

# Clarinda Preschool Family Handbook

## Mission Statement

(IQPPS 10.1)

To educate all students to succeed by ensuring quality leadership, curriculum, and instruction.

## Vision Statement

(IQPPS 2.1, 7.2)

Clarinda Community School District is a leader in education by fostering high standards and expectations through rigorous academics, meaningful learning opportunities, and engaging student activities.



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*NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION: The Clarinda Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following service areas: agricultural education, business education, family and consumer sciences education, and industrial education. It is the policy of the Clarinda Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Heidi Bird, 423 East Nodaway Street, 712-542-5165, [hbird@clarindacsd.org](mailto:hbird@clarindacsd.org)*

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## **Welcome to Clarinda Preschool**

(IQPPS 10.1)

The program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for three-year-old children with special needs and all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. Clarinda Preschool is funded through partnerships with Headstart and Statewide Voluntary Preschool.

## **Curriculum**

(IQPPS 2.1, 2.2, 7.2)

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting. It is the policy of the Clarinda Community School District that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society. The preschool program uses Creative Curriculum and other research and evidence based comprehensive curriculums designed for three to five-year-olds. They include the following areas for development and learning: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, math, science and technology, social studies, the arts (exploration and expression), and health & safety. The curriculums are modified and adapted as needed.

## **Equal Educational Opportunity**

It is the policy of the Clarinda Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinator, Heidi Bird, 423 East Nodaway Street, 712-542-5165, [hbird@clarindacsd.org](mailto:hbird@clarindacsd.org). Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Ste. 800, Milwaukee, WI, 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111, or the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, (515) 281-5294.

## **Enrollment**

### **Eligibility**

Children must be four years of age on or before September 15th of the current school year and **potty trained**. Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the previous year. Registration materials are available from the PK-6 office or online through the district website. Registration will be ongoing until all spaces are filled.

## **Hours**

Class meets from 8:05am-3:00pm five days per week. Doors open at 7:40am. Preschool students are welcomed and escorted, if needed, to their designated classroom. All academic time is completed by 2:00pm. Families may choose to have their child dismissed at 2:00PM. This option allows preschool staff time for parent meetings, planning, assessment review and data analysis, and collaboration. Students who remain at school until the regular 3:00pm dismissal will be supervised by classroom paraprofessionals during the afternoon transition period. Clarinda Preschool follows the CCSD's calendar/schedule including any adjusted start/end times. Any additional dates when preschool will not be in session will be communicated by the classroom teachers.

## **Dropping Off and Picking Up Students**

Students not participating in district busing can be dropped off at the designated PK-6 locations: Main Garfield Entrance, North Parking Lot, and Middle School Entrance. Cooperation with crossing guards and staff traffic monitors is imperative for student safety. Classroom instruction begins at 8:05 a.m. Any student that arrives at 8:30AM or later must be dropped off at the 4-6 building entrance.

### *PK-Kindergarten Students:*

Pre-K who are getting picked up from school will be dismissed from the north doors/parking lot. If you will be picking up from the north parking lot, please turn onto Division Street off of 16th Street to line up. Stay in line, pulling into the gravel/north parking lot from the west. We ask that you do NOT park or get out of your car. Please pull up to the forward-most available cone before stopping. If your child is not outside when you get to the cones, you will be asked to pull forward to wait. If you need to get out of your vehicle to buckle your child in, you will need to load them at the orange cones, then pull forward to the waiting area to get out and buckle them.

## **General Information**

(IQPPS 9.9, 9.12, 10.4)

Prior to participating in the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

- The maximum class size is twenty students.
- Our center maintains a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children at all times indoors. The Clarinda Preschool teacher and paraprofessional will have primary responsibility for students enrolled in the classroom. The daily schedule allows for minimal group, staff and classroom transitions. Additional staff may be provided based on the individual needs of children.
- Adult-student ratios are maintained on field trips.
- Classrooms have adequate space for children's development.
- All children will be within "line of sight" of adults both indoors and outdoors unless toileting.
- When toileting, students will be monitored by sound and checked visually when necessary.
- When students enter the hallway to use the drinking fountain, use the restroom, change into boots, etc. an adult visually monitors and supervises the children in the hallway.
- A First Aid Kit is available for use in the classroom and taken outdoors at all times.
- The elementary principal will maintain a current list of available substitutes for both the teacher and paraprofessional. Should one of the staff need to temporarily leave the room, arrangements will be made to cover the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio.

