

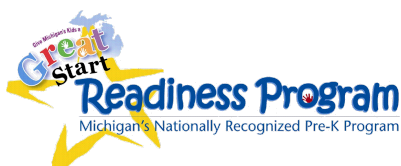


**WHITMORE LAKE
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS:
Head Start & GSRP**

**PROGRAM HANDBOOK
2023**

**8845 Main Street
Whitmore Lake, MI 48189
(734) 449-4464 ext. 4001/4002**

***“Partnering with students, parents, and the
community to provide exceptional,
personalized education.”***



Handbook Table of Contents

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Page Number</i>
Whitmore Lake Vision, Mission & Guiding Principles	3
Early Childhood Staff Directory	4
Program Information	5 & 6
Preschool Program Initiatives	6 & 7
Children are Individuals!	7 & 8
Developmental Screenings	8
Drop-Off & Pick-Up Guidelines	8, 9 & 10
Attendance Policy	10
Pedestrian Safety	11
High Scope Curriculum	11 & 12
Daily Routine	12 & 13
Classroom Activities	13, 14 & 15
Outdoor & Gym Time	15
Program Meals	15 & 16
Dressing Children for School	16
Procedures for Handling Parent Complaints	16
Parent Involvement	17
Family Volunteers	18
Field Trips	18
Yearly Calendar & Events	18
Admission to the Program- Required Forms	19
Withdrawal Policy	19
Communication	19 & 20
Medication Policy	20
Health Concern	20 & 21
Child Abuse and Neglect	22
Confidentiality	22
Discipline Policy	22
Seclusion and Restraint	22
Program Expectations	23
Articles Prohibited in School	23
Preschool Staff Requirements	23
Early Dismissal and School Closings	24
Fire Drills/Severe Weather Drills	24
A note from the Early Childhood Staff	24
Supervision of Children	24
Pesticide Policy	25
“What’s in your backpack?”	26
Transportation & Pedestrian Safety Handout	
School Calendar for GSRP and Head Start	



WHITMORE LAKE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

1077 Barker Rd., Whitmore Lake, MI 48189
Phone: 734.449.2051 ext. 4001 | Fax: 734.449.9376
www.wlps.net Exceptional, Personalized Education

Director Sue Wanamaker | Superintendent Tom DeKeyser

The Whitmore Lake Early Childhood Programs are supported by the Board of Education as part of our district's commitment to providing high quality educational services to children and families of Whitmore Lake.

Vision Statement

Providing each individual the inspiration to dream and the skills to succeed.

Mission Statement

Partnering with students, parents, and the community to provide *exceptional, personalized education*.

Guiding Principles

Integrity, Diversity, Innovation, Respect,
Stewardship, Leadership, Citizenship

Whitmore Lake Early Childhood Center Staff Directory

734-449-4464

Attendance Call-In (*Before 9:00 AM*): 734-449-4715 ext. 7439

Director, Early Childhood

Sue Wanamaker Ext. 4002 sue.wanamaker@wlps.net

Family Service Worker

Charlie Basham Ext. 4001 charlie.basham@wlps.net

Teachers:

Katie Coppel, ECSE Ext. 1016
Kirstyn Love, GSRP Ext. 4005 kirstyn.love@wlps.net
Abbey Adams, Head Start Ext. 4003 abbey.adams@wlps.net
Shannon Morton, Enrichment Tuition Ext. 1013 shannon.morton@wlps.net
Hillary McGraw, Enrichment Tuition Ext. 1014 hillary.mcgraw@wlps.net

Assistant Teachers

Denise Smith, ECSE Ext. 1016 denise.smith@wlps.net
Brooke Collick, GSRP Ext. 4005 brooke.collick@wlps.net
LaNanda Cook, Enrichment Tuition Ext. 4003 lananda.cook@wlps.net
Stephanie Wilson, Head Start Ext. 4003 stephanie.wilson@wlps.net
Cassie Villarreal, GSRP Ext. 4005 cassie.villarreal@wlps.net
Chrystal Villarreal, Enrichment Tuition Ext. 1013 chrystal.villarreal@wlps.net
Michele Johns , Head Start Ext. 4003 michele.johns@wlps.net

Kids Club

Melinda King, Elementary School Lead Child Care Worker
Direct line: 734-839-6311 Ext. 1032 melinda.king@wlps.net
LaNanda Cook, Child Care Worker Ext. 1032 lananda.cook@wlps.net

Occupational Therapist

Mandy McClain Ext. 1724 mandy.mcclain@wlps.net

Physical Therapist

Sheryl Calder sheryl.calder@wlps.net

Social Worker

Amber Masterson Ext. 1424 amber.masterson@wlps.net

Speech Pathologist

Julia Newman, Elementary School Ext.1224 julia.newman@wlps.net
Rachel Shilling Ext. rachel.shilling@wlps.net

Program Information

Main Street Campus **8845 Main Street**

Sue Wanamaker, Director

Administration Office

Charlie Basham, Family Service Worker

Main Office

Main Street Campus

Abbey Adams, Michele Johns & Stephanie Wilson

Room D-162

Full Day Head Start: Monday-Thursday

8:15 AM - 3:30 PM

Kirstyn Love, Brooke Collick & Cassie Villarreal

Room D-160

Full Day GSRP: Monday-Thursday

8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Elementary School

Katie Coppel & Denise Smith

Room A-16

Half Day ECSE: Monday-Thursday

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Shannon Morton & Chrystal Villarreal

