

# TUITION PROGRAMS

## Parent Handbook



### **The Early Childhood Center of Van Buren Public Schools**

451 West Columbia Ave.  
Belleville, MI 48111

[www.vanburenschools.net](http://www.vanburenschools.net)

734-699-2180

734-697-9338 Fax

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## **WELCOME TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER TUITION PROGRAM**

We are excited to partner with you to further your child's development and to help and support your parenting efforts. Early childhood is a period of rapid growth, exploration and discovery critical to the development of well-being, trusting relationships, and a growing knowledge of the world. Research indicates that children provided with a high-quality preschool experience show significant positive developmental differences. The focus of our tuition programs is to provide that and more. Our certified and experienced staff provide high-quality, rich, nurturing experiences to prepare your child for kindergarten and inspire a lifelong love of learning.

Van Buren Public Schools recognizes the value and need for quality early childhood education programs. We maintain high standards with qualified, experienced, and highly trained staff. Our center strives for excellence and we participate in program evaluation through Great Start to Quality to continuously improve programs for students and families.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The Early Childhood Center of Van Buren Public Schools together with our families and community, are committed to providing an exceptional educational program for all early childhood students.

*We believe that infants and toddlers learn best:*

- When relationships are the foundation for all learning and development. The child's development of knowledge of the social world and strategies for interacting with peers and adults is an important part of learning during the early childhood years.
- When in a warm, supportive, nurturing, respectful, safe atmosphere in which individual and cultural differences are valued
- When engaged in active exploration, involvement, and manipulation of their environment. Play provides this interaction and is the natural mode of learning for young children
- When we value the uniqueness of each child and focus on the development of the whole child (physical, social, emotional, language, creative and cognitive).
- When curriculum is designed to be appropriate to the developmental capabilities of each child and is implemented with attention to children's differing needs, interests, and developmental levels
- When families are the primary educators for their children. We strongly believe in forming partnerships with families and keeping them involved in their child's experience

*We believe preschoolers learn best:*

- When in a developmentally appropriate environment
- When their emotional needs are met
- When the preschool curriculum lays the groundwork for the district's K-12 curriculum
- When the parents are in a positive partnership with the school district
- When that partnership can be cultivated by positive early childhood experiences

- When in a safe, secure, and comfortable setting
- When the physical environment is dictated by the learning needs of the young child
- When their expectations and responsibilities are clearly defined
- When surrounded by a language-rich environment which encourages sensory exploration and active participation

## CURRICULUM

### *Infant and Toddler*

Our youngest learners need to feel safe and supported so they can learn with their whole body and all of their senses. Our infant and toddler teachers and caregivers focus on developing supportive, trusting relationships with the children in their care. We create rich environments that encourage very young children to explore and discover the world around them, helping them to engage in experiences designed to support their optimal development in all domains.

The High Scope Infant-Toddler Curriculum includes strategies for nurturing and supporting infant and toddler development in a child-centered environment. These resources guide teachers through how to create high-quality experiences for infants and toddlers using High Scope's active learning approach and six curriculum content areas of early learning.

We value and respect parents as your children's first teachers. That's why we partner with you to learn everything we can about your infant and/or toddler to better care for their needs and plan for their development.

Active learning is at the center of our program. It's the foundation where young children gain knowledge through their natural play and interactions with the environment, events, and other people. Other key strategies include strong bonds through adult-child interactions including holding, playing alongside infants and toddlers at their level and pace, communicating in give-and-take exchanges verbally and nonverbally, respecting children's choices and encouraging their efforts, acknowledging children's strong emotions, and involving toddlers in resolving conflicts.

### *Preschool*

Our curriculum model provides opportunities for children to grow through active learning. The curriculum's incorporation of the plan-do-review process, adult scaffolding of learning, support in developing conflict resolution skills, and opportunities for key experiences in learning are presented throughout the day and produce an early learning environment where all children can thrive.

There is a balance of child initiated and teacher initiated activities during the day. Children's own efforts at their own developmental level are encouraged as opposed to teacher prepared projects. Developing an attitude of competence is the primary goal of the curriculum. By supporting and gently extending children's learning within content areas, teachers ensure that each child is learning and growing in all areas of development.

Our curriculum is made of a series of daily activities and interest areas to help your child develop and learn. The **High Scope Curriculum** is a research-based program focusing on developmentally appropriate practices important for the growth of your child.

Developmentally appropriate practice means teaching in ways that match the way children develop and learn to promote their optimal development and learning.

The High Scope Curriculum for Preschool addresses children’s development through eight content areas. Each one includes key developmental indicators, or specific learning experiences. It is linked to an assessment system so the teachers can use information from assessments to plan and guide instructions both for individuals and groups of students.