## **Inclusion**

(IQPPS 9.10)

The preschool program includes all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families. The preschool facilities meet the CCSD's board policy in regards to the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

## **Who Works In the Preschool**

(IQPPS 10.3)

- **Program Administrator:** The PK-6 principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets all qualifications described in the IQPPS Standards.
- **Teacher:** A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an Early Childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom.
- **Paraprofessional:** A full time paraprofessional in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The paraprofessional has specialized training in early childhood education.
- **School Nurse:** The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is available full time, is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. She attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. She is available for parent consultation when necessary.
- **Support Staff:** Green Hills Area Education Agency support staff provide resources and assistance to the teacher and classroom upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, special education representative, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

## **Daily Activities**

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities, solitary time, indoors and outdoors, quiet play, and noisy play. The teaching team meets weekly to discuss and review student observations and anecdotal notes to enable them to plan for instruction.

Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

- Large and Small Group Activities
- Self-directed Play
- Learning Center Activities: Art, Construction Zone (blocks), Dramatic Play, Library, Math, Puzzles & Games, Ipads and Technology, Exploration Station, Calm Down Area, Writing, Manipulatives, and Sensory Table
- Story Time
- Individual Activities
- Outdoor Activities

Lesson plans for each week are available in the classroom.

## **Supervision Policy**

(IQPPS 3.7)

No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Staff will supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as staff check within five minutes on children who are out-of-sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are in the library area, etc.)

## **Clothing**

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can't guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. If needed, families may be asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

## **Outside Play (Recess) and Learning**

(IQPPS 5.4, 9.1, 9.2, 9.5)

We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. We use the Child Care Weather Watch guidelines produced by Healthy Child Care Iowa to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play. The outdoor play area is arranged so that children are supervised by sight and sound.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

In order to make sure that your child can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress him/her according to the weather. When it is cold outside he/she needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child's name). For the warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a practical idea. It is expected that all students will go outside unless there is a doctor's note indicating the reason why the child cannot go outside. There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun.

Unless the "feels like" temperature is 12 Degrees and below Fahrenheit, at or above 106 Degrees Fahrenheit, or raining, recess will be outside. Be sure your child is dressed appropriately as the season requires. The children will have recess outside whenever possible and should dress accordingly (coats, mittens/gloves, boots, hat, etc.). If a need arises, please contact the office for support of cold weather gear. During rainy or snowy seasons, students should have boots and a change of shoes to prevent tracking mud, snow, etc. into the building. Please label winter clothing items such as coats, hats, mittens/gloves, and boots with your child's name. Teachers will honor your request for your child to be excused from outdoor play for one day after a brief illness. If it is to be extended beyond one day, the family doctor's recommendation should accompany the request.

## Clarinda Elementary Outdoor Play Guidelines Based on the IDPH Childwatch Chart

Feels Like Temperature	Recess	Outerwear
106 and above	Indoor Recess	
97-105	Outdoor	Shorten Time Outside
60-96	Outdoor	Choice
50-59	Outdoor	Long Sleeves
40-49	Outdoor	Light Coat
30-39	Outdoor	Winter Coat, hat, gloves
13-29	Outdoor	Winter Coat, hat, gloves
12 and below	Indoor Recess	

### Objects From Home

The preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you not bring toys from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

### Weapon Policy

(IQPPS 10.5)

The board believes weapons, other dangerous objects and look-a-likes in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons, dangerous objects and look-a-likes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-a-likes will be taken from students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess weapons, dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property are notified of the incident. Possession or confiscation of weapons, dangerous objects or look-a-likes may be reported to law enforcement officials, and students will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Students bringing firearms to school or knowingly possessing firearms at school will be expelled for not less than one year. The superintendent has the authority to recommend this expulsion requirement be modified for students on a case-by-case basis. For purposes of this portion of this policy, the term "firearm" includes, but is not limited to, any weapon which is designed to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, a muffler or silencer for such a weapon, or any explosive, incendiary or poison gas, or otherwise defined by applicable law.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials or other individuals specifically authorized by the board are exempt from this policy. The superintendent may develop an administrative process or procedures to implement the policy.

