



**Fort Dodge Community School District
Preschool Policies and Procedures**

Fort Dodge Community School District
104 South 17th Street
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
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Preschool Policies and Procedures

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Fort Dodge Community School District Preschool Program Policies and Procedures

I. WELCOME TO FORT DODGE COMMUNITY PRESCHOOLS QPPS 10.1

Fort Dodge Community School was awarded the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Grant in 2008 as a result of the Early Childhood Advisory Committee's dedicated work. The program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschools provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool programs have adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, administered by the Iowa Department of Education or Head Start Standards. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND GOALS QPPS 10.1

Mission:

The mission of Fort Dodge Community School District, preschool partners, parents, and community, is to prepare students to be life-long learners who can become successful, productive future citizens. This will be accomplished by recognizing the value of each individual and promoting academic and personal growth in a challenging and caring environment.

PreK-4th Grade School Philosophy of Education:

We believe:

- Student learning is the most important element of our society.
- Students learn best in a safe and caring environment.
- Innovative learning activities and various teaching strategies enhance learning.
- Respect for diversity develops tolerance within the school and our society.
- Effective learning produces life-long skills.
- Leaders never lose sight of best practice.
- Teaching the importance of citizenship benefits the school and the community.
- Productive discipline incorporates control, consistency, and care.
- Memorable and enjoyable activities foster learning.
- School, home and community cooperation facilitates and reinforces learning.

Core Values

Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education are based on commitment to core values that are deeply rooted in the history of our field. At Fort Dodge Community Preschools, we have committed ourselves professionally to:

- Appreciating childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle.
- Basing our work with children on current knowledge of child development.
- Acknowledging and supporting the close ties between the child and family.
- Recognizing that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community and society.
- Respecting the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual child, family member and colleague.

- Helping children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect and positive regard.
- Fostering an appreciation for and building a natural connection between the arts and learning.

Curriculum Goals:

The early years in a child's life set the tone for future learning. Our goal at Fort Dodge Community Preschools is to stay current on research in child development so that we are able to build a foundation for each child that lasts a lifetime. Our curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age level and child; however, the following goals are incorporated into every classroom:

- Developing safe and healthy habits in young children.
- Fostering positive self-esteem.
- Providing opportunities for creative expression.
- Supporting the development of social skills.
- Stimulating cognitive problem-solving skills.
- Strengthening communication skills necessary for listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
- Enhancing fine motor and gross motor skills.
- Assessing the individual needs of each child.

Goals for Children:

- Children will show competency in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- Children will be safe and healthy.
- Provide opportunities to use a large variety of materials appropriate to his/her age constructively and freely.
- Enhance his/her physical and intellectual development.
- Provide opportunities to play and live happily with other children in a group.
- Learn to trust adults other than his/her own family members in a new environment.

Goals for Families:

- Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read and write.
- Families will advocate for their children.

Goals for the Community:

- Help meet the needs of the community for an early childhood education facility.
- Contribute to the wholesome growth and development of the future of the community.
- Provide a setting where people of various social, religious, and ethnic backgrounds can work together for a common interest.
- Each child is encouraged to progress at their own rate of speed toward enriched experiences, self-discipline and the ability to make choices.
- Help each child to become self-confident, to have an eagerness to learn, and for each child to know they are unique and special.

III. ENROLLMENT

Equal Educational Opportunity

It is the policy of the Fort Dodge Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, physical attributes, religion, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, veteran's status, actual or potential parental, family or marital status, in its programs, services, and employment practices. If you have questions or grievances related to this policy, please contact Marcy Harms, Director of Student Services, Central Administration Office, 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501, (574-5678) or contact the Civil Rights Midwestern Division for U. S. Department of Education Office, 500 W. Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661-4544. (Alternate for Section 504 is Lis Ristau, Director of Special Needs, 515-574-5675).

