

MONTICELLO

Early Childhood

Family Education



EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION Parent Handbook

What is Early Childhood Family Education?

ECFE offers a variety of classes, activities and special events designed especially for you and your child! We recognize that parents are their child's first and most important teachers. We are committed to strengthening families by providing opportunities to play and learn together, and to enhance the ability of all families to provide the best possible environment for healthy growth and development of their children.



Our Philosophy

Parents are the child's first and most important teacher! Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) programs provide parent education, early childhood education and parent child interaction. Our Monticello program is locally designed to meet the services needed in our community. Building community and social support is an important factor for a family's success. In Monticello ECFE parents learn about community resources and gain support from relationships with other families.

Early Childhood Education Goals Are For Students To:

- Develop and express imagination and creativity.
- Express feelings and energy in healthy ways.
- Build strength and control of their bodies.
 - Increase ability to concentrate.
- Develop a positive attitude toward learning.

Learning Through Play

ECFE and School Readiness Preschool weave a learning through play philosophy into each class. Since students learn by doing, we focus on the process of creating rather than the product created. Learning happens when children are given space, materials, and time to play.

Monticello Early Childhood Programs

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) offers a variety of classes and services including parent-child separating and nonseparating.

Sibling care is offered at most ECFE classes for younger/older siblings (up to the age of 5) of students attending ECFE classes.

Home visits are for those families who need a little extra individual attention than can be accomplished in a 1.5 hour group class, or for families who cannot make it to school. Please contact any of the ECFE teachers, parent educators or the program coordinator to set up a meeting.

Monti-Magic Preschool is a high quality program for children three or four years of age by September 1. Magic Preschool focuses on preparing children for kindergarten! The program has multiple offerings, including half-day and full-day.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) is a program for children who are experiencing delays in their development. If you have concerns about your child's development, please speak with your ECFE teacher or contact Janelle Ortiz at 763-272-2930.

Early Childhood Screening (ECS) is required by the state for kindergarten entrance. Children are eligible for screening after they turn three years old. This screening includes an evaluation of speech, language, fine and gross motor skills, social and emotional development. Hearing, vision, height, weight and immunization checks are all included. To have your child screened, please schedule online at <https://ce.monticello.k12.mn.us/early-child-hood-screening>

If any questions please email Tonya Larsen at tonya.larsen@monticello.k12.mn.us or 763-272-2972

ECFE Class Format

Parent-Child Separating Classes

The first 45 minutes parent and child will spend time together, engaging in a variety of activities. The following 45 minutes will consist of guided play and snack, during which the parents will separate out to another room for discussion.

Nonseparating Classes

The first 45 minutes parent and child will spend time together, engaging in a variety of activities. The following 45 minutes will consist of guided play and snack, during which the parents will have time to visit about joys or concerns with other parents in similar stages of life. Parents are available to their child to check in when needed.

Parent-Child Interaction Guidelines

Parents are a child's first teachers. Activities during parent-child interaction time promote healthy family relationships and offer parent teaching opportunities. The following guidelines will help you and your child experience a successful interaction time:

- Smile, laugh, relax, and enjoy the experience.
- Follow your child's lead. Visit activities your child is interested in first.
- Follow your child's pace and continue to try other activities, too.
- Include other parents and children in your interactions and activities. This shows your child how to be friendly with others.
- Verbalize. Use simple language to describe what is happening.
- Get down to your child's eye level by stooping or sitting on the floor.
- Reinforce. Stay positive. Establish a firm basis of support and trust.
- If an activity is full, encourage your child to try something else and come back. Waiting is a good skill to learn.
- Avoid using your cell phone during class.

Separation

Parent/child separation at discussion time can be difficult. We recommend that you prepare your child that you will be going to another room to talk and that you will be back. Working together, the teacher and parent will decide such things as when the parent should leave, how long the parent should stay away and how to make the separation easier. If a plan is made, it will be implemented in the child's classroom.

In addition, if your child experiences prolonged separation anxiety, we may request to have you come get your child from the room. Please note: If a child cries or is distressed for over ten minutes and does not respond to comfort from staff, you will be contacted to pick up your child. This helps us manage the situation effectively and supports your child in adjusting to the environment.

Parent Education

The goal of parent education is to strengthen the parent-child relationship by providing relevant, effective education and support. Parent education is an opportunity for parents to discuss ideas and concerns ranging from child development to family relationships. A licensed parent educator leads the discussion and provides information based on research and knowledge of child development and family education. Parents are encouraged to share their experiences and observations with the group. Non-mobile infants are welcome in the parent ed room if you prefer not to separate.

Parent Education Group Guidelines

Parent education is a time for you to share your joys and challenges of being a parent. Please remember:

- There are many good ways to be a parent, so try not to judge others.
- Please silence your cell phones during class time and refrain from using cell phones for non-emergency calls and texts.
- It is all right to share ideas from your discussions outside of the group, but please do not share names.
- This is your group and much of what you get out of it depends on what you put into it.
- Please be respectful when someone is speaking. Side conversations make it difficult for the person talking.
- It is important that all parents return to the classroom at the same time. Children may become frightened if they don't see their parent when other parents arrive.