### **Snacks/Foods and Nutrition**

(IQPPS 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.15)

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional foods, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snacks are provided throughout the year by parent donations.

Meals and snacks are at regularly scheduled times, two hours apart and not more than three hours apart. Menus are posted monthly on the district website and on the Parent Information Board. Paper copies are also available to families. Menus are kept on file in the cafeteria.

All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture School Lunch Program guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day.

### **Birthdays**

(IQPPS 5.10)

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be commercially prepared or pre-packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

### **Child Guidance and Discipline**

(IQPPS 1.3)

The preschool staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. The staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. The staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to

the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

### **Challenging Behavior**

(IQPPS 3.6)

The staff in the preschool is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. They anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, the staff promotes pro-social behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling, turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

The staff will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Children will be taught social, communication, and emotional regulation skills. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the staff, parents, and AEA support staff will work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. The staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior.

### **Permissible Methods of Discipline**

(IQPPS 1.3)

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident.; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

#### Prohibited Practices:

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

1. harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children nor make threats or derogatory remarks
2. physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing
3. psychological abuse or coercion
4. any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect
5. withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline

### **Child Assessment**

(IQPPS 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9)

#### Guiding principles:

It is the school district's belief that formal and informal assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. Families

will have access to information about assessments used and staff will work with families to determine the best assessment methods for their child. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. Assessment will never be used to label children or to include or exclude them from a program. A family's culture and a child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- The preschool curriculum is directly aligned to the Iowa Core Curriculum Birth to Five Essential Concepts and Skills and the Iowa Early Learning Standards. It utilizes Teaching Strategies Gold to record student progress in all developmental areas within three months of entering the program, at the middle, and the end of the year.
- Observational data provides an ongoing anecdotal/on the spot record of each child's progress during daily activities that are geared toward the needs of the children to meet the objectives in Teaching Strategies Gold.
- Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development through enrollment paperwork, other questionnaires, informal and formal P/T conferences, etc.

The information from the above is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them
- To describe the developmental progress and learning of children
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones
- To indicate possible areas that require additional assessment

(IQPPS 7.3, 7.5, 8.1, 8.2)

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Parent Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. In addition, written preschool progress information will be communicated to families three times during the school year. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time. The CCSD's ELL department will provide assistance with verbal and written language translation.

If, through observation or information on the assessments/screenings given, the teacher feels that there is a possible issue related to a developmental delay or other special need, she/he will communicate this to the family during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for next steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The staff requests assistance from the Area Education Agency (AEA) as an early intervention process. This team engages in problem identification, plan interventions, provide support, and make outside resources available to those individuals requesting assistance. The AEA team is available and functional for all students and staff in the building.
- A request made to Green Hills Area Education Agency for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing can be made.

The preschool staff would assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

If the appropriate team determines a child needs special accommodations, those accommodations are included in the materials, environment, and lesson plans for that child. Examples include, but are not

limited to, sign language and visuals for children with hearing impairments or language delays and behavior plans for children whose behavior does not respond to the typical strategies used by staff in the classroom.

The program provides families with information about programs and services from other organizations, such as Green Hills AEA, DHS, Child Care Resource and Referral, *Parents as Teachers* programs, medical professionals, etc... Program staff develop partnerships and professional relationships with agencies, consultants, and organizations in the community such as: iSmile, Lions Club Vision, AEA, and Head Start nurse.