The High Scope Curriculum for Preschool is based on five fundamental principles. They guide the teacher’s planning and help them to understand the reasons for intentionally setting up and operating our program in particular ways. These principles are:

- Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide critical foundation for successful learning.
- Social-emotional competence is a significant factor in school success.
- Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning.
- The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.
- Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning.

**DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. -6:00 p.m., excluding holidays. The center will operate during school breaks and summer options will also be available. If your child will need care during school breaks and/or snow days, please let your child’s teacher know in advance so we can continue to provide excellent programming.

**INFANT/TODDLER CARE AVAILABLE FROM 6:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.**

**PRESCHOOL SESSION FROM 8:00 A.M. -3:30 P.M. - EXTENDED CARE OPTIONS AVAILABLE AT ADDITIONAL COST**

**TUITION ROOM OPTIONS**

Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 weeks to 18 months</li> <li>• Full Day Care</li> <li>• 4:1 ratio in accordance with State of Michigan Licensing Guidelines</li> </ul>
Toddlers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 months to 36 months</li> <li>• Full Day Care</li> <li>• 4:1 ratio in accordance with State of Michigan Licensing Guidelines</li> </ul>
Preschool- 3s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• School Day, Half Day, and Full Day (School with Extended Care)</li> <li>• Fully independent in a school restroom situation</li> <li>• 10:1 ratio in accordance with State of Michigan Licensing Guidelines</li> </ul>
Preschool- 4s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>• School Day, Half Day, and Full Day (School with Extended Care)</li> <li>• Fully independent in a school restroom situation</li> <li>• 12:1 ratio in accordance with State of Michigan Licensing Guidelines</li> </ul>

## ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION/ADMISSIONS

If you are interested in enrolling your child, we encourage you to bring your child to tour our center. To apply for the program, submit the registration form along with a non-refundable registration fee of \$50 per child (\$75 per family).

Upon completion of the registration form, you will receive enrollment paperwork required for your child's file. Before your child starts the program, you will need to complete the full enrollment packet which is available at the Early Childhood Center during program hours. Enrollment paperwork can also be found online at [www.vanburenschools.net](http://www.vanburenschools.net). You may contact us at [ECC@vanburenschools.net](mailto:ECC@vanburenschools.net) or call 734-699-2180 for information or to schedule an appointment.

A completed registration does not imply acceptance. As applications are completed and returned to the office, they will be reviewed and prioritized as follows:

1. District residents and staff
2. Families seeking full day, full week
3. Families seeking full day, part week
4. Families seeking half day will be accepted as space permits

Additional admission/enrollment information:

1. No child will be denied admission on the basis of race, creed or religion.
2. If classes are filled when a parent completes an application, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list.
3. All paperwork, including health appraisal, will need to be completed and submitted before acceptance.
4. As vacancies occur during the school year, they will be filled from the waiting list or from new registrations according to the above procedures.

## TUITION

All tuition payments will be processed through Procure at [schools.procareconnect.com](http://schools.procareconnect.com). This can be credit card\* or automatic withdrawal from your banking institution. Your account must be set up and first payment received before your child begins the program.

*\*Credit card payment fee of 2.7% plus \$.30 for each transaction.*

### *Infant and Toddler*

Tuition is charged at a daily or weekly rate, based on the schedule selected during registration. Advance Tuition for the following week is due each Wednesday. This payment arrangement allows us to guarantee consistent wages for staff and to retain excellent caregivers.

### *Preschool*

Tuition reserves a spot for your child for the academic year. Regardless of the school days each month, tuition is billed in 10 equal monthly installments, based on the schedule selected for your child. The first payment is due September 1<sup>st</sup> and will be due the first of each month through June 1<sup>st</sup>. Tuition payment includes care during school breaks listed on the district calendar, excluding holidays.

Enrollment in the preschool program reserves time, space, staff, and provisions for your child, whether in attendance or not. No tuition adjustments are made for daily absences due to weather, illness, or family vacation. Please review the program calendar for the number of days.

*Family Discount:* A 10% discount will be applied to the oldest child's tuition if multiple children are enrolled in full week tuition programs.

*Late Payments:* A \$25 fee will be assessed for late payment. If payment is past due, or repeatedly late, preschool and childcare services will be temporarily suspended or permanently discontinued without a refund. Service will not be reinstated until the tuition account, including fees, is made current.

*Waiting list:* A waiting list will be maintained for all fully enrolled classes. As openings arise, families will be contacted in order. Tuition fees for midyear will be prorated. We are unable to hold spaces for students who have been suspended due to late or non-payment of tuition. Any such spaces will be offered to families on our waiting list.

*Late Pick Up:* A charge of \$5.00 will be assessed for every 1-15-minute segment of time a parent arrives after pick-up time. After three such incidents, the charge will be \$15 for each 1-15-minute period.

