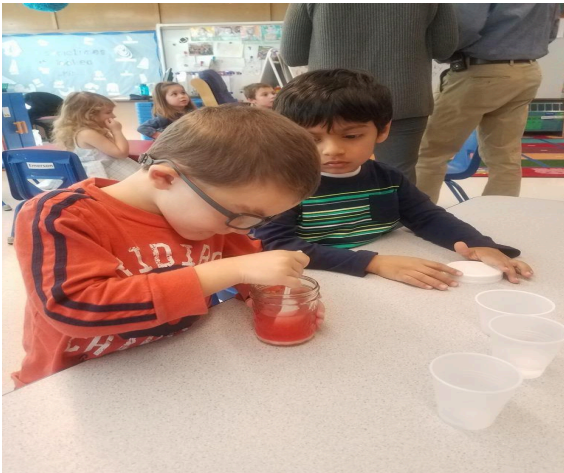




Vernon Preschool Program

Family Handbook



Vernon Public Schools Integrated Program

Center Road School
20 Center Road, Vernon
Office: 860-870-6300
Nurse: 860-870-6307
Fax: 860-870-6309

Vernon Public Schools Integrated Program

Skinner Road School
90 Skinner Road, Vernon
Office: 860-870-6180
Nurse: 860-870-6185
Fax: 860-870-6187

Vernon Public Schools Integrated Program

Northeast School
69 East Street
Office: 860-870-6080
Nurse: 860-870-6082
Fax: 860-870-6095

Vernon Preschool Administrative Team:

Robert Nagashima, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Shelley McCone, Preschool Program Specialist
Melissa Ross, Special Education Supervisor, K-5
Jen Dennin, Administrative Assistant
Phone 860-896-4671

My child's teacher is: _____ in classroom # _____.

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Dear Families,

Welcome to the Vernon Preschool Program! Our program supports strong family-school-community partnerships where families are welcome in classrooms and are always invited to school events! We believe that families are an important part of children's education in Vernon.

Our program focuses on the whole child, where a typical day follows a predictable schedule and includes varied and rich learning experiences. Children participate in literacy activities, which build language and background knowledge, motor movement indoors and out, small and large groups, art activities and promote inquiry through science and exploration. The program follows the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS), which are the endorsed standards by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood.

This handbook serves to provide you with information about our program. We look forward to working with you and your child. If I can assist you in any way during the year, please feel free to call me at (860) 896-4666.

Sincerely,

Robert Nagashima
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

The Vernon Public School System has the privilege of and responsibility for educating successive generations of the town's young people to become competent, confident, thoughtful and contributing members of society, and for providing them with the tools for continuous learning in adulthood. The Vernon Board of Education also recognizes its responsibility to implement the educational objectives of the State of Connecticut, and Board policies shall reflect and be in compliance with all legal requirements.

Vernon Board of Education
30 Park Street
Vernon, CT 06066

The Vernon Preschool Program

The Vernon Preschool Program is a high quality, nationally accredited, early childhood program serving preschool children, ages 3-5, and their families. All preschool age children, who are residents of Vernon, are eligible to attend the program at no cost. We do have a limited number of spaces in our classrooms. Children enter the program by being chosen through the preschool lottery, meeting School Readiness income guidelines, or having a documented disability.

The Vernon Preschool Program is funded through Vernon Public Schools as well as the School Readiness grant. Approximately 35% of our classrooms are grant funded and 65% are funded through Vernon Public Schools.

