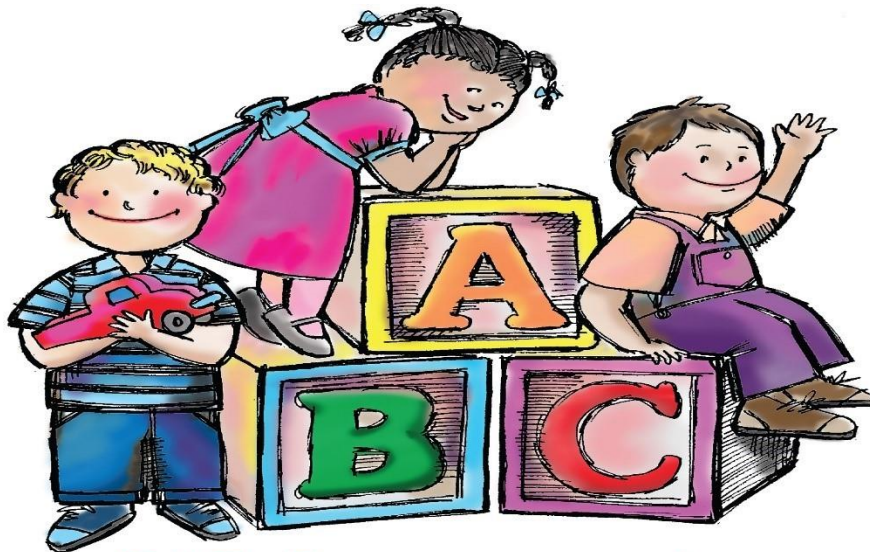


# Early Childhood Initiatives

## Onslow County Preschool Program

Parent & Family Handbook  
2022-2023



## Welcome to Preschool

*Preparing children for a positive school experience through a high-quality prekindergarten program,  
where children can learn, grow, explore and discover.*

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## **Welcome to Preschool!**

We are pleased that you and your child will be part of our program for the 2022-2023 school year! Many pleasant experiences await your child and you.

We provide a positive, safe and welcoming classroom experience where all children can learn, grow and explore.

We believe that parents are the primary teachers and nurturers of their children.

Staff will work together with you to build strong relationships that support positive child and family outcomes.

This handbook is a resource to help you to better understand our program policies and procedures. We ask that you review this handbook and please feel free to ask your child's Teacher or Family Specialist any questions you may have regarding your participation in our program.

Thank you for choosing Onslow County Early Childhood Initiatives. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and welcoming environment where all children thrive.

Sincerely,  
Luisa Davis, Director



# First Day Fears

The first day of Preschool can be a scary time for some kids (and some moms and dads, too!) Starting school is something that kids have probably been thinking about all summer. Now, they walk into a new room with all these new kids, new grown-ups, and new “stuff” and maybe Mom looks a little teary-eyed that her “baby” is growing up so fast.... Well, it’s no wonder some kids suddenly cling to parents and cry!

## Here are a few tips for getting through those first few days:

- Try to act confident yourself. If you seem anxious and unsure about leaving your child at school children pick up on that and start wondering if there is something to worry about.
- If possible, plan to stay for 5 or 10 minutes the first day getting your child settled. A longer or shorter amount of time may make separation harder.
- When it is time for you to leave, make sure you say goodbye. Trying to “sneak out” when the child is busy and not looking, sometimes makes kids panic a few minutes later, and may make separation even more difficult the next day.
- Separation problems sometimes show up on the second or third day, just when you think you’re getting off easy! It is also common for children to have problems when there are significant changes in the home. Let us know if anything is happening at your house that you think is important for us to know about.
- We know that you are entrusting us with a very precious gift, and we feel very honored that we will be your child’s first teachers.
- If your child is having an especially hard time, we will give you a call at home or work.

We are looking forward to a great year working with your child and you!

♥ Welcome to  
Preschool!



## **What are our Pre-School Programs?**

Onslow County Schools Preschool is a braided program comprised of the Head Start, Title I, and Exceptional Children's Programs. The NC Pre-K program along with the Developmental Day program supplement the funding for our braided programs through criteria specifically outlined by the State of North Carolina for child qualification. These programs help improve outcomes for preschool children.

**E.S.E.A. Title I** is a federally funded education program for elementary and secondary schools. The students served must be 4 years old on or before August 31. Each child is administered screening instrument(s) to determine possible educational need. Students are selected through the review of multiple selection criteria, including the developmental screening. All children selected for the Title I program must live in the Onslow County Schools attendance area.

**Head Start** is a federally funded educational, health, and social program designed to work with families who are economically disadvantaged. The students served are 3 and 4 years old. There are many classrooms throughout the county. All students selected for the Head Start program must live in the Onslow County Schools attendance area.

**Exceptional Children's** Preschool Services for students who have developmental delays, speech/language delays and/or other delays that affect their education. The program serves children in a variety of settings throughout the county. All students served by the Onslow County Schools Preschool Program for Exceptional Children must live in the Onslow County Schools attendance area.

**NC-Pre-K** is a state-funded preschool program for students who meet the state of North Carolina guidelines for the NC Pre-K program as outlined in the selection criteria. The NC Pre-K program is administered by the Onslow County Partnership for Children and has sites in selected elementary schools, TECC and high-quality childcare centers. Students must be four years old on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> to be eligible for the program.

**Developmental Day** funding helps improve child outcomes for children with disabilities and increases opportunities for instruction in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This program is intended for all collaborative partners who work with special education in the Onslow County Schools Preschool to provide inclusive learning environments in the preschool program.

Before a child enters any preschool program, an application, birth certificate, immunization record and eligibility requirements must be on file. The preschool programs are designed to provide developmentally appropriate experiences, which enhance educational opportunities prior to entry into kindergarten. The purpose of the preschool program is to prepare the students for a successful school career.

**Any changes in parent policies, procedures or requirements will be sent to families at least 30 days in advance.**

# Onslow County Early Childhood Initiatives

## Vision

Excellence in Serving Families and Educating Children

## Mission

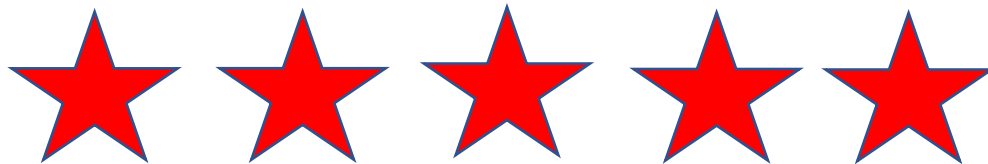
To ensure that preschool age children are “school ready” as they transition to kindergarten, thus enhancing the opportunity for a successful school career.

## Quality Rating

Star Rated License through North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services and the Division of Child Development.

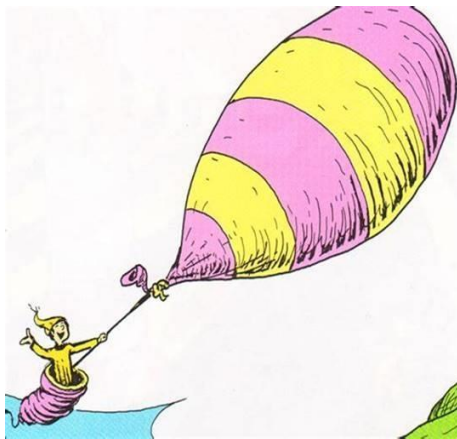
Onslow County Schools Early Childhood Initiatives has obtained and maintained Five Star Rating in each of our sites. To learn more about the Star Rating for NC Child Care Facilities, please visit the NCDHHS website at:

<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Services/Licensing/Star-Rated-License>



## Important Dates to Remember & Schedule of Closings

Date	Reason
September 6, 2022	First Day of Preschool
September 22, 2022	Early Release Day for Students
October 10, 2022	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
October 19, 2022	Early Release Day for Students
November 8, 2022	Early Release Day for Students
November 11, 2022	Holiday – Program Closed
November 23, 2022	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
November 24-25, 2022	Holiday – Program Closed
December 19-30, 2022	Winter Break – Program Closed
January 2, 2023	Holiday – Program Closed
January 16, 2023	Holiday – Program Closed
January 23-24, 2023	Teacher Workdays – No School for Students
February 9, 2023	Early Release Day for Students
February 20, 2023	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
March 10, 2023	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
March 22, 2023	Early Release Day for Students
April 1 – 7, 2023	Spring Break – Program Closed
April 10, 2023	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
May 1, 2023	Teacher Workday – No School for Students
May 29, 2023	Holiday – Program Closed
June 9, 2023	Last Day of School




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*Oh the places we'll go  
together in preschool. Child,  
family and staff, all with great  
mountains to climb.  
Inspired by Dr. Seuss*

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## Onslow County Schools Preschool Program

### Site Locations

Dixon Elementary School  
 Hunters Creek Elementary School  
 Morton Elementary School  
 Queens Creek Elementary School

Southwest Elementary School  
 Summersill Elementary School  
 Thompson Early Childhood Center

### Preschool Staff

**Telephone: 346-6222 or 455-2211 (see extension below)**

Teacher will provide parents with his/her phone number and the name of the school administrator.

Luisa Davis	Director of Early Childhood Initiatives & Head Start Director	21001
Katherine Ray	Assistant Director Early Childhood Initiatives	21002
Melinda Watkins	Preschool Coordinator	21007
Brenda Hirko	Preschool Office Intake	21004 455-5530
Trystyn Kent-Orr	Preschool Office Intake	21013
Tyanna Villanuevarosa	Receptionist	21000 346-6222
Hannah Bradshaw	NC Pre-K Coordinator/Childcare licensing	21027
	Data Manager	21005 989-2332
	Exceptional Children's Preschool Coordinator	21034 989-2332
Gwen Macias	Education Coordinator	21025
Diana Salis	Education Specialist	21006
Brandy Lammonds	Education Specialist & Head Start Disabilities Coordinator	21026
Traci Yates	Family Specialist	21012
Janie Marshburn	Family Specialist	21010
	Family Service Worker	21011
Kiandra Bowden	School Social Worker	21015
Brandy Wrenn	Family Service Worker	21033



Website	<a href="http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us">www.onslow.k12.nc.us</a>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/OCSprek/">https://www.facebook.com/OCSprek/</a> or Onslow County Schools Early Childhood Initiatives & Head Start

## Delays or Closures

In preparing for severe or inclement weather, it sometimes becomes necessary for a decision to be made concerning the closing of school or delaying of school hours. After conferring with the National Weather Service and various emergency agencies, a decision will be made on whether to delay or close school. This decision will be made in a timely manner so that information can be communicated to all parties. Since we are a county-side school system, a decision to close schools or delay school hours will affect all schools throughout Onslow County. In order to effectively communicate this information, school officials are asking all students, parents and school employees to follow the suggestions listed below:

1. The parent's/guardian's primary contact phone number will be registered with your child's school to receive automated messages. School cancellations or delays will be announced through the school system's automated alert network. In addition, the registration of your phone numbers is essential to allow the school to contact you in case of an emergency.
2. Log-on to our system's web site at <https://www.onslow.k12.nc.us/> to read current information on school closings or delays.
3. Call the Onslow County Schools "Information Line" at (910) 989-2211 to hear current information on school closings or delays.
4. Listen to one of the area radio stations: WKOQ (98.7FM), WXQR (105.5FM), WDLX (93FM), WSFL (106.5FM) or WRNS (95.1FM) or your local favorite radio station.
5. While we will notify area television stations, they have certain time restraints in getting information on the air, due to the large volume of closings they list.
6. Please do not telephone radio or television stations, newspaper offices, school officials or school offices.
7. **THE ABSENCE OF ANY ANNOUNCEMENT MEANS THAT THE SCHOOLS WILL OPEN OR CLOSE AS USUAL.**

Over 15,000 of the approximately 24,000 students in the Onslow County School System travel to and from school by bus. Many times, road conditions on our much-traveled primary roads are quite different from those on our less frequently traveled secondary roads. When making a decision on opening or closing schools, school officials are primarily concerned with the safety and welfare of all pupils and staff members.



