

Early Learning Center

Indian River School District Parent Handbook



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Thank you for enrolling your child at the Indian River School District Early Learning Center. The purpose of this handbook is to help you understand this unique educational initiative, to explain the goals and objectives of the program, and to offer suggestions that will help your child be successful in the Pre-K, TOTS and Project Village programs and throughout his or her educational career.

We also want you to know we value your input. Please contact our office with any questions or comments. Also, visit www.irsd.net website for more information. We appreciate your interest in the Early Learning Center.

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IRSD Early Learning Center

The Early Learning Center provides appropriate activities and learning experiences that help prepare young children for school. We offer integrated pre-k programs for children ages three to four. Classrooms include children with identified disabilities as well as children without identified disabilities, known as “Typical Peers.” Based on research and developmentally appropriate practice, this “inclusion” model of programming, where children with and without disabilities are educated together, is considered to be best practice.

TOTS/Pre-K 619 is our Special Education Pre-K program. Special education is instruction specifically designed to meet the educational and developmental needs of children with disabilities, or those who are experiencing developmental delays. Services for children are provided free of charge through the public school system. These services are available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Tuition program provides services for three and four-year-old children at an affordable rate. The goal is to prepare children to be successful in kindergarten and beyond through education in the areas of language, literacy, social-emotional, and physical development.

Purchase of Care (POC)/Subsidized Child Care is offered through the Delaware Department of Health and Social Service (DHSS). Parents must meet DHSS guidelines. It is a parent/guardian’s responsibility to pay the required Parent Co-Pay.



Project Village is our Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP). ECAP is funded by the Delaware Department of Education and provides services for Delaware’s low-income families free of charge. ECAP provides services to three to four-year-old children. The focus in education is in the areas of language, literacy, social-emotional, physical development, health, nutrition and mental wellness. The goal is to prepare children to be successful in kindergarten and beyond.



Early Learning Center

Mission

Through the provision of developmentally appropriate language-rich activities in a safe, nurturing preschool environment, all children will be able to “enter school ready to learn”.

Philosophy

The Indian River School District believes that all children deserve an opportunity to maximize their potential and realize academic success. Furthermore, the district believes that all children can learn and should be fully included in early care and education programs that have the flexibility and resources to accommodate individual’s unique needs and abilities. Such quality programs offer experiences that increase each child’s literacy and math readiness skills; foster cognitive, motor and social skills development; offer opportunities to explore and experience various aspects of the surrounding environment; foster self-esteem, and create a nurturing environment which encourages parents and community to become partners in their child’s education and a comprehensive early childhood program for 3 and 4–year olds.



Early Learning Center Goals

- To provide a safe and nurturing environment
- To build a positive self-image for each child
- To enhance children’s cultural and ethnic identity while promoting an awareness and acceptance of diversity
- To provide a developmentally age appropriate curriculum
- To encourage children to engage in cognitive activities that promote thinking, discovery and problem solving
- To develop age appropriate gross and fine motor skills
- To reinforce good behavior, self-control, and cooperation through praise and encouragement

Program Governance

The Indian River School District Board of Education currently serves as the Early Learning Center Governing Board. The Indian River School District Board is responsible in the development, planning and evaluation of program, policies and procedures, self-assessments, community assessment, financial audit, and personnel policies, hire and terminate staff, procedures for selecting Policy Council Members, etc.



Indian River Board of Education 2021-2022

Board Member	Election District	Term Expiration
Rodney M. Layfield, <i>President</i>	District 2	2023
Leolga T. Wright, <i>Vice President</i>	District 3	2023
Derek E. Cathell	District 5	2024
W. Scott Collins	District 5	2024
James E. Fritz	District 1	2022
Dr. Donald G. Hattier	District 4	2024
Madeline R. Moses	District 1	2022
Gerald T. Peden	District 2	2025
Constance T. Pryor	District 4	2025
Dr. Heather M. Statler	District 3	2024

For more information on the IRSD Board please visit www.irsd.net

Our **Policy Council** is the formal structure in the program that provides parents and other community representatives with the authority and opportunity to participate in shared decision-making concerning program design and implementation. Our Policy Council is made up of parents whose children are currently enrolled at the center, community representatives and board liaison. As a member, you have the authority and influence over program goals, policies, including the establishment of enrollment criteria, budgeting, etc. Members are elected at the beginning of the school year and serve for one year.

For additional information, please contact the Family Service Coordinator.

Open Door Policy

The Early Learning Center maintains an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to visit our classrooms unannounced to observe their child at any time during program hours. Our programs are based upon a partnership with the parents of the children enrolled. Therefore, parents are encouraged to participate in our programs. Parents planning to visit must adhere to our volunteer policy as described in the parent involvement section.