The District's Compliance Coordinator for Affirmative Action is Robert Hughes, Assistant Superintendent, who can be reached at 574-5657 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District's Designated Investigator of Physical/Sexual Abuse of Students by School Employees is Marcy Harms. She can be reached at 574-5678 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501. The alternate is Corey Moody. He can be reached at 574-5469 or 819 North 25th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

The District's Officer for Harassment Complaints and Allegations is Marcy Harms, Director of Student Services. She can be reached at 574-5678 or 104 South 17th Street, Fort Dodge, IA 50501.

Eligibility

Children must be four years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year. Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the year. Registration materials are available from the elementary secretary. Final registration will occur in the fall.

Hours

Fort Dodge CSD Preschools meet Monday through Friday, 8:10 am – 2:30 pm

General Information QPPS 5.1 10.4

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The maximum class size is 20 children in each session based on square footage of the current location. A teaching staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. This ration will increase when the children are outside and on field trips. The elementary principal will maintain a current list of available substitutes for both the teacher and teacher assistant. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will call the elementary office and the principal will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio. **QPPS 10.4**

Inclusion QPPS 9.10

The preschool programs provide all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

IV. A CHILD’S DAY

Who Works In The Preschool QPPS 10.2

Program Director – The Director of Special Needs is designated as the program director supervising the preschool grant. The Director meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Each site has a building administrator as well.

Teacher – A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding and early childhood endorsement and special education endorsement is assigned to the preschool classrooms. **QPPS 6.3**

Teacher Assistant – A full-time teacher assistant in the classrooms carry out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistants will have specialized training in early childhood education. **QPPS 6.4**

School Nurse – The preschools will have access to a school nurse. Each school nurse is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. She maintains student health records by updating them quarterly, and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.

QPPS 10.10

Support Staff – Prairie Lakes AEA 8 support staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

Large and Small Group Activities	Self-directed Play	Snack
<i>Learning Center Activities:</i> Art, Science, Writing Table, Games and Put together toys, Book Center, Blocks and Wheel Toys, Pretend Play	Story Time	Computers
	Outdoor Activities	Individual Activities

Lesson plans for each week are posted in the classrooms showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Weekly notes will be sent home to families in children's backpacks and electronically, if parents desire.

Curriculum QPPS 2.1 – 2.3

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting.

It is the policy of this district that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and life styles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society.

QPPS 1.7

The preschool programs use Creative Curriculum, a research and evidence based comprehensive curriculum designed for four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. It provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways – through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling. Suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of the curriculum.

QPPS 2.1, 2.2

Child Assessment QPPS 4.1, 4.2

Guiding principles:

It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- Creative Curriculum is modified to align with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It records student progress in all developmental areas at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.
- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that requires additional assessment.

QPPS 7.3, 7.5

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. In addition, the Creative Curriculum will be sent home at the end of the first semester. The preschool teachers will communicate weekly regarding children's activities and developmental milestones. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

If, through observation or information on the Creative Curriculum, the teachers feel that there is a possible issue related to a development delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the Student Study Team as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plan interventions, provide support, and make outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The Student Study Team is available and functional for all students and teachers in the building.
- A request made to Prairie Lakes AEA 8 for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

The preschool teachers would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated. **QPPS 7.4**

If a child is determined to need special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

Program Assessment

Fort Dodge Community Preschools implement the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards or Head Start Standards. We had a verification visit during the 2009-10 school year and met all the standards. Administrators, families, staff and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. A report of the annual evaluation findings is shared with families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

Supervision Policy QPPS 9.2

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teachers will complete the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor:

- All safety plugs and electric outlets covered heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. in working order.
- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked – first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of environment – spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to head custodian.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child’s ability to participate in the daily activities.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.)

Child Guidance and Discipline QPPS 1.11

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child’s own ability to become self disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help

children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

***Challenging Behavior* QPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10**

The teaching staff in the preschools is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. All preschools will be implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) during the school year.

What is Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports?