# Student Information Management

## Information Updates

It is important that you keep all information updated with your child's teacher.

**You must notify your child's teacher if any of the following change:**

- ❖ Home address (you must provide proof of residency for new address)
- ❖ Telephone number (common barriers: voice mailbox full or not set up, minutes ran out)
- ❖ Emergency contacts
- ❖ Change in job location and/or telephone number
- ❖ Release form with names and telephone numbers of people who can pick up your child from school or the bus stop. Your child cannot be released to a person not on the release form.

## Withdrawal Process

If a child is being withdrawn from the program, the parent will notify both the teacher and preschool staff and complete a *Withdrawal Form* at least two weeks before the intended withdrawal date.

# Regulations and Standards

The North Carolina Child Care Regulations are the rules and regulations that OCS preschool programs adhere to ensure the high quality services to children and families are provided. Copies of the regulations are available at your child's site. For questions, please see your Family Specialist.



## NC Child Care Programs Licensing Regulations

North Carolina Child Care Regulations govern childcare facilities and programs. These rules are the minimum requirements established to protect health and safety of North Carolina's children and ensure that children in care and early education programs are provided with healthy growth and education experiences.

## **Inclusion**

Onslow County Schools Preschool Program believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in our program. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

## **Non-Discrimination**

Equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, gender identity, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Our preschool program is designed to meet the varying needs of all students and families.

## **Confidentiality**

Families and children enrolled in our program have the right to the protection of personal information. Parents should be the primary source of information about themselves and information sought from them should be limited to that which is essential for service.

To be in compliance with Federal Regulations, and to respect the privacy of each family, confidentiality of information is of primary importance. No volunteer or staff member of Onslow County Schools Preschool Program may use information obtained for his or her own use. Videotaping of any functions by individual families or students is not allowed at any preschool campus unless you have written permission of all families involved.

## Disclosures With, and Without Parental Consent

Exceptions to the above confidentiality statement are:

- Child abuse
- Threats to harm self or others
- Abuse of disabled individuals
- A caseworker or other representative from a local or state child welfare agency, who has the right to access a case plan for a child who is in foster care placement, when such agency is legally responsible for child's care and protection.
- Officials at a program, school, or school district in which the child seeks or intends to enroll or where the child is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is related to the child's enrollment or transfer. With prior parental/guardian notification and a copy of records to be disclosed.
- Contractors and sub recipients of the program
- Federal or state entity, in connection with an audit or evaluation of education or child development programs or for enforcement of or compliance of federal legal requirements.
- Federal or state entity, to conduct a study to improve child and family outcomes, including the improvement of quality.
- Appropriate parties in order to address a disaster, health or safety emergency during the period of the emergency, or serious health and safety risk, such as serious food allergy.
- As required to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- Child and Adult Food Care, authorized representative to conduct monitoring, evaluations and performance measures.

For questions, regarding OCS Policy, With and Without Parental Consent please contact the program director or assistant director.

## **Child Abuse & Neglect- Mandatory Reporter**

In accordance with North Carolina regulations regarding child abuse and neglect, All preschool staff are Mandatory Reporters and must report cases of suspected physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect to the proper authorities. The staff is obligated by law to report any suspected abuse to child protection services with 24 hours. This may include releasing child/family information to parties involved in the investigation. The child protection agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. We will cooperate fully with the investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. When appropriate, staff will inform the family, a report is being made to child protective services and will encourage the family to make a report as well.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

### Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect

While most of us want nothing but the best for our children, child abuse and neglect are too common. While the words abuse and neglect are often used interchangeably, each type of maltreatment is distinct. Abuse is the intentional maltreatment of a child and can be physical, sexual, or emotional in nature. Neglect, on the other hand, is the failure to give children the necessary care they need. The emotional scars of both types of maltreatment are often deep and no child deserves to be maltreated. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, or if you think a child may have died from being mistreated, you must report what you know to the [county Department of Social Services](#). This is the law ([N.C.G.S. § 7B-301](#)). Do not be afraid to report. As long as you are acting in good faith, you cannot be held liable ([N.C.G.S. §7B-309](#)).

### Recognizing Child Abuse

The following signs may signal the presence of child abuse or neglect. It is important to note that any one of these things could mean anything or nothing. For example, there are many reasons a child may not want to go home on any particular day, or a child may be overly compliant when they are trying to please a favorite teacher. However, when you have a cluster of two or more of these, this should raise a red flag to at least talk to the child and/or parent, and at most call your local Child Protective Services. It is also important to remember that issues related solely to poverty are not considered child maltreatment issues.

### The Child:

- Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance;
- Displays overt sexualized behavior or exhibits sexual knowledge that is inconsistent with their age;
- Has not received medical attention for a physical injury that has been brought to the parents' attention;
- Has learning problems that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes;
- Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen;

- Is overly compliant, an overachiever, or too responsible;
- Comes to school early, stays late, and does not want to go home; or
- Has unexplained burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes;
- Has bruises or marks in non-prominent, “fleshy” areas of the body (for example, inside of biceps or behind the knees);
- Has fading bruises or other marks noticeable after an absence from school;
- Seems frightened of the parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home from school;
- Shrinks at the approach of adults;
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver.

#### The Parent or Other Adult Caregiver:

- Shows little concern for the child, rarely responding to the school's requests for information, for conferences, or for home visits; denies the existence of or blames the child for) the child's problems in school or at home; asks the classroom teacher to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves; sees the child entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome;
- Demands perfection or a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve;
- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury;
- Describes the child as "evil," or in some other very negative way;
- Is abusing alcohol, prescription drugs or illegal drugs and that abuse is having an adverse impact on the child;
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child; or
- Has a history of abuse as a child.

#### Recognizing Child Neglect

##### The Child:

- Begs or steals food or money from classmates;
- Lacks needed medical or dental care;
- Lacks age appropriate adult supervision ;
- Lacks clothing appropriate for the weather;
- Reports family violence in the home;
- Reports use of illegal substances or excessive use of alcohol by parents or caregivers (for example, to the point the parent passes out);
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs; or
- States there is no one at home to provide care.

##### The Parent or Other Adult Caregiver:

- Appears to be indifferent to the child;
- Seems apathetic or depressed;
- Is involved in an abusive domestic relationship;
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner; or
- Is abusing alcohol, prescription drugs or illegal drugs.

#### Twelve Alternatives to Lashing out at Your Child

- The next time everyday pressures build up to the point where you feel like lashing out -- STOP! Try any of these simple alternatives. You'll feel better... and so will your child.
- Take a deep breath... and another. Then remember you are the adult.

- Close your eyes and imagine you're hearing what your child is about to hear.
- Press your lips together and count to 10... or better yet, to 20.
- Put your child in a time-out chair (remember this rule: one time-out minute for each year of age.)
- Put yourself in a time-out chair. Think about why you are angry: is it your child, or is your child simply a convenient target for your anger?
- Phone a friend.
- If someone can watch the children, go outside and take a walk.
- Take a hot bath or splash cold water on your face.
- Hug a pillow.
- Turn on some music. Maybe even sing along.
- Pick up a pencil and write down as many helpful words as you can think of. Save the list.
- Call 1-800-4-A-CHILD

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/>

<https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/dss/cps/about.htm#Neglect>

## Need to Know Information

### Positive Child and Family Outcomes

The Onslow County Preschool programs will serve many children this school year. Following placement in the program, a family specialist will be assigned. This person will be the liaison who ensures that you receive various services in the community necessary to provide your child a “head start” in school. The family specialist will talk to you about your plans for your future. **The family specialist may develop a plan with you to achieve goals that you set for your child, your family, and yourself.** The family specialist works with your child’s teacher to ensure that your child has a successful school year.

**As a parent,** I will work to the best of my abilities in partnership with staff in the following ways:

- ✓ Arrive to class on time to drop off my child and pick up my child. I will notify my Family Support Specialist, if I need to change my childcare hours.
- ✓ Ensure my child attends consistently and on time daily. Regular attendance is essential to school success.
- ✓ Each time my child is absent I will call the classroom the morning of the absence.
- ✓ Work with teachers, staff and other families in a cooperative manner.
- ✓ Reinforce what my child learns at school by working with my child at home.
- ✓ Participate in two parent teacher conferences and two teacher home visits.
- ✓ I will participate in Parent Committee Meetings and Parent Engagement activities.
- ✓ Ensure my child is up-to-date on all required medical and dental needs.

**As staff members,** we will work in partnership with the family/caregiver in the following ways:

- ✓ Develop positive, goal-orientated relationships.

- ✓ Recognize that each family is unique and special, recognize and honor your culture, ethnicity, language and traditions.
- ✓ Welcome you into the classroom at all times.
- ✓ Ask for your ideas and input for the classroom curriculum.
- ✓ Share with you, skills that you can use with your child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and academically.
- ✓ Encourage you to participate in parent engagement activities.
- ✓ Keep you informed of preschool program information and updates.
- ✓ Schedule home visits and parent teacher conferences at a convenient time for parents.
- ✓ Work with you to achieve the goals that you have developed or expressed interest in according to your Family Partnership Agreement.

## **Your Child's Schedule & Routine**

The classroom has a visual schedule posted in the room. The visual schedule supports children by providing a reminder of upcoming activities. Teachers will refer to the schedule often to support children's need for predictability of a routine and schedule. Teachers will also let children know when there is a change in the schedule.

We all need tools to help us get things done – even children! Parents have you ever thought about making a daily or weekly schedule for your child at home? You could do a schedule based on your child's bedtime routine.

