

Parent Handbook 2007-2008

Pied Pipers Preschool

"A place to play while learning"

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MEET YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS:

Sarah Erickson is our Director of Pied Pipers. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education and earned a National Administrator Credential. She has been working at Pied Pipers for 14 years, with 4 years prior experience in licensed child care centers. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, walking and spending time with her family: her husband, Mark, her two sons: Benjamin, 11, and Jonathan, 9 1/2, and 3 cats.

Stacy Neil joined Pied Pipers as assistant teacher in October last year, so this will be her first year to start with the preschoolers. Stacy had been a stay at home mom and has worked with children for a number of years. Her family includes her husband, Jim, and her 2 sons: Zachary, 10, and Aidan, almost 4. She plans on taking some college level courses on-line. Stacy and her family enjoy camping often.

We are required by the Department of Human Services to

- Have current CPR and first aid certificates
- Attend annual universal precautions training
- Attend 4-8 hours of child care related studies (In past years, we've taken much more!)
- Submit Criminal History Record Checks biannually
- Have physicals every 3 years
- Attend Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse training every 5 years

To continue to improve quality in preschool, we:

- Participate in Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards
- Evaluate our program using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
- Were awarded a level 3 in the Department of Human Services' Quality Rating Scale
- Are implementing the Creative Curriculum for Preschool
- Use Iowa's Early Learning Standards as a resource

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE:

It is mandatory, under Iowa Code, Section 232.69, for the owner or director in charge of a child care center to report any suspected incident of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. If your child has any unusual scars or markings on his/her body, please notify us.

OUR MISSION:

Pied Pipers Preschool provides fun, educational experiences encouraging each child to become an enthusiastic learner.

OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Goal: provide fun, educational experiences
 - a. Objective: teaching children through play
 - b. Objective: hiring professional, caring staff
 - c. Objective: offering developmentally appropriate curriculum

- 2) Goal: to encourage each child to become an enthusiastic learner
 - a. Objective: developing social skills (talking, listening, playing and sharing with others)
 - b. Objective: developing cognitive skills (knowing colors and shapes, counting, and classifying)
 - c. Objective: developing emotional skills (expressing feelings verbally and nonverbally)
 - d. Objective: developing physical skills
 - Large motor (walking, climbing, jumping, hopping, running, catching)
 - Small motor (cutting, drawing, stringing beads, putting together puzzles)

CLASS SCHEDULE:

9:00 - 11:30 in the mornings on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays OR Tuesdays & Thursdays

CLASS SIZE:

6 children with one teacher (or up to 8 with an exception from DHS)

Minimum of 13 children or maximum of 15 children with 2 teachers for 3 year olds

Minimum of 13 children or maximum of 18 children with 2 teachers for 4 year olds

August, 2006

ADMISSION POLICY

A child may be admitted into Pied Pipers Preschool after the following forms have been completed and given to the teachers:

1. Physical Form
2. Immunization Certificate
3. Picture Release (Parents may choose not to sign this) & Intake form
4. Emergency card

The above mentioned forms will be given to the parents prior to school starting.

August, 2004

DISCHARGE POLICY

A child may be dismissed from Pied Pipers Preschool for failure to meet center policies, inability of child to adjust to group experience or if the child is a threat to other children, staff, or self. The parents or director may initiate a phone call or email to identify the challenge and find a solution agreeable to both parties. Following 2 class sessions, the parents and director will make contact again to discuss progress. If no improvement is seen after one month, the child will be discharged, and a letter of dismissal will be mailed home. After one month, at the parent's request reinstatement may occur on a space available basis at the director's discretion if we feel a solution may be possible.

A student will also be discharged if tuition is not paid by the last day of the month. A payment coupon is included with the monthly newsletter. A bill will be sent home in your child's backpack if payment is not received by the 15th of the month. A bill and dismissal letter will be mailed to your home if payment is not received by the end of the month. Reinstatement will occur on a space available basis when tuition is paid in full.

November, 1995

DISCIPLINE POLICY

If child's behavior is not harmful, we ignore it or give a gentle reminder.

If child's behavior is harmful, a staff person will:

Talk to the child about what is happening, what/who is hurt, & how the person feels.

(If behavior continues) have the child move away from the situation.

(If the behavior continues) have the child sit away from the other children for 3-5 minutes, depending on the age of the child.

(If the behavior continues) send home a note or give a phone call to the parent(s).

