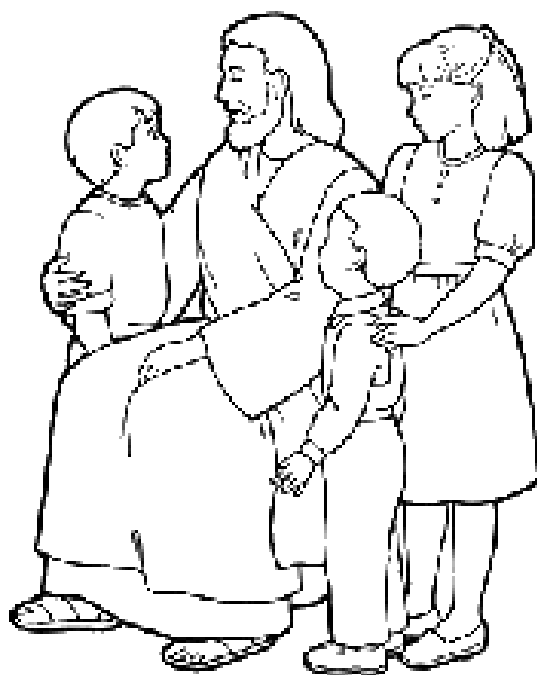


**EARLY CHILDHOOD HANDBOOK**  
**PRE-KINDERGARTEN & KINDERGARTEN**  
**PROGRAMS**



**2006**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| FOREWARD                                 | 5  |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS                         | 6  |
| EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS          |    |
| School Year                              | 7  |
| School Day                               | 7  |
| Curriculum                               | 7  |
| Handbook                                 | 8  |
| Schedule                                 | 8  |
| Opening and Closing of the School Day    | 8  |
| Health and Safety                        | 8  |
| Facilities                               | 8  |
| Fire Drills                              | 8  |
| Environmental                            | 8  |
| Immunization                             | 8  |
| Medical Exams                            | 9  |
| Dental Exams                             | 9  |
| Lighting                                 | 9  |
| Heating                                  | 9  |
| Cleanliness                              | 9  |
| Universal Precautions                    | 10 |
| First Aid Kit                            | 11 |
| Health Records                           | 11 |
| General Safety                           | 11 |
| Age Groups                               | 11 |
| School Plant                             | 12 |
| Floor Space                              | 12 |
| Restrooms                                | 12 |
| Heating                                  | 12 |
| Furnishings                              | 12 |
| Professional Staff                       | 13 |
| Teachers                                 | 13 |
| Assistant Teachers                       | 13 |
| Aides                                    | 13 |
| Pupil-Teacher Ratio                      | 14 |
| Equipment and Course of Study            | 14 |
| Program of Instruction                   | 15 |
| Assessment or Screening                  | 15 |
| Communicating with Parent(s)/Guardian(s) | 15 |
| Parent Conferences                       | 15 |
| Telephone                                | 16 |
| Calendar                                 | 16 |
| Newsletter                               | 16 |
| Progress Report                          | 16 |
| Dress Code                               | 16 |
| Homework                                 | 16 |

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Field Trips                                | 17-19        |
| Emergency Procedures                       | 20           |
| Nutrition                                  | 20           |
| Single Parent/Other Relative               | 20           |
| Visitors                                   | 21           |
| What's Appropriate                         | 21           |
| Appropriate Practices                      | 21           |
| Appropriate Discipline Methods             | 22           |
| <b>EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY</b>          | <b>23-29</b> |
| Philosophy                                 | 24           |
| Program Goals                              | 25           |
| Kindergarten Full Day vs. Half-Day Program | 26           |
| Developmental Appropriateness              | 27           |
| Characteristics of Quality Programs        | 27           |
| Transitions: Changes and Challenges        | 28           |
| Accountability                             | 29           |
| <b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>                     | <b>30-33</b> |
| Characteristics of a Child                 | 31           |
| Three Year Old ~                           |              |
| Emotional                                  | 31           |
| Cognitive                                  | 32           |
| Physical                                   | 33           |
| Four Year Old ~                            |              |
| Emotional                                  | 34           |
| Social                                     | 35           |
| Cognitive                                  | 36           |
| Five Year Old ~                            |              |
| Physically                                 | 37           |
| Social                                     | 37           |
| Language                                   | 37           |
| What Can You Do?                           | 37           |
| Vision                                     | 37           |
| Fine-Motor                                 | 37           |
| Self Control                               | 38           |
| Language Development                       | 38           |
| Personal-Social                            | 38           |
| Point of View                              | 38           |
| Literal Focus                              | 38           |
| Suggestions for Appropriate Materials      | 39           |
| <b>SOCIAL COMPETENCE</b>                   | <b>40-43</b> |
| Helping Children To Get Along With Others  | 41           |
| What Teachers Can Do                       | 42-43        |

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION OF CHILDREN                | 45-53 |
| Developmental Evaluation                            | 46    |
| Assessment of the Child                             | 47    |
| Teachers' Check List                                | 48    |
| Motor Development                                   | 49    |
| Cognitive Development                               | 50    |
| Language Development                                | 51    |
| Daily Routine                                       | 52    |
| Guidelines for Parent Conferences                   | 53    |
| SAMPLE SCHEDULES                                    |       |
| Pre-Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                 | 54    |
| Pre-Kindergarten Full & Half Day Suggested Content  | 55    |
| Suggested Pre-Kindergarten ½ Day Schedule           | 56    |
| Suggested Pre-Kindergarten Full Day Schedule        | 56    |
| Suggested Sample Schedule Full-Day Pre-Kindergarten | 57    |
| Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                     | 58-59 |
| Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                     | 60    |
| Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                     | 61    |
| Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                     | 62    |
| Kindergarten Suggested Schedule                     | 63    |
| FLOOR PLAN & EQUIPMENT                              | 64-69 |
| Classroom Design Considerations                     | 65    |
| Sample Plans  | 66-67 |
| Materials   | 68    |
| Classroom Checklist                                 | 69    |
| CENTERS   | 70-77 |
| Developing and Using Centers                        | 71    |
| Creating and Using Learning Centers                 | 72    |
| Educational Purpose                                 | 73-76 |
| Unusual Spaces and Places                           | 77    |
| THEMES  | 78-84 |
| Getting Started                                     | 80    |
| Me/I'm Special                                      | 81    |
| Farm Animals  | 82    |
| Chinese New Year                                    | 83    |
| Spindly Spiders                                     | 84    |
| ORIENTATION   | 86-88 |
| Opening Meeting with Parents                        | 86    |
| Child Orientation                                   | 87    |
| The First Day                                       | 87    |
| Parent Orientation Checklist                        | 88    |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| INCLUSION                                   | 88-93   |
| Children with Special Needs                 | 90      |
| Physical Space                              | 90      |
| Adaptations ~ Visual Impairments            | 90      |
| Hearing Impairments                         | 90      |
| Communication Deficits                      | 91      |
| Motor Difficulties                          | 92      |
| Perceptual Motor                            | 93      |
| FORMS                                       | 94-104  |
| Registration                                | 95      |
| Information                                 | 96-97   |
| Sample Letter for Parent/Teacher Conference | 98      |
| Report of Parent/Teacher Conference         | 99      |
| Authorized Pick-Up List                     | 100     |
| Field Trip Permission                       | 100     |
| Field Trip Transportation                   | 100     |
| Field Trip Checklist                        | 101     |
| Food Allergies                              | 102     |
| Accident Report                             | 103     |
| End of the Year Evaluation                  | 104     |
| PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES                      | 105-109 |

# ***FOREWARD***



Research shows that quality early childhood education has positive and lasting benefits for young children. Strong foundations for learning are established and children are encouraged to develop to their full potential.

The early years of a child’s learning make a significant difference to the way they develop and go on to learn throughout their lives. Getting it right at this vital stage will build the lifelong foundation of success.

To these ends, the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Curriculum have been updated to provide each classroom teacher with the tool to guide the essential learning throughout these early and foundational years. Within each school that houses both Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs, good communication between the teachers at both levels is crucial. For schools that begin with Kindergarten, communication is essential with the first grade teacher to ensure the strength of this early foundation as the child progresses toward early levels of success!



***“Let the children come to Me and do not hinder them.”***

# ***EARLY CHILDHOOD GUIDELINES***

## ***2006***



### ***PREPARED BY***

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## EARLY CHILDHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

### SCHOOL YEAR

Early Childhood programs are to adhere as closely as possible to the basic school calendar and the 180 days as required by Pennsylvania State Regulations. Classes should open within a week of the regular school opening, and close no earlier than the Friday before the final week of school for the basic school program. The days immediately before the opening will allow time for teacher in-service and orientation for both parents and students. The days after closing will allow time for communication of information with the following year's teacher(s), parent conferences and eventual closure. It is necessary to provide adequate time for parent conferences which will focus on the child's growth and development throughout the year. An end of the year conference with the child's parent(s) or guardian is strongly recommended rather than just sending a written report home in isolation.

### SCHOOL DAY

The minimum length of daily instruction is:

Pre-K (3, 4, and 5 year old) - 2 hours  
Kindergarten – 2 ½ hours

Important: There has been a significant increase in full day Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten programs. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten may offer full day programs in which the starting and dismissal times are identified. These times will, in most cases, be the starting and dismissal times of the entire school.

Instruction time for students shall be the time during the school day which is devoted to instruction and activities provided as an integral part of the school program. Age and developmentally appropriate field trips are to be considered an integral part of this instruction. A walking tour to a specific location in the school's neighborhood (e.g. bakery, firehouse, doctor's office) is a multi-sensory approach to learning. (See information concerning field trips.)

### CURRICULUM

The Educational Program of Pre-K and K follow the Archdiocesan guidelines. These guidelines meet the needs of the students and the educational objectives of Early Childhood Education. They are consistent with the philosophy of Catholic Education. They reflect an awareness of National and State Academic Standards.

Early Childhood teachers are required to prepare weekly plans which follow the guidelines and incorporate the concepts therein through appropriate techniques and experiences.



## HANDBOOK

An Early Childhood handbook is developed at the local level and should be given to each student's family explaining the philosophy, goals and policies of the program. To review sample handbooks, contact a member of the Elementary Childhood Curriculum Committee.

## SCHEDULE

The schedule needs to be flexible enough to allow for spontaneous experiences, as well as meaningful integration of Early Childhood learning. Refer to Section on "Schedules" in this document for guidelines around half-day and full-day schedules.

## OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE SCHOOL DAY

It is the responsibility of the Principal and the Early Childhood teacher to arrange the opening and closing procedure and to allow ample time for entering and leaving the building. Special attention should be paid to Early Childhood programs which begin or end at a time which differs from the school schedule. If you have a special situation, please discuss with the principal and solve it on the local level.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Facilities Approval

The buildings or schools shall conform to applicable fire and panic requirements of the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions. The Crisis Management Plan of the school must be followed.

### Preparation for Fire Drills

Fire drills are mandatory and should be held once a month. All drills should be given with advance notice for Early Childhood children. Young children need a great deal of preparation to be able to handle the drill. Many children at this age cannot differentiate between fantasy and reality and should be reassured by the teacher.

### Environmental Health and Safety

Provisions for the health, physical welfare and safety of pupils shall be those prescribed and required by the Department of Environment Resources or by the county departments of health in the counties.

### Statement regarding Health Related Issues

All Health-related issues should follow Policies & Procedures Manual of the Parish Elementary Schools. (Example: students with allergies, diabetes etc.)

### Immunization

No child in grades Pre-K through 12 may be admitted to or permitted to attend a non-public school unless the child has received immunizations required by 28 PA. code Chapter 23 Subchapter C (relating to immunization) or has received from the director a

medical or religious exemption from immunization under 28 PA Code (relating to exemptions from immunization).

- *Hepatitis B shots are required for children starting Kindergarten in 1997. This new law does not apply to students already attending school.*
- *Kindergarten children will also need a second shot of MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) and a fourth shot of DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)*
- *Refer to your doctor, school nurse or local health department for more information or call 1-800-986-KIDS.*

#### Medical Examinations

A complete medical examination, including appropriate visual and hearing evaluations, shall be made by a licensed physician at the expense of the parents prior to the **original** entrance of the pupil into school. The school may provide the necessary forms. **“ORIGINAL ENTRANCE” MEANS ENTRANCE INTO PRE-KINDERGARTEN IF IT IS PART OF THE SCHOOL OR INTO THE FIRST GRADE IF THE SCHOOL DOES NOT HAVE A KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM.**

#### Dental Examinations

A dental examination shall be provided for a student upon original entry into school and in grades 3 and 7 if locally applicable. The school may provide the necessary forms.

#### Lighting

Artificial lighting facilities shall be adequate and safe and shall provide the minimum foot-candles required by the governmental authorities having jurisdiction over such matters.

#### Heating

Heating facilities shall be sufficient to provide for the maintenance of normal room temperature in all rooms occupied by pupils, exclusive of gymnasiums and rooms used for sleeping purposes, when the outside temperature is less than normal room temperature.

When mechanical ventilating facilities are not used, windows shall be used and equipped for ventilating purposes.

#### Cleanliness

Cleanliness and orderliness in the indoor and outdoor areas of school shall be maintained at all times.

## **UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

IN AN *EARLY CHILDHOOD* SETTING, KNOWING WHO CARRIES AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND WHAT GERM MAY BE PRESENT IS NOT POSSIBLE. CARRIERS DO NOT ALWAYS SHOW OUTWARD SIGNS OF INFECTION AND OFTEN ARE NOT AWARE OF BEING INFECTED. ALL PRE-SCHOOLS SHOULD EVALUATE CURRENT PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SPILLED BLOOD AND BODY FLUIDS TO ENSURE PROPER CLEANING AND DISINFECTION. THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS ARE REQUIRED:

1. Surfaces soiled with blood, urine, feces, vomit, etc. must be thoroughly washed with soap and water, and then disinfected with a ten percent solution of household bleach and water (one part to nine parts). This solution must be freshly prepared for each use.
2. Personnel cleaning spills must wear gloves and wash their hands when finished.
3. Disposable towels must be used whenever possible.
4. Mops must be thoroughly rinsed in the above disinfectant solution.
5. Facility persons handle all discharges from another person's body (particularly body fluids containing blood) with gloves and wash hands thoroughly with soap and running water (for at least fifteen seconds).
6. Facility persons avoid punctures with objects that may contain blood from others.
7. Facility persons carefully dispose of trash that contains body waste and sharp objects. Special containers with plastic liners must be used for disposal or refuse that contains blood or any body spills that contain blood. For disposal of sharp objects, containers that cannot be broken or penetrated must be used.
8. Children must be encouraged to foster good habits and health and hygiene.

## FIRST AID KIT

Schools which enroll students of Pre-Kindergarten and compulsory school age shall provide and maintain an approved first aid kit for emergency treatments, which shall be readily available and in the charge of at least one staff member competent to administer first aid.

- Keep alcohol ready.
- Should not touch body fluids without gloves.

## HEALTH RECORDS

Health records shall be kept in the school building where the students attend school. The original health records shall follow a student when transferring to another school.

School nursing services shall be provided for students in grades K through 12. The services may be provided through the public school system in which the private school is located or by a certified school nurse employed by the private school.

## GENERAL SAFETY

A school shall provide evidence of fire and liability insurance for premises and occupants. **(Children may not be left unattended, indoors or outdoors, at any time.)**

A school shall have at least two adults present at the school while students are in attendance.

School playgrounds adjacent to a public highway, waterway, ditch or other unsafe surroundings shall be fenced or have natural barriers to restrict children from these areas.

