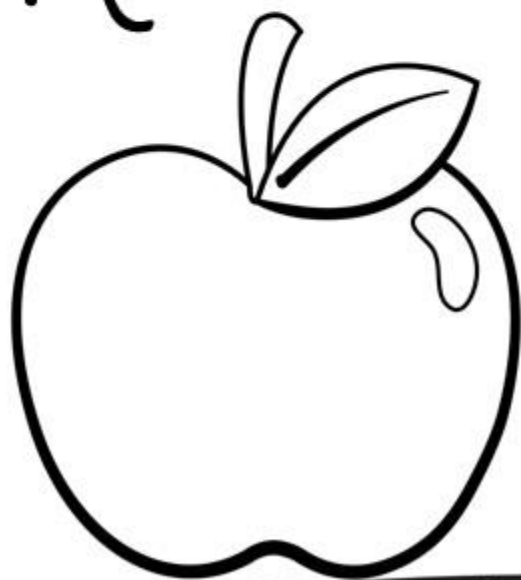


**Welcome
to our
Classroom!**

PARENT
HANDBOOK



Welcome to Our Classroom

We welcome you to the Pea Ridge Pre-Kindergarten program. We are so excited to partner with you as we prepare your child for a lifetime of learning!

We believe in the value of quality early-childhood education and are committed at Pea Ridge Pre-K to provide a stimulating, child-oriented learning environment. Our mission is to create purposeful opportunities for learning which will establish a firm foundation for educational success.

This handbook provides valuable information and policies that will guide you throughout the year. I encourage you to read each section carefully and ask that you sign and return the forms included in the handbook.

Thank you for allowing Pea Ridge Pre-K to be a part of your child's foundation in learning! It's going to be an exciting journey!



Katie Rhine, Director/Lead
Teacher
Pea Ridge Pre-K
krhine@prs.k12.ar.us
1-800-451-0608



PHILOSOPHY

The objective of our program is to provide safe, healthy, and nurturing experiences for children; helping them to develop a positive social-emotional foundation and passion for learning. We strive to meet the needs of all children, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Children are encouraged to explore their environment, think creatively, and develop problem solving skills. Certified classroom teachers develop lesson plans that correlate with the Adventures in Learning Curriculum and the Arkansas Early Childhood Frameworks. Challenging play, exploration, and success at a range of developmental levels are acquired through the arrangement of discovery or interest centers throughout the classroom.

- Provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum to improve gross and fine motor skills, language, cognition, social, and self-help skills
- Provide opportunities for interaction with peers that will promote exploration and curiosity of the world

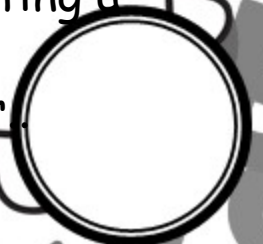


CURRICULUM

Our Pre-K staff works with children to enhance their learning and development in these areas: social/emotional, creative/aesthetic, physical, language/literacy, and intellectual. Our activities are planned around your child's interests, needs, and abilities. This does not always translate into a "typical" school setting . . . it may not LOOK like school to you! Our teachers know that children thrive by using their senses and movement. Children LEARN through play! We use these play experiences to teach concepts and skills. Activities are planned to encourage creativity, questioning, social interactions, and higher level thinking.

Pea Ridge Pre-K currently utilized the Adventures in Learning Curriculum, which adheres to the Arkansas Frameworks for 4-year olds.

All Pea Ridge Pre-K teachers hold a Bachelors of Science in Early Childhood Education or equivalent degree from an accredited university, along with completing a minimum of 60 professional development hours each year.



Contact Information

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All calls received during class time will go directly to voicemail; calls will be answered as soon as possible after school or during planning time.

1-800-451-0608



School hours

7:30 a.m. Students may enter the classroom.

8:00 a.m. School begins/students go to the cafeteria for breakfast

3:00 p.m. School ends

Students are not permitted in the classroom before 7:30 a.m.

