



# MVAO Preschool Handbook

(updated 10/2023)



## I. WELCOME to MVAO Community Preschool

QPPS 10.1

The MVAO preschool program goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and diverse backgrounds. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel cared for, safe, and respected. This is an opportunity for all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, administered by the Iowa Department of Education. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

## II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

QPPS 2.1, 10.1

### *Mission:*

The Mission of MVAO Community Preschool is to provide the environment and curriculum necessary to assist all students in achieving their fullest potential.

### *Elementary School Philosophy of Education:*

We challenge each other to exceed the expectations of students, staff, families, and community, and in so doing, continuously raise those expectations. Each child is unique. We will understand and use the most effective ways to teach and measure the progress of each child. The single most important factor is student success. We provide a variety of experiences to enable each child to acquire cooperative and independent social skills as well as opportunities to further develop respect for self, others, and the environment.

### **Goals for Children:**

- Children will show competence in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- Children will be safe and healthy.

### **Goals for Families:**

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

## III. ENROLLMENT

### **Equal Education Opportunity**

The MVAO Community Preschool does not discriminate in its policies or programs on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, attributes, physical or mental disability, ancestry, political party affiliation, political belief, socioeconomic status, or family status. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX, Section 504 or Title VI may be referred to Jennifer Kinsey, Elementary Principal, 712-881-1319, or MVAO Elementary School, Mapleton Building, 410 South 6th St., Mapleton, IA, 51034. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, Us Department of Education, 310 W. Washington Ave., Ste 800, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111, or The Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des

Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available on our district website or upon request from the MVAO School Superintendent.

### **Eligibility**

Any child who is four years old by September 15 of the current enrollment year is eligible to enroll in preschool. Some students enrolled in the program who are under four years of age have Individual Education Plans (IEP) in place at the time of admittance.

Application will begin at a date set by the principal in early spring. Space is limited; therefore some students may be placed on a waiting list. The MVAO CSD reserves the right to deny enrollment. We require that parents provide proof of age for each child by providing his/her birth certificate. A doctor's physical and immunization records must be provided before a child can attend preschool. Immunizations must be current in order to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students.

### **Hours/Days**

MVAO preschool starts at 8:25 a.m. and dismisses at 3:15 p.m. Preschool follows the MVAO CSD calendar for days off and holidays. Preschool meets on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, each week. The starting and ending dates will be determined prior to the start of the school year.

### **General Information**

#### **QPPS 5.1 10.4**

The following information and documentation are required at registration:

- 1) Enrollment forms including, but not limited to, the child and parent/guardian name, address, telephone number, medical emergency consent, medical/dental service providers, emergency contacts (if the parent/guardian cannot be reached), and a list of individuals authorized to pick up the child from preschool. (See Section K, for information regarding a potentially life-threatening emergency, when the parent designated doctor or hospital information is not current and parent designated emergency contacts cannot be reached through reasonable efforts.)
- 2) Physical Report (dated within 6 months of enrollment).
- 3) Immunization Certificate indicating that the child is current on all required immunizations or submitted with a physician's waiver for immunizations not up-to-date.

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

### **Inclusion**

#### **QPPS 9.10**

The MVAO Community School Preschool Program serves all children, including those with disabilities, and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff is aware of the identified needs of individual children and is trained to follow through on specific intervention plans.

## **IV. A CHILD'S DAY**

### **Staff**

#### **QPPS 10.2, 6.3, 6.4, 9.4, 10.10**

Program Administrator The elementary principal at MVAO, Mapleton Elementary School is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets

all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Teacher A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom.

Para/Teacher Assistant A full time teacher assistant in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistant/Para will have specialized training in early childhood education.

School Nurse The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is employed full-time, and is a certified RN. The nurse maintains student health records by updating them quarterly, and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. The nurse is available for parent consultation when necessary.

