

Clara Hearne Early Childhood Center



2023-2024

PRESCHOOL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Roanoke Rapids Graded Schools' inclusive pre-kindergarten classrooms are child-centered and promote healthy, well-rounded growth for all children. As facilitators of learning, we strive to provide a loving environment that enhances learning. We believe that it is important to capture "teachable moments" and foster the natural curiosity and capacity for learning that young children exhibit.

Our inclusive classrooms encourage growth by providing the appropriate materials, time, and space to enable all children to explore, manipulate, and discover. Activities are planned to include typically developing children as well as children with special needs. Our learning centers are designed to develop gross motor skills, fine motor skills, cognitive skills, communication skills, and social/emotional skills. Through play in these centers, children will grow in thinking and reasoning skills, creative expression, literacy skills, and self-help skills. Each child is encouraged to grow and develop at a rate that is appropriate for him or her. A wide variety of sensory experiences provide appropriate stimulation for all children. Group times are planned to encourage participation of all children.

Our pre-kindergarten is a place where children learn through play. While playing, they solve problems, gain confidence in themselves, discover cause and effect, develop language, and learn to relate to others. Our children move, think, experience, and grow. Working together with families and our community we help our children to develop as lifelong learners, through discovering themselves and the world around them.

The Board of Education of the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District subscribes to a policy of nondiscrimination in relation to race, sex, age, national origin, handicap, and other human differences. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning staff, students, the public, educational progress and services, and individuals with whom the Board of Education does business.

PRESCHOOL INFORMATION

Hours of Operation

- **Full-Day Classes:** Arrival (9:00)
Dismissal (3:30)
- **Half-Day AM Classes:** Instruction (9:30-12:00)
- **Half-Day PM Classes:** Instruction (1:00-3:30)
- **4 hour class:** (11:30-3:30)

Age Range of Children Served – For the full day classrooms, students must be four years old (and not five) on or before August 31 of the current school year. Students served by our Pre-K programs are between the ages of three and four years old when the school year begins. For the three-year old self-contained classes, qualifying students are allowed to start when they are three years old (three years, zero months). Under the school's discretion, some three year old students who have an IEP and are soon to turn four may be placed in a Head Start classroom.

Admission, Requirements, and Enrollment Procedures – Students should have the following forms on file in order for the registration process to be complete:

Registration form

Pre-Kindergarten Application

- Emergency Contacts Form
- Preschool Director – Teacher – Parent Compact Agreement
- Parent / Guardian photo ID
- Birth Certificate
- Immunization Record
- 2 Proofs of Domicile A signed lease agreement or property ownership proof (e.g. deed, tax statement) in parent/guardian's name at current address and current (dated within past 30 days) gas, water, or electric bill (current street address not PO Box). The proof of residence must be in the name of the parent or court-appointed custodian.
- Dental Form (completed by appropriate health professional)
- Health Exam form (completed by parent and physician) The above form must be complete and in the child's records no later than 30 days after the enrollment date.
- Student Health form (completed by parent)
- Signed Discipline Policy
- Signed Handbook form

School personnel must make copies of original documents. We cannot accept copies made by parents or other individuals.

Registration for Pre-K is held in the spring for the following school year. Parents are informed of their child's placement by mail during the summer.

Attendance – Clara Hearne Pre-K serves a limited number of students yearly with some students placed on a waiting list. Consistent attendance and prompt arrival are essential. Children should arrive on time and should be picked up promptly at the end of the day. If necessary, your child's teacher may request a conference to address issues of excessive absences and/or tardies. Excessive absences will result in withdrawal of your child from the program.

Clara Hearne Professional Development Days- Clara Hearne designates 5 days annually for the professional development of all teachers in accordance with DCDEE regulations. While the following dates are student days throughout our district, our school will be closed for students on the following days: October 27th, November 15th, January 10th, February 9th, and March 8th. Teachers will be using this time to receive training, collaborate with both elementary schools, and enhance their teaching practices.

Teacher Workdays – Clara Hearne follows the RRGSD's calendar but also has five extra professional development days built in. You will be notified of these dates at the beginning of the school year. Please note these dates on the school calendar provided by your child's teacher. Pre-K classes will **not** be open to students on these days. Please make appropriate day-care arrangements now.

