



# GARFIELD HEIGHTS PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

## PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

Terry Olszewski, Superintendent  
Brynn Morris, Principal

William Foster Elementary  
12801 Bangor Avenue  
Garfield Heights, OH 44125

(216) 475-8123

Vision: Transforming lives by instilling 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.



The Garfield Heights Preschool Program is a part of the Garfield Heights City School District. Our mission is to educate, guide, and ensure all students graduate prepared to meet high expectations and serve as responsible citizens in a global society.

**Garfield Heights Preschool Staff Members**

Joanne Biltz, speech and language pathologist

Christen Brandt, early childhood intervention specialist

Katherine Barnes, early childhood intervention specialist

Rosemarie Daddario, preschool psychologist

Kelly Tekancic, early childhood intervention specialist

Caitlyn Malorni, occupational therapist

Diane Crockett, physical therapist

Sean Patton, Supervisor/ Special Education (216-475-8100)

All other staff members can be reached at (216) 475-8123

**Garfield Heights Board of Education Members**

Joseph M. Juby, President

Gary Wolske, Vice President

Robert A. Dobies, Sr., Member

June A. Geraci, Member

Christine A. Kitson, Member



Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to William Foster! We are looking forward to that first day of school when we will have the opportunity to really get to know and spend time with your child! It is an exciting day, and the "newness" of everything can sometimes be overwhelming for a child (and his or her parents). We are here to nurture, love, and gently but consistently encourage your child as he or she grows. We look forward to our yearlong partnership with you in this endeavor.

Plan to get to know your child's teacher, the classroom, and your child's peers by visiting or volunteering often. In preschool, the teachers often touch base with parents in the morning, through emails, or phone calls. Please let the teachers know about issues that may affect your child's behavior or work at school. We will also share that information with you.

This handbook is designed to give you information about our educational philosophy and our daily operations and policies. It is important that you read this before the first day of school so that we have shared expectations. We will ask that you sign off at Open House indicating that you have read and understand these policies. Each of us being familiar with and abiding by these policies benefits the children.

We look forward to an exciting school year! The life of a young child is a time of wonder, curiosity, and adventure in which we all share. It is our privilege to work with your child each day!

Sincerely,

The Garfield Heights Preschool Team

## PHILOSOPHY OF GARFIELD HEIGHTS PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

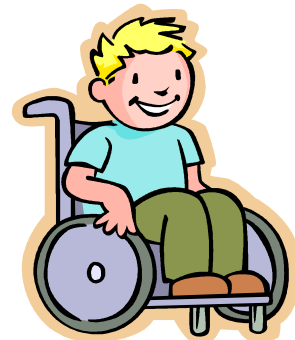
The most important goals of our preschool curriculum are for children to get along well with others and become enthusiastic learners. We want children to become independent, self-confident, curious learners who can work well with others. We're teaching them **how** to learn, not just in preschool, but all through their lives. We do this by creating purposeful and productive play experiences that help children grow in all areas.

Our curriculum identifies goals in four areas of development.

- ❖ **Social/emotional:** to help children develop independence, self-confidence, self-control, follow rules and routines, make friends, and learn what it means to be part of a group.
- ❖ **Physical:** to increase children's large muscle skills - balancing, running, jumping, throwing, and catching - and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like buttoning, stringing beads, cutting, drawing, and writing.
- ❖ **Cognitive:** to acquire thinking skills such as the ability to solve problems, to ask questions, and to think logically - sorting, classifying, comparing, counting, and making patterns - and to use materials and their imagination to show what they have learned.
- ❖ **Language:** to use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversations with others, understand the purpose of print, recognize letters and words, and begin writing for a purpose.

Through the activities we plan and the way we organize the classroom, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, we seek to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

Taken from *A Parent's Guide to Preschool*  
Published by Teaching Strategies, Inc. 2006



## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Garfield Heights Preschool Program serves children ages three to five who demonstrate developmental delays or disabilities in:

- ❖ language development
- ❖ motor skills
- ❖ cognitive areas
- ❖ socialization
- ❖ behavioral/emotional growth
- ❖ adaptive behaviors

A major component of the program is the integration of children with special needs with typical children. Opportunities for interaction are developed for the benefit of all children.