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

**Daily Schedule of Activities:**

A daily schedule of activity times will be posted in the classroom. Although a schedule helps children develop a sense of the routine they will experience in the MVAO Elementary School – our goal is to be flexible enough to take advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities! Children will have an opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

Large and Small Group Activities	Learning Center Activities	Meal times
Individualized Activities	Large Motor Activities	Self-directed Play
Story Time	Snack	Outdoor Activities

Preschool monthly newsletters will be sent giving information regarding activities and learning opportunities that we are currently teaching. Daily information will be sent home through a messaging system, such as Remind.

**Sleeping and Nap Time**

**QPPS 10.6**

Rest time is offered for all children for approximately 45 to 60 minutes daily. Each child is provided their own mat by the MVAO Community School. Each mat is kept in the child’s individual cubby and washed weekly. Children bring blankets from home, which are sent home to wash.

**Curriculum**

**QPPS 2.1-2.3, 1.7**

**Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities**

The preschool program uses Creative Curriculum. These programs are research and evidence based comprehensive curriculums designed for 3-5 year old children. They are also supported by Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS), and the Iowa Core Curriculum (IA Core) birth to 5. They are content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support active learning and promote children's progress in all developmental areas. Curriculum is designed to provide children the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways-through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling.

The teaching staff counters potential bias and discrimination by treating all children with equal

respect and consideration, initiating activities and discussions that build positive self-identity and teach the valuing of differences. Staff members provide models and visual images of adult roles, differing abilities, and ethnic or cultural backgrounds that counter stereotypical limitations.

## **Child Assessment**

**QPPS 4.1,4.2, 4.8**

### *Guiding Principles:*

The MVAO Community Preschool believes that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in a natural setting by familiar adults. All results shall be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- *The Creative Curriculum*<sup>®</sup> *Gold Assessment Toolkit for Ages Birth - K* goals and objectives are fully aligned with Iowa Early Learning Standards, and Iowa Core. It records a student's progress in all developmental areas in the beginning, middle, and end of the year.
- *IGDIs* will be used as an Early Literacy screening for all children three times a year.
- *Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP)* is used as an additional assessment resource during the classroom assessment.
- *Ages and Stages* is used as an additional resource if needed.
- *Observation data* provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- *Child portfolios* are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- *Families* are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

This information will be used in the following way:

- Provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities;
- Plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- Provide information to parents about their child's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that require additional assessments;
- To plan program improvements;
- Arrange for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

**QPPS 7.3, 7.4, 7.5**

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring. The assessment information will be shared formally with families at this time. Newsletters regarding children's activities and developmental milestones will be sent home throughout the year. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

When program staff suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for follow-up steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the Building Assistance Team as an early intervention process.
- A request made to Northwest Area Education Association for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

The preschool teacher will assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment.

## **Program Assessment**

The MVAO Community School implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Administrators, families, staff and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in an evaluation process. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

## **Supervision Policy**

### **QPPS 9.2**

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete a safety checklist. The primary purpose for “supervision” is to keep all children safe. The indoor environment is designed so staff can supervise children by sight and sound at all times without relying on artificial monitoring devices. In semi-private areas, areas designed for both children and adults to be observed by an adult from outside the area.

## **Behavior Management and Discipline**

### **QPPS 1.11**

Teaching staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and planning ahead to prevent problems. Staff will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child’s own ability to become self disciplined. The teaching staff will help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting children to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs and learn turn taking.

## **Challenging Behaviors**

### **QPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 10.6**

The teaching staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

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

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

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

### ***Permissible Methods of Discipline:***

*For acts of aggression and fighting* (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any

injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

### ***Prohibited Practices***

MVAO Community Preschool staff do not, and shall not, employ harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children not make threats or derogatory remarks. They will not use physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, grabbing or use any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect. Food will not be withheld nor threaten to be withheld as a form of discipline.