### **Below is a sample schedule of our preschool day:**

#### **Morning**

9:00	Arrival and sign in
9:05	Circle Time
9:10	Transition Song or Game for handwashing
9:15	Breakfast
9:50	Free Play (Choice Time)
10:50	Clean Up
10:55	Story Circle / Transition activity to line up
11:10	Outdoor Play / Gross Motor
12:10	Transition activity for handwashing

#### **Afternoon**

12:15	Lunch
12:45	Books / Brush Teeth / Bathroom
1:00	Quiet Time
2:15	Wake Up / Table Play
2:45	Clean Up
2:50	Music and Movement / Transition activity for handwashing
3:00	Good Bye

**I feel more secure when you let me know what's next!**





## Attendance

Build the Habit of Good Attendance! Preschool is the ideal time to introduce children to the importance of consistent on-time attendance. Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool and beyond. Attendance in school and participation in class are an integral part of academic achievement and the teaching/learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. (Onslow County Schools Attendance Policy)

1. All children should arrive to their classroom on time each day.
2. When your child is absent, parents/caregivers call the classroom to let the staff know why your child is absent and how long he/she is expected to be out.
3. If we do not receive a call from you about your child's absence we will call you within one hour of when they are expected to be at school or make a home visit to follow-up.
4. Multiple absences without reason and documentation may result in the development of an attendance plan and may also jeopardize your child's participation in the preschool program
5. Your Family Specialist will review your child's attendance. If your child's attendance is nearing chronic absenteeism, we will work with you to develop your *Child's Attendance Success Plan*.
6. Cumulative Absences should be documented in the following manner.
  - Child is sick for 3 or more consecutive days - a written note of explanation for the absence signed by a parent/ guardian or doctor must be given to the teacher upon return
  - Admittance to the hospital – a doctor's note is required stating how long the child is excused from school.
  - Critical conditions - child is home for long periods of time because of health reasons; documentation is needed from a doctor.
  - Family issues or emergency –Signed and dated written statement from the parent
7. If your child is absent for two consecutive weeks, and we have had no contact with you to develop an attendance plan, we reserve the right to fill your child's spot and place your child on the Wait List.



## **Daily Sign In and Sign Out**

**\*\* ALL visitors/parents must sign in/out at the office upon arrival/departure. You must have your ID with you at all times for identification when checking a child in or out of school.**

Please bring your child to school on time. It is very upsetting to children when they arrive late and realize that they have missed breakfast and other activities. Children are to be picked up promptly at preschool dismissal time. If children repeatedly arrive late or are often picked up late, a conference with the parents may be requested.

All children must be signed in and signed out on the attendance sheet by the caregiver upon arriving and departing the program. The person's initials and the time of drop off and pick up needs to be recorded on the attendance sheet. The accuracy of the attendance sheet is key in providing active supervision of all children. The attendance sheet is also used to record the number of meals and snacks served, and for tracking attendance.

## **Authorized, Unauthorized & Late Pick-up**

Authorization and Consent Forms must be completed by each parent/guardian. Staff will only release your child to those persons listed on this form. Staff will ask for identification from each person until they have become familiar with them. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy. If you want a person to pick-up your child who is not identified on the Authorization and Consent form, you must notify us in advance, by updating the form in person. We will only release your child to authorized persons.

It is essential that parents provide at least two working emergency phone numbers and two emergency contacts with current phone numbers.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed on Authorization and Consent Form. Provisions will be made to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 45 minutes we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an emergency contact, we will call the appropriate local authorities.

## **Child Custody**

In order to safeguard your child, we will need copies of any court custody agreements. Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## Cubbies

Upon enrollment all children are assigned a “cubby.” Cubbies are labeled with your child’s name and picture. Please check your child’s cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.



## Children’s Personal Belongings

Preschool children come to school with a lot of stuff, especially when the weather turns cold! Please clearly label all items and clothing brought to school to prevent items from being lost or misplaced. The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

What to Bring: At least one change of clothes, which include underwear, socks, shoes and a child size blanket to leave at school. Please make sure the extra change of clothing is appropriate for the weather.

During the late fall, winter and early spring, please send your child with a coat, hat and gloves. If your child is in need of any of the items listed, please see your family specialist, for information regarding resources.

Your child’s extra set of clothing can be left at school in your child’s cubby. We ask that you do not send the extra clothing in a plastic bag, as this is a choking hazard. If you need a paper bag to store extra clothing in please see your child’s teacher for one.

Playing at preschool can be dirty and messy, please send your child in clothes that can get dirty as a result of outdoor play, painting, sand play, etc.

Flip-flops and sandals are not appropriate for center play and outdoor play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. We recommend all children wear closed toe shoes for ensuring their safety.

Remember we go outside every day weather permitting!



“Look deep into nature and then you will  
Understand everything better.”  
Albert Einstein

## Program and Facility Access Information

### Open Door Policy

Family Engagement is the cornerstone of a preschool program. Parents/guardians are welcomed to visit the program at any time during our program hours.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of children, keycard entry is required at all times.

Teachers will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during drop off and pick up. If a discussion requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for a time to call or meet with the teacher. If immediate assistance is needed, the teacher will contact the family specialist to speak with you.



### Grievance / Complaint Procedure

The grievance procedure is a problem-solving mechanism in which every attempt is made to resolve issues at the lowest level of authority, with the least possible amount of program disturbance.

A grievance is a written complaint alleging that Program Policies and Procedures (if applicable), and/or North Carolina Child Care Licensing Regulations were:

- a) Not followed; or
- b) Administered in a discriminatory (unequal) fashion; or
- c) Were administered in an arbitrary and capricious (unfair) fashion.

To resolve parent grievances concerning staff, the following steps are followed:

1. The parent should immediately contact the staff person that the disagreement or complaint is with and attempt to resolve the issue.
2. If the issues are not resolved, the parent and the staff person should contact the site based School Administrator. At this time, the grievance should be documented in writing, dated and signed by the parent.
3. The site based School Administrator will discuss the issue with the parent and the staff person.
4. If the issue is not resolved, the site based School Administrator shall refer the issue to the Preschool Program Director or Assistant Director.
5. If the issue is still in question, the Preschool Program Director shall refer the issue to the Executive Director.

6. If no solution is reached and the student is Head Start, the Executive Director should bring the matter before the Policy Council.
7. If the Policy Council is unable to resolve the matter, or the child is a Title I or NCPK student, the issue shall be referred to the Onslow County Schools' Deputy Superintendent.

Questions, concerns, and complaints regarding **program enrollment decisions** shall be addressed to the Site based School Administrator.

1. If issues are not resolved during initial discussions, the grievance must be prepared in writing and presented to the Head Start director, who shall have five working days to hold a meeting with the person(s) bringing the complaint to resolve the issue.
2. If a resolution is not achieved, the guidelines set forth above in the Parent Grievance Procedures shall be followed.

For parent concerns regarding **classroom procedures**, the process for discussion is the same as listed above, except the Family Specialist assigned to the class should be advised of the problem and offer suggestions in collaboration with the Education Specialist for resolution before the site based School Administrator is contacted.

**If an impasse is reached between Onslow County Schools and Onslow County Schools Head Start Policy Council, both parties will enter into binding mediation or arbitration to resolve the impasse**

Parent and Community Complaint forms are available at each site on the parent board, with stamped and addressed envelopes.

All community complaints will be forwarded to the RCP / Head Start Director and addressed accordingly.

## **Parent and Adult Personal Behavior**

### **Standards of Conduct**

All staff, consultants, and volunteers must abide by the following program standards of conduct:

- a. They will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- b. They will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families or staff members.
- c. No child will be left unsupervised while under their care.
- d. No child will be left alone with only one staff member. Classroom ratios will be maintained at all times.
- e. They will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, they will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

**These standards should be followed at all times when providing services to the preschool children and families.**

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. One of our goals is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop.

Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of the Onslow County Schools Preschool Program but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters our preschool centers and classrooms.

We will not tolerate hostile and aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior, limit or restrict access to the facility, may be reported to law enforcement and to remove your child from our care.

Onslow County Schools Preschool Program has a “No Weapons” Policy. No weapons including firearms, hunting knives, archery equipment or weapon accessories such as ammunition are allowed on property.

### **Social Networking: Parents and Staff**

Many people use social networks for personal communication. It is not unusual to have Facebook, Twitter or other online accounts. A policy of preschool program, however, discourages our employees from having parents/guardians of enrolled children as online “friends” because of the many boundary issues it presents. We ask that you respect our policy and not solicit our staff to become online “friends.” However, we encourage our parents and families to join us on the Onslow County Early Childhood Facebook page.

### **Cell Phone Usage**

The times you spend dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.



### **Prohibited Substances**

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on center’s premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited. Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of a substance is required to leave the premises immediately.

### **Smoking**

The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center’s premises (cigarettes, E-cigarettes, chew).

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to young children’s developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment are non-smoking areas at all times.

# Parent, Family and Caregiver Engagement



Parents/guardians are the foundation of early learning. Parent and Family engagement in preschool is about building relationships. This happens in the home, early childhood program, school and community. It is a shared responsibility with all those who support the child's learning. In Onslow County Preschool programs, staff and parents build responsive and respectful relationships that support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships, and ongoing learning and development for parents and children. When parents/guardians work together, children thrive!

## Family Involvement Opportunities

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program is committed to working with families. We encourage the participation of our parents and community members. We welcome those who have any amount of time or talent to share with us. If you know of someone who would like to donate time, service, or materials, please contact your teacher. Volunteers are needed to do the following things:

1. Planting and gardening with the children
2. Sewing projects, repair of dress up clothing, doll clothing, etc.
3. Building projects requiring carpentry skills
4. Arranging books, maintaining reading logs
5. Reading to children on an individual or small group basis
6. Sharing a musical instrument, job skill or hobby with the children
7. Joining the class on field trips
8. Coordinating activities program
9. Assisting in any area of interest
10. Training workshops
11. Visiting/Volunteering in classrooms
12. Parent committee meetings, teacher planned educational activities, and Celebration of Learning Events.
13. Parents are welcomed to visit classrooms of their child at any time. Visiting other classrooms is not appropriate.

Families of preschool children are encouraged to participate in all preschool activities. The Preschool Director and Family Specialists ask parents to participate by:

1. Serving on the Parent Committees at the school
2. Serving on the Policy Council (Head Start Parents)
3. Becoming part of the school based Strategic Planning team
4. Assisting in the promotion of the Preschool Program

## **Parent Committee Meetings, Activities and Workshops**

Parent Committees provide every parent of an enrolled child with the opportunity to assist in the development of parent activities, field trips, classroom activities, and menu planning. Attending your Parent Committee meetings gives you a voice in our preschool program. Parent Committee meetings and Parent Engagement activities are scheduled throughout the program year.

Families will complete a survey to help determine the best days and times for the meetings. All current parents are Committee members and are encouraged to participate. If you are not able to attend the Parent Committee meetings but have ideas to share, let your Family Specialist know. Parent workshops and trainings will also be scheduled for each site throughout the program year. A schedule of the trainings and Parent Committee Meetings will be sent home with your child.

### **Parent Committee Activities:**

1. Assist classroom staff in the development and operation of the Preschool Program by discussing and reviewing lesson plans, assisting in developing menu recommendations and nutrition activities and volunteering in the classroom.
2. Work with teachers and staff in planning activities
3. Plan activities and programs for preschool parents in the classroom
4. Listen and resolve complaints from parents and the community concerning the Preschool Program using the grievance procedure established by the Policy Council
5. Promote volunteer services from parents and community sources
6. Make recommendations to the Policy Council
7. Communicate with current preschool parents and encourage them to participate in the Preschool Program
8. Assist in conducting a self-assessment of the classroom's operation

### **Head Start Policy Council**

The HS Policy Council is comprised of parents of currently enrolled Head Start students and community representatives from area agencies. Some former Head Start parents may be selected to serve on the Policy Council. Policy Council members are elected from the individual parent committees and must be a parent of a Head Start student.