Room A-13

Full Day Enrichment Tuition Programs: Monday-Thursday 7:45 AM-3:15 PM

Hillary McGraw & LaNanda Cook

Room A-14

Half Day Enrichment Tuition Program: Monday-Thursday 8:00 AM-11:45 AM

Melinda King & LaNanda Cook

Cafeteria

Kids Club: Monday-Friday

6:00 AM-8:45 AM & 2:30 PM-6:00 PM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Head Start Program



Whitmore Lake Head Start is a federally funded free preschool delegate program that is part of the Washtenaw County Intermediate School District, our grantee/grant holder. We accept funds from Health and Human Services and by accepting these funds we commit to follow all rules and regulations set by the established criteria for this funding source. We agree to meet and exceed all performance standards established by the Head Start program. The program serves children of low-income families, foster children, children in temporary living situations and children with special needs who are 3 or 4 years of age by December 1st.

The program offers a full day, four days per week: Monday-Thursday for seven hours and fifteen minutes each day for 1020 hours. Snow days will be made up within a few weeks of each occurrence as required.



GSRP Program

Whitmore Lake GSRP preschool is a state funded free preschool program for 4 year old children by December 1st. The program is part of the Washtenaw County Intermediate School District, our grantee/grant holder. This state funded program serves children with risk factors for learning with specific income guidelines that must be met.

The program offers a full day, four days per week: Monday-Thursday for seven hours each day for at least 123 days.

Preschool Program Initiatives

Whitmore Lake Early Childhood preschool programs provide children with developmentally appropriate experiences as they learn through their play using the High Scope Curriculum approach. Children learn about the world around them as they explore the early childhood environment rich with experiences in math, science, language, literacy, music, and art while developing their fine and gross motor skills. Children learn social-emotional skills as they interact with others during group times, individual play times and experiences with other children and adults. We encourage the development of self-help skills through simple everyday tasks such as caring for their own personal items.

The Early Childhood Center offers outdoor and indoor play areas and an abundance of space for special program events and center wide experiences.

For families, the Early Childhood Center offers volunteer opportunities, involvement in decision making, parent meetings, trainings and workshops, resources and much more!

The Early Childhood Center:

- Acknowledges that the family is the child's primary educator.
- Is designed to assist families in taking an active part in their child's education.
- Offers families opportunities to learn new skills and build on existing skills.
- Offers opportunities for families to meet new people, learn more about the program, and make decisions about their child's education.
- Involves families in the program through parent meetings, policy meetings, and center events and volunteering.

The Family Service Worker is involved with families by:

- Recruiting and enrolling families.
- Being available to families to assist in creating family goals, providing community connections and resources, and by providing assistance where needed.
- Ensuring program attendance of children.
- Assisting with meetings, trainings, and events.
- Assisting families in meeting their child's health, dental health, mental health, and nutritional needs.

Educational Services:

- Helping children to help themselves, develop independence, and to acquire skills for success.
- Providing individualized education for each child.
- Ensuring each child with special needs receives appropriate services (i.e. speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and social work services).

Children are Individuals!

All children will be observed in the classroom setting and assessed in all developmental areas using the *Ages and Stages and DECA Screening Tools* and through the use of the *COR* online assessment tool. These assessments and continual observations assist in planning for each child's individual needs and skills. The focus is on strengths and areas that need more focused attention.

If staff have any concerns about your child they will meet with you and discuss these concerns. If more screenings and/or testing is needed, written consent will be obtained from the parent/guardian before screenings or additional testing occur.

Children's individual needs will be met in small and large groups, through individual instruction, and throughout the daily routine.

In order to meet the individual needs of the children, and to meet the State of Michigan licensing and grant requirements, the classroom is staffed with a qualified teacher and two teacher assistant teachers in GSRP and Head Start. ECSE and Enrichment tuition preschool are staffed with one teacher and one assistant in each classroom.

Children are Individuals *continued*

Family volunteers are always welcome and needed to work with the children and staff in the classroom after a background check is completed through our administration office. Please check with your child's teacher to see when volunteering is possible. We welcome you to assist in other ways as well and will send invitations for special events and programs.

Please check with your child's teacher to schedule your volunteering opportunity. We welcome you to assist outside the classroom as well.

Developmental Screenings

All children will be observed on home visits and/or in the classroom setting and assessed in all developmental areas using the *Ages and Stages and DECA Screening Tools* and through the use of the *COR* online assessment tool. These tools focus on strengths and areas that need more focused attention.

- The **Ages and Stages** Developmental screening tool will be completed with staff and parents before school starts and/or during the first few weeks of school. This tool highlights a child's skills in the areas of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social development.
- The **DECA** social emotional screening tool will be completed after 30 days of school by the staff with parent input. This tool looks at all aspects of a child's social emotional health, focusing on developing healthy relationships, learning to regulate emotions and showing initiative.
- The **COR** assessment tool focuses on all areas of a child's development. Children are assessed three times per year in the areas listed below:
Approaches to Learning Social and Emotional Development
Physical Development and Health Creative Arts Social Studies
Language, Literacy, and Communication Mathematics Science and Technology

The outcomes of these assessments assist teachers with planning and guiding lessons for individual children and the class as a whole. Outcomes will be communicated with parents.

