



Division of Early Learning Services
Early Care and Education

Center Based and State Preschool PROGRAM HANDBOOK

January 2022





Pledge

Every student in Riverside County will graduate from high school academically and socially prepared for college, the workforce, and civic responsibility.

Mission

The mission of the Riverside County Office of Education is to ensure the success of all students through extraordinary service, support, and partnerships.

Vision

The vision of the Riverside County Office of Education is to be a collaborative organization characterized by the highest quality employees providing leadership, programs, and services to school districts, schools, and students countywide.

Core Values

- Building Relationships That Promote Trust
- Engaging in Open and Honest Communication
- Focusing on the Needs of Students and Children

Center Based and State Preschool Programs

Betty Gibbel Teen Parent Program	(951) 826-4979
Las Brisas Child Development Center	(951) 600-5620
Norte Vista Teen Parent Program	(951) 826-4970
Oasis State Preschool	(760) 863-3040
Val Verde Child Development Center	(951) 826-4324

Our Philosophy

To provide and promote experiences that meet the needs of all children enrolled, by stimulating learning in all areas of development and offer a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and challenging. We believe that children learn best from direct and personal exploration of their environment. Children learn through curiosity and discovery, through making choices by trial and error, and through the modeling of adults in their world. Our program is designed to enhance the individual skills of each child and to honor and celebrate their uniqueness. Our staff provides a variety of classroom and outdoor learning experiences that help children express themselves creatively. We encourage self-sufficiency, growth, and independence for all children and families within their community, as well as acceptance and respect for diversity.

Welcome

Dear Families:

Welcome to the Division of Early Learning Services, Early Care and Education, Center Based and State Preschool Programs.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and give you an overview of our programs along with some helpful reminders. This handbook will help you become familiar with the programs' policies and procedures. It is important to keep this handbook with copies of your enrollment documents so that you can refer back to them throughout the year.

Our programs provide subsidized full-day services for eligible children ages birth through four years of age. Instructional teams use research-based curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and culturally sensitive. Our classroom environments include an array of opportunities for all students to learn through exploration and play. Classroom experiences include a focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math), Language Development, Literacy and connecting with Nature.

The program provides a wealth of services such as meals to children, family education and support, referrals to health and social services for families, staff development opportunities, and ongoing training to employees.

Our Center-Based Infant/Toddler program is funded by the California Department of Social Services and our State Preschool program receives its funding from the California Department of Education. To support and maintain this funding, we must comply with the regulations that govern these programs – the California Code of Regulations, Title 5. Many policies have been established in order to meet the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Title 22 regulations, and the California Department of Education Title 5 regulations. *For additional information, please refer to the Participant Handbook for Child Care and Development Programs provided by the Division of Early Learning Services, Early Care and Education.*

You are your child's first and most important teacher. No one knows your child like you do. We welcome and need your participation in our program. Parent involvement is both fun and rewarding. Make a difference in the quality of your child's life by participating in a program that will give your child a solid educational foundation in preparation for their future.

We believe that communication is the key to a successful relationship between the family and our programs. Whenever you have any questions or concerns, please bring them to your child's teacher. Remember, we are your partners in helping your child succeed. We look forward to working with you and your child this year as they continue their journey into the wonderful world of learning.

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Program Goals

The goals of our Center Based and State Preschool programs are as follows:

- To provide children with a happy, healthy, and safe environment in which all children can learn.
- To provide stimulating, developmentally-appropriate experiences that will promote physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth.
- To provide and support inclusive early intervention services for children with special needs.
- To provide resources for parents to help improve parenting skills and support services for families.

When these goals are implemented, children are more successful in their school and home environments, parents are more productive and are able to improve the quality of life for their families, and the community is being provided a needed service.

Nondiscriminatory Statement

The Center Based and State Preschool Programs do not discriminate on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, national ancestry or origin, sexual orientation, or mental or physical disability. Our program will make reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities and special needs as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Equal Access/Nondiscrimination Statement:

No person will be subjected to discrimination or any other form of illegal bias, including harassment. We give equal access to services without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability. In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY), or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) FAX: [202] 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Refrain from Religious Instruction or Worship Statement

Center Based and State Preschool Programs refrain from religious instruction and/or worship. Our programs prohibit the use of any event that is designed to provide individual or group recognition to only one child.

