



School Readiness Handbook

2008-2009

RLCC –Oklee Site

School Readiness Center

When your child comes to center they will be working on readiness and social skills. Readiness skills are skills such as beginning or pre-reading skills, beginning or pre-math skills, along with learning about their community and discovering many new things. Children will also be working on social skills of self-control, playing in groups of children successfully, and how to be a good citizen. We will celebrate how special they are! We will find out what is unique about them and how they learn best. We will count on the parents to come into the classroom to volunteer and share in this process. We will depend on your input.

A Typical Day in Center Based Program

Arrival

Children are warmly welcomed and hang up their jackets in their own special place. Children work on printing their name, read books, go to breakfast, visit with each other, or write in their journals until all the children arrive.

Breakfast

Children will be offered the opportunity to participate in the school breakfast program and usually walk down with a buddy for breakfast. If you chose not to participate in the breakfast program, please make sure that your child has a good nutritious breakfast before coming to school.

Boost-up

We will spend about 20 minutes in physical activities that have been proven to "wake up" the brain and body.

Health and Safety

Children will brush teeth after lunch and wash hands regularly. They will learn the importance of good health habits and learn about safety.

Story time

The foundation of our day begins here. Following a story read by the staff, the children build on their pre-reading skills by: acting it out, writing/drawing additions to the story or, answering questions about the story.

Work Time

The classroom offers a variety of learning centers that children may choose to work at. The centers have activities that encourage developments in motor skills, language and social skills, dramatic play, creativity, music, literacy, social studies and science areas

Circle Time	Children, teachers, and parent volunteers gather around and play large and small group games, talk about the weather and the calendar, plan their day and sing and play music games.
Outdoor Time	Children will play outdoors for a minimum of 60 minutes per day (30 min a.m. and 30 min p.m.) Remember to dress your children in the proper clothing. The only time that we do not go outside is when it is below zero or raining.
Lunch Time	Children are offered a nutritious lunch and taught about the different kinds of food we eat. If you do not wish to participate in the school lunch program you may send a nutritious lunch from home.
Rest Time	We will all be resting after lunch. Even if your child does not take a nap at home, they will be resting for at least 30 min. Some children will fall asleep and they will be allowed to do so as they probably need it.
Afternoon	The afternoon will be lower key and include another story time, circle time, music, small group activities, snack time, and outside time.
Dismissal	Backpacks are filled, coats are put on, and goodbye songs are sung. PLEASE Look in your child's backpack EVERY DAY for important information about what is happening at school.

Behavior and Guidance Policy

Young children can present challenging behaviors as they learn to behave appropriately in the educational setting. School Readiness Staff are committed to using positive behavioral strategies when teaching young children how to manage their own behavior. Child guidance and classroom management decisions will promote positive social skills, aid mutual respect, strengthen self-esteem, and support a safe environment.

Guidance Approach

Positive behavioral strategies will typically include the following list. All staff will use strategies such as these in guiding and helping children manage their behavior:

Using praise, encouragement and other means of recognizing appropriate behavior clearly stating expectations for appropriate behavior.

Teaching children positive social skills through direct teaching, modeling and using practice with peers.

Observe, be alert to potential situations, i.e. potential to cause injury or harm to peers, staff or the child.

Use **Do** phrases, instead of Don't phrases, use positive action phrases, i.e. feet on the floor, walking feet, gentle hands, inside voices, listening ears, etc.

Providing children alternative choices and redirection away from inappropriate behavior and avoid power struggles with children whenever possible.

Developing classroom rules that are clear, reasonable and consistent; establishing the rules at the beginning of the program year (introduce to new children when they begin) including children in the process:

1. Rules will be posted (include pictures as much as possible).
2. Establishing, modifying and discussing rules will be part of the regular lesson plans.
3. Rules will be consistent with RLCC policies and procedures including health and safety polices (*No weapons; toy or otherwise*).
4. Rules will be as few in number as possible with a focus on being broad statements.

If staff need a child's attention, go to the child (do not yell across the room unless there is a danger or you physically cannot get there.)

Refrain from terms such as naughty and bad, they do not explain why or what happened.

School readiness educators will plan a safe and developmentally appropriate environment that supports positive social behavior:

1. There will be enough structure in the classroom environment to communicate to children what to do and how to behave and use the equipment/material
2. All furniture and equipment will be checked as needed for safety and will be arranged to promote ease of movement, large play spaces, small play spaces and a quiet area.

Schedules, transitions, and routines will be established and followed to promote security for children.

When ever possible, cultures of the children will be reflected in the environment.

All adults in the classroom will be expected to interact with children in a friendly manner modeling positive behavior with each other and the children. If a staff member is dealing with a child in a behavioral situation, let them continue, unless they ask for help (*it's OK to ask for help*) or are experiencing physical harm from the child.