A school shall have a listed telephone number.

A school shall have a written plan for emergency evacuations and shall conduct monthly fire drills.

A school shall make specific and adequate provisions for protecting the health of the students and for safeguarding their physical welfare.

## AGE GROUPS

The age group within the scope of Pre-K and Kindergarten education shall be classified as follows:

- (1) Three, Four and Five-year olds – Pre-Kindergarten **(must meet entrance dates)**
- (2) Five-year olds – Kindergarten **(must meet entrance date)**

A child entering Pre-K must be 3 years old **(meet entrance date)** and be able to use lavatory facilities independently.

The entrance date depends on the local school district **in which the parish school resides**. In Philadelphia, the child must meet the entrance date of September 1. An assessment instrument is never used to exclude or include a child in an Early Childhood Program. NAEYC is against using any assessment instruments for this purpose. ***A school is not required to admit a child as a beginner whose chronological age is less than the school's established admission age for beginners. (PA Regulations 51.62 (d))***

## SCHOOL PLANT

### Floor Space

Indoor – There shall be a ***minimum of 35 square feet of floor space per child in the indoor classrooms,*** exclusive of offices, sanitary facilities, storage spaces and other auxiliary rooms. Classrooms shall have a minimum height of 8-foot ceilings.

Outdoor – There shall be a minimum of 60 square feet of accessible space per child in the outdoor activity area, which shall be freed of hazards. Outdoor play areas which are adjacent to traffic, steep banks, water, or other unsafe areas shall be fenced.

## RESTROOMS

There shall be at least one flush toilet and one washbowl for every 15 children. If the toilet and washbowl facilities are not child size, platforms or steps of proper size shall be provided.

## HEATING

Radiators, fireplaces, and heating and cooling devices within the indoor classrooms shall be equipped with shields or guards for providing protection against contact injuries. Kerosene, electric or other types of portable heaters may not be used as heating devices in classrooms.

## FURNISHINGS

Wall and floor coverings and furniture shall be of such type and quality as will assure safe and sanitary conditions. Only fire retardant materials may be used on classroom doors and windows.

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF

### TEACHERS

The following are required of all Early Childhood Teachers:

1. Be a graduate of an accredited 4-year college or university with a state certificate in Early Childhood, Elementary or Special Education.
2. Must be approved by the Office of Catholic Education, and fulfill Archdiocesan professional requirements –
  - Pennsylvania State Police Check – effective November 1986
  - Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse Check – effective July, 1996
  - F.B.I. Fingerprint Check – effective November, 1986 (if coming from out of state)
  - Child Abuse Prevention Training
3. Complete physical/health form

### ASSISTANT TEACHERS

The following are required of all Early Childhood Assistant Teachers:

1. Be a graduate of an accredited 2-year college having specialized in Early Childhood, Elementary or Special Education.
2. Must present –
  - Pennsylvania State Police Check – effective November 1986
  - Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse Check – effective July, 1996
  - F.B.I. Fingerprint Check – effective November, 1986 (if coming from out of state)
  - Child Abuse Prevention Training
3. Complete physical/health exam.

### AIDES

An aide may be employed by a school to assist the teacher.

An aide shall meet the following qualifications:

1. Be a high school graduate, 18 years or older, with good physical and mental health, be of good character and possess personal qualifications for working with children.
2. Be under direct supervision of a teacher at all times and not be permitted to assume independent responsibilities for a group of children.

3. Be included in in-service training.
4. Be legally cleared through the State Police Check, DPW Child Abuse Clearance, FBI Fingerprint Check and complete Child Abuse Prevention Training.
5. Be examined by a physician to ensure that the person is free from communicable disease.

A school which has separate classes for ages 3, 4, and 5 or which group ages 3, 4, and 5 together shall follow the pupil-teacher ratios identified in the following chapter. *The latter is the least desirable type of program.*

PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO

|                                 | <u>Without Aide</u> | <u>One Aide</u> | <u>Two Aides</u> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b><u>Pre-Kindergarten*</u></b> |                     |                 |                  |
| 3 yr. olds                      | 12                  | 13-17           | 18-22            |
| 4 yr. olds                      | 17                  | 18-21           | 22-25            |
| Combined 3 & 4 year olds        | 15                  | 16-19           | 20-23            |
| <b><u>Kindergarten*</u></b>     | 25                  | 26-29           | 30               |

*Classes should not exceed these numbers and be in accordance with 35 square feet per child of classroom space.*

EQUIPMENT AND COURSE OF STUDY

Instructional Materials and Equipment

There shall be instructional materials and indoor/outdoor equipment compatible with the school's philosophy, objectives, and teaching methodology which will accommodate the number of children enrolled in the school.

## PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

The Catholic program of instruction shall foster motor, creative, manipulative, imaginative, rhythmic and language skills and effect the spiritual, physical, mental, social, emotional, and aesthetic development of children of pre-kindergarten age. Objectives and daily plans shall be kept on file and shall be available upon request.

Learning experiences, both informal and planned shall include:

1. Free play/outdoor weather permitting
2. Gross motor skill development
3. Fine motor skill development
4. Religion activities
5. Language Arts activities
6. Mathematical activities
7. Perceptual activities
8. Science activities
9. Expressive arts including music, art, and dramatic play
10. Social science and intercultural activities
11. Nutrition Awareness
12. Health and Safety Awareness

## ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment in Early Childhood is to discover what programs are suitable and to make instructional decisions to meet the needs of each child. The purpose of assessment is not to determine the eligibility of any student for entrance to the school.

Decisions that have a major impact on children should be based primarily on information obtained from observation by teachers and parents **not on the basis of a single test score**. The assessment of children's progress and achievement is to be used to plan curriculum, identify strengths and weaknesses, communicate with parents and evaluate the program's effectiveness. (See "Assessment of Young Children" page 38)

## COMMUNICATING WITH PARENT/GUARDIAN

It is important to keep the lines of communications open and clear.

### Parent Conferences

It is recommended that a general parent meeting (or individual family visits) be provided before the opening day to explain the *developmentally appropriate* philosophy, goals, and policies. Parent meetings provide an excellent opportunity for teachers to share information regarding the Early Childhood program. Meetings offer an opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss how each child learns and to emphasize the importance of good home and school communication. An end-of-the-year conference is an opportunity for the teacher to share with parents the growth of the child throughout the year. Individual parent conferences should be provided at least once a year and thereafter as the need arises.



## TELEPHONE

Telephone calls can be an efficient and effective means of communicating with parents on a topic that needs immediate attention for praising a child or concern about a child. It is suggested that you document, date and record the nature of the call.

## CALENDAR

A calendar may be used to keep parents informed of the Early Childhood curriculum, activities, field trips, etc. which correspond to it. A calendar also helps parents to establish home activities which are more closely connected with the learning activities presented in school.

## NEWSLETTER

Newsletters share information about current and future events. They also provide an update on child growth and development. Newsletters include announcements about child development, field trips, and other pertinent school activities.

## PROGRESS REPORT

Progress reports are used in conjunction with parent conferences to provide the teacher with an opportunity to explain the meaning of the child's observable progress to the parent/guardian. The progress report should be as objective as possible. It should be used to reflect the child's developmental progress and it may describe progress as:

Does this well \_\_\_\_\_  
Working on this now \_\_\_\_\_  
Experiencing difficulty \_\_\_\_\_

For other examples, see "Teacher Resource" section. Formal progress reports are not recommended prior to the second trimester of the 4-year old program.

## DRESS CODE

It is recommended that children in the Early Childhood programs wear play clothes to school. In some situations, it is more convenient and practical for students to wear the school uniform or school gym uniform.

## HOMEWORK

Interesting activities that involve parent and child in a happy learning experience is recommended. Formal written homework is not to be given on the Early Childhood level.

## FIELD TRIPS

The provision of field trips in the Early Childhood programs is a local decision. Every trip should have an educational purpose. Young children learn through play and *through their* environment. It is important for them to receive exposure to the world outside the classroom, since this is part of their education.

Field trip permission forms should be required for all trips. If both parents have custody, they both should sign the permission form. If one parent is out of town, or otherwise unavailable, the fact should be noted on the form. *If only one parent has custody, permission must be obtained from this parent with an acknowledgement that this parent is sole custodian of the child. If there are two guardians, permission must be obtained as indicated above for two parents. If there is no parent and only one guardian, permission must be obtained from the sole guardian with an acknowledgment that he or she is sole guardian.*

As far as possible, school buses and/or leased buses should be used for field trip transportation. If private cars/vans are used, parents should sign a separate statement on the field trip form agreeing to the mode of transportation. **(See Appendix A, B, C and D for related information)**

If parents/guardians are driving private cars, they should be *informed in writing* whether the school has insurance covering them in the event of an accident. If there is no school coverage, parents/guardians should understand that they can be held personally liable in the event of an accident. It is advisable to ask parent/guardian volunteer drivers to furnish the administration with *proof of insurance*. The same cautions apply when teachers use their own cars. A one million dollar rider should be carried on private car insurance.

The basic principles involved in successful field trips are planning, choosing appropriate kinds of trips, recruiting volunteers, implementing the plan and following through after the trip. Basic principles are the same whether trips are to be walking ones, or children are to be transported by bus or car.

Before a field trip is planned, the teacher obtains the permission of the principal. At this time, the purpose, objectives, and goals are discussed. The teacher then sends home parental/guardian consent letters and asks for volunteer parent/guardian helpers. The teacher should be well informed about the trip, check safety hazards, toilet facilities, food, parking areas, and the time scheduling of the trip. It is extremely important to plan a “dry run” of the trip and the person being visited to assure the appropriateness of what will be said, how it will be conveyed and exactly what will be shown.

On the day of the trip, divide the children into small groups with one adult accompanying each group. Every child must have a tag with the school’s name and phone number on it. The teacher who is responsible must carry emergency information for every student and emergency contact numbers. Each group should have different color name tags to match the adult in charge. The children will know which parent/guardian is in charge of the group by matching colors. The teacher should prepare discussion questions and plan for the organization of the day as well as provide follow-up activities to enrich the experience of the trip for the children.

Field trips are a vital part of the child's experience in the Early Childhood Program. It is suggested that children become familiar with the local neighborhood first and then the teacher plans for longer trips. Several suitable excursions are listed below.

### TRANSPORTATION

Walks  
Bus Ride  
Train Ride  
Elevator Ride  
Escalator

### STORE

Supermarket  
Department Store  
Pharmacy  
Hardware Store  
Fish Market  
Outdoor Fruit Market  
Butcher  
Cleaners

### FOOD

Fast Food Restaurants  
Candy Factory  
Potato Chip/Pretzel Factory  
Bakery  
Ice Cream Store  
Fruit Farm  
Pizza Shop

### COMMUNITY

Fire Station  
Police Station  
Post Office  
Library  
Mounted Police  
City Hall  
Senior Citizen Home  
Bank  
Construction Area  
Church and Sacristy

## NATURE TRIPS

Nature trips should be made during all seasons. Frequently, preschools ignore the beauty of winter & only schedule field trips during the spring. Nature trips that are usually free or inexpensive could be to:

Parks  
Nature Centers  
Apple Orchards  
Duck Ponds  
Dairy Farms  
Wildflower Gardens

## GENERAL

Tour entire school plant  
Radio Station  
T.V. Station  
Weather Station  
Movies  
Puppet Show  
Farm/Dairy Farm  
Nursery  
Orchard  
Nature Preserve  
Hatchery  
Neighborhood Park  
Animal Farm/Zoo  
Zoo  
Aquarium  
Natural History Museum  
Art Museum  
Plays/Concerts  
Auto Museum  
Children's Museum

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The handbooks should explain how parents will be contacted in the event of an emergency, illness or other problem. Parents should be called at home and/or work. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts indicated by the parent on the emergency or registration form should be contacted. The absolute minimum of emergency contacts permitted should be two.

It is a good idea to include an emergency plan in the handbook. For example, should the building housing the Early Childhood program be evacuated or closed, where will the children be taken? How can the parent(s) contact school officials in the event of evacuation?

## NUTRITION

Handbooks should include some information concerning the importance of good nutrition. If parents are required to provide breakfast and/or lunch for a child, suggestions as to appropriate food choices should be made. If the Early Childhood program provides meals and/or snacks, the types of foods should be discussed. Menus should be posted in the classroom or other-wise made available to parents.

Acceptable snack and/or “treat” items should be stated. Administrators must provide clear instructions as to what will be accepted as birthday treats. For example, will such foods as candy, cookies, cake and the like be accepted *or* are parents expected to provide more nutritious treats and/or non-edible items, such as small favors.

**Teachers *must* be aware of students with severe food allergies. Check the Confidential Medical List.**

## SINGLE PARENT/OTHER RELATIVE CONSIDERATION

Young children are particularly vulnerable to disputes between parents. It is not uncommon for a separated or divorced parent to instruct the school that the other parent is not to be allowed access to the child. Since the law holds that non-custodial parents do not cease to be parents when they no longer have custody of their children, it is important that administrators include in handbooks the policies and procedures of the Early Childhood program with regard to non-custodial parents.

One of the soundest legal procedures is for the school to require that all divorced parents furnish the school with notarized copy of the custody section of the divorce decree. Some non-custodial parents have weekend visitation rights. It may be entirely appropriate for the parent to pick up the child at the Early Childhood facility on Friday afternoon. If there are any questions, the Early Childhood administrator should, of course, contact the custodial parent; if in doubt as to appropriate course of action, the school or diocesan attorney should be consulted before any action is taken.

## VISITORS

Early Childhood programs should, as far as possible, have an open door policy with regard to parents/guardians visits. It is mandatory for parents/guardians to report to the school office.

Parents/Guardians should always be welcome. The school may make regulations regarding non-interference with other children and with the Early Childhood program, as these are appropriate. Conversely, administrators should insure that only parent visitors or their designated representatives are allowed to visit unless on appropriate official business; in such a case, the visitor should be accompanied by a school official at all times.

## WHAT'S APPROPRIATE

### Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Activities are planned so the children participate to the fullest extent possible, most often individually or in small groups. The teacher is available to answer questions or stimulate children's thinking as they work on their own.

Teachers recognize and use the teachable moment to integrate children's learning whenever possible (an unplanned event captures children's interest, such as the arrival of a tree-trimming crew, so the children go outdoors to watch, talk about why trees are being trimmed, try to figure what will happen to the wood chips, listen to the sounds of the equipment, smell the freshly cut wood and go back indoors to dictate or write about the experience.)

Children and adults move about the classroom from learning center to learning center as they complete activities and talk with each other in informal but respectful ways. Children are motivated to learn because what they are doing is so interesting and builds upon their natural curiosity.

All areas of learning are integrated in meaningful, natural ways so children can see how useful their emerging skills are. For example: Children make a shopping list for a cooking project, distribute cups to each child for snacks, and care for plants or small animals. They keep charts and records that use newly developing pre-math, pre-writing, and pre-reading skills.

Children are given a number of educational options regarding activities, and their choices are respected within the limits of space.

## Appropriate Discipline Methods

A few rules *stated positively* are set by the group democratically (children formulate rules they need to get along well together). Children are expected to gain increasing control of their own behavior. Rules are realistic and designed to promote cooperation and respect. Educators accept that it is natural for young children to display an appropriate noise level, to move about a lot, to express their enthusiasm vigorously and to want to finish their projects before moving on to something else. Movement, enthusiasm, and completion of projects are all typical early childhood behaviors.