Grievance and Complaints Procedures

Parents or other concerned adults who have a complaint or concern regarding the program, should follow the following procedure:

1. Meet with the classroom teacher initially to resolve any classroom specific conflict.
2. If you are uncomfortable or unable to resolve the issue with the teacher, contact the Coordinator of your program.
3. If the Coordinator is unable to resolve the grievance contact the Center Director. If the Director is unable to resolve the grievance, contact the Governing Board in writing.



Equal Access

The IRSD Early Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability in determining which children and families are served. Our district understands and implements the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities.

Confidentiality of Information

All records provided regarding your child and family health and finances are confidential. We also ask that you respect this confidentiality by not asking staff to discuss your child or other children outside of the center. ELC staff understands the importance of this policy and feel uncomfortable when asked to discuss confidential issues concerning children in the program. We encourage you to bring up child and center issues with the Center Director.

Mandatory Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Every employee is mandated by state statute to report any cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Such a report is not a statement of blame; it is simply a statement that may result in an investigation by the proper authorities. In the event that the Department of Human Services carries out an investigation of child abuse, The Early Learning Center and its staff will cooperate fully with investigators. All staff are screened by the State of Delaware for abuse and criminal records. The National child abuse hotline number is 1-800-2929-9582. Children may be subject to interviews by child maltreatment investigators or law enforcement officials to determine licensing compliance or for investigative purposes without parental notice or consent.

Release of Children

Students in the Early Learning Center will ONLY be released to adults on the student's Emergency Contacts and Transportation Form.

A written letter from the parents must be submitted if they want to add or delete any of the emergency contacts. **Students will NOT be released if contacts are not on file.**

Parents must advise their emergency contacts that a Photo ID must be provided to the Early Learning Center staff when child is being released.



Review of Delacare Regulations

The Early Learning center is licensed by the office of Child Care Licensing to provide services to children 3-5 years of age. The DELACARE regulation provides and reviews our program through both unannounced and regularly scheduled re-licensing visits. We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with the state licensing regulations in order to ensure a quality environment for your children. The Early Learning Center complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facility and playground safety, health guidelines as well as child-to-staff ratios. The DELACARE regulation is available for viewing in the office. Copies of our most recent monitoring checklist for licensing and facility licensing compliance are also made available.

Photographing/Videotaping

Photographs of the children participating in our program may be taken from time to time for newspapers, public material, website and face book page. Parents/Guardians must fill out and sign parental consent form of release of child's photograph and other information in order to grant or not grant permission.

Dismissals

School bus transportation is an optional service provided by our program and is a privilege extended to all students. The Student Code of Conduct of the Indian River School District shall be in effect on school buses transporting IRSD students and at any designated IRSD school bus stop. This privilege may be suspended for violations of the School Bus Safety Regulations at the discretion of the administrators. For further information, please see the school calendar with the handbook on District Policies and Procedures.

Busing Information

If you choose to use district transportation, the bus driver will contact you directly regarding pick up and drop off times and locations.

- In accordance with the IRSD transportation policy for preschool students, a parent or another authorized adult must be present and waiting with/for the child at the bus stop location. Repeated violations of this policy by parents/guardians may result in a suspension of bus privileges.
- Students should plan to arrive at the bus stop approximately 10 minutes prior to the designated pickup time. The bus cannot wait for students who are late since this would cause traffic congestion and would delay the arrival at subsequent bus stops.
- If your child is ill or not attending school for some reason, please contact the driver as a courtesy so that he/she does not have to proceed to your bus stop location.
- Weather, traffic, substitute drivers or unforeseen incidents may be responsible for delays in the arrival of school buses in the morning and afternoon. Please know that our transportation department is doing everything humanly possible to have all buses running on schedule every day. In the event that your bus does not arrive as scheduled, please allow at least fifteen minutes before calling the transportation office or the school.
- **Please inform the office immediately of any bus/address changes in writing and allow three days for changes to be made.**

Parents transporting children to/from school

- Parents driving children to school should park in the side parking lot where the buses park. You **MUST** remain in your vehicle until the buses arrive and the staff is present to receive children. Parents can then bring their child to meet the group on the sidewalk. All children will walk into the building together with teacher escorts.
- Parents picking children up at dismissal should park in the side parking lot where the buses park. Parents may then wait for children outside by the buses on the sidewalk. **Parents must wait for all buses to leave the parking lot in order to leave.**
- For obvious safety reasons, our staff **will not allow** children to walk/run to meet parents at their cars.

