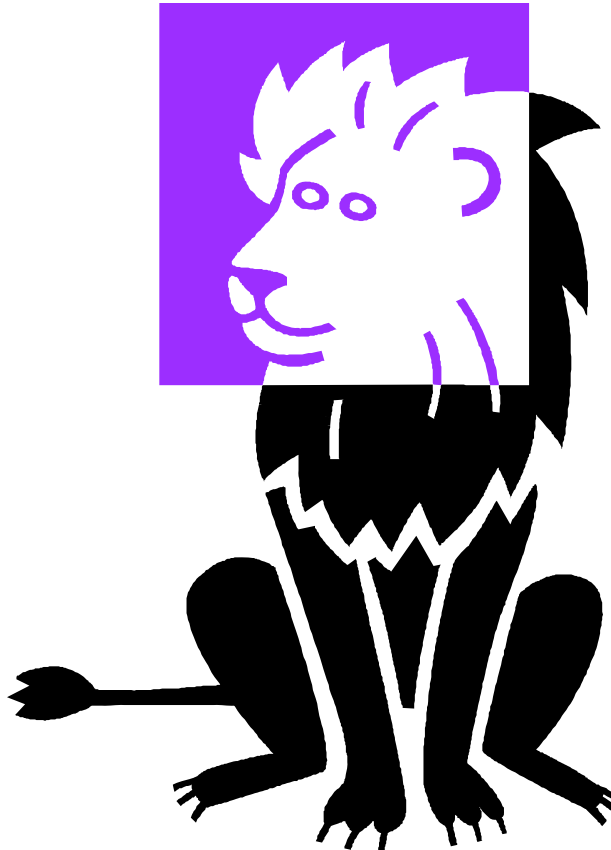


**ELMWOOD LOCAL SCHOOLS
EARLY INTERVENTION PRE-KINDERGARTEN
PARENT HANDBOOK**



The Elmwood staff connects students to the power and possibilities of learning.

District Goals:

- 1. Increase student academic achievement.*
- 2. Operate the district more efficiently and effectively.*
- 3. Raise hope, trust, and confidence in the Elmwood Local School District.*

Handbook Revised May 2018

Welcome

Welcome to Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten, which is partially grant funded through the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood. This program is required to comply with all public preschool rules and regulations and Elmwood Board of Education policies.

Philosophy

Trained early childhood educators, working together with parents, provide the necessary active learning experiences that will enable the child to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. Emphasis is placed on building a child's self-esteem while satisfying a child's need for love, security, and motivation. Early childhood educators focus on the child and his or her family. The Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten is a developmentally appropriate program responsive to the needs of families as well as the children.

The Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten Program and Curriculum are guided by the following principles:

- ❖ **Curriculum for young children is comprehensive and addresses all aspects of development.** The curriculum, which is based on state academic standards, addresses social/emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development through a program that is both age and individually appropriate. The child's individual and cultural background, including developmental history is an important determinant of curriculum goals for that child.
- ❖ **Children learn by doing.** The curriculum provides opportunities for children to pursue their own interests and curiosities, and to make appropriate choices. Adults avoid doing for the children anything that they might do for themselves. Children are encouraged to do their own drawing, cutting, writing, experimenting, buttoning, etc.
- ❖ **Process is more important than product.** With young children, the ultimate value of an activity is the experience of doing the activity, rather than the quality of the product produced. Creativity of each child is encouraged. The end result of an activity should not be a group of products that all look the same.
- ❖ **Play is the best vehicle for integrating learning across all developmental domains.** Adults enhance children's learning through play by providing appropriate space and materials, carefully observing children's play, helping children identify their own ideas and put them into action, and encouraging problem solving.
- ❖ **Through a carefully planned environment including responsive adults and peers, children develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that encourage**

life-long learning, such as curiosity, initiative, persistence, and self-confidence as a learner.

