

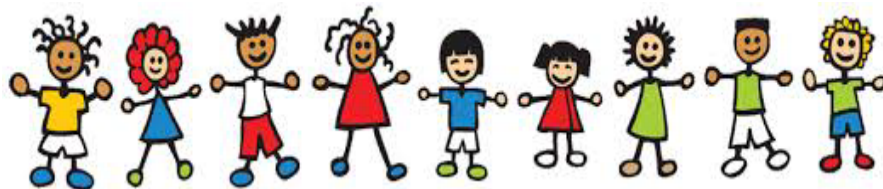
Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Preschool For All

Prekindergarten 3-5

Prevention Initiative 0-3



Jersey Community Unit School District No. 100

Preschool for All

Prekindergarten 3-5 & Prevention Initiative 0-3
2023-2024

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Preschool For All

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Mission Statements

Jersey Community Unit School District No. 100

Our **Pre-Kindergarten** program provides all children and their parents an opportunity to grow and change in positive ways by providing an environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of all children three-to-five years of age.

Our **Prevention Initiative Birth-to-Three** program provides children and their families an opportunity to grow in positive ways. By promoting a literacy-rich environment, fostering imagination, and providing physical and emotional support, families are better equipped to help their children reach their maximum potential.

Prekindergarten 3-5 Prevention Initiative 0-3

Early Childhood Philosophy

The purpose of the Prekindergarten Program and Birth-to-three program is to provide children and parents with an opportunity to grow and change in positive ways. We believe that in order to make long-term positive changes in a child, it is necessary to involve parents and to work together to make long-term positive changes in the family. Therefore, our goals and philosophy are aimed at serving the needs of the whole family - child and parent.

Our programs provide an environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of the young child. This in turn enables him/her to become independent, productive and contributing adult members of our society.

Our programs also provide an environment that promotes parents to have a better understanding of the needs of children and enhances their parenting skills. This enables the parent to continue beyond the scope of our programs encouraging the child and making a positive difference in promoting the child to achieve to their full potential. Workshops, parent-child playgroups, classes, community field trips, and classroom visits will all provide opportunities for families to learn and grow.

The Preschool for All programs serve families who may potentially have difficulty in social, emotional, cognitive, and/or physical tasks when they enter school because one or more of these areas are developmentally delayed. While providing appropriate activities in all areas of growth and development, teachers provide children specific training and activities to strengthen needful areas. Emphasis is placed on individual and family needs as assessed through consistent monitoring.

These are developmental programs in which all activities are designed to foster growth that is developmentally appropriate for the preschool child. Children learn through play and other informal learning situations that are appropriate. A more natural environment is used where children can interact in small and large groups while teachers provide opportunities for them to learn.

Essential to a child's successful school experience is having a positive self-image. A child who feels capable and able to learn is likely to be a good achiever. Our teachers focus on self-esteem, encouraging the children to value themselves as capable and important. We believe that good discipline includes responding to inappropriate behavior in ways that help develop an understanding and acceptance of appropriate behavior while maintaining the child's sense of being valuable and capable. Positive discipline techniques are always used and at no time are children disciplined in negative ways.

Our programs are a partnership of child, parents and teachers. We believe it is necessary for parents and teachers to work together for the improvement and development of the child and family.

Welcome to Prekindergarten 3-5

We are happy to have your child enrolled in the Preschool for All: Pre-K class in District #100. All children who participate in this program are 3-5 years of age and come from all parts of Jersey County. Soon your child will be able to share with you all the many new activities he/she is involved in and the new friends he/she has met.

We will encourage your child to learn through play. Play is important and necessary for the preschool child. It encourages the child's development in the areas of language, cognitive, social and emotional, fine motor, creative and physical development. They will learn in play situations, informal situations, and formal situations.

Attendance

Preschool students attend regular classes Monday through Friday. The morning class student arrival time is 8:15 and dismissal is 11:00. The afternoon class student arrival time is 12:15 and dismissal is 3:00. Families are expected to attend parental involvement activities as often as possible with their child. Attendance will be taken at each parental involvement activity, parent-child interaction activity, scheduled conference, scheduled student assessment meeting, and your scheduled home visit days.

