileting needs, not wearing a pull up and free of on-going toileting accidents). Children who qualify for an IEP are not required to be toilet trained.

Registration for the next school year takes place in February. Children who are not five years of age by May 31st of the approaching school year and at least three years of age and toilet trained (unless on an IEP) to be considered eligible to go through the registration process.

Parents are asked to complete a Preschool Financial Eligibility Form. This determines eligibility for free or reduced tuition. A sliding fee scale, based on the federal poverty guidelines is available. Any child who is determined to have eligibility for the Early Childhood Education Grant through the Ohio Department of Education, must complete an ECE financial eligibility form. A sliding fee scale will apply and is based upon family size, family income and the federal poverty guidelines. Children who qualify for the ECE Grant Education Grant are expected to attend 455 hours per school year or 12.5 hours per week.

Children with special needs may attend public school programs at no cost. Criteria for eligibility for special needs children are specified in Rules for the Education of Preschool Children with Disabilities Served by the Public Schools (Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 3301 - 51).

School districts with children who meet the definition of "homeless" under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC 11431 et seq.) are to comply with division (F)(13) of section [3313.64](#) of the Revised Code. Additional policy information is located in the Putnam County Educational Service Center's Policy Manual in section 5111.01, located on their website. For more information parents can contact Dr. Jan Osborn, the program liaison, at the Educational Service Center at 419-523-5951 ext 3002.

FEES

The Educational Service Center establishes tuition fees. Please make checks payable to Putnam County Educational Service Center. Policy regarding payment of fees is as follows:

- Fees for the current month are payable before the 10th of that month or will be considered past due (example: September tuition is due by September 10th).
- If tuition is past due, your child may be unable to attend preschool. If you have a financial difficulty during the month, please call the central office at 419-523-5951.
- Fees may be waived, at the discretion of the superintendent, for children who are absent because of an extended illness.
- Fees will not be waived for family vacations.
- *Except for the following late pick-up fee policy*, fees will not be charged for children with disabilities who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in place and signed by the school district of residence, and who attend a preschool unit operated through the Putnam County ESC. This is according to provisions specified in Rules for the Education of Preschool Children with Disabilities Served by the Public Schools (Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 3301 - 51).

Late Pick-Up Fees: For children who are chronically picked up past the preschool programs assigned departure time (more than two times picked up late), on the third offense and thereafter, a charge of \$ 10.00 per 15 minutes (or nearest to 15 minutes), will be charged to the family, regardless of where the family falls on our current sliding fee scale or whether the child is on an I.E.P. In the event that fees including

late/overdue payment, late fee charge, and service fee charge are not received, your child may be asked to leave the program and action may be taken with the Putnam County Small Claims Court for overdue fees.

SLIDING FEE SCALE POLICY

A sliding fee scale for income eligible preschool families shall be established and based upon:

- 1.) Family Income: the family's gross income that includes gross earned and gross unearned income shall be used for the purpose of determining income eligibility of families
- 2.) Children from families whose income is at 100 percent of the federal poverty level or below attend tuition free;
- 3.) Children three or four years of age and not eligible for kindergarten from families whose income is between 101 and 200 percent of the federal poverty level attend on a prorated tuition basis which is established annually and based upon the federal poverty guidelines
- 4.) Children with Individualized Education Programs attend the program at no cost to the family (regardless of family income level). It is not necessary for the families of children with disabilities to provide income information;
- 5.) Verification of income will be kept on file by the Putnam County Educational Service Center in a confidential manner.
6. Verification of family income may include the following: A 1040 annual tax report, two consecutive weeks of pay stubs, a letter from an employer or another type of income verification such as through Ohio Medicaid program or Ohio WIC program. The Putnam County Educational Service Center may keep a copy of the actual documentation or have a staff member sign and certify that appropriate documentation was provided at the time of registration.