Policies and Procedures

Allergies and Health Concerns: Please notify the ECFE staff of any allergies including food allergies or health concerns so we can act upon them appropriately to keep everyone healthy and safe. Physician orders may be requested.

Attendance: Please email your classroom teacher or the office to report absences. We recognize that a family illness or emergency may prevent you from attending an ECFE class on occasion with your child. If this happens, another adult family member or caregiver may accompany your child to class. Please ask them to check in at the front office. If you or your child are absent more than two consecutive class times, your teacher may call or email you to check in.

Arrival: Please be on time for class. It is easier for your child to transition into class and be successful when they can participate in the same things as everyone else. Because teachers are preparing their classrooms, the doors will not be open until a few minutes before class start time. If you arrive early, please wait patiently in the lobby. Staying late is not permitted due to staffing of the classes in the various classrooms.

Bathroom Needs: Diapering your child should only be done on the changing table in the children's bathrooms. During separation time or in sibling care, if your child needs a diaper change, has a bathroom accident, or is toilet training, please note that you as the

parent/caregiver will be notified to assist your child, as our staff are not certified to change your child.

Behavior: Monticello ECFE believes in positive discipline. When difficulties arise, we encourage you to talk calmly and redirect your child to other choices. We realize it is not always easy to remember this during a difficult situation! That's why we are always available for more ideas, information, and support.

Book Orders: Scholastic book orders will be available once per month. The teachers will have hard copies of the order forms, as well as the code to order online. Every purchase helps earn free books for the classroom!

Building Safety: Eastview has a secure entry. Doors will be locked 7:30-3:30 every day. For first time attending, ECFE families will enter through the main office and show the secretary your ID to receive an ECFE/Visitor's badge. Going forward you will need to bring your badge to attend class, and you will be greeted by a staff person at the Canopy Entrance. If you forget your badge, you will need to get a new one at the front desk.

Cell Phones: Phone calls or texting can be disruptive to the classroom and to the flow of the parenting session. Please turn off or silence your phone when you come in.

Class Fees: ECFE charges per class on a sliding scale based on household income. Eleyo payments may be made by credit card or electronic bank transfer. Payments by cash, check, or credit card may be made in the office. If your financial circumstances change and paying your class fee becomes difficult, please contact Jenifer Johnson at 763-272-2901. We will work with you to make this program affordable for your family.

Classroom Cleaning Procedures: We clean tables, toys, and equipment with a disinfectant after each class. If you notice your child mouthing a toy, place it in the sink when he/she is done playing with it, and it will be washed. Our clean-up procedure of bodily fluids follows school district guidelines. The Eastview custodial staff cleans floors and bathrooms daily.

Clothing: Dress your child in washable, comfortable play clothes so they will be free to participate in all activities, including messy ones. Tennis shoes allow your student to play and climb! Remember to bring shoes in the winter when your child wears boots to school. Bring extra clothes if your child is toilet training.

Confidentiality: Personal information discussed within the parenting groups is confidential. If you would like to discuss personal information about your child with the teacher, please feel free to set-up a meeting.

Drills: Eastview is required to conduct lockdown drills to determine how a crisis situation might be handled if one should occur at our school. Fire and tornado drills occur multiple times during the year. Drills are a necessary part of preparing for possible emergencies. We do this to ensure that all students and staff are safe and we take appropriate steps to deal with each situation. During a drill please follow the directions of the staff. We will make sure all adults and children are accounted for during drills

Early Childhood Screening: Early childhood screening is a free check of children's height, weight, immunizations, health, vision, and development. State law requires that children are screened before they enter kindergarten or within 90 days of beginning district preschool. Screening identifies health and developmental concerns that can be addressed well before a child enters kindergarten. A child can be screened any time after age 3. To schedule an appointment, please go online to:

<https://ce.monticello.k12.mn.us/early-child-hood-screening>

If you have any questions, please email tonya.larsen@monticello.k12.mn.us or call 763-272-2972.

Eleyo: Eleyo is the online system Early Childhood uses to manage registration and tuition for the ECFE and Monti Magic Preschool programs. The system is also used by Community Education and Magic Adventures. Each ECFE family should establish an Eleyo account, even if class fees are made in person.

Please note that Eleyo is not the same as Infinite Campus, the data management system used by the school district. Information provided by families on their enrollment form will be used to create a Campus record for the student (and family). Because the Campus system is used to generate School Messenger alerts, it is important that families notify the office if contact information has changed.

Guests: Only children who are registered will be allowed to participate in class. Any exception must be approved in advance by the teacher. We also ask that you notify the teacher in advance before bringing a second adult to class.