We do important things every day and hope your child will be at school to benefit from them. Unless your child is sick or there is another important reason such as a family emergency, we expect your child to be at school. Why is this so important even for such young children? Good habits begin early. If your child learns that attendance is expected in preschool, the pattern will continue as he or she grows older. You want your child to be successful in school and starting this routine is a great way to begin reaching that goal. It is your responsibility as a parent to see that your child attends regularly—and you will be happy with the results! They will learn more, have valuable time shared with classmates, learn not to make excuses when they have a responsibility, and become all around better students because they have begun a routine of good attendance. We look forward to seeing your child in school!

Early Dismissal

If there is an early dismissal due to weather or emergency conditions, the afternoon classes may be cancelled. Our district website will have the latest up-dated information.

Delayed Start

Should it be necessary for the district to determine a delayed start to the school day is necessary, there will be no morning Pre-K classes. Afternoon classes will run as scheduled. Our district website will have the latest up-dated information.

School Improvement Days / Early Dismissal

There are no morning or afternoon classes on School Improvement/Professional Development early dismissal days. PFA staff will participate in various professional development activities on these days. Please refer to District and Program Calendars for specific dates.

Change of Clothing

We have some clothing at school for your child in case of an accident. Should your child use these, please wash and return so that it is available for the next child. It is preferred that you send a baggie with a change of clothing for your child. Please label with child's name. These will be kept in your child's cubbie.

Classroom Visit/Volunteer

Our program has an open door policy and encourages parent involvement within the classroom. As parents choose to spend the morning or afternoon in the prekindergarten classroom, you have two different types of classroom visit options. Depending on the option you choose, the parent and teacher expectations take on a slightly different role.

As a **parent visitor**, you may spend the day playing with your child and his/her friends. You will participate in the activities and centers with your child. You will spend free time together and engage in conversations enhancing the activity. This is an excellent opportunity to communicate, share excitement, and learn with your child. During each classroom visit, you will be encouraged to complete a "Kid Watcher" form.

As a **classroom volunteer**, you may volunteer in the classroom by helping an assigned group of students with an activity, helping the teacher prepare materials for future activities, or perhaps working with one child on a particular activity. Volunteering in the classroom allows you the opportunity to work with the teachers and students while observing your child play and interact with other students.

Classroom interactions provide you with the opportunity to become involved with your child's academic life. You may visit the classroom at any time. If you know in advance that you plan to visit the classroom on a certain day, it is helpful, but not required, to let the teacher know when you will be coming. At that time, or when you arrive at school, please discuss with the teacher your expectations for the visit. This will help you and the teacher make the most of your visit.

Communication

Two-way parent communication is encouraged through use of the SeeSaw app, email, or phone contact. We will be sending notes, newsletters, and reminders out frequently in an effort to keep you informed. Phone calls will be made as needed. If you have questions, please email, call or stop by. We want you to know what is going on and we welcome your questions. Please communicate with us whenever you have the need.

Pre-K Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice per year. Parents of all children will participate in fall conferences. Parents of children entering kindergarten in the

fall will also participate in winter conferences. Early Learning Scale assessment reports will be completed and discussed with parents in the fall, winter, and spring. These will be distributed during conferences or sent home.

Dress

Opportunities will be provided to work with paints, clay, glue, markers, etc., so please dress your child in washable play clothing each day. They feel comfortable to participate if they do not have to worry about staying clean. Outdoor play will be offered when weather is permitting, so please dress your child appropriately. For the safety of all children, tennis shoes are recommended.

Fees

There are no registration fees for our prekindergarten program. This program is funded by the Illinois State Board of Education and Jersey C.U.S.D. No. 100. Every child accepted into this program must qualify using State and District guidelines. Active parent participation is a requirement of our prekindergarten program.

Field Trips and Rules

Field Trips are part of the early childhood curriculum. There are no field trip fees or costs to families. We will be going on various in-district field trips throughout the year. Some will be walking trips and others will be by bus. We require a signed permission slip for all field trips. We may request a permission slip that will cover all walking field trips. A signed permission slip will be required for each individual bus trip. Children may not attend any field trip without a permission slip. Please return slips promptly.

Permission slips for field trips on a bus will be sent home before each planned event. These **MUST** be filled out and returned in order for your child to participate. If you would be willing to help on any of the field trips, please contact us. We always appreciate your help.

