



Pre-K Handbook

2024-2025

Information about our grant with The Department of Early Childhood: Office of School Readiness

The Department of Early Childhood Education: Office of School Readiness regulates Alabama's state administered diverse, voluntary, high- quality Pre-K program. The classes are funded through a grant process, in which sites throughout the state are awarded according to their ability to meet specific quality assurances and abide by rigorous operating guidelines.

First Class: Alabama Voluntary Pre-K

First Class: Alabama's Voluntary Pre-K is part of the Office of School Readiness. First class Pre-K provides effective, high quality early childhood experiences that prepare Alabama's children for school with:

- An enthusiasm for learning
- An ability to function in a social setting
- Age-appropriate communication and problem solving skills
- Age-appropriate physical and emotional skills and optimal health

Why High- Quality Pre-Kindergarten?

Numerous studies have shown that students who have participated in a high quality Pre-K program are:

- Less likely to repeat a grade, require remedial education, or be placed in special education.
- Score higher on achievement tests
- More likely to graduate from high school and go on to college
- Get higher paying salaries as adults
- More likely to stay out of prison and off welfare

Our Curriculum:

The Guntersville Pre-K Academy presents a complete educational program in accordance with age-appropriate practice and with the use of the Creative Curriculum through Teaching Strategies GOLD. We believe that children learn best by pursuing their personal interests and goals. Children in Creative Curriculum are encouraged to make choices about materials and activities throughout their day. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems, and

interact with peers and adults. In this type of environment, children engage in experiences that foster developmentally appropriate skills and abilities.

Operations and Services

General Program and Services Information

Purpose

The purpose of the Guntersville Pre-K Academy is to provide a full year of appropriate children's instruction for eligible four year olds. Guntersville Pre-K Academy will maintain the same calendar as Guntersville Elementary and operate 5 days per week.

Dates of Service

The Guntersville Pre-K Academy will operate according to the approved Guntersville City School System Calendar.

Age Requirement

Children must be four years of age by or before September 1, based on acceptable documentation such as birth certificates, official medical documents, or official documents from other countries.

Policies and Procedures

Toileting Procedures

Students entering Guntersville City Pre-K programs must demonstrate independence in self-care skills, specifically in the area of toileting. It is considered age appropriate behavior upon school entry to expect "toileting independence." If a student has special needs and requires assistance with diapering or toileting, this should be discussed with the teacher and school nurse and addressed in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan. Every effort will be made to meet those needs in the least restrictive environment.

Environmental/Safety Concerns

Exposure to another person's body fluid is not a safe practice. All body fluids are considered potentially infectious and can transmit a variety of communicable diseases (ALSDE, 2017). Therefore, staff can not change or clean a student if feces/or urine are involved. In the case of stomach contents (vomit), the school custodian has been instructed in the proper procedure for cleaning up. If a student vomits, the parent will be notified to pick the student up from school.

Parent Responsibility

If a student does not make it to the bathroom and soils his/her clothes with urine or feces, the parent will be called to come to the school to clean the student, and dress the student in clean clothes and take the soiled clothing off-campus. Once cleaned, the student may return to the classroom. In cases where the student self-cleans, the same procedures apply.

Residency Requirement

The child must live in the Guntersville City school district (see Guntersville City Students Handbook)

Special Needs/ Services

Special needs personnel should be consulted for assistance with suggestions of interventions, including referrals to special education programs of the local public school if appropriate.

Signing in and out

When entering the building, a visitor's pass must be obtained from the office. We are concerned about the safety of all children. It is important that we know who is in the building at all times.

Closure due to inclement weather

During inclement weather, Guntersville Pre-K Academy will be closed if the Guntersville City Schools are closed. If Guntersville City Schools close during the school day due to

weather, you will receive a message about the school closing. Please be prompt to pick your child up on bad weather days.

Student Dress

Students should be dressed appropriately for school activities. Clothes should be comfortable, suitable for classroom activities, and appropriate for weather. Comfortable shoes or sandals with secure straps should be worn at all times for safety and health reasons. Coats, jackets, sweaters, and mittens should be labeled with your child's name. Please provide the teacher with a second set of clothes (pants, shirt, underwear, and socks in case your child's clothes become wet or dirty. The set of clothes will need to be changed out seasonally.