Regardless of how your child entered the program, the goals for all children are the same:

- Improve children's health and physical abilities
- Encourage confidence, curiosity, and self-discipline in children
- Encourage children's thinking and learning
- Encourage children and families to relate positively to each other
- Encourage a sense of dignity and self-worth in children and their families

The Vernon Preschool Program serves over 100 families each year. All preschoolers who attend our program must be registered with the Vernon Public Schools. Classrooms are located in 3 of our 5 of the elementary schools. We do our best to place children in their home schools. Home school refers to the school assigned to your home address. Depending on the preschool spots available, there are some cases where children attend preschool in another school in Vernon. In these cases, children are expected to attend Kindergarten in their home school. Our preschool classes meet 5 days a week, in half-day sessions. *Program locations, sessions and available preschool spots are subject to change.*

*We believe that you are your child's first teacher.
Our dedicated early childhood staff will work in partnership with you.
Together, we will support your child's learning and growth.*



NAEYC Accreditation

The Vernon Preschool Program has received accreditation status from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This confirms that the program meets all ten high-quality program standards. Having NAEYC accreditation represents the ultimate mark of quality in early childhood education.

NAEYC has a published Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment that we take very seriously. One way that we demonstrate our ethical responsibility to children is to advocate for and ensure that all children, including those with special needs, have access to the support services needed to be successful. We demonstrate our ethical responsibilities to families by developing relationships of mutual trust and create partnerships with the families we serve.

Our program promotes the use of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct in many ways. Two prime examples include being an integrated program where we respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual, and we recognize that both children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on respect and trust.

Vernon Public Schools Mission Statement and Goals

District Mission Statement

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

Goals

- Build and improve relationships and partnerships with the family and community
- Increase the achievement of every student through high quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Promote safe environments that are socially, emotionally, and physically conducive to learning

Family Services

At the Vernon Preschool Program, you will have many opportunities to increase your family strengths. Our partnership begins at the time of application when we welcome you to our program and learn about you, your child, and your family. Families are expected to attend a program orientation meeting. At this meeting, we will talk about school and complete all of the necessary paperwork. We are dedicated to working with you and your family to provide support in any way we can! A Family Resource Directory can be found on the last page of this family handbook. All families also have access to the Family School & Community Partnership Center that is located at the Central Administration office on 30 Park Street. 860-896-4651

Check out the website for news and events:

www.vernonpublicschools.org/departments/family-engagement

Getting Involved

Families are the most important part of a child's development. We have an “open door policy” which means that **you are welcome to visit your child's classroom at any time!** We encourage you to take advantage of this, too! Your involvement at school shows your child that you are interested in his/her learning and that you care about their school! Being involved will also make **you** feel good!

Other ways to be involved:

- Attend family events
- Share ideas for monthly newsletters and classroom activities
- Be a classroom volunteer (See page 7 for more information about volunteering)
- Attend workshops and parent education opportunities
- Share in book reading and library activities
- Donate recycled materials for classroom projects
- Respond to family surveys about how well the program is working
- Talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis
- Read with your child at home

Volunteering at School

We look forward to you sharing in the many activities provided for children and families at school. There are many ways to volunteer in our program. You can help a teacher prepare an activity in the classroom, donate materials to the school, be a member of the PTO and much more. If you are interested in volunteering at school, please talk to your child's teacher or family advocate. You will never be alone with students; a teacher and/or a paraprofessional will be with you at all times.

We love having our families volunteer in our classrooms! We strongly encourage those of our families who speak a different language to come and spend time in our classrooms. Our teaching staff have noticed that when we have people who volunteer in our classrooms, who speak the same home language as our students, that our students thrive! Our students feel more comfortable with an adult who speaks their language and they have often come out of their shell, so to speak, to communicate with that special volunteer. While all families are welcome to be vetted as a volunteer, we are overjoyed when we have families from diverse backgrounds come in, too! It is also very important to us that our students feel validated and recognized in our classroom through that lens of equity.

How to Become a Classroom Volunteer in Preschool

1. Fill out a volunteer application packet which includes:
 - * Introduction letter
 - * Interview with Principal
 - * Volunteer Registration
 - * Volunteer disclosure and consent form
2. Complete a DCF background check and national criminal background check *SentryLink*, both of which must come back with no record.
3. Participate in Volunteer Orientation and complete a TB risk assessment.

Remember, we take these steps to keep children and families safe at our school.