- HS Policy Council representatives are limited to three one-year terms. Parents must be elected. No members may serve more than three years.
- Fifty one percent (51%) of the Policy Council members must be parents of currently enrolled Head Start children.
- No staff or members or their immediate families will serve on the Policy Council.

### **Title I Parent Advisory Council**

The Title I Parent Advisory Council is a district level forum that seeks parent input regarding the Title I program. Parents of students funded by the Title I program are encouraged to become a part of the Strategic Planning Committee at their school and participate in the Preschool Parent Committee



meetings at their child's school. School administrators can provide information about the dates, times and locations of the Strategic Planning Committee meetings.

## **Parent Volunteers**

We believe that parent participation is the foundation of a child's success in preschool and we encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's preschool experience. Parents can volunteer in the classroom, chaperone a field trip, help with school projects at home, and attend Parent Committee meetings, and much more. Please let your child's Teacher or Family Support Specialist know if you would like to volunteer in the program.



## **Family Services**

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program works in partnership with parents, families and the community. We offer parents many opportunities and support for growth so they can identify their own solutions, strengths, interests, and needs. The building of respectful and trusting relationships allows parents and staff to share and learn from each other.

Positive goal-oriented relationships with families lead to positive parent-child relationships, a key predictor of success in early learning and healthy development.

Following placement and enrollment in the preschool program, a Family Service Worker will be assigned as your child's case manager. Your Family Service Worker will work in partnership with you to complete a *Family Needs Assessment* which will be utilized to develop goals that you have identified for yourself, your child, and your family. The Family Service Worker and your child's Teacher will work as a team to assist you throughout the year through home visits, parent teacher conferences, and day-to-day contact.

### **Roles of the Family Service Team:**

- ❖ Organize and oversee health, dental and nutrition services for children
- ❖ Coordinate mental health services for children and families
- ❖ Establish and maintain family records
- ❖ Monitor student attendance
- ❖ Make home visits
- ❖ Share information about available community services
- ❖ Recruit volunteers

- ❖ Conduct Parent Orientation
- ❖ Oversee Parent Committees
- ❖ Coordinate Male Involvement Activities
- ❖ Recruit families for the Head Start and other Preschool Programs
- ❖ Process Preschool Applications

## **Family Conferencing**

Family Conferencing gives your child’s Teacher and Family Specialist the opportunity to discuss child and family strengths, goals, community connections, referrals, and or concerns. Family conferencing will take place a minimum of two times per year. All information is confidential.

Educating children is a team effort! It takes parents and teachers working together as PARTNERS, and one of the most important parts of this partnership is the parent/teacher conference. Conferences give you an opportunity to see how things are going at your child’s school and catch any problems before they get too big to handle. Here are some suggestions for making the most of your conferences and becoming part of the team.

### BE PREPARED

Each teacher will plan to have **two home visits** and **two conferences** with families during the program year. It is important that you “be prepared” for your home visit and/or conference. Think about what you would like to accomplish in the time you have. During your conference or home visit your child’s teacher will talk about OCS Preschool School Readiness Goals and how the goals align with your child’s:

- ✓ Academic performance—how your child is growing intellectually
- ✓ Social development—how your child’s behavior/social skills impact the classroom
- ✓ Emotional development—how your child deals with problems
- ✓ Physical development—how your child’s physical abilities compare to a “typical” child his/her age

With these things in mind, make a list of what you would like to ask or talk about. If you can, share the list with your child’s teacher before the conference, so she will be prepared to answer your questions. If you know of problems, arrive with ideas to help solve them. If your child’s teacher has been especially helpful, make a note to thank her.

### AT THE CONFERENCE

Say up front what you want to discuss and what you hope to accomplish. Be confident. Don’t be afraid to ask questions or express your opinion. As you discuss your child, volunteer your suggestions. If there is a complaint about your child’s behavior, don’t lose your cool. Listen to what the teacher says and ask for specific examples. Ask her what she has done to change the behavior and offer suggestions.

### CLOSING THE CONFERENCE

Before ending any conference or home visit, be sure you understand what was discussed. Keep asking until you are clear about any concerns you may have. Conferences and home visits are good opportunities for communication, but not the only way to be involved in your child’s learning. Promise

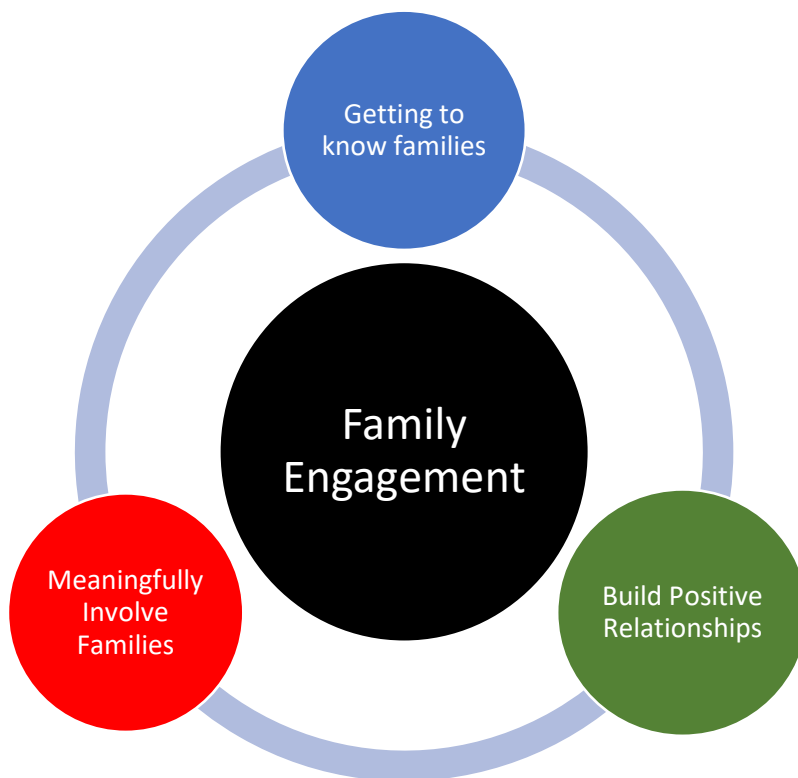
yourself to visit the school and be involved in the classroom. Remember a winning team takes equal effort from all its members!

### MAINTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

The teaching team in your child's classroom has tremendous influence on your child's attitude toward school and is the team that spends one-on-one time with your child on a daily basis. It is extremely important for parents and teaching staff to work together to provide the best possible school experience for each child.

Preschool staff welcomes the involvement of families and want to hear your ideas. Practice positive, constructive communication. Praise the teaching staff for good things that are happening and keep lines of communication open by writing notes, making classroom visits, and answering/returning telephone calls from staff.

Make a list of things you want to discuss with the teacher. If you have a problem, share the specific things that bother you as they relate to your child. Remember the teaching staff may only discuss YOUR child with you. When you speak to a member of the teaching team, approach them in a positive non-threatening way. Keep the focus on your child, and not on what you may think are the teacher's shortcomings. Offer assistance in the classroom when possible. Offer your time and talents. By focusing on the positive and discussing creative solutions to problems that may arise, you and your child will be off to a positive start on his or her school career!



## Child Development Services



### Philosophy & Curriculum

Children learn best by doing and play. Through active involvement within their environment, children learn to make sense of their world. They do this through interacting with materials and other people. For young children the environment is particularly important. Thoughtful arrangement for the indoor and outdoor environments will support the goals we set for children.

As part of our curriculum we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in the classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child.

Our classrooms have clearly defined; well-equipped interest centers that are arranged to promote independence, foster decision-making, and encourage involvement.

Onslow County Preschool Program utilizes The Creative Curriculum for Preschool as our curriculum, and Teaching Strategies GOLD as the Child Outcomes Assessment System.

All of our teaching staff receives training in Creative Curriculum and Observing and assessing children, utilizing Teaching Strategies Gold online assessment system.

We strive to prepare all children to be ready for school and experience success as lifelong learners. School Readiness goals are developed annually by review of child outcomes and parent and staff input.

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program is committed to ensuring that each child enrolled in the program has experiences that will enrich and prepare him/her for a successful school career. Each classroom is designed to meet the developmental needs of the children. The classroom is organized to help your child explore and learn about his/her world. The schedule of the day will be 5 days a week

for at least 6 ½ hours per day. No before or after school care is provided on site. Some students enrolled as Exceptional Children may attend a shorter week based upon their IEP.

Children learn best through a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences. The teacher and assistant facilitate learning experiences by offering all children in our blended program opportunities to explore, discover, compare, classify, and problem solve. Each classroom has an outstanding collection of materials for the implementation of such learning experiences. Children need to be active, so they engage in outdoor play almost every day. They should always be dressed comfortably and have coats, hats, and gloves available during cold weather.

Children have access daily to the following materials:

1. Sand/water
2. Blocks/building materials
3. Books/tapes/records
4. Art/painting/cutting/gluing
5. Housekeeping/dramatic play
6. Manipulative materials/puzzles/games
7. Gross motor/fine motor (riding toys, writing, etc.)
8. Writing/literacy materials
9. Music/movement
10. Other enrichment activities may include technology, cooking, parent classroom activities, field trips, assemblies, and family – style dining in classrooms.

Responsibilities of Education Specialists:

- ✓ Support teachers in implementing the curriculum, lesson plans, room setup, and daily schedule
- ✓ Work with family specialists to support families
- ✓ Work with preschool program staff to ensure implementation of EC services
- ✓ Provide classroom support



## School Readiness Goals

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program School Readiness Goals were developed to align with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*, North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development and Teaching Strategies GOLD: Objectives for Development and Learning: Birth through Kindergarten.

1. Approaches to Learning refers to observable behaviors that indicate ways children become engaged in social interactions and learning experiences. **In the Onslow County Schools (OCS) Head Start program, children will:**
  - a. increase their ability to cooperate within the classroom.

- b. improve their ability to attend and persist at meaningful tasks.
  - c. further develop their sense of creativity, flexibility and inventiveness.
- 2. Language and Literacy refers to all aspects related to listening, speaking, reading and writing. **In the OCS Head Start classes children will:**
  - a. understand increasingly complex sentences.
  - b. use increasingly complex language to express themselves.
  - c. demonstrate progress in their ability to write.
  - d. increase their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
  - e. improve skills in alphabetic knowledge, book knowledge and print awareness.
  - f. use and demonstrate increased understanding of English language for dual language learners
- 3. Cognition and General Knowledge includes the areas of math, science, social studies and logic and reasoning. In all of these domains, children use curiosity to gain, organize, problem solve and apply knowledge. **In OCS Head Start classes children will:**
  - a. demonstrate improved understanding of counting, number symbols, number operations, spatial relationships, shapes, measurement and patterns.
  - b. increase their ability to use scientific skills of observation, manipulation, prediction, problem solving, organizing, comparing, classifying and representation.
  - c. demonstrate increased understanding of the people and world around them, knowledge of self, the responsibility of the physical environment and changes that take place over time.
- 4. Health and Physical development encompass opportunities for children to begin developing and refining motor skills, self-care, physical health and growth, and safety awareness. **In OCS Head Start classes children will:**
  - a. increase independence of caring for themselves by using basic hygiene skills of washing hands, brushing teeth, completing toileting routines, and dressing
  - b. demonstrate an increased awareness of the importance of being safe and improved ability to follow safety rules.
  - c. develop increasingly refined fine motor skills and gross motor skills
  - d. increase their knowledge of nutrition and making healthy choices
- 5. Young children's social-emotional development involves learning how to understand their own and others' feelings, regulate and express their emotions appropriately, build relationships with others and interact in groups. **In OCS Head Start classes children will:**
  - a. develop an increased sense of self and demonstrate increasing competence in regulating, recognizing and expressing emotions verbally and nonverbally.
  - b. form and sustain increasingly positive relationships with peers and adults.
  - c. increase their social competence to work cooperatively and constructively with peers and adults.
- 6. Family and community engagement promote positive outcomes in all areas of child development. **In OCS Head Start classes children will:**
  - a. be more engaged and perform academically at higher levels and exhibit social and emotional skills at higher levels when stronger relationships exist between school, home, and the community.
  - b. benefit from the availability of mental health, medical and dental resources as evidenced by the PIR.

