

# Hudson Community School District



**Preschool Family Handbook**  
2018-2019

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Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Hudson Community School District, we welcome you to the Hudson Preschool. We are very excited to partner with you as we work to establish a strong educational foundation for your preschool child.

Preschool is a wonderful way to set the pace for what we would hope to be a lifelong love of learning. This love for learning will sprout out of our District's core purpose which calls for us to create effective learning environments that result in success for all students. Therefore, we look to develop an early childhood educational environment that is filled with socially and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for your child. By doing this, we're confident that we'll be able to provide them with a "valuable" and "successful" experience within a school setting.

As professionals, our staff is dedicated to the nurturing of all children that are placed in our care. Therefore, we value the trust you place in us at this delicate time in your child's development. With that being said, we encourage you to be an active partner in your child's education. We know a child's attitude toward school is greatly influenced by parental involvement and excitement about school, so please join us. Together, we're confident that we can build a strong home-to-school partnership which will help set the stage for many years of educational success for your child.

This preschool handbook is intended to be used as a reference. After you have read it thoroughly, please keep it for the year as it may help answer your questions when they arise. Along with this preschool handbook, you can also find a larger scope of the Hudson School experience by going to the District's website at [www.hudsonpiratepride.com](http://www.hudsonpiratepride.com) and reviewing the Student/Parent Handbook. To further enhance the information found in these handbooks, you will also receive more timely communications from the classroom. These communications will keep you informed as to the curriculum your child is exploring and any special events in which they will participate. If you need assistance in reading or translating our communications, please contact the classroom teacher and she will make arrangements to assure that access is made for your family.

Communication with you is of vital importance to us as we work together in your child's early education. So please feel free to share with us your views and your child's views about the program. You can contact the teacher/school at 319-988-3239 or by email.

Sincerely,

Mark Schlatter  
(PreK - 6 Principal)  
[markschlatter@hudschools.org](mailto:markschlatter@hudschools.org)

Sara Anderson  
(Preschool Teacher)  
[saraanderson@hudschools.org](mailto:saraanderson@hudschools.org)

# General Preschool Information

## Core Purpose

We create effective learning environments that result in success for all students.

## Vision

The Hudson Preschool will:

- Include students who qualify under the StateWide Voluntary Preschool Program guidelines.
- Include students who are identified as needing early special education services.
- Provide a safe learning environment designed to meet the unique needs of the child.
- Follow the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards established by the Iowa Department of Education.
- Provide a high-quality education using the Creative Curriculum framework.
- Provide strength-based learning opportunities.
- Use developmentally appropriate learning experiences.
- Focus on developing the whole child.
- Encourage home/school/community partnerships.

## Preschool Philosophy

The Hudson Community School District's Preschool program is developmental and its philosophy is to take each child at their present level and provide them with a variety of experiences to further their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. We recognize that each child's readiness and developmental level within these areas will differ from others. Therefore, we want to provide a solid foundation on which a child's school success can be built upon once they enter kindergarten.

Here are the major foundational areas from which we will build our preschool program:

**Social Skills** - It is important that children learn the value and skills of working and playing with others. Through interactive activities, students will have opportunities to share the responsibilities of planning, preparing for and cleaning up after activities. They will also have opportunities to develop such social skills as cooperation, helping, and negotiating.

**Emotional Skills** - A child's self concept is of great importance to their approach to learning and to life. Our goals are to facilitate the development of self-esteem by expressing respect, acceptance and comfort for each child so that they can offer those same qualities to their peers. Opportunities for learning these skills will be provided through things such as creative play, creative dramatics, working with puppets, and listening to stories pertinent to a child's problems and how they work them out.

**Intellectual Skills** - Children are exposed to skills that are the basis for all learning such as, being observant, seeing relationships, listening, verbalization, sequencing of thought, etc. Emphasis is put on these visual and auditory skills because they are so important within the learning process. Students will be learning literacy, math, science, art, and social studies through a variety of activities. These activities will include things like field trips, investigations, and real life experiences.

**Physical Skills** - Developing the large and small motor skills of a child is important. Therefore, students will have the opportunity to participate in many different types of activities which will build their fine and large motor skills.

To build the previously mentioned skills, our preschool program will be play-oriented. Play is an important part of a preschooler's education because what looks like play to an adult is actually the work of a child. Through a balance of self-directed and teacher-directed activities, our program will strive to build and enrich your child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.

We believe the main component of an effective learning environment is a well qualified teacher. In addition to being well qualified in early childhood education, we believe that a preschool teacher should also be trained and experienced in classroom management, positive reinforcement techniques, and communication skills.

Based on its developmentally appropriate approach to learning, our preschool program has chosen to use the Creative Curriculum. Creative Curriculum believes that young children learn best by doing. Creative Curriculum also believes that learning isn't just repeating what someone else says; but rather requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things in their world work. We recognize that children love to explore the world around them by using all their senses (touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and seeing). Therefore we want to take advantage of this period of tremendous growth, desire, and willingness in your child by using stimulating, exciting real world experiences.

### **Preschool Goals**

#### **Goals for Hudson's Preschool Staff:**

- Staff will provide a safe learning environment designed to meet the unique needs of the child.
- Staff will provide strength-based learning opportunities using developmentally appropriate learning experiences.
- Staff will focus on developing the whole child.
- Staff will build home/school/community partnerships.

#### **Goals for Hudson's Preschool Children:**

- Children will show competence in social, emotional, intellectual, and physical skills.
- Children will be engaged, enthusiastic, and curious learners.
- Children will work to keep themselves, their peers and their classroom materials safe.

#### **Goals for Hudson's Preschool Families:**

- Families will advocate for their children.
- Families will be active in their child's learning.
- Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn.