### **Program Assessment** (IQPPS 10.15)

Clarinda Preschool implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Head Start Standards. Administrators, staff, and/or other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in a program evaluation that measures progress toward the program's goals and objectives. The annual evaluation process includes gathering evidence on all areas of program functioning, including policies and procedures, program quality, screening effectiveness, children's progress and learning, family involvement and satisfaction, and community awareness and satisfaction.

### **Communication With Families** (IQPPS 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 8.1)

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations, e-mail or communication apps. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. Staff will use these communications to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the preschool staff in a manner that best meets their needs - email, in person, notes, or phone calls. Clarinda Preschool staff will provide families with information about programs and services from other organizations. Staff support and encourage families' efforts to negotiate health, mental health, assessment, and educational services for their children.

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any visitor entering the building.

### **Arrival and Departure of Children** (IQPPS 10.5, 10.9)

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians will include the use of age-appropriate, and size-appropriate seat restraints. When bringing/picking up your child to/from school, we ask that you follow the flow of traffic. No child will be permitted to leave the building/pick up area without an adult. Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them. If your child rides the CCSD school bus to school, staff will assist the students off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus. The preschool staff will record attendance at the beginning of the day. Throughout the day, each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the staff will be responsible for

counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

### **Transportation**

Transportation will be offered to students in the Clarinda Community School District through district school buses. Arrangements can be made through the Transportation Office. 712-542-5165. Due to the age of preschool children, it is advised they ride to and from with a school-age sibling if utilizing district transportation.

Parents or legal guardians may request transportation at enrollment, indicating the pickup and drop off address/bus stop, the name of the responsible person at that address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved. Parents or legal guardians are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes to the preschool staff/office personnel.

For children who have special needs for transportation, the facility will use a plan based on a functional assessment of the child's needs related to transportation. Any accommodations indicated in the child's Individualized Educational Program will be implemented as described.

### **Field Trips/Class Sponsored Trips**

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The Clarinda Community School District buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and calendars well in advance. Students may only attend field trips if the signed Permission Form allows them participation. Adult family members may be asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios.

### **Attendance**

Students who are enrolled for classes in Clarinda Preschool are expected to be in school for the full session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as staff find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. **Please call the PK-6 office with the reason for an absence at 712-542-4510.** For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, staff or office personnel will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

### **Ethics and Confidentiality**

(IQPPS 6.1B)

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families.

Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information regarding any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults. All staff will follow the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Code of Ethical Conduct.

## **Student's Records**

(IQPPS 4.1, 10.8)

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular school hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the CCSD board secretary in the district administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

## **Grievance Policy**

(IQPPS 7.5)

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool staff is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to the preschool staff to find mutual solutions that can be incorporated into your child's day. When necessary, the CCSD's ELL department will provide assistance with language translation. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the CCSD Elementary Principal.

If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the CCSD Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool. If you remain dissatisfied, you may contact the Superintendent of the Clarinda Community Schools.

## **Family Involvement**

(IQPPS 7.1, 7.2)

Clarinda Preschool encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Family members are invited to a Meet the Teacher Night and are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions.

Staff and administrators use a variety of formal and informal (including conversations) ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. **Home/class visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year.** Program staff communicates with families, on at least a weekly basis, regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests. Written assessment reports are sent home three times a year. CCSD's ELL department will provide assistance with verbal and written language translation.

Clarinda Preschool values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the staff learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be

incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool staff or administration at any time. Although in-person daily contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also rely on notes home, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and bulletin boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication.

*The Clarinda Preschool staff invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways, and welcomes other ideas as well:*

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the staff informed of changes and events that might affect your child, allows the staff to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Return all forms, questionnaires, and so on, promptly
3. Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring semesters
4. Check teacher communication app (SeeSaw) daily
5. Check your child's backpack each day
6. Participate in field trip activities
7. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, preparing visuals, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
8. Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs
9. Read all the material sent home with your child
10. Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, running errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards.

It is the policy of the Clarinda Preschool not to discriminate against families/volunteers on the basis of family structure, socioeconomic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or language. The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand. The school district believes that families should make the primary decisions about services that their children may need. The teaching staff will support these decisions by providing information to families about available community resources and assisting as requested in helping the family make connections.