Teachers promote respect for each other and are sensitive to children's desire to please adults. Teachers recognize that children take criticism very seriously and personally, so they refrain from reprimanding in front of others and never use labels such as bad or naughty. Instead, teachers talk with individuals about what happened and try to help the child come up with better ways to handle the situation or similar events.

Teachers recognize the critical learning value of recess, time in the library, and other opportunities for children to get fresh air, and to learn from experiences outside the classroom. **Children are never denied these activities as punishments.**

***EARLY CHILDHOOD***

***PHILOSOPHY***



## PHILOSOPHY

Early Childhood Education should be a journey, not a race. On this journey, children travel at a different pace according to their individual development, background of experience and needs. Education assists *in the development* of the total person spiritually, physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Therefore, early childhood educational experiences should provide opportunity for unifying all aspects of children's lives.

Catholic educators agree that children are unique and need to have their academic and spiritual needs met. Children have a tremendous potential for growth. Their God-given imagination and contemplative minds are eager for stimulation. In a warm, caring, risk-free environment, teachers model and manifest Catholic beliefs, values, and attitudes. Young children are encouraged to develop a positive image of themselves and to respect others as they begin to live the Gospel Message.

The Early Childhood Program in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia embraces children of every race, culture and socio-economic background. Cultural diversity is celebrated!

Dedicated Early Childhood teachers, who recognize that all individuals possess strengths and weaknesses in all areas of development, endeavor to provide a rich variety of activities and experiences which will challenge and encourage children to develop at their own pace. From this experiential learning, it is possible for the children to become complete individuals. Successful developmental experiences in early childhood education will prepare children for the formal academic programs in the grades.

The Early Education teacher of young children had the unique opportunity to observe the individual learning styles of each child as he/she enters the school experience. It may become apparent to the teacher that some children have needs which require special intervention. The teacher should act as a referral source for further evaluation. Openness to the diversity of all children enriches an Early Childhood Program.

It is important, then, that the Early Childhood environment be developmentally appropriate for children. Essential, also, is a curriculum which leads to an awareness of the unconditional love of God.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM GOALS**

The early childhood years are a gift of time which will enable the young children to experience the joy of being created and uniquely gifted by a loving Father.

Therefore, the Early Childhood Program in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia provides the following:

- \_\_\_ growing in awareness of God's love as experienced in family, parish and community
- \_\_\_ developing awareness that he/she is a child of God and will grow in His love
- \_\_\_ developing a positive self-image
- \_\_\_ developing a social-interdependence with adults and peers
- \_\_\_ experiencing situations enabling the child to communicate effectively with others
- \_\_\_ developing motor skills which will lead to proficiency and coordination in action and movement
- \_\_\_ using concrete materials and "hands-on" experiences to facilitate learning through discovery

## **KINDERGARTEN FULL-DAY vs. HALF-DAY PROGRAMS**

**Which do parents prefer?  
Which do teachers prefer?  
Which is better for children?**

Traditionally, Kindergarten was offered in the Parish Elementary Schools as a half-day program. However, educational research has increasingly shown the effectiveness of whole-day programs in providing added experience and enrichment for young children. Also, critical changes in family structure and work habits have dictated a need for full-day programs. The full-day Kindergarten environment provides more time for learning and socialization, with fewer disruptions and transitions in the child's day.

Parents who are able to be at home with their children often prefer the half-day Kindergarten schedule. They are able to provide added social and educational experiences with family and friends in after-school hours.

Parents who are working outside the home need the security and predictability of a full-day Kindergarten schedule. These parents are aware that their children will have additional opportunities for socialization, lunchtime nutrition, educational enrichment, and appropriate periods of rest within the full-day schedule.

Teachers traditionally have held the belief that the half-day Kindergarten program was optimal, providing ample time for appropriate learning activities. They acknowledged the value of the activities that took place with families and friends during the other part of the day. It was felt that the children were enjoying a rich balance of school and home experiences.

The great majority of parish schools have moved to the full-day Kindergarten model. Teachers have come to appreciate the added time for learning activities, enrichment and socialization. They are aware of the importance of good lunchtime behavior and nutrition; they also provide ample opportunities for outdoor play.

Children can thrive in either half- or full-day Kindergarten programs, according to the needs and habits of their individual families. It is important for the school and the family to understand the variations in half- and full-day scheduling, so that they can make the best educational choice for their child.

Some schools offer a Kindergarten model that includes half-day within the full-day schedule. Half-day students leave just before the lunch break. Teachers are even more keenly aware of the content of the morning schedule in this model. Some schools allow children to later switch from half- to full-day Kindergarten. This happens as half-day students express a desire to be part of all that the Kindergarten schedule holds.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATENESS**

The concept of developmental appropriateness has two dimensions: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness.

### **Age Appropriateness:**

Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by early childhood program provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

### **Individual Appropriateness:**

The adult is aware that each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth.

Teachers employ their knowledge of child development to identify the range of appropriate behaviors, activities, and materials for a specific age group.

The content of the curriculum is determined by many factors, but for the young child, the content and teaching strategies, to be developmentally appropriate, must be age and individually appropriate.

Children's play is a primary vehicle for and indicator of their mental growth. Therefore, child-initiated, child-directed, teacher supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

- The teaching of religion and God's love is clearly manifested.
- Competent, qualified, and committed teachers work to provide support and individual attention to children.
- Teachers continue their education through professional organizations and in-service training.
- The program is well managed and monitored.
- Parents become partners with teachers in educating the child.
- The program is organized around the Early Childhood Curriculum as set by the Archdiocesan Early Childhood Committee.
- The program is regularly assessed to assure that goals for high quality are being met.

## TRANSITIONS: CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

All change is stressful. But for young children who have limited experience and few well developed coping strategies, change can even be more difficult. However, with teachers and administrators working together, the amount of stress for children and their families can be lessened significantly.

Four key elements to consider helping ensure successful transitions for young children and their families:

1. Ensure program continuity by providing developmentally appropriate curriculum for all age levels in all educational settings.
  - a. Program should vary with age of children. With good developmentally appropriate programs, the transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten to First Grade should be a wonderful experience for the child.
2. Maintain ongoing communication and cooperation between staff on all levels.
  - a. It is very important that teachers on different levels communicate.
3. Prepare the children for the transition.
  - a. If possible, pay a visit to the new situation.
  - b. Listen to the children; allow them to express their feelings.
4. Involve parents in the transition.
  - a. Communication with the adults concerned is vital to an effective transition.
  - b. Ease parent tensions by informing them of new programs and expectations.

Teachers of young children must always be cognizant of the “whole child.” Attention to the key elements of transition will lessen the negative impact of change in a child’s life.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

*Quality Early Childhood Programs readily accept the principle of being held accountable.*

- Standards for evaluating staff are consistent with the Early Childhood Program's philosophy and goals.
- The approach to student assessment is one that is consonant with developmental philosophy, and is both age and developmentally appropriate.
- Plans are in place to periodically assess the programs. This is to insure that all of the norms of the components of Early Education are being met.
- Evaluation statements from all concerned parties, teachers, parents, and community, are regularly solicited and are used to improve the programs.
- The school's procedures and policies reflect both community's standards and the children's needs.
- The administration (Principal/Director) has developed a plan for monitoring and regularly assessing the program.
- Policies which are clear, current, legal, and consistent with the Philosophy are published and available to all concerned parties.

# ***CHARACTERISTICS***

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHILD**

Early Childhood education is effective when it takes into account and provides adequately for the unique educational needs of young children. Specifically these needs center upon the emotional, physical, social and cognitive characteristics of the *young child*.

### **THE THREE YEAR OLD CHILD**

#### **Emotional Characteristics:**

*We know that three-year olds:*

- Are developing self-esteem
- Are developing self-control and self-restraint
- Are very curious
- Are subject to whining, bouts of anger and frustration
- Demonstrate attachment to opposite sex parent
- Some parallel play, often plays near someone but may not interact
- Enjoy imitative play
- Thrive on attention from adults
- Can help put toys away

#### **Emotional Needs:**

*To satisfy these characteristics:*

- Give genuine praise and encouragement
- Provide warm, positive atmosphere where child can express feelings verbally
- Offer learning opportunities with hands on approach
- Consistency is needed. Limits must be set.
- Provide opportunity to act out family roles through creative play
- Provide space for individual activities and opportunity to learn to play with someone
- Use group activities
- Encourage use of role-playing
- Establish routine on the first day



**The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Develop unit “All About Me” that focuses on the uniqueness of each child.

Provide various experiences that enable child to discover world around him/her.

Dress up corner; family dolls to enact appropriate roles.

Include circle games, participatory activities that involve the class.

Let child know you care. Greet him/her personally each day. Praise him/her and comment on activities.

Praise appropriate behavior; talk about why our actions affect others.

Stress verbalizations of feelings, acknowledge child’s emotions and help him/her to see how to deal with them.

Allow child freedom to choose method of play at free time. Stimulate cooperative play with games.

Provide toys that are child-size replicas of items adults use.

Clean up after play-time and assign jobs for the week.

**Cognitive Characteristics:**

***We know that three-year olds:***

- Have an attention span of about 5 minutes to about 20 minutes depending on the child
- Function at Piaget’s pre-conceptual level
- Are talkative in a familiar environment
- Learn by doing, require tactical involvement
- Are beginning to develop problem solving techniques

**Cognitive Needs:**

***To satisfy these characteristics:***

- Plan several short term activities
- Design learning activities with concrete methods – no abstract goals
- Provide lots of sharing time and encourage conversation between children
- Manipulatives (kinesthetic activities should be plentiful)
- Discuss outcomes; make predictions based on obvious facts

**The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Understand that the child needs to move around or to be redirected.

Teach the art of being a good listener so each child will be able to express himself/herself.

Discuss stories, pictures and situations. Identify the problem and steps taken to solve it.

Plan at an appropriate developmental level to discourage frustration.

Worksheets and coloring a printed page are inappropriate. Open-ended learning is essential.

**Physical Characteristics:**

*We know that three-year olds:*

- Play actively, fatigue easily
- Are developing large motor skills
- Alternate feet when climbing stairs
- Cannot be expected to sit still longer than five minutes
- Have not mastered fine motor skills

**Physical Needs:**

*To satisfy these characteristics:*

- Provide variety of short term play experiences
- Allow time for running, throwing, dancing, etc.
- Encourage this as it is important for eye-hand coordination
- Plan short paced lessons, freedom of movement
- Offer activities that encourage small muscle coordination

**The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Alternate active play with quiet, circle time.

Sing song about “Right Foot, Left Foot” when going up to the library, etc.

Work with clay, puzzles, painting, crayoning, and cutting.

Use gym facilities or daily outdoor activities when weather permits.

Provide interesting, multi-sensory activities that involve the child.

## THE FOUR YEAR OLD CHILD

### Emotional Characteristics:

*We know that four-year olds:*

- Often exaggerate to expand their sense of self
- Are very sensitive to criticism and praise
- Develop awareness of concepts of “good” and “bad”
- Are active, aggressive and can be loud
- Want to master their environment; eager to succeed

### Emotional Needs:

*To satisfy these characteristics:*

- Develop self-image; accept him/her unconditionally
- Respond positively to appropriate behavior; reprimand quietly, do not scold in front of group
- Promote positive self-image. Let the child know he/she is loved
- Large motor activities should be planned to expend energy
- Plan open-ended learning experiences with tasks developmentally appropriate

### **The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Allow self-expression. Teach a unit on “I am Special”.

Label action or happening as good or bad; never label a child.

Ensure successful completion of tasks by making them challenging, not frustrating.

Hugs, pats on the back, and verbal praise are effective. Limit negative behavior.

Have interesting activities. Encourage verbalization rather than acting out.

## **Social Characteristics:**

### ***We know that four-year olds:***

- Play with peers but are still egocentric
- Play with imaginary friends
- Understand the concept of cooperation
- Often defy authority
- Have strong feelings about home family life

## **Social Needs:**

### ***To satisfy these characteristics:***

- Encourage group participation
- Recognize need for autonomy
- Develop this social skill with projects that require 2 or more participants
- Children need established routines
- Respect the family unit of each child

### **The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Play group games with no direct competition.

Identify cooperative acts as they happen; praise children and discuss how this helps this activity.

Provide opportunity to talk about families and homes.

Encourage dramatic and creative play as means of self-expression.

Teacher assumes parental authority, earns trust by professional behavior, commands respect.

## **Cognitive Characteristics:**

### *We know that four-year olds:*

- Are very verbal
- Have strong sensory perceptions
- Have 10-30 minute attention spans; depending on the child
- Are mastering spatial concepts
- Develop ability to classify and organize information
- Take great pleasure in physical activity
- Move in a more coordinated manner, able to use both feet and both arms
- Developing eye-hand coordination
- Fine motor skills are still developing
- Begin to develop childhood diseases

## **Cognitive Needs:**

### *To satisfy these characteristics:*

- Stimulate conversations and listen to the child
- Provide concrete experiences to see, hear, touch and taste.
- Vary length of time of activities
- Develop awareness of concepts over, under, around, behind, etc.
- Provide practice for this math readiness skill
- Provide opportunities to develop large motor skills
- Provide opportunities to dance, skip, run, jump and rhythmic activities
- Observe need for practice to develop this reading readiness skill
- Use manipulatives that require small muscles
- Understand that progress may temporarily be interrupted; skills may regress

### **The following are suggested activities to meet these needs:**

Encourage self-expression while teaching the skill of good listening.

Be prepared to change or redirect focus of attention.

Provide opportunity to sort objects by color, shape, or size.

Use music to encourage creative movement. Practice cutting, working with clay, pasting and painting.

Hands-on activities will encourage multi-sensory involvement; cooking activities are very good.

Encourage use of spatial words to locate objects: “Next to the blocks, behind the bookcase.”

Provide time in gym or outside everyday.

Provide opportunities for working with puzzles, tracking activities, mosaic and shape patterns.

Teach personal health habits.

## THE FIVE YEAR OLD – WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

### Physically:

- Ocular fixation near point vision
- Centered on task
- Gross motor control improving
- Pincer grasp with pencil
- Falls out of chairs sideways
- Paces self well
- Active

### Personal-Social:

- Likes to help; cooperative
- Wants to be good
- Needs approval
- Dependent on authority; wants to be told what to do, but also finds it difficult to see things from another's viewpoint

### Language:

- Literal, succinct
- “Play” and “good” favorite words
- Needs release from adult “Can I.?”
- Fantasy is more active, less verbal
- Does not communicate about school at home
- Thinks aloud

### Adoptive-Accommodative:

- Likes to copy
- Literal behavior, often only one way to do things
- Bound cognitively by sight and senses
- Animistic (inanimate objects have life, movement)
- Learns best through play and own action

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The teacher is the most influential person to a 5 year old child's school experience. The teacher has the capacity to dignify, horrify, or humiliate. The 5 year old will believe what teacher says of and to him. The 5 year old will seek structure and guidance. It is important that structure and guidance be positive.

### Vision

- Because children have not established ocular pursuit, left to right, they will tend to focus on one word at a time. Teachers need to be aware that children will often lose their place looking at print, both in books and on the board.
- Children will have difficulty copying from the blackboard or chart stand.
- Children who have started to read will often need a pointer or a finger to keep their place.
- Reversals of letters and numbers *will occur*.

### Fine-Motor

- Manuscript printing can be introduced, but children should not be expected to stay within the lines.
- Spacing of letters and numbers will be inconsistent.

### Self-Control

- Teachers can expect children to work at quiet, sitting activities for up to 15 to 20 minutes at a time.
- Children often need the teacher to transition them to the next task, though they are able to pace themselves well with a given task.

