

ASHLAND HEAD START/ KY PRESCHOOL



PARENT HANDBOOK

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PARENT HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO ASHLAND HEAD START/KENTUCKY PRESCHOOL

We look forward to working with your child and your family to make this a successful year for your child. Please read this handbook and refer to it throughout the year for information you might need while your child is at Ashland Head Start/Kentucky Preschool.

Helpful Information as your child begins Ashland Head Start/Kentucky Preschool...

ENROLLMENT

Ashland Head Start / Preschool Program is a blended program with federal head start and Ky. state preschool. In order to be eligible for head start, a child must: Be 3 or 4 years old by August 1st and family income must be equal to or below the federal poverty guidelines or eligible for public assistance. At least 10% of head start enrollment is reserved for children with disabilities. In order to be eligible for KY preschool, a child must be: 4 years old by August 1st and family income not exceed 160% of federal poverty guidelines **or** Child has identified disability according to Ky. Eligibility criteria.

ATTENDANCE

A key to your child's success in Head Start and throughout their school years is good attendance. To receive the full benefits from Head Start/Kentucky Preschool, it is important to have your child in school every day. We know there may be a time when your child is ill or out of town. It is necessary to contact the Head Start office or your child's teacher if your child is going to be absent for any reason. Our program requires a reason for any absence. **Please call the office before school starts, giving reason for absence.**

Research shows that one way for children to be successful at school is to attend regularly and on time. We are preparing your child for the transition to Kindergarten.



BACKPACKS

Your child should wear a backpack to the center everyday. The purpose of the backpack is for communication between your home and the center. Please check your child's backpack daily for written communication from the center. Backpacks will be checked daily at the center for communication from home. Please do not send food, toys, movies, stuffed animals or games to school in your child's backpack. The program provides backpacks at the beginning of each school year. Only backpacks provided by the program are allowed on school buses.

CLOTHING

Children should be dressed in comfortable play clothes and shoes appropriate for the weather. Tennis shoes or sandals with back straps are preferred. Diapers/pull-ups will be provided while your child is at school. Please label all items of clothing sent with your child. It is recommended that children do not wear jackets with drawstrings. Children are encouraged to use self help skills in dressing and hygiene needs. Children should not be dressed in snap type body suits that are difficult for them to open and close. We recommend that children do not bring or wear jewelry to school. Small stud earrings are permitted, but staff will not be responsible for jewelry if lost.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

The Privacy Act (PL93-579) safeguards privacy. You can be assured that any information concerning your family will not be shared with unauthorized persons without written permission. Contact the Head Start Director at the Head Start Office 327-2715, if you suspect that information has been shared with unauthorized persons.

HOLIDAYS/BIRTHDAYS

At Ashland Head Start we strive to respect the beliefs and cultures of everyone in our program. In order to provide an environment of acceptance for all children and families, only federal holidays may be included in the classroom curriculum. Because every child's birthday does not fall on a school day, we do not celebrate birthdays at school. We do celebrate seasons and classroom studies.



PARENT CONFERENCES/HOME VISITS

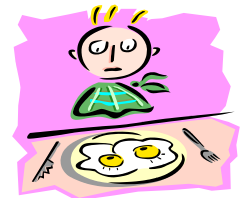
The teachers and family service staff make home visits. The purpose of the home visit is to share information and answer any questions you may have. Home visits are scheduled at least twice during the school year. Parent conferences can be conducted at the center, with a total of 4 home visits or parent conferences throughout the year. Both parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in home visits / parent conferences.

IMMUNIZATIONS/PHYSICALS

Your child's immunizations/physicals must be kept up-to-date throughout the school year. If you have any questions, please contact the Health Coordinator. When your child's immunizations need to be updated, you will receive a letter from the Health Coordinator. You will need to make an appointment for your child to get the immunizations they need. After you get an up-to-date immunization certificate, please bring it in to a member of the family service staff. Failure to provide up-to-date Immunizations/Physicals in an appropriate amount of time could result in your child being dropped from the program and placed on a waiting list. Staff is available to assist as needed to obtain any required health examinations.