## Child Developmental Screenings

Prior to your child starting preschool you were asked to sign permission to allow your child to complete these screenings. A screening is a brief procedure to identify children who may be at risk and may require further evaluation. A screening does not determine a diagnosis; but it may suggest the need for further evaluation.

Children who require further evaluation will be referred to the proper agency. The family's permission will be given, and a release form signed before any referrals are made. Onslow County Preschool staff will assist families through the referral process.

**EDUCATIONAL SCREENING:** The Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) is the educational screening that looks for concerns in the areas of communication, motor skills, problem solving and self-help skills. The social development is also measured based on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Social-Emotional (ASQ: SE-2) parent questionnaire. *How will I be notified?* Results will be shared during your home visit and/or parent conference.

**SPEECH SCREENING:** The ASQ-3 is the educational screening that includes questions regarding communication. Your responses to those questions along with teacher input will determine if your child needs an informal speech observation from a Speech Therapist. *How will I be notified?* If it is determined that your child needs further evaluation you will be contacted.

**HEARING SCREENING:** The screening will test your child's ability to hear "beeps" using headphones. If your child fails any part of the screening, a rescreen and/or referral will be made. *How will I be notified?* You will receive a notification of the results only if your child needs further assistance after the rescreen.

**VISION SCREENING:** The screening is done with a PlusOptix machine and measures spherical equivalent and cylinder (far vision, near vision), it also measures axis (alignment of the eyes) and Asymmetry (signs of strabismus or other alignment problems). If we are unable to get a reading with the PlusOptix, we will screen your child using a different method. *How will I be notified?* If your child does not pass the testing, you will receive a referral to an eye doctor. Although the screening is thorough, it does not replace an evaluation by an eye doctor.

**BLOOD PRESSURE:** The screening will measure your child's blood pressure. This screening may be done when your child's health care provider is unable to obtain. *How will I be notified?* If your child's blood pressure reading is below or higher than the normal range you will receive a referral to a health care provider.

**GROWTH ASSESSMENT:** The screening will measure your child's height and weight to determine your child's BMI (Body Mass Index). This screening may be done when your child's health care provider is unable to obtain. Healthy weight is defined as a BMI at or above the 5<sup>th</sup> percentile and less than the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile. *How will I be notified?* You will receive a notification of the results only if your child's BMI is under the 5<sup>th</sup> or at or above the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile. BMI is not perfect and should be considered a screening tool and not a definitive measure.

**DENTAL SCREENING:** State public health dental hygienists may visit the classrooms and provide dental screenings. This screening is only to find obvious dental problems and is meant to identify children who need dental care. No X-rays are taken, and this screening does not replace a thorough dental examination by a dentist. *How will I be notified?* If a screening is completed the results are sent home to parent/guardian.

**MENTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING:** A classroom observation will be conducted by a mental health professional. An individual observation of a child (with parental permission) may be conducted to help determine the nature of the child's difficulties and help staff and parents develop ways to help the child be successful in the classroom and at home. Referrals may be made to community resources by the Mental Health Coordinator.

## **Disabilities**

The Onslow County Schools Preschool program serves children with disabilities. A child must be evaluated and meet the North Carolina Policies and Procedures for Exceptional Children to qualify as a child with special needs.

Services may include speech and language therapy, occupational therapy (fine motor) or more specialized educational services as determined by the Individual Educational Program (IEP).

## **Cultural Diversity**

Every individual is rooted in their own unique culture. Culture has an influence on the beliefs and behaviors of everyone, is passed from generation to generation and is closely involved in how children learn. Our materials, equipment, and activities reflect the diversity of children and families in the program and community.



## **Celebrations**

We encourage an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families and community. Teaching staff welcome parent participation in celebrating special occasions in the classroom. Please discuss ideas with the teaching staff before plans are made.

Our guidelines for celebrations and holidays are:

- ✓ We believe that decisions about celebrations are best made together by parents, children and teachers.
- ✓ Activities must be age appropriate and meaningful to children.
- ✓ OCS Board Policy states in part that any foods brought into the classroom for sharing must be commercially prepared processed and NOT HOMEMADE.
- ✓ Food requested for celebrations must follow program nutritional guidelines.
- ✓ Because of possible latex allergies and choking hazards, childcare licensing prohibits balloons of any type from being brought into the classroom.
- ✓ Children and families can choose not to participate in parent-initiated celebrations and holiday activities held in the classroom.



- ✓ If materials or supplies are needed for a parent-initiated activity this should be discussed with the classroom teacher. Program approval will be obtained for purchase of materials.

## **Communal Water Play**

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease. Kiddie pools and water tables are sanitized after each use.

## **Rest Time**

The children play and work hard, so rest time is necessary and a part of the school day. During rest time your child will be asked to lie quietly on his/her mat. You will be asked to send a towel or blanket for your child during rest time. **Please do not send pillows, stuffed animals, or sleeping bags. Your child's cover must be small enough to fit in his/her backpack and cubby.**

## **Clothing**

Parents provide at least one complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, shirts, shorts, etc.) Dress your child for outdoor play. Please have your child wear shoes that do not slip off the foot. **Clothing should be appropriate for the weather. Shoes should be appropriate for outside play. Sandals, flip-flops, and heels are not safe for running and climbing.** Dangling necklaces, bracelets or earrings are dangerous for your child in the classroom or on the playground.

## **Field Trips and Outings**

Field trips are a great way to explore and learn more about the world around us, especially in our own community. Parents will be notified in advance of field trips and permission slips will be sent home with your child for each field trip. Parents are invited to share field trip ideas. All ideas will be considered as to appropriateness, distance, cost, classroom composition, and cultural heritage.

## **Transitions Between Learning Environments**

Your child's transition in preschool should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

1. Transitions from home to center:

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with a Family Specialist and visit a classroom. During this time, you should communicate any anticipated concerns.

2. Transitions between learning programs:

At times children may transition from one preschool site to another. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet to develop a plan to introduce your child into the new program and to review current developmental and learning skills.

3. Transition to Kindergarten:

Transition activities could include but not limited to; Kindergarten Teacher reading a story our classroom, creating a special mural of friends and special times at preschool, parent night “What to Expect in Kindergarten” and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school. Parents/guardians will meet with your child’s teacher to review the Kindergarten Transition packet that will be shared with the elementary school your child will attend.

## Social and Emotional Development of Children Through the Pyramid Model

Research has shown that the skills your child needs to be successful in the future are social and emotional skills! Because this is so important to your child, we are using the Pyramid Model (NCPPM) in our program.

What is the Pyramid Model?

It is a framework for supporting the social and emotional development of our children. The goal of the Pyramid Model is to create an environment where every child feels good about coming to school. This is accomplished by designing classrooms that promote engagement in learning and by building relationships among children, families, and staff. The classroom staff will work together to ensure that all children understand behavior expectations, receiving instruction in social skills, and receive individual support for those who are struggling.



What is gained by using the Pyramid Model?

1. Families
  - Receive information on how to help promote children’s social and emotional skills
  - Team with teachers to help children grow and learn
  - Receive support for preventing and addressing behavior problems
2. Teachers
  - Are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills
  - Strengthen classroom management skills

- Have information and resources to support families
3. Children
- Increase their social and emotional skills
  - Improve in their readiness for kindergarten

Stay tuned for ongoing updates about the Pyramid Model in our program!

## **Supporting Positive Behavior**

Children learn self-control when adults treat them with respect and dignity. Children’s healthy social and emotional development is strongly influenced by the health and well-being of the adults who care for them.

Staff uses the Second Step Curriculum, NCPPM universal practices, Conscious Discipline and resources to help young children learn about their feelings, gain self-control and reduce challenging behavior.

We strive to provide children with a safe environment, which will maximize each child’s social and emotional development.

## **Behavior Guidance Policy**

The Onslow County Schools Preschool program promotes and supports an instructional, proactive approach to behavior guidance that supports the learning and practice of pro-social behavior.

### Social and Emotional Promotion

To promote a program wide culture that supports social and emotional well-being, children’s mental health and family engagement, we adhere to the following:

- All children are treated with dignity and respect.
- The program utilizes an evidence-based framework, The Pyramid Model approach, for promoting social and emotional competence and addressing challenging behaviors.

### Challenging Behavior Definition

Definition of challenging behavior: Any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults.

*Challenging behavior* is severe and persistent; inappropriate crying, violent tantrums, throwing objects, kicking, hitting, spitting, yelling, running, excessive lack of cooperation or noncompliance and a marked failure to respond or interact with others and repetitive or perseverative actions that occur for extended and unreasonable periods of time.

- Challenging behaviors are communicative, they serve the same purpose as other forms of communication, such as speech, nonverbal gestures, and facial expressions.

- Challenging behaviors are maintained by their consequences. A behavior will be maintained if it is followed by a positive reinforcer.
- Challenging behaviors occur in context. They occur at different rates or intensities in different contextual or environmental circumstances.

### Behavior Interventions

When a child repeatedly engages in challenging behavior for a period of time and is unresponsive to targeted supports the classroom has implemented. The Intervention Team will meet to identify immediate strategies and or services to put in place to better support the student.

### Continuation of Severe and Persistent Challenging Behavior

If the child behavior continues to be severe and persistent the team will initiate the following process. The team will meet within one week to determine what additional supports can be put in place.

- The team may conclude that the child would benefit from:
  - a modified day
  - different classroom environment
  - child would go home when the behavior is unsafe, as determined by the intervention plan until a meeting with child's family occurs
  - another early care and education option/program, team will develop a seamless transition plan and will use the plan to implement a smooth transition.

### Suspension and Expulsion of Children

The program severely limits the use of suspension due to a child's behavior.

- Such suspensions are only temporary in nature.
- A temporary suspension is used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modification.
- The program cannot expel a child from Head Start because of a child's behavior.

### **Discipline Policy**

The preschool program **does not allow** use of any form of corporal punishment to discipline students. Teachers utilize methods from the *Creative Curriculum*, *Conscious Discipline*, *NC Preschool Pyramid Model* strategies and also incorporate the *Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum* into their weekly lesson planning. Parents are also asked to carefully read and then sign the Preschool Discipline Policy that addresses unacceptable behavior. Parents are a vital part of the behavior management of each preschool classroom and teachers keep them updated of any concerns they may have about their child's behavior.