Supplementing positive behavior intervention with more intrusive strategies

Sometimes young children present dangerous behavior (verbally or physically) in the educational setting, with the potential to injure themselves or others. Some situations children may need more intrusive behavioral strategies to help them learn appropriate behavior. After discussion, the teachers and family may add to the above strategies with one or more of the following interventions:

Using natural consequences-explain to the child that when he/she hits another child, that child will not want to play with you;

Using time away- removing the child from the immediate situation when he/she is behaving inappropriately. Use this time for an opportunity to:

Calm the child.

Talk about what just happened-make clear that it's the behavior not the child that is unacceptable.

Problem solve with the child about how to handle a similar situation in the future and,

Plan how the child will re-enter the play environment.

Responding to unanticipated dangerous behavior

Occasionally, staff may be unaware of a child's potential for dangerous behavior, which may occur very quickly and with little warning. Centers will have a Site Plan for Dangerous Behavior that will include the following:

A safe, quiet place in the classroom for a child to be alone

A procedure for quickly exiting the children from the classroom so the child with behavior issues can be alone with a School Readiness educator

A place outside the classroom to take a child that needs time away (with School Readiness educator)

Ways of quickly communicating to the rest of the team (including volunteers) with a signal word so that the plan can be quickly implemented without a lot of discussion

The plan will enable staff to take immediate action to ensure the safety of the child and others in the area. For the safety of the child and staff, the crisis intervention for the child **will not** exceed gentle but firm physical guidance/direction, holding a child only long enough to get them to a safe space to calm down.

Should such a situation occur staff will contact the child's parent to talk about the incident. It is appropriate to develop a behavior plan immediately, which will specify:
The behavior of concern

The setting and function of the behavior

Positive alternative behaviors for the child

Methods to teach and reinforce the alternative behaviors

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviors

A time line for implementation

A method to monitor progress

A system for follow-up and review

Team signature, including parents

Rarely, an educational staff may determine that positive behavioral intervention, supplemented by more direct (intrusive) consequences has not resulted in decreasing a child's dangerous behavior to an acceptable level. Behavior that is consistently unacceptable may be an indicator that further support and assessment is needed. This support includes our referral process for further assessment and additional services. The team will make the necessary referrals. ***Physical restraint is not to be used as a routine procedure without an approved behavior plan specifying its use, signed by parents, teacher and administration***

School Readiness/ICCC Head Start /ECSE Programs: at **NO TIME** is any staff member, volunteer or student in training to:

Subject a child to corporal punishment such as hitting, pinching, shaking, shoving and spanking.

Subject a child to emotional abuse (i.e. name calling, threaten, humiliation, shaming, using language that threatens, or frightening a child)

Withhold food or access to the bathroom, clothing, etc.

Punish for lack of toileting control. A child will **NOT** be required to clean up the area where the accident occurred as a logical consequence.

Routinely physically or mechanically restrain a child except in relation to an approved plan developed for the safety of the child and /or those around him/her.

No child will be separated from the group unless less intrusive methods have been ineffective and the child behavior will threaten the well being of the child or other children. The separated child will be in an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard. Separation will be documented and a parent involved plan will be implemented.

School Readiness Attendance Policy

Families participating in the center need to call the school 796-5136 or 1-877-898-2501 or contact transportation if your child will not be in school. If your child misses two days without a call, School Readiness staff will contact you.

Pick Up and Drop Off Policy

Parents need to walk their child to the classroom and pick their child up from the classroom if not riding the bus. Please make sure you greet a School Readiness staff person so we know you and your child are there. If your child is riding the bus, please instruct the **bus buddy** to walk your child to the classroom and greet the teachers. School Readiness will maintain in the files, written authorization by the child's parent or legal guardian of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of individuals whom the parent or the legal guardian have approved to care for the child, or, to pick up the child for them. If the person picking up your child is not listed on our child information form, your child will not be released from the School Readiness Program . No child will be released without the presence or permission of the custodial parent or legal guardian.

If your child is being transported home, you must be at the door to greet them.

Telephone authorization to release a child to someone who does not usually pick up the child will be accepted only when accompanied by prior written permission from custodial parent or legal guardian. The parent/guardian will be contacted by School Readiness staff if someone other than those authorized have attempted to pick up your child from the School Readiness center.

School Readiness will not release a child to anyone who cannot safely care for the child, (i.e. siblings under 12 years of age, parents under the apparent influence of drugs/alcohol or an individual who poses a safety risk). School Readiness staff will contact the emergency contact person to make arrangements for the child's transport to a place of safety. If no one is available to care for the child, School Readiness will contact child protective services/law enforcement.

Transportation & Busing

Your child may use the public school transportation system in on scheduled bus routes. Please contact a bus buddy(an older child riding the bus) to walk your child to the classroom. If you do not know an older child riding the bus, please contact the school.

