

**Middleburg Early Education Center
Parent Handbook**

MIDDLEBURG EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

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Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130

Phone (440)888-9922 Fax (440)843-6664

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Middleburg Early Education Center to serve all children and their families in a loving and caring environment. The spirituality of each child is nurtured to guide the child toward positive values and develop self-esteem. A quality education is provided for all children in the least restrictive environment. Classes are tailored to meet the individual needs of every child. Developmentally appropriate practices are implemented to develop the unique potential in every child.

Adopted and approved 8/1/95

PHILOSOPHY

Based on the philosophy of educator Jean Piaget that children learn in stages and that they learn best by exploring their environment, a diversity of stimulating experiences is offered to all children. Experiences and activities are presented in order to facilitate learning in the following domains: communication, social/emotional development, self-help, fine motor, gross motor and cognitive development. Believing that play is the "work" of the child, learning experiences are enjoyable and intrinsically motivating play-based activities.

Parents and families are viewed as a young child's primary and most important teaching source. The individuality and diversity of each child and family is recognized and respected. Parents and professionals work in a collaborative effort to assess, establish goals and objectives, and implement a plan to assure quality programming for each child.

Children learn through modeling the behaviors of others. In accordance with this premise, professionals display and promote positive behaviors and provide a caring atmosphere where a child can learn respect for himself, others and the environment. It is the goal of professionals that all children develop a positive self-concept and a joy for learning.

Curriculum planning follows developmentally and individually appropriate best practice. The teaching staff continues their pursuit of learning through in-service training and college course-work to be able to employ new and proven effective intervention teaching strategies.

Discipline is also viewed as an opportunity for learning. Strategies of redirection and exchanging a negative behavior for a positive behavior are always the preferred method of discipline. Time-out procedures may be necessary at times in order to help a child gain self-control.

The philosophy of Middleburg Early Education Center is to allow each child to learn skills which enable him/her to participate to his/her fullest capabilities in the life of his/her family and community. Opportunities for inclusion are provided to promote a respect for diversity and further development across domain areas.

Middleburg Early Education Center is committed to each and every child and family that it serves. The school is also dedicated to best practices of early intervention programming.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Licensing

Middleburg Early Education Center is licensed to operate under the regulations of the Ohio Department of Family Services. State officials review the school and personnel periodically to ensure that all standards are upheld.

Governing Body

Middleburg Early Education Center is under the guidance of a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees assists the school administration to evaluate, adopt and enforce appropriate policies and procedures. The Administrative Director directs the daily functioning of the school with assistance from the professional and paraprofessional staff. Parental input is also important; parents are encouraged to serve on various committees and share their ideas and/or concerns.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

Middleburg Early Education Center adheres to a nondiscriminatory doctrine. Children of all races, creeds and ethnic origins are welcome to participate in the programming and activities of Middleburg Early Education Center. In hiring of professional and paraprofessional staff, Middleburg Early Education Center adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy, also.

Safety and Medical Policies

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form, included in the parent handbook, must be signed and returned prior to the opening day of school. A Medical Emergency Plan is posted in the room and followed if necessary. Trained personnel in First Aid are working in each classroom on a daily basis.

No child shall ever be left unattended. The teacher will be aware of the daily arrival and departure of each child with his/her parent or other authorized person. Children will not be released to another party unless authorization by the parent or guardian is first given.

All precautions will be taken in each classroom to childproof the environment for the safety of your child. Several policies and procedures are in place and are included in the handbook. Please take a moment to read them for the safety of your child.

PROGRAM GOALS: GREAT BEGINNINGS

1. To provide a loving, caring atmosphere where physical affection is freely given. To instill in each child a feeling of autonomy and a positive self-concept.
2. To provide a joyful, enthusiastic and spontaneous approach with the children.
3. To meet each child's physical needs.
4. To establish the foundations for respect of equipment.
5. To establish the foundations for respect of others - Social Development.
6. To provide for the language development that is so important at this stage of development.
7. To make available developmentally and individually appropriate materials on the shelves at the child's level (manipulatives, dramatic play, pull toys, Fisher-Price...).
8. To provide ample opportunity for use of gross motor skills.
9. To provide a variety of activities that begin to introduce the following curriculum areas: art, science, cooking, social studies, dramatic play, manipulative activities, language, large motor, music, and movement.
10. To be supportive of parents, encouraging involvement, encouraging open and honest communication, with tact and discretion.
11. To develop staff potential through proper supervision by making expectations clear, following through to see that expectations are met, and utilizing staff input and abilities.
12. To develop self-help skills in order to create a feeling of independence and confidence in the child. (This can be accomplished through toilet training, encouraging children to dress themselves and to help in food preparation.)
13. To provide care in smaller subgroups, in order to give each child more personal attention, to prevent under and over stimulation, to allow more freedom of choices, and to maintain a more relaxed atmosphere.