LATE FEE POLICY

Fees are due by the 10th of the current month. If not paid these steps will be taken:

- If tuition is not paid by the 30th of the month, your child will be unable to attend preschool until tuition is paid in full.
- In the event that fees including late/overdue payment and service charge are not received, action will be taken with the Putnam County Small Claims Court.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

A 10-day notice for withdrawing a child from the program must be made either verbally or in writing to the Putnam County ESC and your child's teacher. If proper notice is given, the remaining balance of fees will be reimbursed.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for your child. However, we know illnesses and family situations may cause absences from time to time. Following are guidelines about your child's attendance.

- Please call the school (419-596-3860) between 8:00 - 8:30 if your child will be absent.
- Please inform your child's teacher of vacation schedules, appointments, or other events when your child will not attend class.

Chronic, unexcused absences may result in dismissal of the child from the program or a reduction of the number of assigned days which will impact fee schedule; however, staff will work with the family to maintain the child's attendance at school.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Guidelines for the arrival and dismissal of children in Early Discovery Preschool Programs are:

- Children should arrive on time for class (morning students 8:01 am and afternoon students 12:01 pm).
- Children should be picked up promptly at dismissal times. Failure to do so may result in a late pickup fee or dismissal from the program. Students on an IEP will be contacted for a conference.
- Let the teacher know if you need to pick-up your child early.
- Children will not be released to a person other than the parent without written authorization from the parent.

DELAYS AND CALAMITY DAYS

- Our program follows the delay/cancellation policy of the Continental Elementary School. If school is canceled so is preschool but if the school delays the following times apply:

- **One hour delay** - morning preschool starts at 9:05 and dismisses at 11:05, afternoon preschool operates the same, 12:05 -3:05
- **Two-hour delay**-morning preschool starts at 10:05 and dismisses at 12:05, afternoon preschool will start at 1:05 and dismiss at 3:05
- **Three hour delay** morning preschool is canceled and afternoon preschool operates the same, 12:05 -3:05.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents of children on an IEP who are transported by local school bus must adhere to the bus schedule for pick-up and drop-off times. It is imperative that a parent or designee meet the bus to receive the child.

The bus will not operate on weather-related school cancellation days. Weather announcements are announced by your school district either by radio, TV, internet, or text message. Please check with your school district for further details.

If it is necessary to pick up your child early, please let the teacher know what time to expect you. Children will not be released to anyone other than the parents or someone designated in writing by the parents.

Parental consent for transportation related to the program shall be on file no later than the 1st day of attendance.

SUPPLIES

Equipment and materials used in learning centers and other preschool activities are supplied by the program. However, you will need to provide items for your child's classroom use. Please send the following with your child on the first day of school.

All Children:

- * (1) Large pkg Wet Wipes (baby wipes) (boys only)
- *(1) Large pkg Disinfectant Wipes (girls only)
- * (2) pencils
- *(2) glue sticks
- *(1) Kid size scissors
- *(1) box colored pencils
- *(1) school box for child's supplies
- *(2) pocket folders
- *Regular size bookbag (no wheels)

*A complete set of clothes (shirt, pants, socks & underwear) to stay at school
Throughout the school year, parents will receive notes to send in juice and/or crackers for a snack.

EXAMPLE OF A DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning and afternoon programs are available at most sites. Hours of operation vary according to the school district in which the program is located.

Continental Early Discovery Preschool Program Daily Schedule

Morning	Afternoon
• 8:00 Arrival	• 12:00 Arrival
• 8:20 Opening Circle	• 12:20 Opening Circle
• 8:55 Gym or Outdoor Activity	• 12:55 Gym or Outdoor Activity
• 9:20 Learning Center / Open Snack	• 2:20 Learning Center /Open Snack
• 10:40 Language Activity	• 2:40 Language Activity
• 11:00 Closing Activity	• 3:05 Closing Activity
• 11:04 Dismiss students	• 3:09 Dismiss students

* **Learning Centers** are organized around interests of the children. They are changed often so children have opportunities to explore different materials, themes and ideas. Children choose from a variety of learning centers that include:

- Fine Motor Area
- Housekeeping & Dramatic Play
- Science Discovery Area
- Writing Area
- Pre-reading activities are incorporated throughout the day.
- Creative Arts
- Math Discovery
- Books & Listening Area
- Opportunities for Social Development

The Continental Preschool follows the elementary school schedule for holidays, conference and teacher work days. A school calendar is included.