Our core instructional hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sign-in between 7:30 a.m. ~ 8:00 a.m. (after 8:00 a.m. is considered $\frac{1}{2}$ day absence)

Sign-out between 3:00 p.m. ~ 3:45 p.m. (before 3:00 is considered $\frac{1}{2}$ day absence)



Drop-Off & Pick Up

You are required by Arkansas State Licensing to sign your child in and out each day. There will be a sign-in/sign-out sheet on a clipboard by the door of your child's classroom. The person who brings or picks up a child is required to sign the child in and out of the classroom with a signature. The **signature must be a legible, full name** and indicate the time of arrival/departure as dictated by the clock in the school. You may also be asked to present photo identification and verification will be made to ensure he/she is authorized to pick up the child. No one other than a parent will be allowed to pick up a child unless that person's name is also included on the child's personal data sheet as an authorized pick up person. Children may not leave with any unauthorized adult.



Breakfast Procedures

Pea Ridge School District offers nutritious breakfast and lunch at a minimal charge. If your child is enrolled in the ABC Pre-K funded program, your child will be served breakfast and lunch with no charge. Tuition-based students may apply for free or reduced price meals by completing an application and returning it to your child's teacher.

Breakfast will be served daily in the cafeteria at 8:00 a.m. We will go as a class to the cafeteria at this time.

If you should arrive at school after we have left the classroom, you will need to bring your child to the cafeteria to join us.

Otherwise, you will have to wait until our return at 8:30 a.m. to gain entry into the classroom.

Breakfast \$1.60

\$.30 (reduced price)



Lunch Procedures

Pea Ridge School District offers nutritious breakfast and lunch at a minimal charge. If your child is enrolled in the ABC Pre-K funded program, your child will be served breakfast and lunch with no charge. Tuition-based students may apply for free or reduced price meals by completing an application and returning it to your child's teacher.

We will be eating lunch at 10:45 -11:15 in the cafeteria.

Lunch \$2.10

\$.40 (reduced)

If you are sending a lunch with your child, please make sure the contents can be easily opened by your child and the food does not require a microwave.



Meal Payment PROCEDURES

Parents are encouraged to pay for student meals at least one week in advance, but may be paid daily, weekly, or monthly. Payments may be given to the classroom teacher. Students who bring their lunches will eat in the cafeteria as well.



Rest time

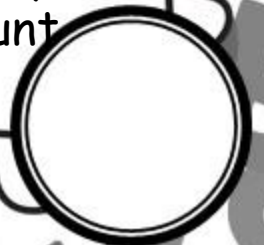
A supervised rest time is provided for all children. Children are not required to nap, but are required to rest quietly as not to disturb other children who need to nap. Rest mats and sheets are provided for each child. If your child has a special blanket they would like to use during rest time, they may bring it to be used only for rest time. Pre-K staff will launder the sheets weekly, or as needed. Blankets brought from home must be sent home weekly to be laundered. Teachers ask that you NOT send other items for nap.



Attendance & Tardy Policy

We are very fortunate to be able to provide quality, early-childhood education in our district. Daily attendance is essential in order to gain the most valuable educational experience. For this reason, we have a strict attendance policy in place. Students who miss a total of ten (10) days per semester may be disqualified and dropped from the pre-k program. (August-December and January-May) A phone call or letter explaining the program's attendance policy will provide notification to the parents when a student has missed three (3) days in one semester. A second notice or phone call will be received after missing five (5) days in one semester. After the tenth absence, your child may be dropped from the program.

Children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. will be considered tardy. When three tardies and early check-outs occur, it will count as an absence.



PARENT CONFERENCES

We will be holding parent conferences twice this year, once in the fall and again in the spring.

Please check your child's notebook for the dates and scheduling details.

Open Door Policy

We have an open door policy and love when our parents come to visit. Please know you are welcome at any time!



ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If you know your child will be absent in advance, kindly give his teacher notice. If your child is ill or has an appointment, please call and leave a message.



Medication

Written parental consent is required prior to administration of any medication to a student. Medicine will remain locked in a designated area. When medication is given to the child, the date, time, dosage, and the staff member's signature are recorded on the medication form. Only medication prescribed specifically to be given during school hours will be administered. All medication must remain in the original container indicating the child's name, type and date of prescribed medication, amount and times of dosage. Over the counter medication may not be given unless it is in an unopened container accompanied by a doctor's note.



Dress Code

Children in our program are active and creative. Please follow these guidelines when dressing your child, so that he/she may enjoy the day's activities:

Buttons, zippers, snaps, and buckles can be easily fastened /unfastened for toileting.

Washable, durable clothing for vigorous play

Inexpensive clothing so that soiling, damage, or loss will not cause great concern.

