

The Dearborn Academy's

Parent Handbook



This Parent Handbook Belongs To:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

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Philosophy

- **The Dearborn Academy’s Great Start Readiness Preschool provides a developmentally appropriate program in a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. Our goals foster a positive self-concept and develop socialization and school readiness skills. Various experiences, geared to the age group, as well as individual needs of each child are provided. Long-lasting partnerships between school, family, and community are initiated. The teaching team uses the HighScope® curriculum to gently guide each child’s learning as they make discoveries using an active participatory approach. Children’s developmental progress is assessed through daily observation. Because learning is a life-long process for children and adults, and it is necessary to make continued improvements, the program and staff are evaluated on a regular basis using a Program Quality Assessment. The results are used to guide the teaching team toward a higher quality experience for all children in the program.**

Recruitment Plan

Information about GSRP and applying for the program is circulated throughout the community. Parents may inquire by phone or in-person. Once an intake form is completed an interview will be scheduled. Children will be admitted to GSRP based on the greatest need. Our ratio is 1:8 based on GSRP Guidelines. Students who are not admitted into GSRP will be placed on a waiting list and will be called if a spot becomes available.

The parent will receive a handout outlining what documentation needs to be brought to the interview, including, but not limited to the parents 2015 Tax Return, 1040 Form.

Students are admitted into GSRP based on need.

Parents need to provide documentation for qualifying risk factors.

Students are selected according to the state prioritization guidelines.

90% of total eligible families must be identified as extremely low income/low income.

Referral will be made according to the family income and individual needs of the child.

HighScope Curriculum®

- **In HighScope's® vision of preschool education, children are doers and problem solvers, and adults are partners who share in children’s discoveries and gently guide their learning. We call this approach *active participatory learning*. Young children build or “construct” knowledge of the world — finding out how the world works through direct experience with people, objects, events, and ideas. The HighScope® Preschool Curriculum is built around 58 developmental milestones called *key developmental indicators* (KDIs) in 8-9 curriculum content areas that are closely aligned with state and professional standards. The KDIs define *what* we teach; the *hows* are provided by our teaching practices for the classroom learning environment, daily routine, and adult-child interaction. The KDI’s are Approaches**

to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language, Literacy, and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, Social Studies and English Language Learning (if applicable).

Criteria for Admission

- For admission contact The Dearborn Academy's Main Office personnel to see if your family qualifies according to guidelines set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). If more families apply than there is space available, children with the greatest need (per the MDE guidelines) will be admitted first. Children with the greatest need will then fill subsequent openings.
- Children in the 4 year-old program must be at least four years of age, and less than five years of age, by December 1, 2016. A copy of a birth certificate is required.
- Copies of the following documents are required: birth certificate, social security card, immunization records, current health appraisal (within the last year), and proof of income. Paperwork must be provided prior to acceptance. Health appraisals must be updated annually.
- Proof of Immunizations are required as follows: 4DPT, 1MMR, 3 Polio, 3 Hepatitis B, HIB series, PCV series and Varicella (chicken pox) unless parent signs a waiver. A copy of your child's immunization records and any updates along with a well child check-up must be on file at the preschool. If your child has not yet received all required vaccinations, a schedule of appointments to receive age appropriate vaccinations must be provided. Failure to comply will result in the child's removal from the program.
- Additional items may be requested as evidence of the Michigan Department of Education's at-risk factors (i.e., proof of income, doctor's notes for health risks or, IEP's, etc...) and will need to be provided.
- Necessary enrollment and registration forms must be completed prior to the beginning of school. This includes the Emergency Contact and Consent Card (Child Information Record)

Nondiscrimination Policy (Taken from TDA's Handbook)

- This handbook is presented as a statement of the institutional program and potential offerings. This document is not to be considered as a contract between The Dearborn Academy and students. The Dearborn Academy reserves the right to make changes to regulations and offerings as circumstances may require.

- The Dearborn Academy, pursuant to the requirements of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-97), the Michigan Mandatory Special Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act, and Executive Order 11246, does not discriminate against applicants, employees or students on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, or handicap, nor will sexual harassment be tolerated, in its employment practices and/or educational programs or activities.
- If you feel that your rights as articulated above have been violated, you must immediately contact the Principal.
- The Dearborn Academy assumes responsibility for conducting Child Find among the students enrolled in the school. The Dearborn Academy provides a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to students eligible for Special Education. Concerned individuals may contact the Principal.

Confidentiality Policy (Taken From TDA's Handbook)

- The school records of all students will be kept confidential. Mrs. Soha Younes, front office, secretary is the coordinator of records she can be reached at 313-982-1300. The parents/guardians, of students who are under the age of eighteen, are entitled to review their child's school records upon a written request and in the presence of school staff. In situations where the parent of a student are divorced or separated, each parent, custodial and/or non-custodial, has an equal right to view the child's records unless a court order specifies otherwise. At this time The Dearborn Academy does not publish a public directory of student information.