SAFETY

Early Discovery Preschool Program policies to ensure the safety of children are:

- Children will be supervised by a staff member at all times through the day.
- Upon arrival, each child will be greeted by a staff member/ classroom volunteer.
- At dismissal, a staff member will release children only to parents or persons designated by the parents.

- A fire emergency and weather alert plan is posted in each classroom.
- Children will practice fire drills.
- On field trips children will have identification attached, containing the child's name, school's name, address, and phone number.
- At least one staff member, trained in first aid, will be available at all times.
- First aid materials that meet the requirements of Ohio licensing rules will be available in classrooms and on field trips.
- Anytime a child is injured an incident report will be completed and given to the parent.
- State law requires staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Children's Service Department.

Next-phase Pandemic Guidance for Preschool and School Age Child Care

As of June 2, 2021, many COVID-19-related health orders from the Ohio Department of Health have ended. As a result, the Ohio Department of Education is withdrawing two rules from the approval process of the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review. These rules have been in place to provide guidance to Ohio Department of Education licensed programs in alignment with Director of Health orders and child care rules from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services:

- **Rule 3301-37-03.1** (Transitional Pandemic Requirements for a Licensed Child Day Care Program) provided COVID-19 mitigation requirements for preschool classrooms. Licensing specialists will no longer be enforcing the transitional pandemic rules. However, programs are required to continue to follow all pre-pandemic rules, which include 3301-37 for Preschools.

COVID-19 Practices for June 2, 2021 forward

- **Handwashing:** Programs should continue to follow COVID-19 CDC handwashing guidance for both employees and children.
- **Symptom assessment, quarantine, isolation, discharge:** Programs should follow CDC guidelines for COVID-19 symptom assessment, quarantine and isolation for both employees and children.
- **Reporting:** Pre-pandemic rule requires programs to report in the Ohio Child Licensing and Quality System (OCLQS) when a serious incident occurs. Positive COVID-19 cases for an employee or child are considered a serious incident and must continue to be reported in OCLQS. Additionally, COVID-19 should be reported to the local health department. The Communicable Disease Chart (JFS 08087) is being updated to require reporting for COVID-19.
- **Masks:** While masks are no longer required, beginning June 2, 2021, it is STRONGLY ENCOURAGED that providers adhere to CDC guidance, which states that unvaccinated populations should still mask and socially distance.

MEDICAL/ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

The following information must be completed annually for each child in an Early Discovery Preschool Program before the child may attend:

1. Early Discovery Enrollment Form
2. Transportation Form
3. Child History Forms
4. Medical Emergency Authorization Form
5. Medical form completed by a physician or health care practitioner (chiropractic care provider is not eligible to sign health form).

Upon initial enrollment the following:

1. Copy of birth certificate
2. Copy of current immunization record
3. Authorization for school transportation (if applicable).

- Authorization and written instructions from a physician and/or dentist to administer prescription medication. Medication must be in original container. Prior to administration: Teacher's shall secure written instructions of a licensed physician or licensed dentist as appropriate for the administration of any medication, food supplement, modified diet or fluoride supplement; and Each time medication is administered, a written record or log including dosage, date and time shall be made. That record or log shall be kept on file for one year. Only employees who are health professionals or who have completed a drug administration training may administer medication pursuant to section 3313.713 of the Revised Code.

- Medications, both prescription and non-prescription, (i.e. cold remedies and creams) will be administered only if ordered by a physician and in original container.

Staff will follow the following procedures if a medical emergency occurs.

- Parents will be contacted immediately unless the situation is life-threatening, in this case, EMS will be called before attempting to reach the parent.
- If efforts to reach the parents are unsuccessful, instructions from the child's emergency medical form will be followed.

Annually a roster of the name and telephone number of the child and of the child's parent, on request, this roster will be furnished for each parent. If a parent does not desire their child's name to be included, please indicate by checking "no" on the enrollment form. The classroom roster will not be furnished to any person other than a parent who is currently enrolled in the program.

