

**Pre-Kindergarten
Exceptional Student Education
Parent Handbook**



**Okaloosa County School District
Florida**



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Information Sheet:

School: _____

Principal: _____

PK teacher: _____

Teacher's phone #: _____

Teacher's email address: _____

Classroom Assistant: _____

Speech-Language Therapist: _____

Physical Therapist: _____

Occupational Therapist: _____

School Phone #: _____

Class Hours: _____

Bus Driver & Bus #: _____

Transportation Department Phone: _____

School Staffing Specialist: _____

Okaloosa School District website: www.okaloosaschools.com

School website: _____

It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that you keep the school office & teacher informed of current address and current telephone numbers, including EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS. IF your address or home /work telephone number changes, PLEASE notify the school as soon as you know your new address or phone numbers.



PHILOSOPHY OF PKD

The Okaloosa County Pre Kindergarten Program for children with Disabilities (an Exceptional Student Education program -- ESE), utilizes a researched based curriculum. We believe prekindergarten children gain success in developmentally appropriate child-centered activities in a language based, positive, and culturally diverse environment. Active learning experiences and adult child interactions aid children in developing skills, habits and attitudes contributing to a successful life.

Curriculum

The following early childhood goals are paired with developmentally appropriate and active learning approaches to early childhood education. These activities will help to meet the goals of the child's individual educational plan (IEP).

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Develop, expand and enrich children's language skills.
2. Provide an enriched learning environment.
3. Teach skills that will build future success in school.
4. Develop independence and a positive self-image in preschool students.
5. Provide experiences to help children develop logical thinking and reasoning abilities.
6. Broaden the child's awareness and acceptance of individual differences.
7. Encourage active parent involvement in the child's education.
8. Provide experiences that meet individual needs in all developmental areas.

Skill Areas

- * **Gross Motor Skills:** Movements that involve large muscles, such as: walking, running, jumping, climbing, hopping, kicking, throwing, catching, and balancing.



- * **Fine Motor Skills:** General movement that involves eyes, fingers and hands, such as painting, cutting, stringing, beads, sorting, drawing, block building, handwriting skills such as tracing and copying.



- * **Self Help Skills:** Skills required to gain independence, such as: eating, drinking, dressing, undressing, toileting, and health related activities such as nose blowing and hand washing.



- * **Speech & Language Skills:** Skills required to communicate and understand such as gestures, vocalizations, sounds, words, sentences, following verbal directions, and vocabulary.

- Speech: age appropriate sounds used when speaking
- Receptive Language: what you understand
- Expressive Language: what you say

- * **General Knowledge:** Age appropriate everyday information such as: body parts, names of people and objects, colors, shapes, concepts, numbers, letters, and classification.

- * **Social & Emotional Development:** Skills needed to get along with others, such as: play skills, school and work-related skills, sharing, turn taking, appropriate adult and peer interaction.



Social Skills:

Our goals are to help each child develop:

- a positive self-esteem (feeling good about themselves)
- self-control
- respect for themselves
- respect for the rights of others
- respect for property (toys, books, etc...)

Social skills are gained through a positive developmental process which happens in small steps. To help this process, the Staff will:

- * Provide a consistent program that will keep the children involved and happy.
- * Arrange the classroom to facilitate learning and promote order.

- * Provide a consistent daily schedule.
- * Base expectations for each child on their age and stage of development.
- * Guide children in decision making skills using classroom demonstrations and positive statements.
- * Recognize and attend to positive behavior.
- * Encourage children frequently.
- * Actively listen to children to help them solve problems.
- * Redirect children from inappropriate activities to appropriate activities.
- * **Children will not be allowed to disrupt learning activities, to hurt themselves or others or to damage/destroy property.**

Consequences for a child who is not cooperating and continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviors may include:

1. A review of classroom rules.
2. A reminder of appropriate behaviors.
3. Removal from the group or learning activity.

If problem behaviors continue, an IEP meeting will be scheduled to form a partnership to discuss behavioral strategies.

PROJECTS OF STUDY

A new class theme will be introduced each month or week. The topics address a variety of activities, stories, songs, cooking experiences, excursions and safety hints. Examples include: School discovery, myself, safety, seasons, senses, plants, animals, water, etc.

Daily Routine

Daily routines will include:

- * Greeting
- * Large group time
- * Small group time
- * Meals
- * Self help skills
- * Outside time
- * Work time
- * Story time

The classroom teacher will provide an individual class schedule of the daily routine.