Students with parents involved in their school are more likely to...

- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, improved behavior and adapt well to school
- Earn higher grades and score better on tests
- Graduate and go to college

Why Reading is So Important

1000 Books Before Kindergarten

Numerous studies estimate that as many as one in five children have difficulties learning to read. Reading has been associated as an early indicator of academic success. Public formal education does not typically start until ages 5-6. Before then, parents and caregivers are the first education providers during the 0-5 early critical years. The 1000 Books Before Kindergarten challenge is a simple (read a book, any book to your child, with the goal of reading 1,000 before kindergarten) and very manageable endeavor. Sign up at rockvillelibrary@vernon-ct.gov with "1000 Books Before K" in the subject. Not only does reading increase the bond between parents and newborns, infants and toddlers but it's fun and free! Together, you track their progress and receive fun rewards along the way.

Parent Leadership and Advocacy

Everyone is encouraged to attend meetings and to become involved in the various programs and activities sponsored by the school's PTO (Parent Teacher Organization).

The objectives of the PTO include:

- Fostering and maintaining an understanding between parents, children, and teachers
- Encouraging a closer relationship between school and home
- Promoting parent-teacher cooperation toward the overall welfare of the children in their school

Communication

- Family conferences take place 3 times a year, as a chance to discuss your child's growth and development. You will be provided with your child's progress marks, too. You may request a meeting with your child's teacher and/or a program supervisor at any time.
- You are asked to provide your input about the program. Your thoughts and ideas are valued. Please fill out our surveys. You will have a chance to share your ideas and make suggestions at parent committee meetings too.
- We will share information with you about special activities planned at school. We will send notes and monthly newsletters home with your child. We will also let you know about community events and activities.

We encourage you to communicate your thoughts about the program with us at any time. Throughout the year, we will ask you to complete surveys and participate in the ongoing evaluation of the program

If you have a concern or a suggestion about the program, please let us know:

- *Talk to your child's teacher first, as a meetich can always be scheduled.*
- *If you still need assistance or if you have additional questions, please call the Director of Pupil Personnel Services at the Vernon Board of Education office, 860-896-4666*

We will listen to your concerns and work with you to clarify the issue and/or solve the problem.

Confidentiality

- We respect your privacy. All information that you share with us is kept confidential. To ensure this, all written records that contain family information are kept in a locked location.
- As a parent or legal guardian, you have access to your child's file. In addition, only the following people can see these files:
 - Vernon Public Schools employees, and their consultants
 - Regulatory authorities
- At no time shall any employee discuss any family outside of school or on their own time.
- In order for us to communicate with an outside agency, you will be required to sign a *Release of Information Form*. This means that you would be giving us permission to share your information.

Child Development

Children grow and develop in many ways which are unique to them. We focus on growth in all areas of development in the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards, CT ELDs, including:

Cognition- Making sense of the world, staying with something and working hard to solve problems

Social and Emotional Development- Understanding yourself, your feelings, and how to play with other people

Physical Health and Development- Learning to take care of yourself and to do things with your body and hands so that you grow strong and healthy

Language and Literacy- Communicating using your body, language, signs and written communication

Creative Arts- Enjoying music, dance and art and expressing yourself in these ways

Mathematics- Understanding numbers and how to use them, counting, patterns, measuring and shapes

Science- Understanding the world around us, including living things, the earth and space and energy

Social Studies- Understanding the world and knowing about the people in it. This starts with knowing about your family, then the community and the world.

We work with all children to meet their individual needs. If your child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other individualized plan, we will work to address the goals and objectives that have been identified. Teachers and other program staff will talk with you regularly about ways to work together to meet goals and about progress. If you suspect that your child may have a disability, please contact your child's teacher.



In our classrooms, children are engaged in active play scenarios. While playing, children work through conflicts with objects, other children and adults. Play provides an outlet for curiosity, information about the physical world, and a safe way to deal with anxiety and social relationships. In the long run, play serves children's inner needs, hopes and aspirations.