## **Equal Educational Opportunities**

It is the policy of the Hudson Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, of families with children with disabilities, and of families with different cultural backgrounds. These opportunities can be supported by providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format, by including alternative formats on request, and by offering volunteer opportunities.

There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Jeff Bell, Equity Coordinator, 136 S. Washington Street, 319-988-3233, [jeffbell@hudschools.org](mailto:jeffbell@hudschools.org)

## **Program Requirements**

As a part of Iowa's Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, we are required to meet certain standards and criteria. Those standards and criteria fall into the following 10 areas:

Relationships	Teachers
Curriculum	Families
Teaching	Community Relations
Assessment of Child Progress	Physical Environment
Health	Leadership and Management

Here is a link for a closer look at the IQPPS standards and criteria. [Iowa Quality Preschool Standards](#)

## **Program Assessment**

Hudson's Preschool classroom implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. After completing a verification process, we annually confirm that we are meeting these standards through a desk audit.

Program evaluation will take place annually. Administrators, families, staff, and other routinely participating adults will be involved in the annual program evaluation, which will measure progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction. Norm-referenced and standardized test scores may be used as part of this program evaluation to show student progress toward learning goals. A report of the annual evaluation findings will be shared with families, staff, and appropriate advisory and governance boards. The program will use this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.



### **Attendance Policy**

Regular and timely student attendance is expected. If your child is sick, please call into the elementary office (988-3239) and let us know that your child will be tardy or absent. When calling in, please let us know the reason your child is going to be late or absent as this information may be very useful in ensuring that we keep a safe, healthy environment for other students in your child's class. If a student does not show up to class and the school has not received a call notifying us that the student will be tardy or absent, a call will be made to check on the student. If a pattern of absenteeism begins, the school may contact the parents and discuss an attendance plan which could result in a child being dismissed from the program if this problem is not corrected, especially if there is a waiting list during the school year.

# Getting Ready for Preschool Information

## **Qualifying Preschool Students**

Qualifying children must be four years of age by September 15 to be eligible for participation in our Preschool program since this program is funded through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, which allows for one year of participation for each student.

Exceptions to this qualifier will be made for children of 3 years of age which have been identified by the Central Rivers AEA as being entitled to special education instructional services, provided by the Hudson Community School District.

Depending on available space and district approval, children age 5 by September 15th may be allowed to attend our Preschool program. In these cases, families sending students would be required to pay tuition to the Hudson Community School District. The amount of tuition will be determined by the Hudson Community School District's superintendent.

Children living within the Hudson Community School District will be given first preference when building class rosters and determining participation in our preschool program.

## **Inclusion**

The Preschool program provides instruction to all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications or staff assistance may be given if a child has difficulty getting access or maneuvering through areas of our facilities. Prior to making any major modifications or new assistance plans, the preschool teacher will conference with the caretakers of the child. Staff are expected to be aware of the identified needs of individual children and are also trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families.

The preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

## **Least Restrictive Environment**

The goal of the Hudson Community School District is to place each child in the least restrictive learning environment as possible. With that in mind, our preschool students will begin with placement in a general education preschool classroom, as this is the most least restrictive environment. This style of learning environment will be maintained for a child unless they begin or have been identified with learning disabilities that require special education services. In such a case, a problem solving process will take place and special education services will be put in place if warranted by the IEP team. If a preschool student qualifies for special education, they will remain in the same preschool classroom as Hudson provides an inclusive preschool program where both general education and special education students attend. To support this inclusive learning environment, a special education paraeducator will be placed in the classroom to support the special education students and the classroom teacher. Thus, special education students will remain in our inclusive preschool classroom unless it is determined by the IEP team that this type of learning environment can no longer serve the needs of the student.

## School Calendar

The Hudson Preschool will follow the Hudson Community School District's academic calendar. A copy of it can be found on the district's website at [www.hudsonpiratepride.com](http://www.hudsonpiratepride.com)

## Times /Days

The Hudson Preschool will hold classes for students on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays. There will be two sessions on each of these days and each session will be three (3) hours in length. The AM session will run from 8:05 to 11:05. The PM session will run from 12:05 to 3:05. The will be NO CLASSES for students on Wednesdays as this will serve as a records and professional development day for the preschool teacher.

\*\*\* Preschool classes will begin the first Tuesday after Labor Day.

## School Arrival/Dismissal

For safe arrival to and from our preschool classes, pickup and dismissal will move through the elementary's front entry or through the normal bus drop off zones.

- **8:05 - 11:05 class** - Prior to the 8:05 class, parents dropping off their child may bring them directly to the preschool classroom. Preschool students riding the busses will be met in the back of the school by a preschool staff member and taken to their classroom and/or to breakfast. Dismissal for this class will occur from the elementary's front entrance. The preschool teacher/ paraeducator will be in this area to dismiss students. Parents/adults, picking up their child, are asked to park in appropriate parking areas when leaving their vehicles. Hudson elementary is a secure facility. Thus parents/adults are asked to remain outside until class is dismissed and the teacher/paraeducator is ready to hand off their child. For those students using school transportation, the teacher/paraeducator will walk the students out to the bus.
- **12:05 - 3:05 class** - Prior to the 12:05 class, parents dropping off their child may bring them to the elementary's front entrance, where they will be met by a preschool staff member. Students riding the busses will proceed from the bus drop off zone to their classroom and/or the front entrance. Dismissal for this class will occur from the classroom. The preschool teacher/ paraeducator will hand off the students from this area. Parents/adults, picking up their child, are asked to park in appropriate parking areas when leaving their vehicles. Hudson elementary is a secure facility. Thus parents/adults are asked to remain outside until school is dismissed (3:05). For those students using school transportation, the teacher/paraeducator will hand off the students to the supervising children and/or walk the students out to the bus.