Shoes are sturdy and protect the child's feet

Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions (hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, jackets, coats, etc.)

ALL clothing should be labeled with the child's name. We are not responsible for lost clothing. Please bring your child a complete change of clothing to leave at school. Check periodically to make sure something does not need to be replaced.

If a change of clothing is necessary during the school day, the soiled clothing will be returned to you in a bag when you pick up your child.



Extra Clothes

Please bring your child a complete change of clothes to keep at school (shirt, shorts/pants, sock and underwear). Please send this in a Ziploc gallon-sized bag with his/her name on the outside. Please label each piece of clothing as well.



BIRTHDAY POLICY

Your child's birthday is a special occasion to share with friends. If you would like to provide a healthy snack for your child's class to enjoy on their birthday, please plan the date in advance with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher can suggest a healthy snack that your child's friends will enjoy. All foods brought to school must be prepared in a commercial food service establishment (no homemade goods).



PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We are fortunate to have many manipulatives and instructional materials for your child to explore. We ask that your child leave his/her toys at home. These can sometimes be difficult to share and may become broken. Cell phones are not permitted at school. Toys that resemble weapons are not permitted. For reasons of safety, no latex balloons are allowed.



CLASSROOM RULES

Behavior Expectations

- You may not hurt yourself.
- You may not hurt others.
- You may not hurt toys or equipment.

The following behaviors will not be tolerated: Fighting, disrespect toward others, obscene language, physical abuse or assault of school staff, bullying of other students, possession of a weapon, or destruction of school property. These behaviors may result in consequences from reprimand to dismissal.

Guidance Policy

Parents will be given a copy of our behavior guidance policy and will be required to sign an acknowledgement that they have been informed of the policy.



School Rules

Our goal is to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop self-control. Our program is designed to promote positive and enjoyable learning experiences and to build trusting, respectful relationships. A well-planned schedule, classroom arrangement, and curriculum, along with well-trained staff, significantly reduces instances of inappropriate behavior. When children do make mistakes in behavior, we use the following guidelines to address the issue:

- Tell the child what he/she can do
- Offer choices, if they are available
- Support children in learning how to problem solve and resolve conflicts on their own
- Re-direct the child to another activity
- Directing a child to a safe place to calm down
- Recognizing the child who is behaving appropriately
- Helping children learn how to play with friends



Late Pick-Up

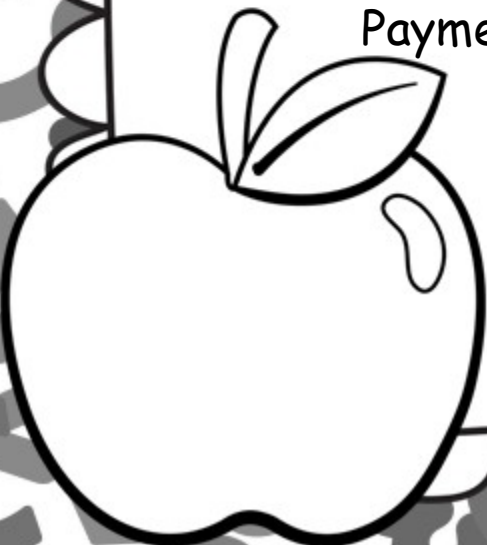
We expect your child to be picked by 3:45 p.m. Your child may become very anxious when you are late picking them up. Additionally, this causes conflict with the Pre-K staff, who may have other commitments after this time. If children are not picked up by 3:45 p.m. by the school clock, a \$15 late fee will be charged per child. After 3:50 p.m. by the school clock, an additional \$15 will be charged per child.



Payment Policies for Tuition Students

- The weekly charge for tuition is \$110.00 per student. (Tuition may be subject to change each August). **Payments are due by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday morning of each week prior to services rendered.** A \$10.00 late fee will be charged for payments not received by 10:00 a.m. Monday morning. If you know your child will be out on Monday, please make payment on the preceding Friday.
- Tuition may be accepted on a semester, monthly, or yearly basis if it is more convenient for your family.
- Parents are not required to pay for Pea Ridge School District designated holidays and breaks in which the Pre-K will not be in session. Student's absences due to illness, vacation, appointments, etc. will require payment.

Payment should be made to the designated staff member each Monday morning and a receipt will be issued.



HEALTH POLICIES

School Nurse

There is a nurse on campus who will verify shot records, check children for illness, administer medication and care for minor injuries.