Learning Environment

Developmentally appropriate activities and active learning experiences are implemented throughout each day. The environment includes materials and equipment that stimulate and challenge. The preschool classroom is organized into areas called centers. At these centers children learn to experiment, explore, discover, ask questions, and solve problems. Some of the centers include:

- ❖ **Art** – Children learn to use their imaginations and to be creative with paints, paper, crayons, glue, play dough, scissors, tape and other materials. Art encourages children to make choices, try out ideas, plan, and experiment.
- ❖ **Blocks** – Children learn about balance, gravity, size, shape, comparison, measurements, counting, and sorting. Children develop eye-hand coordination, enhance language skills, and strengthen social interaction skills.
- ❖ **Dramatic Play** – Children learn about themselves and their families by playing dress-up, talking on the phone, and pretend cooking. They learn to cooperate, to share, and to imitate life experiences.
- ❖ **Sensory Table** – Children discover and explore floating, sinking, molding, digging, pouring, and measuring. Tactile sensory materials such as water, beans, snow, ground corncobs, and rice enhance language, social, and motor skills while helping the child to master many state standards for math and science.
- ❖ **Manipulatives** – Children learn eye-hand coordination by doing puzzles, stringing beads, and by placing pegs in a pegboard. Children learn problem-solving skills and observe relationships involving space and size.
- ❖ **Writing** – Children experiment with writing by drawing, tracing, copying, and inventing their own spelling.
- ❖ **Science** – Children learn about five senses, body parts, animals, plants, weather, magnets, simple machines, and observe and predict changes.
- ❖ **Computer** – Children become familiar with the operation of the computer and mouse. The preschool software enhances learning of shapes, colors, numbers, letters, words, patterns, and classification.
- ❖ **Library** – Children discover people, places, and things through words and pictures. A variety of fiction and nonfiction books are available along with cassette listening centers for many stories.

Children's work in the centers occupies part of their daily routines. The remainder of the day is devoted to language activities, small group activities, and large muscle play.

Admission

Selection of students for admission is mandated *by state guidelines* and will be made first on the basis of qualifications for free/reduced tuition and special education.

Any child living in the Elmwood School District, who is age 3 or 4 by August 1st may apply for the Elmwood Preschool. Applications are taken in March for the following school year. Admission is based on the child's age, address, and full time preference. Children of employees, who do not reside in the district, are also considered in the admissions process. If possible, students already admitted to the program will be invited to continue the following year.

Program Schedule

The preschool has classes scheduled five days a week; Monday through Friday. There are two sessions each day. Each class is 2 ³/₄ hours. The morning class meets from 9:00-11:45a.m. and the afternoon class meets from 12:51-3:36 p.m. Transportation will be provided each day.

Tuition

The program operates on a sliding scale, depending on family size and income. **The cost of preschool is \$10.00 per day**, which includes a snack. Free and reduced rates are offered upon qualification. Family income statistics are submitted to determine student fee rates. Parents will be asked to provide proof of eligibility for free or reduced tuition. Fee statements are sent home monthly. Payment is expected the 1st of each month. Checks should be made payable to "Elmwood Local Schools." Failure to make payments will lead to the removal of student from the program.

If your income changes during the school year please request a new fee application.

Releasing Pupils

Children may only be released to parents or persons authorized by the parents whose names are indicated on the *emergency medical* and *transportation* forms. Under no circumstances shall a child be released to an unidentified person. Photo identification will be requested if the preschool staff does not know someone who has permission to pick up your child. Parents must send a written note or email stating when a child will be picked up by an adult, rather than riding a bus home. If no note is received, the child will be placed on the bus following the routine procedure. Requests for extended bussing changes must be submitted to the transportation coordinator, one week in advance of any change.

Transportation

When possible, bussing will be provided. Pre-Kindergarten children may ride an elementary bus in the morning or afternoon with siblings. A mid-day route will be provided, Monday through Friday, for all preschool children living in the district. There may be occasions when bussing is not available, such as field trips. On those occasions it will be the responsibility of the parent to transport their child to and from school.

