

Eastampton Township School District Preschool Handbook



Eastampton Community School

1 Student Drive

Eastampton, NJ 08060

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Welcome to the Eastampton Township School District Preschool Program!

We are excited to work with you and your child to develop the foundation for academic and developmental success. We strive to offer a quality program that recognizes and values each child's unique traits and potential. This handbook was designed to acquaint you with our program policies and procedures. Please read and refer to this handbook as needed to familiarize yourself with our program.

All Eastampton Township children who are 3 years-old on or before October 1st and 4 years-old on or before October 1st are candidates for our preschool program.

The preschool classrooms are mixed age groupings of 3 year olds and 4 year olds.

If the number of interested families exceeds our ability for placement, a lottery will be held in April of each school year to determine eligibility for the following September.

Kindergarten students must be 5 years-old on or before October 1st



BUILDING SUCCESS TOGETHER

Together, students, staff, parents, and the Eastampton community will work to foster excellence and empathy by providing a quality education and encouraging respect, promoting diversity, and nurturing the skills students need to exceed the New Jersey learning standards and succeed in today's world. Together, we will provide a safe learning environment for our kids to explore, innovate, and grow into the individuals they are.

Please view our district Parent/Student Handbook [Here](#)

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Faculty and Staff

Superintendent/Principal	Lianne Kane
Assistant Principal (P-3)	Jenna Carrell
Curriculum Supervisor	Nicole McGann
Assistant Principal (4-8)	Ray Robinson
Child Study Team Coordinator / School Psychologist	Dawn Dilliplane
Preschool Case Manager & Learning Consultant	Jessica Goodman
Social Worker	Carol Palacios

Preschool Teachers
Ashley Forsyth
Julie Hancock
Tanya Raible
Cynthia Greer
Alesia Hieronimus

Contact Information

The Eastampton preschool program is located at 1 Student Drive Eastampton, NJ 08060.

For questions regarding the program, please contact
Jenna Carrell, Assistant Principal.
Phone (609) 267-9172 x151

Registration

For the 2024-2025 school year, all seats for general education preschool students have been filled. Every year, if the number of interested families exceeds our ability for placement, a lottery will be held in April to determine eligibility for the following September.

To be added to our wait list, please visit our website

[Student Registration / Preschool Program](#)

School Hours

Regular Session (Full Day) hours for preschool is 8:15 am to 2:15 pm Monday through Friday.

Preschool schedules are full day admission only. A half day program is not available.

Student Absences

If you know your child will be absent, please notify the Main Office by 9am, by calling the absentee line at 609-267-9172 EXT #3.

Please leave your student's name, grade, homeroom teacher, reason for absence, and expected return. You can leave a message there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If it is a scheduled absence/late for a doctor's appointment, travel etc. you can call a day (or more) before. If you do not notify the Main Office by 9am, you can expect to receive an automated phone message.

For absences that may be excused, you must provide written documentation. For health related absence or lateness, please provide a doctor's note with the students full name and the date(s) involved.

Nurse's Office

For all information regarding illnesses, immunizations, allergies and medications please visit our Nurse's page.

Before delivering any documents, please ensure you are making a copy for yourself to keep. It is important to keep in mind that preschool students are in close proximity with each other and are learning the ability to keep germs to themselves. In the classroom, all toys and supplies are shared with many students and illness can spread quickly if not managed. Rigorous cleaning procedures are followed to mitigate the spread of germs.

If your child is not feeling well, please do not send them to school and consult a physician.

We appreciate your collaboration with keeping all of our students and staff healthy!

[ECS Nurse's Office](#)

School Calendar

Preschool students follow the Eastampton Community School District Calendar

[Eastampton Community School | 2024-2025](#)

Classroom Supplies

Item	Quantity
Standard size backpack (no wheels) - must be able to fit a snack container and folder	1
Complete change of clothes in ziploc bag (shirt, pants, underwear (or diaper/pull ups), extra pair of shoes and socks).*	1
Diapers or pull ups if necessary	As needed
Picture of family	1
Baby wipes	2 packs
Fitted Crib Sheets* (sent home weekly for laundering)	2
Light Blanket* (sent home weekly for laundering)	1
Lunchbox (if bringing lunch from home)*	1
Hand Sanitizer	1 bottle
Paper Towels	2 rolls
Tissues	2 boxes
Crayons	1 box 24 pack
Markers	1 pack - 10 count
Dry Erase Markers	4 markers
Glue Sticks	4 sticks
Paper plates	Small pack

*Please make sure that all items are labeled with your child's first and last name.

Please label all jackets, mittens, hats, scarves with your child's initials during the cold weather months.

If your student soils their clothes while at school, they will be returned to you. Please send in a new full set of clothes the following day.