Items not allowed on school property

Federal and State laws prohibit dangerous weapons on school property. Weapons, including toy weapons, may not be brought to school. Please refrain from sending extra items such as toys, money, and/or videos to school with your child. Guntersville City Schools do not permit tobacco, matches, or other dangerous objects on school grounds. NO SMOKING IS ALLOWED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY. This includes car lines.

Illness

Children who do not feel well will not do well in school. Children with severe colds or undetermined rashes should not attend school. Your child should be free of stomach upset (vomiting or diarrhea) and fever for 24 hours before he/she returns to school.

Attendance Policy

The attendance policy for Guntersville PreK Academy is the same as Guntersville Elementary (see Guntersville City Handbook).

Head Lice

A case of head lice is a communicable disease. A child with head lice will not be able to attend class until he/she is checked by the school nurse.

Medications

If it is necessary that medication be given at school, you must have your child's doctor fill out the appropriate paperwork available in the nurse's office. Medications must be in the original bottle. Ask your pharmacist to separate your child's medication into two bottles if necessary. **MEDICATION SHOULD NEVER BE PLACED IN YOUR CHILD'S BACKPACK.**

Accidents

If your child has a minor accident such as a bruise or a scrap, the teacher or school nurse will send a note about the incident or injury. If your child is involved in a more serious incident, you will be informed by telephone. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that a current list of adult phone numbers are provided to the teacher or school secretary in case of an emergency.

Nutrition

The Guntersville City Child Nutrition Program provides breakfast and lunch for your child daily. It is your choice to allow your child to eat from the lunchroom or send breakfast and lunch from home. Menus are posted online monthly. Lunch forms are available online to see if your child qualifies for free or reduced lunch prices.

Snack

Guntersville Elementary allows water only at snack time. Your child may bring a thermos of water daily and may drink throughout the day. If your child is on a special diet or has a food allergy, please make the teacher aware so your child can be accommodated.

Discipline

At Guntersville Pre-K Academy, our goal is to maintain a safe and orderly environment in which your child can learn. Therefore, we place a great emphasis on encouraging appropriate behavior of children to help them develop self-control, self-confidence, and self-discipline. An effort is made to help children understand why some behaviors are not acceptable, and suggestions for more desirable behaviors are offered. The rules are posted in the classroom and reviewed often with children.

Classroom rules children are expected to follow are:

- 1) Be safe by keeping your hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- 2) Be respectful and kind to others
- 3) Be responsible for yourself and your play area
- 4) Be a good listener especially to your teacher

To ensure the safety of all participants and staff, Guntersville Pre-K Academy staff will implement a positive discipline program. Children involved in our program are expected to follow the rules and direction of the staff. The following are guidelines used when disciplinary action becomes necessary due to unacceptable behavior. Severe behavior will be addressed by the Pre-K Director/Principal.

1. Positive redirection
2. Verbal warning for specific unacceptable behavior.
3. Separation from the group with a call to parent or guardian and a write-up warning of future consequences for repeated behavior.
4. Parent/Guardian conference to discuss corrective action and consequences for future incidents.
5. Suspension - 1 to 2 days from the program and/or remainder of the day.
6. Repeated aggressive/inappropriate behavior with 1-3 suspensions will result in removal from the program with approval from the Pre-K Director and Principal.

Guntersville Pre-K Academy reserves the right to withdraw a participant from the program if all discipline options have been exhausted and/or demonstration of extreme behavior that may put participants and staff in danger.

Transportation

Drop off will begin at 7:30 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. in the back of Guntersville Elementary School. Pickup will begin at 2:00 at the back of Guntersville Elementary School (beside the lunchroom).

Please have your child's visor tag visible at pickup time. There will be one line for drop off and two lines for pick-up.

Parent Participation

Each family will be encouraged to volunteer in the Guntersville Pre-K Academy classrooms. **Families must participate or volunteer a minimum of 12 hours in classroom activities.** At least two individual conferences per year between the lead

teacher and the parent/guardian are expected for each child. There will be several parties and parent activities throughout the year. Your attendance and help with these activities will be greatly appreciated.

We are looking forward to a fantastic year! Please notify us if you have any questions.

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