Routine is huge. Therefore, parents need to communicate (preferably in a note or by phone call) in a timely fashion if there is going to be a routine change for their child. This helps us ensure a safe learning experience for your child.

For those students riding the bus, your preschool child must be paired with an older responsible sibling/child that can help them get on and off the bus. If a preschool child's routine is broken or an adult is not visibly at the stop to pick up the preschool child, the student will be brought back to the school and we will treat it as an emergency situation. Contact will be made with the parent who will have to come to pick up / and or arrange pickup for the child. Bus routes run on schedules. Therefore, it is essential that the people responsible for delivering or picking up a preschool child be timely and responsible!

### **Transportation**

Transportation to and from the Hudson preschool will be the responsibility of the parent. With that being said, preschool students coming to school (8:05) and leaving school (3:05) will be able to use the regular school busses as long as they are paired/supervised by an older responsible sibling/child. The district will also be providing midday bus transportation for those preschool students living in designated areas, such as registered daycares within Hudson and Country Terrace. Country Terrace riders will be picked up and dropped off at the regular bus stop. Students riding the midday bus home must be met at their drop off spots! If nobody is physically there to meet the child, the bus driver is instructed to bring the child back to school where contact with the proper people will be initiated.

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is available for students in the Hudson Community School District. There is a cost, unless your child qualifies for free/reduced price meals. Breakfast is served from 7:35 - 8:00.

### **Preschool Registration Process**

Each spring prior to the upcoming school year, pre-registration will occur. This process begins with a canvassing of community families to identify eligible/interested students. Pre-registration materials will be sent out to families committing to the district's preschool program. Upon receiving these pre-registration materials, the district will timestamp them so that it knows which students get a spot in the preschool. After gathering preschool registration, students will be placed in either a morning or an afternoon class session. Student placement in these sessions will be dependent upon, but not limited to, district need, student need, and/or family need. Once student placement is determined, families will be notified by the school. If the preschool sessions fill up, students not getting in will be placed on a "waiting list"

Final preschool registration occurs in July. Families will need to submit final registration materials/paperwork at this time.

If a child would appear after the school year begins, he/she can be admitted to our preschool program if space allows and it is determined we can meet his/her needs.

### **General Registration Information**

To comply with Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and the requirements of the Hudson Community School District, it is necessary for parents to provide the preschool/school with:

- general registration information sheet/forms which will include information that will be entered into our student information system and/or kept on file for your child.
- a medical information/physical sheet signed by a physician
- an up-to-date immunization card signed by both parent and physician with sources of immunizations to be listed.

These forms must be completed and turned in before your child attends class. Information on these forms will remain confidential and shared only with staff from the Hudson Community School District and other personnel from invested educational agencies; such as but not limited to the Central Rivers AEA.

### **PreSchool Supplies**

A list of supplies that a preschooler should bring with them will be provided to students during registration. Parents can also find the supply list on the district website [www.hudsonpiratepride.com](http://www.hudsonpiratepride.com) under the Parent tab. Once these basic supplies are obtained, the preschool teacher will communicate with parents to let them know if additional supplies are needed.

# Preschool Staff Information

## Staff/Roles

### Program Administrator

The Hudson Elementary principal is designated as the program administrator. The program administrator will supervise the district's preschool classroom. The principal, Mr. Mark Schlatter, meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. He can be contacted at 319-988-3239. [markschlatter@hudschools.org](mailto:markschlatter@hudschools.org)

### Teacher

A teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to each preschool classroom. This year's preschool teacher is Mrs. Sara Anderson. She can be contacted at 319-988-3229. [saraanderson@hudschools.org](mailto:saraanderson@hudschools.org)

### Paraeducators

When necessary, our district will hire paraeducators to carry out activities under the supervision of the preschool teacher. Para educators will have specialized training in early childhood education. This year's para educators are Mrs. Autumn Parrino and Mrs. Katy Petersen.

### Elementary Secretary

Parents are asked to work through the elementary office. Our elementary secretary is Mrs. Terri Kelly. She can be contacted at 319-988-3239. [terrikelly@hudschools.org](mailto:terrikelly@hudschools.org)

### School Nurse

Our school nurse, Mrs. Jan Brandhorst, is full time and serves grades PK - 12. Her office is located in the elementary office. She can be contacted at 319-988-3239. [janbrandhorst@hudschools.org](mailto:janbrandhorst@hudschools.org)

### Support Staff

Central Rivers AEA support staff provide resources and assistance to the teachers and classrooms upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

## Staff General Information

Employees, working for the Hudson Community School District, fall into two categories (certified and classified). Falling into the Certified Staff category is the preschool teacher. The preschool teacher will carry the credentials/licensure which allows her/him to teach both general education and special education students. Falling into the Classified Staff category are the preschool paraeducators. Our paraeducators are expected to carry the proper credentials and are strongly encouraged to obtain para educator certification as this certification will strengthen their knowledge and skill sets.

The Hudson Community School District has written personnel policies (Board Policy - Series 400) that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. 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.

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. This information will be kept in the employee's confidential personnel files which will be kept in either the district's central office or in the principal's office.

### **Staff Ratio/Coverage**

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. These times include, but are not limited to indoor time, recess, and while on fieldtrips. By maintaining the required ratio during these times, the preschool staff works to create a healthy, safe learning environment throughout their students' day. If for some reason one of the teaching staff needs to temporarily leave the classroom, coverage will be arranged so that the proper adult/child ratio is still maintained.

To maintain the required adult to student ratio of 1:10, preschool class/session size will be limited to 20 students and a certified teacher along with at least one certified paraeducator will be placed in the preschool. The elementary secretary will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the preschool teacher and the preschool para educators in case of absence.

### **Staff Orientation**

Employees must know their role and duties. New and returning preschool teaching staff will participate in an annual orientation that introduces or reviews the fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, 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 reporting procedures;
- Program policies and procedures;
- Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria;
- Regulatory requirements.