When the weather changes, your child's teacher will request that the spare clothes kept at school get swapped for weather appropriate items.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Regular Day Hours

Arrival: 8:15 AM

Dismissal: 2:15 PM

Preschool students enter and exit the building through the playground doors (yellow circle seen below).

All students entering the building after 8:30 AM will be required to enter through the main office entrance and marked late.

Dismissal will begin at 2:15. All students not picked up by 2:20 will be required to attend Kidz Space, our after care program.

Any students that need to be picked up during the school day due to illness or appointments must visit the main office.



In the event that a student is picked up after 2:20 PM, this will be documented. Upon the 5th unanticipated late pick up, preschool students will be required to enroll in KidzSpace.

Before and After Care

Kidz Space

Before and after school care is offered through our partnership with Kidz Space (formally known as Wee Kids). Please visit their website for more information.

<https://www.kidzspacenj.com/eastampton-community-school/>

Classroom Schedules

Each preschool classroom schedule varies, but is comprised of the following components throughout the day:

- Arrival/Signing In
- Breakfast/Tabletop activity
- Morning Meeting / Social Emotional Learning
- Outdoor Time
- Choice Centers / Small Groups
- Lunch
- Nap
- Choice Centers / Small Groups
- Snack
- Literacy Circle
- Dismissal

Gross Motor, Mealtimes and Rest Time

Gross Motor

Gross motor skills are abilities that let us do tasks that involve large muscles in our torso, legs, and arms. They involve whole-body movements that are essential to healthy development. Preschool students have access to our playground equipment at least once per day. Please ensure that your child is dressed for active play each day. In the event of inclement weather, gross motor activities occur in the classroom or in the gym if the schedule that day allows.

Mealtimes

Nutritious meals and snacks are essential for young children's optimal growth and development. The energy provided by healthy foods ensures that children will be ready to fully participate in the day's learning opportunities. During meals and snacks preschoolers learn how to make nutritious choices, discover a wide variety of different foods and develop healthy eating habits.

Breakfast (optional), lunch, and snack time occur during the preschool day in the classroom. Each month, a menu will be sent home if you would like to choose breakfast or lunch options prepared at school.

Breakfast options are for students who choose to purchase breakfast from school only. If you would like your child to eat a homemade breakfast, please have them eat it at home prior to coming to school.

You may also choose to send your child to school with a packed lunch. Lunch items brought from home cannot be heated up or prepared for your child. We recommend packing a cold lunch or an item in an insulated thermos. Encourage your child to learn to open their mealtime items independently, but assistance will always be provided as needed. Please include any silverware that is needed. Plastic silverware is only included in school purchased lunches. We request that you include multiple food groups in your preschoolers lunch and avoid sweets and candy.

Every child will require one snack item and a drink each day sent from home, regardless if they are choosing to purchase breakfast and lunch. Snack items are not provided at school. We recommend a fruit or vegetable or a crunchy snack option that can be consumed in about 10 minutes. Please also send a filled water bottle.

Rest Time

A nap time routine is established in the classroom and occurs daily for 1 hour. Families must provide their child with a crib sheet (to cover their cot) from home as well as a light blanket. A spare sheet is kept in the classroom in case of any accidents or soiling. At the end of each week, nap items will be sent home for laundering. Please return them the following week.



Students are instructed to have a calm body and rest during this time. The lights are dimmed and soft music will play in the classroom. If they are unable to fall asleep, they are provided with a book or quiet toy while remaining on their cot.

Toileting and Potty Training

The only requirements for enrollment in New Jersey state funded preschool programs are age and residency. The district cannot mandate that preschool students be potty-trained in order to be enrolled in the preschool program.

All preschool classrooms have child size toileting provisions (e.g. child-sized toilets and sinks, accessible soap and paper towels for hand washing) that can facilitate self-help skills.

All students that are potty trained will be required to have independence with all steps of toileting (wiping, washing hands, etc.).

If your child is not currently potty trained or lacks independence with toileting, please communicate that with your child's teacher. If you are in the process of potty training at home, we would like to remain consistent at school.

Curriculum and Assessment

The Eastampton Township Preschool Program emphasizes the importance of developmentally appropriate practice. For many students, preschool is the first experience they will have away from home. In preschool, developmentally appropriate practice includes providing all students with a safe and nurturing environment to play and explore. Preschool students thrive when they can experience new materials, roles, ideas, and activities - especially in pretend play with peers. Preschool teachers emphasize the importance of learning about each other's feelings and take great interest in enabling students to express their emotions and identify those of others. Learning experiences in preschool are structured to allow for students to make important cognitive gains that invite them to represent their world in pretend play, symbols, objects, drawings, and words. Socialization opportunities allow for students to gain language skills and understand the world around them.

Our preschool program uses a continuum of play based learning methods.