Developmental Screenings

Each child receives a brief developmental screen within the first 45 days of enrollment. This helps us to identify their current developmental levels and any possible concerns. Results of a screening tool, along with observations of the child, parent reports, and home visit information are all considered in determining whether or not any further assessment or child centered plans are needed.

We use the following tools:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire - Social Emotional (ASQ -SE)
- Early Screening Inventory (ESI)

*You will have input in the screening process. All screening results will be shared with you and maintained in your child's confidential file.
Teachers are trained to complete these screenings.*

Assessment

In order to assess each child's progress and plan to meet their needs, our teachers are trained to use:

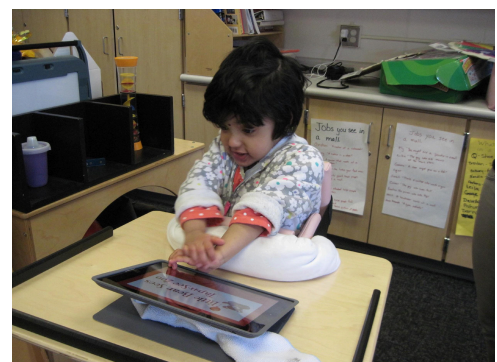
- Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the CT Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT ELDS and CT DOTs)
- Observational notes and data
- Work samples
- Bi-annual report cards
- Progress marks, 3 times a year, for students on IEP
- Discussions with families at meetings (family conferences and home visits)
- Data from these assessments is then used to inform planning for students and the overall program

Our Amazing Teachers

Teachers in our program hold current Connecticut teaching certification and continue their education through professional development and coursework. They get to know each child and build respectful relationships with them. Our teachers provide materials and plan activities based on the interests of the children. They use assessment information to plan for ways that children can develop skills through their play. They will work with you to set goals and identify ways to support your child's continuous growth and development. Our teaching staff are provided with a planning period each day where they are able to collaborate with one another. Teachers are also provided with planning time, through Professional Learning Communities, each month to meet as a grade level to plan, too.

Our Classrooms

Our goal is to help you prepare your child for success in school and in life. This is accomplished by caring for each child in a safe, nurturing environment. We organize our classrooms and outdoor spaces as learning areas where children play and learn. Equipment and furniture are child-sized and encourage children to use them independently. Classroom schedules provide a consistent routine and simple classroom rules help maintain a safe and predictable environment so children become comfortable in this familiar setting. They gain independence and skills as they work together and care for their classroom. Maximum classroom size set by the state is 20 children with a minimum of 2 staff.



Dress for Success, Learning is Fun!

Early childhood activities can be messy! Even though they wear smocks, children may come home with paint, glue, etc. on their clothes. Also, outdoor play is active and can get dirty.

We will take the children to play outside daily except:

- In bad weather (for example, pouring rain)
- If the temperature is below 30 degrees, including wind chill
- If the temperature is above 90 degrees, including heat index
- During smog and air pollution alerts

Please dress your child with these points in mind:

- Dress children in play clothes. Understand that they may become soiled or stained.
- Dress children in non-skid, closed toed and closed backed shoes for safety (sneakers are best). We ask that children **not** wear sandals, flip flops, beach shoes, jelly shoes, “croc” type shoes or other “open toe” type footwear to school. This is important to prevent falls.
- Send in at least 1 set of extra clothes **labeled with your child’s name** for accidents, spills and different weather conditions (boots, mittens, hats, socks).



Attendance

We are required to make sure that children in our program maintain regular attendance. Children are expected to attend school as scheduled. Daily attendance will allow your child to receive the full educational benefits of the program and this will establish good school attendance habits early.

There are times when an absence is necessary such as when your child is sick; this is expected. When your child cannot make it to school for any reason, please call your school nurse and let us know that same day. It is fine to leave a message early in the morning before school opens. For safety reasons, if you do not call, a school nurse will contact you. Vernon Public Schools is required to track attendance and communicate via phone and letters any attendance concerns. State laws are followed and guidelines will be shared with you.