MEAL CHANGES

If your child has allergies or cannot eat certain foods due to health problems, you must provide a written statement from a physician, which includes foods your child cannot eat, and a list of recommended foods. For any child who cannot eat foods because of religious beliefs, the parent/guardian must write a statement of the religion and what foods the child cannot eat.



NUTRITIOUS MEALS AND SNACKS

Ashland Head Start promotes proper nutrition and healthy eating habits. Your child will receive breakfast, lunch and/or a snack. It is important for children to receive their proper nutrition each day. Meal times and menus will be available in each classroom. Nutritious meals and snacks served during mealtime and other Head Start activities will be provided by Ashland Head Start and will not include foods with a high-refined sugar or high fat content. Food will not be used as punishment or reward. Children may not bring breakfast, lunch or snacks, or party foods from home.

OUTDOOR PLAY



An important part of your child's day and total health is outdoor play. Weather permitting; **(if temperatures fall below 40 degrees Fahrenheit real feel temperature, the children will not go outside)** the children will play outdoors each day. You can help your child enjoy this time outdoors by being sure that your child is dressed for the existing weather conditions. During winter months this includes a warm coat, long pants, sweater, gloves, and a hat. Please let your Family Service Advocate know if proper clothing is a problem for your family.

VISITORS AT THE CENTER

For the protection of the children and staff, all visitors, volunteers and guests must sign in upon arrival, wear a visitor nametag and sign out upon departure. Outside classroom doors are locked at all times, please sign-in at the office. You must ring buzzer and wait to be buzzed into the building.

PICKING UP AND DROPPING OFF CHILDREN

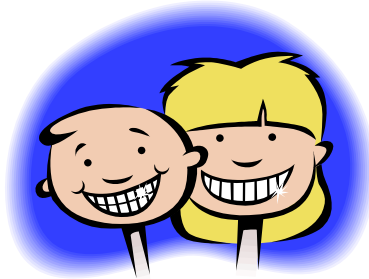
Child Release/Emergency Contact Form

The purpose of the form is to let the Head Start Staff know who has permission to pick up your child and who should be contacted if your child becomes ill at school. It is your responsibility to update the form when needed. Let those adults whose names you have written on the form know that picture identification is required of them. Please let them know that they also may be contacted if your child becomes ill at school and you are not available. Children will only be released to people who are listed on the form. **For your child's protection, additional names cannot be added to the form over the phone.**

Sign in/ Sign Out Record

When you, or any other adult, bring your child to school or pick up your child from school, the sign-in/sign-out record must be signed and dated. Arrival and dismissal will take place in the gymnasium. Each classroom is assigned a designated area for arrival and dismissal of children.





SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School closings due to inclement weather will be announced over local radio stations such as WRVC, WKEE and WTCR and local TV stations such as Channels 4, 8 and 13. Ashland Head Start may be closed even if Ashland Schools are open. Please watch the school closing information on all of the TV channels. If the bulletin reads "Ashland Schools Closed", that will include Head Start. If the bulletin reads "Ashland Schools on a Delay", look for a second bulletin about Ashland Head Start. Head Start will probably be cancelled for that day, because of our short day and our door-to-door bus pick up. We will make up those days on Fridays.

DISCIPLINE

At Ashland Head Start **children will learn how to interact with one another and learn to express their feelings in an acceptable manner.** In order to cooperate appropriately, children must know what is expected of them. Children will experience a predictable classroom routine and are involved with making classroom rules. These rules are simple, realistic, and appropriate for your child's age group.

Conscious Discipline is a brain based social emotional learning curriculum that builds resilience in children, families, educators and schools. As a community, Ashland Head Start / Preschool Program implements Conscience Discipline to build a healthy family as the template for creating an optimal school culture. We manage behavior by using appropriate communication skills, redirection, and time away to collect thoughts, if necessary. To prevent a child from hurting himself/herself or others, he/she may be moved to an area where the problem situation can be managed. Managing behavior will be handled by teaching staff and not by volunteers. Should inappropriate behavior continue, a parent would be notified and asked to come in for a conference. *Discipline isn't something you do to children; it's something you develop with them.* –Dr. Becky Bailey