Holiday themes are not part of the classroom curriculum. The focus of this curriculum is designed to help children gain social competence and the skills necessary to prepare them to succeed and foster school readiness.

Days and Hours of Operation

Our programs vary in calendar days and hours depending on the school site. A separate site calendar will be given to you at the time of enrollment and will be posted in the classroom.

Open-Door Policy

Our programs have an open-door policy. Please feel free to visit your child's classroom. Effective family-teacher partnerships are important to us, and we value your opinion. Families are encouraged to share ideas and information. This leads to increased learning and full engagement in the program.



Parent Involvement and Education

Our goal is to provide a welcoming environment for families and invite them to participate as partners in the education of their children. There are many kinds of parent involvement including but not limited to:

- Parent-Teacher conferences, which provide an opportunity for parents to collaborate with the teacher to develop goals for their child.
- Participating in decision-making processes regarding the program through involvement with the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC).
- Attending monthly parent meetings.
- Volunteering in the classroom (must be over 18 years of age and have fingerprint clearance, required immunization documentation, TB clearance, and participate in a volunteer orientation).
- Assisting with preparation of activities.
- Assisting in completing the Program Self-Evaluation (PSE).

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences occur at least twice a year. This is an opportunity to discuss each child's developmental markers and set goals for the child and family. Parents/Guardians and staff work together to come up with a plan to support the child's growth and development.

Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

As the parent/guardian of a child enrolled in our program, you have the opportunity to be a member of the PAC. This committee meets regularly and advises the program on issues related to families and children. The PAC also assists in the evaluation and review of program activities and suggests improvements, plans parent activities, and helps parents to become informed about legislation or community action that may possibly affect early childhood education. PAC officers consist of a chairperson, co-chairperson, and secretary.

Parent Education

Our program offers parent education training and workshops. Topics may include, but are not limited to: parenting, Ages and Stages of Child Development, nutrition, family literacy, STEAM, and child abuse prevention.

Limited and Non-English Speaking Parents/Guardians

The program addresses the needs of limited and non-English speaking parents/guardians by providing written materials, information and/or oral translation in the home language of the families.

Program Self-Evaluation (PSE)

Our goal is to implement an effective annual PSE process. The annual self-evaluation process includes:

- Assessment of the program by parents using the Desired Results Parent Survey.
- Assessment of the program by staff and board members using the Program Monitoring Instrument, Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) tools.

Based on the results of the PSE, goals and action steps are developed and implemented.

Lab and Practicum Students

Our program supports students who desire a career in the field of early childhood education by providing opportunities for those enrolled in high school teen parent programs, high school elective classes, and college courses to complete select lab/practicum hour requirements on site.

To ensure the health and safety of all children enrolled in our program, lab/practicum students will be supervised by RCOE staff for the duration of their time on site. In addition, students must have fingerprint clearance (over 18 years of age), immunization documentation, and TB clearance prior to beginning their lab/practicum hours.

Curriculum

- **HighScope Curriculum**

Our programs use research-based HighScope Curriculum. In a HighScope program, teachers ignite children's interest in learning by creating an environment that encourages them to explore learning materials and interact with adults and peers. We focus on supporting early learners as they make decisions, build academic skills, develop socially and emotionally, and become part of a classroom community. Active learning is at the center of the HighScope Curriculum. It's the foundation for young children who are gaining knowledge through natural play and interactions with the environment, events, and other people.

- **The Classroom Environment**

The Environmental Rating Scale tool (ERS) is utilized to prepare the classroom for an optimal learning environment.

- **Individualization**

The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) is an assessment tool required by the California Department of Education and is used to design and implement activities to support each child's developmental level and track progress towards school readiness. Each child will be continually assessed through ongoing observations. This data will provide us with reports that are completed twice per school year. The results will be discussed at the fall and spring parent-teacher conferences.

- **Lesson Plans**

Lesson Plans are individualized to meet the developmental needs of each child and implemented with consideration to children's interests, developmental data specific to each child, parent input, teaching team, administration, and ongoing observations of all children. Developmentally appropriate weekly lesson plans are used to enhance the learning in all areas of development of each child. The lesson plans will be posted in the classroom. Please feel free to discuss curriculum activities with the classroom teacher.