Healthy children who are absent frequently concern us. Should this occur, the Vernon Preschool Program team will work with you to identify the reason and find solutions to improve your child's attendance. We want to prevent any child from losing a space in the program because of poor attendance. If this does happen, you will be notified and we would then enroll the next child on the waiting list. The Vernon Preschool Program follows the Vernon Public School attendance policy.

Vacations

Family vacations are special. Please make every effort to plan vacations during scheduled school vacations. You will receive a Vernon Public Schools calendar upon enrollment.

Arrival, Drop off and Pick Up

Arrival – Start of the Day

Please be on time each day. This includes children who get on a bus, come in a family car or walk. When children are consistently on time, children learn what to expect. Everything we plan for the children has a purpose. We do not want them to miss an important part of the program. An adult must sign a child in and out of the classroom. There is a sign in and sign out sheet in each classroom. At drop off, you will have the opportunity to speak briefly with your child's teacher about anything you need. Should you need a longer time to communicate with the teaching staff, please set up an appointment to dive deeper into your concerns.

When possible, please schedule all appointments before or after school hours. We understand that this does not always work out. If your child must arrive late because of an important appointment, please let us know in advance. We ask that you bring in a note verifying the appointment.

Pick-Up – End of the Day

It is very important that you pick your child up on time. If something happens to prevent you from picking up your child, notify us immediately. In this case, you will have to arrange for someone else to do so. This person must be listed on the *Emergency Card* you completed and bring a photo ID with them to pick up your child. Please keep your child's Emergency Card up to date.

Late Pick Up Procedure:

If your child has not been picked-up by the agreed time:

1. **We will call you.**

2. If you cannot be reached, we will **call each of your emergency contacts. A staff member or school administrator** will stay with the child until you, or an approved contact with a photo ID, arrives to pick up your child.

If your family schedule prevents you from picking up and/or dropping off on time, the Vernon Preschool Program team will work with you to identify the reason and find solutions to improve your child's participation. We want to prevent any child from losing a space in the program because of pick-up and arrival difficulties. If these cannot be resolved, you will be notified and we would then enroll the next child on the waiting list.

Pick up time is another great opportunity to connect with the teaching staff in the classroom! Like drop-off, if you need to speak about some concerns you are having, please be sure to schedule a time with the teacher to address these concerns.

Drop off and Pick Up Information: When dropping off or picking up your child from school, please be sure that your vehicle is parked and off, and not idling. Doing this will help ensure that our students are not breathing in toxic air and will help to keep them safe.

Bus Transportation

There are limited spaces on the bus for children attending preschool. If your child comes to school or goes home on a bus, you must be waiting outside 10 minutes before and after the scheduled pick up/drop off time. Bus schedules vary. You will receive a list of bus rules upon enrollment. If you have any questions for the classroom teaching staff, you can mention them to the bus driver, however, please contact the teacher directly either through email or a phone call. The bus driver's job is to form a relationship with you and your child and does not have much to do with the classroom itself.

If you are not there to get your child off the school bus:

Your child will be transported back to school and you will be contacted to come and pick him/her up.

Positive Discipline

We find that specific praise and encouragement work well to increase positive behavior in children. Children tend to repeat the behavior that gets the most attention. We encourage you to ignore or respond calmly to misbehavior. Most importantly, we hope that you will respond enthusiastically and often to positive behavior.

We teach social skills when we model caring and cooperation and use positive guidance and show children how to interact with others in acceptable ways. Students are encouraged to use words to express their feelings and needs. We help them work together to solve problems. Good discipline also involves helping children to learn that mistakes are a natural part of learning.

We want your child to have great success in school! We will work together with you to find effective ways of helping your child learn important social skills; we cannot do it alone! When children receive consistent messages from home and school about positive behavior, their learning becomes easier. When children's behaviors are challenging at home and/or school, we will work with you to put plans in place to help them succeed.

