

# Hudson Community School District's



## Preschool Family Handbook 2017-2018

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July 2017

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 development 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 much-valued 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 K-12 student 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 with you, 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)

Sara Cartney  
(Preschool Teacher)

## Core Purpose

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

## Vision

The Hudson Preschool program/classes 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
- Provide a high-quality education using the Creative Curriculum framework and following the Iowa Quality Preschool Program standards
- Provide strength-based learning opportunities
- Use developmentally appropriate learning experiences
- Focus on developing the whole child
- Encourage home/school/community partnerships

## Goals and Philosophy

The Hudson Community School District's preschool program is developmental. Our purpose 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 growth and development. Each child's readiness and developmental level will differ from others. Therefore, we want to provide a solid foundation on which to your child's school success can be built upon in later grades.

The following are the major areas of focus in 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 responsibilities of planning, preparing for and cleaning up after activities. They will also have opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperation, helping, and negotiating.
- **Self Respect** - 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 pass those same qualities towards 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.
- **Cognitive Learning** - 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. Learning about literacy, math, science, and social studies, are all integrated through meaningful, hands on activities.
- **Life Experiences** - Activities such as field trips, science investigations, and cooking will take place throughout the year to help bring meaning to the many different life experiences a child performs/views everyday.
- **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 physical skills.

Our preschool program is play-oriented and implements the Creative Curriculum framework. What looks like play to an adult is actually the work of childhood. Therefore while playing, we believe children are developing an understanding of their world. It is our purpose to provide stimulating, exciting, and worthwhile experiences in order to take advantage of this period of tremendous growth, desire, and willingness in your child. We want to dig into a child's natural

curiosity and desire to make sense of their world as a means of motivating them to become involved in learning activities and opportunities. We feel it is our role is to provide meaningful learning opportunities which will observe, support, and guide children along their way.

### **Program Requirements**

The District Fire Marshal inspects our school each year. These inspections guarantee to you as parents that this preschool meets state standards for health and safety. Along with these inspections, our preschool students will participate in regular emergency drills. These drills will allow our children to be prepared in the event of a fire, tornado and/or a intruder.

The preschool is also in the verification process for Quality Preschool Programming Standards as one of the three program standards which must be met under the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant.

It is necessary to make you aware that, as required by the Code of Iowa 235A, “certified school employees, employees of a licensed daycare facility” are considered mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse. It is the responsibility of the Human Services Department to make any further investigation should such a situation arise.

An adult to student ratio of 1:10 will be maintained with a class/session size being limited to 20 students. A certified teacher and a certified paraeducator will be placed in the preschool to fulfill this mandate.

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

### **Admission Policies**

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 (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. 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@hudsonpiratepride.com](mailto:jeffbell@hudsonpiratepride.com) The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity

To comply with Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, it is necessary for parents to provide the preschool with:

- a 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.

### **Student Accessibility**

Children with any level of physical ability are welcomed at our preschool. In cases where it may be difficult for a child to access an area due to the physical layout of the building, the staff will manually assist the child in order to enter the desired area. The preschool teachers will discuss this assistance plan with the caretakers of the child.

### **Toilet Training**

It is the strong preference/expectation of Hudson Community Preschool that 4-year old children who attend preschool are toilet trained. For a safe and effective learning environment, the teacher and/or para cannot 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.

### **Grievance Policy**

In the event of a complaint against the preschool teacher or preschool paraeducator, 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).

### **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 12:15 to 3:15. 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.

### **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.

### **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/ para educator 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/para educator is ready to hand off their child. For those students using school transportation, the teacher/para educator will walk the students out to the bus.
- **12:15 - 3:15 class** - Prior to the 12:15 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/ para educator 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 (3:15). For those students using school transportation, the teacher/para educator 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 (3:15) 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.

\*\*\* Again, students riding the busses home must be met at their drop off spots!

### **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 7:45 - 8:00.

### **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 dismisses early due to the weather, preschool students will be dismissed with the rest of the K-12 students. Days missed due to inclement weather will be made up at a later date if possible.

### **Health/Immunizations 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

### **Health 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. We do not have the staff or facilities to care for a child if they are too ill to participate in regular activities. Please remember if your child is too sick to go outside, they are too sick to be at the center. 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

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.

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, the student shall not attend 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 strep throat or chickenpox, a note will be sent home with your child.

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.

### **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.

### **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.

If you are concerned about sun exposure to your child please apply sunscreen prior to your child's arrival at school. If bug spray is recommended by the Department of Public Health, parents should apply only insect repellent with DEET to be used up to 1 time per day following the rules of medication administration. Sunscreen and insect repellent will not be applied by any staff at preschool.

### **Snacks**

Each day the children will share a snack and juice or milk during their preschool class time. We are asking 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 do not send sweets except for birthday treats and those should be individually wrapped to send home. The drink needs to be 100% juice (no products labeled ades, beverages, or drinks) or white milk. IQPPS Health Standard 5 includes guidelines set by the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program require that only 100% juice or milk and nutritious snacks be served to the children, even if provided by the parents. Please do not send juice boxes or fruit snacks/fruit roll ups. Foods must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. Some possible snack suggestions are listed below, but use your imagination too. One of our goals is to have the children try new things and let eating be an adventure.

Snack suggestions:

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

Items that do not meet CACFP guidelines and should not be sent . These items include: graham crackers, vanilla wafers, animal crackers, cereal bars, granola bars, Rice Krispie treats, fruit snacks, pudding, and chocolate/strawberry milk.

### **Parent Involvement/Access Policy**

Parent participation in the preschool is welcomed and encouraged. If you would like to donate your time or talents, we ask you to contact the preschool teacher and set up a time to come visit your child's classroom. For a variety of reasons, drop-in visits are discouraged as they tend to disrupt the learning environment both for your child and the other students as well. Therefore, we encourage you to look for ways to be involved in your child's education and then coordinate them with the preschool teacher. This will go along way in building/strengthening the home-school partnership.

Depending on family/personal circumstances, access to the preschool classrooms and students may be restricted. People without permission to be on site will be contacted by a staff member and the intruder policy will be followed if necessary. Any person convicted of a sex offense against a minor are required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry may only be on the premises if they have followed the proper procedures.

### **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/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.

### **Cum Folders**

All preschool students will have their personal information filed in a cum folder which will be filed in a locked file in the elementary office. Parents wishing to access this information need to stop in the elementary office and follow the established procedures for accessing a child's cum folders.

### **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.

### **Discipline Policy**

Establishing a safe learning environment is vital for a successful learning experience for the preschooler. With that in mind, we use positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirection, and setting clear limits as we set our preschool classroom behavioral expectations.

If inappropriate behaviors exist, a variety of classroom management strategies will be tried. If these strategies don't change the child's behaviors, a conference will be held with the parents with the goal of brainstorming and partnering with each other as we work to control the behaviors that are disrupting the classroom's learning environment and preventing the child from being as successful as they can with the school environment.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Supplies**

A list of supplies that a preschooler should bring with them will be provided to students during registration. If additional supplies are needed, the teacher will communicate with parents to let them know what is needed and when it is needed.

### **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.

### **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)

### **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.