Late arrivals/Early dismissals

- If you bring your child to school after the designated arrival time or wish to pick him/her up before the scheduled dismissal time, you must enter through the front entrance of the school.
- **Prior written notice must be received for early dismissals.**

From there, you will need to go to the office and sign in/out. The teacher will be alerted and the student will be escorted to or from the classroom by school personnel. **For security reasons, parents will not be permitted to walk to and from the classrooms without an escort.**

Food, Water and Nutrition Services



ECAP, Pre-K and TOTS students receive free meals and snacks based on income, USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations. Tuition parents may buy meals or pack for their child. Menus are posted on the IRSD website, and parents will receive a copy every month. Morning students receive breakfast and lunch while afternoon students receive lunch. Teachers will model healthy eating practices and encourage students to eat. Water will be available to students at all times. The district encourages foods provided for celebrations and rewards to follow USDA Smart Snacks in School Guidelines. **All foods provided for celebrations and rewards are required to be commercially packaged and have food nutrition labels, which include nutrient analysis and allergy information.**

It is important for parents to notify the Early Learning Center Staff and school nurse concerning any food allergies or special diet to provide an individualized menu.

A lunch is to include:
Milk (REQUIRED) (Whole Milk, 1% or fat-free for 24+ months)
Protein
Grain
Fruit /Vegetable (2 Items: 2 fruit or 2 vegetables or fruit & vegetable)
No more than ½ cup (4 oz.) per day for 12 months and older – Per DELACARE Requirements

What You Can Expect

Classroom Settings, Learning Areas, Teaching Methods

Classrooms have learning areas or “centers” set-up in the classroom, and each center is supplied with books, materials, and learning activities. Typical learning centers in a classroom might include math, blocks, reading, art, science, dramatic play, writing, and music. The learning centers are designed to promote developmental skills in seven areas:

- Language and Literacy
- Math Development
- Science Development
- Social Studies Development
- Creative Development
- Physical and Health Development
- Social Emotional Development
- Approaches to Play and Learning



The classrooms have ample space to accommodate individual, small, and large group instruction. The Delaware Early Learning Foundations (ELF) provide the basis for instruction in the classrooms. You can find a copy of the ELF’s on our website, <https://dieecpd.org/early-learning-foundations>.



Teachers interact with children and move within the classroom to facilitate learning experiences. You can find a copy of a daily schedule posted in the classroom. The schedule allows for daily story times; outside time, rest time, instruction in the learning centers and in large and small groups. You might find your child engaged in building a farm in the block center as a result of visiting a real farm, or observing butterflies hatch in the science area and painting or drawing a picture of a butterfly in the art center.

Curriculum

3 Year Old

Big Day for PreK is a proven-effective comprehensive early-learning program that ensures readiness for Prekindergarten by embracing children's natural curiosity and encouraging them to explore and connect with the world around them.

Big Day for PreK is organized into eight engaging and child-friendly themes for the school year:

- Ready for School
- My Family
- Our Community
- Awesome Animals
- Imagine It, Make It
- Growing Up Healthy
- Nature All Around Us
- Moving On



In *Big Day for PreK*, each day is organized around three Big Experiences—Whole-Group, Circle Time, and Story Time lessons—which provide a springboard for conversation, play, and learning. Big Experiences provide integrated learning opportunities and introduce children to new vocabulary, concepts, and skills. *Big Day for PreK* provides intentional instruction in the learning domains of social-emotional development, oral language and vocabulary, physical development, emergent reading and writing, mathematics, science, social studies and art.

4 Year Old

Pre-K's curriculum is called Develop. Inspire. Grow (D.I.G), a Delaware STARS and DOE recommended and approved curriculum. The curriculum offers:

- A balance between play and instructional skills
- Dr. Jean's cheers, chants, and active movements used throughout each week of instruction
- 8 themes that build on social emotional, language development, emergent reading, emergent writing, mathematics, science and health, creative arts, physical development, and cognitive development skills, writing, mathematics, science, social studies and art.
- Teaching Strategies Online Assessment
- The assessment will be administered during the Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Brand New, Comprehensive Pre-K Program

DIG is everything a teacher needs to develop, inspire, and grow children across all learning domains in a balanced way.

Thematic Units



DIG's eight thematic units of integrated science, social studies, literacy, and math instruction anchor learning throughout the year and help children make solid and lasting content connections. With each unit lasting four weeks, students have **ample time to dive deeper** into various aspects of the theme.

Behavior

ELC staff will guide children's behavior in a positive, consistent manner. In your child's classroom, a behavior management program called the clip chart is used. Each child has a clip on the clip chart. Every student starts their clip on ready to learn or green. The student has the chance to move their clip up or down throughout the day depending upon the choices that they make. A clip can be moved up, or it can be moved down depending on a student's behavior and choices that are made. If the clip is moved down, it can be moved up as the behavior improves. At the end of each day, the clip chart is recorded. Parents will be contacted if a behavior problem is identified. See the School District's calendar for our Discipline Policy. Families will be given assistance in obtaining resources to help the child benefit from the program if a student consistently displays challenging behaviors. The Early Learning Center collaborates with the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Services which offers early childhood mental health consultation as a free service. Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an effective strategy in supporting young children's social and emotional development in early care and education settings.