Guidelines:

1. While we include siblings in many of our Pre-K activities, field trips are

designed to be specific learning activities for your Pre-K child. Parents are encouraged to attend, however, siblings are not part of the learning experience and should not attend any field trips.

2. Children need to stay with the group. No running. Hold hands or a rope so that all children will be kept together.
3. Adults watch and interact with those children assigned to their care.
4. Children listen to and follow the adults to which they are assigned.
5. Adults listen to the reactions of the children and answer any questions. Please talk to the children about what they are seeing, hearing, touching, etc.
6. Adults please remember: You are a role model for the children. Don't discuss "adult subjects" in front of them, and no smoking is allowed on field trips.

Health

Children entering our Preschool For All program must have an up-dated and current immunization record on file and a completed physical examination dated within one year of entering the program. Returning students do not need another physical unless they have changes in health issues. These requirements must be completed prior to the start of school or the children will be excluded from school.

Please keep your child at home when he/she has a temperature and/or is not feeling well. This protects your child as well as the other children. Children must be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should not take medications during school hours unless necessary for their health and well-being. All medications must be discussed with the school nurse and be brought to the school by a responsible adult. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure medicine arrives safely.

Home Visits

Home visits are a required component of our PFA program. Every effort will be made to complete a home visit on all students with priority appointments given to

children new to our prekindergarten program. Home visits for returning students will be completed as time allows.

Three-year-old students will receive additional home visits as needed based on individual needs. New students entering the program after the school year begins will receive their first home visit prior to the student beginning school if possible, or as the teacher's evening schedule can accommodate.

Home visits will be scheduled as teacher's time allows. Evening visits are available for working parents who cannot be available during the daytime. The initial home visit takes about 30 minutes and the remaining visits will be scheduled individually and may take additional time depending on the needs of the child and the purpose of the visit. If necessary, you may discuss the length of the home visit with your child's teacher when the appointment is scheduled so that you allow ample time before planning the rest of your day. If you cannot make your appointment, you must notify the teacher as soon as possible to reschedule a time with will work for you. You will be notified of the home visit date and time via SeeSaw, phone or by a note sent home with your child.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is a requirement of our preschool program. All parents must fulfill this obligation to keep their child eligible to participate in this program. This is required of everyone who participates and there are **no exceptions**. During the year there will be numerous opportunities to participate in Parenting Activities. We offer childcare during many of our parenting activities.

The following outlines the parenting components that must be completed during the school year. Failure to complete these activities will make your child ineligible to continue participating in preschool.

- PARENTING CLASS and/or PARENT WORKSHOPS
- PARENT-CHILD PLAYGROUP ACTIVITY and/or CLASSROOM VISIT
- AT-HOME ACTIVITIES (as suggested by the teacher)

We want you to come and visit the class, go with us on field trips, help with special projects, and most of all we want you to participate in many parenting activities

beyond the required amount. However, your participation during classroom parties and on field trips is not a part of our required activities. They are optional activities and therefore do not count in place of the required activities, but are in addition to them. All of our parenting activities are geared to help parents with the overwhelming task of "parenting". Parenting is the job that is probably the most demanding yet the job for which we have the least training. While your children are growing and changing in positive ways we think these parent activities will help you to grow and change in positive ways, too. We hope you will attend as many activities as possible.

Parties

While siblings are included in many of our family activities, any school parties are designed and planned for your preschool child only and siblings should not attend. Some parents may be needed to assist with school parties. If you are interested in volunteering, please check with your child's teacher prior to the first scheduled party. This eliminates duplication of party snacks and activities.

We celebrate birthdays at school. You may send a healthy pre-packaged snack on this day if you wish. Please contact the teacher prior to your child's birthday so snack time can be planned accordingly. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate it during the month of May. Please check with the teacher for the specific celebration date.

We celebrate some holidays. Please let us know ahead of time if you wish to send a healthy snack. This will help us monitor so it does not get too overwhelming.

Resource Library for Parents

We have a Parent Lending Library that contains a variety of resources that parents find valuable as they work to develop and refine parenting skills for the various phases of early childhood development. Teachers will periodically send home resources and other parenting information that addresses topics in which parents have indicated an interest. The following resources are also available to check out of our library upon request. Please let your child's teacher or home visitor know what topic you wish to explore and you will receive that information. Our program offers social services and mental health services for children and families. Please discuss this with your child's teacher as needed.