The curriculum is a combination of "traditional" early childhood programming, developmentally based, and specially planned, structured interventions and procedures to address the special needs of the children. Our preschool team includes early intervention specialists, instructional assistants, a speech/language therapist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, a vision specialist, and a school psychologist.

Classes meet for two and one half hour sessions Monday through Thursday. The morning session meets from 8:15am-10:45am. The afternoon session meets from 11:40am-2:10pm. Please note that teachers and sessions are subject to change. The program tries to provide morning spots to younger children when possible. Thank you for your understanding.



## FAMILY COMMUNICATION/COLLABORATION

Research shows that a partnership between family and school is essential for student success. As your school team, we respect that parents are a child's first and closest teachers. We want to work with you to support your child and your family. You are invited to volunteer in our classrooms, get involved in the PTA, become a member of the Head Start Family Council, attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events (field trips, celebrations, fundraisers), and participate in parent information trainings. All grownups (parents, guardians, grandparents) are welcome. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in November and May.

Your child will receive a communication folder that allows us to send home newsletters and practice sheets so you know what is happening in our classrooms and school. Please use this folder to send notes back so we can communicate regularly about your child. Families that are involved in their children's learning tend to have children who are more successful. A weekly newsletter will be sent home to provide families with information about themes, activities, and special events. The newsletter may also include ideas for family activities.

We appreciate that you are supporting us at home by encouraging your child to continue learning outside of school. We are here to support you too. Please let us know what you and your family need. We are lucky to have many community outreach programs/resources to share with you. For example, the community library offers reading activities, computer classes, and family nights. The Council of Economic Opportunities of Greater Cleveland offers the services of a mobile dentist/nurse and Cleveland Hearing and Speech, assistance with job placement for family members, guidance on paying bills and getting food stamps, and access to housing and gently used furniture.

### YOUR CHILD WILL NEED:

- Immunization Record on file
- Child Medical Statement must be submitted every year before the school year begins.
- Emergency Authorization form
- Proper outside clothing for the weather
- Backpack (large enough for 11 x 15 inch papers)
- A large box of tissues
- Diapers and baby wipes (if applicable)
- Extra change of clothes. Parents need to provide a labeled plastic bag containing a complete change of clothing for their child (socks, underpants, shirt and pants). Please label individual items in the bag. The clothing will be kept at school for emergency use and returned at the end of the school year.

**Please label all your child's belongings.** Each day check your child's backpack for notes and

communication from school. Please feel free to share information or your concerns with the teacher with a note in your child's folder.

## TRANSITIONING INTO OR OUT OF PRESCHOOL

The Preschool Program wants to guarantee that your child's preschool experience is positive. Therefore, we've planned intentional transition activities to help your child be successful. This includes a yearly orientation prior to the school year starting; individualized transition meetings for children with special needs; a spring information session on preparing for kindergarten and a spring graduation and summer picnic for children and families. We will also create an individualized transition plan for your child upon entrance or departure from the program which will include strategies to assure a smooth transition.



### Community Resources Information

The Garfield Heights Preschool program would like to support the families of our students. If you need any support in the following areas, please contact the preschool psychologist or school social worker for additional information, whether it is for your child or another family member. Your request will be handled in a confidential manner. In addition, local resources are listed below.

- Guidestone of Ohio (counseling/mental health services).....(440)234-2006
- The Word of Righteousness (food and clothing needs).....(216)365-3336
- Garfield Heights Library (free storytimes, toy rental).....(216)475-8178
- Garfield Heights Resource Center.....(216) 475-1103

## COMPONENTS OF OUR DAY

Morning class session - 8:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.  
Afternoon class session - 11:40 a.m. to 2:10 p.m.

ARRIVAL AND PLAY....a time for greetings, practicing dressing, and taking responsibility for possessions.....then social play in environment.

LARGE MOTOR TIMES....a time for indoor/outdoor activities, and developing large motor abilities such as strength, endurance, coordination, and motor planning.

BATHROOM AND HYGIENE....a time to carry out toileting plans and learn good hand washing.

CIRCLE TIME....a time to function as a member of a group by attending to stories, conversation, and participating in songs and discussion.

SMALL GROUP TIME....a time to work on a wide variety of fine-motor, social, communication, and cognitive skills through arts, crafts, cooking, puzzles, building, wood working, clay, etc.