CANCELLED CLASSES

The district will follow the school calendar as close as possible. Our district webpages, RRGSD app, and notification service will provide you with information as the need arises. In the event of inclement weather necessitating the closing or delay of school, please check school and district websites, listen to the local radio stations, WRAL-TV 5 and other television stations for announcements. If the announcement states:

SHOULD INCLEMENT WEATHER OCCUR AFTER SCHOOL TAKES IN...

- Pick up students at the announced time.
- You will receive an automated call

School Closed – then neither staff nor students report to school.

One Hour Delay – Full day classes will operate one hour later and dismissal will be at the normal time. Morning Half-Day class **will not** operate. Half day afternoon classes will operate on a normal schedule.

Two Hour Delay – Full day will operate two hours later. Morning Half-Day class **will not** operate. Afternoon Half-Day class will operate on a regular schedule. Dismissal will be at the normal time.

CURRICULUM AND DAILY ACTIVITIES

A balanced curriculum for preschool children includes the following areas:

1. Gross motor skills – running, skipping, hopping, and throwing
2. Fine motor skills – finger plays, drawing, coloring and cutting
3. Language – verbal communication, storytelling, repeating, making sounds, show and tell, rhyming, forming sentences, phone conversations and pre-reading
4. Math – counting, one-to-one correspondence, sets, likes/differences, sorting, matching, categorizing
5. Social Skills – sharing, trading, playing, discussing manners, politeness, caring for others, respecting property, parallel play, playing together, child/child, child/adult
6. Life Skills – health and safety, dressing, name, phone number, parents' names, address
7. Music – singing, dancing, and dramatic play
8. Art – process more important than product
9. Science and nature – light/dark and shadows, things that float, things that grow, and living and non-living things

Units and themes that are developed in preschool will draw from these areas. Many activities will center around seasons. All will be designed to draw from the child's experiential background while also exposing him/her to the wonder of new and different experiences.

Preschool teachers base their units and themes on their training from the Creative Curriculum and NC Foundation for Early Learning and Development. These curricula provide a good transition into the NC Kindergarten curriculum.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

1. Table Top Time

Students engage in hands-on activities at the table.

2. Circle Time

Students participate in stories, sing-along, and discussions.

3. Extension Activity

Students work individually or in small groups on a follow-up activity.

4. Centers

Students work in centers, which include: dramatic play, blocks, sand table, water table, library, art, music, technology, and manipulatives.

5. Child Nutrition

Breakfast and/or lunch is served daily. A snack is also provided daily.

6. Physical Activity

Students engage in indoor or outdoor play for a minimum of one hour per day.

Funding Sources-The Roanoke Rapids Graded School District offers Pre-K and NC Pre-K Classes for students living in the school district who meet the age requirements. There are a limited number of slots available and at times, there can be a waiting list for those who wish to attend. We also receive funding from Title I. We also contract with CADA/Head Start Program to fund one additional classroom. The lead teachers are employed by the School District.

Tardies – Please call your child's teacher if your child will be late or absent. A parent must sign their child in at the office if they are tardy. If your child arrives after 9:30, a proper doctor's note will be expected. If your child's class has already eaten breakfast, they should

be fed before arrival or you will be asked to stay with them to eat.

Arrival and Dismissal – When delivering and picking up children, always be aware of the safety of others. Parents and visitors should park on Rapids or Cedar Street. Cedar Street is one-way north to south and Rapids Street is one-way south to north. The parking lot is for the school personnel only. Please drive slowly and carefully, and look for our little ones as they move from cars to the building. Also, be aware of the other vehicles moving around you. It is required that parents accompany children to their teacher's ramp and remain with their child until a teacher comes to receive students.

Children who arrive late (after 9:10) should be checked in at the office. See tardy information above. Children who depart early should be signed out in the office. Children must be signed out before 3:00 pm if an early departure is needed. Children will not be released from the playground. Please notify your child's teacher of any change in the pick-up person. Children will not be released to anyone not on the original list unless parents notify the school. Teachers will also require picture identification from anyone they do not know

Conferences and Visiting – We have an open door policy at our school and hope you will feel free to come into the classroom to visit. Please sign in at the office upon arrival for a visit. Parents are encouraged to attend special events at Pre-K, which include (but are not limited to):

- Parent Orientation/ Meet and Greet Day
- Open House in the fall
- Book Fair
- Concerts and Sing-a-Longs in the fall and winter
- Parent-Teacher Conferences

Please e-mail or call your child's teacher to arrange a conference. Teachers may be reached by calling the office at 519-7700. The Director can also be reached at 519-7700.