Drop Off and Pick Up Instructions

Teachers will be at the front doors to receive your child when your class time starts. Parents will not be walking their children into school, staff will gather all the children and take them to their lockers and to their classroom. Please follow the procedures below to ensure your child has a safe and responsible experience as they enter the school building and as they leave from the school day.

Please do not arrive too early as we have classes starting at 8:00 AM and 8:15 AM and parents dropping off their children for the Go Like the Wind (GLTW) child care programs. Children are also departing at 3:00 PM and 3:30 PM as well as children from GLTW. We want to ensure that all families can get their children to and from the school safely.

Drop-Off Procedures: When facing the building, park along the curb in the parking lot, or in the actual parking lot, on the far left of the front of the building. Curb parking is only for quick drop off and pick up. If you are entering the building for any other reason, please park in the parking lot.

- Please do not gather at the school doors.
- Please wait in your car until your child's scheduled start time.
- Have your child ready to leave the car with their backpack and rest time bag.
- Your child's teachers will open the door and walk out to greet you and your child and take your child inside the building.
- Do not allow children to run towards the teachers or school doors.
- Hold your child's hand in the parking lot area until they are safely with your child's teacher.
- After you have handed your child off to the teacher, say goodbyes to your child and the teacher will take your child into the school where the assistant teacher is waiting. Ms. Charlie and Ms. Sue may also be assisting.
- After all the class has arrived, the children will walk down to their classroom with their teachers.
- Children will put their own belongings in their locker, with assistance from staff, so it's a good idea to have them practice at home how to put on and take off their coats, boots, etc.
- If you are late for drop off, please park in the front parking lot. You will need to ring the doorbell, state the program your child is in and the teacher's name. The office staff will call the classroom and a staff member will come and take your child to class.

Pick-Up Procedures: Parking is the same as with drop off.

- Please do not gather at the school doors.
- Please wait in your car until your child's end time and you see your child's teacher at the door.
- Your child's teacher will hand your child off to an authorized adult.
- Children will walk from the school to their waiting family.
- If you are picking up early, please let your child's teacher know ahead of time and/or call Charlie at Ext. 4001. This way we can have your child ready for you.

Additional Drop-Off & Pick-Up Guidelines:

- Parking is allowed in parking lots only. Please turn off your car for safety reasons.
- **Children are not to be left unattended in cars or in the parking lot area.**
- When bringing your children to school, and picking them up, please park in the parking lot only. **No curbside parking.**
- **For the safety of all the children and families in the building:** Staff will always escort your children to and from the school doors. Adults will not be allowed into the building unless they are a pre approved visitor.
- If another adult is picking up your child please inform the staff. **Children will only be released to adults who have been authorized on the child's emergency form. Identification will be required.**

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE LINE: 734-449-4715 ext. 7439

Children are expected to be at school on time each day class is in session. Children learn better when they are able to follow a routine; missing multiple days or excessive tardiness/leaving early has a negative effect on the children and is disruptive to the class.

Head Start and GSRP Program requirements state that a child's absence rate should be less than 10%. Children with excessive absences, over 10%, may be dropped from the program. The program must have a monthly attendance percentage of at least 85%. If this is not met, the program could lose funding, or possibly be closed. It is extremely important that children are here on a regular basis.

Head Start and GSRP programs have a specific attendance policy. You will receive this at your child's home visit, at orientation and/or in your child's backpack. Please sign the attendance agreement and return to your child's teacher. The following attendance policy outlines the expectations for student attendance for the Head Start and GSRP programs.

- Student absences must be called into the attendance line no later than 9:00 am. This is when lunch and snack counts will be given to the kitchen. The Family Service Worker or the teacher will be calling by 9:30 am if you have not called the attendance line or let your teacher know your child will be absent.
- All absences must be reported. Unreported student absences will be marked unexcused.
- A student will be marked tardy if s/he arrives after the class has entered the classroom. Students who are picked up before the class has been brought down to the gathering area will be marked as early pick-up. Students who arrive after the classes have left the school doors will be considered tardy.
- Daily attendance will be recorded in the classroom and reported to the office. The Family Service Worker will contact families that are deemed to have problems keeping regular attendance

(including late arrivals and early pick-ups). A Family Partnership or other agreement may be required to keep the student enrolled in the program.

- If it is determined that a child cannot keep regular attendance, s/he may be dropped from his/her program. A child that is dropped from his/her program will be placed on a wait-list until such time that s/he can attend school on a regular basis and when an opening becomes available.

Pedestrian Safety

You can help us keep your child safe by teaching them some simple traffic safety rules.

- Do not let your child walk in a parking lot without holding your hand.
- Supervise your child at all times.
- Children should not be allowed to cross the street alone.
- Use sidewalks whenever possible.
- Teach them who can help them cross the street safely.
- Teach by example. When you cross a street with your child, always:
 - Stop at the curb or edge of a parked car.
 - Look left-right-left for traffic in all directions.
 - Cross only when clear.
 - Keep looking for cars as you cross.
 - Obey traffic signals.
 - Praise your child for copying your safe actions or words.
- If you must walk along the roadway, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.