TRANSPORTATION

A twenty-four hour (24) notice must be given at the office for a bus change to occur for your child. Please call, send a note or drop by the office to make this change. The bus garage will be notified of the change so that the route may be adjusted in advance. **We cannot make last minute bus changes. Children will only be released to people who are listed on the Child Release/Emergency Contact Form with proper identification.**

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

The word transition means entering or leaving the program. In the spring, children will visit their neighborhood kindergarten and begin the transition. Parents are provided with the following to make transition an easier process:

1. Information regarding registration.
2. Information about placement for children with disabilities.
3. Participation by Head Staff at IEP (Individual Education Plan) and public school meetings.
4. Children's records.
5. Information about kindergarten or other Head Start programs if transferring.



Illnesses That Cause Children to Miss School

If a child has one of the following communicable diseases such as, but not limited to hand, foot & mouth disease, impetigo, pink eye, ring worm, scabies, scarlatina/scarlet fever, strep throat, fifth disease, roseola, or rubella, the parent/guardian will take the child to the doctor and provide to the family service staff or teacher a written statement that allows the child to return to school. Children who are experiencing fever; vomiting, diarrhea or rash should remain at home until they have been free of the symptoms for 24 hours. **Children who are receiving medicine to reduce fever are not considered fever free.** Please remember that your child will not be allowed to return to school until they have been out the required amount of time shown in the Communicable Diseases chart for that illness. We do have a District Nurse who is available.

Medicine-Prescription and/or Nonprescription

Please notify your child's teacher if your child is taking medication of any kind at home. If a doctor requires that prescribed medicine be given during school hours, the following steps must be taken:

1. Obtain from the Health Coordinator the "Medication Permission Form from Doctor" which indicates the type of medication, dosage, and time to be given, reason, side effects, and length of time to be given. You must also fill out the other side of this form, giving permission to the staff to administer the medicine. This form must be completed and returned to the center each time prescribed medicine must be given during school hours.
2. Arrangements must be made by you with your child's teacher for medicine to be available at the center. Do not send medicine of any kind, (including cough drops) in your child's backpack.
3. The medicine must be in the original, appropriately labeled container.
4. If medicine dosage or time to be given is changed, you or the doctor must send a written note indicating changes. The container label must reflect those changes.
5. Over the counter medication, including sunscreen may not be administered at school with out a written statement from the child's physician.



Classroom Committee

Ashland Head Start's parent committee is responsible for working with other parents to plan events and activities. Every parent/guardian who has a child enrolled in Ashland Head Start / Preschool is a member and is encouraged to actively participate.

Policy Council

1. The Ashland Head Start Policy Council is a governing board, which meets monthly and makes policy decisions concerning the head start program along with the governing board (AISD).
2. Classroom committee elects policy Council members from individual classrooms.
3. The Policy Council and Ashland Independent School District Board and Superintendent work together approving the program budget, employment of HS staff, approval of Grant, Community Assessment, Self-Assessment, approval of program plans, policies and procedures.
4. The Policy Council will assist in organizing activities for parent volunteers and children.
5. **Relatives of Head Start Staff may not serve on Policy Council.**

PARENTS, FAMILIES and COMMUNITIES

**Can be engaged in ASHLAND HEAD START/KENTUCKY PRESCHOOL
in various ways**

- Share information about the program and ideas on ways to improve
- Volunteer to work with the children
- Help prepare materials for classroom activities
- Work together on community activities and other events
- Volunteer to be a reader
- Assist other parents in using computers
- Work on Classroom Committee projects
- Join the Policy Council
- Attend trainings and special events planned for families.
- Baby-sit for other families so they can volunteer
- Participate on committees
- Help children arrive and depart from busses
- Serve meals to the children
- Accompany children on field trips
- We encourage and support male involvement
- Families as advocates and leaders



VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

1. If you volunteer on a regular basis, you must have a Criminal Record Check on file at the center. The program pays for this service.
2. Information about Head Start Children and their families is confidential. A signed Confidentiality Agreement is required before volunteering.
3. Volunteer training will be provided for all classroom volunteers.
4. Should you have a concern about a child's behavior, it should be discussed confidentially with the child's teacher.
5. Smoking will not be permitted inside or outside the Head Start building. This is a smoke free environment.
6. Volunteers should not consume chewing gum or eat or drink snacks not provided by Head Start in the presence of the children.
7. Attire should be comfortable for all activities.
8. If you are interested in volunteering, please talk with any of the Head Start Staff.
9. Share all your special gifts and talents with all of our children.
10. You are always welcome to visit at any time, please sign-in at the office first.

