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Welcome to the 2016-2017 preschool year at Eastminster Preschool. We have tuition-based preschool, as well as public preschool through the Great Start Readiness Preschool (GSRP) Program of the State of Michigan. The preschool is one of many ways Eastminster Presbyterian Church seeks to serve the community. We welcome children and parents without regard to religious affiliation, family structure, or race. We believe children are a most precious gift, and thank you for the privilege of caring for them. While doctrinal religious instruction is not part of the curriculum in the preschool, our experience and motivation is Christ-centered. The preschool curriculum is focused around skills for kindergarten readiness.

We spend many hours planning so that your child can have experiences which provide security, develop social skills, challenge thinking, and help them to grow physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We try to help them mature in their relationships, feel good about themselves and their abilities. We open new worlds for them to explore and enjoy. You are invited to share your comments with us throughout the year as we continue to evaluate and improve our program. We promise to treat them always with loving care.

Shannon Rybarsyk, Preschool Director

## PRESCHOOL STAFF

There will be times during the year when you will want to talk with your child's teachers. Listed below are the teaching staff and their phone numbers:

	<u>HOME</u>	<u>CELL</u>
Debby Collins		616-780-1780
Kris Flak	616-452-2667	616-514-8828
Amy Karel		616-514-4196
Alicia Lee		248-992-6401
Melissa Marsh	616-974-0408	616-581-8556
Jennifer Mercer		616-375-0480
Shannon Rybarsyk	616-243-9599	616-446-2497
Kathy Sneller	616-452-0986	616-307-2106
Donna VanderLinde	616-285-8120	616-581-1735
Jennifer Waalkes		616-856-6555

My child's small group teacher is: \_\_\_\_\_

# 2016-2017 DAILY SCHEDULE

## Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8:30 AM 4's

Teachers: Kathy Sneller :  
Kris Flak  
Jennifer Waalkes

8:30 - 8:45 Arrival  
8:45 - 9:00 Bunch time/whole group instruction/calendar/weather/patterning  
8:05 - 9:40 Exploratory play/art activities  
9:40 - 9:45 Pick-up toys  
9:45 - 10:05 Music/literacy circle  
10:05 - 10:10 Me Bag  
10:10 - 10:25 Snack  
10:25 - 10:45 Small group time  
10:45 - 11:00 Outdoor play/inside activity/pick-up

## Tuesday/Thursday 8:30 AM 3's

Teachers: Kathy Sneller  
Kris Flak

8:30 - 8:40 Arrival  
8:40 - 8:50 Bunch time, whole group instruction  
8:50 - 9:45 Exploratory play/art activities  
9:45 - 9:50 Pick-up toys  
9:50 - 10:05 Music/literacy circle  
10:05 - 10:10 Me Bag  
10:10 - 10:25 Snack  
10:25 - 10:45 Small group time  
10:45 - 11:00 Outdoor play or inside activity/pick-up

## Monday/Wednesday 10:15 AM 3's

Teachers: Donna VanderLinde  
Melissa Marsh

10:15 - 10:25 Arrival  
10:25 - 10:35 Bunch time/whole group instruction  
10:35 - 11:25 Exploratory play/art activities  
11:25 - 11:30 Pick-up toys  
11:30 - 11:45 Music/literacy circle  
11:45 - 11:50 Me Bag  
11:50 - 12:10 Lunch  
12:10 - 12:30 Small group time  
12:30 - 12:45 Outdoor play or inside activity/pick-up