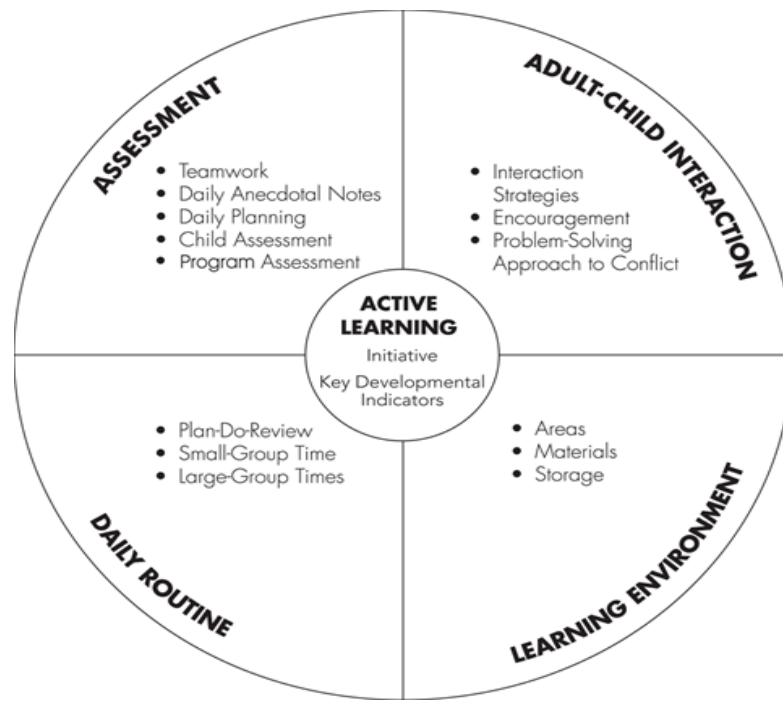
Review training handout at the end of the handbook.

Early Childhood High Scope Curriculum

A comprehensive, research-based curriculum carefully designed to provide a rich academic foundation and foster child creativity, confidence, and independence.

Learn more at HighScope.org

The HighScope Preschool Wheel of Learning



The Developmentally Appropriate Classroom

Our classroom is set up for learning. Children have many opportunities to make choices, come up with ideas, experiment, and take responsibility for their work. Here's what you'll see when you visit.

- Materials are on low shelves in containers and on hooks so children can get them independently and put them away.
- Shelves are neat and uncluttered so materials are easy to see, remove, and replace.
- Picture and word labels are on containers and shelves so children know where materials belong and learn to use print.
- There are distinct interest areas--blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, discovery, library, sand and water, music and movement, cooking, and different play spaces outdoors--so children know what choices are available and make decisions.
- A variety of learning materials are in each area so that no matter where children choose to play, they learn.
- Similar materials are grouped together to teach children to sort and classify--skills that are important to understanding and solving math problems.

High Scope Preschool Daily Routine Components

- Greeting time (variable)
- Planning time (10-15 minutes)
- Work time (45-60 minutes)
- Cleanup time (10 minutes)
- Recall time (10-15 minutes)
- Large group time (10-15 minutes)
- Small group time (15-20 minutes)
- Outside time (30-40 minutes)
- Transition time, including arrival and departure (variable)
- Eating and resting times (variable)

(pg. 56-Essentials of Active Learning in Preschool)

A Framework for the Day's Events That Supports Children's Security and Independence

Following a consistent routine day after day gives children the sense of security they need to make choices and take risks, which opens the door to exciting learning opportunities.

Each HighScope program decides on the daily routine that works best for its setting, schedule, and population. The following components are always included in the routine, although the length and order of the segments vary from program to program. A sample of half-day and full-day schedules are also included.

Daily Routine Components

Plan-do-review sequence (planning time, work time, recall time) — This three-part sequence is unique to the HighScope Curriculum. It includes a 10- to 15-minute period during which children plan what they want to do during work time (the area to visit, materials to use, and friends to play with); a 40- to 60-minute work time minimum for children to carry out their plans (or shift to new activities that interest them); and another 10- to 15-minute period for reviewing and recalling with an adult and other children what they've done and learned.

Small-group time — During this time, a small group of children meet with an adult to experiment with materials, try out new skills, and solve problems. Adults develop a small-group activity based on children's interests and particular skills, materials, or content areas that suit children's developmental learning needs. Though the adult plans the activity and sets it in motion, children make choices about how to use the materials and freely communicate their ideas.

Large-group time — Large-group time builds a sense of community. Up to 20 children and two adults come together for movement and music activities, interactive storytelling, and other shared experiences. Children have many opportunities to make choices and play the role of leader.

Outside time — Children and adults spend at least 30 minutes outside every day, enjoying vigorous and often noisy play in the fresh air.

Transition times — Transitions are the minutes between other blocks of the day, as well as arrival and departure times. Teachers plan meaningful learning experiences for these times, which keeps children engaged and minimizes disruption.

Eating and resting times (if applicable) — Meals and snacks allow children to enjoy eating healthy food in a supportive social setting. Rest is for napping or quiet, solitary activities. Since both activities happen at home as well as at school, adults in HighScope programs try to respect family customs at these times as much as possible.

Adult team planning time — The teaching team meets to discuss their observations of children’s developing abilities and interests, focusing on these observations as they plan activities and review the materials in the classroom. It can occur during children’s nap time, before children arrive, or after they leave.