CONTINUUM OF PLAY-BASED LEARNING

CHILD DIRECTED	EDUCATOR GUIDED			EDUCATOR DIRECTED
<p>FREE PLAY</p> <p>Children initiate and direct their own play. Educators observe and facilitate the environment.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Running, jumping, make-believe, drawing, building with materials, reading</p>	<p>INQUIRY PLAY</p> <p>Children ask questions and explore ideas. Educators offer resources and nudge children to go deeper.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Making instruments with elastic bands, investigating how worms move and simple machines work</p>	<p>COLLABORATIVE PLAY</p> <p>Educators co-design play with children and may join their play.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Playing restaurant or grocery store with pretend money</p>	<p>PLAYFUL LEARNING</p> <p>Educators set up experiences that children explore to meet specific learning objectives.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Rehearsing and performing a scripted play, doing a scavenger hunt, baking cookies with a large illustrated recipe poster</p>	<p>LEARNING GAMES</p> <p>Children follow the rules of prescribed learning activities designed by educators to promote specific skills.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Matching and number line games, word bingo, rhyming word games, Simon Says, games using dice</p>

Adapted Pyle & Danniels, 2017

Curriculum

The New Jersey Division of Early Childhood supports preschool curricula that meet the following criteria:

- The curriculum is aligned with the Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards;
- Methods for inclusion of students with disabilities are provided;
- The content and teaching strategies are clear, and research-based;
- The curriculum content is taught with focus and integration;
- The curriculum relies on child initiation and engagement;
- All curriculum components are developmentally appropriate; and
- Show evidence of benefits.

The Eastampton Township Preschool Program uses
The Creative Curriculum. The Creative Curriculum:



The Creative
Curriculum®
for Preschool

- Promotes differentiated instruction
 - a. Appropriate for use with general education and special education preschool students
- Aligned with New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards
- Focus on building students' confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills
- Emphasis on hands-on, project based learning
- Reinforcement activities for home to increase family engagement
- Prioritizes building a classroom community and developing students' social emotional skills

Interest Areas

The majority of the preschool day is structured around student directed learning. Students may choose from a variety of interest areas in the classroom including:

- Blocks
- Library
- Math
- Dramatic play
- Art

- Science/nature
- Music/movement
- Calm corner

Units of Study

All learning objectives for all developmental areas are encompassed within each study. Students will complete the following studies during the school year:

- Beginning the Year
- Balls
- Trees
- Clothes
- Buildings
- Exercise
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Wheels
- Water

Some additional supplemental studies may be included based on student interest.

When a new study begins, families are provided with a letter explaining the learning activities that are occurring in the classroom and ways they can support learning at home. Each unit of study includes several days of “investigation”.

Each day of investigation includes:

- Question of the Day
- Large Group Activities
- Small Group Activities
- Read Aloud
- Center based learning
- Mighty Minutes (transitional activities)

At the conclusion of each classroom study students engage in a celebration of learning.

Assessment

Classroom assessment occurs as an authentic part of instruction, not a disruption. Embedded in everyday interactions with children in the classroom, teachers generate formative assessment throughout naturally occurring

interactions and structured activities. Students are assessed on a trimester basis.

The following elements are assessed using a unique developmentally appropriate format for each student. Based on individual progress, teachers are able to scaffold instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Social-Emotional

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 1. Manages feelings
 2. Follows limits and expectations
 3. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 1. Forms relationships with adults
 2. Responds to emotional cues
 3. Interacts with peers
 4. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 1. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 2. Solves social problems

Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 1. Uses fingers and hands
 2. Uses writing and drawing tools

Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
 1. Comprehends language
 2. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 1. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
 2. Speaks clearly
 3. Uses conventional grammar
 4. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
 1. Engages in conversations
 2. Uses social rules of language

Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 1. Attends and engages
 2. Persists

3. Solves problems
4. Shows curiosity and motivation
5. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 1. Recognizes and recalls
 2. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
 1. Thinks symbolically
 2. Engages in sociodramatic play

Literacy

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition
 1. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 2. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 3. Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound
 4. Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
 1. Identifies and names letters
 2. Identifies letter–sound correspondences
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
 1. Uses and appreciates books and other texts
 2. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
 1. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections
 2. Uses emergent reading skills
 3. Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts
 4. Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts
 5. Reads fluently
19. Demonstrates writing skills
 1. Writes name
 2. Writes to convey ideas and information
 3. Writes using conventions

Mathematics

20. Uses number concepts and operations
 1. Counts
 2. Quantifies
 3. Connects numerals with their quantities
 4. Understands and uses place value and base ten
 5. Applies properties of mathematical operations and relationships
 6. Applies number combinations and mental number strategies in mathematical operations

21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
 1. Understands spatial relationships
 2. Understands shapes
22. Compares and measures
 1. Measures objects
 2. Measures time and money
 3. Represents and analyzes data
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Early Screening Inventory (ESI)

This screening is a brief assessment procedure designed to identify children who might be at risk for a possible learning problem or delay. The screening looks at children by quickly sampling their skills across areas of social, language, reasoning, gross and fine motor development. This assessment occurs within the first six weeks of school. You will receive a letter home with your child explaining the assessment and the date that it occurs. Once the assessment is completed you will be informed of the results.