Follow-up training may expand on the initial orientations.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities, duties and benefits.

## **Ethics and Confidentiality**

Staff follow 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. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

## **Sexual Abuse and Harassment of Students by Employees**

As laid out in Board Policy Code Reference 402.2, 402.3, 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, learning facilitator, 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. The school district has designated Mr. Jeff Bell (988.4137) and Jan Brandhorst at (988-3239) as its Level I investigators. Physical abuse is a non-accidental physical injury that leaves a mark at least 24 hours after the incident. While employees cannot use physical force to discipline a student, there are times when the use of physical force is appropriate. The times when physical force is appropriate include, but are not limited to, times when it is necessary to stop a disturbance, to obtain a weapon or other dangerous object, for purposes of self-defense or to protect the safety of others, to remove a disruptive student, to protect others from harm, for the protection of property or to protect a student from self-infliction of harm. Sexual abuse includes, but is not limited to, sexual acts involving a student and intentional sexual behavior as well as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits; submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance by creating an intimidating hostile or offensive educational environment.

## **Grievance Policy**

In the event of a complaint against the Preschool teacher, a Preschool paraeducator or other Hudson School District employee, communication of that complaint needs to be directed to the elementary principal, Mr. Schlatter. The principal will then follow the grievance procedures as laid out by the Hudson Community School District. (Board Policy Reference 102,605.3).

## **Staff Professional Development**

The Hudson Community School District expects its teaching staff to continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and to work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff will be encouraged to participate in professional development activities provided internally and in professional development activities provided by external agencies which address early childhood topics relevant to our preschool program and the larger school community.



### **Staff Evaluation**

The preschool teacher is evaluated at least once every three years by an appropriate supervisor. The teacher also evaluates and improves their own performance through ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they are encouraged to develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and then search for ways to develop their craft. Preschool paraeducators are also evaluated at least once every three years by the appropriate supervisor. In cases that the supervisor is someone other than the preschool teacher, input will be gathered from the preschool teacher and used in the evaluative process.

### **Volunteers**

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 school volunteer. For safety's sake, if a volunteer will be working with children on a regular basis, a formal criminal background check will be conducted. 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.

# Facility/Safety Information

## Facility Information

The Hudson preschool classroom is housed in a room with the dimensions of 28ft x 30ft which equates to 840 square feet. With a cap of 20 students per session, this means that we have 42 square feet of usable space per child within our preschool classroom.

According to School Board Policy, Code No. 802.5 our district recognizes the need for access to its buildings and sites by persons with disabilities. Our building has been recently renovated to include improved access and accommodations for people with disabilities. Future improvements will continue to be evaluated and made as the district works to meet the requirements of the ADA.

To protect our preschool students from avoidable , the staff takes precautions that will keep our students from certain hazards. Examples of these precautions are, but not limited to, electrical outlet covers, electronics plugged in at counter height, and the use of low pile carpets.

## Secure Facility

The Hudson Community Schools are secure facilities. This means that outside doors will be locked once the school day starts and will remain locked until school is dismissed. Visitors wanting to get into the school after the doors are locked will need to buzz in and then check into the elementary office. Failure to comply with this expectation may lead to visitation rights being restricted or denied.

Parents picking up or dropping off their preschool children (midday or end of the school day) will be asked to remain outside until a preschool staff member either moves into a supervisory role or brings the preschool child to the parent/pick up zone.

## Visitors

The school policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business to attend school. Parents, guardians, guests and visitors are always welcome. We ask that they register in the office and get a visitor pass before moving through the school. Students who attend other schools will not be allowed to visit classrooms at Hudson. Visitors are expected to leave promptly when their business is completed.

## Pets

There may be times during the year that students will want to share their pets with their class. Before a student brings a pet to school, contact needs to be made with the teacher. During this contact, a conversation can occur to see if there are any health concerns (both for students and pets) preventing the pet from visiting and if there is a time that might work for the pet to visit if no concerns are detected.

### **Tobacco Free Environment**

School district facilities, including school owned or leased vehicles, grounds, dock areas, parking lots, athletic fields and their parking lots and seating areas, buildings and any other district owner property shall be tobacco free. This includes the possession and consumption of electronic e-cigarettes or similar devices. This requirement extends to students, employees, and visitors. This policy applies at all times, including school-sponsored and non-school sponsored events. Persons failing to abide by this request shall be required to extinguish or dispose of the tobacco product or leave the school district premises immediately. It shall be the responsibility of the administration, school resource officer, and the staff to enforce this policy.

### **Substance Abuse**

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Hudson Community School District. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Weapons**

Weapons of any kind will not be allowed on the premises. No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or a look-alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school buildings. Look alike weapon” means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. Students who bring weapons (real or look alike) may lead to discipline resulting in either suspension/expulsion.

### **Safety Plan**

Our Preschool is equipped with a Safety Folder and Safety Bucket that includes a Crisis Procedures Manual and other tools to be used in times of crisis. Included within the Crisis Prevention Manual are informational pieces along with procedural protocols that cover a variety of crisis situations (eg: fire, tornado, lockdowns, bomb threats, etc). Included within the Safety Bucket are emergency first aid materials and other items that could be used during an emergency situation.

### **Fire Safety**

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates will be maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted by site requirements, and logged at the individual sites.

### **Tornado Safety**

In event of a tornado, the preschool students will go to the girl's locker room which is located in the underground level of the school. Within this area, students will be expected to kneel down on the floor and cover the backs of their necks. Tornado drills will be conducted each semester. A written log of testing dates will be maintained and made available upon request.

## **First Aid**

Basic first aid materials are located in our Preschool classroom. They are inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. Basic first aid materials are taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

The district also employs a full time PK - 12 nurse. This nurse is stationed in the elementary building. Nurse duties include taking care of minor injuries, communicating with families about health issues, monitoring and maintaining student health records, administering medications, and supplying basic first aid materials to teachers.