### Language Development

- Teachers need to expect and allow children to think aloud; language often directs the actions of the child: “I am going to move the truck!” preceding the action.
- Dramatic play through a housekeeping corner or dramatic play area is essential to language development, allowing children to express thoughts through actions.

### Personal-Social Behavior

- Consistent guidelines and carefully planned structure help children feel safe in the classroom. Children need to be allowed to make choices about the use of their time within the established structure.
- Teachers need to be aware of children’s need to touch base frequently.
- Praise is an important “release mechanism” for children to move on to a next task.
- Teachers need to understand and accept children’s seemingly illogical understanding of cause and effect in the physical world (i.e., “It’s raining ‘cause the sun is crying,”) but teacher do not need to agree with children’s answers.

### Point of View

- Children are seldom able to see things from another’s point of view.

### Literal Focus

- Teachers need to allow for much repetitive behavior in the classroom. Stories, poems, songs and games should be repeated, sometimes with minor variations. Patterning in math, science and daily scheduling is important.

### *Suggestions for Appropriate Materials*

- *Social and fantasy play materials*
- *Mirrors*
- *Dolls*
- *Role-play materials*
- *Puppets*
- *Stuffed Toys/Play Animals*
- *Play scenes*
- *Transportation toys*
- *Exploration and Mastery Play/Learning*
- *Sand and Water – dams, rivers, lakes, islands*
- *Construction materials*
- *Puzzles*
- *Pattern-Making*
- *Dressing, lacing and stringing materials*
- *Specific skill – development materials – reading, writing, letters, typewriter, computer, math manipulatives etc.*
- *Games – board, word, numbers etc.*
- *Books*
- *Music, art and movement materials*
- *Art and craft materials*
- *Musical instruments – audio visual materials*
- *Gross motor play (balls, sport equipment, ride-on, outdoor gym)*

**(Resource: The Right Stuff for Children Birth to 8 – Bronson)**



# ***SOCIAL COMPETENCE***

## **HELPING CHILDREN TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS**

The development of social competence – getting along with others – is an underlying goal of early childhood education. Social competence includes the ability to initiate and maintain relationships with others. A child must learn how to approach other children, how to negotiate issues that come up, how to take turns, and how to communicate effectively. Children who are able to develop and maintain friendships are more likely to lead successful and productive lives as adults.

Children’s social development is strengthened when they have secure relationships with their parents and teachers and many opportunities to play with other children. When the important relationships in their lives are unreliable and children have few opportunities to play with others, they are less likely to develop effective social skills. Some children appear to develop social skills with ease. They instinctively know how to make friends and find their place in a group. They get pleasure from being with other children and relating to adults. Other children, however, may need more time and help to feel comfortable in a group. Once they feel comfortable, they too can join in and make friends.

Children who are unable to make friends and who tend to feel rejected a great deal of the time often have serious problems later in life. Such children may have low self-esteem and lack the social skills they need to develop friendships. Because they aren’t accepted by their peers, they have fewer opportunities to develop social skills. They have difficulty breaking the cycle of rejection.

Children present different challenges to teachers. Those who are especially shy or overly aggressive often have difficulty getting along with others. You can help these children by first identifying the nature of the problem. By building on their strengths and helping them gain acceptance, you will be helping these children acquire social competence.

## **WHAT TEACHERS CAN DO**

To develop self-discipline, children need to be offered choices and opportunities to make decisions, knowing what the logical consequences will be. Teachers must clearly state in advance the choices and the consequences. For example, you might say, “Sanchez, if you keep knocking down Tyler’s blocks, you will have to leave the block area. You can make your own buildings and knock them down if you want. Or you can find something else to do.” This type of guidance helps a child develop self-discipline because it sets limits and offers a choice. It results in less anger and fewer power struggles than does punishment.

You can use a variety of approaches to guide children's behavior. No one approach works for every child or every situation. The approach used should be based on your knowledge of the child and the particular problem. Positive guidance approaches include the following:

- *Anticipate and plan ahead* so that you can head off problems. "This new table toy is going to be very popular. I'd better set up a system for taking turns before I introduce it."
- *Look for reasons why a child is misbehaving.* Discuss the situation with a colleague. "Tysha's mother is in the hospital. She is probably worried about her."
- *Focus on the child's behavior,* not the child's value as a person. "I like the way you wiped the table, Marguerite" (rather than "you're a good girl for wiping the table").
- *Help children understand the consequences of their actions.* "Shantaye and Annie, the doll broke when you both pulled its arms. You will have to wait until it's fixed before you can play with it again."
- *Explain the choices available.* "If you want to drive your truck, Susan, you must drive on the rug, not under the easels."
- *Help children use problem-solving skills* to develop solutions. "I can see it is hard for you to share your bear, Carlos. Where can you put it until you go home?"
- *Help children refrain from dwelling on mistakes* so that they learn to move on. "Your paint cup spilled. Let's go find a sponge to clean it up."
- *Watch for restlessness.* Give children room to release their energies and frustrations physically. "Kathy, you seem fidgety this afternoon. Why don't you and Leroy try out the climber for a little while? I'll watch you climb."

State rules positively and firmly rather than harshly and judgmentally. The following chart offers some alternatives.

***SAY OR DO THIS***

***INSTEAD OF THIS***

|   |   |
|---|---|
| “Use quiet voices inside, save your loud voices for outside.”                         | “Will you stop screaming!” or “You’re giving me a headache.”                        |
| “You’re angry, but hitting hurts. Let’s talk about what’s bothering you.”             | “Haven’t I told you not to hit other children?”                                     |
| “Use the shovel to dig with; if you want to throw something, you can throw the ball.” | “If you don’t put that shovel down right now, I’m going to take it away.”           |
| “It’s dangerous to push people on the slide. They may get hurt”                       | “If you don’t stop pushing other children on the slide, they’ll start pushing you.” |
| “Careful drivers put on their brakes or sound their horns.”                           | “Stop running those trucks into the walls!”   |
| “Throw the stick over the fence so no one will get hurt.”                             | “Put that stick down. Don’t you know someone might get hurt?”                       |
| “Keep the puzzle on the table so the pieces don’t get lost.”                          | “Did you dump the puzzle pieces on the floor again? I told you not to do that.”     |
| “Wipe your brush on the jar, so it won’t drip.”                                       | “You’re dripping paint all over the floor! Why don’t you find another activity?”    |

(Resource: The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood – Diane Trister Dodge and Laura Colker)

***DEVELOPMENTAL  
EVALUATION  
OF  
CHILDREN***

## **Assessment and Young Children**

In determining the appropriate ways to assess the learning of young children, ethical, appropriate, valid, and reliable assessment must be a central part of all early childhood programs. To assess young children's strengths, progress and needs, assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children's daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families and connected to specific, beneficial purposes: (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.

### **Indicators of Effective Assessment Practices**

- Ethical principles guide assessment practices
- Assessment instruments are used for their intended purposes
- Assessments are appropriate for ages and other characteristics of children being assessed
- Assessment instruments are in compliance with professional criteria for quality
- What is assessed is developmentally and educationally significant
- Assessment evidence is used to understand and improve learning
- Assessment evidence is gathered from realistic settings and situations that reflect children's actual performance
- Assessments use multiple sources of evidence gathered over time
- Screening is always linked to follow-up
- Use of individually administered, norm-referenced tests is limited
- Staff and families are knowledgeable about assessment

**The position stated here is in compliance with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in the State Departments of Education (NAEWCS/SDE)**

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION OF CHILDREN**

*Assessment of individual children's development and learning is essential and necessary for planning developmentally appropriate programs.*

- Assessments of young children should rely mainly on the results and observations of their development and descriptive data.
- Decisions that have a major impact on the educational life of a young child are not made on the basis of a single developmental or screening device. Other relevant information from parents and other teachers must be considered.
- Developmental assessments and observations are used to identify children with special needs so that appropriate planning can take place.
- A child's progress is defined in terms of individual growth and development – one that is consonant with a developmental philosophy rather than against an arbitrary set of criteria.
- Portfolio assessment is based on what a child can do – not on what a child can't do.
- Legal entry age should be the criteria of acceptance if all other components match. (The school should be ready for the child rather than expecting the child to be ready for the school.)

## ASSESSMENT OF THE CHILD

*As the teacher becomes more aware of each child, observations should be noted on the following areas:*

### Areas:

#### **1. Adjustment to school-**

- ✓ How comfortable is the child leaving family, entering school?
- ✓ Is the child participating fully in the program, happily?

#### **2. Attitude toward teacher and school-**

- ✓ Does the child talk easily to the teacher?
- ✓ Does the child follow the directions of the teacher?
- ✓ Does the child follow rules?

#### **3. Social Development-**

- ✓ How does the child relate to peers?
- ✓ Does the child join groups, invite others to play?
- ✓ How does the child handle disagreements?

#### **4. Self-Expression-**

- ✓ Is the child's speech clear and understandable?
- ✓ Does the child let others know his/her needs, wants?
- ✓ Can the child answer questions and participate in discussions?

#### **5. Learning-**

- ✓ What activities, materials does the child choose?
- ✓ Does the child need help getting started?
- ✓ Has the child shown concentration?
- ✓ Does the child show any strong interests, skills mastered, concepts known or skills needed?
- ✓ Lessons – What lessons are presented to the child?
  - How does the child react?
  - How does the children learn what is presented?
  - Does the child seem to learn best in a certain way, such as through listening, seeing, feeling, *or* playing with friends?

#### ***Lessons are given on:***

- coordination activities
- sensorial activities
- math activities
- names for colors, shapes and letter sounds

#### ***Notes are kept:***

- as to the lessons given
- practice accomplished
- mastery through a series of charts for each class

These notes and charts are used in planning lessons for the children and communicating the children's progress to the child and to the parent.





## MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

|                           | <i>GOOD</i> | <i>FAIR</i> | <i>POOR</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>LARGE MOTOR:</b>       |             |             |             |
| <b>Walking</b>            |             |             |             |
| <b>Running</b>            |             |             |             |
| <b>Climbing</b>           |             |             |             |
| <b>Hopping (one foot)</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Jumping (two feet)</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Pedaling</b>           |             |             |             |

|                                | <i>GOOD</i> | <i>FAIR</i> | <i>POOR</i> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>SMALL MOTOR:</b>            |             |             |             |
| <b>Fasteners:</b>              |             |             |             |
| <b>Zippers</b>                 |             |             |             |
| <b>Snaps</b>                   |             |             |             |
| <b>Buttons</b>                 |             |             |             |
| <b>Other</b>                   |             |             |             |
| <b>Dressing</b>                |             |             |             |
| <b>Handling Utensils</b>       |             |             |             |
| <b>Cutting</b>                 |             |             |             |
| <b>Pencils/Brushes/Crayons</b> |             |             |             |
| <b>Stringing</b>               |             |             |             |

- Characteristics:

Active                       Sedentary                       Quick  
 Slow                               Quiet

- Comments:

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### COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

- Demonstrates understanding of opposites:
  - \_\_\_ Big/Little      \_\_\_ In/Out      \_\_\_ Up/Down
  - \_\_\_ Night/Day      \_\_\_ Long/Short      \_\_\_ Over/Under
- Points out shapes:
  - \_\_\_ Circle      \_\_\_ Square      \_\_\_ Triangle      \_\_\_ Rectangle
- Names shapes:
  - \_\_\_ Circle      \_\_\_ Square      \_\_\_ Triangle      \_\_\_ Rectangle
- Points out colors:
  - \_\_\_ Red      \_\_\_ Purple      \_\_\_ Yellow      \_\_\_ Green      \_\_\_ Orange
  - \_\_\_ Blue      \_\_\_ White      \_\_\_ Black      \_\_\_ Brown      \_\_\_ Pink
- Names colors:
  - \_\_\_ Red      \_\_\_ Purple      \_\_\_ Yellow      \_\_\_ Green      \_\_\_ Orange
  - \_\_\_ Blue      \_\_\_ White      \_\_\_ Black      \_\_\_ Brown      \_\_\_ Pink
- Letters:
  - a. Says the Alphabet: \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No
  - b. Identifies Letters: \_\_\_\_\_
- Numbers:
  - a. Counts from 1: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Identifies Numerals: \_\_\_\_\_
- Recognizes name: \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No
- Tells full name: \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No
- Tells parents names: \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No
- Relates outside experiences: \_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_ No

|  |
|--|
| ○ Attention Span   |
| <i><b>GOOD</b></i> <i><b>FAIR</b></i> <i><b>POOR</b></i> |
| <b>Story Time</b>  |
| <b>Discussion Time</b>                                   |
| <b>Art Time</b>  |
| <b>Music Time</b>  |
| <b>Free-Play Time</b>                                    |

|  |
|--|
| ○ Curiosity  |
| <i><b>USUALLY</b></i> <i><b>SOMETIMES</b></i> <i><b>RARELY</b></i> <i><b>NEVER</b></i> |
| <b>Tries New Activities</b>  |
| <b>Asks Questions</b>  |

- Comments:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- Uses language to:
 

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Converse with children | <input type="checkbox"/> Express feelings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Converse with adults   | <input type="checkbox"/> Disturb others   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tell stories           | <input type="checkbox"/> Teasing          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do finger plays        | <input type="checkbox"/> Singing          |

- Enunciation:

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- Comments:

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## INTERESTS

|                            | <i>USUALLY</i> | <i>SOMETIMES</i> | <i>RARELY</i> | <i>NEVER</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Art:</b>                |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Painting</b>            |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Pasting</b>             |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Cutting</b>             |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Crayons</b>             |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Other</b>               |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Block Play</b>          |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Puzzles</b>             |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Small Building Toys</b> |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Manipulative Games</b>  |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Books</b>               |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>House/Dramatic</b>      |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Small-Wheeled Toys</b>  |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Climbing</b>            |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Outside</b>             |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Bikes</b>               |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Music</b>               |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Other</b>               |                |                  |               |              |

- Comments:

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## DAILY ROUTINE

|                                 | <i>USUALLY</i> | <i>SOMETIMES</i> | <i>RARELY</i> | <i>NEVER</i> |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Cleans up willingly</b>      |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Asks to leave room</b>       |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Appetite:</b>                |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Tries food freely</b>        |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Asks for seconds</b>         |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Acceptable table manners</b> |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Quiet Time:</b>              |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Rests Quietly</b>            |                |                  |               |              |
| <b>Sleeps</b>                   |                |                  |               |              |

○ Comments:

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TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Guidelines for Parent Conferences**

- Meet parents easily and with friendliness. Start the conference on a pleasant note.
- Start the conference with the child's strong points.
- It is easier to build a cooperative relationship between parent and teacher if the teacher is not behind a desk.
- Encourage the parent to talk about his/her child and attempt to find out his/her feeling as to the child's progress.
- Listen to the parent's reasons for the child's behavior before presenting your suppositions and/or suggestions. Together work out a plan for improvement.
- Remember that parents may find it difficult to be objective about their child. Therefore, direct criticism is seldom successful in working toward improvement.
- Present evidence or specific incidents of problems which need improvement and/or reflect exceptional behavior.
- Be quick to note confusion on the part of the parent as to teaching techniques or school philosophy and clarify them.
- Be willing at all times to encourage and show parents when and how to help children when parents indicate a desire to do so. (Children spend a small proportion of waking-learning hours at school!)
- Be straightforward and honest in your evaluation of a child's performance in school.
- Show consideration for the feelings of parents and, at all times, avoid embarrassing them. Avoid saying anything that will make parents feel that you are critical of the home.
- Refer parents to the principal, parish priest, and/or director, if problems that necessitate counseling arise.
- Teachers should, at all times, treat parent or child conferences with the same professional ethics and confidence as that of a lawyer toward his client, or doctor toward his patient.
- Close conferences with words of encouragement and reassurance to parents. Indicate a willingness to meet with parent again soon if he/she so desires.