### **Home Visits**

Home/class visits are made prior to the start of school and are required for your child to start in the program. This is an opportunity for the preschool staff to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. It also allows your child to become familiar and comfortable with his/her preschool staff and have any questions you may have answered. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the staff understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns, and questions at any time with the classroom staff or administrator.

## **Family/Teacher Conferences**

The preschool program will have formal family/teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school - fall and spring. During the conference you may be asked to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community, to think about what you'd like more information about the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. During the conference the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development.

## **Transitions**

(IQPPS 7.7)

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program. The child's family provides the constancy and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. The children and families in the Clarinda Preschool are invited to a Meet the Teacher Night before school begins in the fall. They meet the staff and see their classroom. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child. The staff will partner with the family to make transitions as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff including special education programs. Preschool staff will help to provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and answer other questions as they are able.

## **Health and Safety**

Clarinda Preschool is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

## **Health and Immunization Certificates**

(IQPPS 10.5)

Before a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

## **Health and Safety Records**

(IQPPS 10.8)

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child's parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request.

*Child Health and Safety Records will include:*

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency
2. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date through parent communications as needed and/or parent review during conferences

4. Names of individuals listed on the Permission Form authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child
5. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes)
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support)
7. Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implement a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

### **General Health and Safety Guidelines**

(IQPPS 5.2, 5.19)

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions.
- All staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.
- All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" training as required for employment with the Clarinda Community School District.
- All staff members have a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, and are always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times.

### **Illness and Injury**

Clarinda Community School District collaborates with Page County Public Health, Iowa Department of Public Health, and local healthcare providers to provide guidelines which define when a student is well enough to attend school.

**The general message to families, students, and staff is to stay home if you are not feeling well.**

#### *If a Student Gets Sick at Home:*

24 Hour Guidelines: Students should stay home until 24 hours fever free without fever-reducing medications (fever is defined as greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees), 24 hours without vomiting or diarrhea, and/or 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment.

#### *If a Student Gets Sick at School:*

School Nurse will use professional judgement to determine if the student may be returned to class, be referred for further medical intervention, or be sent home for rest and observation. Regardless of the nature of the illness, anyone presenting with illness symptoms that suggest communicable illness will be sent home with instructions to consult with their healthcare

provider who can further assess, diagnose, and prescribe appropriate care to include when it is advisable for the child to return to school.

### **Severe Allergies**

If your student has a severe allergy, PLEASE make sure you communicate this information to the school nurse. The school nurse will work with you to develop an individual health plan, and if needed an emergency response plan, for your student.

### **Diet Modifications**

If your student has a special dietary need, please request a Diet Modification Request Form from the school nurse. Form must be completed by a license, prescribing medical professional. Once completed, submit the form to your school nurse. No special diets or substitutions will be made unless this form is properly completed and approved by the Food Service Director.

### **Medication Administration Guidelines**

All medications should be taken before or after school hours whenever possible. However, it is understood that certain medications are required during the school day. Iowa State Law and Clarinda Schools allow medications to be administered at school only when the following specific guidelines are met:

- Medicine prescribed 3 times a day should be given at home; before, after school and at bedtime.
- Medications that are to be given four times a day will be given at lunch in the Student Health Office by the School Nurse.
- Herbal remedies, Natural Supplements or Essential Oils not approved by the Federal Drug Administration will NOT be administered by school personnel.
- All medications must be brought to the school and picked up by an adult. The medication will be kept in a locked storage area and distributed by the school nurse or school personnel that have taken the Medication Administration Course. Medication will not be sent home with students. Any medication that has not been picked up by the last day of school will be disposed of properly.
- No medication is to be kept by students in their lockers, desks, or on them personally. Medications are to be kept in the school's designated area.
- Medications will be transported for field trips according to State of Iowa recommendations.
- Medication Administration Forms can be obtained from the school website or the school office.