# Children's Mental Health and Well Being

## Mental Health Matters

Mental health means that young children are growing in their ability to:

- Understand and share feelings
- Have close and positive relationships
- Explore and learn



Having positive mental health is important! It makes it easier for children to:

- Have close relationships with family and friends
- Do well in school
- Learn new things
- Solve tough problems
- Develop patience (or not give up)
- Focus on a task
- Ask for help

When young children are worried, sad or angry, it can be hard to:

- Make friends
- Follow directions
- Express feelings or wishes
- Follow simple directions
- Pay attention in class
- Solve problems in positive ways
- Do well in school

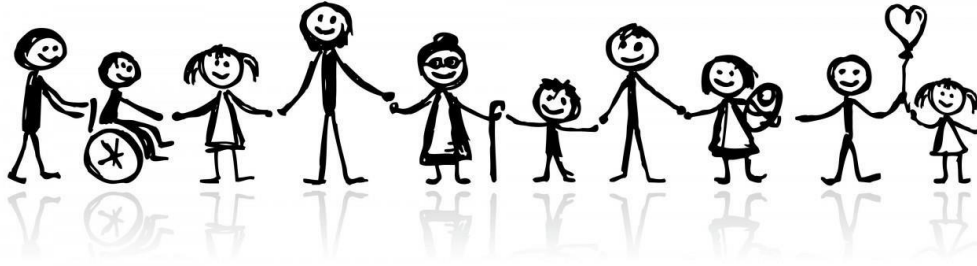
In the Onslow County Schools Preschool program, social and emotional wellbeing is the foundation for children to be ready for school and beyond. Our primary focus is building social and emotional skills in each child. At times children may need additional support in this area of development to help them build positive mental health.

As part of our program, a Mental Health Coordinator may conduct classroom observations as needed. The observations focus on the environment, teacher/child relationships, and the teaching of social and emotional skills. Individual child observations are also available at the request of the parent/guardian or teacher. Individual child observations need to have an additional mental health release form completed.

### Responsibilities of Mental Health Coordinator:

- ✓ Addresses areas of mental health concerns from staff or families; may assist families in securing the appropriate mental health services from an outside source
- ✓ Schedules mental health classroom observations and individual child observations as recommended by teachers with parental permission

- ✓ Assists teacher/parents in the development of behavior plans for identified students in the classroom setting and in the home upon parent request.



## **Mental Health Services Partnership**

Sometimes families need extra support during different stages of life or during hard times. Mental health matters for kids too! It is just another part of our health! Good mental health makes it easier for kids to have close relationships with others, behave well, do well in school, learn new things and solve tough problems. Children with good emotional health can also focus better and develop patience. If they are worried, sad or angry all the time, it is hard to learn these things.

To help your family, the Onslow County Schools Preschool Program collaborates with community partners to ensure families are able to access mental health resources/services as needed. These services allow for more attention to your child's social, emotional and behavioral needs at your request.

- ❖ Setting goals with your child and family
- ❖ Direct skills teaching with child and family
- ❖ Family, group and individual (child) counseling
- ❖ Help with strengthening parenting skills, including help with behavior
- ❖ Help for families adjusting to or solving problems related to divorce, loss, etc.
- ❖ Support in the classroom for a child with challenging behavior
- ❖ Service coordination and referral to additional supports for child and family
- ❖ Consultation to teachers about the child's concerns

For more information, talk to your child's teacher or the Family Service Worker.

## Health, Nutrition and Safety Services



### **Prescribed Medication Administration**

Staff may administer a prescribed medication to a child when the parent or guardian is unable to administer the medication at home or outside of school hours and only when it is authorized by the child's health care provider. Before any medications can be given to a child, the Medication Administration Form must be completed by the child's physician and signed by the parent or guardian. The medications must be in the original container prescribed to the child. Over the counter non-prescription medications are not permitted unless prescribed by a physician and the signed request is brought in with the medication. **If an Over-the-counter non-prescription medication is prescribed by a physician such as Tylenol and Ibuprofen, etc. the medication must be in a new and sealed container. No opened over-the-counter medications will be permitted.**

**MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE SCHOOL BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN OR DESIGNATED ADULT. DO NOT SEND MEDICATION IN YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK OR GIVE TO BUS DRIVER.**

The **Medication Administration form** (if your child needs medication during the school day) can be downloaded from the Onslow County Schools website.

Go to: [www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us) then click on Families, then click on Parents/Students, then click on Health Services.

### Administration of Medication

1. The school nurse or classroom teaching staff may administer medication that is prescribed by a physician.
2. "Permission to Administer Medication" form must be completed and signed by parent and physician.
3. Parents may be requested to administer medication to their child at school.
4. Medications requiring refrigeration will be stored in a locked container in the classroom refrigerator or in the nurse's office. On field trips, such medication is in a locked ice chest or cooler. If medication does not require refrigeration, it is kept in a locked container in the classroom.

### Exclusions

Onslow County Schools Preschool Program follows the North Carolina State Child Care Licensing Regulations. Per Caring for our Children, the following will be taken into consideration when determining a temporary exclusion:

- Does the condition prevent the child from participating comfortably in activities?

- Does the condition result in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children?
- Does the condition pose a risk of spreading a harmful illness to others?

The Onslow County Schools Preschool program reserves the right to require a note from the child's physician in order for the excluded child to return to school.

**Any time your child is unable to participate fully in school activities, he or she should remain at home in a familiar and comfortable environment.**

**We suggest the following:**

- Please keep your child home if he/she needs a special diet (i.e. no food, just liquids)
- Please keep your child home if he/she is not able to go on with educational routine (i.e. medicine that causes drowsiness or inability to participate in outside activities).
- Often children may ask to come to school even though they are ill; please keep them at home if they are sick.
- If your child becomes ill while at school and you are called, please cooperate by picking him/her up promptly.
- Be sure that your phone number and your emergency contact are kept up-to

**Accidents and Illnesses**

The teacher and nurse have the responsibility for determining the seriousness of illness at school. The child will be observed in the classroom to decide what procedures to follow with the consent of the parent. Preschool staff will follow all Onslow County Schools guidelines for illness. The Onslow County Schools Policies and Procedures for short- and long-term communicable diseases are located in the appendix section of this handbook.

When a child in a classroom is found to have a communicable disease, parents will be notified, and the child will be sent home. All families in the classroom will receive a notice if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease. No exceptions are made to this policy.

If your child has an accident or is injured during the school day, the parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible, and an 'Accident and Injury Report' will be sent home with the child at the end of the day.

Please remember that when children are recovering from an illness, they need lots of rest. Children who come back to school too soon after an illness do not have the stamina to keep up with the normal pace of the preschool classroom. They jeopardize their health and possibly spread the illness to others. If you think your child is beginning to get sick or is sick, please keep them home.

If your child is ill for 3 or more consecutive days - a written note of explanation for the absence signed by a parent /guardian or doctor must be presented to the teacher on the day returning after an absence.



## **Immunizations and Health Assessments**

Your child's immunization status will be reviewed during the recruitment and registration process to ensure that your child's vaccinations are in compliance with North Carolina State Laws.

### Requirement for Immunization Records - NC General Statute 110-91 (1)

- Each child must have a record of immunization on file at the center within 30 days of enrollment.
- A current immunization record must be on file for each child.
- Each time a child receives an immunization, the record must be updated.

### Requirement for Child's Health Assessment - NC General Statute 110-91 (1)

- Each child shall have a health assessment before being admitted or within 30 days following admission to preschool.
- The assessment must be completed and signed by one of the following:
  - a licensed physician
  - the physician's authorized agent who is currently approved by the North Carolina Medical Board, or comparable certifying board in any state contiguous to North Carolina
  - a certified nurse practitioner
  - a public health nurse meeting the Department's Standards for Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Program.

## **Well-Child Exams: Medical and Dental**

All children entering Head Start will receive dental evaluations with parent permission as required by the Head Start regulations. If future evaluation is necessary referrals will be made to your family dentist. If you do not have a family dentist, please contact our office and the family specialist will assist you in finding services for your child. Family specialists will provide other necessary information to Head Start parents.

Dental Home: We strongly encourage you to establish a dental home and complete a dental exam. Other preschool children may receive a dental evaluation during the school year. Information will be sent home about this evaluation.

Medical Home: All children must have a **current** health assessment (including immunizations and encourage lead screening results) on file **NO LATER than 30 calendar days from the child's entry into the program.**

Permission to Screen: Prior to your child starting school you were asked to sign permission to allow your child to complete the necessary screenings.

This permission form covers the following screenings:

- Educational Screening
- Speech

- Hearing Screening
- Vision
- Growth Assessment (measuring height/weight/BMI)
- Dental screenings and/or dental exams (with additional permission)
- Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being

## **Health and Safety**

### Nurturance

Touch and nurturance are important in a young child's development. Children need to feel loved, accepted, and supported through the sensations of touch by nurturing adults and peers. However, physical touch should be respectful of a child's body cues and only occur with his/her permission. Except for safety and cleansing, children will always have the right to refuse touch. Children are also taught to respect adults' and other children's touch preferences. Touches that will be common in the program include hugging, rocking, back rubbing, pats on the back, holding on laps, holding or carrying an injured child, and using physical proximity techniques to protect upset children from themselves and others.

### Hand washing

- Children wash their hands upon arrival.
- Children are expected to wash hands after toileting.
- Children are encouraged to wash hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Children will wash hands before and after eating.
- Children will wash hands after outside play.
- Children will wash hands before and after sand and water play.
- All classroom visitors must wash their hands upon entering the classroom.



### Toileting

When accidents occur, staff will utilize proper sanitation and hygiene methods. Children are expected to practice good toileting habits. Be sure that your child has an extra change of clothing in case of an accident at school.

### Tooth Brushing

All children in the preschool program brush their teeth daily. Your child will be using toothpaste when brushing teeth. Toothbrushes will be replaced as necessary

### Onslow County Preschool Tooth Brushing Procedures

1. Toothbrushes are provided for each child. Sharing toothbrushes is not permitted, and children are taught not to allow others to use their toothbrushes.
2. Toothpaste is provided for children.
3. Staff places a dab of toothpaste on individual paper towel squares for each child. Each child selects his/her toothbrush from toothbrush holder and places toothpaste on brush, discarding paper towel.
4. Staff supervises children as they brush teeth.

5. Child brushes teeth and rinses toothbrush in cold water, blotting excess water with paper towel, which is then discarded.
6. Child returns toothbrush to its proper slot.
7. Staff ensures that toothbrushes and toothbrush holder are kept clean.
8. Toothbrushes are to be labeled with each child's name or another identifying symbol.
9. The toothbrush slot should also be labeled so the toothbrush is returned to the same slot following each use.

## Meals

Meals in the preschool classroom are a learning experience for children. Each day children will receive a USDA approved breakfast and lunch. Cost of breakfast and lunch is dependent upon family income.

If your child has special food requirements, please notify your teacher or your family specialist.