Classroom Activities

When you visit your child's classroom, you see a room full of children playing. You may wonder what we are doing to help children learn. As children play, we watch how they use materials. We listen. We talk with them to find out what they are thinking and trying to do.

We help children become aware of their actions, offer suggestions, and think about what materials to offer next. Then we challenge them to think further. This is how we encourage the development of skills children will need in elementary school.

Here are a few examples of what children are learning:

	When children do this:	They are learning to:
Blocks	Use blocks and wooden people to create rooms in their home Make bridges for cars	Make maps of their world (social studies, math) Use shapes to build (math) Plan ahead (study skills) Recreate structures they've seen (geography, problem solving)
Dramatic Play	Use a stethoscope to examine a doll and write a prescription Pretend to be a firefighter	Pretend with objects (abstract thinking) Write for a purpose (literacy) Recall what they know about workers in their community (social studies) Act out roles (the arts)
Games and Toys	Finish a puzzle Group pictures that are the same	Complete a task (study habits, self-confidence) Learn about the alphabet (literacy)

		Match and classify (math)
Art	Gather paper, scissors, and glue for a project Draw a picture of their family	Plan and carry out a task (study habits, independence) Use symbols to represent their ideas (literacy) Gain an understanding of what "family" means (social studies)
Science	Plant seeds and measure each plant's growth Use eye droppers to add colors to containers of water	Measurement (math) Plant life cycle (science) Mixing colors (science) Small muscle development (writing)
Library	Scribble on paper using some letters and tell what the scribble says Listen to a story and talk about what happened	Use writing as a way to communicate (literacy) Make a connection between letters and the sounds they make (literacy) Love books, remember details, and express ideas (language development, literacy)
	When children do this:	They are learning to:
Music and Movement	Sing or do a finger play with other children and the teacher Create different sounds by putting more (or fewer) items in cans and shaking them	Participate cooperatively in a group (social skills) Recognize rhymes (phonological awareness, listening) Explore cause and effect (science, logical thinking)
Cooking	Follow directions in a recipe that calls for adding ingredients by teaspoons, cups, etc. Watch bread dough rise or melt butter	Understand measurement (math) Read a recipe (literacy) Understand that foods can change their physical states (science)

Outdoor Time and Gym

The time children spend outdoors every day is just as important to their learning as the time they spend in the classroom. Children will also have the gym available each day so on bad weather days they can also have physical exercise.

Large muscle activities are essential for children's health and well-being. Children need time each day to run, leap, hop, jump, slide, climb, and throw and catch a ball. These activities build strong muscles and a sense of pride. Brain research shows that physical activity actually wakes up the brain for learning. Playing with others also helps them to learn social skills and how to get along with others.

The outdoors greatly increases our learning environment which is a natural setting for scientific investigations. Children find and study bugs and butterflies, plant seeds and watch them grow, and compare the feel of the bark on different trees. In some climates they notice the leaves change color and fall to the ground and learn about ice and snow. We talk with children about their discoveries and encourage them to continue investigating what they find outdoors.

Program Meals

This is a **peanut free** program.
Please note that the rest of the building is **NOT** peanut free.

Importance of Mealtime

- Meal time is an important part of our early childhood preschool day. Meals encourage socialization, choices, speech and language skill development, and sensory integration.
- Children will have days when they will prepare their own healthy snacks, taste new foods and practice good nutritional habits.

Head Start & GSRP Meals

- All meals, breakfast, lunch and snack, in GSRP and Head Start are served family-style, where children will learn to serve their own meals and pour their own liquids. Adults assist as needed.

Head Start & GSRP Meals *continued*

- Daily meals meet 1/3 of the child's nutritional requirements.
- We provide nutritious foods that are low in sugar and fat and good for healthy teeth.
- The focus on good nutrition helps support the dental health plan of our program as well as guide children on their way to learning healthy eating habits.
- Quantities and kinds of foods served must conform to recommended serving sizes and minimum standards for meal patterns recommended in USDA meal patterns as mandated by the CACFP food program.
- Water will be available to children at all times during the school day.

Dressing Children for School

Children will be active during the day and involved in messy activities. Please dress your children so they will be comfortable and so you are not worried about ruining what they are wearing.

Children need to wear play clothes and rubber soled shoes. No open toed shoes, crocs or flip flops please. Children will be walking down the hall and climbing on play equipment and rubber soled shoes work best for these activities.

Children will also be sitting on the floor, climbing and jumping. If girls wear dresses, shorts or tights are best underneath.

We will be going outside often so please dress your child in clothing for the weather. In the winter, children will need a warm coat, snow pants, boots, gloves and a hat daily. Please be sure your child has shoes to wear inside when you bring them to school in boots. Please put your child's name on all items.

It is always a good idea to be prepared. Please bring several extra sets of clothes and shoes to leave at school in your child's locker. Please put your child's name on all their clothing, with a permanent marker. Extra boots, snow pants, gloves and hats can also be left at school.

If you are in need of winter clothing please let your child's teacher know.