The School Calendar Year

The Early Learning Center is based on the IRSD Calendar. A separate calendar will be provided to parents that identifies ELC workshops/meetings. The instructional program is 3.5 hours per day. Please see IRSD calendar for closings and parent teacher conference dates.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is a component of a child's academic success. Children who do not attend school on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early will be put on a family action plan to help improve attendance. Parents will receive a call from the Early Learning Center staff by 9:30am if the child is absent and parent has not called to notify staff of absenteeism. If child is absent more than three consecutive days due to illness, parents must provide a doctor note. If a family has an emergency or going on a vacation, parents must provide a written note. **POC students may not be absent from school more than 5 days per month.** Failure to comply with the attendance requirements will result in the withdrawal of the student.

Physical Activity/Screen Time/Daily Schedule

The daily schedule will slightly vary for each classroom and is posted in the classroom for both the parents and the child to see. Students will engage in at least 30 minutes of physical activity and less than 30 minutes a week of screen time (smart board etc.). Although changes may be made periodically, the daily schedule may be similar to the following:

<u>Activity</u>	<u>A.M Times</u>
Arrival	8:30-8:35
Unpack/Bathroom	8:35-8:50
Breakfast	8:50-9:10
Clean up/ Transition	9:10-9:15
Theme Circle (Story-time/discussion)	9:15-9:30
Learning Centers/**Toothbrushing	9:30-10:00
Literacy Circle (Letters/language)	10:00-10:25
Recess	10:30-11:00
Math Circle (Math concepts)	11:00-11:15
Handwashing/Bathroom	11:15-11:20
Lunch	11:20-11:50
Closing/pack-up/buses	11:50-12:00

<u>Activity</u>	<u>P.M. Times</u>
Arrival	12:40-12:50
Afternoon Meeting/Bathroom	12:50-1:00
Lunch	1:00-1:30
Big Experience (Story-time/discussion)	1:30-1:50
Learning Centers w/Small Group Instruction	1:50-2:30
Big Experience 2 (Basic concepts skills)	2:30-2:50
Recess/Bathroom	2:50-3:15
Closing/pack-up/buses	3:15-3:20

Family Involvement

Open House

The ELC will conduct an Open House prior to the start of the program. The Open House will include additional information about the curriculum, specific classroom information and general program information. Invitation letters are sent out to parents with information about the Open House at the end of August.



Field Trips

Whenever possible, teachers are encouraged to plan field trips both inside and outside of the classroom environment to familiarize children with their community and broaden their educational experiences. The number of field trips will vary. Some field trips will require chaperones and parents are encouraged to participate.



Moving up Ceremony

Our Early Learning Center “Moving Up Ceremonies” are held during the end of the school year. We encourage families to participate and support the Early Learning Center.

Parent Workshops

In partnership with community organizations, the Early Learning Center holds monthly Parent Workshops based on family needs and interests. Previous workshops have included: budgeting, how to improve a credit score, healthy meals, positive behavior, and father/ mother activities. We will provide you with a needs/interest survey during enrollment.

Your Involvement

Whenever possible, families should actively participate in the program and maintain an open line of communication with the program staff. Research shows that active family participation in children's learning experiences contribute to success in school. Volunteering in the classroom is highly recommended, as it is beneficial to the children, and is informative and rewarding for families.



Contact your Family Service Coordinator to find out about opportunities to volunteer your time, talents, and experiences in your child's classroom.

Parent Communication

Please keep your contact information and emergency numbers current with the office. We must maintain up-to-date records in case of emergencies and to deliver important school information such as closings and delays; which are usually communicated via telephone. If you change your phone number or address at any time during the school year, please inform our office immediately (732-1346 ext. 8).

Informal/Formal communication

We believe that a child's education is enhanced by a strong partnership with the family. Therefore, these programs provide numerous methods of communicating with families and sharing student progress.

- Daily "Take-Home" Folder – please check this folder each day for communication from the teacher and return it to school each day. You may communicate with this teacher via this tool as well.
- Weekly Notes Home
- Quarterly Updates on the goals/benchmarks outlined in your child's Individualized Education Program
- Quarterly Newsletter with current information about themes, activities, scheduled events, and helpful articles
- Telephone Calls/Emails at the discretion of the teacher
- District Parent/Teacher Conferences – parent conferences are held on a regular basis throughout the school year. Dates and times are posted on the district school calendar. Each family will have a minimum of 1 conference per year. The teacher will send a formal invitation notice prior to a scheduled appointment.
- Individual Education Program (IEP) conferences – If your child has an IEP, you will be notified of any scheduled meetings.