Our Staff

The classroom is led by a teacher who holds current certifications from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. These credentials authorize the teacher to provide service in the care, development and instruction of children in a child development program, under the guidance of RCOE's Early Care and Education management team. Instructional assistants support the lead teacher in supervision, daily routine and needs of the students. Our instructional assistants have specific early childhood education and experience. Extensive background checks and fingerprint clearances with the Department of Justice and the Child Abuse Index are conducted on all staff. Our instructional teams are required to be certified in CPR, first aid, and preventative health.

Child Abuse/Mandatory Reporting

All RCOE staff are mandated child abuse reporters. Staff are required by law to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse to the appropriate authorities. Suspected child abuse will be documented, and the information will be forwarded to Child Protective Services (CPS) or appropriate law enforcement agencies for further investigation. This abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect.

The safety and well-being of your child always comes first. If you or someone in your family wants to learn different ways to guide and discipline your child or to handle anger without hurting your child, please talk to your child's teacher or enrollment specialist. There are resources available at no charge to help you.

Admission and Enrollment

All of our programs are state-funded. All children enrolled must meet the eligible age as set by regulations for the applicable state-funded program. Families with children enrolled must meet the need and eligibility criteria of the program.

Parents/Guardians may apply for Center Based and State Preschool services at any time. The parent or legal guardian must complete an Eligibility List application. Once initial eligibility is assessed, it will be required to provide the child's birth certificate, immunization record, and proof of income to determine program eligibility.. This program is not a first-come, first-served system, but serves the most eligible families first (based on enrollment regulations for state-funded programs).

Prior to starting in a Center-Based or State Preschool program, all children must have a current physician's report and proof of up-to-date immunizations on file.

Please refer to the Participant Handbook for additional information on enrollment, eligibility, need, income requirements, and State Family Fees.

Fraud Policy

Intentionally providing false or inaccurate information in order to access services is considered fraud. Fraud is grounds for termination from the program. Some examples of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to report the actual number of family members living in the household.
- Failure to report the actual gross income for the family.
- Submitting falsified income documentation.
- Submitting falsified employment documentation.

Family Needs Assessment

Health and Social Services

At certification and recertification, parents/guardians will complete a Family Needs Assessment form to indicate the need for additional information and services. Support services and referrals will be provided to meet a family's individual needs. Our goal is for families to know where to access community health and social services to meet their unique family needs.

Inclusion

Children with Special Needs: Center Based and State Preschool Programs welcome children with special needs into our programs as we believe in providing an enriched learning environment for all children.

Referrals and related comprehensive screenings can be requested for children who are suspected of having a disability, in addition to children with previously identified disabilities. The goal of services is to support each child's individuality, development, learning, and above all, educational achievement.

Program staff work with the parents and appropriate personnel to ensure that each child is promptly referred to the appropriate local education agency, in order to access Early Intervention/Special Education services. The program collaborates with parents and the appropriate local education agencies to both monitor and support the growth and development of children identified with disabilities or who are found eligible to receive specialized services.

Through partnerships with RCOE, children with disabilities, including children with severe disabilities, have the opportunities to learn, play, and develop alongside typical peers enrolled in Center Based and State Preschool Programs in a least restrictive environment.

Individualized Education Program/Individual Family Service Plan (IEP/IFSP) records, if in place, are required to determine the best placement and support services for any qualifying child.

Health Policy/Health Check

The health and well-being of all enrolled children is our greatest concern; therefore, we conduct daily health checks. These health checks include taking your child's temperature, and a visual evaluation of your child's eyes, ears, nose, skin, and hair/scalp upon their arrival to school. You are required to stay with your child until a successful health check is completed, and then you can sign your child into his/her classroom. If it is determined during a health check that your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, you will be asked to take your child home until all symptoms subside.

- Temperature of 100.40 or higher
- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Earache, sore throat
- Unusual tiredness with other symptoms
- Scabies, head lice – must be nit-free
- Excessive coughing
- Eye drainage
- Any symptoms of contagious disease
- Skin infections (open sores, blisters, patchy scaling, eruptions, crusty lesions)
- Cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose

If your child becomes ill while at the site, he/she will not be able to stay. You will be notified immediately to pick up your child. If you are your child must be picked up by someone listed on the emergency card. If your child has been exposed to a contagious illness, please inform the site staff (a doctor's note clearing the child to return to school may be requested). A child should be fever and/or symptom-free for 24-hours before returning to the site.

Daily health checks and ongoing daily health observations are required by California Child Care licensing for all of our programs.