Procedures for Handling Parent Complaints

If you have a complaint or concern about the ECC staff, educational programs, or policies and procedures, please refer to the parent complaint process provided on the district's website under school board policies. This process is condensed below:

- Your concerns can be addressed with the classroom staff, the Family Service Worker, the Early Childhood Director and/or at the monthly parent meetings.
- It is always best to express your concerns with the person closest to the situation you are concerned about (classroom teacher for classroom concerns; Early Childhood Director for program policies, procedures, and funding requirements).
- Unresolved concerns can be brought to the Parent Committee to review the concern.

Parent Involvement

Family volunteers are always welcome and needed to work with the children and staff in the classroom after a background check is completed through our administration office. Please check with your child's teacher to see when volunteering is possible. We welcome you to assist in other ways as well and will send invitations for special events and programs.

Parent Meetings

As an ECC family, your involvement in the family meetings, policy committee, and the policy council meetings assures our program meets the Head Start standards for quality and assists us in making decisions about programming. All ECC families are invited and encouraged to attend.

Policy Committee Meetings

The policy committee works with Head Start staff, the community and school districts to ensure that families have an opportunity to be involved in shared decision making in regards to Head Start program operations.

- Consists of parents/guardians in the current Head Start program, community representatives, school board representative, and Head Start staff.
- The committee elects a chairperson, secretary, and representatives to attend the policy council monthly meetings.
- The committee meets monthly in the ECC building. A flier will be sent home with more information.

Head Start Policy Council Meetings

Washtenaw County Intermediate School District Head Start policy council is made up of families from all the Washtenaw County Head Start programs.

The Whitmore Lake Head Start program must have a parent attend these monthly meetings.

Policy Council:

Meets monthly at a designated place in the county. A stipend is provided.
 Makes important decisions about the program using family input.
 Discusses issues, concerns, and needs of the entire Head Start grantee.
 Approves/disapproves the Head Start budget, service plans, program operations, and many other important functions.

Family Volunteers

- We welcome, appreciate and encourage family volunteers in the classroom and in the center. **We need your help!**
- As a volunteer you will have the opportunity to observe your child with other children their age, get to know their friends and families, interact with the teachers and staff and have an opportunity to see how the classroom works.
- When you come into the building for special programs and volunteering, you will need to sign in at the main office and obtain a name tag/volunteer badge. **(Please sign in any children, no matter what age, when you sign in.)** You must sign out in the main office as well.
- Unfortunately we cannot accommodate siblings in the classroom when you volunteer.
- A staff member will always be present with a family volunteer. Volunteers will not be left alone with a child other than their own. All volunteers must have clearance through an annual background check before they volunteer with children.

Field Trips

- If funds are available, field trips are planned to enhance the preschool curriculum, to develop the children's interest in the world around them, and to provide them with new and exciting experiences.
- The teacher will communicate through written form the site, date, and volunteers that are needed for the field trip.
- Teachers may invite a special visitor that will provide an appropriate developmental experience for the children. These visitors will be chosen to enhance the children's learning. Examples of this would be a police officer, firefighter or librarian.
- If you have an idea or a connection with a community worker or an exciting in school visitor please let us know.

Yearly Calendar and Events

Parent and child orientation is scheduled in the fall before school starts and when new children are enrolled during the school year. This is a time for the children to visit the classroom and school play areas, while parents meet with the Director and Family Service Worker to talk about school policies and procedures and what to expect from the early childhood programs.

The Whitmore Lake Early Childhood Center follows the calendar of the Whitmore Lake public schools unless stated differently on the annual ECC or monthly calendars.

All early childhood families are invited to elementary school events during the school year as scheduled on the calendar. These events will be interactive and hands-on experiences for children and their families. The ECC will also provide school hands-on experiences such as the farm visit, puppet show, wild animal presentations, etc. as funds are available. Newsletters and notes will be sent home and/or emailed providing the date and time for these activities.

Admission to the Program

Children must be in the potty training process in order to attend preschool unless they have health needs. Teachers will work with families to complete the process. It is important to remember that children who are potty trained may have accidents at school due to the new environment, too busy to stop their play and/or illness. Please discuss any concerns you may have with the Early Childhood Director or your child's teacher. All children need an extra set of clothing in case they have an accident.

All forms and information necessary for each child's file must be completed before the first day of school. Registration forms and information may be obtained from the Early Childhood Office.

Required Forms

- Copy of the child's birth certificate
- Proof of residency (Head Start, GSRP & ECSE only)
- School physical, signed by a physician, to be kept on file at the school. (Due within 30 days of the first day of school. Must be updated every year for Head Start and every two years for GSRP and Tuition programs.)
- Dental form, signed and dated by the child's dentist. (Head Start only)
- An emergency card must be filled out completely and kept up-to-date in the preschool classroom. **Children will not be released to any person that is not listed on the emergency**

card or to anyone who is under 18 years of age. Staff is required to ask for identification before releasing a child to an adult they do not know

- Free lunch program form (GSRP programs only)
- All registration forms as required and available through *Script* and any additional forms as determined by the program.

Withdrawal Policy

When withdrawal is necessary, parents must contact the Early Childhood Director or Family Service Worker as soon as possible. We have children on our waitlists and need to fill open slots as soon as possible.

Communication

- All staff welcome questions or concerns at any time. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher, the Director or our Family Service Worker, by email or phone. If they are not available please leave a non-urgent message and they will get back with you as soon as possible.
- Each child is assigned a mailbox where notes, schedules, calendars etc. are passed out to go home.
- District wide and community information will be available through PeachJar and the WLPS smartphone app and on the wlps.net website. Having difficulty navigating all these different places, let your child's teacher know.
- Your child will need a small backpack or bag with their name on it to hold all items from their mailbox. This will help to secure items in their own locker until they get home.