Family/Teacher Conferences

A minimum of two family/teacher conferences will be offered to families during the school year. During this conference the Teaching Strategies Report will be shared with families. While sharing the report with families, the teacher will provide information about your child's performance in language/literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, social/emotional development, health and physical development, creative expression, approaches to play and learning, and cognitive processes. Parents can discuss any concerns with teachers during conferences.



Family Partnership

ECAP is a comprehensive, strength-based family program. Research has shown that parental involvement helps children to be more successful at school and also throughout life. Good partnerships means ECAP parents/guardians and staff are learning from one another. Our partnership begins with the Family Strengths Interview that is completed at the beginning of the year. We will identify the strengths, needs and interests of your family. Parents are supported as they meet their own goals and as they nurture the development of their children. Family situations affect children. The ELC staff is prepared to assist families in finding needed resources. Our program assists families by:

- Making home visits.
- Referring to other services, agencies or consultants.
- Working in a partnership that is driven by family's strengths and needs.
- Responding to your child's attendance to see if additional assistance could be provided.
- Helping you identify the strengths and concerns of your family to help you set goals and time frames to meet your goals.

We work with parents/guardians and provide education on how to advocate for yourself, your child, and your community. Parental involvement has continually evolved over the years; and we have learned from our experience and research about what makes the best differences for children and families.

Home Visits

Center Teachers and a Family Service Worker meet individually with families at least two (2) times during the school year once at the beginning of the year, and at the end at home or a location where the family feels comfortable. These meetings are held to discuss the strengths of your child and keep you up to date on the many ways your child is growing and to review annual Family Goals.

The items discussed during these home visits include, but are not limited to:

- Home/School Transition
- Goal Setting
- Family Partnership Agreement
- Child's Developmental Progress
- Family Needs Assessment
- School-Kindergarten Transition
- Any Additional Information



Reading Aloud

The Early Learning Center suggests that you read to your child as often as you can. Time spent reading to your child and encouraging your child to read will strengthen your child's school success. Together, at home and at school, you can help your child be an explorer, a discoverer, a problem solver, and an inventor. Reading aloud has been identified as an outstanding way to introduce vocabulary and to engage in meaningful conversations with your child.

Early Learning Center Newsletter

The ELC Newsletter is a publication for you and your child. Each issue gives you ideas about how to connect with what your child is learning at school and with what you are doing at home. Each publication includes information about child development and activities for children and families that support the development in each of the learning domains identified earlier in this handbook.

Transition/Preparing for Kindergarten

"Transition" means change. Families frequently go through many changes as their children grow and mature. Transitions are often viewed as opportunities for continuous learning and growth. Transitions address changes that occur as a family moves from one setting to another, from home to a center-based program, within a program or between programs as well as the locations attended by your child. As these transitions occur, you will become aware of just how important you are when planning for the many transitions that you, your child, and family will experience, even on a daily basis. As a parent, you are the best resource for your child. You have firsthand knowledge about your children and family to provide staff as learning and decisions are being made. This information will be useful in guiding your family's next steps. As your child's first teacher, you are the key to successful early transitions when you:

- Advocate for your own child and other children.
- Prepare and support your child before and during transitions.
- Understand the importance of effective transitions in the lives of your child and family.
- Learn from others about the new settings by forming supportive and ongoing alliances with other parents/guardians and staff.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- Work with your child at home.
- Learn about new settings and new experiences.
- Stay involved with the program.
- Network with other parents/guardians.
- Communicate regularly with staff.
- Ensure your child has all health requirements completed prior to entering Kindergarten.

Preparing for Kindergarten

The Early Learning Center will forward all cumulative files (birth certificate, physical, immunization, etc) to the elementary school your child will attend. A transition meeting will be held to facilitate you and your child's transition to Kindergarten. Included in this transition process will be a field trip to a local elementary school and to have children experience a Kindergarten class. More information will be provided as this approaches.

Health/Safety

Physical Exam Requirements

A yearly physical examination within 12 months of enrollment. **Licensing regulations requires physicals be updated every 13 months.**

Physical must have the following:

- Tuberculosis screening or PPD
- Lead results: 12 and 24 months or 24 months
- Hemoglobin/Hematocrits ***ECAP students only**
- Immunization Record

Due to Head Start regulations, ECAP students only must have the following:

- Dental Exam (updated every 12 months) due **45 days of enrollment**
- Growth Assessments done at the center, check height and weight, in the fall and spring, demonstrates how your child is growing throughout the school year.

Administration of Medication

Our centers follow state and federal regulations regarding medication. We must follow these regulations. There can be **NO** exceptions. Medication will be administered only by a school nurse who is certified according to state guidelines.