# **Pre-Kindergarten Suggested Schedules**

## PRE-KINDERGARTEN ~ FULL AND HALF DAY

### *Suggested Content of a Typical School Day*

**Arrival:** Children select quiet activities or simply play with toys.

**Gathering:** Teacher shares prayer, song and plans for the day with children.

**Circles:** Circle time may include many things – calendar, weather, Religion.

**Centers:** May be child or teacher selected – individual or group activity.

**Snack:** After snack children use the bathroom and play with toys.

**Story Time:** Might be a story about God or a story read to or told by children.

**Play Time:** Outside is preferred. If this is not possible, children must be allowed to play.

**Circles:** Theme may be covered here. Also prepare for lunch/dismissal.

**Lunch:** This is followed by outdoor or indoor recess activities.

**Activity:** This may involve motor-activity or independent Center time.

**Rest:** Very important quiet time in a child's day.

**Circles:** A story may be read here. Teacher may choose group activity song.

**Center:** Opportunity for Imaginative Play – Children free to choose space.

**Clean up:** Children put materials away. Prepare for dismissal.

**Story Time:** Done with the group. It may be read by the teacher or aide.

**Gathering:** Prayers, song – sharing about the day – planning for tomorrow.

**NOTE:** All subjects and specials are integrated into Centers, Circles and Groups.



**A SUGGESTED  
PRE-KINDERGARTEN  
HALF-DAY SCHEDULE**

Opening Exercises  
Circle Time  
Attendance  
Calendar  
Weather  
Religion  
Language Arts/Math  
Snacks  
Sensory-Motor  
Learning Centers  
Unit Theme (Science/Social Studies)  
Closing Exercises

**A SUGGESTED  
PRE-KINDERGARTEN  
FULL-DAY SCHEDULE**

Opening Exercises  
Circle Time  
Calendar  
Story Time  
Theme  
Religion  
Centers  
Snacks  
1<sup>st</sup> Group Time (Language Arts/Math)  
Centers  
2<sup>nd</sup> Group Time (Language Arts/Math)  
Lunch/Recess  
Quiet Time  
Centers  
Clean-Up  
Story Time  
Closing Exercises

**Note:** Science, Social Studies, Technology, and Fine Arts are integrated in centers and group time.

*A Suggested Sample Schedule for Full-Day  
Pre-Kindergarten Program*

**Arrival**

**Activity:** greet the children, and do morning activities including: prayer, calendar, weather, Religion, etc.

**Integrated center choices**

**Activity:** offer children opportunities to engage in a variety of activities and projects including literacy, math, science, expressive arts, manipulatives, dramatic play, etc.

**Activity:** teacher directed/small groups (must be age appropriate in time length!)

**Clean-Up and Snack**

**Activity:** wash hands; provide opportunity for children to socialize, have children assist with cleaning up

**AND**

**Outdoor Play**

**Activity:** exercise gross motor skills and experience a change in environment

**Story Telling and Writing**

**Activity:** focus children on the function of print

**Religion**

**Activity:** focus children on developing sense of God (see guidelines)

**Lunch and Outdoor Play**

**Quiet Time for All**

**Activity:** rest or quiet time with soft music; each child has time and space alone for quiet

**Whole Group**

**Activity:** social interaction of group with sharing of news and views

**Literature or Social Studies or Science or Math**

**Activity:** whole group, small groups, or centers

**Creative Movement, Art, Music**

**Activity:** offer children opportunities to engage in the expressive arts

**Outdoor Play**

**Activity:** exercise gross motor skills and experience a change in environment

**Departure**

**Activity:** recap day and give “coming attractions” for next day; close with prayer

# **Kindergarten Suggested Schedules**

## **KINDERGARTEN**

| <b>SUBJECT</b>           | <b>MINUTES PER DAY</b> | <b>MINUTES PER WEEK</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Religion                 | 15 (each day)          | 75                      |
| Math Concept Development | 15 (each day)          | 75                      |
| ILA                      | 30 (each day)          | 150                     |
| Social Studies           | 20 (for 3 days)        | 60                      |
| Science                  | 20 (for 3 days)        | 60                      |
| Music and Movement       | 20 (for 3 days)        | 60                      |
| Art                      | 60 (one day)           | 60                      |
| Physical Education       | 15 (each day)          | 75                      |

## SUGGESTED KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE SAMPLE

Kindergarten is a time of learning through play and discovery. Lesson planning should be geared toward providing activities and experiences that will prepare children for the more academic world of first grade. The schedules and time frames included here are only suggestions. **It is important for each teacher to dedicate the appropriate amount of time to each area of the curriculum, but content areas should not be taught in isolation.** Integration of curriculum areas is a hallmark of Early Childhood teaching.

### KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM

| SUBJECT                  | MINUTES PER WEEK |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Religion                 | 75               |
| Math Concept Development | 75               |
| ILA                      | 150              |
| Social Studies           | 60               |
| Science                  | 60               |
| Music and Movement       | 60               |
| Art                      | 60               |
| Physical Education       | 75               |

Due to the integrated style of early childhood teaching, the Kindergarten schedule may vary from day to day; but attention needs to be given to providing the appropriate balance of time in the curriculum areas. “Specials”: Library, Computer lab, Gym class, Music class and Art Class occur weekly, and can be included within the time allotted for related content areas.

Technology is integrated into the Kindergarten curriculum wherever possible, as individual or small group activity, or in the Computer Lab, according to the custom of the school.

## **SUGGESTED KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE SAMPLE**

### **FULL DAY**

Opening Activities (Prayer, Pledge, Weather, and Plan of the Day)

Religion

Whole Group Instruction (Math Concepts)

■ Integrated Language Arts

Snack – Bathroom Time – Outdoor Recess

Learning Centers (Including Small Group Instruction)

Theme Related Activities (Music and Movement, Social Studies, Science)

Language Arts (Story Time, Poetry, Choral Reading, etc.)

Bathroom, Lunch Break, Outdoor Play

Quiet or Rest Time (Listening to music, reading books, listening to taped stories)

Activity Period (Extension of Theme Work from Morning session, Hands-on activity, Role-playing, Group Project or Play Centers)

Closing Activities (Pack Up, Story Time, Prayer)

Dismissal

### **HALF DAY**

The schedule for half day Kindergarten will reflect the activities planned for the morning in the schedule above.

### **FULL DAY WITH HALF DAY OPTION**

Instruction and theme related activities are introduced in the morning. Extension of morning activities occurs in the afternoon.

## ALTERNATE SCHEDULES

### Suggested Schedules for Half Day Kindergarten

|                      |  |                      |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| <b>8:30 – 8:50</b>   | Arrival Greeting<br>Free Activity                | <b>12:30 – 12:50</b> |
| <b>8:50 – 9:10</b>   | Coming Together – Prayers<br>Salute – Religion   | <b>12:50 – 1:10</b>  |
| <b>9:10 – 9:35</b>   | Concept Development<br>Math – ILA                | <b>1:10 – 1:35</b>   |
| <b>9:35 – 9:50</b>   | Music – Singing – Movement                       | <b>1:35 – 1:45</b>   |
| <b>9:50 – 10:15</b>  | Snack – Bathroom<br>Outdoor Play/Activities      | <b>1:45 – 2:05</b>   |
| <b>10:20 – 10:35</b> | Language Arts<br>Story Time – Poetry – Listening | <b>2:10 – 2:25</b>   |
| <b>10:35 – 11:00</b> | Art – Science – Social Studies                   | <b>2:25 – 2:50</b>   |
| <b>11:00 – 11:10</b> | Plans for next day – Prayers<br>Dismissal        | <b>2:50 – 3:00</b>   |

### SCHEDULE II

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>8:30 – 8:55</b>   | Arrival – Coming Together<br>Prayers – Salute - Religion |
| <b>8:55 – 9:20</b>   | Concept Development<br>Math/ILA                          |
| <b>9:20 – 9:40</b>   | Free Activity  |
| <b>9:40 – 10:00</b>  | Art – Science – Social Studies                           |
| <b>10:00 – 10:30</b> | Snack – Bathroom – Outdoor Play/Activity                 |
| <b>10:35 – 10:50</b> | Language Arts<br>Story Time – Poetry – Listening         |
| <b>10:50 – 11:05</b> | Music – Singing – Movement                               |
| <b>11:05 – 11:15</b> | Plans for next day – Prayers<br>Dismissal                |

## **SUGGESTED FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN SCHEDULE**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>9:00 – 9:40</b>   | Arrival – Greeting – Free Activity<br>Clean Up                         |
| <b>9:40 – 10:00</b>  | Opening Exercises<br>Religious Instruction                             |
| <b>10:00 – 10:30</b> | Structured –<br>Math Readiness and Development<br>ILA                  |
| <b>10:30 – 11:00</b> | Bathroom—Snack—Physical Education                                      |
| <b>11:00 – 11:25</b> | Art  |
| <b>11:25 – 11:45</b> | Science – Social Studies   |
| <b>11:45 – 12:00</b> | Quiet Activities – Music   |
| <b>12:00 – 1:00</b>  | Lunch – Outdoor Play   |
| <b>1:00 – 1:30</b>   | Rest – Listening   |
| <b>1:30 – 2:00</b>   | Learning Centers for Small Groups<br>Math – Reading – Personal Reading |
| <b>2:00 – 2:20</b>   | Lavatory   |
| <b>2:20 – 2:45</b>   | Rhythms – Dramatization  |
| <b>2:45 – 3:00</b>   | Poems – Story  |
| <b>3:00</b>          | Dismissal  |



# **FLOOR PLANS & EQUIPMENT**

## CLASSROOM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

**Small Room-** Be careful not to have more furniture than absolutely necessary. Use one set of tables and chairs for many purposes. Use halls, outdoors, and shared spaces for “work areas”.

**Large Room -** Section off areas with storage cabinets and/or shelving units.

**Little outdoor space; no gym available -** Plan space for large muscle activities. Leave sufficient open space for gross motor activities. Teach children how to safely move light furniture to make room for gross motor activities.

**Limited Furniture-** Make more use of floor space when doing work such as math, reading and puzzles. Use lap boards. Use bulletin boards for leaning centers. Make masking tape lines on the floor to show the different work areas. Rug remnants and pillows can be substituted for chairs. One set of tables and chairs can be used for multiple purposes during the day.

**Limited Materials- Do not pull all materials out at once.** Rotate materials on a regular basis to provide the excitement of “new” materials and activities. Use teacher-made learning centers to supplement materials. Ask parents to donate and/or make materials. Solicit contributions of materials from community stores.

**Limited Shelving Units-** Shelves for materials are essential so substitute stackable plastic milk crates, cinder blocks and boards, dishpans, etc. These can be used as dividers.

**No sink-** Substitute plastic dishpans for water play. Use gallon water jugs and dishpans for cleaning.

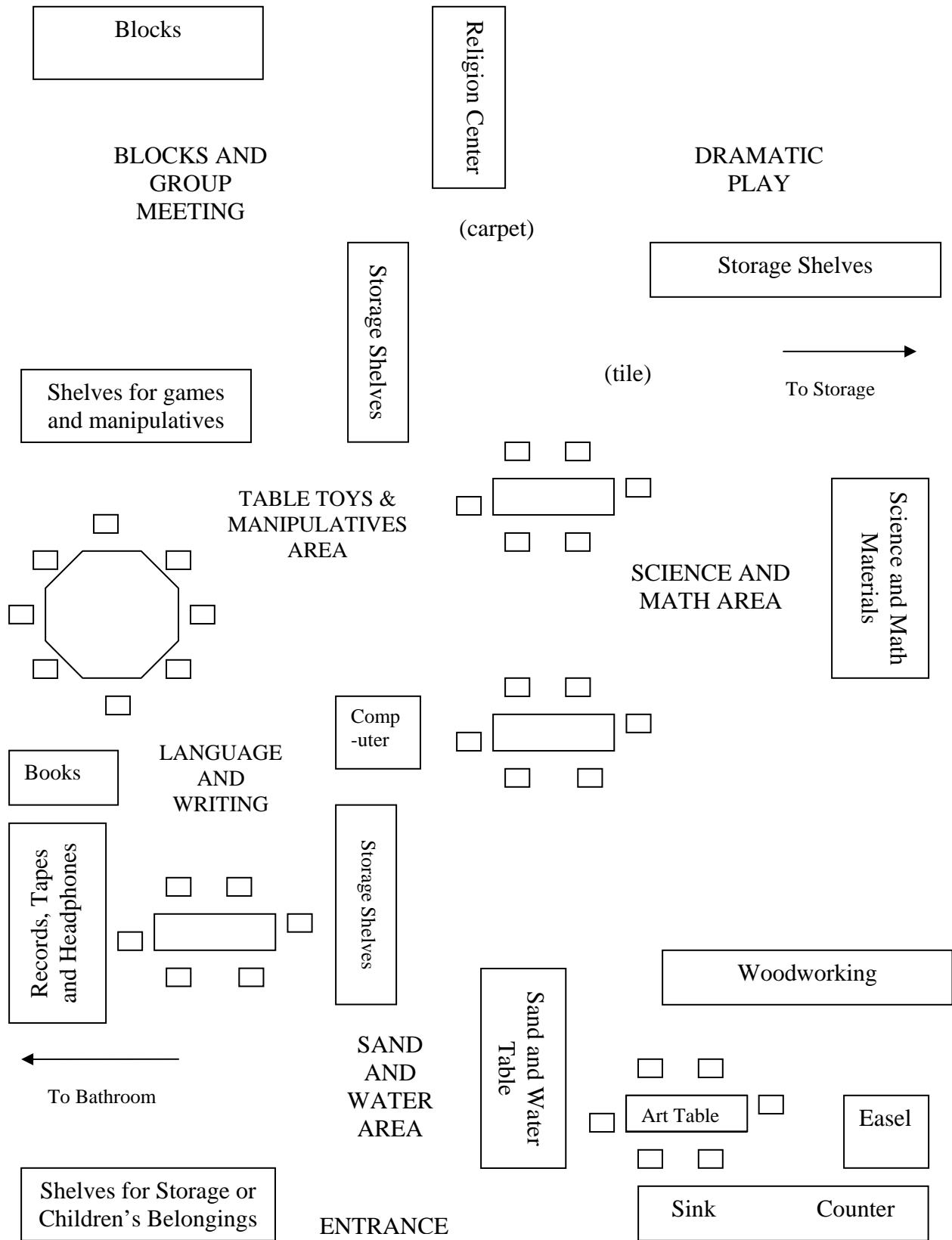
**No sand and water table-** Substitute a small inflatable plastic swimming pool or dishpans.

**Program emphasis on individualized instruction -** Use storage units and other furniture such as pianos, teacher’s desks, and file cabinets to divide the room into individual learning centers. Make sure appropriate materials are at each center. Ensure the class is set up for whole class meetings as well.

