

Dock Mennonite Academy

Early Childhood Handbook 2024-2025

Dock Mennonite Academy inspires and equips each student to serve with a global perspective by integrating faith, academic excellence, and life-enriching opportunities in a Christ-centered community.



DOCK
MENNONITE ACADEMY

GOAL

Our goal in the Early Childhood program is to give children the opportunity to develop and learn through play and exploration. We provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere where young children develop intellectually, spiritually, socially, physically, and emotionally.

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Three-year-olds:	Must be 3 by September 1st and toilet trained
Four-year-olds:	Must be 4 by September 1st and toilet trained
Pre-Kindergarten (PreK):	Must be 5 by December 31st and toilet trained

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The three-year-olds meet Tuesday and Thursday

AM: 8:25 AM—11:15 AM

FULL: 8:25 AM—3:15 PM

The four-year-olds meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

AM: 8:25 AM—11:15 AM

FULL: 8:25 AM—3:15 PM (with option to add Tuesday and/or Thursday, 4 or 5 day)

PreK meets daily.

FULL: 8:25 AM—3:15 PM.

DAYS: M, W, F (3 day) with option to add Tuesday and/or Thursday (4 or 5 day)

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Arrival –Please park in the lot in front of the Early Childhood entrance and escort the child to the door. A teacher or assistant will be there to receive your child. The EC doors are open from 8:10-8:25.

Departure –Please park in the lot and walk to the Early Childhood entrance. The teacher or assistant will bring the children out. Please be prompt.

Authorized Drivers – A transportation form will be required at the start of the school year listing all the people who are permitted to transport your child. Any changes after the start of the school year will require a written note from parent. Students are released only to authorized persons.

After 8:25, please enter the school at the main office, where a staff member will escort your child to class. Should a child need to be picked up before school ends, please inform the teacher via email by 8:30. When you arrive, check in at the main office. A classroom aide will escort your child to the office.

COMMUNICATION

We value parent and teacher partnership in the support and nurture of each learner. The teacher will include notes and other materials in the child's folder. Email and phone calls are used to communicate progress, concerns, or questions. Classroom information will be posted online with the Schoology platform. Parents will be provided with log-in information for their student(s). A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled in January and progress reports issued at the end of each semester.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

On a regular basis, the school conducts emergency drills to give students practice in emergency procedures. Teachers work carefully to create an atmosphere of safety and calm.

SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY

EC classes follow the decision of Dock Mennonite Academy and the EC to Grade 8 campus for school closings or late openings due to inclement weather.

- If the EC-Grade 8 campus is closed, Early Childhood classes are canceled.
- If the EC-Grade 8 campus is delayed two hours, all EC classes will be delayed 2 hours.
 - AM classes will run from 10:25-12:15 for AM. Students will eat their snack, but no lunch will be served.
 - Full day 3's, full day 4's, and PreK classes will start 2 hours late.
- If it snows during school hours, parents may pick up children any time prior to dismissal.

School Closings, Delays and Early Dismissals for inclement weather may be accessed via:

- Text message alerts
- Schoology
- Website- www.dock.org
- Facebook- [EC to Grade 8](#)
- Phone- Dock Mennonite Academy Early Childhood to Grade 8 campus(215-723-1196)

SCHOOL ATTIRE AND SUPPLIES

Daily activities will include active and messy play, so children are encouraged to wear play clothes and sneakers. Shoes without laces are recommended. Girls may wear shorts or leggings under dresses and skirts. Our school appearance code is based on principles of modesty, practicality, and wise use of resources. Do not send children in clothing that resembles or advertises the armed forces or other items that are inconsistent with our school values. All bags and outer clothing (coats, hats, sweaters, gloves) should be labeled with the child's name. Unless requested for a special day, toys should not be brought to school. Toys related to violence or war are not permitted.

Each family shall provide:

- School bag/backpack, labeled and big enough for 8 ½ x 11 folders (No wheeled bottoms)
- Change of clothes (including shirt, long pants, shorts, socks, underwear) in a labeled zipper bag
- Beach towel- labeled
- Full-day students: 1 vinyl/plastic rest mat (e.g. [Walmart](#) or [Amazon](#)) labeled
- Rain boots (labeled, to be kept at school)
- No-lace sneakers/shoes (rather than laced) are highly recommended
- 1 plastic twin-pocket folder, any color, labeled
- 1 box of 10 Crayola markers
- 24 pack of Crayola crayons
- 2 large purple disappearing glue sticks
- 1 container of playdoh
- 1 container of Clorox wipes
- 1 pencil box (not a bag)

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, children operating 3-wheeled pedal-driven vehicles whose main driving wheel is 20 inches in diameter or under are not required to wear a helmet. However, if you would like to send in a helmet for your child, please clearly mark his/her name on it.

SNACKS

Full-day students will have two snack times per day and morning students will have one snack time per day. Dock Mennonite Academy will provide napkins. A water fountain is available in the classroom to refill water bottles. Parents will be responsible for sending in a nutritious snack(s) for their student. Examples of healthy snacks include fresh fruit, yogurt, graham crackers, raw vegetables/dip, yogurt covered raisins, banana/pumpkin breads, muffins, and pretzels. Special treats such as cookies or cupcakes are acceptable as birthday treats. As some children have tree-nut or peanut allergies, please refrain from sending nuts or peanut butter for snacks. Full-day children will bring their lunches.

BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES

Instructors provide clear-cut limits, redirection, and positive guidance in the classroom. Children are encouraged to develop self-control and to stop and think about their behavior. In a group setting, a child may be seated next to the teacher or given a break away from the group. As needed, parents and teachers will meet to discuss strategies.

VOLUNTEER PROCEDURE

Dock Mennonite Academy requires all volunteers to have clearances as mandated by law. Clearance forms are available on our website or the main office. When you have received your clearances, please submit copies to the main office. All clearance forms are required for all parents who wish to volunteer in a classroom or to accompany students on a field trip.

1. PA Criminal History Clearance
2. PA Child Abuse History Clearance
3. FBI Federal Criminal History Report (fingerprinting).

Volunteers must renew all clearances every five years to remain in compliance.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to participate by sharing hobbies/careers, being a "Mystery Reader," helping with classroom projects, and assisting with field trips.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents shall submit up-to-date immunizations and other medical information and a signed emergency card with emergency numbers for reaching a parent or guardian. A physical examination within the previous year is required before entering the EC program.

- The school nurse is available daily. Services include first aid and administering medications, both prescription and over-the-counter with a doctor's order.
- Students are not permitted to attend school with infectious pink eye, active lice infestation, or bacterial infections with less than 24 hours of treatment.
- Students are not permitted to remain in school if they have a fever or are vomiting.
- Students with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher should be kept out of school until they have been without a fever for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medications.
- If a child is vomiting during the night, or in the morning before school, they should be kept home for the day.

CHILD WELFARE

All Dock Mennonite Academy employees are mandated by Pennsylvania state law to report suspected child abuse. Any adults working with a student, having reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect of a child may have occurred, are required by law to report the suspected abuse. Mandated reporters do not investigate abuse. The outside agency investigates and when appropriate, provides parenting resources, family interventions, and other support services.