You must follow these procedures regarding medication:

- The Parental Permission to Administer Medication at School outlining the plan of care, including instructions for medication administration, must be completed by a physician when a health condition requires rescue medication to be given.
- You must bring the rescue medication to the center.
- Send medication in the original container. If a prescription, the container must be properly labeled with correct name, time, dose, date and prescribing licensed healthcare provider.
- Pick up the medication from school at the end of the school year.

Ill Child/Communicable Diseases

Children who have symptoms of illness will not be admitted or allowed to remain at the center without written documentation from a health care provider or with written documentation stating that the child may return and that the symptoms pose no threat. If ill, children will be made comfortable in nurse's office and closely monitored until your arrival. The parent/guardian will be

contacted to pick up the child. If parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child. Symptoms include but not limited to:

- Temperature equivalent to 101°F or greater when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness or behavior changes.
- Uncontrolled diarrhea; if child has diarrhea and a fever, child will be excluded for 48 hours once symptoms are no longer present.
- Symptoms of possible serious illness such as unusual tiredness, uncontrolled coughing, unexplained touchiness, non-stop crying, trouble breathing, wheezing, and/or other unusual signs.
- Blood in stool not explainable by dietary change, medication or hard stool.
- Vomiting two or more times in 24 hours; or vomiting and having a fever, until 48 hours after the symptoms are gone or until a doctor clears the child to return to the center.
- Persistent abdominal pain that last more than two hours or irregular pain with fever or other symptoms.
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the condition is noninfectious.
- Pink eye until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started.
- Scabies, a red rash with severe itching, until 24 hours after treatment has started.
- Head lice, until 24 hours after treatment has started.
- Tuberculosis, until health care provider states the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend again.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been initiated and lesions are dry.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started and the child has no fever.
- Chicken pox, until all wounds have dried and crusted (usually six days).
- Shingles, only if clothing or a dressing cannot cover the wounds; if not until wounds are crusted and dry.
- Whooping cough, until after five days of antibiotic treatment.
- Mumps, until five days after onset of glandular swelling.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after onset of illness, jaundice, or as directed by the Delaware Division of Public Health.
- Measles, until four days after appearance of rash.
- Rubella, until seven days after appearance of rash.
- Cold sores, if child is too young to control liquid coming from mouth.
- Unknown illness if the child cannot participate in activities or the child needs more attention that takes away from the care of other children.

Serious Incident, Illness or Injury

In the event of a serious incident, illness or injury, the following procedures will be followed:

- Staff will stay with the injured/ill child at all times and summon additional help if needed to supervise the remaining children.

- Staff will quickly complete an assessment: Appearance, Breathing, Circulation.
- Staff will summon school nurse trained in First Aid/Communicable Disease/CPR.
- Nurse will determine whether EMS needs to be contacted.
- Staff will check child's health information to determine if a Medical/Physical Health Care Plan has been completed for the child.
- Contact parent/guardian.
- Provide basic first aid until EMS or parent arrives. Nurse or other staff will accompany child to the hospital with all available health records if the parent is not available.
- Complete an incident report for parents/district office.

If child is ill, staff will isolate child, reference the ODH Communicable Disease Chart and follow instructions. Nurse will determine whether illness needs to be reported to ODH. If blood or bodily fluids are involved, staff will wear vinyl or non-latex gloves and follow standard precautions for cleanup. Children must be supervised at all times. Staff will be assigned to monitor remaining students while additional staff remain with your child, who is in need of your attention.

Accident/Incident Report Procedures

Incident Reports will be completed to document any injury as soon after the incident as is feasible by the school nurse.

- Incident Reports contain child's name, center location, name of parent, brief, accurate description of incident with good detail, and names of witnesses if any and center staff completing the report.

An incident report will be completed by the nurse when any of the following occurs:

- An illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment.
- A bump or blow to the head.
- Emergency transporting.
- An unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children or staff.

Incident Report will be signed by the parent/guardian and a copy sent home the day the incident occurs. Copies of all Incident Reports are kept on file for one year and archived for reference as needed.

Daily Health Checks

According to Delaware State Licensing Requirements, before signing your child in each day, the center staff will briefly check for general signs of illness or any communicable conditions. Staff will also check for general signs at the end of the day. They will report to the nurse if they have any concerns.

Safety/Sanitation

Our agency takes the responsibility of caring for your children very seriously. Children are never left alone or unattended. Staff is trained in safety policies and procedures. Emergency response phone numbers are posted in all locations. Parent/Guardian emergency contact information for every child is kept on file. Please notify staff as soon as possible, if your contact information changes. This will guarantee that we can reach you in the event of an emergency. In the case of serious injury that requires medical treatment, staff will call 911. Parent/Guardians are notified immediately if this occurs..