Breakfast/ Lunch

Meal times are a time for learning about nutrition, table manners, social skills, oral language, fine motor and self help skills and concepts,

- Breakfast and/or lunch may be packed and sent from home; when packing meals for your child, please send nutritious meals that do not require any additional preparation such as heating, mixing, or refrigeration.
- Breakfast and/or lunch may be bought from the school cafeteria.
- Free and reduced meals are available for those families that qualify. Application forms are available in the office or online.
- School district policy is that we do not give change. Parents can pay online or pay with correct cash or a personal check.
- All monies should be put in an envelope with child's name on it and what it is for.
- Cost for Meals:
Student Breakfast - \$1.80 Student Lunch - \$2.70 Milk - \$0.65
Reduced Breakfast - \$0.30 Reduced Lunch - \$0.40
Adult Breakfast - \$2.25 Adult Lunch - \$4.00

Parents /Adult School Visits

Parents are welcome to visit and participate in their child's classroom. Please adhere to the following procedures whenever you would like to visit your child's classroom.

- Adult classroom visits need 24 hour written (not email) notice prior to visit.
- Adult visitors must adhere to student confidentiality.
- Adult classroom visitors **must** have a current **PARENT VOLUNTEER AFFIDAVIT** on file in the school office. Parent Volunteer Affidavit must be submitted and approved two weeks prior to the field trip or activity.
- Adult visitors need to participate in the ongoing activity.
- Adult visitors need to model the rules and expected school behaviors by following the rules and procedures.



Dressing for Success

The Pre-Kindergarten Disabilities Program is an active and fun place to learn. Children play in sand and water, use paint and glue and play outdoors almost every day. Keep in mind that we encourage independence in the classroom. It is for these reasons and your child's safety that we suggest you NOT send your child dressed in the following styles:

*overalls * one piece outfits * distracting articles of clothing (flashing or noise making) *jumpsuits *suspenders *tights *fancy shoes *belts, *sandals/flip flops *cowboy boots.

For your child's comfort, please send your child in properly fitting clothes to allow them to concentrate on the planned activities instead of adjusting their clothing.

If your child is learning to toilet, please send them in easy to manage clothing to increase their success in independent toileting skills.

Checking Your Child In/Out of School

If you need to check your child in/out of school, the process is:

1. Go to the school office.
2. Show picture identification.
3. The office personnel will notify your child's teacher.

******Your child will not be released to any person who has not been listed by you on the emergency contact form kept in the school office. If you know in advance that you will be checking your child out early, please let your child's teacher know.******



Health Guidelines

Please help us all stay well by keeping your child home when he/she is sick or if you suspect he/she may be coming down with something. One sniffing child can spread germs to others very quickly!

1. Fever - a temperature of 100.0F and over is considered a fever. Student should be fever free without being medicated for 24 hours before returning to school.

2. Diarrhea & Vomiting- Student should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.
3. Runny Nose (green or yellow mucous)
4. Pink eye, and other communicable diseases

It will be healthier for him/her to stay home until the symptoms subside. IF your child arrives at school sick or becomes sick at school, you will be called and will be responsible for coming to get him/her immediately.

When your child has been out, please send in a note telling why he/she has been absent.

HANDWASHING is the number one, single most important procedure used to prevent infection. Please emphasize this with your child at home. We will teach hand washing skills at school.

At school, we will wash hands after:

- *toileting
- *blowing nose
- *after putting fingers in ears, mouth or nose
- *playing outside

We will wash hands before:

- *eating
- *cooking

Administering Medication to Students by School Personnel

Any medication, either prescription or nonprescription to be administered to a student on school premises or at school functions (including field trips) must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian/authorized adult representative for retention and administering. No student will be allowed to have medication, prescription or nonprescription in his/her possession on school premises, on a school bus, or at a school function. Enzymes, Epipens, insulin pens, or asthma inhalers are permitted to be carried by the student with parental permission and physician's authorization.

Medication brought to school must be in the original prescription container, properly labeled with the child's name, doctor, name of medication, route, dosage, time to be administered, directions, and expiration date. A "**Dispersion of Medication Form**" must be completed for each medication and a method of disposal of any unused or expired medication designated. The medication must be counted jointly by the parent/guardian and a school clinic staff member. The parent/guardian and school clinic staff member must both sign the "**Registry of**

Medication Form” for the initial medication drop off and each time additional medication is brought to the school. Any medication that is unused must be picked up within one week of the ending date noted or at the end of the school day on the last day of school. All unused medications left after these dates will be discarded by the school clinic staff.

IF your child has been given ANY medication (prescription or non prescription) before he/she comes to school, send a note stating the name of the medicine and the time it was last given.

Head lice or Nits is frequently a problem in schools. If your child is found to have head lice, the following guidelines will be followed:

(1) Parents or Guardians will be called to transport the student home. Students are not permitted to ride the bus when head lice are identified.

(2) School clinic staff will give parents written procedures on the treatment of head lice.

(3) After treatment and upon return to school, parents will bring the student back to the clinic with documentation that the head lice was treated and the clinic staff will check that the student is free of lice and/or live nits.

i) Live nits are defined by the Centers for Disease Control as nits that are located no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ in. from the base of the hair shaft and/or scalp.