PROGRAM GOALS: WEE THREES

1. To provide a wide variety of age appropriate activities, within a routine, that draws from the following curriculum areas: art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, large muscle, practical life, social studies, dramatic play, language arts, and manipulative activities.
2. To provide a nurturing, flexible, and calm atmosphere where physical affection is freely given, self-concept is enhanced, independence is encouraged and expectations are made clear.
3. To develop staff potential through proper supervision by making expectations clear, following through to see that expectations are met, and utilizing staff input and their abilities.
4. To be supportive of parents encouraging involvement, encouraging open and honest communication. with tact and discretion.
5. To establish room awareness among staff so that a safe environment is always present both indoors and out.

6. To meet each child's physical needs while setting the stage for future development in all domain areas.
7. To provide ample opportunity for the use of large motor skills through both indoor and outdoor activities.
8. To provide an atmosphere where the foundations of respect for others is established.
9. To encourage social development through cooperative play.
10. To establish respect for the equipment and materials.
11. To establish an observation system in which notes on children are kept.
12. To encourage appropriate and purposeful play skills.
13. To encourage language development through modeling and through direct teaching of games and activities which promote language.
14. To provide exposure to basic concepts and pre-readiness skills in order to promote general knowledge.
15. To develop consistency in daily routine and programming in order for the children to be comfortable and confident in the environment.
16. To incorporate any adaptive methods which are individually appropriate to meet a child's needs.

PROGRAM GOALS FOR THE A.M. & P.M. DEVELOPMENTAL FOUNDATIONS CLASSES:

To provide an inclusion setting in which typical and special needs children learn from one another.

1. To provide 4, 5 and 6 year olds the opportunity to develop the skills necessary for Kindergarten. A wide variety of experiences will offer the children opportunities to develop physically, socially and cognitively.
2. To engage children in age appropriate activities in individual, small and large group settings. To develop listening and speaking skills and encourage a spirit of cooperation in a group setting.
3. To foster fine and gross motor skills through a variety of mediums which include music and movement, art, cooking, math, science and problem solving activities.
4. To develop and introduce pre-Kindergarten concepts and learn techniques in an age-appropriate manner.
5. To encourage and appreciate each child's unique learning style and assist in their transition to new situations and settings.

WRITTEN SAFETY POLICY

- A. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- B. The teacher/aide will be aware of the daily arrival and departure of each child with their parent or other authorized person. The school will release the child to no one but the parent or authorized person unless notified by the parent in person, in writing, or by telephone as to who will pick up the child.
- C. There is immediate access at all times to a working telephone in the building. Telephones are located in the school office, church office, and the hallway.
- D. There is a monthly fire drill and weather drill at varying times each month.
- E. In case of a FIRE EMERGENCY, the children in the large room should exit through the double doors on the north side of the school. Children in the small room will exit through the double doors on the south side of the school. There should be no talking or running. Teachers should close windows and the door, and should take their class list with them. The children should be taken to the far grassy area east of the parking lot. The Fire Department should be notified as soon as possible by an adult in the building. Children should never be left unsupervised.
- F. In case of a WEATHER ALERT, teachers are to take the children to the designated area in the school hall and have the children kneel and cover the back of their heads with their hands. There is no talking, and children need to stay in this position until the all clear is given. IF A CHILD REFUSES TO KNEEL, HAVE THEM SIT AGAINST THE WALL WITH LEGS FOLDED AND COVER THEIR HEADS WITH THEIR ARMS. Teachers should close the doors and take their class lists with them.
- G. During all FIELD TRIPS, a person trained in first aid will be in attendance. The first aid kit will be taken along.