Books

10 Days to a Less Defiant Child
ADD & ADHD Answer Book
Birth to 6 Developmental Profiles
Biting, Tantrums, and 47 Other Problems
Break Cycle of Violence
Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development
Children-The Challenge
Courage to be a Stepmom
Creative Play-Children with Disabilities
Dare to Discipline
Divorce
Dry All Night
Grandparents as Parents
Guide for Raising Responsible Children
Help For Parents
How Children Learn
Language and Literacy Activities
Meltdowns
Parenting for Dummies
Parenting through Crisis
Preschooler's Busy Book Games and Activities
Siblings without Rivalry
Single Mothers
Sleep Book for Tired Parents
Strong-Willed Child
When Child Loses Control
When Someone Dies
Whining

Pamphlets

Abuse/Alcohol/Neglect
Anger
ADD
Blended Families
Balanced Diet
Car Seat Safety
Communication Skills
Conflict Resolution
Death and Grief
Discipline
Divorce
Depression
Ear Infections
Emotional/Social Dev.
Foster Parents
Fatherhood
Grandparents
Hearing
Language
Learning through Play
Learning Styles
Misbehaving
Co-Parenting
Single Parent
Toilet Training
Problem Solving
Reading
Self-Control
Social Skills
Step-Families

Speech/Language Program

Speech and Language services are a part of the preschool program. Students identified with Speech/Language delays are evaluated and provided with appropriate services to meet the needs of the individual student. Speech Therapists work closely with preschool teachers and parents to promote better speech/language skills.

The four areas that are evaluated are:

1. Articulation Skills -
What speech sounds can the child make?
2. Language Skills -
Receptive language - What words does the child understand?
Expressive language - What words does the child use?
Grammar Skills - How does the child form sentences?
(Pronouns, verbs, etc.)
3. Fluency Skills -
Does the child have smooth flowing speech?
4. Voice -
Does the child use his/her voice correctly?

Speech/Language services can be provided in the following ways:

Articulation Therapy, Fluency Therapy, and Voice Therapy -

This is provided in small groups in the speech room by a therapist.

Language Therapy -

This is provided in small groups in the classroom and/or speech room by a therapist.

Sign Language Services -

Baby Signs® are taught during whole group and small group instruction. This instruction allows all students to communicate with their classmates through the use of sign language.

Snack Time

A healthy snack is provided through our grant funded Preschool For All prekindergarten program each day at no cost to families. Our Preschool for All prekindergarten program does not participate in the school breakfast/lunch program. Students should eat breakfast or lunch before coming to school each day.

White milk is provided each day through our grant funded program at no cost to parents/guardians. Juice, water, or other drink may be substituted occasionally (example: class parties, birthday parties, field trips, or other classroom events).

Please discuss any specific dietary needs or special food or drink restrictions or requirements with your child's teacher and the school nurse prior to the first day of preschool attendance.

Supplies

All school supplies and materials are provided and funded through our Early Childhood Preschool for All Block Grant program. Backpacks are not needed for our Pre-K program. Teachers will send school information, children's work, and any other correspondence home on Fridays. Two-way parent communication is encouraged through use of the SeeSaw app, email, or by phone contact.

Transportation – Bus Riders

This Preschool for All program is not a "mandatory" program. It is an "optional" program and, therefore, the school district does NOT have to provide busing. Because the district is committed to the program, we have ELECTED to provide busing for the students and areas most in need. There are strict guidelines that must be followed if your child is eligible for bus service. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in loss of service.

1. There must be an **adult in sight** when the bus stops to drop the child off. Children who are three - five years old are too young to be left without supervision. Please watch for them so we will know that you are home waiting for their arrival.
2. Children must be ready 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled Pick Up and Drop Off times. When a bus must wait a few minutes on a child it makes parents further down the line wait and become worried. Make arrangements to always have someone at your drop off point on time. If you are delayed, have someone else available to meet the bus.
3. The bus driver makes every effort to adhere to a bus schedule. This is difficult because some days all children ride and other days only a few children may ride. Therefore, you must be flexible and realize that Pick Up and Drop Off times may vary as much as 15-20 minutes and this is unavoidable.
4. There is **ONLY ONE** Pick Up point and **ONLY ONE** Drop Off point for each child. We **will not** take the child to different places on different days. Bus schedules must be consistent to avoid errors and confusion when a substitute bus driver is needed. If this becomes inconvenient for you, you will have to make your own transportation arrangements.
5. Speak to your child about the importance of sitting down, wearing their seat belt, and staying in their seat while riding the bus. There is a transportation aide on the bus to help the children with seat belts and to keep order on the bus.