**If your child has any type of food allergy or food restrictions that has been documented by a doctor, a diet order form must be completed by the doctor in order for a special diet to be put into place. A copy of the documentation must be given to the teacher.**

All meals are served family-style in the classroom. The teachers, the children and all family members and guests sit down and enjoy meals together. You are welcome to join your child at mealtime. Please let the child's teacher know as early in the day as possible.

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program does not allow food from home to be brought into the classroom environment.

For more information please visit the OCS Food & Nutrition Services website at:  
<http://www.schoolnutritionandfitness.com/index.php?sid=1501179229405>



## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event that a preschool site determines that there is an emergency situation, each site/classroom will follow the steps outlined in the *Emergency Procedure Manual* which are located in each classroom. The definition of an ‘emergency’ is as follows; a serious, unexpected situation requiring immediate action.

Each classroom participates in monthly drills. Children practice evacuating the building in event that there an emergency, such as:

- a fire;
- other event which requires exiting the building;
- an even that requires ‘shelter-in-place’ or lockdown drills.

During a ‘shelter in place’ or lock-down drill, children are asked to remain quietly in their classrooms until the drill is over and an all-clear has been announced.

### What parents need to know in the event of an emergency:

- Parents/caregivers will be notified using the Authorization and Consent form filled out during registration. Please ensure that all phone numbers for contacts listed are kept up-to-date. Or will be notified using the Robo call system.
- Parents/caregivers may contact their child’s school/classroom using the numbers provided in the Parent Handbook.
- In the event that it is not safe to remain in the building, each center has a location to evacuate to.

All staff has been trained in the use of the Emergency Procedure manual classroom staff and others are certified in Adult/Pediatric First Aid and CPR, by a certified Red Cross Instructor.

If you would like to review the *Emergency Procedure Manual*, please ask your classroom teacher.

## **Pest Management Information**

Dear Parents or Guardians and Staff,

We would like to let you know that Onslow County Schools uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for controlling insects, rodents, and weeds for all school facilities.

The IPM approach currently in use focuses on making the school buildings and grounds an unfavorable place for pests to live and breed. Through maintenance and cleaning, we will reduce or eliminate available food and water sources and hiding places for the pests. We will also routinely monitor the school area to detect pest problems and prevent the pests from becoming established. Some IPM techniques we will employ include monitoring, increased sanitation, sealing entry points, physically removing the pest, and modifying storage practices.

From time to time, it may be necessary to use chemicals to control a pest problem. Chemicals will only be used when necessary and will not be routinely applied. When chemicals must be used, the school system will use the least toxic products when possible. Access to treated areas will be secured against unauthorized access for the period specified on the pesticide label. Notices will be posted at application sites and will remain there until the posted safe re-entry time is met.

For your information, we have a list of pesticides and safety data sheets that may be used in the school during the school year. This list is available online at [www.onslow.k12.nc.us](http://www.onslow.k12.nc.us) under Auxiliary Services/Safety and Security/documents.

You may request prior notification of specific pesticide applications made at the school. Email [wayne.williams@onslow.k12.nc.us](mailto:wayne.williams@onslow.k12.nc.us) with the subject line IPM Parent Notification, to be added to the notification list. The registrants will be notified at least 72 hours before a pesticide is applied.

If a chemical application must be made to control an emergency pest problem, notice will be provided as soon as possible after the application. Exemptions to this notification include cleaners (disinfectants), pesticides formulated as baits or gels, and any EPA exempt pesticide. If you would like to be placed on this registry, please contact Wayne Williams IPM Specialist at 910-455-2211 ext. 20543.

## Transportation

### Hand to Hand Safety Policy for Bus Transportation

The Onslow County Schools Preschool Program offers free transportation on the Onslow County Schools transportation system for eligible preschool students. Children must follow all Onslow County Schools rules as explained by the school bus driver. Bus routes and stops are determined by the preschool transportation staff. Discipline issues that occur while a student is riding a bus will be handled by the school transportation staff and school administration.

Preschoolers riding the Onslow County Schools buses must receive **hand to hand** service. A parent or an officially designated adult (at least 18 years of age) **must** accompany each student to the assigned bus stop and wait with the child until the bus arrives. (Designated adult must be at the bus stop 10-15 minutes before and after scheduled pick-up until child arrives) The child is then transported to the school. Each child is received at the school by a designated school employee. At the end of the school day, preschool children are placed on the school bus by a school employee and returned to the bus stop **where a parent or officially designated adult (at least 18 years of age) with a valid photo ID must receive them.** **If there is no designated adult at the bus stop the child will be returned to the school.** **Children riding regular Onslow County School buses are to be seated at the front of the bus, so they can be seen and heard by the bus driver. As per NC Statute 14-132.2, no parent/guardian or other persons are allowed to board the bus at any time without permission.**

Parents whose children ride on the Onslow County Schools transportation system should **carefully** read and sign the transportation policy used by their school. Any changes in drop off/pick up locations must

be submitted at least **FIVE DAYS** before changes are needed and must be approved by the transportation office. Bus stops are set by the child transportation office to ensure the safest most efficient route for students.

## **Hand to Hand Safety Policy for Adult Drop Off**

Onslow County Schools Preschool students must receive **hand-to-hand** service. A parent or an officially designated adult who will be providing transportation for a child to and from school **must** accompany the child to the preschool classroom and sign the child in for the day. A designated school employee receives each child at the school. At the end of the school day, the parent/designated adult of the preschool child will pick up the child from the classroom in a timely manner (with a valid photo ID).

Parents must **carefully** read and sign the Onslow County Schools Hand-to-Hand Safety Policy

1. The first failure to have a designated adult pick up the child will result in a call to emergency contacts.
2. The second failure will result in a conference with classroom teacher and family specialist.
3. Repeat instances will result in referral to designated authorities for further action.

## **Rules and Safety Procedures for bus riders**

Children riding any Onslow County Schools bus must abide by all bus rules and safety procedures.

1. The first failure to have a designated adult meet the child at the bus stop will result in a call to emergency contacts and written notice of 1<sup>st</sup> incident. The child will be returned to school and if **no** designated adult can be located, designated authorities may be called to intervene.
2. The second failure of an adult to meet a school bus will result in a formal contact (phone call) by School staff and 2<sup>nd</sup> incident report.
3. The third failure of an adult to meet school bus and any incidents thereafter will result in loss of bus privileges up to 3 days per incident.

## **Pedestrian Safety**

Here are some facts you should know:

- Preschool children are quick and often unaware of danger.
- Each year, many children are injured or killed when they suddenly dart into the path of a car.
- Most preschoolers are injured near their home or on their own street.
- Most crashes involving children happen between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Most crashes involving children occur in fair and warm weather.
- Twice as many preschool boys are injured than preschool girls.

This is How You Can Prevent These Tragedies:

- Supervise children at all times.
- Children should not be allowed to cross the street alone.
- Teach them who can help them cross the street safely.

Teach by explaining:

- Explain to your child the safe way you cross a street. Say: “When I cross a street, I always stop at the curb. I look for cars. I look left for any traffic coming and then I look right for traffic coming that way. Then I look left again. When it is clear, I cross the street and keep looking left and right.”

Teach by example. When you cross a street with your child, always:

- Stop at the curb.
- Look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT for traffic in all directions.
- Cross when it is clear.
- Keep looking for cars as you cross.

Encourage your child. As you both safely cross the street together, point out your child’s safety behaviors. Use safe language and specific safety words. Practice what you teach at all times.

## Policy Section

### Onslow County Schools Preschool

### **SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME & ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA POLICY**

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Onslow County Schools Preschool believes that prevention, recognition, response to, and reporting of suspected shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is necessary to keep children safe, to protecting their healthy development, and to educate families. SBS/AHT is a form of physical abuse caused by an infant or small child being violently shaken and/or trauma to the head has occurred. Onslow County Schools Preschool has developed this policy in compliance with North Carolina Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .0608.

This policy applies to children up to five years of age and their families, operators, early educators, substitute providers, and uncompensated provider.

Onslow County Schools will prohibit any staff member from shaking or jerking a child; pushing them into walls, doors, or furniture; and/or tossing a child into the air or into a chair, wheelchair, etc. All children will be observed for any sign of head trauma caused by SBS/AHT including:

- Irritability
- High pitched crying
- Difficulty staying awake/lethargy
- Loss of consciousness
- Difficulty breathing
- Inability to lift the head
- Seizures
- Lack of appetite
- Vomiting
- Poor feeding/sucking
- No smiling or vocalization
- Inability of the eyes to track
- Decreased muscle tone
- Bruises (which may be found on the upper arms, rib cote or head)

If SBS/AHT is suspected staff will contact the school nurse and inform the director/principal. 911 will be called if there is a suspected case of SBS/AHT and emergency response staff will care for the child as needed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted and informed of the action taken by the Early Childhood Center.

Instances of suspected child maltreatment in childcare are reported to the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). In the case of suspected child maltreatment in the home, Onslow County Department of Social Services will be notified.

Onslow County Schools Preschool will ensure that all staff who provide care in the Early Childhood Program will review this policy at time of hire and annually. A signed staff acknowledgement of the SBS/AHT policy along with the sign in sheet for staff training will be maintained in the preschool office.



Onslow County Schools will ensure that the policy is reviewed with all preschool parents/guardians on or before enrollment. Parents/guardians will sign acknowledgement that they have been given and explained the policy and a copy of the acknowledgement will be kept in the child's file.

Parent web resources

- The American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/athome/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <http://dontshake.org/family-resources>
- The Period of Purple Crying: <http://purplecrying.info/>

## **Onslow County Schools Preschool HAND-TO-HAND CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

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### **Bus riders**

Preschoolers **riding any Onslow County Schools bus** must receive **hand-to-hand** service. A parent or officially designated adult **must** accompany each student to the assigned bus stop and wait with the child until the school bus arrives. The child is transported to the school. Each child is received at the school by a designated school employee. At the end of the school day, preschool children are placed on the school bus by a school employee and returned to the bus stop **where a parent or officially designated adult must receive them (with valid picture ID)**. **If no designated adult at the bus stop, child will be returned to the school. Designated adult must be at the bus stop 10-15 minutes before and after scheduled pick-up until bus arrives.** Children riding regular Onslow County School buses are to be seated at the front of the bus so they can be seen and heard by the driver. Children riding preschool buses are seated in a designated spot by the bus monitor. **Children riding any Onslow County Schools bus must abide by all bus rules and safety procedures. Per NC Statute 14-132.2 no parent/guardian or other persons are allowed to board the bus at any time without permission.**

1. The first failure to have a designated adult meet the child at the bus stop will result in the child being returned to the school and a call to parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts and written notice of 1<sup>st</sup> incident. If **no** designated adult can be located the designated authorities may be called to intervene.
2. The second failure of a designated adult to meet the child at the bus stop will result in a formal contact (phone call) by school staff and 2<sup>nd</sup> incident report.
3. The third failure of a designated adult to meet the child at the bus stop and any incidents thereafter may result in loss of bus privileges up to 3 days per incident.

### **Students transported by parents or other adults**

Onslow County Schools Preschool students must receive **hand-to-hand** service. A parent or an officially designated adult **must** accompany each student to the preschool classroom and sign the child in for the day. A designated school employee receives each child at the school. At the end of the school day, the parent/designated adult of the preschool child must pick up the child from the classroom in a timely manner **(with valid picture ID)**.