## **Mandatory Reporters**

Licensed school employees and nurses who serve students in the regular course of their employment must report known or reasonably suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to the State Department of Human Services. All teaching staff must complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse" training at least every five years.

Child abuse reports are to be made within twenty four hours of when the person first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

A "child" for the purpose of the mandatory reporting law means any person under the age of 18 years old. Child abuse includes:

- Any non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the history given of it, suffered by the child as the result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of the child
- Any mental injury to a child's intellectual or psychological capacity as evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment to the child's ability to function within the child's normal range of performance and behavior as a result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of the child, if the impairment is diagnosed and confirmed by a licensed physician or a qualified mental health professional.
- A sexual offense with or to a child in violation of the criminal law by a person responsible for the care of child.
- If the child's parent cohabitates with a person on the sex offender registry unless the parent is married to or the parent of the person on the sex offender registry. So if the mandatory reporter is aware that a student's mom is living with a person on the sex offender registry and that other person is not the mother's husband or another child of the mother, this is reportable child abuse.
- The failure on the part of a person responsible for the care of a child to provide for the adequate food, shelter, clothing, or other care necessary for the child's health and welfare when financially able to do so.
- The presence of an illegal drug in a child's body as a direct and foreseeable consequence of the acts or omissions of the person responsible for care of child.

Each mandatory reporter is individually responsible for his or her compliance with the reporting requirements. A person who has a duty to report and knowingly fails to do so is guilty of a simple misdemeanor and may be liable for civil damages proximately caused by the failure to report. A person who makes a false report in bad faith also commits a simple misdemeanor.

A person acting in good faith, which reports, assists in an investigation or testifies in a judicial proceeding concerning a known or suspected case of child abuse will not be subject to either

civil or criminal liability for making the report or participating in the investigation or judicial proceedings, as they are granted immunity.

The identity of the person who reports suspected child abuse is to be kept confidential and is not disclosed without a court order, except to a Department of Human Services official or law enforcement officer for the purpose of conducting a criminal investigation.

# Communication Information

## **Communications**

Communication between the preschool and home is very important. Communications may include home visits, newsletters, emails, phone calls, and parent/teacher conferences. To assist in this effort, parents are encouraged to maintain regular, ongoing, two-way communication with the preschool staff. It is important for parents to be advocates for their child and that they work with the preschool staff to develop the best learning environment for their child.

## **Open Door Policy**

Parents and legal guardians are welcome to visit the preschool classroom with prior notice to teachers. As a safety feature, all visitors must follow check in procedures at the elementary school. Please begin by checking in at the elementary office.

## **Preschool Advisory Committee**

The Hudson Preschool Advisory Committee is composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the Preschool. This group meets to provide feedback on services to meet children and family needs within the preschool. This group will meet annually. Staff, and parents and/or guardians will be notified of the meeting date and time.

## **Preschool Home Visits**

Prior to the start of the school year, the Hudson preschool staff will be making home visits. These 30-minute visits will be arranged by the preschool teacher. After they are set up, the preschool teacher and the paraeducator will both be in attendance whenever possible.

Home visits give both parent and teacher an opportunity to know each other and to share information that pertains to the child. These visits also give parties a chance to start a strong home-school partnership . Therefore during home visits, parents are encouraged to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. Parents can also help the teacher understand what their goals are for their child and whether you have any concerns that they would like addressed. Because of the information that can be shared, home visits provide an opportunity for both home and school to set the stage for a successful school experience for the child.

## **Parent Involvement/Access**

The Hudson district encourages preschool families to be involved in their child's education and to build a strong home-to-school partnership. Parents can do this by observing their children during the day when possible and by meeting with the staff. Family members are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions; but please, coordinate your visits with the preschool teacher since drop-in visits tend can potentially disrupt the learning environment, both for your child and the other students as well. Because of this potential, families are encouraged to give at least a day's notice when visiting the classroom.

Our preschool staff and our district use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of

child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. These ways include enrollment papers, home visits, communications between school and home regarding children's activities, developmental milestones, caregiving issues, Parent/Teacher conferences, and Family Night, and other information that affects the wellbeing of their children.

Our preschool values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. Through these relationships, the preschool teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

Recognizing that communication between school and home is very important. Our preschool will attempt to communicate may through things such as, but not limited to, face to face conversations, home visits, newsletters, emails, phone calls, texts, and calendars. To assist in this communication effort, parents are also encouraged to establish and maintain regular, ongoing, two-way communication with the preschool staff.

Because parents are the primary teachers in a child's life, we encourage our students' parents to get actively involved in and support their child's education. Here are a few ways that they might do this.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Attend family meetings.
3. Return all forms promptly.
4. Attend Parent/Teacher conferences twice per year or more often as necessary.
5. Check your child's backpack each day.
6. Participate by attending field trips or coming during our play time.
7. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
8. Share any of your family's' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
9. Help prepare snack and enjoy it with your child.
10. Read all the material sent home with your child.
11. Help with special events.

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.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

All preschool children are assessed throughout the year on academic, social and physical skills. Methods used to collect data on your preschool child's progress might include tools such as observations, checklists, GOLD assessment, parent surveys, discussions from home visits, and individual activities with the teacher. The results of these tools will be shared with families at parent/teacher conference time. Parent/Teacher conferences are held formally twice each school year. The fall conference is in October and the spring conference is in March.

If at any time during the school year you have concerns about your child's development, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher to discuss your concerns.

### **Transitions**

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. 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.

### **Student Records**

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 office hours. Parents may file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated.

