

Randolph Central School Corporation



Preschool Program Handbook

Deerfield Elementary School

213 West State Road 28
Ridgeville, IN 47380
(765) 595-0144
(800) 850-2554



Baker Elementary School

600 South Oak Street
Winchester, IN 47394
(765) 584-5581



Welcome to the Randolph Central School Corporation Preschool Programs!

Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your child's early childhood education. This preschool handbook is designed to answer many of the questions you may have about our program. Here are some highlights:

- ❖ Our Deerfield Elementary Preschool is a **Paths to Quality Level 3** program. Our Baker Elementary Preschool program is in the process of working towards Paths to Quality Level 3.
- ❖ Our preschool teachers are required to hold a Child Development Certificate (CDA) credential within their first year of employment.
- ❖ Currently, our building principals serve as Preschool Directors and work together to assure a quality early learning experience is accessible to ALL children.
- ❖ The Deerfield and Baker Elementary Preschools are open every day of the Randolph Central School Corporation calendar and tuition is charged by the session with the expectation that preschool students are enrolled for 180 days.
- ❖ Randolph Central School Corporation Preschools accept CCDF vouchers and are eligible to take On My Way Pre-K vouchers. If you need information about these state programs, we are here to help!
- ❖ Students eligible for preschool under IDEA Part B (special education law) pay no tuition for the morning program ending at 12:00 p.m. at Deerfield Elementary. These preschoolers have the option to stay for the afternoon portion of the day at a cost of \$6 per day. Special Education students who want to attend for part of the day at Baker Elementary should attend the GRIC preschool. Round-trip transportation is provided. In addition to preschool teachers, they also interact with licensed special education staff.

About Our Program

Randolph Central School Corporation offers a fully inclusive Preschool Program. We understand that a child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development is best nurtured among caring adults and peers within an environment that extends curiosity and enriches learning. Our program is child-centered while providing the structure needed for children to feel safe within predictable routines. We respect that each child is uniquely individual and eagerly watch for and celebrate learning milestones as a natural outcome of play and guided learning activities.

We want your child to enjoy coming to preschool! We use positive classroom practices as the foundation for building a joyful community of learners. Our teachers and support staff take every opportunity to honor creativity and wonder as primary means for cultivating self-confidence and self-expression. Conversation, observation, and patient listening are the tools used by our entire Preschool team to develop the relationships children depend on as they work through challenges and share their accomplishments.

We know that parents, grandparents, and other caregivers rely on our communication. We promise to do our personal best to keep you informed of all special events, school celebrations, upcoming topics related to curriculum, and other important information through our weekly newsletter.

About Our Curriculum

Our preschool curriculum is based on the 2015 *Indiana Early Learning Foundations*. During each class session, children move through a series of specially designed learning centers where they may participate at their own personal level of interest and ability. The curriculum focuses on learning basic concepts and skills through hands-on experiences and activities. Some centers are designed to develop large and small motor skills while others are more academically oriented. By using the 2015 *Indiana Early Learning Foundations* as our guide, we provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the development of the whole child. We use the DIG Pre-K curriculum, Haggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum, and Tucker Turtle. Teachers make decisions each day as they observe children and respond in appropriate ways. The observations require teachers to think about each child and consider how best to provide support.

Enrollment Process

Children must be 3 years of age to attend the preschool program at Deerfield, and 4 years of age to attend the preschool program at Baker. Enrollment is rolling, so children are welcome to enroll and attend on or after their third birthday at any time during the school year. A completed RCSC Preschool Enrollment Packet is required for all students. The packet must be received by school office personnel. Evidence that all immunizations are up to date and a copy of the child's birth certificate must be presented with the completed enrollment packet.

Families who plan to transition from the First Steps Program should communicate their decision to enroll their child in the Deerfield Elementary Preschool Program at their 30-month transition meeting. A Case Conference will be held prior to the child's third birthday to develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Families are contacted by the school their child will attend to schedule a Case Conference date and time.

Toileting Requirement

General education preschoolers must be completely toilet-trained and be capable of using the bathroom independently at the time of enrollment. Preschoolers with developmental disabilities and a current Individual Education Plan (IEP) do not need to meet this requirement.

Confidentiality Commitment to Families

Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. Communications among staff and parents about children should be kept confidential at all times. We believe that conversations about a child, their behavior, or an incident should be conducted in private, away from the child and other members of the school community. If a parent has a question or concern, we suggest first contacting the child's teacher via email or in-person to arrange a time for a productive discussion. Our goal is for communication between staff, parents, and administrators to be open and accessible.

Parents should expect that all children are cared for in a safe, supportive, respectful, and trusting environment. Behavior management will be fair, equal, and respectful of the individual development of all children. Educational experiences will be engaging and children have plenty of choice time and playtime.