- Repeated late pick up may result in dismissal from the program. Late pickup is five or more minutes past your scheduled pickup time.
- The timestamp from electronic parent sign out will record the official time.
- A late fee invoice will be generated and sent electronically. The late fee must be included in the next payment.

If your child has not been picked up and we are unable to make contact with a parent/guardian or others listed on the emergency card, it may be necessary to enlist the assistance of the local police department.

Please remember that our staff members have families of their own and may have plans for the evening. Also, when parents are unexpectedly late, children worry. We understand that occasional emergencies are unavoidable, and we appreciate a phone call if you are delayed.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

Some families may qualify for aid from the Michigan Department of Human Services. To discuss this possibility with a representative, telephone (734) 481-2400 in Washtenaw County or (313) 931-6385 in Wayne County.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

If space permits, you may add time to your child's schedule. Check with office staff to verify available space and complete the schedule change form, which is available online or in the office for your convenience. Charges for added time will appear on your next statement and moving forward.

## **CANCELLATIONS**

### *Infant/Toddler*

Please deliver a written request for cancellation of services to the Early Childhood Center office at least two weeks in advance to allow for staffing and enrollment adjustments. Payment is required for the entire two-week period, whether or not services are provided.

### *Preschool*

Preschool tuition is billed and expected for the program year. However, the school district reserves the right to waive all or partial program fees or to modify arrangements based on hardship or other considerations. Families must deliver a written request for cancellation of services to the Early Childhood Center office at least two weeks in advance to allow for staffing and enrollment adjustments. The balance remaining of the monthly tuition will not be refunded.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Start times and traffic patterns have been designed to ensure the safety of all children and building parking guidelines will be enforced. Please be extra patient and alert in our parking lot. Please keep your child close to you and hold their hand when in the lot. There is no stopping, standing or parking in the lane in front of the building and the back loop is for busses only, so please park in designated parking spaces in our front lot only. Do not leave a car running and never leave a child in the car unattended.

Please make every effort to arrive at school on time. When children arrive after the day has started, they miss out on important parts of the routine. Children who consistently arrive on time and are in school every day quickly master the routine, learn more, are happier to be in school and receive the maximum benefit from our preschool program. Classroom doors will open promptly at the designated start time for preschoolers. Infant/toddler teachers will be watching the door at the drop off time indicated by each family.

Building security requires that parents wait outside the class for the teacher at arrival and dismissal. Children must be received individually by the teacher and signed in and out each day by a responsible adult. A child will not be released to anyone except a parent or a person whose name appears on the child's information card. Photo ID will be required if the staff member does not recognize the adult picking up the student.

Parents dropping children 15 minutes or more after the start time or to volunteer, observe or have a conference must enter the main entrance and sign in at the office.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING**

Initial screening provides the teacher with a baseline of information needed to plan appropriate activities. Preschool teachers also observe and assess children using COR Advantage, High Scope's research-validated child assessment tool. COR Advantage is a birth-to-kindergarten assessment that assists teachers in supporting children at every developmental level. This guides program planning, staff development, and individualized instruction for each child.



## **REFERRAL PROCESS TO MEET FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S NEEDS**

Our program provides support to families in response to their interest, goals, strengths and needs. Families sometimes need extra help and support, our program maintains a list of resources to assist in meeting child and family needs. If there is ever a non-educational need that your family has, our staff will be happy to assist you. To ensure all families have access to basic needs resources, families are asked to share information related to the child's life experiences and current living situation. Staff will partner with community agencies, including Wayne RESA and the Great Start Collaborative to assist families in attaining necessary resources and follow-up accordingly.

We strive to meet the individual needs of all children in the program. If observation, assessment, or screening results indicate a developmental concern, you will be contacted by your child's teacher to hold a discussion based on documentation. Staff may identify and obtain resources that families may need, such as: initial referrals, partnerships, and other resources. If necessary, we may also partner with Wayne RESA and the Van Buren Public School District Student Services for support and/or resources. Staff will follow-up with the family throughout the process to ensure they are receiving needed support.

Staff may also be in contact with the support services if needed and if permission is given to staff by the child's parents/guardians. Wayne County provides environmental health, nutritional health, community health, emergency preparedness, women and children's health and communicable disease prevention and control services to all Wayne County residents, businesses and visitors. Visit their site at

<https://www.waynecounty.com/departments/hhvs/wellness/maternal-child-health.aspx>

## **HOME SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

We are honored that you are placing the care of your children in our hands. While we grow to know and love them when they spend time with us, we understand you are concerned about many aspects of their lives. We believe that ongoing, open communication is the key.

Please review the parent handbook in the beginning of the year, and keep it to refer to our policies as questions arise. We have tried to be as thorough as possible, but please contact the building principal or program director in the event that a unique situation occurs.

### *Infant and Toddler:*

Families will receive an electronic daily report tracking feeding, diapering, sleeping, mood and any special developmental achievements for the day.