At no time will the teachers and adults in the classroom use verbal threats or speak to a child in a disrespectful manner, withhold food as a form of discipline, physically harm a child (e.g. hitting, shaking, squeezing, pinching, biting), use coercion, rough handling, or force a child to sit or perform an action, nor will any staff member use psychological abuse (e.g. name calling, shaming, threatening, frightening, withholding affection).

Being a parent/guardian is one of life's most challenging jobs. We will provide information to support you. Throughout the year the Vernon Preschool Program offers workshops, discussions with staff, and home activities on topics such as child development, positive discipline, and handling stress.

Child Protection

Our primary concern is for the health and safety of children enrolled in our program. Our child protection policy reflects this concern. It is very important that you keep us informed about your child's well being.

All Vernon Preschool Program staff members are mandated reporters and must follow this law, as part of their job. Mandated reporters are required by Connecticut General Laws Concerning Child Abuse and Neglect to inform the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been neglected or abused. Abuse is physical, emotional, or sexual harm to a child.

If there is a suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect, we are required to share this information with DCF.

We understand that as children explore their environment they often fall and bump into things. It is normal for them to get the occasional bruise. **When your child has a bruise from playing or a fall at home, be sure to let the teacher know as soon as he/she comes to school. We will do the same for you and you will receive an injury report if this happens at school.**

Our school buildings remain locked at all times. There are buzzers and doorbells, with cameras, at each main entrance that are monitored by the main office. People wishing to come into the building must ring the bell and be allowed into the main office. There, their identification will be taken, entered into a computer, and the visitor will be provided with a visitor badge they must wear at all times. Staff have access to key-carded doors by using their district-issued badge to enter.

Health and Wellness

Physical Exams and Immunizations

We follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' schedule for physical exams and immunizations. At **every** physical appointment, you will need to have the doctor's office fill out the health evaluation form. **It is very important that the completed form is brought to your child's school, or your child may be excluded from school until this requirement is met.**



Flu Shot

The State of Connecticut **requires** that all preschool students have a flu shot. Families must show written proof of the shot or flu mist from a health care provider. If missing, your child might be excluded for the flu season. Every child must have 1 dose administered each year between August 1 - December 31. Two doses separated by at least 28 days are required for those receiving the flu vaccine for the first time. If you decide to not provide your child with the flu shot, you need to contact Mrs. McCone, as the student will need to be excluded for the duration of flu season, which goes through the first of April.

Health Screenings

Screenings are an important way to ensure children are growing and developing well. They also help identify and prevent health problems. All children, who are one year or older, are required to be screened for hemoglobin, lead, and TB at the time of their physical exam. This needs to be documented on the physical exam form by the health care provider.

We screen each child for vision and hearing if it was not done by the Physician. Families will be given the results of the screening and the referral process will begin if a concern is discovered. Shy or uncooperative children will be re-screened at a later date, or referred to the pediatrician for screening. **Parents are responsible for follow-up on all health referrals.**

Student Medication

If your child requires medication during the day, or they have medication that needs to be kept at school in case of an allergic reaction, their medication will be stored, locked, in a container with their name clearly written on it in our nurse's office. Our school nurse is the

one who will administer medication as prescribed to our students. Classroom teachers will not store medication in their classrooms, nor will they be administering medication to students.

Sunscreen Administration

A note from your child's physician is required for sunscreen application during the school day. Our school nurse would be the one who applies the sunscreen to those students who have the required documentation. Best practice is to apply sunscreen prior to coming to school each day.

COVID-19 Information

Please know that Vernon Public Schools will be complying with the guidance from the State of Connecticut and the Center for Disease Control, CDC. More guidance on this to come.

Please note, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some providers may have limited availability for appointments. Please provide copies of your students' most recent physical and immunization record when registering and your school nurse will keep you posted when we receive direction from the State.