HYGIENE

Early Discovery Preschools incorporate health and hygiene education with other program activities. Good hygiene practices are part of preparation and clean-up activities before and after snack or meal times and toileting. Staff model and provide instruction designed to help children learn the importance of washing their hands, brushing their teeth, covering their mouths when sneezing or coughing and keeping their clothing and personal belongings clean.

Please comply with the Continental Schools dress code adopted for the hygienic, health, and well-being of all students.

- Footwear of some kind must be worn.
- Hats may not be worn during class.
- Clothing with insignias or printing that is obscene, suggestive or advertises an alcoholic beverage may not be worn.
- Tank tees and bike shorts are not allowed.
- Clothes must be clean, neat and meet reasonable standards of health, hygiene, and decency. Cleanliness must be observed at all times.
- Shorts may be worn during the months of August, September, and May.

DAILY HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

- Students ***must*** stay home if any of the following conditions exist:
 - A temperature in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Experiencing any or all of the following symptoms:
 - Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Muscle or body aches
 - Headache
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea

Any preschool student or staff will immediately be sent home who has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher and shall not return until they have been fever-free without the use of fever reducing medication for at least 24 hours.

COMMUNICATIONS WHEN A STUDENT/STAFF MEMBER HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED COVID-19 POSITIVE

- Preschool programs shall follow the communications guidelines (school scenarios document) /COVID-19 procedures as set by the local school district and the Putnam Co. Health Dept. (attached).
- If a child or employee who has had the fever and known contact with someone confirmed or probable to have COVID-19, they must complete isolation or quarantine procedures in coordination with the (school scenarios document) /COVID-19 procedures as set by the local school district and the Putnam Co. Health Department. (attached).
- If a preschool employee or child enrolled in preschool tests positive for COVID-19, the program shall:
 - a. Notify ODJFS by the next business day in OCLQS as a serious incident and
 - b. Notify the local health department by the next business day.

HEALTH/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Staff is trained in the recognition of communicable diseases. Should your child exhibit any symptoms of illness during the school day, he or she will be isolated from the group. You will be contacted and asked to take your child home. Parents will be informed if children are exposed to a communicable disease such as chicken pox. An emergency medical and dental plan is posted in classrooms. A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:

- Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program;
- Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised;
- Made comfortable and provided with a cot. All linens and blankets used by the ill child shall be laundered before being used by another child. After use, the cots shall be disinfected with an appropriate germicidal
- Observed carefully for worsening condition;
- Discharged to parent, guardian or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be isolated immediately from other children. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director and the parent or guardian. The child, while isolated at the program, shall be watched carefully for symptoms such as:

- (a) Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four-hour period);

- (b) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound;
- (c) Difficult or rapid breathing;
- (d) Yellowish skin or eyes;
- (e) Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain;
- (f) Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit, taken by the auxiliary method, when in combination with other signs of illness;
- (g) Untreated infected skin patch(es);
- (h) Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool;
- (i) Stiff neck with an elevated temperature;
- (j) Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation.

As well as the following:

- (a) Unusual spots or rashes;
- (b) Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing;
- (c) Elevated temperature; or
 - (d) Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.

First aid kits are readily available and are maintained at each site as well as on outings.

The staff wears Nonporous (e.g. latex) gloves when they are in contact with spills of blood or other visibly bloody bodily fluids.

Spills of bodily fluids (e.g., urine, feces, blood, saliva, nasal discharge, eye discharge or any fluid discharge) are cleaned and disinfected immediately in keeping with professionally established guidelines (e.g., standards of the Occupational Safety Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor). Any tools and equipment used to clean spills of bodily fluids are cleaned and disinfected.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Because of the close proximity of children in school we occasionally have students with head lice. It is our program practice that a child with head lice must be excluded from school until at least one treatment and combing at home, has occurred. A student may come back to school provided the parent/guardian documents the treatment and combing and upon examination by the school's designee that 1.) any remaining nits are farther away than ¼" from the scalp, 2.) there are no live bugs and 3.) progress has been made on combing. It is recommended that all nits be removed. The process of nit removal may take a few days. Continue combing daily and remove any nits found.