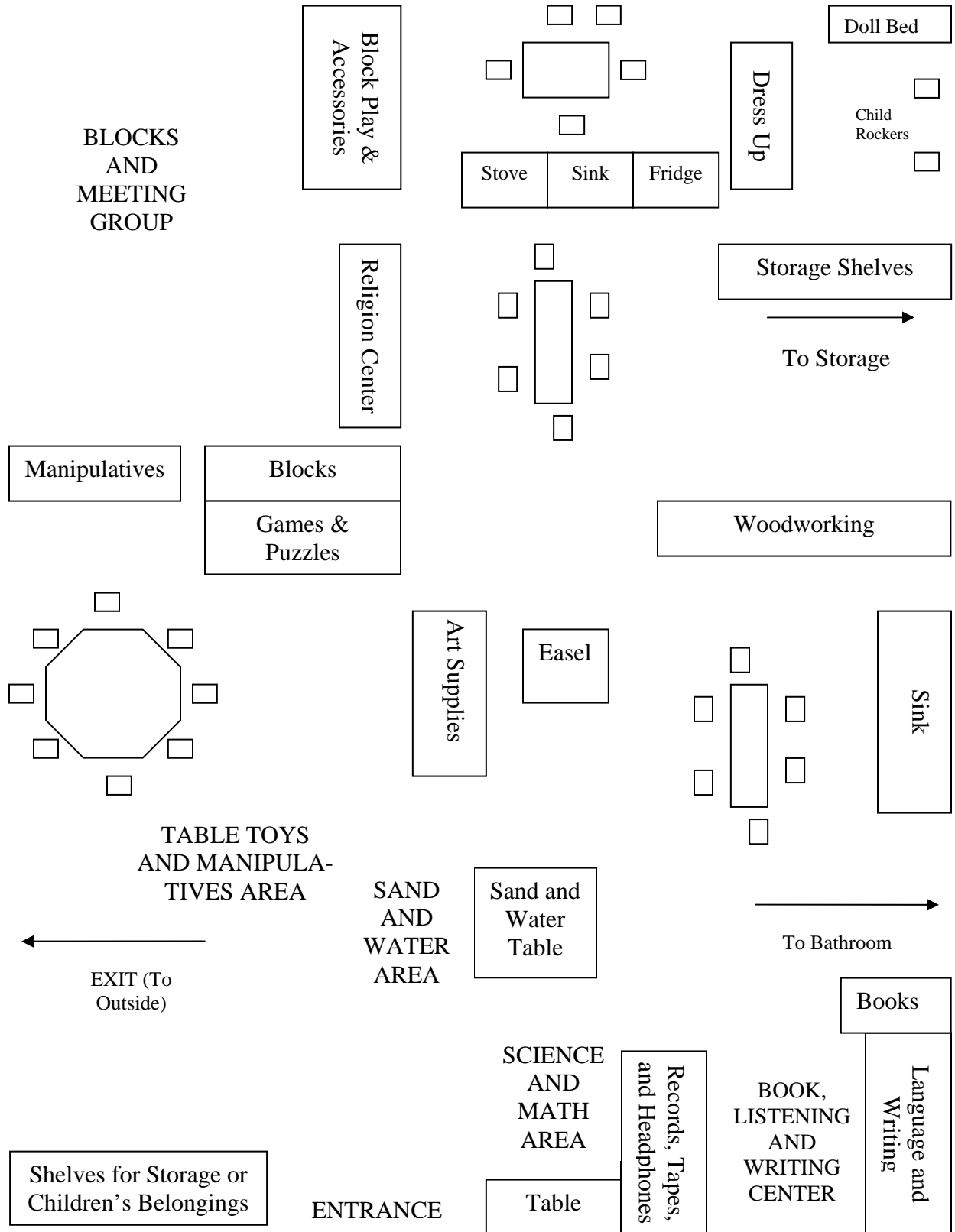
**Program emphasis on small group instruction -** Use tables in different areas of the room for small group activities or use area rugs or masking tape markers to set aside small group clusters. Ensure that areas are set up for whole class meetings as well.

**Areas that compliment each other -** Science and math areas, Science and art areas, Reading and listening areas, Blocks and dramatic play areas, Art and water activities (near sink, on washable flooring). Blocks and woodworking areas, Language arts and listening arts, Creative play and cooking activities, Art and Music Centers, Gross motor activities and block building areas, Blocks and housekeeping areas.

SAMPLE EARLY CHILDHOOD FLOOR PLAN A



SAMPLE EARLY CHILDHOOD FLOOR PLAN B



## **MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT**

*An Early Childhood classroom provides many opportunities for children to explore, investigate, and learn through age-appropriate activities. The teacher facilitates, guides, and directs students as they work alone or cooperatively with others. The atmosphere is one where ideas can be expressed, respected, and challenged appropriately. It is a well-organized space divided into inviting interest areas which appeal to a wide range of abilities. Areas/centers could include block building, fine and gross-motor activities, dress-up, books, art, math and science.*

*Suggestions for materials to help create a rich and well-organized environment are given only as start-up ideas and are in no way conclusive.*

*Crucifix*

*Religious pictures*

*Dramatic play equipment*

*Farm animals*

*Puzzles*

*Sandpaper alphabet*

*Band set with tom toms – bells*

*Hula hoops, balls, jump ropes*

*Tables, chairs, cubbies*

*Playground equipment*

*Indoor play supplies*

*Housekeeping materials*

*Reading corner books – pillows*

*Paint and other art mediums*

*Weather chart*

*Transportation toys – signs*

*Tape recorder/player*

*Mats/cots/blanket for rest*

*“Found materials”*

*Rhythm instruments*

*Bible*

*Painting easels*

*Wooden blocks with a cart*

*Family dolls with a doll house*

*Flannel and peg board*

*Movable alphabet and numbers*

*Legos type equipment*

*Math and science manipulatives*

*Book shelves, cabinets, and storage*

*Balance beam – bean bags*

*Cleaning equipment*

*Chart Stand*

*Big Books*

*Color games or manipulatives*

*Calendar chart*

*Computer*

*Water/Sand Table*

*Chart Paper*

*First Aid Kit*

*Beads and String*

**AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU MAY CONSIDER APPROPRIATE**

## **CLASSROOM CHECKLIST**

**Does your classroom have?**

- 1. A cubby for each child which is labeled with his/her name and an identifying feature such as a sticker or picture**
- 2. Attractive display of children's work**
- 3. Clear division between quiet and noisy areas**
- 4. Material stored near their place of use**
- 5. Materials which are clean, whole, and in good repair**
- 6. Materials stored in clean, open containers which are visually labeled**
- 7. Shelves which are visually labeled**
- 8. Shelves which are uncluttered and provide enough space for children to easily select and return materials**
- 9. One material in one container as opposed to mixing legos with beads**
- 10. Duplicates of many items, especially in classrooms for 3's**
- 11. Some centers which provide a clearly defined private workspace; i.e. trays, placemats, carpet squares**
- 12. Clear visual cues as to the number of children who may use the center at any one time**
- 13. Closed teacher storage which is clearly separate from shelves the children may use?**
- 14. Tops of shelves and cubbies which are clear, clean, and uncluttered**
- 15. Bright, simple wall display at children's eye level**

# ***CENTERS***

## DEVELOPING AND USING CENTERS

### Centers:

Learning is a social experience that can happen through the use of centers. Centers enable the child to act, react and/or learn in particular ways. Centers let each child work at his/her own pace and level. Centers give value to discovery and allow each child to make and correct mistakes. Centers direct each child to learn by doing and to reinforce learning through repetition. Centers let children choose. Centers also help to develop the whole child as children learn to work individually and/or cooperatively through their interaction with the materials.

### Why Learning Centers?

For the child, the center is used as:

- a. a self-selected activity for independent study
- b. follow-up for a teacher-taught lesson
- c. an activity in place of a regular assignment
- d. an enrichment activity

For the teacher, the center is used as:

- a. a small group instruction area
- b. follow-up for a lesson taught
- c. an individualized activity
- d. a setting/situation to observe/assess development

### Guidelines for Learning Centers:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Start Slow!</b>       | Initially, keep the number of items at centers limited. Gradually, increase the number as children's learning needs grow.      |
| <b>Locate Centers</b>    | For functional relationship: quiet, noisy and messy activities, proper lighting and traffic patterns, proximity to water, etc. |
| <b>Introduce Centers</b> | Teach children about choices. Explain possible problems at the centers and how to handle.                                      |
| <b>Expect Noise!</b>     | Determine whether or not it is meaningful noise, and act accordingly.  |
| <b>Be Consistent</b>     | Decide with your class when centers may and may not be used.   |
| <b>Choosing Centers</b>  | Initially, begin as teacher-directed. Over time, become more student-selected.   |



## **ROOM AREA (CENTERS)**

### **EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

#### **Paints**

-Creative expression, self-confidence, exploration of paint and painting tools as an art medium, readiness skills for reading and writing, hand-eye coordination, color recognition.

#### **Blocks**

- Mathematical concepts of shape and size recognition, spatial awareness, sorting, counting, categorizing, creative expression, eye-hand coordination, social interaction, planning, cooperation.

#### **Housekeeping**

- Language development through dramatic play and social interaction, sharing, taking turns; awareness of self and others through role play, verbal communication.

#### **Dress Up**

- Imitative play, role play, creative expression, imaginative play, fosters verbal and social interaction.

#### **Mail Box**

- Visual discrimination, letter and name recognition, eye-hand coordination, personal ownership, responsibility.

#### **Sand Box**

- Problem solving boundaries, sharing, creative expression, fine motor development, self-confidence.

#### **Play Dough**

- Fine motor development, creative thinking and problem solving through imaginative play and interaction.

#### **Create/Art Table**

- Fine motor development, creative expression, self-confidence, social interaction, and responsibility integrated into the curriculum.

## LEARNING CENTERS

Centers afford the children opportunities for choice. They may select the block or housekeeping center where they interact, cooperate and share with peers. Or, they may choose to paint at the easel or to work with puzzles. Then, they learn that they must stay with a project until its completion. Or, personal “reading” or quiet listening time may be the choice of the day for some children.

During center time, the teacher can observe interpersonal relationships and can redirect the indecisive student or work one-on-one basis with specific students. This time allows for reinforcement of certain concepts as well as encouraging additional effort with smaller groups.

### **Learning Centers in the Kindergarten - The What and Why**

| <u>CENTER</u>       | <u>WHAT</u>  | <u>WHY</u>  |
|---------------------|--|---|
| <b>Housekeeping</b> | Kitchen supplies: sink, stove, refrigerator, pots, pans, dishes, etc.<br>Snack supplies, Dress up clothes (male and female), mirror, broom, sponges, ironing board, doll’s bed, dolls, tables, chairs, phones, storage space | Language Development<br>Social concepts and amenities (sharing, cleanliness, responsibility)<br>Role playing – adult home and community, activities using familiar child size equipment and materials related to curriculum |

| <u>CENTER</u>       | <u>WHAT</u>  | <u>WHY</u>  |
|---------------------|--|---|
| <b>Block Center</b> | Adequate floor space<br>Large and small unit<br>Blocks (wood)<br>Planks<br>Cardboard boxes<br>Small Toys and accessories (zoo animals, people, cars, trucks, etc.) | Role playing, physical education, manipulation and control, balance, coordination, visual perception, socialization, imagination, math concepts (proportion and design) spatial relationships related to curriculum |

| <u>CENTER</u>             | <u>WHAT</u>  | <u>WHY</u>  |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Math Manipulatives</b> | Teacher made and commercial materials puzzles, small blocks, counters, discs, pegs, pegboards, tracing patterns, flannel board, abacus, games, beads | Free choice<br>Independent activities<br>Fine motor coordination<br>Development of math concept and spatial relationships |

All labeled in separate containers.

| <b><u>CENTER</u></b>                | <b><u>WHAT</u></b>   | <b><u>WHY</u></b>  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Library and Listening Center</b> | Books – hard and soft covered<br>(change to reflect curriculum, season or experiences)<br>Puppets, pictures, tapes, magazines, area rugs, display cabinet<br>Well-lit area<br>Easy access to books | Language and listening skills<br>Interest in books<br>Handling and care of books<br>Dramatics<br>Role playing<br>Resource area |

| <b><u>CENTER</u></b> | <b><u>WHAT</u></b>  | <b><u>WHY</u></b>   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| <b>Science</b>       | Sand, water, magnets, magnifying glass, weights, scale<br>Measuring containers<br>Plants, animals, fish<br>Aquarium<br>Mirror<br>Rocks, shells<br>Seasonal displays | Discovery<br>Care and feeding of plants and animals<br>Questioning<br>Manipulation<br>Curiosity<br>Vocabulary development<br>Classifying<br>Predicting Outcomes |

| <b><u>CENTER</u></b> | <b><u>WHAT</u></b>  | <b><u>WHY</u></b>  |
|----------------------|---|--|
| <b>Music</b>         | Assorted brushes and paints<br>Crayons – thick and thin<br>Paper – newspaper, colored construction paper, mural paper, paste, scissors, clay, string, sponges, cloth, wallpaper, samples, bags, etc.<br>Easel, containers for storage | Visual-Manipulative skills<br>Fine motor coordination<br>Creative thinking<br>Individual expression<br>Experiments with different t media<br>Exploration<br>Language development |

**CENTER**

**WHAT**

**WHY**

**Art**

Assorted brushes and paints  
Crayons – thick and thin  
Paper – newspaper, colored  
construction paper, mural paper,  
paste, scissors, clay, string, sponges,  
cloth, wallpaper, samples, bags, etc.  
Easel, containers for storage

Visual-Manipulative skills  
Fine motor coordination  
Creative thinking  
Individual expression  
Experiments with different t media  
Exploration  
Language development

**CENTER**

**WHAT**

**WHY**

**Music**

Record player, records, piano (if  
possible), rhythm instruments

Developing love and appreciation of  
music  
Listening skills  
Enjoyment of singing  
Provides emotional outlet, rhythm  
Learn about instruments  
Group activity

## CREATING AND USING LEARNING CENTERS

### Develop

- Select a topic, subject skill or interest as the basis for creating activities.
- Structure activities to include:
  - Ways to receive information:
    - Listening
    - Observing
    - Experimenting
    - Researching
  - Ways to apply information:
    - Making Products
    - Designing Models
    - Filling in Worksheets
    - Putting together Puzzles
    - Acting out Scenes
    - Playing Games
    - Writing Stories
    - Matching Objects

### Collect

- Locate references and resources about the topic skill or interest:
  - Study Prints
  - CD's, DVD's
  - Records
  - Books
- Gather all materials to be used for:
  - Building
  - Writing
  - Drawing
  - Modeling
  - Sorting
- Set up supplies:
  - Scissors            Paper
  - Pencils            Marking pens
  - Glue                Stapler
  - Crayons           Paper punch
  - Chalk               String

### Display

- Section off an area in the classroom.
- Arrange the materials using:
  - Cardboard       Tables
  - Peg Boards       Boxes
  - Plastic Bins      Chart Racks
  - Bulletin Boards Shelves
- Label Items.
- Place signs and directions around center.
- Indicate space for working.
- Allow for display of children's work.

### Present

- Introduce activities.
- Give directions on how to use materials.
- Schedule individual conferences.
- Encourage students to act as teachers for the center.
- Plan for ways children can add activities to the center.
- Teach group lessons at the center.

### Evaluate

- Develop a record-keeping instrument for students' use.
- Provide ways for children to share products.