April, 1996

EMERGENCY POLICY

Pied Pipers Preschool has written emergency plans posted in their classroom for the following emergencies: extended power failure, winter storm, earthquake, flooding, fire (children are taken to Slininger-Rossow), bomb threat, chemical spills, abduction, intruders and missing child (ren,) dealing with an intoxicated person, and tornado (children are taken to the women's locker room.). In the event of an emergency that the children need to be transported immediately, Greene County Community Center staff will transport them. If the children need to be picked up early from school, we will announce it over local radio stations, and cable. Please listen to hear where your child has been taken if the preschool is unsafe. If your child has not been picked up, we will attempt to notify you by telephone. Your children's teachers will remain with them until they have been released to you.

August, 2006

FEE POLICY

The tuition for Pied Pipers Preschool will be \$40/month for enrolling 2 days/week or \$60/month for enrolling 3 days/week. Enrollment to the Pied Piper Preschool program is on a pre-pay basis only. Tuition is figured by taking the total cost for the school year and dividing it by the 9 months we are in session, thereby giving an equal payment for each month rather than a per day cost. A total month tuition payment is due at the Jefferson Park and Recreation Office the first school day of each month. Returned checks have a \$30 fee.

August 2007

HEALTH AND EMERGENCY CARE POLICY

In order to protect your child and other children, several health policies have been established. A child who is ill needs to be picked up if illness results in a greater need for care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of others.

When to keep a child at home:

- Upset stomach (diarrhea or vomiting) within the last 24 hours
- Excessive runny nose or coughing
- Complains of unusual pain
- Any undiagnosed rash or skin sores
- Suspect impetigo, scabies, or ringworm
- Fever of 100 F or above (child may return to preschool after 12 hours of normal temperature without medication)
- Head lice, including nits
- Conjunctivitis/pink eye
- Sore throat
- If you feel that your child is too ill to play outdoors. (We are unable to allow children to stay indoors alone.)

Please contact your child's teacher if your child will be absent from school. (Don't forget to call WITS, if your child usually rides the bus.) If your child has a communicable disease, please inform your child's teacher as soon as possible, so that she may inform the other parents to watch for symptoms in their children because these are highly contagious. (Due to confidentiality, the teacher is unable to tell **who** infected the class.)

The staff at Pied Pipers Preschool will not give out medication unless first discussed between the parent and the staff.

In the event that your child has an accident, we will attempt to contact the parents. If the parent or emergency contacts cannot be reached and the teachers feel the child requires immediate care, we will follow the directions given on the Emergency Care form.

August, 2007

OUTDOOR POLICY

We plan on using the outdoor play equipment whenever the temperature/wind chill is 10 degrees F or higher. Pied Pipers Preschool does not have space to keep extra winter clothing. It is the parents' responsibility to provide appropriate clothing for your child to be comfortable outdoors.

Please do not send your child with an umbrella or scarf (for the children's safety.)

80% of a person's lifetime sun damage occurs before the age of 18 years. Individuals who suffered severe childhood sunburns are at increased risk for skin cancer. Therefore, sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before exposure to the sun and every 2 hours while in the sun. At preschool we would not have ample time to apply sunscreen. Therefore, we strongly urge parents to apply sunscreen before preschool.

August, 2007

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Parents or designated persons will bring their children and pick them up at the preschool room. If we do not recognize the person who arrives to pick up your child, we will ask for photo identification and may make a photocopy of it for our records. We are not responsible for your child once he/she has been released to someone listed on the emergency card. If you happen to come a little early and see the preschool door shut you'll know the teachers are still busy preparing for the day.

Parents have open access to preschool unless restricted by a court order.

Parents may have access to any written records concerning his/her child anytime they request it. These records are considered confidential and will not be shared with anyone other than preschool staff without permission from the parent.

We encourage parents to visit anytime, preferably after the first month. The best education happens when parents and teachers work together. If you have a hobby or talent, we would love to have you share it with us. Pied Pipers will have some fun evenings that we specifically invite you to join us for a special event.

If **pets** visit preschool, its immunization record or statement of health from the veterinarian is required. The Centers for Disease Control also warn against contact with the following animals for children younger than age 5: amphibians (frogs, toads, newts or salamanders,) ducklings, chicks and petting zoos. These animals would be able to visit our classroom, but not touched.

In order to go on **field trips**, we need parents (without siblings because they are distracting to classmates) to accompany us. We send home a permission slip that you must return to preschool. Also, if you work at a place that would be interesting for us to visit please let us know.