●

Communication *continued*

- Please limit their nap items to one small, soft and quiet item and a small blanket and a pillow.
- Each child will be assigned a locker that will hold backpacks, extra clothing and outdoor clothing.

Newsletter: The ECC Newsletter will be sent home and/or emailed at least monthly with important information, resources and calendar events.

Orientation will take place prior to school starting for families to go over the center handbook, to meet other families and to get acquainted with the staff and building.

Home Visits are required for Head Start and GSRP programs and will occur before the child begins school and again in February.

Conferences will take place in November and again in the spring. A time will be scheduled for you to meet.

We will also be communicating with families through phone calls, email, texts and weekly online storyboards and folders.

Medication Procedure

If a child is in need of medication during school hours, an Individual Health Service Plan (IHSP) is completed and kept on file.

- IHSP's are signed by the child's doctor, parent and staff.
- Copies of IHSP's are kept in the child's central file, in the child's classroom file, the locked medication drawer in the office, and the crisis box.
- Medication is kept either in the classroom in a locked cabinet, the refrigerator in the office, or the locked medication drawer in the office.
- When the child is in need of his/her medication, a staff member will dispense the medication either in the classroom or in the office, away from other children if at all possible.
- Whenever a medication is dispensed, it is documented on the child's Medication Log and signed by the staff member that dispensed the medication.
- Medication Logs are reviewed with parents and sent home on a monthly basis.
- All medication contains the original packaging, including doctor and prescription information.

Health Concerns

There are many other viruses/bacteria that children can pass from one to the other. In an effort to minimize the illness between children and their families, the following guidelines have been established to help parents make wise decisions regarding when to keep their child home, and to make them more comfortable in sending their child back to preschool. We will also call a parent/guardian if a child appears ill and/or contagious. We will send information home if it is a possibility that your child has been exposed to a contagious illness.

Health Concerns *continued*

If your child is ill, please call the attendance line and give your child's symptoms. We report some illnesses to the county health department.

Head Lice

If staff suspect that a child has head lice, the parent is called to immediately pick-up the child from school. An informational letter is sent home with the rest of the children in the class. Once the child has been treated for lice and there are no nits (eggs) she/he may return to school. At that time your child will need to be re-examined by a staff member.

The office can assist you with additional information.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye/inflammation of the eye)

Symptoms include pus and pinkness in the corner of the eye and itchy/watery eyes. Child needs to be seen by a physician before attending school.

Diarrhea

Please keep your child home if your child has had diarrhea the morning before school or continuously the night before school.

Cough

An occasional cough is not significant, but if your child is coughing enough for you to administer a cough suppressant or the cough interferes with their play please keep him/her at home as they will not have a productive day.

Fever

The most obvious reason to keep your child at home. Temperature greater than 100 F. (oral or rectal) is considered to be a fever. Twenty-four hours after the temperature has returned to normal, the child may return to preschool, provided the child feels well enough to attend.

Nasal Discharge

Color and amount are things to consider. Yellowish or green nasal discharge can be either of viral or bacterial origin; it is given more weight than clear, runny discharge and could be a warning that something else needs to be evaluated. The child should definitely be kept at home.

Rashes

If your child has an unexplained rash they need to stay home and be seen by a physician.

Vomiting

Please keep your child home if your child has been vomiting the morning before school or the night before school.

This information is not meant to take the place of advice from your doctor and is only given for informational purposes.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

All education staff are mandated reporters and are required, by law, to report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. It is not the job of the mandated reporter to determine whether the allegations are valid. If child abuse or neglect is reasonably suspected or if a child shares information with a mandated reporter leading him/her to believe abuse or neglect has taken place, the report must be made. No supervisor or administrator can impede or inhibit a report or subject the reporting person to any sanction.

Confidentiality

- Confidentiality of children and family information will be maintained at all times.
- Respect for privacy will be shown to everyone in the program.
- All children's files will be kept in locked cabinets.
- Only authorized personnel have access to the children's records.
- Any information shared about children and families in the program due to working or volunteering in the classroom will not be tolerated.
- Concerns about information can be discussed with the Early Childhood Director.
- Written consent will be obtained from a parent or guardian before any information is released to anyone.

Discipline Policy

Discipline methods are developmentally appropriate, positive methods of discipline which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.

Children will know and understand the classroom rules and expectations. Staff will enforce these rules by stating expectations and through redirection and consequences of behaviors such as leaving the area they are playing for a short period of time. Adults will encourage problem solving skills among the children.

Discipline in the classroom will not at any time be punitive, demeaning, threatening or derogatory to the child. Staff will not withhold food at any time for any reason. Children will not be restrained or secluded at any time.

Seclusion and Restraint

The school district strictly adheres to the law as described in MCL 380.1307-307h. The WLPS School Board adopts the State Board of Education policy approved by the State Board of Education in March of 2017 and directs all staff to comply with the policy. Physical seclusion and/or restraint shall not be used with preschool aged children as defined by law. The following actions are *prohibited in all situations*: Corporal punishment, deprivation of basic needs, child abuse, intentional application of noxious substance or stimulus resulting in physical pain or extreme discomfort, mechanical restraint, chemical restraint, any restraint that negatively impacts breathing, prone restraint, physical restraint other than emergency physical restraint, and seclusion

Program Expectations

1. Be kind and respectful with your language and your actions.
2. Keep our hands on your own body.
3. Use quiet voices inside.
4. Use walking feet.
5. Work and play safely.