### **Prescription Medication**

- Per Iowa State Law prescription medication must be in the original container from the doctor, pharmacy, or store. The name of the student, medication, time to be given, and name of the physician must be on the container. Written permission to give the medicine, with the parent's signature, must accompany the medication. A current pharmacy- labeled container can serve as the written prescriber's order.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for submitting a new prescriber's order form to the school each time there is a change of dosage or time of administration. Prescriber's orders may be faxed or emailed to the nurse.
- Medications must be in the most current pharmacy-labeled container.

- Empty bottles of prescription medication will not automatically be sent home with a student unless under specific circumstances arranged/approved by the nurse or school staff.
- Parent instruction cannot conflict with the prescriber's orders.

## **Head Lice**

From time to time students may become infested with head lice. This is a problem in every school in the Midwest. If a child is discovered to have live lice at school, the child will be allowed to stay at school. The student needs treatment the day the lice is found, prior to returning to school the next day. The nurse may make the decision to send the student home from school if the infestation is interrupting their learning process (excessive itching, very uncomfortable etc.). In this case a parent will be contacted and the student will be sent home for treatment prior to returning to school. The school nurse has guidelines prepared by the Iowa Department of Health for treating lice.

## **Hand Washing Practices**

(IQPPS 5.6)

Frequent hand washing is key to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Staff teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught handwashing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

### Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day
- after using the toilet
- after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit)
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry)
- after playing in water that is shared by two or more people
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals including after daily outside time.

### Adults also wash their hands:

- before and after feeding a child
- after assisting a child with toileting
- after handling garbage or cleaning

### Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- Using liquid soap and running water
- Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water). Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal material. In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

### **First Aid Kit**

(IQPPS 9.12)

It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from school.

### **Cleaning and Sanitization**

(IQPPS 5.18, 5.19)

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately. Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and sanitized after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be sanitized using a non-toxic solution of one-fourth tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water. Surfaces will be disinfected using one tablespoon of bleach to one quart of tap water and sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for at least two minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Staff are trained annually in cleaning techniques, handwashing, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents. Routine cleaning will be performed by the staff. Rugs/carpets are cleaned by the custodial staff. Facility cleaning, also done by custodial staff and, requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure to the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible. Odors will be controlled by sanitation and ventilation.

### **Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health**

(IQPPS 9.11,10.5)

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping. The preschool classroom has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Custodial staff maintain the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children. The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

### **Smoke Free Facility**

(IQPPS 9.15)

In compliance with the Iowa Smokefree Air Act of 2008, CCSD buildings and grounds are smoke free. A “No Smoking” sign meeting the law’s requirements is posted at the entrances to the CCSD building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds.

### **Fire Safety**

(IQPPS 9.13, 10.10)

Fire extinguishers are installed in the elementary hallways with a tag indicating annual service dates. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. The program has written and posted disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation policies and procedures. According to district policy, fire and severe weather drills are conducted twice each semester.

### **Emergency School Closing or Delay**

In the event weather conditions or emergencies make it necessary to close or delay school, KMA radio 960 AM, 99.1 FM and the school website shall provide public information. Parents will be notified through the student information system via text or email.

During emergency school dismissals, the school’s phone lines are often busy, making it tough for parents to reach us. Sometimes, parents are unreachable, leaving us unsure of your child’s plans. It’s crucial for families to know what to do. Please discuss and plan ahead with your child and your child’s teacher.

### **Emergency Drills for Standard Response Protocol:**

#### **Hold/Secure/Lockdown/Evacuate/Shelter**

Clarinda School conducts emergency drills designed to assure the orderly movement of students and personnel to the safest area available. Even though these are almost always for practice, it is very important for students and teachers to treat them seriously. All procedures follow the Standard Response Protocol.

More information can be found at <https://iloveguys.org/The-Standard-Response-Protocol.html>

# Clarinda Preschool Family Handbook Agreement Form

## Agreement Confirmation

By signing below, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to the above expectations and responsibilities for participation in Clarinda Preschool Program for the 2026-2027 school year.

Parent/Caregiver Name **(Printed)**: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name **(Printed)**: \_\_\_\_\_

Preschool Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_