# 2016-2017 DAILY SCHEDULE

## 12:10 PM GSRP 4's & Y5's

12:10 - 12:30	<b>Outside play/inside play or activity if inclement weather</b> Children play outside on play structure, using balls, riding toys, sand box, sidewalk chalk, etc.
12:30 - 12:33	<b>Hang-up coats</b> Hang outerwear in small group room or assigned coat hook area according to small groups
12:33 - 12:50	<b>Bunch time</b> Gathering song is sung to let children know that it is time for Bunch Time which is a whole group experience, activities are both pre-planned by teachers and open to children's interests; can include discussion and sharing time, story reading, storytelling, Brain Gym & S'cool Moves, calendar, weather bear, new dramatic play intro, etc.
12:50 - 1:00	<b>Planning</b> Children make a plan for their exploratory play time - usually done in small group
1:00 - 2:00	<b>Choice Time</b> Children play freely based on plan they have made; activities include pre-planned art activities, art, sensory area, discovery area, toys & games, puzzles, dress-up, dramatic play, blocks, kitchen, etc.
2:00 - 2:03	<b>Transition/Pick-up toys/Transition</b> Children are given a 5-minute warning prior to Pick-Up song being sung to children to indicate that it is time for children and teachers to cleaning up the play spaces. Once completed a gathering song is sung to bring children to Bunch Bench area for next activity
2:03 - 2:08	<b>Review</b> Play time is reviewed by children in an assortment of ways (i.e. describe an activity you did, describe or chart your favorite activity chart, pantomime an activity you liked, use a pointing stick to show where you played, etc.). This may include the whole class or be an activity where children volunteer to share.
2:08 - 2:25	<b>Music circle/Me Bag</b> Pre-planned and extemporaneous singing, instruments, movement based on theme & children's Interests. One child daily shows-and-tells about 5 items they have brought in the Me Bag. Extension activities include memory game about what was brought, guessing game about who has the bag next,
2:25 - 2:38	<b>Small Group Time</b> Pre-planned (based on children's interests or needs) or extemporaneous (based on children's suggestions) activities in small groups that remain constant throughout the year. These activities can include games, stories, fine-motor activities, gross motor activities and are planned based in children's needs, interests, or related to knowledge acquisition surrounding learning topics.
2:38 - 2:40	<b>Wash hands</b> Use hall bathrooms for handwashing with soap and water - singing songs to ensure good washing.
2:40 - 2:55	<b>Snack</b> Family-style snacks and water provided for children to eat/drink if they choose. Lively table discussion.
2:55 - 3:10	<b>Outdoor play/inside play or activity (if inclement weather)</b> Children play outside on play structure, using balls, riding toys, sand box, sidewalk chalk, etc.

# Philosophy Statement

Eastminster Preschool believes that every child is endowed with the ability to learn, and that each child possess unique traits and talents that allow them to be successful. Our goal is to partner with parents and/or guardians to make the preschool experience one that fosters social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth. Our environment is designed to inspire a child's natural curiosity, promote self-discovered knowledge, encourage independence, and build self-esteem. Our program is play-based and our teachers provide developmentally-appropriate activities so that children prosper, and know school as a loving, safe, and fun place to be.

## Curriculum

Eastminster Preschool uses *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* to design our classroom, formulate our daily routine, and plan for children's experiences in the classroom. We have chosen to implement *Creative Curriculum* because it is a comprehensive, research-based early childhood curriculum that provides quality experiences for children, support for teachers, and is recommended by the Kent Intermediate School District for its GSRP classrooms. Using exploration and discovery as a way of learning, *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*:

- is based on 38 objectives for development and learning, which are fully aligned with the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* as well as early learning standards for every state.
- presents knowledge-building volumes and daily practice resources in tandem, giving every educator the "what," "why" and "how" of early childhood education.
- offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction, helping teachers meet the needs of every type of learner.
- addresses all the important areas of learning, from social-emotional and math to technology and the arts, and incorporates them throughout every part of every day.
- offers daily, built-in opportunities for observation, helping teachers and administrators clearly see the strong relationship between curriculum and assessment.
- offers complete support for working with English- and dual-language learners, including detailed guidance that helps to build teachers' knowledge about best practices.