1. The first failure to have a designated adult pick up the child will result in a call to parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts.

2. The second failure will result in a conference with classroom teacher and family specialist.
3. Repeated instances will result in a referral to the designated authorities for further action.

**I have read the Hand-to-Hand Child Safety Policy and understand the consequences of my (or the designated adult's) failure to deliver to and pick up my child from the classroom or assigned school bus stop.**

**Onslow County Schools Preschool  
TRANSPORTATION POLICIES FOR PARENTS**

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The following procedures have been reviewed with me prior to my child being transported on a bus route:

- When I leave my child at the bus stop they will be with a responsible adult.
- Understand that children cannot transport medication in backpacks, lunch bags, coat pockets, etc.
- Preschool children must sit in the front row(s) of the bus.
- Preschool children may not sit with school age children except for siblings.
- I have provided emergency contact information for my child. If I do not provide emergency information my child will not be transported until it is received.
- When the bus arrives at the school, the driver will not allow the preschool children to exit the bus unless the designated center employee is available to receive them.
- When the bus arrives at the child's drop off site the driver will not allow the preschool children to exit the bus unless the designated responsible adult, with valid photo ID, is there to receive them.
- If no one is at the drop off site to receive the child, the driver will return the child to the school and deliver the child to the principal or designee.
- Preschool children will never be left on the bus without an adult present.
- The driver will not transport more than 15 preschool children if the age of the youngest child is three, and no additional adults are present. If the age of the youngest child is four, the driver will not transport more than 20 preschool children.
- I will inform center staff of any special behavioral, emotional or physical needs of my child (ren).

OTHER policies:

**Onslow County Schools Preschool**  
**BLANKET PERMISSION FOR ROUTINE TRANSPORT OF CHILDREN\***

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\_\_\_\_\_

(Facility/School Name)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Today's Date)

I \_\_\_\_\_ give permission for \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent) (Child's name)

to be transported to and from school \_\_\_\_\_.

(Where)

Arrival Time \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Time \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Travel \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation Provider(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other important information \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Permission to transport is valid for \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

(Up to 12 months)



# Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules (Center and FCCH)

Division of Child Development  
and Early Education

North Carolina Department of  
Health and Human Services  
333 Six Forks Road  
Raleigh, NC 27609

Child Care Commission

<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Home/Child-Care-Commission>

Revised January 2021

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.

### Additional Staff/Child Ratio Information:

Centers located in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

### Reviewing Facility Information

From the Division's Child Care Facility Search Site, the facility and visit documentation can be viewed. A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every licensed center or family child care home. These files can be viewed during business hours (8 a.m. -5 p.m.) by contacting the Division at 919-814-6300 or 1-800-859-0829 or requested via the Division's web site at [www.ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov).

### How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development and Early Education to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be issued an administrative action, fined and/or may have their licenses suspended or revoked.

Administrative actions must be posted in the facility. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-814-6300 or 1-800-859-0829.

### Space and Equipment

There are space requirements for indoor and outdoor environments that must be measured prior to licensure. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

### Licensed centers must also meet requirements in the following areas.

#### Staff Requirements

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours, including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. All staff who work directly with children must have CPR and First Aid training, and at least one person who completed the training must be present at all times when children are in care. One staff must complete the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. All staff must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.

#### Staff/Child Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. The minimum staff/child ratios and group sizes for single-age groups of children in centers are shown below and must be posted in each classroom. The staff/child ratios for multi-age groupings are outlined in the child care rules and require prior approval.

Age	Teacher/Child Ratio	Max Group Size
0-12 months	1:5	10
12-24 months	1:6	12
2 to 3 years old	1:10	20
3 to 4 years old	1:15	25
4 to 5 years old	1:20	25
5 years and older	1:25	25

### What is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis - at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The purpose of regulation is to protect the health, safety, and well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

### Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, including their own preschool children, and can include three additional school-age children. The provider's own school-age children are not counted. Family child care home operators must be 21 years old and have a high school education or its equivalent. Family child care homes will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

### Child Care Centers

Licensure as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Recreational programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

### Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The laws and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone

directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your community. For more information, visit the Resources page located on the Child Care website at: <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>. For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-814-6300 or 1-800-859-0829 (In State Only), or visit our homepage at: <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/>.

### Child Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment

Every citizen has a responsibility to report suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. This occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. It may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. It also occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, appropriate discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child maltreatment at a child care facility to report the situation to the Intake Unit at Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-814-6300 or 1-800-859-0829.** Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any maltreatment complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect in a family to report the case to the county department of social services.**

### Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratios must be maintained.

### Record Requirements

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's, staff, and program. A record of monthly fire drills and quarterly shelter-in-place or lockdown drills practiced must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care. Prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma policy must be developed and shared with parents of children up to five years of age.

### Discipline and Behavior Management

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in the discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all centers and family child care homes. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development and Early Education that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

### Training Requirements

Center and family child care home staff must have current CPR and First Aid certification, ITS-SIDS training (if caring for infants, 0 to 12 months), prior to caring for children and every three years thereafter. Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training is required and each facility must create an EPR plan. Center and home staff must also complete a minimum number of health and safety training as well as annual ongoing training hours.

### Curriculum and Activities

Four- and five-star programs must use an approved curriculum in classrooms serving four-year-olds. Other programs may choose to use an approved curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Activity plans and schedule must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. A written activity plan that includes activities intended to stimulate the development domains, in accordance with North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore, use materials on their own and have choices.

### Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed family child care home and center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. For Centers and FCCs, meals and snacks must be nutritious and meet the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed centers to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. Children must have space and time provided for rest.

### Two through Five Star Rated License

Centers and family child care homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one-star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five-star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program, and one quality point option.

### Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background qualification is a **pre-service requirement**. All staff must undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter. This requirement includes household members who are over the age of 15 in family child care homes.

**Onslow County Schools Preschool**  
**SUMMARY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CHILD CARE LAW FOR CHILD CARE**  
**CENTERS**

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**Parent or guardian acknowledgement form**

I, the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
**Child's full name**

acknowledges that I have received the Summary of the NC Child Care Law for Child Care Centers for my child's classroom. I understand the information provided and have read this document.

**Onslow County Schools Preschool**  
**PREVENTION OF SHAKEN BABY SYNDROME & ABUSIVE HEAD TRAUMA POLICY**

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**Parent/Guardian acknowledgement form**

I, the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
**Child's full name**

acknowledges that I have read and received a copy of Onslow County Schools Preschool Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date policy given/explained to parent/guardian      Date of child's enrollment      School**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Name (PLEASE PRINT)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent/Guardian Signature**

**Date**

## **Onslow County Schools Preschool CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE POLICY**

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### **Supporting Positive Behaviors**

Teaching and practicing appropriate student behavior is a very important component of the preschool experience. Appropriate student behavior is expected in order to provide a school climate conducive to effective teaching and learning. Praise, encouragement and positive reinforcement will be used as the primary methods of classroom management. Children are always supervised.

We reason, set limits and model appropriate behavior. We listen to children, provide appropriate consequences and structure our environment to support positive behaviors. We respect children's families, culture and ethnicity. Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. Each child at school has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

No form of corporal punishment will be accepted in the Onslow County Schools Preschool Program. Discipline is not related to eating, resting, sleeping or outdoor play. However, a brief time to self-regulate in calm down area may be used as a calming technique when developmentally appropriate.

### **Challenging Behaviors**

The following are examples of unacceptable student behavior in the preschool program:

- Physical Abuse to peers and/or adults
- Verbal Abuse to peers and/or adults
- Jeopardizing the safety of other children
- Destruction of school property

If these unacceptable behaviors are exhibited, classroom staff will communicate with parent/guardian at the end of the day to discuss situation. When a child becomes verbally and physically aggressive, staff intervene immediately to protect all the children. The usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. On-going behavior concerns will be addressed by program staff through a series of interventions and strategies to teach appropriate behaviors. Staff will communicate and encourage parent involvement throughout this process.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Teaching and practicing appropriate student behavior is a very important component of the Preschool experience. Appropriate student behavior is required in order to provide a school climate that is safe for your child and conducive to effective teaching and learning. If a child's behavior is a serious safety threat, the program will consult with teachers, family members and if needed mental health consultant to determine if temporary suspension is needed in order for the program to put supports in place to ensure child safety. The program will not expel a child due to behavior.

# **Parent Orientation Checklist**

## **Welcome and Introductions**

- Welcome to Preschool!
- What are our Preschool Programs?
- Vision, Mission, and Quality Rating

## **Program Contact Information**

- Important Dates to Remember
- Sites & Staff
- Delays & Closures

## **Student Information Management**

- Information Updates
- Withdrawal Process

## **Regulations and Standards**

- NC Child Care Regulations
- Inclusion
- Non-Discrimination
- Confidentiality
- Child Abuse & Neglect- Mandated Reporter

## **Need to Know Information**

- Positive Child and Family Outcomes
- Your Child's Schedule & Routine
- Attendance
- Daily Sign In and Sign Out
- Authorized, Unauthorized & Late Pick-Up
- Child Custody
- Cubbies & Children's Personal Belongings

## **Program and Facility Access Information**

- Open Door Policy
- Grievance/Complaint Procedure

## **Parent and Adult Personal Behavior**

- Standard of Conduct
- Social Networking: Parents and Staff
- Cell Phone Use
- Prohibited Substances & Smoking

## **Parent, Family, and Caregiver Engagement**

- Family Involvement Opportunities
- Parent Committee Meetings, Activities and Workshops
- Head Start Policy Council and Title I Parent Advisory Council
- Parent Volunteers
- Family Services

## **Child Development Services**

- Philosophy and Curriculum
- School Readiness Goals
- Child Developmental Screenings
- Disabilities
- Cultural Diversity
- Celebrations



- Communal Water Play
- Rest Time
- Field Trips and Outings
- Transitions Between Learning Environments
- Social and Emotional Development of Children
- Supporting Positive Behavior
- Behavior Guidance and Discipline Policy

**Children's Mental Health and Well Being**

- Mental Health Matters!
- Mental Health Services Partnership

**Health, Nutrition, and Safety Services**

- Prescribed Medication Administration
- Accident and Illness
- Well Child Exams, Immunizations, Medical and Dental
- Health and Safety
- Tooth brushing
- Meals
- Emergency Procedures

**Transportation**

- Hand to Hand Safety for Bus Transportation
- Hand to Hand Safety for Adult Drop Off
- Rules and Safety Procedures
- Pedestrian Safety

**Policies & Acknowledgement**

- I understand my child will be using toothpaste during tooth brushing. **(page 42)**
- I have received the summary of NC Child Care Law for Child Care Centers. **(page 52)**
- I have received the Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome & Abusive Head Trauma Policy. **(page 48)**
- I have received the School Readiness Goals. **(page 29)**
- I have received the Hand-to-Hand Safety Policy. **(page 49)**
- I have received the Transportation Polices for Parents. **(page 50)**
- I have received the Permission for Routine Transportation. **(page 51)**
- I have received the OCS Preschool Parent & Family Handbook.