### *Preschool:*

We will send electronic communications and each room will post information near the classroom door for families, as required by LARA licensing guidelines.

Please know that our staff is committed to providing timely responses to family inquiries and messages. In order to maintain a healthy balance of home and work life, and to allow staff to focus on children during class time, we strive to return calls and emails within 24 business hours.

## **CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS**

Family members are encouraged to volunteer in our classrooms. We believe that shared experiences provide an increased awareness of child development. Please consider joining us

for parent workshop meetings, as well. Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the program, although advance notice is requested. When visiting the building, we ask that you put your cell phone away and play with the children. During the visit the teacher may not be free to talk with adults. Please understand that the children come first during class time. The teacher will be available to talk with you after the children are dismissed for the day. Volunteering in the classroom or attending parent workshops is also encouraged. This handbook is supplied in an effort to answer many questions about the Van Buren Tuition Program. Please feel free to contact anyone on the staff if you have any other questions.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

The Van Buren Public Schools (VBPS) Preschool is sensitive to the fact that information concerning you, your child, and your family is private and personal. Trust and confidentiality are essential to building trusting relationships. We are committed to maintaining your privacy and protecting your personal information. The VBPS will share student assessment and attendance records with VBPS Kindergarten programs. Information may be reviewed by the MDE to ensure and support program compliance. VBPS will provide parents with a copy of student records if attending a Kindergarten program outside of the district. VBPS will not disclose information except as required by law or when there is a threat to the health and safety of the individuals and families we serve.

### **STAFF REQUIREMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

All staff have met clearance requirements of Van Buren Public Schools which include fingerprint screening. Staff working in the Early Childhood Program have met additional screening requirements required by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) which include additional fingerprint screening, safety training and current CPR and First Aid certification. All lead teachers are required to hold a State of Michigan teaching certificate with certification, degrees and experience in Early Childhood/Child Development, endorsements in Early Childhood, or a Child Development Associate degree.

All lead and assistant teaching staff in licensed programs are required by the State of Michigan to complete a minimum of 16 hours of professional development training each year. In accordance with the Great State to Quality rating system, through which all of our 3 and 4-year-old classrooms are star-rated, P-CCS Early Childhood Program staff members are required to go beyond the state-required 16 hours and complete 24-30 hours of professional development each year. Topics include: child development, cultural and anti-bias awareness, curriculum, assessment, social/emotional learning, communication, health and safety, nutrition, and licensing regulations.

## DAILY CLASSROOM ROUTINE

A sample daily schedule is as follows: (order may vary per classroom)

### **Infant and Toddler Room**

8:20 a.m.	Arrival (restroom use and handwashing)	Good morning, families! Children practice self-help skills like dressing, helping during diaper change and hand-washing. Teachers support child.
8:35 a.m.	Breakfast	Children practice self-feeding skills. Teachers support children, join in meals with children, discuss meal time. Teachers supervise.
9:00 a.m.	Greeting Time	Classroom gathers for morning greeting, who's here? who's missing? Song selections
9:05 a.m.	Planning Time	Children plan where they would like to explore at in the classroom with support from teachers.
9:10 a.m.	Work Time/Choice Time	Children explore the classroom and select materials to play with. Teachers encourage play and join in with the children's work time.
10:30 a.m.	Clean up Time	Teachers encourage children to work on self-help skills of putting materials away. Teachers supervise and support children.
10:35 a.m.	Recall Time	Staff ask children where did they work in the classroom, staff scaffolding on open-ended questions.
10:45 a.m.	Restroom use/Transitions	Teachers practice self-help skills like dressing, helping during diaper change and hand-washing with children
10:50 a.m.	Large Group/Music & Movement	Children and staff gather together to work on music and movement activities
11:00 a.m.	Gross Motor/Gym/Outside	Children and staff in a large group explore the gym or outside play area utilizing gross motor materials
11:30 a.m.	Handwashing	Practice self-help skills like dressing, helping during diaper change and hand-washing
11:30 a.m.	Lunch	Children practice self-feeding skills. Teachers support children, join in meals with children, discuss meal time. Teachers supervise.
12:00 p.m.	Restroom use/Transition to rest time	Practice self-help skills like dressing, helping during diaper change and hand-washing
12:30 p.m.	Rest Time	Children are offered time to rest their bodies. Adults supervise. If child is not sleeping offer a quiet activity.
2:45 p.m.	Quiet Activities/Restroom use/Handwashing	Children are offered a quiet activity and then transition to restroom/handwashing
3:00 p.m.	Snack	Children practice self-feeding skills. Teachers support children, join in meals with children, discuss meal time. Teachers supervise.
3:20 p.m.	Dismissal	Children are released by the teacher to an adult on emergency card.