PBIS is a process for creating safer and more effective schools. It is a systems approach to enhancing the capacity of schools to educate all children by developing research-based, school-wide, and classroom behavior support systems. The process focuses on improving a school’s ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. Rather than a prescribed program, PBIS provides systems for schools to design, implement, and evaluate effective school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and student specific plans. PBIS is not a program or a curriculum. It is a team-based process for systemic problem solving, planning, and evaluation. It is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn.

The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors teachers promote pre-social behavior by:

- Interacting in a respectful manner will all children.
- Modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors.
- Helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- Engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- Encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

Teaching staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

Permissible Methods of Discipline:

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
4. withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Water activities QPPS 5.9, 9.15

We have a water table in the classrooms for children to stand and play with their hands in the water. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that not infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition QPPS 5.12 – 5.21

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

Children may choose to have breakfast before class begins. A snack is served two hours after breakfast has ended. Children are served a snack at a regularly scheduled time. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. A written snack menu is posted in the classrooms and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschools serve a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourage children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program in individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hotdogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn, raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The preschool classrooms do not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

At least once daily in a program where children over 1 year of age receive two or more meals, teachers provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque. (The use of toothpaste is not required.)

Food Brought from Home QPPS 5.13

Lead Teacher will inform parents or legal guardians of food service plan of the facility and suggest ways to coordinate with this plan. The facility will supplement a child's home-provided meal if the nutritional content appears to be inadequate. The parent or legal guardian will be informed by staff if food brought from home is supplemented on a regular basis. Caregivers will check for food allergies before providing any supplemental food. In this facility, food may be brought from home under the following conditions: (for special occasions, for lunch, for snack). Meals may be provided by the family upon written agreement between the parent or legal guardian and staff.

1. Perishable food brought from home to be shared with other children must be store bought and in its original package. Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration and were made with freshly purchased ingredients.
2. Lunch and snack foods brought from home will meet with the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food program for the types of foods and portion sizes. They will be prepared and transported in a sanitary fashion, including maintenance of safe food temperatures for perishable items. Lead Teacher will check the arrival temperature and storage requirements of food brought from home. Food that is not at a safe temperature when it arrives will be discarded. Perishable foods that require refrigeration will be kept below 40 degrees F and perishable hot foods will be kept above 140 degrees until served. Food brought from home will be labeled with the child's name, the date, the type of food, and the need for temperature control.
3. Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
4. Leftover food will be discarded. The only food that may be returned to the family is food that does not require refrigeration or holding at a hot temperature, that came to the facility in a commercially-wrapped package, and that was never opened.
5. No peanuts or popcorn allowed. Food must be cut in small bite sizes-for example, (grapes cut in half, apples sliced, meat and cheeses cut).

Outside Play and Learning QPPS 5.5, 5.6 9.5 – 9.7

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside it is important to dress him/her according to the weather. When it is cold outside he/she needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child's name). For the warmer days dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days dressing your child in layers is a practical idea.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to your child's exposed skin (only with your written parental permission to do so). We will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with your written permission) no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist on a weekly basis.

Clothing

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can't guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Toilet Learning QPPS 5.7

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom adjacent to the classroom with a fold down changing table. Food handling will not be permitted in the diapering area.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:
 - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
 - Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
 - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
 - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
 - Surfaces used for changing on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
 - Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
 - Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
3. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.

4. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Objects From Home

Because the preschool programs provide ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The programs cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Weapon Policy

No child shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another child any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Look-alike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. *A zero tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect; i.e., gun, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, grenades and other similar items knives, etc. Violation may result in a child's suspension/expulsion.*

Classroom Animals and Pets QPPS 5.26

No live animals are to be inside any of the preschool buildings or classrooms at any time.

If you, as a parent or legal guardian, want to bring your family pet to share with your child's classroom you are welcome. However, all animals must remain outside the school buildings during the visit. The preschool teachers ensure that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal would appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teachers would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teachers are responsible for checking that requirements have been met.