Weekly Schedule and Attendance Policy

- **Arrival and Pick Up. Each child must be signed in upon arrival. Sign-in sheets are located by the door of the classroom. Parents should walk a child into the classroom and alert the teacher to an arrival or departure. This is also a good time to talk to the staff about how your child is feeling.**
- **All children must be signed out when they are picked up. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized by parents and listed on the Child Information Card. If you intend for someone not listed on the information card to pick up your child, notify the staff in writing. In emergencies, you may call the site. ID will be required at pick up.**
- **If a parent, by court order, is not allowed to pick up his or her child, a copy of the Court Order must be provided to TDA and the child may be released only according to the court order on file. If the court order is not on file,**

either parent may pick up the child regardless of what the other parent has communicated.

- **Late Pick-up Policy.** Parents are expected to promptly pick-up their child after the GSRP preschool session.
- Children in Great Start Readiness Preschool will attend 4 school day sessions per week, Monday-Thursday.
- Children are expected to attend school on a regular basis. **Excessive absences may result in termination from the program. Up to 5 unexcused absences in a row will lead to termination from the program.**
- If a child must miss school, please notify the office at (313) 982-1300 with a reason for absence.
- There are times when it is appropriate for your child to miss school. If your child is sick, please do not send them to school.
- If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be called to come pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached the person you named as your emergency contact or named as other persons to be released to on the Child Information card will be contacted.

Schedule of Operation

- **Hours of Operation of the Staff:** 7:30 am to 3:00 pm.
- **Hours of Operation for the Students:**
 - **8:00am- 3:00pm**
- **Beginning and end of program:**
 - **October 12, 2016- Students' First Day of School**
 - **June 1, 2017 Students' Last Day of School**
 - We follow the calendar of The Dearborn Academy for holidays and breaks.
- **School/Snow Day Cancellations:** Please check local news and radios stations for weather related school closings. If The Dearborn Academy is closed or delayed, so are we.

Withdrawal Policy

- If you withdraw your child from the preschool, please provide notice in writing. We would like to recognize your child's involvement to participation in our program, and allow classmates time to say their goodbyes.
- A child may no longer be included in the program if
 - They have excessive absences
 - They do not meet the health/licensing requirements by the required deadlines
 - The parent fails to follow program policies
 - The program is determined to be an inappropriate setting

Notes/Messages

- If you need to leave a message for the preschool staff during the day please call the elementary school at 313-982-1300 and leave us a message with the office staff.
- Your child will have a folder in his or her backpack. It is very important that you check this daily. We have an active school community with many events and opportunities. It's important that you are aware of what is going on so you can take advantage and participate in all the great things TDA has to offer.

Daily Activities

- *Arrival/Message Board:* Children enter/children's choices are to spend time with books or interact with each other or adults. When everyone has arrived, we will begin message board where daily messages are translated.
- *Planning Time:* Children express their plans for work time to adults using different strategies.
- *Work Time:* Children's hour of uninterrupted choice time.
- *Recall Time:* In small groups children share and reflect on their work time experiences.
- *Small Group: Adult-initiated learning experience*
- *Lunch*
- *Outside Time*
- *Rest*
- *Snack*
- *Planning*
- *Work time*
- *Recall*
- *Large Group*
- *Outside Time: Children are given time to explore and play outside*
- *Dismissal*

Transportation Policy & Dismissal

- **The child’s caregiver is solely responsible for the transportation of your child. We do not provide bussing to children in the Preschool Program. Additionally, the child will only be released to the people on the emergency card and the parents listed on the emergency card and birth certificate. Those listed on the emergency card must provide proper identification or the child will not be released. All issues with such need to be addressed with administration. **** See Child Custody Policy**

Outdoor Exposure

- **Children in a full-day program will receive a minimum of 60 minutes per day of physical outdoor activities. Outdoor time is held on a daily basis unless there is inclement weather or special circumstances. Children need to have weather appropriate clothing for participation in outdoor activities. Your child will get dirty so play clothes and tennis shoes are encouraged.**

Discipline/Guidance Policy

- **The Great Start Readiness Preschool uses discipline as a learning opportunity. As a result, we implement guidance that is caring, but firm. Consequences are short, consistent, immediate and logical. Emphasis is placed on providing affection, order, security, and unconditional positive regard for every child. Because a positive self-image is our main concern, any form of negative procedures or consequences will not be used. This includes shaming, threatening, depriving, or corporal punishment.**
- **Enrollment will not be denied and children will not be excluded based on challenging behavior, disability, or the need for individualized planning and intentional teaching.**
- **The adults in the GSRP classroom will assume the following roles:**
 - **Encourage children to do things for themselves**
 - **Treat conflict situations with children matter-of-factly**
 - **Approach children calmly and stop any hurtful actions**
 - **Acknowledge children’s feelings**
 - **Teach conflict resolution strategies**
 - **Ask children for solutions and encourage them to solve the conflict together; and**
 - **Support when children when they make decisions.**