Transportation - Car Riders

1. Parents bringing their children to school must be prompt. Children who are tardy have a difficult time in the activities that follow. Children should arrive **NO EARLIER** than class starts and should be brought to the designated area. The teacher is not available before that time unless it is a scheduled appointment. Please **DO NOT** bring children earlier.

2. Parents picking up children must be prompt. Teachers have many responsibilities after the class ends and are not available to wait for parents to pick up a child. Please be thoughtful and courteous.
3. We will not release your child to any person who is not authorized to pick up the child. If someone is going to be meeting or picking up your child that you have not previously authorized, please inform us in writing each day there is a change.

Transportation - Changes

If your child is a bus rider and will not be riding the bus to school on any given day, you will need to call the transportation depot at the bus garage (618-498-9866) to cancel service for the day. If your child is not riding the bus home, please send a note or call the school office to get a message to the teacher. You will need to arrive at school to pick up your child before the bus leaves school.

Volunteers

An important part of our Preschool for All program is parent volunteers. If you are a parent or legal guardian, we welcome your willingness to volunteer in the classroom as well as at school. If you are not a parent or legal guardian but wish to volunteer on behalf of a relative or friend enrolled in preschool, we welcome your help, but will need a minimum one week notice before volunteering at the school or in the classroom. This should be requested by calling the school office or sending a note in the big pocket of the child's backpack stating your full name and the school activity in which you choose to volunteer.

Preschool for All: 0-3

Welcome to PFA Prevention Initiative 0-3

Jersey CUSD #100 offers a variety of family involvement activities for parents and children 0-3 years of age. These activities and services are provide to families free of charge.

Research tells us that children may learn up to 60% of what they will ever know before the age of six. The first three years are vitally important to our children. As parents and educators, we want to provide the best environment in which our children can develop to their fullest potential.

Prevention Initiative Program Model: BABY TALK

The Baby Talk program is designated to give developmental information and support to all parents of infants and young children. The goal of the program is to help parents give their child the best possible start in life. Through home visits, group connections, screenings, and community resource network information, Baby Talk will help inform you of what you can reasonably expect of your child at each stage of development, help you be a good observer of your child, help you have fun playing with your child with age-appropriate activities and materials, and help you be your child's first and most important teacher.

Home Visiting Program

Our Home Visiting Program is available for parents and families with children 0-3 years of age. A parent educator will come to your home when your child is newborn and then weekly, every other week, or monthly thereafter until the child reaches age three. You may enroll in this program at any time prior to your child's third birthday. During a typical home visit, the parent educator will discuss your child's development, read to your child, provide home visit activities, share appropriate parenting program information with you, and answer any parenting questions and/or concerns.

Ages & Stages Monitoring

Ages & Stages (ASQ) is a child monitoring questionnaire that is completed by the parent. This questionnaire starts at age 4 months and continues to 36 months. The purpose of the questionnaire is to help parents follow the developmental stages of their child more closely and help track the child's developmental progress.

Parenting Classes

We offer a variety of classes on topics of interest to parents. Topics may include effective discipline, communication, cooperation, sibling rivalry, self-esteem, toilet training language development, and social and emotional development.

Group Connections Activities

Parents regularly get together to discuss a parenting topic or one of the eight areas of developmental instruction. Parent and child then participate together in a related fun activity. Other activities may consist of parent and child coming to school to read and engage in literacy-rich activities based on a children's book. Some activities include community discovery days where parent and child participate in an interactive activity to discover and explore the world around them. A healthy snack is provided.

Baby Sign Language

Over two decades of research has shown that teaching your baby sign language provides many benefits to both children and parents. Baby signs reduces tears, tantrums and frustration, makes learning to talk easier, boosts self-esteem and self-confidence, stimulates intellectual development and strengthens the parent-child bond.

**Thank you for helping us make this year
in our Preschool for All: Prekindergarten 3-5
and Prevention Initiative 0-3 Programs a
positive experience for your family.**