Attendance & Tuition Fees

Regular attendance in preschool is highly encouraged. However, if your child must miss a day due to illness or for any other reason, please contact the school office to report the absence. Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to preschool. Our Preschool Program follows the Randolph Central School Corporation calendar. Children are expected to attend for the 180 days of the Randolph Central School Corporation calendar, which is the equivalent of 5 full days per week. The fee per day (6 hours) is \$25.00. Fees are charged each day regardless of attendance.

Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Participants

Families using CCDF vouchers to pay for preschool tuition are required to slide their participation cards every time they enter or leave the program. Under NO circumstances may a staff member do this on behalf of a parent/guardian. We are happy to assist, but we are not permitted to keep a card, copy a card, or copy a card number or its pin.

On My Way Pre-K

Families using On My Way Pre-K grants to pay for preschool tuition are required to pay the difference of the weekly preschool tuition of \$25/day minus the On My Way Pre-K grant amounts if the On My Way Pre-K grant amount is less than the weekly RCSC preschool tuition. Full-time grant payments are available for students who are income eligible & attend preschool for at least 25 hours per week. Half-time grant payments are available for students who are income eligible & attend preschool for less than 25 hours per week. Total grant amounts are based on the On My Way Pre-K County market rates for Randolph County.

Transportation/Release Policy

Parents of General Education Preschoolers are 100% responsible for providing transportation to and from preschool for their child. **The policy for release/special pick-up is as follows:**

- ❖ Please inform the school office with a note or phone call if someone other than those you have originally authorized will be picking up your child (a photo I.D. is required).
- ❖ Children can only be released to parents and adults whose names are designated in the RCSC Preschool Enrollment Packet. Be prepared to show proof of identification upon request.
- ❖ Any additions to the authorized list must be made in person in the school office.
- ❖ For safety reasons, we are unable to release a child to another minor.
- ❖ Both parents can pick up their child from preschool unless we have court order documentation stipulating otherwise in the school's main office.

Arrival/Dismissal

Please arrive promptly for preschool! We begin to engage in activities as soon as school starts!

Deerfield Elementary Preschool

The preschool staff will meet the buses when doors open at 8:00 a.m. If you are dropping your child off at 8:00 when doors open, please park and walk your child to the preschool entry doors. We do require hand-to-hand drop-off and pick-up. Walk your child to and from the doors. Do not operate your vehicle in the bus loading area when buses are present.

If you arrive at school after the preschool staff has returned to the classroom, please sign in at the office and walk your child to the classroom. Parents may wait outside the school or in the lobby. For dismissal, preschool staff will meet parents outside or in the lobby at 2:30.

Baker Elementary Preschool

The preschool staff will meet the buses when doors open at 8:00 a.m. If you are dropping your child off at 8:00 when doors open, please park and walk your child to the preschool entry doors. We do require hand-to-hand drop-off and pick-up. Walk your child to and from the doors. Do not operate your vehicle in the bus loading area when buses are present.

If you arrive at school after the preschool staff has returned to the classroom, please sign in at the office and walk your child to the classroom. Parents may wait outside the preschool door. For dismissal, preschool staff will meet parents outside the preschool door at 2:30.

School Entry and Security

The school is equipped with a video entry system enabling the school building to be locked during the school day. You or someone on the authorized pick-up list may be required to ring the video monitor located at the main entrance to be admitted into the building. If you have any questions about this process be sure to ask the office staff or school principal.

Student Meal Prices

Student meal prices are \$1.75 for breakfast and \$2.45 for lunch.

Currently, breakfast and snacks are provided at no cost to families. Parents may also opt to send a packed lunch. Please do not send soda or pop of any kind to your child's packed lunch.

This is subject to change on a year-to-year basis.

Home Connections (Family Involvement)

One of our goals is to help your child connect *you* with their preschool classroom. A communication folder will be sent home in your child's book bag daily. Here you will find important information about what's going on at school, activities your child has completed at school, and papers that may need a signature and return to school. **Please check book bags/folders every night.** Preschool parents will receive weekly Newsletters. Preschool parents may donate items or volunteer to help with class events as well as accompany their child on field trips.

Visitors and Program Observation

RCSC Preschool welcomes volunteers and classroom visitors. A criminal history check is required and confidentiality agreements may be required as appropriate. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school in order to prevent any inconvenience. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, **EACH VISITOR MUST ENTER AT THE MAIN OFFICE DOORS** to sign in and receive a visitor's pass. Any visitor found in the building without signing in and wearing a visitor's pass shall be reported to the principal.

Supplies

Every child must have a complete change of clothing at all times, including socks and underwear. If your child has changed clothing during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace them the next day. All clothing items must be labeled with the child's full name. **If your child is still in the process of toilet training, additional pull-ups, wipes, and backup sets of clothing must be provided daily.** A general supply list will be provided.