Please review the treatment for lice at the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html>

DIAPERING

Only children who are on an IEP will be permitted to wear diapers to the preschool program.

Staff will conform to the following:

The changing of diapers for all non-toilet trained children shall be handled in conformity with the following methods:

- Diaper changing shall occur in a space that contains a hand washing facility;
- The diaper changing area shall be disinfected after each diaper change with an appropriate germicidal agent. Soiled stations shall be cleansed with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicidal agent;
- Any product used during diaper changing on more than one child shall be used so that the container does not touch the child. Any product obtained from a common container (such as wipe cloths) shall be used in such a way so that contamination of the product or the container does not occur. If soiled, the container shall be cleaned with a germicidal agent.
- All topical ointments and creams provided by parents shall include written instructions, which include: name of the item, name of the child, birth date of the child, date, and signature. Written instructions shall be valid, not longer than 3 months. Parents must notify staff in writing if they desire the item to be no longer administered.

NUTRITION

Good nutrition is important for learning. Please provide your child with a nutritious meal before attending preschool. A small snack will be provided at school so if your child has special dietary needs, please contact your child's teacher.

Treats are welcome for special occasions. Just let us know ahead of time if you would like to send a treat to share with your child's class.

- Snack, morning and afternoon: Parents may be asked to provide food for snacks. Snacks are chosen from a list of nutritious foods. Your child's teacher will let you know what snack item you may provide each month on a note attached to the monthly newsletter. Please send the snack with your child on the day specified by the teacher. if you are unable to send the snack listed, let the teacher know.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned as part of the child's learning experiences. They require careful planning to ensure that all children may enjoy and benefit. Parents will be

informed of time, place, transportation arrangements and learning opportunities at least one week before a planned field trip. Costs not covered by the program (e.g., entrance fees or meals) for field trip activities are the responsibility of the parent.

Participation is at the discretion of parents. Permission forms, allowing your child to take part in the field trip must be signed. If your child will not participate, please contact the teacher.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Philosophy of Discipline: The goal of discipline is to help children build self-control and direct their own behavior. We recognize the important role self-esteem plays in this process and respect the emotional needs and feeling of children in behavior management strategies. At no time are children labeled or threatened. Physical punishment is never used. Staff follow these guidelines to promote positive behavior and will be responsible for discipline.

- Establishing clear and reasonable ground rules to protect the rights and safety of all children. These are discussed frequently in the classroom.
- Accepting children's ideas in the establishment of classroom rules.
- Restating these rules, clearly and firmly, when they are not followed.
- Helping children verbalize anger, feelings or concerns when they are in conflict situations and generate their own solutions to the problem.
- Redirecting children in a positive manner to avoid potential problem situations.
- Intervening only when the child may harm him or herself or others.
- Helping children think about outcomes of their behavior and develop better solutions for problem-solving.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

If behavior problems persist, parents will be contacted to review, with staff, possible solutions and alternatives. On-going communications between staff and the parent will occur.

However, when children do misbehave the program will follow the procedures outlined below:

- Level One: Staff will talk with the child explain the situation and attempt to redirect by encouraging the child to become involved in another activity.
- Level Two: If the child's behavior repeatedly requires disciplinary attention and cannot be effectively redirected, he/she will be asked to sit in a "time-out" chair. Staff will let the child know that he/she may rejoin the activity whenever

he/she is ready to follow the preschool rules. The child will remain on the "time-out" chair no longer than 5 minutes.

•Level Three: If the disruptive behavior becomes chronic, staff will document incidents, and request a team which may include specialists from the Putnam County Educational Service Center and/or an elementary principal, to observe the child and make recommendations for an intervention plan. The parents will be contacted. The problem, and how it is being handled by the preschool will be explained to them. Parents will be asked for their ideas so that preschool staff can work together with them to solve the problem. Parents will be given a copy of the behavior management plan.

•Level Four: If the child is still disruptive after implementation of an intervention plan, the parents will be asked to attend a conference. At this time, referral for evaluation by the county Educational Service Center preschool evaluation team may be made.