Visiting Our Classrooms – The Pre-K Classroom is a busy place. Much of the learning is achieved through play and peer interaction. In order to provide the best environment possible we have to minimize interruptions.

For visits, we ask that you plan in advance with the director and the teacher. This will allow the time that you are there to be productive for your child as well as the other students in the room.

Volunteering at Clara Hearne – We welcome volunteers for special events and projects. We need volunteers for : Book Fair week (twice each year)
Picture Day (twice each year)
Special Classroom Projects

Please contact the classroom teacher to sign up and all other volunteers will be approved by the preschool director.

Field Trips – We will have field trips scheduled during the school year. You will be notified in advance of each trip. You will receive a permission form to sign that will cover individual trips planned and supervised by the preschool staff. Your signature is required in order for your child to participate.

Family Engagement- Our classrooms shall provide meaningful opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education. The following are examples of meaningful opportunities: formal and informal parent/teacher conferences, classroom visits and options for parents and families to participate in classroom learning, parent education, allowing family members the opportunity for involvement in decision making about their own child and their child's early childhood program, and opportunities to engage families outside of their regular school day.

Toys and Possessions – Children love to bring special toys from home, but this can be a problem in a classroom of young children. Parents, assure your child that there are lots of toys at school, and discourage children from bringing their own toys from home. We have special times that allow children to bring things from home. **Guns, knives,** and other toys that encourage violent play **are not brought to school.** No animals can be brought into the building at any time. Because of limited space and safety issues, umbrellas are not allowed at school.

Snacks and Celebrations – Daily meals are provided for your child at no cost. In case of a special celebration, you may be asked to provide snacks. All food brought into school must be commercially prepared (not home-made). **Report any food allergies to your child's teacher.**

Nutrition Procedures – Student meals are provided through the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch programs operated by the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District. All meals are planned using the Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning meal pattern. The foods served meet or exceed the required portion size for the Preschool meal pattern option. Breakfast/Lunch meals are prepared at Belmont Elementary School. All meals are transported via a delivery system that meets the safety and sanitation regulations of the local Health Department. If your child has special dietary concerns, speak with his or her teacher. Accommodations may be made for students with special dietary needs, based on a written order from the student's physician. No outside food can be brought in to replace the provided breakfast, lunch, and snack.

Medication Policy - RRGSD policy prohibits school personnel from administering any oral medication (aspirin, decongestants, Ritalin, etc.) without a signed medication form, which is located in the appendix of this handbook or may be picked up at the office. Medication forms must be taken to the student's doctor who will specify medication(s) needed, dosage, and number of times per day that the medication is to be administered. The form must be signed by the licensed health care provider and returned to the school office. Medication may be brought to school by the parent/guardian or delivered by the pharmacy. Prescription medicines MUST be in a pharmacy-labeled bottle, which contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. The parent/guardian should be responsible for knowing the number of doses in the container and assume responsibility for maintaining the supply. Over the counter drugs must be delivered in the original container and will be administered according to the doctor's written instructions. Prescription medications and over-the-counter medications may also be administered by a parent/guardian at appropriate times. If you have any questions about the medication policy, please contact Sarah Council at 519-7500.

Dress – Please dress your child so that he/she will be comfortable for our many varied activities such as painting, sitting on the floor, outside play, etc. Tennis shoes are appropriate footwear for playing on the playground. **We strongly suggest that children wear tennis shoes every day for their safety.** Clogs, slip-ons, and flip flops are dangerous in playground play and may limit the ability to participate in some activities. Coats that have hoods with strings are dangerous on playground equipment and should not be worn to school.