The Early Learning Center is designed to meet all health, safety and developmental needs of children. Only age appropriate non-toxic materials are used at our center. The center meets licensing regulations regarding safety procedures. Adequate temperatures in the classrooms are maintained. We will not hold center session if the temperature in the center falls below 65 degrees. If the temperature goes above 80 degrees, ventilation to provide air movement is used. Custodial staff inspects the centers and playgrounds daily. Any safety hazards, damaged materials, or other potential hazards are removed, repaired, or replaced. The center is inspected by licensing and fire personnel regularly to make sure we are meeting safety guidelines. Emergency fire, tornado, and evacuation plans are posted within the center. Fire drills are conducted regularly so children are familiar with procedures for evacuation. All center areas including bathrooms, closets, under desks, etc. are checked before leaving the building to make sure all children are out of the building. A head count is checked against the attendance sheet to make sure all children are accounted for.

Diapering

The diaper changing area is strictly monitored for cleanliness. Each classroom's diaper changing area is arranged so that teachers can immediately seal all soiled items in moisture proof, hands free, covered containers. Teachers wash their hands thoroughly before and after each diaper change. For the child's comfort a moisture proof pad covers the hard changing surface. The changing surfaces are sanitized after each use by spraying the surface with a bleach solution. The solution is allowed to sit on the changing surfaces for one minute, and then surfaces are wiped dry. Each classroom's bleach solutions are labeled and changed daily. Diaper changing procedures are posted in the classrooms and staff personnel are trained as described.

General Emergency and Safety Procedures

The safety of your child is a top priority for our agency. We have outlined procedures for emergencies that are posted near the telephone in every classroom, in the event that an emergency would occur. In the event of a fire or tornado, staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at their designated spot. Staff will take the attendance roster, first aid kit and emergency contact information for children. All children will be accounted for with a name/face check off.

In order to prepare children for the occurrence of unplanned events, the center conducts monthly drills. In the event that an evacuation occurs, the emergency destination is the Frankford Fire Department. A sign will be posted in front of the center indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. Parents will be contacted immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information. In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, staff will; secure the children in the safest location possible, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would be provided to the parents. In the event a "Shelter In Place" order from authorities were to occur, procedures are in place to assure the safety of children and staff. Supplies that may be needed are readily available at the center. Once the "Shelter In Place" order is lifted by authorities, you may pick up your child. No child will be released to any parent/guardian until this order is lifted. In the event of orders to evacuate a center, we will contact local authorities for evacuation instructions. Once at the evacuation site, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child/children.

Parent Tips

Reading aloud to your child is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for success in reading. Choosing many different types of books will expose your child to new concepts, vocabulary and interests. Listed below are some recommended books that represent different forms of age appropriate literature, that you and your child may enjoy. We would suggest that you consider visiting your local library for other books to enjoy.

Alphabet Books

Alphabet books introduce your child to the letters and connect the beginning letter sounds with pictures.

- n *Dr. Seuss' ABC*, Dr. Seuss
- n *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, Bill Martin, Jr., and John Archambault
- n *Eating the Alphabet*, Lois Ehlert

Counting Books

These books emphasize counting and connect the numerals with a corresponding number of items.

- n *Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed*, Eileen Christelow
- n *Anno's Counting Book*, Mitsumasa Anno

Concept Books and Informational Books

These books teach concepts that children will review in school such as colors, shapes, opposites, or sizes and provide information to help in understanding the world.

- n *Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe*, Tana Hoban
- n *Boats*, Anne Rockwell

Predictable/Repetitive Books

In these books, a word or phrase is repeated throughout the book forming a pattern. Children quickly recognize the patterns and are able to read along.

- n *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Bill Martin, Jr.
- n *Are You My Mother?* P. D. Eastman



THE ABC'S OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

- A**lways consider the child's feelings – avoid embarrassing a child.
- B**e alert and observant. This is perhaps the most effective way to prevent problems before they occur.
- C**hoose your words carefully when problems do arise.
- D**iscipline yourself. In other words, control your temper.
- E**xcessive flattery as a technique to motivate or control is ineffective.
- F**irmness and fairness should abide.
- G**ood humor goes a long way.
- H**andle problems without threatening.
- I**gnore those behaviors that are just efforts to get attention.
- J**oin your child by the hand to supervise them as you walk or cross the street.
- K**eep this simple idea in mind – children are not problems, but rather may have problems.
- L**ead and train children in everyday activities.
- M**ake positive statements as much as possible.
- N**ever underestimate the power of your appearance and behavior.
- O**ptions are important to children.
- P**roximity – stay close as an effective preventative approach.
- Q**uiet activities can be just as much fun as noisy ones.
- R**outines and rules should be consistent and clear.
- S**how children you are up for the challenge of parenting.
- T**ry to predict what would confuse or distract children.
- U**se natural consequences to unacceptable behaviors.
- V**alue your child and spend as much one-on-one time as possible together.
- W**atch the amount of attention you give to individual children.
- X**-pect to have fun.
- Y**elling is not effective with children.
- Z**oom in and handle problems quickly.