### **Water activities**

### **QPPS 5.9, 9.15**

Water play delights the senses and is far more than simply pleasurable for young children. This type of sensory play is important for the development of the young child. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. Children must wash their hands before participating in water play. Children are not allowed to drink the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh water is used, and the water is changed daily. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

### **Snacks/Food and Nutrition**

### **QPPS 5.12-5.21, 9.17, 10.6**

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

Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the foods offered.

Meals and snacks are at regularly scheduled times, two hours apart not more than three hours apart. (See daily schedule)

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Snacks and meals brought from home must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Clean, sanitary drinking water (city water sources) is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program in an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the respective child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with

the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

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

Applications for free and reduced meals are available at registration and also available year round in the elementary office

### **Outside Play and Learning**

**QPPS 5.5, 5.6, 9.5, 9.7, 9.8, 10.6, 10.7**

Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play (when weather, air quality, or environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. We use the Weather Watch guidelines to determine if the Child Care Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible, because of various conditions, the program will provide similar activities inside.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress him/her according to the weather. When it is cold outside your child needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child's name.) For the warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a practical idea. It is expected that all students will go outside unless there is a doctor's note indicating the reason why the child cannot go outside.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun.

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

### **Clothing**

**QPPS 5.6**

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

Drawstrings are a strangulation hazard. Hazardous items shall not be allowed on children's clothing in Preschool. Parents shall be responsible for removing drawstrings and other hazardous items from children's clothing.

### **Toilet Training**

**QPPS 5.7, 10.6, 10.7**

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

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the preschool bathroom outside the classroom with a fold down changing table. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.

2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:

- Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Staff changes children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

3. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.

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

### **Objects from Home**

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you do not bring toys from home. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

### **Weapon(s) Policy**

#### **QPPS 10.6**

Any student who possesses or uses any weapon or look-alike weapon on any school grounds or while engaged in school sponsored activities or on school transportation shall be subject to disciplinary action. The principal shall have the authority to determine the extent and nature of the disciplinary action.

### **Classroom Animals or Pets**

#### **QPPS 5.26**

Teaching staff shall supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Reptiles shall not be allowed as pets or visiting animals because of the risk for salmonella infection. Any child allergic to such a pet or animal shall not be exposed to the pet or animal.

### **Birthdays**

#### **QPPS 5.13**

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. Birthdays give children the opportunity to have special recognition.



## **V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

### **QPPS 1.1, 7.5**

MVAO Community Preschool will promote regular, on-going, two-way communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversation or e-mail, technology based apps, and home visits. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. Teaching staff will write notes for families in the form of newsletters. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs.

### **Parent Participation-Open Door Policy**

This is your child's school, and parents are welcome. Parents should feel free to ask for a conference with teachers, principal, or counselor at any time. Upon entering our building, you will note our security system. There is a button located at the elementary doors that must be pushed to activate the system so that office personnel can unlock the door for you to come in. Please check in at the office upon entering and check out prior to departure. **\*Unannounced visitors will not be permitted during school hours.**

### **Arrival and departure of Children**

### **QPPS 10.11**

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians are required by Iowa Law to include the use of age-appropriate and size-appropriate restraints.

We ask that you please plan ahead as much as possible. Consistency is very important in determining where your child goes after school each day. In the event of temporary changes in bus plans, the parents should keep the school informed.

- If you do need to call during the day, please make all changes in transportation arrangements prior to 2:00 p.m., except in the case of an emergency.
- Any child who rides the bus to school will be expected to ride the same bus home at the close of school, unless the school is informed in writing or by telephone by the parent or guardian of other arrangements.

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

### **Child and Family Support Services**

### **QPPS 8.1**

In the MVAO School District, a listing of support services for families is available upon request. Teachers, administration, and the guidance staff work together to provide assistance to families when help is requested. The district may also suggest early intervention screenings and services through the AEA, based on each child's individual needs.

### **Transportation**

### **QPPS 10.12**

In the MVAO School District most students ride buses to school. Parents or legal guardians may request this service at the time of enrollment, indicating the pick up or drop off address, the name of the responsible person at the address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved.