Illness and Accidents - Do not send a sick child to school. We request that you do not send your child to school if he/she has shown evidence of diarrhea, fever, vomiting, excessive cold symptoms, or any other illness in the past 24 hours. Your child cannot report back to school until they have been 24 hours medicine free without a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting. Report any contagious diseases (chicken pox, strep throat, flu, etc.) to the teacher immediately. If there should be an accident involving your child, we will administer first-aid. You will be informed immediately if professional medical attention is needed. If your child becomes ill at school with diarrhea, fever, vomiting, excessive cold symptoms, etc., a family member or emergency contact will be called to pick up your child. **Please keep your child's teacher informed of all phone number changes.**

Fire Drills and Safety Drills – We will have fire drills each month. We also participate in tornado, hurricane, and crisis drills during the year.

Withdrawal From the Program – Please notify your child's teacher immediately if you plan to withdraw your child from the pre-K program. We have a limited number of slots. Excessive absences will be addressed by the director and can result in withdrawal from the program.

Cleaning Duties – The custodian is responsible for cleaning all bathrooms and eating areas thoroughly each day. Hallways and general use areas are vacuumed daily and classrooms at least three times per week and more if needed. Trash is disposed of twice daily. Other chores are handled on an as-needed basis. The Pre-K teachers and/or assistants are responsible for cleaning the classroom tables and cubbies.

Child Abuse Reporting – Clara Hearne Early Childhood Center Complies with Statutory Authority G.S. 110-88 (3, (5); 110-101; 143B-168.1; 143B-168.3; (Effective January 1, 1986)

According to NC law, any person who has reason to believe a child is being neglected and/or abused must report his suspicions to the local department of Social Services. In cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, the Clara Hearne staff that suspects a child may be neglected or abused will notify the CHECC Director immediately. The CHECC Director will:

1. Meet with the identified staff person to discuss the concerns
2. Observe the child in the classroom setting
3. Document any concerns

If reporting is warranted, the Director will contact the Department of Social Services within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint. The Director and staff of CHECC will cooperate in every way with any ensuing investigation. Any person can call the Division of Child Development at 1-800-859-0829 to make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

MAINTAINING GOOD BEHAVIOR

Behavior and Discipline - Please support the staff in their efforts to instill appropriate self-discipline in each of our students. Habits and patterns established now will provide the foundation for successful schooling over the next thirteen years. Staff will contact you if parental support is needed in correcting misbehavior.

Learning takes place through positive interaction among children and adults. Children are encouraged to behave appropriately through positive discipline methods such as:

1. distraction, redirection, providing alternatives for inappropriate behavior
2. praise, positive reinforcement, encouragement, and reward
3. consistent rules, routines, limits, natural and logical consequences
4. modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems
5. model appropriate behavior
6. listen to the children
7. respect needs, desires and feelings of children
8. ignore minor misbehaviors
9. explain things to children on appropriate level
10. use short, supervised time-out periods (see description of time out)

No child shall be subjected to any form of corporal punishment

1. No child shall be handled roughly in any way, including shaking, pushing, shoving, pinching, slapping, biting, kicking, pulling or spanking.
2. No child shall be placed in a locked room, closet or box.
3. No discipline shall be delegated to another child.
4. Discipline shall in no way be related to food, rest, or toileting.
 - a. No food shall be withheld, or given as a means of discipline
 - b. No child shall be disciplined for lapses in toilet training.
5. No child shall be made fun of, yelled at, or threatened. No sarcastic remarks will be made about children. No profanity will be used by staff. No child will be verbally abused.
6. No child shall be left alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. No families, parents, or ethnic groups shall be criticized, belittled, or made fun of.

“Safe Place”

In accordance with our CSEFEL (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) curriculum, a “Safe Place” is a designated calming space in the classroom where students can visit when they are displaying various emotions. The “safe place”, usually a chair, is located away from other activities and offers calming, quiet activities but is within the teachers’ sight. When they are ready, students are given the choice to return to normal activities.

I, the undersigned parent or guardian of _____
(child’s full name) do hereby state that I have read and received a copy of the facility’s Maintaining Good Behavior policy. Clara Hearne’s Preschool Coordinator and my child’s teacher have discussed behavioral expectations and what is in place to assist my child in developing social/emotional skills.

Date of Child’s Enrollment _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

Date _____

Distribution: Signed copy in child’s facility record and parent copy is contained in Student Handbook.

Edited and approved by Clara Hearne’s School Leadership Team on 5/19/23.