While preschool children are alike in many ways, no one knows your child better than you. You can help us help your child by sharing what is happening at home (for example: arrival of a new baby, death of a loved one, parent's separation, etc.) The information you share will be kept confidential between your child's teachers and will help us respond to your child in an appropriate way.

SNACK POLICY

The children in preschool are given a mid-morning snack and it is provided by the parents. Each month, a snack calendar will be sent home with the preschool children showing who brings snacks on which day for the month. Preschool provides cups and paper plates or napkins. If utensils are needed, parents please provide them. All snacks are not equal! Because snacks provide almost one-fourth of a child's food intake, they should be nutritious. Nutritious snacks will help children to get all the vitamins and minerals they need each day. Healthy snacks must still be served on holidays and birthdays. An extra treat that could be placed in school bags to go home is acceptable. All foods brought from home are required to be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers to ensure your child's safety.

- Please choose a healthy snack from the note in the snack bag.
- The serving size listed is per person.
- Please multiply this number by the total listed above.
- Checking the Nutrition Facts on the package will help you decide how many packages are needed.
- Some extras are appreciated in case of accidents and because some children are hungrier than others are.

The following are considered choking hazards for children under age 4: whole or sliced into rounds hot dogs, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas or baby carrots, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter or chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

WEATHER RELATED CANCELLATION POLICY

If Jefferson-Scranton classes are canceled, there will be no preschool. If Jefferson-Scranton Schools begin school late, there will be no morning preschool class. If Jefferson-Scranton Schools dismiss school early, there will be no afternoon preschool class. If excessive days are missed because of weather, they will be made up at the end of the year.

Snack/Show and Tell Days are so important to your child. Therefore, if a show and tell day is missed due to the weather, we will celebrate this day the following class day. If your child misses his/her snack day due to inclement weather, you may choose to bring snack the following class day. The snack person for the next day after a missed day should bring snacks also.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What can I do to help my child succeed in school?

To do well in school, your child needs plenty of sleep (12 hours/day for preschoolers,) a nutritious meal before class, to be read to 20 minutes each day, to be talked with as you go about your normal, every day tasks and visits to the doctor and dentist annually or more often if needed.

What should my child wear to preschool?

Children need to be dressed in comfortable washable clothes so they are ready for hands-on learning. Children learn so much when they play with paint, playdough, sand, and water. It's hard to enjoy these activities if children are worried about getting dirty. We recommend wearing soft soled shoes. They are best for helping to keep children safe when we do large motor activities. Patent leather shoes and cowboy boots with hard soles often become slippery and cause accidents, so we would suggest not having the children wear them. Crocs or sandals are not recommended because of our playground surface.

What does my child require for preschool?

We would like each child to bring some sort of bag with them to preschool every day. It makes sending things home much easier. We would also appreciate it if your child could bring an art shirt that covers the child's clothing to use when we paint. Please mark it with your child's name. If your child should come home with marker or paint on their clothes, do not use pretreater on them and they should wash out.

What should I do if my child does not want to stay at preschool?

Being able to separate from Mom and Dad is one of the goals in Early Childhood Education. Sometimes this is a very painful process for both the child and the parent. We recommend talking with your child before preschool starts and explaining that you will not be staying but will be picking him/her up when it is over. Then when you bring the child to school, it is best to simply give a hug and kiss and say you'll be back after school. We can take over from there. We will have something for your child to do right away so that he/she is kept busy. If your child needs to be held and reassured, we are comfortable doing that. Most children are fine once they become interested in an activity. However, if we are concerned that a child might be experiencing some trauma, we will call you and have you come back.

May my child bring his/her special toy and/or blanket to preschool?

By the time your child begins preschool, he/she is developmentally ready to learn to spend time away from this security object. We prefer that the object stay at home so it is safe. If your child is showing distress, it will be okay for it to stay inside his/her backpack during preschool. Over time, your child may not feel the need to bring the object to school.

Do you have "Show and Tell" in Pied Pipers?

Yes, while children share their own special items from home during this activity, it is also a learning experience. Show and Tell allows children to develop language and cooperative skills in a familiar social context. We will include show & tell topics on our calendar. Please label your child's possessions with his/her name.

Will my child be bringing worksheets home?