Handwashing: Staff, parents, and students are encouraged to wash their hands before they enter the classroom. Students are expected to wash their hands during the day as needed – after using the toilet, after blowing their nose, prior to snack time and after playtime.

Illness: In order to maintain a healthy environment for students, parents, and staff, please follow this illness procedure. Children may not attend class or sibling care if they are ill or

exhibit symptoms of an ongoing illness. Notify your ECFE teacher as soon as possible if your child has been in school with a contagious illness.

The following information will help guide you as you make your decision on whether or not your child is well enough to go to school. Please keep in mind that we do have some medically fragile children in our building whose well-being relies on those around them being healthy. Please keep your child home from class if he/she:

- Has had a fever of 100 degrees or more. Please keep your child home until his/her temperature has been normal (98.6) for 24 hours.
- Has vomited or has diarrhea. Please keep your child home until 24 hours have passed since the last episode.
- Has an undiagnosed rash, discharge from eyes, or yellow or green nasal discharge. Keep your child home until you are sure it is not contagious.
- Has been diagnosed with Strep Throat, or another bacterial infection requiring antibiotics. Please keep your child home until he/she has been on antibiotics for 24 hours or more.
- Has head lice. Please keep your child home until the first treatment is completed and no live lice are seen.

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms while in class or sibling care, you will be asked to take them home.

Immunizations: Minnesota state law requires that all children attending ECFE classes have their immunizations up to date. Proof of immunization must be presented prior to attending class.

Mandated Reporting: State law mandates all public school staff to report suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect of children to Wright County Child Protection Services or the county of the child's residence. It is our intent to support and provide resources to parents who may be experiencing difficulty in raising children.

Mother's Room: A mother's room is available near the front entrance of Eastview for mothers who would prefer privacy for nursing and pumping. If you are comfortable nursing in the classroom, you are welcome to do so!

Parent-Teacher Organization: All parents are invited to attend Eastview PTO meetings typically held on the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM. The PTO plans fundraisers, supports EEC special events, and helps provide additional learning materials/needs for classrooms/programs

at the EEC. Please connect with us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EastviewPTO882 and join our email list at eastviewpto882@gmail.com

Photos: There are occasions when representatives of Early Childhood, ISD 882, and/or the media photograph or record students while in school or while attending/participating in school sponsored functions. These photographs/recordings may be used in class newsletters, brochures, website, etc. and are used without identifying information about the students pictured. (Additional permissions are required for any uses in which students are identified.) Parents/guardians not wanting their student(s) to be photographed or recorded must contact Jenifer Johnson at 763-272-2901 or jenifer.johnson@monticello.k12.mn.us.

School Messenger: School Messenger alerts families by phone, email, and/or text in the event of an emergency or weather-related closing. Before the start of school, each student's family must complete an enrollment form for the school district. Please be sure to provide accurate information on your enrollment form, as the contact information is used for the School Messenger system. Note that changes to your contact information in Eleyo are not automatically updated in the School Messenger system, so please let the office know if there are changes to your emergency contact information

Sibling Care: Sibling care is available for most ECFE classes. Sibling care is provided free of charge, but space is limited. The purpose of sibling care is to provide a safe, supervised environment staffed by paraprofessionals for children 3 months to 6 years while parents are attending class or volunteering in Eastview classrooms. Parents with infants may keep them in class. Please note there is no sibling care offered at Nature Based classes at Bertram Park.

Sibling Care Guidelines:

- All siblings should arrive toileted and with dry diapers. If your child needs a diaper change, has a bathroom accident, or is toilet training, please note that you as the parent/caregiver will be notified to assist your child, as our staff are not certified to change your child. Diapering your child should only be done on the changing table in the children's bathrooms.
- Please feed your child before coming to sibling care. You may provide a bottle or snack, but be sure to label everything with your child's name.
- Please bring along a blanket, pacifier, or any other comfort item your child uses at home. Be sure to label all items with your child's name.
- If your child is having a difficult time separating, you may be asked to return to sibling care to comfort your child.

- Please pick up your child immediately after class. Children may become frightened if they don't see their parent when other parents arrive.
- The sibling care room will not be staffed until five minutes before the start of class. Please give the child care workers time to prepare the room for your child.
- Children will not be allowed to stay if they are showing any signs of illness noted in illness policy.

Snacks Donations: In an effort to promote good nutrition we ask for snacks to be of the healthy type: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, cheese, yogurt, etc. Due to the seriousness of nut allergies, snacks consisting of any amount of **peanuts and tree nuts** are not allowed in the classrooms. Snack sign-ups will be presented the first day of class.

Toys: Please keep personal toys at home or in diaper bags/backpacks, unless needed for comfort in sibling care or during separation.

Weather/School Closing: When the Monticello Public Schools are closed because of bad weather, ECFE classes will be canceled. The local television stations WCCO, KSTP and KARE 11 will announce closings and delays. You may also call the Community Education office (763) 272-2030. If there is a delayed start, we will notify you if your class is running.