•Level Five: If the problem persists and the child's behavior is deemed to be a threat to themselves and the safety of others, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child from the preschool program.

In the case of a child with a disability, the procedures of the Putnam County Educational Service Center will be followed policy 5610.

Methods of Discipline: Staff will provide developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques such as praise for positive behaviors. The following rules will be followed by all staff:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual or physical punishment such as but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting;
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control;
- No child shall be placed in a locked room, confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle and no excessive timeout period over 5 minutes;
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about them or their family or other verbal abuse;
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat and sleep, or for toileting accidents, techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child;
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use;

- Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space;
- The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

SCREENING, ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING CHILD PROGRESS

Child screening and assessment play an important role in learning and development. A developmental screening will be conducted by your child's teacher within 60 days of enrollment using the Ages/Stages Questionnaire. The results of developmental screenings are used to make instructional decisions and to monitor your child's progress.

Developmental Screenings

The Putnam County Early Discovery Preschools use the Ages & Stages Questionnaires, 3rd edition (ASQ-3) as a screening instrument. The ASQ-3 is a valid and reliable standardized tool used to identify any concerns in the areas of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving, personal –social and social-emotional development. The developmental screenings, as well as health screenings, will be completed within 60 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. If a family needs follow up resources for a failed developmental or health screening, assistance to find those resources may be provided to the family.

Results of the health and developmental screenings, which include the child's name, date of screening and date of referral (if necessary) will be placed in each child's file.

The ASQ 3 is used to complete the comprehensive developmental screenings and are completed by parent/teacher upon enrollment. If necessary, referrals are completed within 90 days of identification of a need, and all results are communicated with the parents in a written format.

- Results are given to parents using ASQ Result form or a form that is teacher developed.
- A score in the gray shaded area results in handouts from the ASQ-3 Activity Booklet or another source, given to parents to work on at home.

- A score in the black area results in discussion with the parents regarding a possible referral for multi-factored evaluation through the child's school district. If the teacher and parents both agree that a referral for a formal evaluation is needed, then a Putnam County Educational Service Center Student Referral Form is completed noting the area of concern and submitted to the Early Childhood Coordinator at the Educational Service Center on behalf of the child's local school to initiate preschool special education referral for evaluation.
- Preschool staff will review overall class results to assist in developing lesson plans and activities that may help the areas of need identified for the children are developed to support children's learning.

Formal and Informal Assessments

Upon enrollment and twice yearly, each child will participate in the Early Learning Assessment (ELA). The Early Learning Assessment measures your child's knowledge, skills and behaviors in seven areas: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Well-being and Motor Development, and Fine Arts.

The Early Learning Assessment is not a test. Your child will not have to complete questions or provide test answers. Teachers use the information they collect through observation, to plan activities and opportunities that will support the continued growth of each individual child.

The ELA has multiple purposes, including monitoring the growth and development of preschool-age children, providing teachers with the information to individualize learning and reporting data for the State and Federal Requirements.

When the assessment is complete, at conference time, teachers will have information to share with you about how your child is developing across the essential areas of school readiness.

The information will help you and your child's teacher work as partners to plan activities that ensure your child starts kindergarten ready to learn. As a parent, you will be given opportunities to contribute to the education plan of your child. For example, you will be asked to complete a survey of your personal goals for your child's development and transition to kindergarten.

Comprehensive Health Screenings

Upon enrollment and annually thereafter, you are required at your own expense to see your child's doctor or medical practitioner (chiropractor is not acceptable) for a physical examination. This annual examination is important to monitor your child's health. During this examination, your doctor or health practitioner

should complete vision, hearing and other health screenings including (height/weight, dental health, lead and hemoglobin levels). If a concern is identified further screening or assessment may be necessary in order to gain more information or to rule out further concerns. Your doctor may refer you to their preferred health professional or the Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

The Importance of Health Screenings

Health Screenings are an important part of your child's growth and development. If you do not have access to a primary care doctor or certified nurse practitioner or other health care professional, The Putnam County Educational Service Center has resources to help connect you.