FREE PLAY....a time for children to explore and utilize the prepared materials in the environment, to engage in social play, develop self image and social skills, to communicate wants, ideas, and feelings, to problem solve and utilize materials creatively.

OTHER INFORMATION...**Dismissal Procedures:** Any change in dismissal procedure, such as picking up a child during or after school, should be stated in writing to the child's teacher. If another person is picking up your child, a note of authorization signed by parent or guardian should be presented to the teacher. In the cases of emergency, please call William Foster Elementary (216) 475-8123 to inform the teacher of any change in dismissal procedures. Parents are welcome into the classroom at any time their child is in attendance, but are asked to sign in the front office and wait to be escorted to the classroom.

FIRE SAFETY....fire drills are held monthly. Every effort is made to teach your child calm evacuation from the building.

SNACK....please inform us of any food that your child cannot eat. Parents must provide a snack daily for their child.

SCHOOL NURSE....a health aide is available daily during hours students are in session in our school clinic.

SNOW DAYS/SEVERE WEATHER....when Garfield Heights City Schools are closed the Garfield Heights Preschool Program will also be closed.



## DISCIPLINE

Our goal is to encourage each child to develop self-control and responsibility for their own actions.

We...

- ❖ provide many choices of play equipment and activities.
- ❖ clearly define limits and consistently and fairly maintain them.
- ❖ allow children time and opportunities to solve problems for themselves.
- ❖ state suggestions or directions in a positive manner.
- ❖ use words and tone of voice that helps the child feel confident and self-assured.
- ❖ provide redirection.
- ❖ provide outlets for releasing feelings of tension.

If behavior continues to be out of bounds, it may be necessary to remove a child from the group or area for a limited time out; one minute for each year of age. If inappropriate behaviors become frequent, form a pattern, and/or become severe, the supervising adult will communicate with the parents.

All school districts are required by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to include the following discipline guidelines:

- 1) There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
- 2) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- 3) No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- 4) No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or a similar cubicle.
- 5) No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
- 6) Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep or for toileting accidents.

- 7) Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
- 8) Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- 9) Separation, when used as discipline shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- 10) The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

## MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If your child is ill when at home, do NOT send him/her to school. He/she will not benefit from the preschool experience if they are not feeling well. We are not equipped to handle sick children, and you will be contacted to pick them up immediately.

Please call if your child will not be attending school. The telephone number for **William Foster Elementary** is **(216) 475-8123**.

Should your child become ill while at school, we will isolate him/her from the rest of the children and make him/her as comfortable as possible. We will contact you to pick your child up as soon as possible. Remember, if someone other than the registering parent will be picking up a child, staff members will require identification and your prior notice, preferably in writing.

Your child will be isolated and discharged to you immediately if these symptoms appear:

1. Diarrhea more than once
2. Severe coughing
3. Difficult or rapid breathing
4. Yellowish skin or eyes
5. Teary, inflamed eyes
6. Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit when taken by auxiliary method
7. Untreated skin rash
8. Dark urine or light stool
9. Stiff neck
10. Unusual spots
11. Sore throat and elevated temperature
12. Vomiting
13. Evidence of lice, scabies, and parasitic infestation



Children who have fevers should return to school 24 hours after the fever is gone. Children on antibiotics should remain at home until they have been receiving medication for 24 hours.

### **Immunizations Summary for Child Care, Head Start, Preschool and School Attendance**

- DTaP/DTP/DT/Td (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis): 4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT or any combination.
- POLIO : 3 doses of OPV or IPV or any combination of OPV or IPV.
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella): 1 dose of MMR administered on or after the first birthday
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae) Type b: 3 or 4 doses depending on the vaccine type, the age when the child began the 1st dose and the last dose must be after 12 months - or - 1 dose if given on or after 15 months of age
- HEP B (Hepatitis B): 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chickenpox): None