DISCIPLINE OF CHILDREN

- A. A child care staff member in charge of a child or a group of children shall be responsible for their discipline.
- B. The center shall have a written discipline policy describing the school's philosophy of discipline and the specific methods of discipline used at the center. This written policy shall be on file at the center for review by the director.
CONSTRUCTIVE, DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CHILD GUIDANCE AND MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES ARE TO BE USED AT ALL TIMES, AND SHALL INCLUDE SUCH MEASURES AS REDIRECTION, SEPARATION FROM PROBLEM SITUATIONS, TALKING WITH THE CHILD ABOUT THE SITUATION, AND PRAISE FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.
- C. The school's actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:
 - 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 technique shall be delegated to any other child.
 - 3. No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child.
 - 4. No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area.
 - 5. No child shall be humiliated or subjected to profane language, threats, or derogatory remarks.
 - 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. SEPARATION, WHEN USED AS DISCIPLINE, SHALL BE BRIEF IN DURATION AND APPROPRIATE TO THE CHILD'S AGE AND CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THE CHILD SHALL BE WITHIN SIGHT AND HEARING OF A CHILD CARE STAFF MEMBER IN A SAFE, LIGHTED, WELL-VENTILATED SPACE.
 - 9. THE CENTER SHALL NOT ABUSE OR NEGLECT CHILDREN AND SHALL PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT WHILE IN THE CENTER'S CARE.

- D. The parent or guardian of a child shall receive the school's written discipline policy.
- E. All child care staff members shall receive a copy of the school's discipline policy for review before or upon employment.

MEDICAL REGULATIONS

Parents are responsible for appropriate health care and monitoring the health status of their children.

The following should be considered to not only reduce sources of infection in our centers, but to protect the health of your child as well:

1. IMMUNIZATIONS

All center children should be immunized prior to or in the process of being immunized at the time of entering the program.

We require a copy of your child's immunization record, signed by your doctor, at the time of admission to the program.

2. PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

If your child takes medication, we ask that you speak to your physician to arrange a medication schedule which will enable medications to be taken at home, if possible, although medications may be taken at the center. In either case, it is necessary for us to know about any medication and to maintain current Prescription Medication Forms (#6106.62) in our records.

If your child takes prescription drugs, you will be asked to complete additional forms for our records, as well as give permission for us to seek information from the physician regarding the drug(s) and condition. If your child is on medication and needs to take medication during the school day, these records must be completed by your physician **prior to your child's entry to the program**

3. ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

If your child becomes obviously ill at school, the staff will make every attempt to notify you and determine appropriate action. As you may well know, however, many children feign illness altogether or exaggerate the situation. Consequently, typical practice includes taking the child's temperature and offering the opportunity to lie down for a short time if a child's complaint is not accompanied with any observable symptoms. Please inform the school staff if your child suffers from any condition or illness that would preclude this typical practice.

4. CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Any child with a known contagious disease should not be brought to the center. If at any time you know that your child has a contagious disease, **PLEASE INFORM THE SCHOOL so proper notification may be made to staff and sent to the parents of children who may have been exposed. We make every reasonable attempt to notify parents of known contagious disease exposure to assist all in protecting the health of our children.**

Refer to the Communicable Disease Notice for brief descriptions of the most common communicable diseases. Some of the most common diseases which appear in school are German Measles, Red Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox, Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever, Pink Eye, and Impetigo.

Children with upper respiratory illnesses (colds, bronchitis) or influenza should be kept home from school if accompanied with a fever. A mild "runny" nose or cough may not justify staying home; we expect the parents to exercise their judgment as to whether a child should stay home for colds. Although colds and influenza may be contagious, we do not send Communicable Disease Notices for these illnesses.

5. POISONS

As you know, all medications, pills, and household poisons must be kept out of the reach of **ALL children. With our children, this is especially important. Please make a special effort to check your house, garage, and yard again to be sure that all medicines and potential poisons (things like kerosene, garden spray, bleach, detergent, etc.) are out of the reach of ALL children.**

**IF AN ACCIDENTAL POISONING OCCURS, CALL YOUR
PHYSICIAN OR THE POISON CONTROL CENTER:**

(216) 231-4455.

6. MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Should a medical emergency arise, the staff will make every attempt to contact you or the emergency contact person designated by you as soon as possible.

In an emergency situation, your child would be transported to receive medical care at the nearest hospital or care center. In less serious situations where medical attention seems warranted, staff will attempt to contact you or your designee prior to seeking medical attention. However, if you cannot be reached, **staff will seek medical care if, in their best judgment, it is warranted.**

For this reason, we ask that you complete the Emergency Medical Treatment form for our records.

Lastly, first aid may be administered for less serious injuries either brought to or occurring in the center. Several staff members are certified in First Aid by the American Red Cross.