The emphasis in Early Childhood Education is "hands on" learning! Young children learn best by getting their hands right on materials, by using their senses, and by engaging in imaginary play. By learning this way now, your child will be ready to do worksheets when he/she is in elementary school.

How will you communicate with the parents?

We have several ways that we can communicate with each other. We use a monthly newsletter to explain our studies and activities that we will be doing each month. We often use email, the telephone or send home a note if we have a concern or if we are excited to share something about your child. When you bring your child to preschool or pick him/her up, we can have a short visit. We also have a variety of articles on our window outside our classroom for you. We will send home written reports in the fall, winter and we will schedule a conference in the spring. It is very important for your child that we have good communication between us. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have a concern.

How can my child get to and arrive from preschool?

You are welcome to bring your child to preschool. We are also fortunate to have the W.I.T.S. bus available. Although we are not affiliated with them, we do try to work together to provide the best care for your child (including sharing a copy of your child's emergency card.) You may reach WITS by calling their bus garage at 386-2416.

What if the teachers don't have an answer?

The teachers have many resources available to assist them. We collaborate with the Prairie Lakes Area Education Agency, the Family Resource Center, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, our child care nurse consultant, the Department of Human Services' child care licensing consultant, Greene County Public Health nurses, Partnerships 4 Families, the Jefferson-Scranton School District, as well as instructors we have had. If they are unable to assist us, they have additional resources they are willing to share with us.

Daily Schedule

Teachers' planning/preparation time

9:00 Arrival - Teachers greet each student.

9:00 Outdoor or gym choice time - We play outside (if weather conditions allow) to swing, climb, slide, pretend, play with balls and socialize. On inclement weather days, we will utilize the gym for large motor activities such as music and movement, parachute play, or balls. Not only do physical activities help your child's health, but new brain research shows it is needed to wake up the brain for learning!

9:30 Group meeting - We continue our day with a good morning song, attendance and the calendar. We may read a Big Book. We may introduce a new game or materials.

9:40 Restroom reminder and wash hands - Children are allowed to use the restroom at any time, but before washing hands is a good time to remind them.

9:50 Snack - We sit down at the tables together to enjoy snack. This is a social time of the day as the children enjoy visiting back and forth.

10:05 Choice time and small groups - Children learn through play. We currently have 9 interest areas: blocks, pretend, toys & games, art, library, discovery, sand or water table, music, and a computer. During this time, the teachers will be working on skills individually or with small groups of children. Show and tell will also occur with a teacher and interested children.

11:05 Clean up - As music is played the children put away the toys and materials. We always have great helpers!

11:10 Group meeting - We will sing some favorite or new songs. We gather one last time to review our day and talk about the next preschool day.

11:20 Closing and departure - We encourage the children to put on their own coats and fasten them as we prepare to go home.

Teachers' planning and reflection

PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

Monday, September 10	First Day of Preschool
Monday, October 15	No School- In-service
Wednesday, October 24	Class Pictures, MWF class
Thursday, October 25	Class Pictures, TR class
Tuesday, October 30	TR Class Party
Wednesday, October 31	MWF Class Party
Monday, November 12	MWF Parent Date Night 6-7 pm
Tuesday, November 13	TR Parent Date Night 6-7 pm
Wednesday, November 21	No School-Thanksgiving
Thursday, November 22	No School-Thanksgiving
Friday, November 23	No School-Thanksgiving
Thursday, December 20	TR Class Christmas Party
Friday, December 21	MWF Class Christmas Party
December 24 - January 2	No school - Winter Break
Monday, January 14	No school - Teacher Work Day
Monday, February 4	No school, Work Day/In-service
Wednesday, February 13	MWF Class Valentine Party
Thursday, February 14	TR Class Valentine Party
Monday, February 18	No School - President's Day
Friday, March 21	No School - Good Friday
Monday, March 24	No School - Spring Break
Tuesday, March 25	No school - Spring Break
Thursday, April 10	No Preschool - Kindergarten Registration
Friday, April 11	No Preschool - Kindergarten Registration
TBA	Hearing Screenings
Friday, April 25 & May 2	Conferences in the afternoons and evenings
Monday, May 5	MWF Family Party 6 pm
Tuesday, May 6	TR Family Party 6 pm
(Wednesday, May 7	Kindergarten Health Clinic @ Jefferson Elementary)

May 8 or 9 is the last day of preschool.

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Child's name: _____

I certify that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook for Pied Pipers Preschool. I have read and understand the policies included in this handbook.

Signature of parent or guardian