Safety on buses cannot be overemphasized. With this in mind, the following rules have been established for the students riding buses:

1. Students shall board the bus without crowding or pushing and shall remain seated while the bus is in motion.
2. Students shall not extend arms, legs, or head out of the bus windows.

3. Students shall not talk to the bus driver while the bus is in motion except in case of emergency.
4. Students will not tamper with the emergency doors or any other bus equipment, nor shall windows be opened except when permitted by the driver.
5. Students shall not mark or deface the bus or its equipment. Any students apprehended in violation of this rule will pay for damages and possibly face juvenile court action.
6. Students will not fight or scuffle on the bus or throw objects out of the windows.
7. Students will keep books, gym bags, lunch boxes, instruments, and other objects out of the aisle of the bus. There shall be no eating or drinking on the bus unless authorized by the bus driver.
8. Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
9. Students will leave the bus in an orderly manner.
10. Students are to be assigned bus pick-up stops at the scheduled time and they are not to be picked up or discharged at any other stop. A request to alter bus stops must be made by the parent with a dated note given to the school secretary, who will issue a bus pass signed by the principal or his representative. Children will be home as usual unless a note is sent.
11. Students are under the authority and supervision of the bus driver while on the bus and are expected to adhere to the regulations.

For children who have special needs for transportation, the Special Education Team will devise a plan based on a functional assessment of the child's needs related to transportation. Any accommodations indicated in the child's Individualized Educational Program will be implemented as described.

### **Field Trips**

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant to and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The MVAO CSD school buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and calendars in advance. A parent or legal guardian shall sign an informed consent form for trips for each child before each trip. A notice posting the dates, time of departure, time of return and the destination location will be given at least 48 hours before the field trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip.

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

### **Attendance**

Students who are enrolled for classes in MVAO Community Preschool are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of a child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. **Parents and guardians are asked to call the Elementary office with the reason for a child's absence no later than 9:00 A.M.** If a student is absent without notification, the school staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school. Per board policy, you will receive notification if your child's absenteeism becomes excessive at ten days each semester.

## **Ethics and Confidentiality**

## **QPPS 4.2**

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

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

## **Children's Records**

## **QPPS 4.2, 5.1**

\*See Child Files for Preschool Health Information Form.

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

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

## **Preschool Advisory Committee**

## **QPPS 7.2**

The MVAO Community School Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Parents are asked to inform the preschool teacher if they are interested in being part of the Preschool Advisory Committee.

## **Grievance Policy**

## **QPPS 7.6**

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. The preschool staff want parents to be confident that their child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time parents have a concern regarding their child, parents are encouraged to address their concern with the child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the Elementary Principal.

If parents have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, they are asked to contact the Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool.

As part of the preschool program assessment, in the spring of each year, the staff will provide

parents with a family questionnaire to evaluate the program. Information along with questions asked at home visits helps the staff to assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

## **VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

## **QPPS 7.1, 7.2**

MVAO CSD encourages families to be very involved in their child's education.

Teachers and Administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred way of child-rearing and information that families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Program staff communicate with families on at least a monthly basis regarding child's activities and developmental milestones, shared caregiving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Parent-Teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as by special request. At least one "Family Night" is held during the year.

MVAO Community Preschool invites family members to become involved in one or all of the following ways:

1. Parent's support of a child's daily transition to school by sharing information about a child's interests and abilities.
2. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect their child, this allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
3. Attend parent nights.
4. Attend Parent-Teacher conferences in the fall and spring semesters.
5. Share family cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
6. Return all forms, questionnaires, and so on, promptly.
7. Check your child's backpack each day.
8. Read all the material sent home with your child.
9. Serving on the Preschool Advisory Committee.