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 ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

### **Family Night**

Family night is an opportunity for you and your family to come to school to participate in fun as well as educational activities. Based on results from a family survey, the teaching staff will select a topic(s) for the evening. With help from family volunteers, the night will be planned to meet the needs of the children and families in the classroom.



## Field Trips

Field trips are often used to enhance the learning process and they can take a few different forms. One form is walking field trips. These trips may occur once in awhile, and won't require the students to be transported. Occasionally, field trips will require that students be transported off school premises. For field trips of this nature, parents will have a note sent home telling them about these trips and may ask for volunteers to help supervise the field trip. When transportation is required for a field trip, school vehicles and drivers will be used.

For the safety of the children attendance will be taken prior to leaving school, upon arrival at the destination, prior to leaving the destination, and upon arrival back at preschool. While on the field trip, the school will also minimally maintain the proper student/teacher ratio required by the IQPPS standards.

## Special Days

During the course of a school year, special days will come up. Here are a few.

- **Fall Celebration** - This day allows students to celebrate fall and all things that make it special.
- **Winter/Christmas Party** - A party will be held, but there will be no gift exchange among the students.
- **Valentine's Day** - Your child may bring Valentines as long as they bring a valentine for each student in the class. The children will celebrate this day with a party.
- **Birthdays** - Children may bring treats to be shared with each classmate (individually wrapped items to be sent home please). Children with summer birthdays will celebrate his/her half birthday during the school year. Party invitations may be handed out at preschool only if every child is being invited.

Other special days may be celebrated. If parents support/participation is needed, the teacher will contact the parents and let them know what is needed.

## School Delays/Closings

When adverse conditions make it necessary to close school, start late, or dismiss early, the announcement may be made on the television stations KWWL (Channel 7), KCRG (Channel 9), and KGAN (Channel 2). District patrons are also encouraged to sign-up for the Iowa School Alerts Notification System. Information is located in the upper right hand corner of the District website at [www.hudsonpiratepride.com](http://www.hudsonpiratepride.com)

If the public schools cancel for the day, preschool is canceled. If public school is delayed 2 hours, morning preschool will be cancelled. Afternoon preschool will attend as usual. If public school is dismissed early due to the weather, preschool students will be dismissed with the rest of the K-12 students. Days missed due to inclement weather may be made up at a later date.

### **Linking with Community/Resources**

Program staff will work to link families to support services available in the community/area based on the pattern of needs they observe among families and based on what families request (eg. health, mental health, oral health, nutrition, child welfare, parenting programs, early intervention, special education screening and assessment services, and basic needs such as housing and child care subsidies). Here is a link to some services located in our area [Resources](#) Our staff will work to develop partnerships and professional relationships with agencies, consultants, and organizations in the community to further the program's capacity to meet the needs and interests of the children and families we serve. Program staff identifies and establishes relationships with specialized consultants who can assist all children and families' full participation in the program. This assistance includes support for children with disabilities, behavioral challenges or other special needs.

# Health Information

## Health/Immunization Records

A physical exam dated within the last 12 months needs to be presented before the first day of class along with an updated immunization certificate. Physical exams expire after one year. If the date of the last physical exam expires during the school year, you will be asked to provide an updated physical exam to remain in preschool. Forms will be provided or your healthcare provider may make a copy of their form for you. Immunizations must be up-to-date according to Iowa Child Care Licensing Center regulations.

## Health and Safety Records

Health and Safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child. Files will be kept in the nurse's office. Files need to be updated as changes are made in your family situation. The contents of the file is confidential, but is available upon request.

Child health and safety records will include:

- 1) Physical examination and all findings
- 2) Up-to-date immunization certificate
- 3) Current emergency contact information
- 4) Names of individuals authorized to pick up your child
- 5) Health plan for any child with special needs, such as allergies or chronic illnesses to include care needed during an emergency

## General Health and Safety Guidelines

- 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 are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff and support staff complete "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.

## Health/Illness Policies

Our policy is set up to protect the children against the spread of illnesses. Hand washing is the best source of protection against illness. Children who are ill should not be brought or sent to school. Children should be able to participate in daily activities, not compromise the health and safety of other children, or demand greater care than staff can provide. Therefore, alert the staff if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Staff in turn will notify the

elementary office/school nurse so that the proper communications/safeguards can be taken. Please honor that we do not have the staff nor the facilities to care for a child if they are too ill to participate in regular activities. A good rule of thumb is "If your child is too sick to go outside, they are probably too sick to be at school. A child may not attend school and may be sent home if the following conditions exist:

- A. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the activities planned.
- B. The illness results in a greater care need than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the children.
- C. The child has any of the following conditions:
  - Fever (above 100), accompanied by behavior changes or signs or symptoms of illness until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to return to the center. Temperature should be normal for at least 24 hours in order for the child to return.
  - Symptoms or signs of possible severe illness such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child.
  - Uncontrolled diarrhea, the child will be sent home. The child must stay home a period of a full 24 hours after they have had a diarrhea bowel movement.
  - Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
  - Vomiting illness (may return after vomiting has stopped for 24 hours)
  - Mouth sores with drooling unless a health care provider determines the condition noninfectious
  - Rash with fever or behavior changes
  - Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge until 24 hours after treatment
  - Scabies and other infestation until after treatment
  - Tuberculosis until medically cleared by a physician
  - Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment
  - Strep Throat or other streptococcal infection until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
  - Chickenpox until 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and crusted
  - Pertussis until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
  - Mumps until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
  - Hepatitis A virus until 1 week after onset of illness or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis has been administered to appropriate children and staff
  - Measles until 6 days after onset of rash
  - Rubella until 6 days after onset of rash
  - Unspecified respiratory tract illness

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school as long as they are able to do so and their presence does not pose an unreasonable risk of harm to themselves and does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. If there is a question about whether a student should continue to attend classes, school staff may contact the Black Hawk County Health Department for guidance. If deemed to be contagious, students will not be allowed back in class or participate in school activities without their personal physician's approval. Infectious or communicable diseases include, but are not limited to, mumps, measles, and chickenpox. In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, such as but not limited to strep throat or chickenpox, the preschool teacher and/or the school nurse will communicate the outbreak to the families through phone, note sent home with the students, or email. Included within this communication, will be the nature of the outbreak, symptoms that parents might want to be on the lookout for, and control measures that will be/may be taken at both school and home.