Local Free Community Health Clinic and Pharmacy

The Leipsic Community Center offers a free community health clinic and pharmacy from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (pharmacy 5-8). Please check the website for updates @ <https://theleipsiccenter.org/services/>

Please go to the Putnam County Educational Service Center's County Resource Directory and search under

Medical Providers:

<https://sites.google.com/putnamcountyesc.org/putnamresourcedirectory/medical-providers>

Mental Health:

<https://sites.google.com/putnamcountyesc.org/putnamresourcedirectory/mental-health>

Dental Health:

<https://sites.google.com/putnamcountyesc.org/putnamresourcedirectory/dental-providers>

Vision Care:

<https://sites.google.com/putnamcountyesc.org/putnamresourcedirectory/eye-careoptometrist>

Hearing Screenings can be provided for free through the Putnam County Educational Service Center or if your child is school age, through your local school.

For more information about your overall child's health, please visit: <https://kidshealth.org/>

Vision Screening – Completed by physician or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. If a child fails the screening, a referral to the family eye doctor may be recommended by your medical doctor or health practitioner. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

Hearing Screening – Completed by physician or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. If a child fails the screening, a referral may be recommended to a local physician or ENT. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

Lead Test

Completed by physician or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. If a child fails the lead screening, a referral may be recommended to the family physician. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

Hemoglobin- Completed by physician or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. If a child fails the hemoglobin screening, a referral may be recommended to the family physician. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

Height/Weight

Completed by physician or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. If a child fails the screening, a referral to the may be recommended. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

Dental Health Screening

Completed by physician/dentist or health care provider and/or information will be provided to parents on the importance of comprehensive health screenings and resources to obtain them. The Educational Service Center can provide you with alternative community resources such as low cost or free clinics.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Home - school communications are important. All Early Discovery Preschools have an 'open door' policy that welcomes your visit to the child's room anytime. However, often staff are busy with children and not able to confer with you during class time. If you have concerns, questions or comments to share, please wait until after school. Each teacher has established office hours available. Telephone contacts and conference times can be scheduled at times convenient for you.

The preschool sends a newsletter to parents regularly. This will keep you informed about program activities planned for your child and Continental School events scheduled in the coming month.

All children like to bring in toys and special items from home. Though we try to keep these items safe, occasionally they get lost or broken. Please keep the following guidelines in mind if your child chooses to bring something from home.

- Do not send something that has great value, is fragile or cannot be replaced.
- Label the item with your child's name.
- Understand that we cannot be responsible for lost or broken items.
- Please, no dangerous/violent/scary toys or weapons.

Young children enjoy sharing information about their families and special events. Sometimes young children are not able to communicate these things and have difficulty expressing their feelings. Knowing about events or changes in your child's life such as illnesses, hospitalizations, deaths, separations, a new baby, moving plans, special visitors, celebrations, family outings or trips can help us stimulate communications and/or provide appropriate understanding and support. Staff will keep any information you care to share in strictest confidence.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Many families with young children have needs for information or support. There are many resources on the Putnam County Educational Service Center website that are helpful for many types of assistance needed in Putnam County. For more information go to:

<https://sites.google.com/putnamcountyesc.org/putnamresourcedirectory>

The Resource Guide has information about

Emergency Services / Food Assistance / Clothing Assistance / Shelters / Domestic Violence Shelters / Income Based Housing Assistance / Income Based Housing for Elderly or Disabled (62 & Older) / Court/Legal Services / Medical Care / Drug/Alcohol Resources / Detox Centers / Mental Health/Drug and Alcohol Services / Elder Services

/ Children/Youth Services / Job and Family Services / Veteran Services / Disabilities / Education/Services / Schools / Transportation

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation in early childhood programs is key to ensure successful transitions between home and school. Opportunities for parent involvement in Early Discovery Preschool Programs reflect the diverse family schedules, needs, interests, and experiences of parents whose children are enrolled.