Birthdays QPPS 5.13

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, children who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. The teachers will provide families a list of foods meeting the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES QPPS 1.1, 7.5

The programs will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations or e-mail. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. Teaching staff will write notes for families no less than weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs – email, in person, notes, or phone calls.

Open Door Policy

Parents and legal guardian are always welcome to visit the preschool classrooms. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the office. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom.

Arrival and Departure of Children QPPS 10.11

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians will include the use of age-appropriate and size-appropriate seat restraints.

When bringing your child to school, we ask that you park your car in the parking lot and turn off the engine before entering the building. Please hold your child's hand as you enter the building to decrease the possibility of an accident. Parents or legal guardians must either accompany children to the classroom at the beginning of the day or leave their child in the care of one of the teaching staff. No child will be permitted to leave the building without an adult.

Other than parents or legal guardian, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

In the interest of children's safety, parents/guardians/authorized individuals are requested to report directly to the office when picking up their child rather than going to the child's classroom. Likewise, when a child returns to the building following an absence during the school day, the adult should stop in the office and sign the child in. When picking up your child from the school, please come early enough to enjoy watching what your child is doing during that time of day.

If your child rides a bus to school, teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the child off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each child to the bus and assist the child onto the bus.

When all children have arrived, teaching staff will walk the children to the classroom where the preschool teachers will record attendance for the day. Throughout the day each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

Field Trips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classrooms. Parents or legal guardians will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and signs posted in the classrooms well in advance. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips for each child before each trip. Adult family members are asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. A notice posting the dates, time of departure, time of return, and the destination location will be posted prominently at least 48 hours before the field trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct children and all adults using the bus about the 10-foot danger zone around the vehicle where the driver cannot see.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that, for children, gives the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will be counted every 15 minutes while on a field trip. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

Attendance

Children who are enrolled for classes in the Fort Dodge Community are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Children are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those children who have been absent. Please call the office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:30 am for your child for the morning session and by 12:30 pm for the afternoon session. For safety's sake, if a child is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

Ethics and Confidentiality

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

All teaching staff will receive training on ethics and confidentiality on the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Code of Ethical Conduct as part of their orientation. Each staff person will sign a Statement of Commitment to document their willingness to hold close the values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood education.

Children's Records

Children's records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a child's records without the parent's permission. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school districts policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary in the administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Early Childhood Advisory Committee QPPS 7.2

The Early Childhood Network has an Early Childhood Advisory Committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool programs. This group meets quarterly to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Please let the preschool teachers know if you are interested in being a part of the Early Childhood Advisory Committee.

Grievance Policy QPPS 7.6

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool programs is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to your child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the Program Director, Lis Ristau.

If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Director of Special Needs, Lis Ristau, who is the program director for the preschools. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Superintendent of the Fort Dodge Community School District.

As part of our programs assessment, in the spring of each year, we also provide you with a family questionnaire to evaluate our programs. This information helps us to assess how the programs are meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT QPPS 7.1, 7.2

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Family members are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions.

Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about the socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to

share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Program staff communicate with families on at least a weekly basis regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools value the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teachers learn from families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teachers or administration at any time.

Although in-person daily contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also rely on notes home, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and bulleting boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication.

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools invite you to become involved in one or all of the following ways, and welcomes other ideas as well.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teachers informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teachers to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Attend family meetings.
3. Return all forms, questionnaires and so on promptly.
4. Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring semesters.
5. Take time to read the family bulleting board.
6. Check your child's backpack each day.
7. Participate in field trip activities.
8. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
9. Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
10. Help prepare snack and enjoy it with your child.
11. Read all the material sent home with your child.
12. Come to play.
13. Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, run errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards.
14. Serve on the Early Childhood Advisory Committee.
15. Add to the monthly newsletter or organize it.

It is the policy of the Fort Dodge Community Preschools not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools believe that families should be supported in making decisions about services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Home Visits

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teachers to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teachers, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teachers understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like addressed. Parents or legal guardians are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teachers or administrator.