The MVAO Community Preschool does not discriminate in its policies or programs on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, attributes, physical or mental disability, ancestry, political party affiliation, political belief, socioeconomic status, or family status. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX, Section 504 or Title VI may be referred to Jackie Fonley, Elementary Principal, 712-881-1319, or MVAO Elementary School, Mapleton Building, 410 South 6th St., Mapleton, IA, 51034. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 310 W. Washington Ave., Ste 800, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111, or The Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available upon request from the MVAO School Superintendent.

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

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

### **Home Visits**

Home visits are made prior to the start of school and are required for your child to start in the program. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. It also allows your child to become familiar and comfortable with his/her teacher and have any questions you may have answered. This is a great time for you to share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

The preschool program shall have formal family teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school - fall and spring. The teacher will send home a sheet before the conference asking you to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community, to think about what you'd like more information about the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. During the conferences the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of the child's work. Together parents/guardians and staff can make a plan to continue to encourage their child's growth and development.

### **Family Night**

Family Nights are opportunities for families to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. With help from family volunteers, the nights will be planned to meet the needs of the children and families.

### **Transitions**

**QPPS 7.9, 7.10**

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible. In addition, Kindergarten open house is held annually in the spring. Preschool staff may attend this event to support children as they prepare to transition to Kindergarten. The Preschool and Kindergarten staff also hold a swap day where preschool students get to meet and interact with the Kindergarten teachers in each room for a portion of the day in the spring.

## **VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**QPPS 10.6, 10.7**

MVAO CSD is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

### **Emergency Procedures**

**QPPS 10.13**

Emergency procedure plans are available upon request from the program administrator. Emergency procedures are also posted in each classroom.

### **Health and Immunization Certificates**

**QPPS 5.1**

Before a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according

to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

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

### **Health and Safety records**

### **QPPS 10.10**

Health and safety information collected from families shall be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to school administrators or teaching staff who have the need for access to records. The child's parent or guardian, and regulatory authorities shall have access as permitted by law.

### **Child Health and Safety Records will include:**

### **QPPS 5.1**

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

### **General Health and Safety Guidelines**

### **QPPS 5.2, 5.4, 10.14**

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

training each year.

### **Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children**

**QPPS 5.3, 10.6**

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

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pink eyes with drainage
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge
- Cold sores or lesions
- COVID exposure

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

- Fever free for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- Cold sores or lesions shows signs of healing (scabbed over)
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

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

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

### **Reporting Communicable Disease**

**QPPS 5.4**

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

### **Medication Policies and Procedures**

**QPPS 5.10**

*Policy:* The MVAO Community School District authorization form signed by the parent or legal guardian must be on file for *each* medication to be given during school hours.

Medication prescribed by a physician will be given to school personnel.

Non-prescription drugs also should be given to school personnel with a note from home.

Health care of the school age child is a responsibility of the parent. Parents are advised to give medication and perform health care procedures at home, outside school hours. Parents should explore with the physician the advisability of a schedule that can be carried out before and after school hours.

It is recognized that there may be certain medications and health care procedures which must be carried out during the school day to allow the pupil to attend school in as healthy a state as possible. In these cases, parents are advised to comply with established safeguards and Board Policy procedures.

*Procedures:*

1. Medication required during school which cannot be managed otherwise shall be administered when the following are on file at school:
  - a. A physician's signed, dated authorization including name of the medication, dosage, administration route, time to be given at school, and reason receiving.
  - b. A parent's signed and dated authorization/permission to administer the medication during school.
  - c. The medication shall be in the original packaging and labeled as dispensed by the prescriber or pharmacist and to be administered. Two labeled containers may be requested: one for home and one for school. If needed the physician may be contacted for clarification on medication administration.
2. If a student must take non-prescription medication during school, letters b and c above are to be followed before administration.
3. With parental permission, the school personnel will provide non-prescription medications (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or cough drops) within reason.
4. Medication authorizations must be renewed annually and updated as changes occur. An annual report to the physician and parents is recommended at a minimum.
5. A record of each dose of medication administered shall be documented in the pupil's health record. Included are: medication and any unusual observations.
6. Medication shall be stored in a locked/secure area.