If a child becomes ill while at the school, the parent will be notified. The child will be taken to the nurse's office until the parent can pick up. We request that children be picked up within an hour of being notified. If you cannot pick up your child, please notify someone on your emergency pick up list.

Each child must have an annual physical exam or obtain a statement of health condition and an up to date immunization record. Please keep the staff informed of any changes in your child's health and/or eating habits. (example: a child who develops an allergy, etc). An emergency care plan is kept on file for all children with a food allergy or any condition that regularly requires medication or technology support.

### **Medications**

According to state law and school policy, no medication can be dispensed by school personnel unless written permission has been granted by the student's parents/guardians and/or doctor. Medication is held in a locked cabinet and distributed by the school nurse. Please see Nurse Brandhorst for medication authorization forms and procedures.

Medication must be in the original container with the following information on the container, in the instruction sheet, or in the parental authorization. A written medication administration record shall be kept on file. This record shall include:

1. Date medicine was prescribed
2. Name of the student
3. Prescriber or person authorizing administration
4. Medication
5. Medication dosage Name, phone number, and address of the pharmacy (if applicable)
6. Administration time
7. Administration method
8. Signature and title of the person administering medication; and any unusual circumstances, actions, or omissions
9. Emergency number for parents.

This information shall be confidential and shall be available to agency personnel with parent authorization.

When medication is brought to school, it should be left in the nurse's office upon the arrival at school. No medication should be kept in the classroom. State laws and school policy also excludes dispensing of aspirin to a student.

### **Cleaning and Sanitation**

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When possible, ventilation and sanitation, rather than sprays, air freshener chemicals, or deodorizers will be used to control odors in inhabited areas of the facility. If spills occur, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

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. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution, consisting of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water, or another safe cleaner. Areas being cleaned will be sprayed until glossy.

Then the solution will be left on for at least 2 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.

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents. All teaching staff and support staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually. Procedures learned in this training include the following:

- Surfaces that may come in contact with potentially infectious body fluids must be disposable or made of a material that can be sanitized;
- Staff use barriers and techniques that minimize contact of mucus membranes or of openings in skin with potentially infectious body fluids and reduce the spread of infectious disease
- When spills of body fluids occur, staff clean them immediately with detergent followed by water rinsing
- After cleaning, staff sanitize nonporous surfaces by using the procedure described in the Cleaning and Sanitation table
- Staff clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning
- Staff dispose of contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is placed in a closed container

Routine cleaning will be performed or supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 and 48 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

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. Non Toxic substances will be used whenever possible.

### **Hand Washing Practices**

Frequent hand washing is key to prevent 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 reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day;
- after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants);
- 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);

- before and 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; and

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, 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 handwashing in any situation listed above.

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

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

## **Snacks**

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their wellbeing, 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 that 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 to form.

Each day the children will share a snack and juice or milk during their preschool class time. We are asking for your assistance in providing this snack on a rotating basis. A calendar will be sent home telling you the number of children and date of your turn to provide snack. It is preferred that you send nutritional snacks as outlined by the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>). These guidelines will give staff and parents suggestions for items that would be appropriate snacks. If you send a drink, it needs to be 100% juice (no products labeled ades, beverages, or drinks) or white milk. Therefore, please do not send juice boxes or fruit snacks/fruit roll ups.

Some possible snack suggestions are listed below, but use your imagination too. Here is a website that can guide you as you decide what to send to preschool for a snack (<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/snacking.html?WT.ac=p-ra>). Don't hesitate to think outside the box as one of our goals is to have the children try new things and to let eating be an adventure.

Some snack suggestions:

cheese and meat mix	bread sticks	yogurt	snack
fresh fruit bread	granola	banana bread	pumpkin
muffins	pretzels	veggies and dip	dried
fruit crackers	fruit cups	box of unsweetened cereal	

Remember, items that do not meet CACFP guidelines should not be sent . Examples of prohibited items include, but are not limited to: graham crackers, vanilla wafers, animal crackers, cereal bars, granola bars, Rice Krispie treats, fruit snacks, pudding, and chocolate/strawberry milk.

Foods sent for snacks must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served. All food/snacks will be checked for expiration dates and will be discard by staff if expired. Expired food/snack items will be discarded. In cases such as this, the preschool will keep foods/snacks on hand to replace what was brought from home.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the 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. If necessary, 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.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. These include things such as, but not limited to: whole grapes; nuts; hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; and/or chunks of raw carrots.

The school district does not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Our preschool program does ask that you do not send sweets, except for birthday treats. If you do send birthday treats, we ask they be individually wrapped so they can be sent home if necessary.

### **Toilet Training**

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 handicap bathroom with a 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 5:
  - 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 check 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 change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- At all times, caregivers will have a hand on the child if they are 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 administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

It is the strong preference/expectation of Hudson Community Preschool that 4-year and 5-year old children who attend preschool are toilet trained. For a safe and effective learning environment, it is preferable that the teacher and/or paraeducator not be taken away from the other children for the time it takes to change a diaper. With that, the district recognizes that unique exceptions may need to be made for students who have specific health issues or educational needs. Therefore, families of children who are not yet toilet trained should contact the teacher in order to develop a plan for meeting the child's needs.