Lost and Found

Please mark all personal items with your child's name. We will make every attempt to locate and return lost items. This task is much easier if your child's name is on the items. We cannot be responsible for any personal items that your child may bring to school. There is a lost and found area in the school. Parents of students who have lost items should check there for their items.

Snacks

Snacks are provided each day. Students may bring a water bottle (plain water in a clear plastic bottle).

Nap/Rest Time

Students who attend all-day preschool will have **1-1 ½ hours of rest time** each day. During this time, students will have their own mat to lie on. Calming rest music may be played during this time.

Birthday Parties

Children are allowed to bring in snacks to celebrate birthdays. Only store-bought foods can be served, and the food provided must include a completed list of ingredients and food label notifications. Healthy treats are encouraged.

Illness

Colds, flu, & other contagious diseases seem to occur frequently and spread easily among preschool and toddler children. To help protect your own child's health and to minimize the possibility of contagion at school, please keep your child home if you observe any of the following symptoms:

- ❖ Nasal discharge that is green or yellow
- ❖ Complaints of ear pain
- ❖ Severe sore throat
- ❖ Eyes that are pink, burning or itching or producing discharge
- ❖ Diarrhea or vomiting
- ❖ Fever or chills
- ❖ Cough
- ❖ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- ❖ Muscle or body aches
- ❖ Headache
- ❖ New loss of taste or smell

If these symptoms of possibly contagious conditions or other conditions deemed contagious are observed in your child during the day, you will be called to come to pick up your child.

When your child has a fever, please keep him/her at home until their temperature returns to normal and he/she stays fever free for 24 hours without Tylenol or ibuprofen. Children also must be free from diarrhea and vomiting for 24 hours prior to returning to preschool. If there are any lingering signs of illness, i.e. glassy/watery eyes, listlessness, and/or drowsiness, etc., please keep your child home an additional day. This will help to ensure that the illness has actually passed and that your child will be well enough to resume school activities. Please call the main office if your child will be absent.

Medications

Any student needing to take medication at school must have a form filed in the office with the direction for giving the medication. The proper form may be picked up at the school. The medicine must be kept in the office and must be in the original prescription bottle bearing the pharmacy label and the student's name. School personnel cannot be expected to administer medication that requires skill beyond their qualification. Parents may come to school to administer medication instead of having the forms filled out. Any changes in medication shall be documented by written authorization from the physician.

Field Trips

Parents are encouraged to attend field trips with their children. Parents who wish to ride the bus and/or chaperone other students on the trip must have a full certified background check on file in the main office. Background checks will need to be done yearly.

Discipline Practices

Use of Positive Measures to Produce Acceptable Behavior

In order to maintain a happy, healthy, disciplined environment, the children are taught the importance of safety, care of the property, good habits, rules of conduct, consideration, and respect for others.

Constructive methods of discipline are used to maintain group control and handle individual behavior. Our main focus on discipline (teaching/training) is preventative in nature, as we aim to build self-discipline in the child.

Use of Constructive Measures to Discourage Unacceptable Behavior

When a child exhibits unacceptable behavior or attitudes, he/she is instructed as to what is wrong and then directed to a positive alternative approach/behavior. Along with these new attitudes and behaviors, the child is guided in the direction of self-discipline by encouraging him/her to make as many decisions as possible within limits. **The limits are as follows:**

- ❖ If a child hurts another child, he/she and the other child are respectfully separated. Each child is asked to explain what happened (define the problem). After each child has verbally given information, they are asked to help solve the problem, talk to each other, reconcile with one another, and are redirected to another activity.
- ❖ If a child is disruptive, he/she will be respectfully asked to stop the behavior. If the child persists to the point of disruption again, he/she is reminded of his/her behavior and how it affects others. If the disruption continues, and the child willfully refuses to yield to instruction, he/she will be separated from the other children. After the child has been separated from the class activity for a short period of time (2 to 5 minutes) he/she will be invited to rejoin the class.
- ❖ If a child continues to misbehave and disrupt the class, the parents will be asked to attend a conference to discuss how we can best meet the needs of the child. At this time, the Suspension and Expulsion policy may be utilized as a form of discipline.
 - Suspension and Expulsion Policy
 - Suspension: The teacher may deny a student the right to attend a school or take part in any school function for up to ten (10 school

- days.
- **Expulsion:** An expulsion is a denial of the right of a student to take part in any school function for a period greater than five (5) consecutive school days.