Physical Activity

We provide all children with a variety of daily physical activities. These activities are fun and designed for their age group. They may take place inside or outside and focus on both large and small muscle movement as well as building social skills.

Health Education and Support

Our school nurses are available if you have any concerns or questions about your child's health and safety. Health and nutrition information will be provided to you throughout the year. It will be included in newsletters and posted on the bulletin boards. We welcome your ideas and requests. Our school nurses are responsible for medication administration to students who have authorization from their physician. Medications, including EpiPens, are to be in their original packaging and will be stored in the nurse's office, locked, labeled and inaccessible to children.

Guidelines for Sick Children

Children should come to school ready to participate in all activities. **If you have concerns that your child may need medical care or has comfort needs that can't be provided at school, please keep your child at home that day.** Plan for child care for sick days well in advance. Please see the Sick Day Guidelines on your school's website. Remember, your sick child may not return to school until he or she is free of fever, vomiting or diarrhea and off medication for 24 hours. If you are not sure, contact the school nurse.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will bring your child to the school nurse. We cannot transport a sick child on the bus. It is important to inform staff where you can be reached on a daily basis. When a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will begin calling people named on the *Emergency Card*. Again, make sure these people have the proper child restraints in their cars and can provide a valid photo ID.

Special Healthcare Needs

Please see your school nurse if your child has special healthcare needs. An individualized healthcare plan will be completed with you. If your child needs medication at school, your child's doctor must complete a form called: *Authorization for the Administration of Medication by School Personnel*.

Healthy Habits

We will work with you to teach your child good habits to keep them healthy. This is especially important when they begin spending time in school. Also, developing good habits early will produce benefits that last a lifetime.

- Proper hand washing is the first line of defense against infectious diseases. We require staff, children and volunteers to wash their hands properly and frequently. Our hand washing policy is posted in each classroom.
- We encourage children to blow/wipe their own noses, place the tissue in the garbage, and then wash their hands. Please help your child learn these skills at home also.
- We teach them to cover their mouths when they sneeze or cough. Coughing or sneezing into the elbow works well because it doesn't transfer germs to their hands.

Diapering and Toileting

For children who are learning this skill, our staff will help as needed just as you would do at home. We will encourage children and praise their attempts. Accidents are a natural part of learning which is why we always need extra clothes on hand - just in case! We will communicate with you about your child's progress at school, and we encourage you to share the progress they are making at home, too!

Nutrition

What We Believe

We know that what children eat affects their development in many ways. Food is never used as a reward, nor will we deny a child food for any reason (unless a substitution is required by your child's doctor).

Food Allergies and Accommodations

Please let us know if your child has a food allergy. While children are not provided food from school, it is important to know of allergies so we can ensure the safety of all learners. We will be providing a snack time for your child, and will serve them the healthy snack that you have packed in their backpacks. Examples of healthy snacks include: fruit, vegetables, granola bars and cheese and crackers. Please try to avoid sending chips, cookies, or gummy fruit snacks into school.

Family Involvement in the Nutrition Program

We ask you to provide healthy snacks for your child to eat at school (no sugary foods such as candy, cake or soda). These foods are often served during traditional holiday celebrations (such as birthday parties) so we do not have such parties or celebrations in the classroom. The only food that will be allowed from home is a healthy snack.

Safety

- Emergency Plans are posted at the school. Fire drills and other emergency drills are practiced regularly.
- A minimum of 1 staff member in each classroom is trained in Pediatric First Aid and CPR and will provide this care if needed.
- We follow Universal Precautions. This means that measures are taken to prevent contact with bodily fluids (such as blood) to prevent disease transmission.
- Staff will complete an Injury Report when a child receives any injury at school. We ask that you sign this document and give it back to the teacher so we can keep it on file. We will give you a copy.
- Our buildings remain locked throughout the day to ensure your child's safety. Please use the buzzer to enter the building.