**Cleaning and Sanitization**

**QPPS 9.11, 5.22, 5.23, 5.24, 10.6**

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

**QPPS 5.24**

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

**QPPS 5.23**

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



### **QPPS 5.22**

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

### **QPPS 5.23**

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

### **Hand Washing Practices**

### **QPPS 5.8**

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

- ◆ Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand washing procedures and are periodically monitored;
- ◆ Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing will reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others;
- ◆ Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.
- ◆ Children wash either independently or with staff assistance.

Children and adults wash their hands:

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

Adults also wash their hands:

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Tooth Brushing Policy**

**QPPS 5.11**

At least once daily, where children receive two or more meals, teaching staff provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque. (Toothpaste is not required.) Toothbrushes will be rinsed thoroughly after each use and air dried. Toothbrushes will be replaced every four months or as needed. Oral health specialists visit yearly and perform an oral exam (with parental permission) and oral health education.

### **First Aid Kit**

**QPPS 9.13**

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

### **Medical and /or Dental Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents QPPS 10.13**

MVAO CSD has in place a “Safety Procedures Booklet” that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Emergency phone numbers
- Fire procedures
- Utility failures
- Severe weather
- Bomb threats
- Physical threats/armed intruder
- Evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures
- Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- School crisis team members and a checklist to use
- List of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

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

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

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and

Poison Control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency telephone numbers and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

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

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event that the MVAO CSD must be closed due to bad weather, we will notify school patrons by use of Infinite Campus, our district social media account, and local TV stations. It will also be posted on the school's website.

### **Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health    QPPS 5.6, 9.12, 9.16, 9.18, 10.6, 10.7**

The staff protects children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, and scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor covers are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

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

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

### **Smoke Free Facility**

**QPPS 9.19, 10.6**

MVAO CSD is in compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008. The building and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

### **Child Protection Policies**

**QPPS 10.8, 10.9, 10.16, 10.19**

The health and well-being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. Hiring procedures insure that all employees who come in contact with children in the program or who have responsibility for children have passed a criminal-record check, are free from any history of substantiated child abuse or neglect, and are at least 18 years old. In addition no person with substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

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

The school district does not tolerate employees physically, or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations.

### **Substance Abuse**

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the MVAO CSD. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Volunteers /High School Helpers**

**QPPS 10.15, 10.17**

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher, the elementary principal, or our office secretary if you would like to be a volunteer. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. If a volunteer works more than 40 hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old. People interested in volunteering should contact the Principal at 712-881-1319.

## **VIII. STAFF**

**QPPS 10.15 - 10.20**

### **General Information**

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

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

### **Health Assessment**

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid staff. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the program before an employee starts work. The health assessment is updated every two years. Documented health assessments include:

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

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

### **Orientation**

### **QPPS 6.2**

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool staff members are given an initial orientation that introduces them to fundamental aspects of program operation including:

- ◆ Program philosophy, values, and goals
- ◆ Expectations for ethical conduct;
- ◆ Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for
- ◆ Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques;
- ◆ Daily activities and routines of the program
- ◆ Program curriculum
- ◆ Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures
- ◆ Program policies and procedures
- ◆ Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria
- ◆ Regulatory requirements
- ◆ Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations.

### **Staffing patterns and schedule**

### **QPPS 1.18**

The preschool program is in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our program follows requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teacher and the preschool teaching assistant in case of absence.

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

### **Staff Development Activities**

### **QPPS 6.6, 10.15**

All staff members focus on strengthening their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community or region, and beyond. Teaching staff participate in informal or formal ways in local, state or regional public-awareness activities related to early care by joining groups, attending meetings, or sharing information with others both at and outside the program.

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

### **Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan**

### **QPPS 6.5, 6.6**

All teaching staff members are evaluated for the purpose of improving their professional performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families.

They develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.