Fee Policy

- **No fees are charged for services provided by the The Dearborn Academy’s Great Start Readiness Preschool for eligible 4 year old children. The Great Start Readiness Program is funded by the State of Michigan through the Michigan Department of Education.**

Parent Involvement

- **Parent engagement is crucial to positive child outcomes. The GSRP program provides a variety of opportunities for parents to become involved in the program and regularly seeks input from parents. Opportunities to volunteer in the classroom, on field trips and on special occasions will be available to parents. Parents also have the opportunity to participate in the Great Start Collaborative Advisory Board. Additional information will be provided upon request.**

Home/Center Visits

- **Parents play an integral role in their child’s development. A strong partnership between staff and families is crucial to child success. Families in the GSRP program will participate in two home visits and two-three center visits during the program year. Visits help maintain an open communication between the staff and families. The initial home visit serves as an orientation opportunity for the child and parents and helps us get to know each other. It also provides a level of comfort when the child comes to school and sees someone they have met before. Initial assessments may be administered at home visits to gather information that will allow the staff to plan accordingly for what the abilities of the child. Center visits are held a minimum of two times throughout the program year to discuss overall development, child strengths, areas of concern, and results of assessments. Parents are provided with activities to help foster kindergarten readiness. A final home visit will summarize the child’s development and transition to kindergarten.**

Assessments

- **Children in the GSRP program are assessed for academic and developmental progress. The assessments provide information across domains identified in the area of approaches to learning, language, literacy, communication, physical development and health, mathematics, creative arts, science and technology, social studies, social-emotional development and English language learning (if applicable). Assessments are done in a 1:1 ratio with a familiar adult. Results of the assessments will be shared with parents during center and home visits, as considered necessary by the teaching team, and upon parental request. Recommendations for further developmental evaluation will be discussed and parental permission obtained prior to referrals.**
- **Assessments include, but are not limited to: the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), SRA Early Math, Early Literacy Skills Assessment (ELSA), and the Child**

Observation Record (COR). For more information about these assessments, please contact the lead teacher.

Staff/Volunteers

- The GSRP teacher is employed by The Dearborn Academy. The lead teacher is highly qualified as outlined by the Great Start Readiness grant. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Human Services will screen all staff for academic credentials and any possible criminal or substantiated child abuse history. Staff are fingerprinted to ensure that they have no criminal history.
- Teaching assistants meet the requirements of the Michigan Department of Education.
- A staff member will not be employed if he or she has been convicted of child abuse/neglect or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire.
- Parents and Volunteers shall not have unsupervised contact with children within TDA's Great Start Readiness Preschool. Volunteers will be supervised by employed staff at all times.

Staff Training

- The lead teacher within the TDA's Great Start Readiness Program have current certification in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid. Staff complete training on blood-borne pathogens. In addition to CPR, first aid, and blood-borne pathogen training all staff complete a minimum of 16 hours of additional training each year. Training topics include child development, curriculum, child discipline, health/safety, nutrition, working with parents, and licensing rules.

Abuse/Neglect

- Staff at TDA's Great Start Readiness Preschool is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law. As teachers/child advocates we are required by Child Protection Law to immediately report suspected abuse and neglect of children to Children's Protective Services. The staff reviews the Child Abuse and Neglect reporting procedures annually.

Child Custody Policy

- In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the Great Start Readiness Program must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.
- In the absence of a court order on file with the Great Start Readiness Program, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Great

Start Readiness Preschool Program can not, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the Great Start Readiness Preschool Program suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access.

Concerns about Child Development

- If a parent has concerns about their child's development, they should begin by contacting the lead teacher. The Lead Teacher will initiate the Response to Intervention process. If further interventions are needed a team will be formed to discuss how to best meet the child's needs. The team may include: parents, the teachers, the building principal or agency head, the Early Childhood Specialist, or other special education staff. If a child is already receiving services for a disability, the GSRP program staff will join the IEP team and continue services. For information about referring your child for a developmental evaluation log onto: www.ProjectFindMichigan.org
- If a parent has a concern about their child, the classroom, or the program, the concern should be discussed with the teaching team. If a solution is not agreed upon, the parents should contact the building principal.

Multi-Culture and Diversity in the Learning Environment

- Materials in the classroom are developmentally appropriate, clean, safe, foster learning and are to reflect the home and community cultures and special needs of children in the program. Materials depict a wide range of non-stereotyped role models and cultures.
- The home and community cultures of each class are used to choose materials included in the classroom. Materials reflect children's interests, parental hobbies, employment and community traditions.