## USING UNUSUAL SPACES AND PLACES

*Capture your students' imaginations with a learning center...*

On a lampshade  
Behind the piano  
On a clothesline  
In a large appliance box  
In a shoe box  
In a series of manila folders  
On an easel  
On the floor  
Behind a table (tipped on the side)  
On a mirror  
In a flower pot  
Under your desk  
On a cork board  
In a bucket  
On a bookcase  
On a cushion  
In a large, straw hat  
On a mat  
Behind the door or in back of it  
On a pizza board  
In an empty set  
In a cassette tape carrier  
In an egg carton  
Planted in a planter  
In a picnic basket  
In an old lunch box, mailbox or hat box  
On a shower curtain  
In the hall  
On a beach ball  
In a suitcase  
In a tent  
In a shopping bag  
On a cube  
On a round table cloth  
In potato chip cans  
In a recipe box  
Under an umbrella  
In a barrel (side cut out)  
Under a table  
On the underside of a table  
On the side of your filing cabinet  
Hanging from your chart rack  
Hanging from a clothes tree or coat rack  
In a loose leaf notebook  
In a wine rack  
In a coffee can  
In a birdcage  
Under a canopy  
In a terrarium  
In an oatmeal box  
In a large drawer  
On a window shade  
On a scroll  
On the Venetian blinds  
In a lady's purse  
In or on an old tire or inner tube  
In a fish bowl  
On a real live human body  
In a carpenter's apron  
In a bird's nest  
In a toy boat or car  
On the outside or inside of a wastebasket or laundry basket  
In a violin case  
On a screen  
In an old picture frame  
In your closet  
Under a blanket  
In a pumpkin shell  
In a sock or stocking  
In a 5-gallon ice cream container decorated with hanging beads, paper chains or burlap  
Or.....

# ***THEMES***

At the Early Childhood level, developmentally appropriate activities are planned which encourage children to participate to the fullest extent possible, most often individually or in small groups.

Themes provide a natural and efficient way for teachers to organize these activities. Information in the form of books, photographs, artifacts, props and creative materials are organized around a specific concept. Topics of interest are many and varied, including seasons, holidays, animals, the farm, weather, dinosaurs, the ocean, the solar system and many more. The diversity and interests of the class as well as the background and talent of the teacher will dictate additional themes for investigation and discovery.

Themes encourage true integration of the content area of learning. Early Childhood students can learn Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Music and Art simultaneously as they investigate a specific theme, such as “How the Dinosaurs Lived” or “Working on a Farm”.



### ***Religion***

- Show children a picture of Jesus and the children.
- Read story of Jesus and the children.
- Teach simple opening prayer. "Dear God, thank You for loving me. Thank You for making me so special."
- Simple Grace – "Thank You God for our wonderful food.
- Simple Closing – "Dear God, thank You for fun at \_\_\_\_\_ School today."

### ***Math***

- Use manipulatives with whole class first before putting into Learning Centers.
- Examples:
  - Sort Teddy Bears by color, size
  - Put puzzles together cooperatively
  - Practice stepping on counting mats
  - Make simple color patterns with linking blocks
  - Sort blocks by color
- Count children in class.
- Ask children to "count off" at start of class.

### ***Social Studies***

- Visit people in our school: nurse, secretary, principal.
- Fire Drill Practice
- Rules of Classroom
- Call one child's name; child says, "That's my name!" Roll large ball to that child.
- Play, "This is my Family." Each child names the people who live in his/her house.
- Snack procedures should encourage good manners and polite conversation with other children.

### ***Science***

- Ask children to look in full-length mirror, and then describe their own hair and eye color.
- Ask children if they and their new friends look the same or different.
- Make a silhouette of each child.
- Take a photo of each child, to be compared with one later to show growth.
- Introduce a simple classroom pet, e.g., some gold fish.

## **THEME**

*"Getting Started"*

### ***Language Arts***

- Book suggestions: My Teacher Sleeps in School by Leatie Weiss, My Teacher's Best Friend by P.K. Hallinan, I Can Dress Myself – Sesame Street Book, My First Day of School by P.K. Hallinan, Franklin Gets a Fish, Franklin's First Day of School
- Encourage children's conversation about selves and families, about their feelings coming to school, about the class pet, about playtime, about fire drill, etc.

***Religion***

- Spend time reinforcing that each child is special.
- Examples:
  - Story of *Jesus and The Little Children*
  - The Name Game
  - Color Picture of Jesus and the Little Children

***Math***

- Sort picture, e.g.:
  - Girls & Boys
  - Color of hair/eyes
  - Different objects by color
  - Like/different
- Group or graph children by their characteristics
- Measure and compare height using blocks or other objects.

***Social Studies***

- Discuss names and tell why they are important.
- Look at faces and tell how they are same/different
- Design a Name Banner.
- Share likes and dislikes, e.g., favorite food, TV show, etc.

***Science***

- Teach:
  - Body Parts
  - Facial Parts
  - Dance to HOKEY POKEY

**THEME**

*“Me & I’m Special”*

***Language Arts***

- Read story FACES by Barbara Brenner
- Read Runaway Bunny
- Draw picture of what children would want to be.
- Label what they drew.

### ***Religion***

- Tell children story of Creation.
- Tell children story of Noah.
- Tell children story of animals in Bethlehem.
- Show animal pictures from Bible, Religion Book, or other appropriate source.
- Create a mural showing many of the animals God has made.

### ***Math***

- Identify pairs of animals in pictures from story of Noah.
- Match animal babies to their animal mothers, in selected pictures.
- Use attribute blocks to create animal shapes. Trace and color.
- Sort animals by feather or fur, number of feet.
- Put precut animals in line, smallest to largest.
- Compare sizes and shapes of farm animals

### ***Social Studies***

- Share ideas of life on a farm.
- Discover products we get from farms.
- Match pictures of animals and what they give us.
- Compare a farm community with their local community

### ***Science***

- Grow corn by putting soil in Ziploc bag, sealing it, placing it in a sunny window.
- Make butter by shaking half a baby food jar of whipping cream until it separates. Pour off milky liquid. Rinse again until nearly clear.

## **THEME**

*“The Farm”*

### ***Language Arts***

- Listen to sounds of animals.
- Write about farm animals.
- Books:
  - Big Red Barn by Margaret Wise Brown
  - Charlie Needs a Cloak by Tomie de Paola
- Retell what they saw or did on a farm trip, in sequential order.

***Religion***

-To deepen our understanding that God made all people in the world and loves all.

-Examples:

- Costume Box
- God's love for all people
- Ways to help others
- "Love All People" wheels
- Prayer Service

***Math***

-To teach concept of Number 5.

-Read – Count Your Way through China by James Haskins

-Examples:

- Blocks – 2 Colors
- Sets of Five
- Write number 5 in sand
- Make number 5 from clay

***Social Studies***

-Where is China?

Locate on map or globe

-Chinese Words

-Explain Chinese New Year

-Eat with chopsticks

-Examine "Made in China" labels on clothing

***Science***

-Chinese flowers:

- Peonies
- Lotuses
- Plum Blossoms
- Camellias: bring in bulbs of some and plant

**THEME**

***"CHINESE NEW YEAR"***

Children will explore some of the customs associated with the Chinese New Year and other ancient Chinese traditions.

***Language Arts***

-Children will write a note to parents asking if they ever visited China.

-Read:

- Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes by Robert Wyndham
- The Five Chinese Brothers by Claire Hucket Bishops
- The Story About Ping by Marjorie Flack
- Tikki Tikki Tembo

***Religion***

- Read story of Noah
- Find a cozy spot for the spiders on the Ark. Draw a picture

***Math***

- Introduce and develop the color black and the shape square.
- Classify kinds of spiders
- Count legs on a spider
- Guess how many plastic spiders are in the jar

***Social Studies***

- Talk about homes.
  - Compare types
  - Draw picture of house
  - Make milk carton houses
- Compare how a spider gets food to how you get food.

***Science***

- Show pictures of spiders
- Name and compare types of spiders
- Predict how spiders help us
- Read factual books about spiders
- Observe spiders and webs. Predict what will happen on a rainy day, windy day or sunny day.

**THEME**

*“Spindly Spiders”*

***Language Arts***

- Read Story:
  - The Very Busy Spider by Eric Carle
  - Anansi, The Spider by Gerald McDermott
- Introduce letter Ss
- Find pictures beginning with S
- Dramatize Little Miss Muffet
- Spider’s Tea Party ~ compare real and make-believe

# ***ORIENTATION***

## Suggested Agenda for Opening Meeting with Parents

- Welcome
- Introduction of staff
- Explanation of the program's philosophy, goals & objectives; discuss curriculum and experiences planned for the children.
- Explain policies and procedures using your Early Childhood Parent/Guardian Handbook.
- Discuss your procedures for the first day of school.
- Talk about separation problems.
- Discuss your staggered entrance schedule.
- Questions.
- Tour of your room and facilities.

### **CHILD ORIENTATION**

The transition into *Early Childhood* should be as smooth and as easy as possible for the child. Create an atmosphere that will be a happy and secure learning environment.

Home visits by the teacher are an excellent means of easing the transition from home to school and can help the teacher get to know the child. If this is not possible, the teacher may send a note to the child before school begins, welcoming him/her to school and telling him/her what to expect on the first day. (See sample on next page.)

The child should have the opportunity to see the classroom before school begins. Many Early Childhood programs allow **parents and children** to visit during the spring while class is in session. The parents and child can observe the class with the understanding that the teacher and class may not be interrupted. If this is not possible, the parents and child should be allowed to visit the classroom before the program begins, perhaps two weeks before school begins.

### **STAGGERED ARRIVAL TIMES**

To facilitate the first day(s) of school, a staggered entrance might be used.

Example:      Children with  
                 Last names beginning A-K      come from 9:00 – 10:00 A.M.  
                 Last names beginning L-Z      come from 10:15 – 11:15 A.M.

A peaceful low-key atmosphere is non-threatening to the young child. Small groups of 7-8 children per session will make it easier for the teacher to give individual attention and get to know each child.

## **GETTING STARTED: THE FIRST DAY**

Planning for the arrival of a new group of children must begin months in advance. Schools often have their own procedures for registration and admittance. But with the approval of the school's administrator, there are techniques a teacher can use to orient parents and children to the beginning activities of school. Included also are ideas that will help the teacher in classroom preparation and management.

### PARENT ORIENTATION

Assuming that letters containing general school policies have been sent to the parents, the teacher will still need to have more personal contacts with parents when school begins. Listed below are possible ways to attain this goal.

- a. Letters sent to parents asking them to attend a general meeting.
- b. A questionnaire given to the parent to aid the teacher to become better acquainted with the child (e.g., allergies, medications, signs of talent, likes and dislikes, etc.) See **FORM** Section
- c. An Early Childhood Parent/Guardian Handbook containing the following pertinent information:
  - a. Introductory letter asking parents for their involvement
  - b. An explanation of the goals, objectives, and procedures of the program
  - c. An explanation of the curriculum, progress reports, and parent-teacher conference
  - d. A general schedule of the child's play
  - e. Procedures for snack time
  - f. List of special things the parent of the child can do to assist the child. (Label child's belongings, bring in paint shirt and tote bag, etc.)

Prior to the first day of school, have a parent orientation meeting. This will give you a chance to present your program and for parents to ask their questions. Establish some type of staggered entrance schedule for the first day of school. This will be helpful for you, the parent and the child.



PARENT/GUARDIAN ORIENTATION CHECKLIST  
SHARE WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- ✓ Philosophy
- ✓ Parent/Staff Communication
  - Daily Communication
  - Conferences/Meetings
  - Parent Committee
  - Involvement
- ✓ Daily Schedule/Curriculum
- ✓ Signing In/Out & Absences
- ✓ Lunch
  - policies
  - visiting
  - practices
- ✓ Birthdays
- ✓ Naptime/Rest Time
- ✓ Sick Child Policy
- ✓ Medication Policy
- ✓ Health Issues
- ✓ Early drop-off/Late pick-up policy (if applicable)
- ✓ Discipline policy
- ✓ Forms and areas to introduce
  - Accident Reports
  - School Calendar
- ✓ Things to remember
  - Extra clothes (labeled)
  - Lunch (if applicable)

# ***INCLUSION***

## THE INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

If the school is able to meet the learning needs of children presented to the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs, the following should be considered.

### PHYSICAL SPACE AND EQUIPMENT ADAPTATIONS

Including young children with special needs into typical environments requires openness on the part of the teacher to make modifications. These changes may require adaptations in the physical environment and willingness to work closely with support personnel for planning and programming. It is important that the environment maximizes opportunities for positive interactions with other peers and adults throughout the day. This guide provides only a representative set of guidelines for successful integration.

The following recommendations reflect guidelines appropriate for all young children. Because of additional difficulties or special needs, it is especially critical that adults are sensitive to these suggestions.

### ADAPTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

- Place objects at child's level and guide child to examine tangibly.
- Provide adequate lighting for child.
- Keep child's personal items (a coat) in an organized storage unit easily accessible to the child.
- For safety reasons, avoid keeping large pieces of equipment or furniture in transition or walk-through areas.
- Control extraneous noise during transition periods to enable children to hear and follow verbal directions.
- Provide additional tactile, auditory and olfactory cues to materials as needed. (Puzzles may have "smelly stickers" added to pieces and their matching spaces so both sighted and visually limited children can use the same materials.)
- Define work space, classroom areas and personal space with cues as needed. Use brightly colored tape, "work trays", carpet squares, concrete objects, among other things.

## ADAPTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

- Use your voice to gain the child's attention whenever possible. Lightly touch the child to signal the child to look and listen.
- Help the child learn to anticipate an auditory environment through use of pauses, cues, or quiet time before the next activity begins; prepare the child to listen.
- Use auditory signals in conjunction with all other possible cues, such as facial expressions, gestures, or pictures when appropriate.
- Sit closely, down at the child's physical level when speaking to the child. Attempt to speak at ear level.
- Speak using a normal conversational tone of voice, facing the child as you talk. Allow the child to see your expressions.
- Orient the child physically (through touch) and verbally to relevant activity or conversation.
- Allow the child adequate time to process auditory and other environmental input.
- Model clear articulation and good language structure, using simple and clear phrases in sentences. Expand the child's language utterances.
- Do not use gestures in excess, only supplement words when necessary.
- Provide amplification systems for classrooms (FM units for child, adults and peers or hearing aids) to maximize verbal and auditory cues.
- Decrease extraneous noise whenever possible to maximize relevant sounds.

## ADAPTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH SIGNIFICANT COMMUNICATIONS DEFICITS

- Observe, encourage, and respond to any forms of communication demonstrated by the child (pointing, gestures, vocalizations, eye gaze). Provide brief verbal labels or comments.
- Minimize your rate and frequency of conversation and limit questioning. Instead, provide short comments, labeling the child's actions (for example, you're painting, you're feeding the baby)
- Identify other children who may communicate and interact well with the child and facilitate opportunities for social interactions. Observe and facilitate interactions but do not be a key participant.
- Follow the child's lead by recognizing one's focus on objects or actions. Maintain the activities the child selects. Comment briefly about the actions.

- Initiate interactions that require minimal speech, and gradually introduce verbal activities in a play situation.
- Be patient and listen as the child attempts to communicate. Do not pretend that you understand if you do not. Warmly ask the child to try again.
- Try to use visual or contextual cues to help in understanding the child's speech. What is the child currently doing? Is there an object or activity the child is requesting? Observe the child's interests, actions and environment for cues.
- Include family members who may understand the child's communication patterns in play activities. Observe those interactions. Ask family members for assistance in interpreting the child's sounds, gestures, or facial expressions.
- Ask the parents or other professionals (speech pathologist, teachers) to create a list of current words, gestures, facial expressions, or other systems used by the child to communicate. Ask that the list be written exactly as the child communicates (mo=more, etc.)
- Refer the child for a comprehensive communication evaluation by a speech pathologist trained to work with young children. Ask for concrete ideas and a play-oriented program with the speech pathologist.
- Develop a simple set of pictures through photographs of favorite people (family, classroom adults, peers, objects, foods and activities). Use these with the child to provide a supplemental means of communication and to facilitate verbal naming of the photographs.

#### ADAPTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH MOTOR DIFFICULTIES OR MULTIPLE HANDICAPS

- Keep toys and materials in open shelves easily reached by children unable to stand or in wheelchairs.
- Provide adaptive seating to assure that children will be at equal height with other children.
- Use non-slip materials to help secure materials for children who have difficulty.
- Arrange rooms to allow space for adaptive equipment, both in seated positions (wheelchairs, chairs, standing tables) and for mobility (wheelchairs, walkers).
- Enable children to use floor space or classroom tables so as not to isolate children by using wheelchair trays.
- Arrange increased communication levels to ensure ready accessibility for interactions with peers and adults.
- Whenever possible, demonstrate special techniques for use of equipment to peers to maximize opportunities for interactions.
- Use grips, Velcro pieces and suction cups with built-up handles to help grasp materials. (for example: place suction cups on individual puzzles without knobs)

## ADAPTATIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH PERCEPTUAL MOTOR PROBLEMS

- Give adequate time for completion of task.
- Give directions both orally and verbally.
- Provide feedback frequently.
- Use materials that allow for manipulation of concrete objects (blocks, rods) instead of only paper or picture abstracts.
- Do not penalize for artistic or written skills – respond to ideas and concepts.
- Allow the child to use tape recorders when possible.
- Allow the child to speak while reading and writing.
- Include tracing in activities.
- Help child have a friend to go over directions or repeat visual information.
- Avoid frequent use of activities that require exact fine motor skills for success (for example: workbooks)
- Use auditory clues for reading comprehension.
- Help the child work without distractions.
- Use large crayons or pencils if helpful.

Adapted from: The Ohio Early Childhood Curriculum Guide. Ohio Department of Education, 1991

# ***FORMS***

SESSION \_\_\_\_\_  
ROOM \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORMS  
EARLY CHILDHOOD REGISTRATION FORM

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

LAST FIRST MIDDLE

SEX: M F BIRTHDATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MOTHER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED \_\_\_\_\_  
SEPARATED \_\_\_\_\_  
DIVORCED \_\_\_\_\_  
REMARRIED \_\_\_\_\_

RELIGION \_\_\_\_\_ PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

BROTHERS/SISTERS

| NAME  | AGE   | SCHOOL | GRADE |
|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ |

PLEASE CHECK THE SESSION YOU PREFER:

FOUR YEAR OLD PROGRAM (DAY)  
\_\_\_\_ MORNING SESSION (TIME)  
\_\_\_\_ AFTERNOON SESSION (TIME)

THREE YEAR OLD PROGRAM (DAY)  
\_\_\_\_ MORNING SESSION (TIME)  
\_\_\_\_ AFTERNOON SESSION (TIME)

REGISTRATION/SUPPLY FEE PAID \_\_\_\_\_  
CHECK \_\_\_\_\_  
CASH \_\_\_\_\_



SAMPLE EARLY CHILDHOOD INFORMATION SHEET

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ BIRTHDAY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT(S) NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

1. Has your child attended a nursery school prior to this one? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If so, what school? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Has your child attended a library story hour? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is a language other than English spoken at home? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If so, please indicate the spoken language \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does your child have playmates his/her own age? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does your child have a hobby or some special interest? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does your child have any physical problems that we should be aware of? For example, an allergy, hearing, speech or vision problem? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Does he/she take any medication on a regular basis? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Does your child have any fears we should be aware of? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Does your child have an older brother or sister at this school? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If yes, please list the names and the grades they are in:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you have an occupation, hobby or pastime that you would be willing to share with our children?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Additional comments or information about your child that you think might be helpful to us:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents,

Parent-Teacher Conferences are currently being scheduled for the Early Childhood classes. Together, we can look at what the children have already learned and establish some goals for the rest of the year.

Conferences will be on \_\_\_\_\_ for the four year olds and on \_\_\_\_\_ for the three year olds. We ask that the children **NOT** be present during the conference. The conference will be held in your child's classroom.

The following appointment has been made for your Parent-Teacher Conference. May we ask that you make every effort to adjust your schedule to keep the appointment given to you as listed below? We could make a change for you in case of necessity or emergency, but such an adjustment may involve several families. If however, it is impossible for you to come at the appointed time, please call the school office by (date), **BEFORE** 3:00 P.M.

Please be prompt for your conference. If you do not feel that sufficient time was given to you for your conference, another appointment can be scheduled at a different time.

Please return the lower portion of this letter as soon as possible. We thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

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|             |               |            |
|-------------|---------------|------------|
| NAME _____  | SESSION _____ | ROOM _____ |
| _____       | TIME _____    | TO _____   |
| (DAY) _____ | (DATE) _____  |            |
| _____       | TIME _____    | TO _____   |
| (DAY) _____ | (DATE) _____  |            |

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PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TO SCHOOL BY \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE).

I WILL BE THERE AT THE APPOINTED TIME \_\_\_\_\_.  
SESSION \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

I CANNOT COME AT THE APPOINTED TIME. I WILL PHONE FOR ANOTHER APPOINTMENT \_\_\_\_\_.

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(PARENT'S SIGNATURE)

NAME OF SCHOOL

REPORT OF PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Conference attended by: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the basic achievement level of this child. Any particular strengths or needs?

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What physical growth factors concerning this child should be considered?

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What can be said of the general social and emotional growth of this child?

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What was accomplished through this conference?

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Parent input helpful for instructional planning:

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Other Comments:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZED PICKUP LIST

FOR YOUR CHILD'S PROTECTION, PLEASE FILL OUT THE NAME OF AUTHORIZED PERSONS TO BRING OR TAKE YOUR CHILD FROM THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM, OTHER THAN YOURSELF. IF YOU CAN'T DO THIS NOW, DO IT AT THE START OF SCHOOL AND WHENEVER ANY CHANGES ARE IN ORDER. PLEASE INFORM THE AUTHORIZED PERSONS TO BE PREPARED TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES TO OUR STAFF. PLEASE LIST PARENTS OTHER THAN ONE SIGNING THIS, IF AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF A CAR POOL ARRANGEMENT, DESIGNATE SUCH ON THE LINE "RELATIONSHIP" OR TELL US HERE WHAT THE ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IS THERE ANYONE WHO MIGHT STOP FOR YOUR CHILD THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO HAVE YOUR CHILD RELEASED TO (E.G. OTHER PARENT)?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

(School Letterhead)

**PARENT(S) / GUARDIAN(S) PERMISSION AND RELEASE  
FOR STUDENT'S PARTICIPATION IN  
(Date and Destination) FIELD TRIP**

We, (I) as parent(s) or legal guardian(s) give permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's name)

to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ School field trip on \_\_\_\_\_ to  
which includes all related programs or events. In consideration for our (my) son's/daughter's  
participation in the field trip, and intending to be legally bound, we (I) and our (my) son/daughter  
agree and understand that we assume risk in full for our (my) son's/daughter's participation on the  
field trip, and with full knowledge of the risks inherent on such field trip, we release and hold  
harmless the school, \_\_\_\_\_ Parish, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia,  
and its priests, religious, teachers, aides, employees, agents, administrators, and any official  
representatives, from any and all liability, damages, or claims for any and all personal injury,  
bodily injury, and/or property damage arising or related to our (my) son's/daughter's participation  
on the field trip, except for medical payments up to \$300, or as otherwise described, and provided  
in the Student Accident Insurance Policy.

We (I) and our (my) son/daughter understand and agree to abide by all rules and regulations  
established by \_\_\_\_\_ School pertaining to the field trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent(s) / Guardian(s) Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\*Both parents and /or guardians should sign this Permission and Release. If one parent and/or  
guardian is out of town or otherwise unavailable, the fact should be noted on the form. If only one  
parent has custody, permission must be obtained from this parent with an acknowledgement that  
this parent is sole custodian of the child. If there is no parent and only one guardian, permission  
must be obtained from the sole guardian with an acknowledgment that he/she is sole guardian.

NB: Each student **must** return the signed *Permission and Release Form* before being permitted  
to participate on the field trip.

**FIELD TRIP CHECK LIST**

Destination: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost per child: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Departure and Return time: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Student Names</b> | <b>Signed<br/>Permission<br/>Slips</b> | <b>Medical<br/>Releases</b> | <b>Lunch if<br/>Needed</b> | <b>Money if<br/>Needed</b> |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 2.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 3.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 4.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 5.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 6.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 7.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 8.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 9.                   |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 10.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 11.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 12.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 13.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 14.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |
| 15.                  |  |                             |                            |                            |

**ITEMS NEEDED**

Emergency Information Cards  
First Aid Kit  
Trash Bags  
Paper Plates  
Paper Cups  
Paper Napkins  
Juice Cooler

Emergency Information Cards  
First Aid Kit  
Trash Bags  
  
Miscellaneous  
Miscellaneous

**FOOD ALLERGIES**

(To be posted in food preparation area)

It is suggested that you post child's photo and emergency instructions here.

The following children have food allergies:

**Child's Name**

**Allergic to:**

**Notes:**

**ACCIDENT REPORT**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

What Happened? *(Be as objective as possible)*

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Treatment:

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Teacher(s) who saw what happened \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher who treated injury \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher who informed parents \_\_\_\_\_

Date reported \_\_\_\_\_ Time reported \_\_\_\_\_

Staff signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**UNUSUAL INCIDENT REPORT**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

What Happened? *(Be as objective as possible)*

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Intervention:

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Teacher(s) who saw what happened \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher who intervened \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher who informed parents \_\_\_\_\_

Date reported \_\_\_\_\_ Time reported \_\_\_\_\_

Staff signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



**PARENT/GUARDIAN  
END OF THE YEAR  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EVALUTATION**



Thank you for your cooperation in filling out this form. Programs change and improve with input. We would like to hear from you.

1. Did you feel that you received adequate information about the program this year?

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2. Did you receive adequate information about your child and his/her progress?

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3. Is there an area or part of the Early Childhood Program that your child liked best?

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4. Is there an area of the program that your child disliked?

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5. Is there a way that we could better serve you and your child in the area of child development and parent education?

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6. Comments, Criticisms, Suggestions:

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# ***PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES***

## **PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES**

**Office of Catholic Education  
222 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103**

**National Catholic Education Association  
1077 30<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. Suite 100  
Washington, DC 20007-3852**

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
State Board of Private Academic Schools Regulations**

**National Association for the Education of Young Children  
1509 16<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036-1426**

**Diocese of Allentown  
Department of Education  
2145 Madison Avenue  
Bethlehem, PA 18017**

**Diocese of Metuchen  
Vicariate for Education  
The John Paul Center  
103 Center Street  
Perth Amboy, New Jersey 08861**

**High Scope Curriculum  
Educational Research Foundation  
600 North River Street  
Upsilanti, Michigan 48197**

**RECOMMENDED TEACHER RESOURCE BOOKS:**

| <b>TITLE</b>  | <b>AUTHOR</b>  | <b>PUBLISHER</b>                                  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Reaching Potentials:<br/>Transforming Early Childhood<br/>Curriculum and Assessment –<br/>Volume 2</b> | <b>Sue Bredekamp<br/>Teresa Rosegrant</b>  | <b>NAEYC – 1995</b>                               |
| <b>Resources for Creative Teaching<br/>in Early Childhood Education</b>                                   | <b>Bonnie Mack Fleming<br/>Darlene Softley<br/>Hamilton<br/>Jo Anne Deal Hicks</b> | <b>Harcourt Brace<br/>Jovanovich, Inc. - 1997</b> |
| <b>Scaffolding Children’s Learning:<br/>Vygotsky and Early Childhood<br/>Education</b>                    | <b>Laura E. Berk<br/>Adam Winsler</b>  | <b>NAEYC – 1995</b>                               |
| <b>The Great Outdoors Restoring<br/>Children’s Right to Play Outside</b>                                  | <b>Mary R. Rivkin</b>  | <b>NAEYC – 1995</b>                               |
| <b>It’s A Catholic School... Let’s<br/>Keep it Catholic</b>   | <b>Sister Edwards William<br/>Quinn, IHM</b>                                       | <b>NCEA – 2005</b>                                |
| <b>Follow Me Too, A Handbook of<br/>Movement Activities for three- to<br/>five-year olds</b>              | <b>Lynne B. Schneider<br/>Marianne Torbert</b>                                     | <b>Dale Seymour<br/>Publications – 1993</b>       |
| <b>Playful Learning and Teaching,<br/>Integrating Play into Preschool<br/>and Primary Programs</b>        | <b>Renee M. Casbergue<br/>Judith E. Kieff</b>                                      | <b>Allyn and Bacon – 2000</b>                     |
| <b>The Right Stuff for Children<br/>K – Eight</b>   | <b>Martha Bronson</b>  | <b>NAEYC - 1995</b>                               |
| <b>Class Meetings, Young Children<br/>Solving Problems Together</b>                                       | <b>Emily Vance<br/>Patricia Jimenez Weaver</b>                                     | <b>NAEYC – 2002</b>                               |
| <b>Off to School, A Parent’s-Eye<br/>View of the Kindergarten Year</b>                                    | <b>Irene Hannigan</b>  | <b>NAEYC – 1998</b>                               |
| <b>The Colors of Learning,<br/>Integrating the Visual Arts into the<br/>Early Childhood Curriculum</b>    | <b>Rosemary Althouse<br/>Margaret Johnson<br/>Sharon T. Mitchell</b>               | <b>Teachers College Press,<br/>2003</b>           |

**Active for Life, Developmentally  
Appropriate Movement for Young  
Children**

**Stephen W. Sanders**

**Heinmann - 2003  
NAEYC - 2002**

**The Young Child and  
Mathematics**

**Juanita V. Copley**

**NAEYC – 2000**

**Learning to Read and Write,  
Developmentally Appropriate  
Practices for Young Children**

**Sue Bredekamp  
Carol Copple  
Susan B. Neuman**

**2002**

**A compendium of Articles On  
Effective Strategies To Achieve  
Inclusive Education**

**Diane Lea Ryndak  
Douglas Fisher**

**Production Development  
Associates, 2003**

**Ideas for Educating Students with  
Disabilities**

**Program Development  
Associates**

**2002**

**Developmentally Appropriate  
Practice in Early Childhood  
Programs, Revised**

**NAEYC**

**1997**

### **Teacher Resources**

#### **Creative Pre-K Press 2003**

Volume I Fall

Volume II Winter

Volume III Spring

Volume IV Summer

Author: Trisha Lee Sappie

#### **Kid Writing**

McGraw Hill 1999

Authors: Eileen G. Feldgus  
Isabell Cardonick

#### **Early Education**

**Three, Four and Five  
Year Olds Go to School**

Pearson Publishing 2006

Authors: Carol Seefeldt  
Barbara Wasik

#### **Teaching with Favorite Read-Alouds in PK and K**

Scholastic 2004

Author: Susan Lunsford

Scholastic 2004

#### **The New Kindergarten**

Scholastic Professional Books 2003

Author: Constance J. Leuenberger

#### **Beyond Morning Message**

Scholastic 2001

Author: Valerie Schiffer Da

#### **Classroom Routines That Really Work for PK and Kindergarten**

Scholastic Professional Books 2001

Authors: Kathleen Hayes and  
Renee Creange

#### **Basics of Assessment**

NAEYC 2004

Authors: McAfee, Leong an