The Year Before Kindergarten

As your child starts kindergarten next year...

The year before kindergarten, you should be laying a foundation for your child's transition to kindergarten. You can begin the process by:

- n Identifying the school that your child will be assigned to next year, or in some cases, choosing which school your child will attend.
- n In some states, parents may enroll their child in the school of their choice or a magnet school. Find out if this is an available option for you.
- n Visiting the school or schools that your child might attend. Bring your child with you on those visits.
- n Begin connecting with other families. Find parents with children who will enter kindergarten at the same school next year. This is a good way to get to know the other adults whose children your child will meet as they enter school. With these relationships, families can support one another in an emergency situation, take turns waiting at the bus stop, or car-pool, etc..

Obtain the following information from the school:

- n A list of entry requirements (immunizations, documentation, child's age, physical, etc.)
- n An enrollment form
- n School calendar and times of operation
- n Information about after-school programs (if available)
- n Transportation information (pick-up location, hours, telephone number of the transportation office, rules)
- n Dates for kindergarten registration and/or screening
- n What meal options are provided, requirements for free and reduced lunches, and the cost of meals
- n A description of the kindergarten program.



Early Learning Center Acknowledgment and Permission

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook for the IRSD Early Learning Center. While I understand that the Parent Handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document, I recognize that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies, provisions, and procedures contained within the Parent Handbook.

In addition, I understand that the contents of the Parent Handbook are subject to change. I acknowledge that the Parent Handbook will be revised in accordance with the rules or regulations of state, federal, and accrediting entities, best practices for childcare service providers, or at the discretion of the Policy Council and Board of the Early Learning Center. I recognize that any such revisions will supersede, modify, or eliminate the current contents of the Parent Handbook.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to stay informed of policy and procedure revisions to the Parent Handbook, which will be posted on the Indian River School District web site at <https://www.irsd.net>. In the event I do not have internet access, I understand that I can obtain a hard copy of the updated Parent Handbook upon request to the Early Learning Center.

Moreover, I recognize that it is my responsibility to contact the Early Learning Center Director for any questions that I might have about the contents of the Parent Handbook now and in the future. **Please sign, date and return this page (double sided) to the center.**

Guardian Name (Print)

Guardian Signature

Date

Child Registered at Center (1)

Child Registered at Center (2)

Child Registered at Center (3)



PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW NOTICE	
<p>UNDER THE DELAWARE CODE YOU ARE ENTITLED TO INSPECT THE ACTIVE RECORD AND COMPLAINT FILES OF ANY LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITY. TO REVIEW A CHILD CARE FACILITY RECORD CONTACT: the administrative specialist, 821 Silver Lake Boulevard, Suite 103, Dover, Delaware 19904, phone (302) 739-5487. You may also view substantiated complaints and compliance review histories by visiting the Office of Child Care Licensing's child care search at https://kids.delaware.gov/occl/search-for-child-care.shtml</p>	<p>Parent Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
SCREEN TIME PERMISSION	
<p>Children over the age of two may have an educational video, movie, or game incorporated into their curriculum. These may be viewed on a television, computer, tablet, or gaming device. These will be age-appropriate and limited to one hour per day unless a special occasion or activity occurs. Children will be closely supervised while using the internet.</p>	<p>Parent Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
SUNSCREEN PERMISSION	
<p>The Early Learning Center Nurse/Staff has permission to apply sunscreen to my child. Sunscreen will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction observed by staff will be reported promptly to you. It is your responsibility to provide sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15.</p>	<p>Parent Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
DIAPER CREAM PERMISSION	
<p>The Early Learning Center Nurse/Staff has permission to apply diaper cream to my child. Diaper Cream will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction observed by staff will be reported promptly to you. It is your responsibility to provide diaper cream.</p>	<p>Parent Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
INSPECT REPELLENT PERMISSION	
<p>The Early Learning Center Nurse/Staff has permission to apply insect repellent to my child. Sunscreen will not be applied to any broken skin or if a skin reaction has been observed. Any skin reaction observed by staff will be reported promptly to you. It is your responsibility to provide insect repellent.</p>	<p>Parent Initials:</p> <p>Date:</p>
RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK	
<p>I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the ELC Parent Handbook for the IRSD Early Learning Center.</p>	<p>Parent Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>