Emergency Cards: An emergency card must be completed for each child and include contact names and phone numbers. Only adults over 18 years of age can pick up a child and must present a photo ID. If applicable, please be sure to include any medical or dental documentation regarding matters such as food allergies, chronic medications, medical conditions, etc.



Medication

If medication is needed during school hours, a physician must complete a Care Plan in which the following information is required.

- All prescription/non-prescription medication must be labeled with the child's name, the doctor's name, and the name of the medicine. A note from the doctor is required stating the amount to be given, any side effects to watch for, and what to do if they are observed, the time schedule for the child to have the medication, and the date the medicine expires must be provided.
- Medication must come to school in the original container.
- Sample medication shall not be accepted at any site.
- The child cannot attend school until the medication paperwork is complete, and medication is on site. The staff will inform the parent when the child can return to school.
- Parents will be notified of any medication that will be expiring and will be responsible for replacing it with current medication. The child cannot attend school until this is complete.
- Community Care Licensing requires that there is an incidental medical service plan of action in place. The plan indicates which medications staff are trained to administer.

Diapering

Staff, volunteers, and families must follow all diaper changing procedures when diapering children in the program. In addition, families will be responsible for providing diapers and wipes to be used while your child is in care.

Health Screenings

Health screenings will be provided with the help of our community partners. The screenings may include vision, dental, and hearing. You will be notified ahead of time when these screenings will take place. Parents/Guardians will be asked to sign permission slips prior to participation in health screenings. You will receive a copy of your child's screening results. If there are any concerns found during the screening, your child's teacher and administration can provide community health supports and resources.

Allergies

If your child has any type of life-threatening food or environmental allergy, please notify your enrollment specialist and/or teacher. A care plan may be required depending on the allergy. This care plan will need to be completed by your child's physician. This plan should include instructions on how to avoid allergic reactions and what to do in the event a reaction does occur. If medication is needed, the medication procedure above must be followed.

Mental Health

Mental health is how we think, feel, and act in order to face life's situations. It is how we look at ourselves, our lives, and the circumstances that contribute to developing a healthy state of mind. It is taking care of our own needs in order to be emotionally available to those we love and care about. Oftentimes, life stressors can impede or hinder our ability to make sound decisions or solve issues that may be affecting our personal lives. Mental health services serve as a resource to assist with exploring other options in solving and coping with everyday life stressors. If you or your family is in need, please reach out to your child's teacher for resource support.

Emergencies

In the event of a disaster, natural or otherwise, the staff will follow the disaster plan and escape routes posted on all exit doors. It is critical that you keep your emergency contact records current. Staff will remain with the children until a parent/guardian or authorized adult is able to pick up the children.

Emergency Kits

Please bring the following items:

- A complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, shorts, underwear, socks).
- Family photos.

First Aid

All staff are trained in pediatric first aid. If it is necessary for staff to administer first aid, non-latex gloves are provided to prevent contact with blood or any other bodily fluid. All accidents are reported on an accident or "ouch" form. A copy of this form is given to the parent and one is kept in the child's file.

When a child has an injury that needs more than general first aid care, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If the injury is severe, the parent/guardian will need to make the decision to transport their child to the emergency room or personal physician or to have the staff call 911 for transportation. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the supervisor will make the decision to call 911 and accompany the child to the hospital.

Transportation

Our programs do not offer transportation services. Please observe safety practices when parking your vehicle and walking to and from school. Never leave your children in a car unattended and unsupervised. Pedestrian safety tips will be shared with parents and children to help them become more aware of good practices when walking and/or crossing streets.

Daily Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

For your child's protection and in compliance with State law, you must sign in your child when he/she arrives at the school site and sign out your child when picked up at departure. Your full signature is required. (Community Care Licensing does not allow initials.)

- The person who signs the child **in/out** must be at least 18 years of age and use his/her **full legal signature**.
- Persons signing children in/out of the center **must** be listed on the child's emergency card and must have proper photo identification. If someone comes for your child and is not listed on the emergency card, your child will not be released to that person. Phone calls or notes from you will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- All students must be signed in. The program utilizes an electronic sign-in/sign-out process with the use of a dedicated tablet in each classroom to be used by those authorized to drop off or pick up enrolled students.
- Sign-in/out sheets **must** be signed by the enrolling parent, utilizing a full legal signature, verifying the completeness and accuracy of the information reflected on the document on the last day of each month. A reminder notification will be initiated through the electronic system used for the sign-in/sign-out process.