- ❖ Situations may cause a bus schedule to be shorter or longer, such as inclement weather.
- ❖ An adult will need to be seen by the bus driver before a child can be dropped off.
- ❖ If you transport your child please follow the established pick up and drop off times and locations. Parking is available directly outside of the main elementary doors. Parents then walk to the set of doors at the west of the building to get their child. *Please do not park in the bus area outside of the high school main entrance area in the circle lot.*
- ❖ Pre-Kindergarten students living north of Jerry City Road or whose sitter is north of Jerry City Road will attend AM preschool. They will ride the morning elementary bus route with elementary students and be bussed home with Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten students only.

Pre-Kindergarten students living south of Jerry City Road or whose sitter is south of Jerry City Road will attend PM preschool. They will be picked up for afternoon preschool with Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten students only and ride the bus home with elementary students.

Students living on Jerry City Road were used to balance the classes between AM and PM. The dividing line may be variable from year to year, depending on enrollment.

Dress

- ❖ Children should be dressed comfortably for play and the weather.
- ❖ Our classes go outside on most days, so children need to dress appropriately for outdoor play. Please mark all outer clothes, boots, etc. with your child's name.
- ❖ An extra set of clothes should be kept at school or in your child's backpack. Place extra clothing in a ziplock bag with your child's name on it with marker.
- ❖ Children should have an extra pair of non-marking gym shoes to keep at school for gym class.
- ❖ Please refer to the *Elmwood Elementary Handbook* for more information.

Snacks

A snack that includes two foods from the basic food groups is provided by the preschool. A monthly snack menu will be sent home to parents. Snacks will be healthy selections

and will follow licensing guidelines. Children are encouraged to try new foods and participate occasionally in preparation of their own snacks.

Health and Safety Training

All Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten teachers are trained in first aid, common childhood illnesses, and child abuse recognition and prevention.

All staff members are trained to recognize signs of abuse. Ohio law requires that the Children's Protective Service Agency be notified when child abuse or neglect is suspected.

Safety

The Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten has established the following policies and procedures to ensure the safety of your child.

- ❖ No child will be left alone or unsupervised.
- ❖ Children will be instructed on the proper use of equipment and materials.
- ❖ Staff members have immediate access to a telephone in case of emergency.
- ❖ Fire, emergency, and weather alert plans are posted in each classroom.
- ❖ Emergency Medical Authorizations will be on file for all children.
- ❖ Fire drills will be conducted monthly. Tornado drills are conducted during tornado season.
- ❖ When an accident occurs that necessitates attention, staff will complete an incident report form and the original will be given to the parent and a copy placed in the child's file at school. Attempts will also be made to contact parents by phone.
- ❖ All chemicals and potentially dangerous materials are kept out of reach of children.
- ❖ The district has a Crisis Team and Plan in place.

Health Examination

Immunizations are required by the State of Ohio. Your child's documentation of shots or exemptions needs to be on file *before the first day of school*. Students without proper documentation will be excluded from Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten.

Immunizations for Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten include:

- ❖ 3 Polio
- ❖ 4DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Whooping Cough)
- ❖ 1MMR
- ❖ 1HIB
- ❖ 3 Hepatitis

Yearly physical and dental examinations are mandatory for preschool. Your own physician and dentist may do this. Medical and dental forms are due *prior to entering Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten*, and are valid for one full year from the date

recorded by the doctor. The child needs a new exam completed after that date to remain in the program.

Medication

In rare cases, it may be necessary for a preschool student to take medication at school. The parent and physician prescribing the medicine must complete a signed release form. The medication must be in the prescription bottle stating the time and amount to be given. These forms are available from the school office. All medication must be kept in the nurse's office.

Attendance

The school office will maintain daily attendance records including admission and withdrawal. When a child is absent, the parents are to notify the school by 9:00 a.m. the day of the absence.

A signed and dated note is required when a child returns to school. A child with five consecutive absences without notification from a parent will be automatically withdrawn from the program. Students who are continually tardy or dismissed early may be counted as absent.