Policy for 2-Hour Delay, Early Dismissal, eLearning Days, and School Closings

In the event of bad weather that leads to school closings and school delays, the following is the 2-hour delay policy for preschool students:

- ❖ NO Preschool for students with an IEP that leave at 12:00 p.m. for a 2-hour delay.
- ❖ Students who attend ALL DAY and are transported by their parents may attend beginning at 10:20 a.m.
- ❖ **Fees will remain the same for a 2-hour delay, early dismissal, unplanned eLearning days, and school closings.**
- ❖ On eLearning days the Preschool will not be in session and no fee is required.
- ❖ In the case of an early dismissal, parents will be contacted through the school messaging system.

Termination of Enrollment

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the preschool staff to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- ❖ Enrollment will be terminated at the discretion of the school for non-payment of tuition
 - After two weeks of non-payment
 - Unless payment arrangements are made and adhered to.
- ❖ Pattern of unexcused absences
- ❖ Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- ❖ The center's inability to meet the child's needs
- ❖ Abuse of other children, staff, or property

5 Areas of School Readiness

Randolph Central Preschools measures and addresses readiness for school across five distinct but connected areas:

1. **Physical Well-Being and Motor Development.**
 - a. Children's physical development (e.g. growth patterns of height and weight)
 - b. Health status (the ability to see and hear)
 - c. Physical abilities (e.g. ability to move to get needs met, assisted or unassisted)
 - d. Proper nutrition and rest have a strong impact on readiness to learn, providing children with the energy and mobility to explore their environment and increase their ability to concentrate.
 - e. Early identification of needs and provision of intervention services are critical for children with disabilities.
2. **Social and Emotional Development.**
 - a. Children's knowledge of their own feelings and those of others
 - b. The ability to develop positive relationships
 - c. An interest in and demonstration of interpersonal skills needed to maintain positive relationships with adults and peers
 - d. The capability of engaging and cooperating within a group
 - e. The ability to demonstrate the skills needed to get along with peers (e.g. managing conflicts in a positive way)
 - f. Highlights of this domain serve as a foundation for later school success and meaningful life experiences as an adult and consist of developing and maintaining friendships, appreciating differences, solving conflicts, and functioning effectively in groups.
3. **Approaches to Learning.**
 - a. Curiosity
 - b. Enjoyment of learning
 - c. Confidence
 - d. Creativity
 - e. Attention to task
 - f. Reflection
 - g. Interests and attitudes
4. **Language Development.**
 - a. Expressive (e.g. expressive speech that is understood or use of a nonverbal system of communication)
 - b. Understanding skills to effectively interact with others
 - c. Early literacy skills are a part of language development (e.g. an awareness of print, and an understanding that writing has a purpose).

- d. Language development and early literacy skills are correlated to how effectively children can communicate their needs, interact socially with others, and describe events, thoughts, and feelings.

5. Cognition and General Knowledge.

- a. Basic knowledge of concepts and the workings of the environment in which the child participates (e.g. knows his/her own name, understanding basic science concepts)
- b. Cognitive competencies like early mathematical skills (e.g. number sense, discriminating shapes and colors, simple patterns, size, location, and time)
- c. Basic problem-solving skills (e.g. acknowledging similarities and differences, identifying solutions, and increasing attention and focus to challenging tasks.)
- d. A child's innate sense of curiosity and the ability to acquire, organize, and use information in increasingly complex ways are indicative of how the child acquires new knowledge and learns about the impact he/she has on others and the environment.

Although these areas are separate and distinct, there is a constant overlap of skill acquisition in early childhood development. Skills in one domain are reinforced as skills are gained in another domain, (e.g. increase in communication skills builds confidence and a positive self-image). Kindergarten teachers support all five domains of child development.

Child development occurs at varying rates, and as such, we should not expect all children to reach a common "standard" of readiness. Children come from different cultures, with unique life experiences, and a range of ability levels. Therefore, it is anticipated that children may demonstrate competencies in individual ways and should be expected to show different patterns of development.

The concept of "readiness" includes much more than children's readiness to learn kindergarten standards. As defined by the National Education Goals Panel, the School Readiness Indicators Initiative (<http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/negp/reports/99rpt.pdf>), and others, "readiness" includes ready children, ready families, ready communities, ready early care and education, and ready schools. Readiness at every level is necessary so that all children will experience success.

It is the responsibility of schools to meet the needs of children as they enter school and to provide whatever services are needed to help each child reach his or her fullest potential.

Indiana has developed the Foundations of the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children from Birth to Age 5. The Foundations are based on the latest national research and findings for all content areas and domains. By outlining specific skills and concepts and giving examples of instructional strategies, these foundations will support teachers, parents, and caregivers as they develop appropriate experiences for young children to help ensure success in kindergarten.

[A copy of the Indiana Foundations can be viewed here:](#)

<https://www.in.gov/doe/files/foundations-2015-august-12.pdf>