Storm Policy

Please listen to your local radio station for storm related announcements. School Readiness will always be canceled if school is canceled because of the weather. Please contact your local school for specific information. Announcements can be heard on the following AM radio stations:

Thief River and surrounding area: KKAQ 1460 am or KTRF 1230 am
Fosston and surrounding areas: KKCQ1480am

Educational Walks and Discovery

School readiness uses the indoor and outdoor environments for learning. We will use the school yard or community businesses within walking distance to take walks and make discoveries. Separate notices are not sent to parents regarding these walks. If you

have concerns regarding your child's participation in these walks, please talk with your child's teacher.

Animals- Periodically, families and visitors are invited to bring pets to show at school. The pets are the responsibility of the owner and are contained by a leash or cages/aquariums that are introduced to the children under careful supervision.

Field Trips

School readiness likes to introduce children to the many experiences and resources that are in their local communities. One way we do this is through field trips to different locals and businesses in our communities. Places that employ our parents can provide some great educational experiences.

You will be asked at the beginning of the year (circle yes or now on enrollment form) for permission for your child to attend these field trips such as to a Dairy Farm or to the Aviation School in TRF. You will be notified a week in advance when these trips will take place and a copy of that notice will be put in your child's file. If you have any ideas for a field trip please talk to the staff about your idea. Parents are always welcome on field trips. When parents are volunteering for a center field trip, younger siblings will not be allowed to come.

Children's Videos

School readiness does occasionally utilize educational videos for educational purposes. Videos are all rated G and usage is to educate children, such as on nature or a concept in education. Videos are no longer than 30 minutes in length. In order to control the video shown, videos brought from children's homes are not shown unless prior approval from the teacher is received.

School Readiness Combination

School Readiness partners with ICCC Head Start, Early Childhood Family Education, Early Intervention Service programs and Red Lake County Nursing service programs in our local community.

The following is a brief description of each program and how they are funded:

School Readiness is a public school program open to Minnesota children age 3 1/2 years to kindergarten enrollment. Usually, children are identified to participate in the program through Early Childhood Screening. School districts offer early childhood education programs and services unique to the needs of children and the resources in their communities. The goal of School Readiness is to help preschoolers enter school with the skills and behaviors necessary to be successful in future learning. School readiness is a center based program with 4-5 year olds attending two full days a week and 3 1/2-4 year olds attending one full day a week.

It is a priority of School Readiness to involve parents in their child's learning and education. Research has shown that early childhood programs that involve parents

and children working together are more effective than programs that only focus on the child. Involving families early encourages parents to play a more active role throughout their child's education.

Head Start is a federally funded, full-service program for preschool children and their families. Head Start primarily serves three and four year olds from low-income families. Some agencies also provide a program for infants, toddlers and pregnant mothers. All local Head Start programs must reserve space (at least 10%) for children with disabilities.

The overall goal of Head Start is to help young children be ready for school. Research has shown the lasting benefits of Head Start. Head Start works to strengthen all the influences on the child's development. Children learn through planned activities. Head Start services include education, health, nutrition, mental health and social services.

Another goal of Head Start is to help families become self-sufficient through programs such as Adult Basic Education, family literacy and job training. Parents also learn how to use available resources to meet family needs. Parents are involved in all aspects of Head Start. This includes the opportunity to make decisions about program plans and policies.

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) is a program for all Minnesota families with children between the ages of birth to kindergarten entrance. The program is offered through Minnesota public schools. ECFE is based on the idea that the family provides a child's first and most significant learning environment and parents are a child's first and most important teachers. ECFE works to strengthen families. ECFE's goal is to enhance the ability of all parents to provide the best possible environment for their child's learning and growth.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) is provided for children with disabilities birth through 6 years old. ECSE teachers provide services to young children and their families in a variety of ways.

It is the intent of ASEC to provide services to young children in the most natural setting appropriate for each child. Programming may occur in the child's home, day care setting or in center-based options with typically developing children such as Head Start, Early Childhood Family Education programs or Learning Readiness Classrooms.

Child Abuse and Neglect

In an effort to protect the well being and safety of children, Federal and State laws require that School Readiness personnel report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to social services or law enforcement. If a child is in immediate danger law enforcement will be call right away. All School Readiness staff is mandated reporters.

Reporting Policy for Programs Providing Services to Children Who should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

Any person may voluntarily report abuse and neglect.

If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 9-1-1.

Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency or local law enforcement.

What to Report

Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 625.556) and should be attached to this policy.

A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, and persons responsible for the abuse and neglect (if known) and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violation. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.

An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by the mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

The reporting policies and procedures must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the child care program and must be available upon request. The Division of Licensing recommends that parents with children currently enrolled in your child care program are informed in the development of the reporting policies and procedures, and provide them with an opportunity to request the information.