(4) Students will be allowed to return to class once he/she is checked by clinic staff and found to free of lice and live nits.

(5) The school principal or his/her designee shall be notified upon the third incident of lice or live nits in a single semester.

Parent Opportunities

*Annual IEP meetings

*Open House/ Parent Orientation

*Communicate with the teacher about your child's special events, daily needs and health concerns.

*Return forms promptly.

*School Functions (PTO, School Advisory Council, committees, etc.)

***Field Trips:** Field trips are extensions of the classroom. When you volunteer for your child's field trip, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Okaloosa County schools are drug free facilities; there is NO SMOKING at any time at school functions including school field trips.
 - Please provide a positive model for your child's school experience by using appropriate language and behavior.
 - Parent permission field trip form and Parent Volunteer affidavit must be completed 2 weeks prior to the field trip.
 - Out of county field trip permission forms must be completely filled out and notarized.
- * Siblings are not invited to attend field trips. This is a special time for your child



Transportation

Bus Riders: Our children love to ride the bus! Due to traffic, the route times may vary a little from day to day. Please have your child ready 10 minutes early each day and be there promptly at the scheduled drop off times.

You can help us by being aware of the following information:

1. It is required that you walk your child to the bus each morning and that you are at the bus stop in the afternoon. Your child will be returned to school if a parent or authorized adult is not present. The school administrator will contact you to come and pick up your child from the school.
2. Keep in mind, that when a number of students are absent, the bus will arrive at homes and school a little earlier than scheduled. Bus driver and aides cannot leave the bus. An adult must accompany the child to and from the bus door.
3. Pick up and drop off times & locations for bus students are established by the Transportation Department.
4. The bus driver will personally contact parents of students to inform them of pick up and drop off times.
5. Any changes in transportation must be in writing and given to **the bus driver and the teacher.**
6. A list of adults, age 18 or older, who are authorized to take the child from the bus, will be required from each family. The

authorized adult picking up the child will be required to show picture identification.

7. Changes in address, phone numbers, childcare information and emergency numbers must be made in writing and sent to the school.
8. Children may not eat or drink on the bus. This is a safety precaution to prevent choking and protect children with food allergies who also use the bus.
9. Please **do not put sick children** on the bus.
10. For your child's safety, the bus drivers are not allowed to talk on the phone while driving.

Should you need to contact your bus driver in route, please call the Transportation office for your area.

11. Please talk with your child about the bus rules. If all children remember the rules, the ride to and from school will be enjoyable.
 - *Sit back in the seat at all times.
 - *Keep all body parts inside the bus.
 - *Use a quiet voice.
 - *Do not throw objects while on the bus.

Car Riders: If you transport your child to and from school, please remember the following:

1. Drop off/pick up your child at the designated area.
2. Be prompt.
3. Pick up your child or have the designated person who is to pick up the child listed on the School Emergency card.

School Supplies

***Full sized back pack (please don't send one with wheels)**

****Please send in a complete set of weather appropriate clothing including: shirt, pants, underwear, socks.**

***If your child is not toilet trained, please send in diapers/pull-ups with Velcro sides and wipes.**

***A list of items you may donate will be sent home from your child's teacher.**

***Bringing toys to school is discouraged unless requested by the teacher. We realize toys are expensive and we will not be responsible for lost or broken toys.**

Helpful Hints for Parents or Guardians

You can help by:

1. Checking your child's backpack DAILY and reading all notes sent home with your child. If they need to be returned, please do so the following day.
2. Asking your child's teacher what rules he/she has to follow in the classroom and talking to him/her about these rules.
3. Encouraging your child when he/she is behaving appropriately.
4. Talking to the teacher about events that may cause a change in your child's behavior (divorce, death, illness, minor accidents, loss of sleep, change in routine, and medication).
5. Asking your child to tell the teacher if someone bothers him/her. Encourage him/her to use words such as "Stop", "Leave Me Alone", "I Don't Like That", "That Hurts Me".
6. Helping your child understand that he/she should not hit, kick, bite or fight when angry. Tell your child to **use words** not hands, feet or teeth to let someone know how he/she feels.
7. Reading street signs, billboards, store windows, grocery lists, directions, maps, books, magazines, newspapers, and cartoons with your child.
8. Being positive. Encourage your child in all of his/her activities.
9. Talking to your child about everyday happenings, his/her interests, school activities, etc. Encourage your child to ask questions and answer your questions. Start by asking something like, "Did you play outside today?" Then say something like, "Tell me about it." If the child doesn't respond, you may need to ask more specific questions about who, what, when, where, and how.
10. Encouraging your child to develop hobbies and new interests such as sports, music, art, pets, handicrafts, and making collections. Arrange for your child to meet friends who share his/her interests.
11. **Helping your child realize he/she is a very special person** by verbally expressing your feelings. Help your child feel good about himself/herself.