\*Please keep in mind we are a classroom of infants and toddlers and we may make minor adjustments to the schedule in order to better meet the needs of the children. Handwashing, diapering, and restroom use are available throughout the day based upon the needs of each individual student. Feeding will be on demand for infants and toddlers.\*

## PRESCHOOL

8:00-8:15 Arrival/Greeting	A transition between home and school. Children gather together with the teachers, talk informally with one another and with adults.
8:15-8:35 Snack	Opportunity for relaxed conversations, and sometimes the sharing of stories. For meal times, children and adults sit together at tables and share a family type meal. Students help in serving and setting up for the meal.
8:35-8:50	Large Group/Message Board Children and teachers gather together for enjoyable shared experiences. During this time, children can be singing songs, making music, playing games, listening to a story, or listening to the teacher talk about a new skill. This time is adult-initiated, but not adult-dominated.
8:50-9:00 Planning Time	Children indicate (through gestures, actions, talking, drawing or writing in various ways) what their intentions are for the work time.
9:00-10:00 Work Time	For about 45 - 60 minutes, children carry out their plans, playing and working throughout the room. During work time, children carry out their plans, making choices about where and how to use materials while adults support children's efforts by listening, encouraging children's language, imitating children's ideas and words, and commenting on specific attributes of children's work.
10:00-10:10 Clean Up	Everyone puts the materials back where they are stored and helps to clean up the room.
10:10-10:15 Recall Time	Children are encouraged to remember something they did during work time, and share it in various ways
10:15-10:50 Outside Time	Gross motor time to use large muscles and be in contact with nature. Adults intentionally support and extend children's plans. Children are provided two thirty minute sessions of physical activity per day. At least one of the sessions will be outdoors unless prevented by inclement weather conditions such as heat, rain or wind chill.
10:55-11:20 Small Group	A time for each teacher to work with a part of the class usually 6-8 children. They explore materials, create things, read books, solve problems, work on a project, play games, or do a learning activity. This time is adult-initiated, but not adult-dominated.
11:20-11:40 Large Group	Children and teachers gather together for enjoyable shared experiences. During this time, children can be singing songs, making music, playing games, listening to a story, or listening to the teacher talk about a new skill. This time is adult-initiated, but not adult-dominated.
11:40-12:00 Book Time (half day backpacks & dismissal)	Interactive read aloud using high-quality children's literature to build comprehension and make reading with children an engaging experience. This time provides children with opportunities to actively engage with text and allows teachers to scaffold understanding of the book's content and features. These experiences help lay the foundation for later reading skills.
12:00-12:30 Lunch	Opportunity for relaxed conversations, and sometimes the sharing of stories. For meal times, children and adults sit together at tables and share a family type meal. Students help in serving and setting up for meal time.

12:30-1:30 Rest Time	A period no longer than one hour, while accommodating for the individual needs of the children. Children who do not sleep will be allowed to sit quietly and choose a book or activity to complete on their cot. Children will assist staff in putting out the cots, getting their own blankets and transition items. Adults assist by having quiet conversations and providing soothing touch. Soft music may be played as a means of soothing children's transition to rest time.
1:30-1:50 Wake Up/Put Cots Away	At the end of rest time children will assist in the transition by putting away their cots, blankets and transition items.
1:50-2:10 Small Group	A time for each teacher to work with a part of the class usually 6-8 children. They explore materials, create things, read books, solve problems, work on a project, play games, or do a learning activity. This time is adult-initiated, but not adult-dominated.
2:10-2:45	Gross motor time to use large muscles and be in contact with nature. Adults intentionally support and extend children's plans. Children are provided two thirty minute sessions of physical activity per day. At least one of the sessions will be outdoors unless prevented by inclement weather conditions such as heat, rain or wind chill.
2:45-3:10 Snack Time	Opportunity for relaxed conversations, and sometimes the sharing of stories. For meal times, children and adults sit together at tables and share a family type meal. Students help in serving and setting up for the meal.
3:10-3:30 Backpacks, Dismissal	Adults guide students toward independence while preparing for the end of day, packing folders, getting coats on, and heading to bus for dismissal

## **HEALTH, ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY**

### **[Program Health Plan](#)**

Should a child come to the tuition classroom when he/she is not feeling well, he/she will be more vulnerable to infection. It is in the best interest of the ill child and of the other children to have a sick child remain at home.

Additionally, a child should remain home if he or she has a short term injury or contagious illness that endangers the health and/or safety of children or others.

A child needs to be well to be able to participate actively in the program. If a child is well enough to come to school, he or she is expected to go outdoors with his or her class, weather permitting. If a child becomes ill while at school, parent/guardian will be called immediately by a staff member. Parent and/or caregivers are expected to pick up the child as soon as possible.