Communication

Each child will have a folder that should be brought to school each day. Parents are advised to direct questions concerning the program or child to the teacher. A message for the teacher may be given directly to the teacher either verbally, by email, or by a note written in the student's folder. Phone messages may be taken or returned at the teacher's convenience. A conference may be arranged at any time by the parent or teacher.

Curriculum and Assessment

The Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten utilizes the *Get Set For School*, *Handwriting Without Tears*, *Eipstein's 6 Keys of Family Involvement*, and *Behavior Basics* as guides for instruction. The curriculum is based on scientific research on how children develop and learn and is aligned with the Ohio Early Learning Content Standards. The Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten program includes several areas of interest, and describes how and what children learn in each area, the supplies and materials needed, how the teacher interacts with children to promote learning, and how to share information about the area with families. Assessments will rely heavily upon observations by the teacher and parent and work samples. Assessments include self-help skills, social development, language and literacy, motor skills, math, and science. In May, each child that will be entering kindergarten will be required to attend Elmwood's Kindergarten Roundup for screening purposes.

Birthdays/Invitations

Children may bring a birthday treat on or near their birthdays. Please check with your child's teacher before sending a treat. Treats and invitations may only be distributed if given to all children in a class.

Field Trips

- ❖ Parents may volunteer for field trips when there is available space.
- ❖ A nominal fee may be charged to cover admission fees, etc.
- ❖ Children will wear name tags.
- ❖ Emergency Medical Authorization Forms will be taken on all field trips.
- ❖ Permission slips *must* be signed by the parents and returned to the teacher in order for a student to attend a field trip.
- ❖ Children must ride the bus to the field trip destination. Any child going home with a parent, rather than returning to school on the bus, must be signed out by the parent before leaving on the field trip.

Discipline

Young children need guidance in learning to show respect for others and for themselves. Every child needs limits set to develop self-discipline and socially acceptable behaviors. Sensible and consistent rules and limits need to be set in any group to help a child feel comfortable, safe, and secure. Classroom rules will be posted in each room and children will be reminded of the rules and the reasons for the rules.

- ❖ Children will be given the opportunity to work out their own conflicts. Teachers will intervene before it becomes physically or emotionally harmful. Teachers will work together with the children to help them discover a better way to resolve problems.
- ❖ Natural consequences will be used when possible. Children will be asked to discontinue play with a certain toy, in a play area or with certain children for a while if appropriate behavior is not occurring. They will be expected to repair any damage done to physical structures children have built. Teachers will redirect the children to more appropriate activities.
- ❖ Knowing they imitate adults, teachers will set a positive example for children.
- ❖ Teachers will have reasonable expectations for children. Children will not be expected to perform tasks for which they are not developmentally ready.

The actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- ❖ There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- ❖ No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.

- ❖ No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- ❖ No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, cage, a box or a similar cubicle.
- ❖ No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- ❖ Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- ❖ Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- ❖ Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.
- ❖ Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- ❖ The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect them from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Cumulative Records

It is necessary to maintain personal information on each child and family. Information in the records is available only to appropriate school personnel and to child's parents or legal guardian in accordance with the law, yet guarded with confidentiality. The Elmwood Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten will maintain the following records on each child:

- ❖ Personal Data – name, address, date of birth, social security number.
- ❖ Family Data – name, address, telephone numbers.
- ❖ Copy of birth certificate.
- ❖ Custody papers when applicable.
- ❖ Emergency Medical information.
- ❖ Immunization records, Medical/Dental assessment.
- ❖ Admission and withdrawal dates.
- ❖ Attendance.
- ❖ Progress reports.
- ❖ Parent authorization to transport.
- ❖ Permission for photo release/field trip release.
- ❖ Request for roster information for circulation to preschool participants.
- ❖ Medical Family Health History.