Ashland Head Start's Emergency Preparedness Plan For Parents

Ashland Head Start practices Fire, Earthquake and Tornado Drills on a regular basis.

In the event of a natural emergency, i.e. Tornado, severe storms, or hazardous airborne chemicals outside the program facility, the children, staff and any other occupants of the buildings will shelter in place in the prearranged areas as necessary, these areas include: classrooms, office area.

Tornado evacuation procedures involve Ashland Head Start children and staff going to the large restrooms on the Central Office side of the building for safety.

In the event of a severe storm, hazardous airborne chemicals, or any type of critical incident that involves the use, continued use or threat of violence that may impact children or staff Ashland Head Start will **shelter in place** in the classrooms or office area.

In the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation away from Ashland Head Start's premises, children and staff will be moved to Bruce Apartments Office Building on Clements Dr. Children will remain in the care of Ashland Head Start staff until a parent Or an authorized individual picks up the child. If an evacuation is required beyond Bruce Apartments Office Building, the Director will coordinate necessary transportation to another safe facility.

Ashland Head Start will utilize the program's website, informational flyers, direct phone calls from staff, and/or the One-call system to notify parents of our emergency procedures.

If an event occurs that will require the implementation of emergency procedures, parents will need to watch television (WSAZ, WCHS, WOWK. etc.), listen to the radio (WKEE, WRVC, WLGC, etc.), and/or prepare for a phone call from Ashland Head Start staff.

It is extremely important that Ashland Head Start keep accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information for all children and families. If you have a change in phone number(s), living address, or authorized emergency contact people please notify us of the changes as soon as possible.

Ashland Head Start's website will have a link to access the program's Emergency Preparedness Plan which will provide you with more detailed information; we will also provide each family with continued emergency preparation information throughout the school year.

Ashland Head Start
Plan for Supervision of Students
(APS Policy 09.221 AP.1 and AHS Policy HS04)
Revised August 2016

I. Bus Loading and Unloading:

Ashland Head Start provides door-to-door pick up and drop off. One bus monitor is assigned to each school bus and is responsible for supervising students as they load, ride, and unload the school bus. All Head Start busses are equipped with child restraints and each child is secured in their seat with a seat belt before the bus begins to move. An adult listed on child's application must be present to release child for drop off and be prepared to present identification. To confirm identification, busses are equipped with two-way radios, providing immediate communication with head start and bus garage.

Children will be supervised at all times while loading, unloading, and riding school bus. Bus monitor is responsible for walking children into the Head Start building when dropping off children at school and releasing children directly to head start staff. Classroom staff is responsible for walking children to school bus when loading busses and releasing children directly to bus monitor.

II. Meals:

Children eat family style in the school cafeteria. At least two staff are present at all times and sit at tables while children are eating. All children are encouraged to eat their food slowly, chewing well. Children should always be encouraged to eat sitting down. Adults chop food into chewable bites for children when needed to reduce the risk of choking.

III. Halls, Restrooms, Gymnasium / Cafeteria and Playgrounds:

Two staff members supervise children at all times. In addition to classroom supervision, children are supervised by two staff members while transitioning in hallways, gymnasium / cafeteria and on playground. Staff is placed within zoning areas on playground for optimal supervision of students. Restrooms are located in each preschool classroom.

IV. Time Before and After the School Day:

Head Start staff is assigned to supervise early drop offs. Classroom staff is responsible for children until children load school bus or child is released to adult.

V. Field trips and other school activities:

Classroom staff is responsible for supervision of children during field trip activities. Additional supervision may be provided by other Head Start staff, parents, or classroom volunteers. Head Start busses are used for all field trips.

ASHLAND HEAD
START/KENTUCKY
PRESCHOOL

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WEBSITE:

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