**IF YOUR CHILD DISPLAYS THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS, THEY SHOULD BE KEPT HOME FROM SCHOOL:**

- Coughing, sneezing or runny nose with yellow or green drainage
- Fever (100.4 degrees or above)
- Vomiting and or diarrhea

**PLEASE FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES BELOW IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN HOME ILL:**

- After a fever (100.4 degrees or above) a child's temperature must be normal for 24 hours before he/she may return to school without the help of fever reducing medicine.
  - Child must be free from vomiting for a 24-hour period.
  - Child must be free from diarrhea for a 24-hour period.

Although a child may ask to come to school when ill, the child must remain at home until well enough to participate in the total program. If a child has had a contagious disease, the parent may be asked to submit a doctor's clearance for the child to return to school.

**MEDICATIONS**

In order to adhere to the State of Michigan Department of Human Services, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing requirements for administering medication (including topical, diaper cream, insect repellent, sunscreen) the Early Childhood Center implements the following provisions:

- A [Consent for District Administered Medication Form](#) must be completed and signed by a physician for each medication.
- All medicine must be in the original container
- The container must be labeled with the child's name
- If it is over-the-counter medication, it must state the amount to be administered by the child's age and/or weight
- All medicine must be labeled with the date (if prescribed) or the date brought to the Center
- The medicine must include directions on how to administer the medication
- The medicine can only be administered to the child for whom it was intended
- Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label, which indicates:
  - The date to begin and stop medication
  - Time in which medication is to be given
  - The amount to be given
  - The storage instructions for the medication
  - All medications must have an expiration date (we cannot administer medication after the expiration date)

Medication is stored in a locked cabinet with access limited to authorized personnel. When refrigeration is required, medication is stored in the refrigerator, in a basket labeled "medication". It is the parent's responsibility to provide the necessary dispensing supplies for administering the medication.

The medication must be left with the administrator/secretary for distribution to the student.

No medication is to be carried in by the student. All medication brought by parent/guardian must be in original prescribed container.

### **ABSENCE REPORTING**

In order to experience the maximum benefits of the tuition program, it is important that your child maintain regular attendance. In the event of illness or other necessary absence of a student, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the classroom teacher or the ECC office staff. Please contact your child's teacher(s) by email or phone if your child will be absent from school.

Enrollment in the preschool program reserves time, space, staff and provisions for your child whether in attendance or not. No tuition adjustments are made for daily absences due to weather, illness, or family vacation.

### **SCHOOL CLOSURES/INCLEMENT WEATHER**

In the event the building must close due to an emergency, such as a mechanical problem or electricity outage, there will be no preschool or childcare. We will make every effort to notify you through our electronic communications so you can make arrangements for your child.

Early in the year, staff will discuss care needs on inclement weather days with each family. If enough families indicate that they need childcare on those days, we will be open for childcare in the event that Van Buren Public Schools have an emergency closure due to inclement weather. The schedule will be communicated by October 1<sup>st</sup>, to ensure you are able to plan accordingly.

Many parents of preschoolers have concerns about sending their children to school on days when severe weather conditions exist. We believe that it is your right and responsibility to decide if the weather indicates keeping your child at home. Please call us if you choose to keep your child home for the day.

### **REST TIME POLICY**

Infants under the age of 12 months eat and sleep on demand. Infants under 12 months will sleep in cribs and we supply the crib sheets. Toddlers will transition to sleeping on a cot when they move to the toddler room. Your electronic daily report will detail your child's sleep patterns for the day.

Children in a licensed center for five or more hours are required to have a rest time during the day. This is important for children to stay healthy and renew their energy for the afternoon. Children do not have to sleep, just rest. For children who do not sleep, quiet options are provided such as books, drawing, or quiet toys.

## NUTRITION

### [Program Nutrition Plan](#)

#### *Infants and Young Toddlers*

Parents must send “ready to go” formula or breast milk in bottles (labeled with your child’s name and the date) each day as well as their baby food, if applicable. These items can only be stored for one day. We will do our best to follow the feeding schedule you have in place for your child. However, we are required to feed on demand. As your child develops we will introduce the sippy cup and, with your direction, introduce milk. As your child begins table foods, we will introduce foods at snack time.

#### *Preschoolers*

A nutritious snack will be provided for each child daily (one for half day students; two for school or full day students). Our snack menus are prepared by the VBPS Food Services and are based on guidelines from the State of Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs, Children and Adult Licensing and the USDA.

Families are responsible for providing our program with information about special dietary needs or allergies. Families may supply their child’s snack, if preferred. All foods supplied by families must comply with allergy restrictions posted in the classroom.

Students attending full day preschool classes will either bring lunch or may purchase lunch in advance from the school. In most classes, morning snack is served between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. If your child attends morning care, families can also provide breakfast. Monthly snack and lunch menus will be posted in each classroom and are available on the VBPS website. Free and reduced cost meals are available to students meeting eligibility requirements. Families may apply online using the [Food Services](#) page. Applications are submitted to Food Services department and families will be notified if eligible.