Parent Involvement/Educational Play Visits

Parent involvement is an important part of the preschool program. All parents of children enrolled in Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten are encouraged to be involved in home-school partnerships. Parents are invited to participate in parent meetings, PTO,

workshops, conferences, field trips, and in the classroom. Upon entering the building, please sign in at the office to receive a volunteer pass.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten Parent/Teacher conferences will be scheduled in the Fall or whenever a parent or teacher deems necessary. To discuss progress and any problems concerning a student, the parent should consult with the teacher. Appointments with teachers must be held outside of class time. *There is no class for students on fall conference days.* Additionally, spring conferences are offered and students will be in class during those days. Conferences are usually 20 minutes in length.

Emergency Closing/Two Hour Delay

In the event it becomes necessary to close because of weather conditions, or any other reason, official announcement will be released for broadcast by the following television or radio stations: WFOB 1430; WBVI 96.7; WKXA 100.5; or WTOL-TV 11 and WTVG – TV 13. **In the event of a two hour delay, both the AM and PM class will be in attendance. The following times will be used when in attendance: AM = 11:00 a.m. to 12:36 p.m. and PM = 2:00 p.m. to 3:36 p.m.**

Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines for Toilet Training

Children must be toilet trained to enter Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten. The only exceptions are for students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP). We do recognize that accidents occur at times, but frequent accidents will result in your child being asked to remain home until toilet training is mastered.

Students should be able to:

- ❖ Recognize the urge to urinate/defecate.
- ❖ Inform the teacher of the need to go to the bathroom.
- ❖ Wipe self after urinating/defecating.
- ❖ Wash hands after using the restroom.

Communicable Diseases

Any child who is suspected of having a communicable disease will be isolated immediately, and a parent or guardian shall be notified via telephone as soon as possible. Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten parents will be notified by letter when a child in the program contracts a communicable disease. The symptoms for which a child will be discharged from the Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten are:

- ❖ Diarrhea.
- ❖ Severe coughing.
- ❖ Difficult or rapid breathing.
- ❖ Yellowish skin or eyes.
- ❖ Conjunctivitis (or pink eye).

- ❖ Untreated infected skin patch(es).
- ❖ Temperature of 100°F in combination of any other sign of illness.
- ❖ Stiff neck
- ❖ Evidence of lice (nit-free policy), scabies or other parasitic infestation.
- ❖ Vomiting
- ❖ Serious cold symptoms
- ❖ Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- ❖ Unusual spots or rash

If your child is “mildly ill,” experiencing minor cold symptoms, or does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but is not exhibiting any of the symptoms specified above, he/she will be permitted to stay at school and will be monitored frequently and observed carefully for signs and symptoms of worsening conditions. If a child’s symptoms worsen, then he/she will be isolated from the other children and the parent or guardian contacted to arrange for the child to be taken home from Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten. The school policy is to keep children home for 24 hours after the fever has broken, and 24 hours after the last incident of vomiting has occurred in order to prevent the spread of illnesses.

Parent Concerns

The Mission of Elmwood Local School District emphasizes the importance of community support and involvement. If you have concerns regarding the program, please contact your child’s teacher. Every attempt will be made to resolve the situation informally. The Board of Education has established Policy 9130 which outlines a more formal procedure to address complaints if matters cannot be resolved informally.

Complaints should be discussed first with staff members directly involved in the situation, who will make every effort to provide a reasonable explanation or take appropriate action consistent with Board Policy and Guidelines. If the matter remains unresolved, complaints should be directed to the building principal. If the situation persists, a written complaint should be filed with the Superintendent.

Complaints which remain unresolved after this process may be reported to Ohio Department of Education’s Ombudsperson at 877-644-6338, or the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at 614-466-0224.

Copies of inspection reports are posted in each classroom. If you would like to request a copy of this document, please contact your child’s classroom teacher or the school office.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD.

I have read and understood the *Early Intervention Pre-Kindergarten Parent Handbook* completely.

Child's Name _____ Child's Teacher _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Please list any questions that you have regarding the information in this handbook or other information covered at the Parent Orientation.