Family Teacher Conferences

The preschool programs will have formal family teacher conferences during the fall and spring. The teachers will send home a sheet before the conference asking you to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community, to think about what you'd like more information about the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. During the conference the teachers will share results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development.

Preschool for Parents

Preschool for Parents is an opportunity for you and your family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. Based on results from a family survey and information from the Early Childhood Advisory Board, the teaching staff will select topics for the evening.

Transitions QPPS 7.9, 7.10

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is with the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Fort Dodge Community Preschools are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our programs. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards and Head Start Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

Health and Immunization Certificates QPPS 5.1

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child's parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request. **QPPS 10.10**

Child Health and Safety Records will include: **QPPS 5.1**

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage for treatment in an emergency;
2. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results;
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
4. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
5. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support); and **QPPS 10.14**
7. Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.
- Under the supervision of the preschool teachers, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.
- All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff completes "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times. **QPPS 5.4**

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children QPPS 5.3

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eyes with drainage
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

The center's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases QPPS 5.4

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the programs and that the families should implement at home. The programs have documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and have, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures QPPS 5.10

Policy: The preschools will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent or legal guardian and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the schools is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed not or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log. See sample form in Appendix.

Cleaning and Sanitization QPPS 9.11

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classrooms. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for at least 2 minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized with not be used. **QPPS 5.24**

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teachers and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible.

Hand Washing Practices QPPS 5.8

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hand effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- Upon arrival for the day
- After diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- After handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- Before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry);
- After playing in water that is share by two or more people;
- After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals; and

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child;
- Before and after administering medication;
- After assisting a child with toileting; and
- After handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water;
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material.

In situations where sinks used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

First Aid Kit QPPS 9.13

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classrooms next to the door. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outing away from the site.

Fire Safety QPPS 9.14

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classrooms with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents QPPS 10.13

The Fort Dodge Community School District has in place a "Safety Procedures Booklet" that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Emergency phone numbers
- Fire procedures
- Utility Failures (electric power failure, water line break, gas line break)
- Severe weather
- Bomb threats
- Physical Threats/Armed Intruder
- Evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures
- Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- School crisis team members and a checklist to use
- List of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

This booklet will be posted by the telephone and included in the first aid kit. The booklet will be reviewed by each staff member at the beginning of each school year and when changes are made to it.

In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our teachers will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an "Injury and Illness" form and a copy will be given to the parent or legal guardian within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Emergency phone numbers will be updated at least quarterly. Emergency phone numbers will be verified by calling the numbers to make sure a responsive, designated person is available.

Medical and Dental Emergency Procedures QPPS 10.14

In the event of a health emergency the following procedure is followed:

1. The parents are notified. If they are not available, the person listed as an emergency contact on the child's record is notified.
2. If no emergency contact can be located and the child needs further emergency care, the child will be taken to your family doctor, dentist, or hospital in the company of a school employee.
3. The Fort Dodge Trinity Hospital paramedics will be called in the event of a major emergency.

If a child becomes injured at preschool, the parent or guardian will be notified immediately. If the guardian cannot be reached, the emergency person listed on the child's enrollment form will be contacted. If we are unable to contact the emergency persons listed, the child will be taken to the hospital that is nearest to the preschool for professional medical care. A completed medical report form will be given to the child's guardian.

Lost Child Policy

Periodically, the teacher shall verify all children are accounted for. If a teacher realizes a child is lost, the Director will be notified immediately. The teacher's aide will stay with the class while the director and teacher begin a systematic search of the area. If the child cannot be found, the police shall be called to help with the search and the parents will be notified.

Inclement Weather

In the event that the Fort Dodge Schools must be closed due to bad weather, we will notify school patrons by radio and television as we have done in the past. The following are the radio and television stations which we notify: KKEZ/KWMT, KTPR, KVFD/KUEL, K97FM/KIAQ, KTLB, KJYL, KRNT, KSTZ, KIOA, KPSZ, KLTI, KAZR, WOI-TV 5, KCCI-TV 8, WHO-TV 13, and WHO-AM.

Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health QPPS 9.16, 9.17

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

The preschool classroom buildings have been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintains the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The programs maintain facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques know as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Smoke Free Facility QPPS 9.19

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke free Air Act of 2008, Fort Dodge Community School buildings and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom buildings to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. Not smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

Child Protection Policies QPPS 10.8, 10.16, 10.19

The health and well being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool programs involves direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

The programs have written school board policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. All teaching staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" at least every five years and within six months of employment.

The Fort Dodge Community Preschools do not tolerate employees physically, or sexually abusing or harassing children. Children who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of children by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Marcy Harms, Director of Student Services, at 515-574-5678. the alternate investigator is Corey Moody and may be reached at 515-574-5469.

Mandating Reporting QPPS 10.8

"As professionals in contact with young children and their families, you are required by law to help the Department of Human Services (DHS) become aware of children who may be abused or neglected. According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors; as well as day care/child care workers, are mandated reporters." Thus, it is the policy of the Fort Dodge Community Preschool Programs to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to DHS and the program director immediately by telephone and to follow up in writing within 24 hours the same information as reported by telephone. Our schools will offer full cooperation of its staff during the investigation of the reported incident. A staff member should follow these steps if abuse/neglect is suspected:

Definitions

Child Abuse is the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker that causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child's physical and emotional well being, including sexual abuse.

Child Neglect is the failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care.

Reasonable Cause means that after examining all the facts in a particular situation, most people with similar training and experience would also suspect abuse and/or neglect.

Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Fort Dodge Community Preschools. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Volunteers QPPS 10.15, 10.17

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher, the program administrator, or our office secretary if you would like to be a school volunteer. (We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer.) For safety's sake, if a volunteer will be working with children, he/she will be expected to execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. If a volunteer works more than 40 hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old. Volunteers will adhere to the following:

- Will be required to follow all rules and regulations of the Fort Dodge Community Preschools.
- Volunteers will use discipline policies as outlined in our Policy and Procedures Manual. Volunteers will not yell at, scold, punish, or use harsh discipline on any child while volunteering. Volunteers will use open ended statements and will speak positively at all times.
- Volunteers must maintain confidentiality. Volunteers must not discuss any situations specific to any child with other parents or teachers.
- Volunteers may be given information about children with special needs in the classroom. Please keep in mind that this information is only given if it is necessary for the volunteer to know in order to carry out his/her duties; and any information given is told in confidence, and may not be discussed with any one else including other teachers, parents, etc.
- Volunteers will encourage children to try tasks, and will help as needed.
- If a volunteer observes any behaviors they are unsure of or uncomfortable with, they will immediately notify the teacher and/or director. Volunteers may be required to document the behavior.
- If any rules are violated, volunteers may be dismissed from the program.

VII. Staff QPPS 10.15 – 10.20

General Information

The Fort Dodge Community School District has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

Health Assessment

The preschool programs maintain current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the programs before an employee starts work. Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance
- Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease.

Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Superintendent's office.

Orientation QPPS 6.2

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, and goals;
- Expectations for ethical conduct;
- Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for;
- Accepted guidelines and classroom management techniques;
- Daily activities and routines of the program;
- Program curriculum;
- Child abuse and reporting procedures;
- Program policies and procedures;
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria;
- Regulatory requirements.

Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

Staffing patterns and schedule

The preschool programs are in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our programs follow requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teachers and the preschool teaching assistants in case of absence. If one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, the person will call the office to arrange for coverage in order to maintain the adult/child ratio.

Staff are provided space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

Staff development activities QPPS 6.6, 10.15

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both at and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff are expected to attend all staff trainings and meetings throughout the year. Trainings will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the programs and community.

Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan QPPS 6.5, 6.6

All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.