7. MEDICAL ALERTS

You will be asked to inform us of any medical issues regarding your child. In order to ensure your child's safety, we need to know about allergies, physical limitations, or any conditions or disorders such as diabetes, seizures, sickle-cell anemia, etc. If at any time new information regarding medical alerts should become known to you, it is important that you inform the coordinators or educational staff.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE NOTICE

Chicken Pox (Varicella) – Feverishness. Rash appears in the form of small pimples which, in a day, fill up with a clear fluid. Symptoms may occur within 14-21 days after exposure. Must be kept at home at least seven days.

Measles (Rubiola) – Cold in ear. Feverishness, watery eyes, sneezing. Blotchy red rash appears on forehead, face and body. Symptoms may occur within 8-13 days after exposure. Must be kept at home at least seven days after rash first appears.

Mumps – Swelling on side of face and jaw. Sickness and feverishness. Glands become swollen and very tender. Movement of jaw is painful. Symptoms may occur within 12-26 days after exposure. Must be kept at home until swelling of glands has disappeared.

Scarlet Fever and/or Strep Throat – Scarlet fever is a strep throat with a rash, with or without vomiting, fever usually present. Fine rash appears about 24 hours after onset. Symptoms may appear within 1-3 days after exposure. Must be kept home 10 days if not treated. Child may return to school after 48 hours with note from doctor.

German Measles (Rubella) – Mild disease with fine rash. (Similar to Scarlet Fever Rash) Swollen glands or enlarged lymph nodes particularly on back of neck present). Symptoms usually occur within 14-21 days after exposure. Must be kept at home until rash has completely disappeared.

Pink eye (Conjunctivitis) – An inflammation of the mucous membrane covering the front part of the eye and lining the eyelids. The membranes become painful and red, the lids swell, and the eyes water. A form of conjunctivitis called Pink Eye is caused by a particular kind of bacteria. A doctor should be consulted before returning to school.

Impetigo – Blister-like lesions which later develop in to crusted pus-like sores which are irregular in outline. Most commonly on face and hands. Prevent contact with other children until pustules are healed. A doctor should be consulted. Symptoms occur within 2-5 days after contact.

Head Lice – Irritation and itching of scalp or body, presence of small light gray insects and/or eggs which are attached to the base of hairs. Symptoms may occur with eggs hatching within one week. Insects reach maturity within two weeks. Child must remain at home until disinfection is accomplished. All family members must be examined by health official.

Scabies – Symptoms include small raised areas of skin containing fluid usually appearing on finger webs, under side of wrists, elbows, or armpits, thigh and belt line. Intense itching. Symptoms occur within 4-6 weeks. Must be excluded from school until family is adequately treated (if treatment necessary).

Ringworm – Includes flat and inflamed ring-like sores that may itch or burn. On feet, there is a scaling or cracking of the skin. Child must be kept at home until sores are no longer present.

SCHOOL CALENDAR, SCHOOL HOURS AND DAILY SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Included in the parent handbook is a copy of the school calendar. Please make a special note of the in-service, conference and vacation days. If there are changes in the calendar year, you will be notified in advance. If Berea schools are closed for a "snow" day, we will be closed also.

The office is open Monday-Friday from 8:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m. if you have any questions or concerns. Specific teachers may not be able to take your call at that time due to teaching responsibilities but will return your call as soon as possible.

Dress

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing which allows them the freedom to experience activities to their fullest. Clothing should be worn that parents and/or child will not become upset if the articles of clothing become dirty. Rubber-soled shoes are safest for daily gross motor activities.

Book Bags

Please send a book bag daily so that information and/or children's papers can be sent home in them. It is necessary for those children not potty trained to have extra diapers and clothing in their bags as well.

Snacks

Parents will be asked to provide snack for their child's class several times during the school year. We encourage nutritious snacks and juice. Special treats may be sent in for parties, special events or birthdays. Each teacher will provide a snack sign-up sheet, and it will be posted on the classroom bulletin board. Please label snacks and juice with your child's teacher's name to avoid confusion.

Arrival and Dismissal

A letter will be sent to each home prior to the beginning of school with each child's classroom and school hours. We encourage you to park in the back parking lot and walk your child into the school building. Please assist your child with removing outerwear garments while you wait for the classroom doors to be opened.

Classroom doors will be opened for arrival no earlier than five minutes prior to the start of class. The time before class is valuable preparation time for the teachers. For your child's safety, please wait with your child until the classroom staff can greet him/her and give them their full attention.