### **Immunizations for School Attendance**

- DTaP/DTP/DT/Td (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- Kindergarten : 5 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT, or any combination, if the fourth dose was administered prior to the 4th birthday. POLIO: 4 doses of any combination of OPV or IPV, the final dose must be administered on or after the 4th birthday regardless of the number of previous doses. VARICELLA (Chickenpox): 2 doses of varicella vaccine must be administered prior to entry.
- Grade 1-4 : 1 dose of varicella vaccine must be administered on or after the first birthday.
- K-12: MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) 2 doses of MMR. Dose 1 must be administered on or after the first birthday. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after dose 1. Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae) Type b-none.
- K-11 : HEP B (Hepatitis B) 3 doses of Hepatitis B. The second dose must be administered at least 28 days after the first dose. The third dose must be given at least 16 weeks after the first dose and at least 8 weeks after the second dose. The last dose in the series (third or fourth dose), must not be administered before age 24 weeks.
- Grades 1-12 \*: 3-4 doses of DTaP, DTP, DT or Td or any combination. POLIO: 4 doses if a combination of OPV or IPV was administered. 4 doses of all OPV or all IPV is required if the third dose of either vaccine was administered prior to the 4th birthday.
- Grade 7: 1 dose of Tdap or Td vaccine must be administered prior to entry.

\*A student age 7 or older, and who received Td or Tdap vaccine as the third part of the immunization series, shall not be required to receive further doses of diphtheria, tetanus, or pertussis vaccine.

### **NOTES:**

- The 4 day "grace" period applies to all age and interval minimums. If MMR and varicella have not been given on the same day they must be separated by 28 days with no grace period.
- The Hepatitis B, Tdap and Varicella requirements will be progressive.
- Only full doses of vaccine using proper intervals shall be counted as valid doses.
- For additional information please refer to the Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-12-37 for Child Care, Head Start, Pre-School and the Ohio Revised Code 3313.67 and 3313.671 for School Attendance. These documents list required and recommended immunizations and indicate exemptions to immunizations.

- Please contact the Ohio Department of Health Immunization Program at (800) 282-0546 or (614) 466-4643 with questions or concerns.

In addition to immunizations, well visits are critical to your child's overall health. During a well-child visit, your child's doctor will provide preventive care by assessing your child's physical, behavioral, developmental and emotional status as they grow. A well-child visit is an opportunity to detect a possible developmental delay or disability, early treatment of which can lessen the future impact on both the child and the family. Well-child visits are also a time for parent-doctor communication. Make the most of these visits by writing down questions and concerns and take them with you. Sleep patterns and nutrition are topics parents can inquire about.

### **Health Screenings and Referrals**

Regular health exams and tests can help find problems before they start. They also can help find problems early, when your chances for treatment and cure are better. By getting the right health services, screenings, and treatments, you are taking steps that will help your child live a longer, healthier life. Ohio law requires that each preschool student have an updated physical form at all times. Therefore, the Garfield Heights preschool program requires a yearly physical, including height, weight, immunization history, and any limitations. Your pediatrician can provide these screenings. You may also want to consider contacting one of the agencies below. The preschool program will review your child's physical, inform you of missing information and request that it be updated in writing. The program will also let you know if there is a concern regarding your child's health screening within 90 days, and at parent-teacher conferences in November. You may be referred to agency listed below, or to the Garfield Heights Family Resource Center at (216) 475-1103. Based on your child's referral, the Garfield Heights Family Resource Center will provide you with contact information for agencies that can best meet your child's needs. Your child's vision and hearing will be screened by the school nurse within the first 60 days of entry. If your child does not pass the screening, you will be alerted and provided with information on obtaining a further evaluation outside of school. If transportation is an obstacle, contact the preschool psychologist, who can coordinate transportation to needed appointments.

HealthChek- <http://www.medicaid.ohio.gov/FOROHIOANS/Programs/Healthchek.aspx> (800) 324-8680

McCafferty Clinic- <http://www.metrohealth.org/mccafferty> (216) 957-4848

J. Glenn Smith Health Center- <http://www.metrohealth.org/jglen> (216) 957-5600

Board of Health- <http://www.ccbh.net/> (216) 201-2000

### **Developmental Screenings and Referrals**

The Garfield Heights Preschool Program screens every child every school year in the areas of communication, cognitive, social-emotional/behavior and motor skills within 60 business days of

beginning school. Your child's results will be shared with you. If your child's teacher has a concern about your child's development, you will be notified of the concern and a referral to helpful community resources will be made within 90 days. Referrals may include (but are not limited to) physicians, mental health agencies, or the preschool special education program. Children's development is important. For more information on typical development, please see:

Checklist for 3 year olds: [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists\\_3yr.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists_3yr.pdf)

Checklist for four year olds: [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists\\_4yr.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists_4yr.pdf)

Checklist for five year olds: [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists\\_5yr.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/checklists_5yr.pdf)

Hard copies will be provided at preschool orientation, or upon request.