Student health records will be maintained by the school nurse. These records are confidential and will require parent/guardian permission before information will be released. In the event of an emergency, personal identifiable information may be released to appropriate parties to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals. It is **vital** that working parents provide **current telephone numbers** of their place of employment in case their child becomes ill at school. If the parent cannot be reached in the event of an emergency, the person listed on the child's registration form as Emergency Contact will be contacted.



Student Illness/Injury

If a student becomes too ill to remain in class and/or could be contagious to other students, a Pre-K staff member will attempt to notify the parents/guardian. The student will remain in the nurse's office or designated area under supervision until the end of the school day or until the parent/guardian checks him/her out. If a parent is contacted to pick up a sick child, promptness is expected. Students who have recovered from a communicable disease must have a doctor's note when returning to school.

Parents are strongly urged to keep emergency contact information up-to-date in the event of a severe illness or injury. If contact cannot be made and transportation to a medical facility is deemed urgent, Pea Ridge Pre-K assumes no responsibility for the treatment. **Parents are responsible for any expenses incurred due to an injury.**

Advance arrangements should be made for the care of a child when the child is sick, if the parent will be unable to stay at home with the child. Parents should call the Pre-K as soon as possible in the day to report an absence.



Parents should keep a child home if any of the following exist:

Fever: If the temperature is at or above 100 degrees without medication; must be free of fever for 24 hours

Diarrhea: Three (3) or more watery stools in a 24 hour period

Vomiting: Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hour period

Rash: Body rashes not obviously associated with heat or allergic reaction

Sore Throat: If associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck

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Severe Coughing: Episodes which may lead to gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing

Pink Eye: Pink or red eye(s) which may be swollen with white or yellowish discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.



Scabies, Head Lice, or the presence of nits:

May return after treatment and removal of nits

Other: Any contagious disease, illness, or health concern. May return based on doctor's recommendation.

Please understand these policies are in place to protect your child and other children/staff members in the school, rather than to create a hardship on anyone. A child sent home with any illness will not be able to return to the school until they are free of symptoms for at least 24 hours (fevers must be gone for 24 hours without fever reducing medication) or have a doctor's note stating that the child may return to school and is not contagious. This means that if a child is sent home during the day, he/she may not return the next morning, but must wait until the 24 hour period has passed or has a doctor's note stating that the child may return to school and is not contagious. Common colds and allergies should not, unless causing the child to feel too uncomfortable, prohibit attendance.



If your child is well enough to come to school and the weather permits, all children will go outside. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. A child should be kept at home if he/she is ill enough for any reason to need one-on-one care or is too ill to go outside.

Head Lice Policy: If head lice or nits are found on your child, you will be called to pick up your child and given information on treatment. The child will be checked upon his/her return to Pea Ridge Pre-K and may stay if proof of treatment (empty lice treatment container) is shown and the child is "nit free".

The following criteria will be used as a before notifying parents when a child becomes ill at school:

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Symptoms of contagious conjunctivitis/pink eye (students may return after being on medication for 24 hours)



- Symptoms of a contagious disease
- Serious injuries (deemed such by the teacher, director, or nurse)
- Symptoms of head lice
- Symptoms that the teacher, director, or nurse deems as a possible health risk to the student and/or other students in the school

Stock Medications

The following medications are kept in the nurse's office: acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen, cough drops, sore throat spray, antibiotic ointment, antacids (Tums), Benadryl, Benadryl cream, and hydrocortisone cream. These medicines will only be administered at the discretion of the school nurse. Tylenol and Ibuprofen may be administered according to the following guidelines:

- Fever over 102 degrees
- Headaches and/or other pains not relieved by other measures such as ice, heat, food, rest, etc.
- Health care provider's order



Tylenol, Ibuprofen, and Tums will not be administered before 10:00 a.m. and after 2:00 p.m.

A Student Medication Administration Release Form is located in the back of this handbook. This form should be completed, signed, and returned to your child's teacher so that the school nurse in order for your child to receive stock medication.

Immunizations

Up-to-date immunizations are required by Arkansas Law and by the Arkansas Department of Health for all children who attend a preschool facility, unless an immunization exemption is on file. A student enrolled in the District who has an exemption may be removed from school at the discretion of the Department of Health during an outbreak of the disease for which the student is not vaccinated.