Health Care Plan

Daily Assessment of Children's Health

- Children's general health will be assessed upon arrival daily. If a child shows any

sign of illness, he/she will be evaluated further and staff will determine if a parent needs to be called. Minor illnesses will be reported verbally at drop-off/pick-up or via a phone call home.

Handling Children's Bodily Fluids

- In preschool, universal precautions shall be observed in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM). Gloves will be worn for all tasks that may cause exposure to blood or OPIM shall be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.
- After removing gloves, preschool workers will wash their hands as recommended in our hand-washing policy

Cleaning and Sanitizing of all Equipment, Toys, and Surfaces

- Tabletops will be washed before and after food is served and as they become soiled.
- Toys will be washed when they come in contact with a child's mouth or saliva.
- Equipment will be washed weekly or as needed. Process for sanitation:
 - There shall be a 3 Step Process for Sanitation
 1. Clean with soap and water
 2. Rinse thoroughly
 3. Spray with bleach water.
 - Process for sanitation while on field trips:
 - Bleach wipes will be used while on field trips and out of the proximity or running water.

Exclusion Policy

- Children will be excluded from the program if there are injuries or contagious illnesses that endanger the health and/or safety of others. Children will not be excluded because of the need for additional support, **assistance with toileting**, or disabilities.

Health Related Resources (ACCESS?)

The following is a list of resources available for preschool staff and parents who have questions concerning health related topics:
Comprehensive School Health Unit

Michigan Department of Public Health

www.michigan.gov.mde

(989) 373-7247

Centers for Disease Control

www.cdc.gov

Michigan Childhood Immunization Registry

www.MICR.ORG

(888) 243-6652

Teacher's Resources

www.pbs.org/teachersource/prek2.htm

School Health

www.Schoolhealth.org

Illness/Injury/Accident Protocol

Our goal is that every child will be safe while in our care.

Illness Care Plan

When a child shows signs of illness such as cough, nausea, or lethargy a call will be made to the parent for transportation home. If unable to reach a parent, the next person on the emergency card will be notified.

- Students with fever above 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea or constant cough will be sent home.

Illness/Accident Care Plan

For minor injuries such as small cuts, bruises or abrasions:

- Student will be given immediate first aid care by the preschool staff in accordance with their first aid training. Parents will be notified in writing or by phone.

For more serious injuries such as open skin wounds, bloody noses or bumps to the head:

- Student will be transported to the School Office for medical care. The parent will be notified by note or phone call.

For major emergencies such as seizure or unconsciousness:

- 911 will be called from the nearest phone. The parent will be notified immediately. Program Serious Accident/Illness Emergency Plan will be followed. A copy of this can be obtained from the Great Start Readiness staff.

Administration of Medication to Students (Taken from TDA)

- **Parents are provided with relevant forms and letters to be completed. A specific location is designated for medication administration (nurse office). The medication administration is administered at prescribed time. Privacy is provided for the medication administration. Verification of medication, child’s name, route and dosage prior to administration. Any and all personnel designated to administer medication will have the proper training. A record of the medication administration will be kept for each student receiving meds. Safe hygiene practices will be carried out during administration. Non-compliance on the part of the student will be addressed with the parents. Staff will verify that information on packaging from pharmacy matches that of physician’s authorization. Parents will be notified by staff when a refill is needed or if there is a discrepancy in labeling.**
- **Some students may need to take medication during school hours. To accommodate such cases, the parent/guardian must sign a “Permission to Administer Prescribed Medicine Form” to be kept in the student’s file in the office.**

Nutrition Policy

- **The Great Start Readiness Preschool Program follows the guidelines of the DHS Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. Parents who choose to send a snack or meal to school with their child should take into consideration the nutritional value of the foods they chose. If parents choose to send in a special occasion food, it is asked that consideration be given to special needs diets and allergies. Please check with the teacher before choosing a food item. Snacks/meals are provided free of charge to the eligible GSRP children. Parents are required to complete a free and reduced lunch form.**
- **If your child has food allergies or the need for a special diet, please provide the staff with a written plan from your child’s doctor.**

Fire/Tornado/Lock-down Drill

- **Fire drills are a necessary precaution for safety.**
 - 1. There will be no warning signal. As the bell sounds, all students should form a line ready for exiting.**
 - 2. No Talking.**
 - 3. Move quickly without running.**
 - 4. Go where directed**

- **Lock-down drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. When in “lock-down” only law enforcement and emergency personnel will be permitted to enter or exit the building.**
- **Tornado drills will be conducted at least twice per school year. Students are to follow classroom instructions and remain silent while the drill is taking place.**