In the event of an **emergency illness or injury**, 911 will be called, and then you would be contacted. Your child would be transported to the nearest emergency room by ambulance with a staff member and the child's file. **It is vital that you tell the program staff when any medicines are given to your child in the morning or before school.**

You will be asked to complete an **emergency contact information form** and revise it when there are any changes.

Injury Prevention

We pay close attention to the classrooms and environments the children play in to make sure they are safe. We monitor the playgrounds for any safety hazards and we check our playgrounds for debris each morning. Children are required to wear helmets when using ride-on toys at school. We teach the children about pedestrian safety, bus safety, fire

prevention, and safety in their homes. We will work closely with you to stress safety while transporting children.

Supervision

We take our responsibility for your child's safety very seriously. When you arrive with your child each day, make contact with one of the classroom staff to make sure that they are aware that your child is present. When you sign your child in, you are transferring responsibility for your child to the staff members. The reverse is true when you pick-up. At that time, also make sure that a staff member knows when your child is leaving with you.

Assisting Families with Concerns

Should a situation arise where families and staff may not see eye-to-eye in a given situation, the family will be invited to have a meeting with the teacher and/or staff member to open the lines of communication regarding their concerns. At the end of this meeting, if there is still a concern, the next step would be to have a meeting with the building administrator, family and the teacher/staff member. If this meeting still leaves some concerns between the family and teacher/staff member, the matter will be moved to the district-level for further support.

Kindergarten Transition

When it is time, the Vernon Preschool Program will work with your family to help with your child's transition to kindergarten.

We do this through:

- visits to the kindergarten classroom
- sharing information between preschool and kindergarten
- kindergarten transition family meeting every Spring

Children enrolled in the Vernon Preschool Program do not need to complete registration paperwork for kindergarten, however, you will be asked to update some paperwork.

And finally, thank you for choosing a high quality early childhood program for your child. The benefits last a lifetime!



Family Resource Directory

Phone Number helpers for your family

EMERGENCY

POLICE, FIRE, AMBULANCE 911
Vernon Police Department 860-872-9126
State of Connecticut Child Abuse Hotline 800-842-2288
Hartford Interval House – Domestic Violence Hotline 800-527-0550
Manchester Memorial Hospital Community Crisis Center 860-641-4766
RED CROSS Emergency Food, Clothing and Shelter for Natural Disaster Situations 860-875-3377
Poison Control Center 800-222-1222

HEALTH

Rockville General Hospital 860-872-0501
Manchester Memorial Hospital 860-646-1222
St Francis Hospital 860-714-4000
Hartford Hospital 860-545-5000
Husky Healthcare Plan 877-CT-HUSKY

OTHER

Birth to Three 800-505-7000
Cornerstone Soup Kitchen 860-871-1823
CT Dept. of Social Services - SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) + Cash Assistance 860-674-1441
Hockanum Valley Community Council 860-872-9825
ECHN Family Development Center 860-432-5278 ext. 125
ECHN Family Resource Center at Maple Street School 860-875-5771
WIC (Women, Infants, Children) Union Church (Monday) 860-528-1458
KIDSAFE CT (Parenting classes and support) 860-872-1918
Vernon Regional Adult Education 860-870-6000 ext. 139
Care 4 Kids - Child Care assistance program 1-888-214-KIDS
State of Connecticut Energy Hotline 800-842-1132
Vernon Social Services 860-896-2375
Vernon Youth Services Bureau 860-870-3555
Rockville Public Library 860-875-5892
Vernon Parks and Recreation Department 860-870-3520

Housing

Dobbs Crossing, 1170 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon 860-872-1713
Sleeping Giant, 1238 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon 860-875-2167
Park West Apartments, 178 Terrace Drive, Vernon 860-875-1234
Vernon Housing Authority 860-871-0886

Dial 2-1-1 (OR 860-522-4636) or go online at www.211ct.org for information about community resources which include childcare, basic needs - food, clothing, shelter, energy assistance, health services and much more. Toll free, multilingual confidential service, 24 hours a day.