Your participation can take many forms such as:

- Communicating on a regular basis with your child's teacher.
- Visiting and observing in the classroom. You are welcome anytime, however, we appreciate knowing when you plan to visit. Your comments and questions can be shared before or after class.
- Joining your child in activities that can promote learning at home or at school.
- Attending parent conferences and meetings.
- Attending Early Discovery Preschool Parent Education Programs that focus on issues and concerns relevant to young children and their families.
- Sharing a special talent or experience with your child's class.
- Assisting with class field trips or special events.
- Contributing to the parent bulletin board in your child's classroom.
- Using resources, such as books, games or toys, that are available in your child's program.
- Participating in community activities that relate to young children and families
- Sharing information with others about the importance of early childhood programs that are developmentally appropriate.

Policy manuals from the Putnam County Educational Service Center and the Continental Schools are available in your child's classroom.

Transition

Every family with a child receiving ongoing preschool services will experience support and information specific to the transition of their child into, within and upon exit from preschool services to kindergarten. In addition, the preschool program operated through the Putnam County Educational Service Center will adhere to transition timelines for children with disabilities and work with the school district of residence to ensure a smooth transition to school age services.

Throughout the preschool program year activities to help your child to transition successfully will be conducted. This will not only help the child, but also strengthen the family's connection to the program and increase their

involvement in their child's learning. Activities may include classroom visits, completion of the Preschool Transition Planning form, Transition Conference, Parent Conference, and materials/resources sent home on topics such as "Ohio Department of Education's: Helping Your Child Make Successful Transitions: Home to School".

Transition shall be addressed throughout the year for preschool age children by developing strategies to support each child's transition into, within or out of the program or when the child is exiting the program. For children with disabilities, transition planning shall begin at least four months prior to the child turning kindergarten age eligible or when there is a change of setting or program.

Records Transfer

Child and family information/records will be maintained at the Putnam County Educational Service Center and/or the local preschool program. Access to individual records will be limited to parents or guardians and staff directly involved with the child. Records may be released to others upon request with the written authorization of the parent or guardian. Parents/guardians who are requesting a records transfer, must do so in writing. A Release of Information for Records Release can be obtained from the Putnam County Educational Service Center, Preschool Office.

All parents will be given face to face opportunity to sign consent to release children's records to any setting outside of the current preschool placement prior to any records being released.

PARENT COMPLAINT PROCESS

It is the desire of the ESC Governing Board to rectify any misunderstandings between the public, parents, and the preschool program by direct discussions of an informal type among the interested parties. It is only when such informal meetings fail to resolve the differences, shall more formal procedures be employed.

Step One: Please discuss your concern with the staff member(s) of your child's preschool program in order to make every effort to resolve the issue with appropriate actions.

Step Two: If a satisfactory solution is not achieved by a discussion with the professional staff member, a request for a phone or personal conference should be made to the preschool program supervisor. Please include:

- a. The specific nature of the complaint and a statement of the facts;

- b. Nature/effect upon the parent/guardian or child;
- c. The action you wish to be taken and why.

Should the matter not be resolved in conference with the supervisor, a request for a phone or personal conference should be made to the Superintendent of Putnam County Schools.

Should the matter still not be resolved or if it is beyond the Superintendent's authority and requires Putnam County ESC Governing Board decision or action, the parent or guardian shall request, in writing, a meeting to discuss the matter.

Specific details related to this policy can be found in the Preschool Policy Book located in each classroom and at the Educational Service Center, 124 Putnam Parkway, Ottawa, Ohio.

Families enrolled in the Putnam County Educational Service Center's Early Discovery Preschools may at any time contact the Ohio Department of Education at 877.644.6338 or by mail at the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, 25 S. Front St., Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Inspection reports for the Early Discovery Preschool Program are posted in each classroom; a copy may be obtained by contacting your child's teacher.

Policy manuals from the Putnam County Educational Service Center and the Continental Schools are available in your child's classroom.

RECORDS RETENTION

We follow the Family Educational rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines for 5 years record retention. Your child's record will be destroyed 5 years after their exit date from preschool.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Early Discovery Preschool follows the Continental School calendar. You may view the school website at <http://www.continentalpirates.org>.