Parents are their child's first teacher. Please help us to model these expectations for the children.

Articles Prohibited in School

Hard balls

Video game devices

Water pistols

Skate boards

Walkie-talkies

Weapons (toy, fake, or real)

***Personal toys need to be left at home unless it is a special day.**

Animals at School: In consideration for those who have allergies, and to help keep an orderly environment at school the procedures for bringing animals to school are:

1. Prior arrangement needs to be made with the classroom teacher who will receive approval from the Early Childhood Director.
2. The visit must be short - 30 minutes or less.
3. The animal must be on a leash or in a cage and under the control of an adult while on school grounds.

Please do not bring animals onto school grounds when dropping off or picking up children.

Preschool Staff Requirements

All staff are certified as required by the school district and program grants.

All staff have on file documentation from the Department of Human Services showing that he/she has not been placed on the central registry for substantial abuse or neglect as defined in Act # 238. All staff have also been fingerprinted and cleared of any crime convictions through the State police.

Teaching staff are trained and certified in CPR and First Aid, Child Abuse and Neglect, Blood Borne Pathogens, Seclusion and Restraint and any other requirement of the school district, county and/or state. They also attend trainings and workshops to better meet the needs of all children and to stay current in early childhood practices.

Early Dismissal and School Closings

The Whitmore Lake Early Childhood Center will be closed when Whitmore Lake Public Schools are closed. In the event that school is canceled due to snow, ice, or other emergencies, notification will be made on radio and television stations and through the school district alert system.

An alert system is utilized to inform families of school closings and important issues and announcements. Please be sure your emergency phone numbers and email addresses are kept up to date.

If school needs to close early, families will be notified as soon as possible and asked to pick up their children.

Fire Drills, Severe Weather and Lock-Down Drills

Throughout the year children will participate in practicing fire, tornado and lock down drills. It is important for all adults to fully participate in all drills. All drills are practiced as if they were real so the children and adults will learn and know real procedures

Drill procedures for all areas of our building have been established, are posted in each room, and carefully followed.

A Note from the Early Childhood Staff:

To ensure the safety of you and your child and to ensure your experiences here at the Early Childhood Center are positive ones, please let your child's teacher, or staff in the Early Childhood offices, know if you have any issues and/or concerns. We welcome positive feedback as well!

Supervision of Children

- Children will be supervised at all times by a paid staff member.
- We follow the State of Michigan licensing rules for adult/child ratios.
- Licensing manuals can be found in each classroom and online through the State of Michigan LARA website.
- The center licensing information can be found online through the State of Michigan LARA website.
- We follow all policies and procedures of the Whitmore Lake Public School District and the Washtenaw County Intermediate School District.

Pesticides

The Board of Education has adopted a policy to provide students and staff with an environment that is free of pests, pesticides, and harmful chemicals to the extent required by law. The Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM) includes routine inspections or surveys of all school facilities and various strategies to prevent pests from becoming a problem. Pesticides are used only as a last resort and parents will be notified prior to a pesticide application in a school building or on school grounds.

The Whitmore Lake Public School pesticides policy will be followed at all times as outlined above in the online transparency report and in the Board of Education policies and procedures.

- Parents will be notified by email, text and/or automated phone call prior to any pesticide application in any school building or on school grounds and posted at the school entrance doors.
- Notifications will include the type of pesticide to be applied, what type of pest(s) is the target and the date and location of the application.
- Annual policy review will be included at parent orientation and as new families enroll.
- The Orkin pest control binder is located in the school office at the elementary school and in the administration office at the Main Street Campus. This binder contains all pest control procedures, records of where pests (ants, mice, etc.) have been located, what the outcome was and any bait or gels that may have been applied. If/when a pesticide other than the bait or gels has been applied, it will also be included in the binder including the type of pesticide and label of the container.
- When/if a pest problem occurs maintenance staff can be reached by phone, email and through our online FMX maintenance system. Maintenance staff are aware of the policies and procedures and the IPM program.
- If/when a pesticide is applied, children and adults will not be allowed entry into the room or area for at least 4 hours or as instructed by the manufacturer of the pesticide.

Have a great preschool year!

What's in your backpack?

What's in your backpack?
It's empty today.
Where's your work?
Did you just play?

When I build with blocks
I learned about shapes.
I balanced and shared-
Our skyscraper was great.

I played in the windy house
And talked with my friends.
I rocked a baby
And played pretend.

In science I observed,
Guessed and experimented, too.
The same things grown up
Scientists do.

My fingers got a work out
With puzzles and clay.
Those same muscles
Will help me write one day.

Out in the playground
I ran like the wind.
I learned to take turns
And helped a hurt friend.

Story time is what
I always like best.
I can use my imagination
And give my body a rest.

I sang and danced-
Learned a finger play too.
I answered questions
and said, "Please" and "Thank you".

There will be time
for worksheets and tests,
But talking and playing
Are how I learn best.