At dismissal time, authorized persons are asked to wait in the hall until the children are dismissed by the teacher. It is important for you to be on time as the children grow anxious if their parents are not there. Please be aware that all classrooms are used for both morning and afternoon classes, so teachers must have time in between classes to set up for the next group.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

At Middleburg Early Education Center, parents are viewed as a child's primary teacher and as partners in the education process. Together with the professional staff, individualized goals and objectives will be planned for your child. There are many opportunities for parental involvement. We are here for you and your child and seek to make the experience that your family has at the school a positive one. The Board of Trustees, and Staff are always interested in your comments and concerns. Following, you will find some of the opportunities in which parents are encouraged to participate.

Open House

This is a time at the beginning of the school year to meet the Board of Trustees and Staff. At this time, the parent handbook will be distributed. Parents will meet with their child's teacher to discuss policies pertinent to each class.

Scheduled Conferences and Evaluations

There will be two scheduled conferences/year for each child. Every child with special needs enrolled in the school will be evaluated during the month of September and October by the teacher and speech therapist. Standard evaluations as well as evaluation through observation will be used in order to obtain an accurate assessment of each child.

Parents will then be notified of a conference date. During this conference, parents and professional staff will discuss the evaluation findings. For those children with identified areas of concern and who receive Individualized Education Plans, the professional staff and parents will establish appropriate goals and objectives for the individual child. These goals will be written in the form of a Service Plan. It is the parent's right to invite any other professional or personal individual who may have pertinent information or concerns for their child. At this time, Service Plans are written and signed.

For children not requiring Service Plans, the teacher and parents will conference in the fall to discuss the child's developmental skill levels. At this time, any questions or concerns will be discussed.

In the spring, the second scheduled conference will take place to discuss the child's progress and present level of functioning. At this time, the possibilities of fall placement for the following school year may be evaluated and discussed also.

Nonscheduled Conferences

Teachers and staff are available for brief discussions before and after class on a daily basis. Please let the teacher know if there are any pertinent facts which could be affecting your child that day. When a more lengthy conversation is needed, please schedule a time to meet with the teacher when she can give her full attention to the discussion. You are always welcome to telephone the office and leave a message for the teacher to return your call.

Daily Progress Reports

Each teacher will establish a classroom procedure for disseminating progress reports. Teachers are available after class for brief comments regarding an individual child's progress or behavior that day. If the concern needs to be discussed at length, the teacher will schedule a conference at a mutually convenient time.

Newsletters

Classroom teachers will distribute newsletters containing information regarding themes

and learning activities. It is helpful for parents to read these and provide some fun follow-through activities at home so that your child has the best opportunity for learning. Newsletters will also be sent home with information about upcoming field trips, special events and fund-raisers. Monthly newsletters with schoolwide news will also be distributed to all families.

Bulletin Boards

There is a bulletin board outside of each classroom. Pertinent information and newsletters will be posted for your attention. Also, your children's artwork and other papers will be posted for you to look at. Each child works very hard at creating their masterpieces, so please take time to notice and comment to your child about these. Your support is what helps your child grow in self confidence.

Also, please be aware of the Bulletin Boards. Articles of interest will be posted here for your information.

Observations

You are always welcome to observe your child's class through the mirrored windows. Please let the teacher know when you would like to observe for scheduling purposes. Also remember that, while the children and staff in the classroom cannot see you, voices are heard quite easily. For the general purpose of helping the routine to run smoothly, please be aware that children may become anxious upon hearing a familiar voice.

Parent and Staff Lounge

During scheduled class times, the stage area has been designated as a parent meeting area. This can be used as a quiet place to spend the time reading a book or chatting with new and old friends at the school. Please remember that the parent lounge is being offered to us by Bethel Lutheran Church, and it is our responsibility to keep it clean.

Tuition

Tuition schedules are included in the handbook for the current school year. Tuition is payable by the 5th of the month, and all checks should be made out to Middleburg Early Education Center.

Insurance for Speech Therapy Services

Families that will be receiving insurance reimbursement for speech therapy services remain responsible for all monthly payments due to the school. Middleburg Early Education Center will provide progress notes and itemized records required for your insurance reimbursement ONLY IF THESE ITEMS ARE REQUESTED IN ADVANCE.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is the policy of Middleburg Early Education Center that the confidentiality of each student and family be protected. All student information is kept on file in the school office and is available to parents, teachers, Director and the Office Manager.

Permission to release student information will be granted to others only after the parent or guardian signs and returns the permission form.