Retention in Preschool

Preschool Expansion Aid (PEA) funding may only be used to support the cost of serving eligible children in a high-quality preschool program. The eligible population of children is defined as three-and four-years-old based on the same district cut-off date used for kindergarten enrollment (October 1).

This means that children may not be retained in preschool once they are age eligible for kindergarten. If a family feels that a child is not developmentally ready to enter kindergarten, but is not eligible for special education services, the family has the option to unenroll their child, attend a private preschool program, and then re-enroll to attend kindergarten in ETSD after a year of a private program.

Teacher Training and Classroom Guidelines

State-funded preschool classrooms are held to rigorous standards set forth by the New Jersey Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Education. Structured classroom observation instruments provide a lens for the examination of the many components of classroom quality from the nature of teacher-child interactions to the availability of materials and

activities that support early learning and development. Using a set of criteria and a rubric for scoring, structured observation instruments allow teachers and administrators to evaluate a range of classroom features. These observations inform individual and program-wide professional development and serve as a means of tracking program quality from year to year.

Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children provides a tiered intervention framework of evidence-based interventions for promoting the social, emotional, and behavioral development of young children. The model describes three tiers of intervention practice: universal promotion for all children; secondary preventions to address the intervention needs for children at risk of social emotional delays, and tertiary interventions needed for children with persistent challenges.



All of our preschool teachers are required to complete comprehensive training on the Pyramid Model.

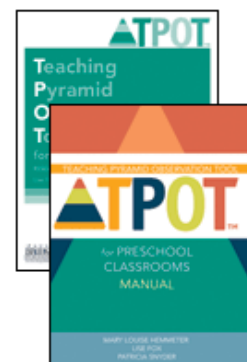
Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)

The Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool for Preschool Classrooms (TPOT) is an assessment instrument designed to measure the fidelity of implementation of practices associated with the Pyramid Model.

This includes:

- Universal practices associated with nurturing and responsive relationships
- High quality supportive classroom environments
- Targeted social-emotional and behavioral support teaching
- Behavioral interventions for persistent social, emotional, or behavioral challenges

Observations are conducted by the Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist two times per year. Results are provided to the classroom teacher



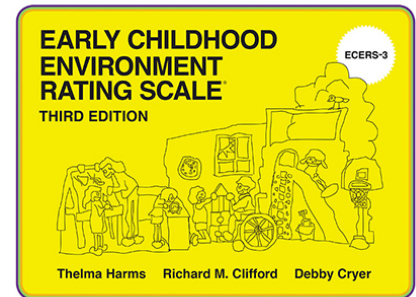
to develop strategies for future classroom improvements related to social emotional and behavioral development.

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS)



The ECERS is a classroom assessment tool designed to measure the quality of group programs by collecting data through classroom observations. The scale consists of 35 items organized into 6 subscales

- Space and furnishings
- Personal care routines
- Language and literacy
- Learning activities
- Interaction
- Program structure



Classroom teachers are observed for components in the ECERS model and provided with feedback two times per year for continued improvement in classroom environment and teaching practices.

Preschool Intervention and Referral Team (PIRT)

The Preschool Intervention and Referral Team (PIRT) is a multidisciplinary team of teachers and specialists who work together to promote positive behavior practices as well as strategies which support high levels of inclusion of students in the general education setting. The primary purpose of PIRT is to decrease the amount of referrals to the Child Study Team. As early childhood professionals, we recognize that preschool is often a student's first experience outside of the home and this formative time in their lives calls for support and time to adjust. As such, PIRT supports teachers with the implementation of strategies and accommodations for students exhibiting difficulties with learning or behaviors with the goal of providing each child the opportunity to access the preschool learning environment with the individualized supports needed for the child to succeed" (NJDOE). PIRT meets every 4 to 8 weeks.

Family Engagement

Creating a community of support is of the utmost importance for our youngest learners. Several times throughout the school year, families will be invited into school to participate in events with their child. Throughout the year volunteers will be requested for classroom celebrations for our curriculum based studies as well as after school gatherings and events for the entire family.

Additionally, information sessions will be held to further families' knowledge on topics that are common struggles for children in early childhood. These are developed based on needs assessments that will be sent to you throughout the year. Common topics include social emotional and behavioral support, developing healthy routines, and how to enhance learning at home.