## Suggested Snack Shopping List for Parents

Bagels and cream cheese

Cheese and/or crackers

Fresh fruits/vegetables

Goldfish

Cereal mix

Pudding

raisins

Graham crackers

Baked chips

Dip for fruits

Fruit leather (fruit roll ups)

Granola bars

Healthy snacks information: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/get-kids-to-eat-fruits-and-vegetables>

## Updating information/Medical Forms

All forms must be updated each September. However, please inform the staff if there are any changes during the course of the school year in the following information: phone number, address, emergency contacts, health status and authorization to release form. Also be sure to notify the staff if a family event has occurred that may affect your child's behavior.

Medical Forms must be submitted at the time of enrollment or your child will not be able to attend preschool until completed, as this is a health and safety liability. Please refer to your immunization scheduled summary in handbook. Current child medical statements expire one year from the appointment date. The school needs a current copy on file at all times.

## Tuition and Payments

Payment for each month is due on the first day of each month, September-June. Preschool tuition is determined using a sliding scale and guidelines provided by the Federal Poverty Guidelines. There will be

a \$20.00 fee for any returned check. The monthly fee is 1/10th of the total preschool/school year tuition. Therefore, there will be no refunds for any portion of a month. Parents are required to give two weeks advance notice if they are withdrawing their child from the program.

## FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATIONS

As there are an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships, and the laws governing divorce settlements and custody have recently been changed; we find it necessary to clarify and restate the usual procedures followed by the administration in dealing with parents in such situations.

**In two-parent families**, it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc. with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes, but is not limited to, parent conferences, IEP meeting invitation, and quarterly progress reports.

**In families experiencing separation of parents or pending divorce**, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by the parents and *between* the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts on a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform *both* the principal and teacher of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. Garfield Heights personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or requests of a parent; however, with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

**In cases of an actual divorce decree** involving *clear custody by one parent*, the school is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the first page of the decree bearing the case number, the pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the principal. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the *custodial parent*. Custodial parents should understand; however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access the records, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a court order, release such report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions. Further, you should realize that unless restricted by court order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child.

**In cases of joint custody (shared parenting agreements)** entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared *by and between* the parents.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations, it is preferred and will be the general procedure that *one* conference appointment be scheduled jointly if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are able to set aside differences and to come together on behalf of their child for this time. A joint conference further insures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstanding and/or misinterpretations. In cases where joint conferences

are *clearly* neither possible nor desirable by all parties involved, alternate arrangements may be scheduled.

## District Grievance Procedure for Complaints Involving Civil Rights, Illegal Discrimination and/or Harrassment

In accordance with federal and state guidelines and District policy, any student who believes he or she has been the victim of discrimination and/or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion or disability by a student, teacher, Administrator or any other personnel of the Garfield Heights School District is encouraged to report the alleged acts, which shall be referred to as a formal grievance. A formal grievance refers to the Garfield Heights School District's alleged inadequate application of the principles of and/or the regulations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 (sex, gender), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability) and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act (disability).

A complaint alleging discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability should be made by either the student(s) involved in the harassment or any District personnel or student aware of the harassment to the Principal or building supervisor. A complainant is encouraged to make a complaint in writing using a District Complaint Report Form however; oral reports will also be accepted. If the complaint involves a building Principal, the complaint shall be made to the Assistant Superintendent or the District's Director of Student Services. Any such complaints may be brought, at any time, directly to the attention of the Superintendent's office at 216 475-8100, 5640 Briarcliff Dr, Garfield Heights, OH 44125.

The complaint will be handled in accordance with established District policy and procedure. If the complainant does not believe that the complaint has been adequately resolved at the District level, the complainant is encouraged to present the complaint to the US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750. Cleveland, Ohio 44114

**\*\*If you wish to obtain a copy of the school inspections please feel free to call the school office.\*\***