Missing Child Procedure

The following procedures will be followed in the unlikely circumstance that a child is discovered to be missing:

A staff person from each area appointed by the Lead Teacher will search their classroom and other rooms throughout the building as an appointed second group covers the grounds. School personnel (i.e. secretary, principle, and available school staff) will be asked by Lead teacher to assist. The other children in the classroom will be monitored by remaining staff.

If the child is still missing after these immediate searches, the Police (911), the child's parents and the RLCC office will be contacted by the Lead teacher or assigned staff. The school or wing policy may be implemented.

While waiting for the police, one person will be assigned by the Lead teacher to each corner of the block. They will continue the search, moving clockwise around the block.

The Parents and RLCC office will be updated by Lead Teacher when search is complete. A follow up meeting will take place with all pertaining parties to discuss and evaluate procedures.

HEALTH SERVICES

School Readiness believes that children are more prepared to learn when their bodies and minds are healthy. The health of your child and your family are important to the program.

Each child enrolled to School Readiness needs to have:

- A health and developmental screening
- A current immunization record
- * A health history on file

NO CHILDREN WILL BE PERMITTED TO START CENTER WITHOUT IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION.

Sick Child Policy

Both parents and child care providers want to keep children healthy. But even with everyone's efforts, children get sick.

DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO CENTER IF THE CHILD HAS ANY OF THESE SIGNS:

An illness or condition contagious to others until treatment is completed to reduce the risk to others.

Chickenpox until the spots are crusted over (about 6 days after the rash started).

Vomiting 12 hours before coming to center.

Diarrhea 12 hours before coming to center.

Contagious conjunctivitis (pink eye) or pus draining from the eye. (Child must be on medication at least 24 hours before returning to center).

Bacterial infection- i.e. strep, impetigo, and has not been on prescription medication at least 24 hours.

Unexplained inactivity, very tired, non-stop crying, irritability.

Head lice, until 24 hours after treatment and free of nits.

Ringworm or scabies that is untreated or contagious to other.

Temperature of above normal, (98.6 degrees is considered normal, taken orally).

Undiagnosed rash.

Respiratory distress (first 48 hours of cold or cough).

Unable to be a part of programs daily activities (this includes playing outdoors).

Staff cannot adequately care for child without taking away from the care of the other children.

Short term injury that cannot be cared for or is a risk of health and safety for the child or anyone in contact with the child.

IF YOUR CHILD BECOMES SICK THEY WILL BE SENT HOME FROM CENTER IF THEY:

1. The child does not feel well enough to be a part of the usual activities of the program.
2. The staff cannot care for the sick child without taking away from the care of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following signs of illness: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, constant runny nose, complains of throat, ears, pain, rashes, non-stop crying, very tired /sleepy, or others listed under sick child policy.

The center staff will keep a sick child from other children at the center and will call parents that the child has become ill. Parents will be asked to pick up the child immediately. If the parents cannot be reached, staff will call emergency numbers provided by parents. **Please keep all numbers current.** School readiness will work with the school district nurse if prescription medication is needed. It is our policy NOT to administer any medication to children-prescription or over the counter. If your child requires medication during the hours the center is in operation, you will need to arrange a meeting with the center teacher and school nurse.

You will be asked to sign a permission release: Emergency first aid will be administered if necessary and follow-up care could be provided by the on-call doctor in your community.

Outdoors

Children go outside daily, year round. Please plan for this by having the appropriate outdoor clothing ready for your children to wear. If outdoor clothing presents a problem, please let us know and we can give you resource information to help the situation. Remember: **Children who are too sick to go outside are too sick to come to school.**

Book Orders- Each month you will be given the opportunity to order books and educational materials at a reasonable cost. You will usually have a week or two to place your order. Please send a check or cash in an envelope marked "Suzie's book order" along with the book order form. If the books are to be given as a gift to your child and you do not want them to know when they come, please specify this on the envelope. Otherwise, books will be sent home with the children. Checks should be made out to Oklee Public School.

Parent -Teacher conferences:

There are two school wide conferences schedules the first being Oct.14, the second Feb. 19. You may ask for a conference at anytime during the school year.

You may call me at home 218-563-2363 if you can not reach me during school hours.

You can also communicate with me via e-mail at frisbylee@gvtel.com

School Readiness Staff for the Year 2008-2009
Susan Lee- School Readiness
Joni Bjerklie- Head Start
Val Sjulstad- ECSE
Shirley Cyr-Foster Grandparent
Viola Kvasager- Foster Grand Parent
Dorothy West-Foster Grandparent
Harlen Lundeen- Student helper

If you have internet access, we will have a button on both of the RLCC websites. Look for Preschool and Oklee site.
The web addresses for both sites are:

Oklee site: www.oklee.k12.mn.us

Plummer site: www.rlcc elementary.org