The student may not return to school until the outbreak is resolved and the student's return is approved by the Department of Health.



Head Lice

The following procedures will be used to address head lice:

Screening for lice may occur when a student exhibits excessive itching/scratching, when a student has been exposed to a sibling or other child with head lice, or when parents or their child make a self-referral.

Three (3) non-related cases of head lice in a classroom within ten (10) consecutive days will require all students in the classroom to be screened by the following school day.

The parent/guardian of a child found with head lice will be asked to pick up their child.

The parent/guardian will be given information concerning the removal and control of head lice. The student may be readmitted after the school nurse or designee has determined the student has no live head lice.

Parents who notice head lice at home are asked to complete treatment prior to coming school. Parents are asked to notify the school of their child's condition so that appropriate action may be taken at school.



Outdoor Play Policy

Outdoor play is not just recess, it is an extension of our indoor learning opportunities. Children will go outside every day except in cases of rain or extreme cold. The time spent outside is adjusted to the temperature; children will be taken out if at all possible. **If children are healthy enough to be at school, they are healthy enough to play outside.** It is a licensing policy that children are outside for a total of at least one hour of outdoor play per day in suitable weather. If a child is unable to participate in the day's activities such as outside play, the child should not attend that day.

Please dress your child for the weather, especially cool mornings in fall and spring. Sneakers with socks, or other similar shoes, are best for running and playing, and enjoying the outdoors. Parents who choose to may sign a consent form for the use of sunscreen during outside play.



Abuse Reporting

Our teachers are required by state law to report suspected child abuse/maltreatment. This includes non-accidental injuries, such as welts, bruises, cuts, burns, scratches, and broken bones. Suspected sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect are also reported. Child neglect is defined as abandonment, lack of food, utilities, shelter, or lack of supervision.

Teachers who fail to report suspected abuse/maltreatment can be charged with a Class C misdemeanor. Reports are confidential and are considered allegations until an investigation is completed. The phone number for the Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-482-5964 and is posted on the parent bulletin board in the Pre-K Parent Resource Center.



Interviews by DHS and other Agencies

Any staff member or child in attendance may be interviewed by Child Care Licensing, by the Division of Child and Family Services, child maltreatment investigators, and/or by law enforcement officers for the purpose of investigations or to determine compliance with licensing requirements. Child interviews do not require parental notice or consent.

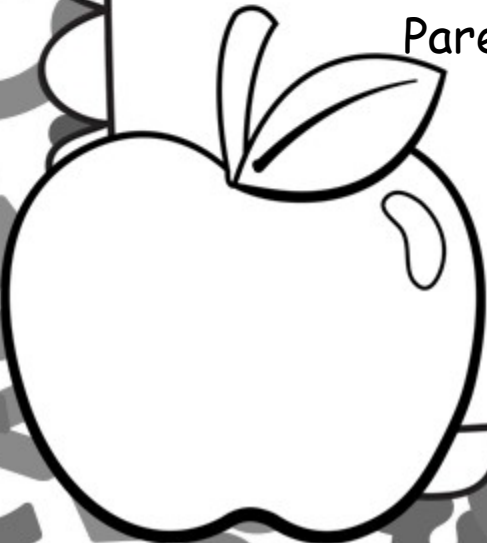
Photographs and Videos

Teachers use digital cameras and video to record learning throughout the day.

Documentation provides valuable insight into your child's growth and development.

Photographs are displayed throughout your child's classroom. Video may be used during special meetings or events. Photographs may be submitted to the local newspaper to inform the community of happenings in our program.

Parents will sign a release in order for their children to be included in photos and videos.



Due to privacy issues, we ask that parents only post pictures and/or videos of their own children on social media sites while visiting our classrooms or on field trips. Not all children have signed media release forms and we must respect their privacy in all media venues.

Withdrawal Policy

The following procedures will be observed should it be necessary for a student to withdraw from the program:

1. Inform school staff of withdrawal and withdrawal date
2. If attending another school, the new school will send a request for records



The Establishment Clause in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibits public aid for religious worship or instruction. Court decisions interpreting the Establishment Clause make it clear that ABC materials be neutral with respect to religion, and that no religious activity may occur during the ABC day

The Pea Ridge Pre-Kindergarten program follows the guidelines and policies outlined in the Pea Ridge School District Handbook, which may be found at www.prs.k12.ar.us