Attendance Policy

When a child does not attend the program on authorized days, the parent/guardian or staff member must indicate the specific reason for the absence and sign for each day of absence on the child's sign-in sheet.

Each child development center maintains an active waiting list of children and families who are interested in attending that program. Therefore, students who are unable to attend school on a regular basis are in jeopardy of losing their enrollment in the classroom, and their space will be assigned to another child who can attend regularly.

Please refer to the Participant Handbook for additional information regarding attendance.

Late Pickup Policy

When a child is not picked up on time, the staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. A late pickup notice will be issued, and a parent conference may be scheduled. After two late pickup notices have been issued, a parent conference will be held. The late pickup policy will be reviewed, and a plan of action will be developed with the parent/guardian in order to resolve the problem. If late pickups continue, the child may be dropped from the program. If children have not been picked up from the program within 15 minutes after closing, and all attempts have been made to contact the parent/guardian and/or emergency card contacts, the staff must consider this an emergency situation. At this point, they are required to notify local authorities (police and/or Child Protective Services).



Behavior/Discipline/Guidance

The intent of our programs is to provide positive discipline by which children can learn problem-solving and social skills. Discipline procedures are designed to be developmentally appropriate, fair, consistent, and effective. These procedures have been established to create a safe and enjoyable experience for children, families, and staff. Program rules are established by the staff based on the age and developmental level of the children. The goal for positive discipline is to develop child self-discipline and self-control. Emphasis is placed on each child, through internal motivation and adult modeling, for an acceptable standard of behavior.

Occasionally children will test boundaries. When a child behaves inappropriately, the staff will use this time as an opportunity to teach the child a positive and productive way of interacting with others. Positive methods of guidance and redirection are used with a focus on social-emotional development to help children gain social skills that allow them to relate and communicate with others in a healthy way. Staff work to build a positive relationship with every child. Every effort will be made to handle discipline problems through redirection, problem-solving, rearrangement of the environment, and staff-parent collaboration. Open communication with each other is key.

Positive discipline does not mean spanking, swatting, removing food, blaming, shaming, time out, or any other form of physical or emotional punishment.

Rules and guidelines have been established for the safety and well-being of all children. For students who consistently display inappropriate behavior that is unsafe to them and/or others, the following steps and documentation will take place.

1. **Redirection:** Staff will redirect children or restate established rules in a kind but firm voice. Staff will make corrections in a positive manner, for example, “Walking feet”, “Blocks are for building” or “Gentle hands.”
2. **Parent/Staff Involvement:** Staff will talk to the parent/guardian about inappropriate behavior and enlist their help and suggestions. Staff may document the behavior on the Behavior Log and inform the parent/guardian of the continuing behavior.
3. **Plan of Action:** If the inappropriate behavior continues, staff will schedule a meeting with the parent. In this meeting, the child’s parent/guardian and staff will develop a Plan of Action. This may include accommodations such as parent volunteering in the classroom to provide staff support, modifying the child’s schedule, and any additional support as needed.

Violence is never permitted by children or adults. If a child poses a threat to themselves and/or other children, or if the child’s behavior negatively impacts the personal rights of other children, further action that may modify their level of participation in the program may take place. (Title 22, regulation 101223) and (RCOE BP 5131, 5144, 5144.1).

Any form of discipline or punishment that violates a child’s personal rights is not permitted regardless of authorized representative consent or authorization. Our goal is to ensure all children’s success and well-being.

Parent Behavior/Discipline

Parent and caregiver involvement in program activities and in the classroom is valued and encouraged.

In an effort to be in compliance with all the federal, state, and local regulations regarding safety and ensure the safety and well-being of children, parents, and staff members, RCOE has the right to exclude parents who willingly interfere with the discipline, good order, lawful conduct, or administration of any school or class activity.

Intimidation, bullying, belittling, yelling, threatening, and/or disregarding the agency's policies and procedures by parents/guardians/family members will result in immediate exclusion of the individual(s) from the program. (RCOE BP 5131.4, 5137, 5142, 5144.1)

Exclusion of an individual(s) from the program will not impact the child's enrollment and attendance in the program. In addition, the parent will be provided the reason for the exclusion and a meeting will be scheduled with program administration to address the issues related to the exclusion.