### **School Dress**

Please have your child come in clothes that allow them to freely enter into activities such as art, creative dramatics, or outdoor play. Shoes should be comfortable for walks, fit well for safety and cover the feet to avoid injury to exposed toes.

Please make sure your child is **dressed appropriately for the weather**. Outdoor play occurs all year long except in extreme cold. Children should have boots, snow pants, mittens, hat or hood to be able to comfortably play outside for at least 15 minutes. Please mark all items (each boot, mitten, hat, coat, book bag, etc) with your child's name.

Parents are asked to send a extra set of clothes for their child. These clothes are kept in the student's locker. If a child doesn't have an extra set of clothes or needs additional outside wear, the school and the classroom teacher keeps a small supply of extra clothing in the office.

### **Outside Play**

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. Sometimes we spend longer getting bundled up than we spend outside. We use our local weather station to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity for large motor movement.

Preschool staff will regularly (monthly) check the outdoor play area to ensure that it is safe for students and activity.

Our current playground area does have trees which provide a natural barrier for sun. But if you are concerned about sun exposure to your child, the school asks that you please apply sunscreen prior to your child's arrival at school. If a student needs to have sunscreen applied while at school, parents will be required to fill out a written permission slip. These slips need to be obtained from and returned to the school nurse as she will be the staff member that is primarily responsible for monitoring and assisting with (if needed) sunscreen application.

\*\*\* All sunscreen/sunblock sent to school needs to have a UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher.

Application will follow the district's rules of medication administration policy.

Because we do go outside for recess/activities, bugs can be an issue. If you want to protect your child from bugs, it is recommended by the Department of Public Health that parents should apply only insect repellent with DEET. If you are concerned about insects biting your child, the school asks that you please apply insect repellent prior to your child's arrival at school. If a student needs to have insect repellent applied while at school, parents will be required to fill out a written permission slip. These slips need to be obtained from and returned to the school nurse as she will be the staff member that is primarily responsible for monitoring and assisting with (if needed) insect repellent application.

\*\*\* Insect repellent should be used only one (1) time per day. Application will follow the district's rules of medication administration policy.

### **Water Play**

A water table or tub may be used in the classroom for children to stand and play with their hands in the water. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children are not allowed to drink the water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table/tub is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers. We do not participate in swimming pool type activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and other water containers.

# Preschool Classroom Information

## Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day in either a large or small group setting: table time, center time, story time, snack, outdoor play, and indoor play. Interest areas included within these times may include, but not be limited to: blocks, dramatic play, library, toys, puzzles and games, sensory center (sand & water), music and movement and cooking.

## Curriculum

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. Through this framework, learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. Because our curriculum guides us, it is continually being revised and evaluated to ensure that learning is appropriate, fun, and exciting.

To ensure that our curriculum is meeting high standards, the district has developed policies that expect our program's curriculum content and instructional materials foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions, careers, roles, and lifestyles of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. The district also expects its curricular content and instructional materials follow and enhance the district's policy of non-discrimination and so as to eliminate bias on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status.

To meet the high curricular expectations of the district, the Hudson Preschool program uses Creative Curriculum. Creative Curriculum is a research and evidence based comprehensive curriculum designed for three and four-year-olds. It addresses all areas of early learning: language and literacy, math, science, physical skills, and social skills. It is based on interest areas familiar and meaningful to young children. It provides children an opportunity to learn in a variety of ways - through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling.

## Student Assessment

It is the school district's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. To help organize our assessments, we have created an Assessment Plan that identifies the different assessments/screenings that our preschool students will take. Within this plan, different aspects of each assessment are laid out. These aspects include the assessments target population, timing, purpose, content areas covered, where the results will be stored, and when the results will be shared.

Assessment results will be analyzed regularly by the teaching team. Results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure location. The GOLD assessment is username and password sensitive to

protect the privacy of each student. Here is a link to a document that can help families understand the GOLD assessment and how to read it. [A Family Guide to Teaching Strategies GOLD](#)

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- Creative Curriculum GOLD assessment is used for each child.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an ongoing 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.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones;
- To indicate possible areas that requires additional assessment.

Assessment information will be shared formally with families in multiple ways. Information may be shared formally through written reports and/or during Parent Teacher Conferences. These types of reports will be sent home after each reporting period and Parent Teacher Conferences will occur twice per year. Outside of these formal reporting practices, informal conferences are always welcome and parents can request them at any time.

If, through observation or the GOLD assessment, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the AEA Early Childhood Specialist as part of an early intervention process. During this process, a team is formed. Members of the team may include, but is not limited to teacher, para educators, parents, and AEA specialists. Once formed, this team will engage in problem identification, will plan interventions, will provide support, and will make outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance.
- A request made to Central Rivers Education Agency for support may include things such as additional ideas or more formalized testing. The preschool teacher would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.
- If after going through the proper identification process, it is determined that a child qualifies for special education services then an IEP team will convene and an Individualized Education Plan will be put in place.

If a child is determined to need special accommodations and/or programming, those accommodations or programming pieces should be evident in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include things such as sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by teaching staff in the classroom.

## **Supervision Policy**

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher/staff will complete the following daily safety checklist indoors and outdoors:

- Outlets will all be covered or be child safe outlets, heat/AC, water temperature, & toilets, etc. in working order.
- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked - first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of environment - spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to a custodian.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check every two to three minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently)

## **Child Guidance and Discipline**

Establishing a safe learning environment is vital for a successful learning experience for the preschooler. To establish such a learning environment, teaching staff will use positive guidance, redirection, plan ahead, and set clear limits to prevent problems. They 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. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect, property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

## **Challenging Behavior**

The teaching staff in the preschool are 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 children is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child become 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, kicking) 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 Disciplinary Practices**

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
2. Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
3. Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
4. Withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

### **Objects from Home**

Because the Preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you really limit toys/items brought from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or locker. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken items brought from home.