The Food Service and Early Childhood Program staff members are responsible for what is presented to students to eat and the manner in which it is presented. We encourage children to try all foods but we never force a child to eat. The preschool class helps serve their own food with “family style” dining encouraged by NAEYC. Staff will sit with the children during snacks and lunch and view this as a great opportunity to help children develop social and self-help skills. The children are responsible for how much and whether or not they choose to eat.



## **ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY POLICIES**

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES/LIFE-THREATENING CIRCUMSTANCES**

Children who suddenly become ill or who are injured in an accident while on the premises of ECC are given priority attention to assure that they receive adequate care. In the event a child is injured and/or requires medical treatment, steps will be taken immediately by ECC staff.

- When the discovery of illness is made or an injury occurs, the involved teacher(s) will seek assistance from other Center staff; and the supervisor will be notified
- If the accident or illness appears to present any risk of life, EMS (9-1-1) will be called first. Then the parent (or emergency contact) will be contacted and arrangements will be made for that person (identified on the Child Information Record/emergency card) to meet the teacher at the emergency room. The teacher will bring the Child Information Record, which has the signed authorization of the parent/guardian to seek medical treatment in the parent/guardian's absence. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be notified, as listed on the Child Information Record
- Client confidentiality is waived in the event of a medical emergency. Information conveyed to outside sources, however, will be limited to that which directly applies to obtaining assistance for the incident
- Parents are financially responsible for any medical expenses incurred

### **MINOR INJURIES**

Here at the Early Childhood Center of Van Buren Public Schools, we do all we can to ensure a safe environment for children. If a child has a minor injury (small cut, scratch, or bruise) the staff will administer appropriate first aid. First aid kits are available in each classroom for minor cuts and abrasions. The kits are not designed for serious accidents. The kits are inspected regularly by the teachers and materials are replaced as used or when outdated. Soap and water will be used to cleanse any wounds. No other topical or internal medication will be administered. Universal precautions are always followed when treating any wound or illness that has discharge of body fluids.

### **FIRE/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The signal to evacuate the school will be a sounding of the fire alarm and flashing lights. A fire alarm is located near the classroom exit door. Students will be led outside by a staff member and the teacher will take attendance. Various emergency practice drills will take place various times throughout the school year.

## **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE**

It is our policy to work to prevent behavior problems with good classroom management, consistent daily schedule which encourages cooperative behavior and feelings, and to encourage children to express feelings in an appropriate manner. Our staff uses positive methods while using the Steps of Conflict Resolution. Using this method, we encourage children to do things for themselves throughout the day and we treat conflict situations with children matter-of-factly.

Van Buren Public Schools prohibits the use of corporal or physical punishment, shaming, humiliating, frightening or threatening punishment. Discipline is viewed as a learning experience. Staff members use positive guidance techniques in helping children move toward self-control and cooperation. Limits and expectations are stated clearly and appropriately for each child's developmental level. Whenever possible, the child is offered a choice of appropriate behaviors in order to involve the child in the decision making process. Children may be removed from situations in which they might hurt themselves, others or property. Verbal, physical or emotional punishment is prohibited, including spanking, shaming, shaking or threats. It is expected that parents will refrain from using physical punishment or threats of punishments while on the premises.

All school employees are mandated reporters. If a staff member suspects child abuse or neglect, child protective services will be contacted immediately. NO EXCEPTIONS!

A child may not be confined, restrained, or deprived of food, activities or toilet use. If a child exhibits continually challenging, disruptive and/or unsafe behavior that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will discuss the situation with the child's family, administrative staff, and/or other professionals to develop an individualized action plan that supports the child's inclusion and success. All reasonable attempts will be made to work with the child and the family to resolve the behavioral problem. Staff will keep parents informed of the progress made. As a last resort, student behavior plans may include parent/guardian working with the child in the classroom during the school day until the unsafe behavior is improved.

IF A PARENT REFUSES TO WORK WITH THE STAFF IN RESOLVING THE PROBLEM OF AGGRESSIVE/VIOLENT BEHAVIOR, OR THE PROBLEM PERSISTS RESULTING IN A CHRONIC SITUATION REQUIRING GREATER NEED FOR CARE THAN TEACHERS CAN PROVIDE, THEN THE CHILD'S ENROLLMENT IS SUBJECT TO TERMINATION.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

All volunteers must provide information for a background check prior to the field trips. Parents will be informed of field trips in advance through newsletters, notes, etc. The school staff, under the direction of the administration, will take reasonable steps to safeguard the physical and educational welfare of all students, participating in field trips. The District reserves the right to place restrictions upon a student's participation in a field trip or outing when, in the district's judgment, the student's welfare or the welfare of others requires it. This includes, but is not limited to, exclusion from participation in the field trip or activities and/or attendance only if accompanied by a parent or adult family member.