If the parent/caregiver feels that the exclusion is unwarranted following the scheduled meeting, he/she may appeal to the program director by requesting an appointment. Parents/Caregivers who are excluded also have a right to appeal the exclusion through the RCOE Uniform Complaint procedure, which can be requested from the program's coordinator. (Legal Citations: RCOE BP 1250)

Child Supervision

Staff actively ensure our environments are safe and no child will be left alone or unsupervised at any time. Supervision is everyone's responsibility, in addition to our staff, parents must also use active supervision techniques to ensure our environments are safe.

Parents must:

- Ensure gate and door are closed and secured.
- Not use cell phones when dropping off/picking up child(ren). This includes texting, streaming, live calls, video calls, and other activities that require the phone to be in your hands and in use. This can be distracting. Please provide your child(ren) your undivided attention.
- Ensure your child is signed in and out every day with your full legal signature and exact time.
- Hold your child's hand near the road and while crossing the parking lot.
- Encourage children to follow safety rules.
- Report safety and supervision concerns to staff immediately.

Physical Education

Our programs recognize the importance of physical activity for young children. Implementation of appropriate physical activity practices support the health and development of children in care, as well as assisting in establishing positive lifestyle habits for the future. Our programs encourage all children to participate in a variety of daily physical activity opportunities that are both age and developmentally appropriate. Daily outdoor experiences will be provided. Staff will provide daily directed, planned physical activity, and screen time limitations will be set.

Clothing

The early years are a fun time for children as they explore, discover, and create. During class time, your child may be provided an opportunity to paint, play outdoors, and enjoy mud. It is important that your child is dressed in play clothes and is able to have fun and get dirty. A second set of clothing for emergencies or accidents is needed. If there are no extra clothes, the parent/guardian will be notified. Clothing that remains at the site must be labeled with the child's first and last name. RCOE is not responsible for lost or stolen clothing.

Toileting: Toileting is an important stage. Your child may also be learning to use the toilet independently. We will assist and support you as your child gains this skill. For times like this, easy on and off clothing would be best as well as extra sets of underwear.

Footwear: For the health and safety of your child, it is important to consider the type of shoes your child wears to school. Open sandals, open shoes, and flip-flops are not permitted. Slippery soles (dress boots or party shoes) can also be a safety risk and are not permitted.

Jewelry: Parents should evaluate allowing their child to wear jewelry to school. These items pose health risks as children go about their normal classroom activities and use the playground. Parents of infants and toddlers should be especially conscious of choking hazards with jewelry or having earrings get caught in blankets and tearing earlobes.

Chapstick/Sunscreen: Chapstick and sunscreen are not allowed in the classroom. Parents are allowed to put these items on their own child before their arrival.

**Please have a complete set of weather-appropriate clothing for your child to keep at school.
This includes underwear, shorts/pants, T-shirt/sweater, and socks.**

Nutrition

A complete and nutritious breakfast and lunch will be served to children in attendance each day. This is provided at no cost to you. Children will be encouraged to taste all foods in order to expand their knowledge of the variety of foods available. Children will be seated during meal times. Meals are served "family style," as children are encouraged to serve themselves. Staff will join the children at the table and model proper mealtime etiquette. A monthly menu will be posted in the classroom. Our menu follows USDA regulations for meal patterns. Food from home or the outside is not permitted in classrooms which includes parents bringing in food for staff or children. All food is eaten in the classroom and cannot be taken home by staff, parents, children or volunteers.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

We value, honor, and respect all children, families, and cultures. We welcome your involvement in sharing your family's culture with the class; however, our programs do not celebrate any religious holidays (example: Valentine's Day, Easter, Christmas, Chanukah, Ramadan, etc...). We also do not celebrate individual birthdays. Placing children in roles in which they receive individual recognition for an activity or event in which they have little or no direct involvement is not developmentally appropriate.

Nap/Quiet Time

Children enrolled in a full-day program will be encouraged to rest for a reasonable period of time, but are not required to sleep. Cots, sheets, and blankets will be provided for your child's use. Quiet activities will be available for those who are awake before others (i.e., quiet books and puzzles).

Personal Items and Electronic Devices

Toys, games, electronic devices, and other personal items from home are not allowed in the classrooms. Such items can be lost or permanently borrowed by other students. These items often cause distractions throughout the day that are not beneficial to your child while participation in their child development program. RCOE is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the early childhood education experience. We encourage parents/guardians to participate in the planning of field trips at the PAC meetings. The purpose of field trips is to provide enrichment experiences that align with curriculum. Signed permission slips will be required for all children.