## **TOILETING PROCEDURES**

### *Infants*

Diapers are checked or changed every two hours or more frequently as needed. Diapering occurs in a designated changing area and the proper procedure for diapering is posted in each diapering area. All staff are trained in diapering procedures and hand washing technique.

Parents supply diapers, wipes and any creams. Each day a report tracking diapering will be sent electronically.

### *Toddlers*

Toilet training process begins in this program. Remember, children are ready for toilet training at different ages. Around the age of 24 months, you may see the following signs of readiness for toilet training:

- Your child can indicate when they are wet or dry.
- Your child remains dry for longer periods of time.
- Your child asks to use the toilet or potty chair.
- Your child can remove and replace their own diaper or pull-up.
- Your child has had success with toilet training with very few accidents.

When you see these signs, we ask you to talk with your child's teachers and discuss how our staff can work with you to best help your child practice and master this important skill. We will want to know what words you and your child use for toileting and we will talk with you about when to have your child wear pull-ups or underwear. During the toilet training process, we will always use a positive approach. Your child will never be punished, blamed or shamed for accidents. We ask that you also take a positive approach with your child. It is not uncommon for children to regress and progress at toilet training. Stress or changes at home or at school can delay the process. Some children are ready for toilet training earlier than others. The most important approach is one that works best for your child and maintains self-respect and self-esteem.

### *Preschool*

It is the expectation that all children enrolled in the preschool program are fully toilet trained (independent in restrooms outside of your home). As diapering stations are not available in the preschool classrooms or restrooms, children will be able to use the restrooms to handle their own toileting needs.

## **CLEANLINESS**

Cleanliness and sanitation are extremely important in preventing the spread of disease. The ECC is cleaned daily by center and custodial staff. Throughout the day, staff members wash their hands frequently with soap. Adults and children wash hands before meals and snacks and after toileting. Toys are sanitized daily. Disposable towels are used to dry children and staff's hands. Countertops, tables and other surfaces are washed and disinfected daily. If you as a parent see any issues related to cleanliness or health, please let the Center Director know so we can resolve the problem. Staff attends annual training on preventing the spread of diseases.

## **DRESS AND SUPPLIES**

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and understand that your child will be involved in activities like painting, coloring, using play dough, climbing and snow play where clothes may be soiled. Clothes should be washable and easy for your child to manage on his/her own, especially when toilet training or beyond. When your child is learning to use the toilet, please do not dress them in one piece clothes or those with lots of snaps or buttons. Sweat pants or other pants with an elasticized waist work well. Please label all clothing with your child's name.

At the beginning of the school year, please send in a complete change of clothes in a Ziploc bag with the child's name on it to be kept at school and used in case of a spill or when accidents occur. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please send a clean set of clothes back to school when your child returns.

Please remember to dress your child appropriately for the weather; we go outside every day unless weather conditions prevent. Some families prefer to have a separate bag of outdoor clothing for winter months which includes hat, boots, gloves, scarf and snow pants. Mitten clips are a great help when we go outside, as are easy on and off boots. This bag may come back and forth between school and home or stay at school, whichever you prefer. Please mark all clothing items with your child's name.

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCY PLAN**

The Preschool Programs at the Early Childhood Center of Van Buren Public Schools recognize that our young children and their families reflect a great and rapidly increasing diversity of language and culture. Cultural competency is a broad concept that impacts student self-worth and acceptance in the classroom environment, therefore, we strive to provide a culturally sensitive atmosphere in which all families and children feel welcomed and accepted.

We embrace the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) recommendations that early childhood programs are responsible for creating a welcoming environment that:

- Respects diversity
- Supports children's ties to their families and community, and
- Promotes both second language acquisition and preservation of children's home languages and cultural identities.

Our goal is to provide early childhood educators with professional preparation and development in the areas of culture, language, and diversity while actively involving parents and families in the early learning setting. We encourage all staff, faculty and community stakeholders to provide an atmosphere of respect, integrity and support of cultural differences. We do not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or handicapped status in educational programs, activities or services. Our classroom teachers and support staff will work with each family to create an educational experience that meets the needs of all learners.

All programs, in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality, will show respect for the cultural, linguistic, and family composition of all children. Encompassed within our programs are specific measures to ensure cultural competency within the classroom environment. This includes but is not limited to:

- Materials reflect human diversity and the positive aspects of children's homes and community cultures
- Materials reflect both home and community cultures
- Materials depict a wide range of nonstereotyped role models and cultures
- Multicultural materials are integrated into the classroom

Special dietary requirements are posted and accommodated (e.g., children with illnesses, allergies, cultural, or religious restrictions are offered alternatives)

Support for children who speak multiple languages through our partnership with Wayne County RESA English Learner program.