## TUITION & FEES

1. Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month, September-May. You will not be billed. It is a yearly amount, divided into equal monthly payments. For 12:10 PM Great Start parents, your tuition is paid by the State of Michigan. You will be notified if you owe a small amount for being over-income.
2. 2015-2016 tuition amounts are:
  1. MW 3's; TTH 3's \$140 per month
  2. MWF 4's \$190 per month
  3. Young 5's \$250 per month
3. Tuition is considered late after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Late notices will be sent home via your child's tote bag. There is a \$15 late fee payment for payments received after the 15<sup>th</sup>.
4. **Tuition must be paid in full by the final day of school.**
5. Checks should be made payable to **Eastminster Preschool**.
6. Receipts will be given upon request.
7. Because your child's place can not be filled during short absences, and is reserved for him/her for the full school year, we **cannot make refunds for trips or absences**.
8. Enrollment fees are a single payment. They are **non-refundable**. The enrollment fee for 2015-2016 is \$100. May tuition amounts reflect a credit of \$50 from the enrollment fee. May tuition amounts are:

MW 3's & TTH 3's:	\$ 90
MWF AM & PM4's:	\$ 140
Young 5's:	\$ 200
9. Multiple child discounts within a family are available. Call for details.
10. Tuition assistance is available on a limited basis at the discretion of the Preschool Policy Board. Applications are available upon request.
11. **A photography fee of \$15** is required from all tuition-paying preschool families, and is due by May 15, 2016 (see photography fee, page 13.)
12. **A field trip fee of \$70 (MWF 4's and non-GSRP Y5's)** is to be paid by October 15, 2016 (see Field Trips, page 6). Parents of 3's also do not pay a field trip fee.
13. **Great Start Readiness 4's & Y5's parents DO NOT** pay tuition or photo/field trip fees for their child.

## 2016-2017 PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

Shortened sessions for MW 3's (10:15-11:30)	09/12, 09/14
Shortened sessions for TTH 3's (8:30 - 9:45)	09/13, 09/15
Chuck E. Cheese Fundraiser (Centerpoint Mall Chuck E. Cheese)	09/20 (3PM - 9PM)
Yellow Day (3's only)	09/21 (MW 3's) & 09/22 (TTH 3's)
Blue Jean Day (Y 5's, GSRP)	09/22
Blue Jean Day (AM 4's)	09/23
School Pictures (parent helpers needed)	10/03 & 10/04
Pet Sleepover (AM 4's, GSRP 4's & Y 5's,)	10/05
Red Day (3's only)	10/12 (MW 3's) & 10/13 (TTH 3's)
Autumn Fun Day - GSRP 4's (1 PM - 3 PM)	10/12
Sietsema's Apple Orchard Field Trip - Young 5's	10/12
Autumn Fun Day - GSRP Young 5's (1 PM - 3 PM)	10/13
Sietsema's Apple Orchard Field Trip - GSRP 4's	10/13
Autumn Fun Day -AM 4's (8:30 AM - 10:00 AM)	10/14
Autumn Fun Day MW 3's - (10:15 AM - 11:45 AM)	10/19 (no lunch boxes)
Koetsier's Greenhouse Field Trip - MWF AM 4's	10/19
Autumn Fun Day - TTH 3's (8:30 AM - 10:00 AM)	10/20
Circle Theater Play - Skippy Jon Jones - EGR Fine Arts	10/20 (drop off at EGRHS at noon)
Halloween Celebrations: (3's wear funny hat or make-up)	10/27 (MW 3's); 10/31 (TTH 3's)
(4's & 5's in costume)	10/31 (MWF AM 4's, GSRP 4's & Y5's,)
Fire Station Field Trip	11/02 (GSRP,4's)
Fire Station Field Trip	11/03 (GSRP Y5's)
Fire Station Field Trip	11/04 (MWF AM 4's)
Special Persons Month (adult visitors attend any session with child)	11/01 - 11/22
Blue Day (3's only)	11/09 (MW 3's) & 11/10 (TTH 3's)
Pajama Day	11/17 (GSRP 4's & Y5's)
Pajama Day	11/18 (MWF AM 4's)
Thanksgiving Vacation - NO SCHOOL	11/23, 11/24, 11/25
Christmas Wrapping Center open (parent helpers needed)	12/07 & 12/08
Green Day (3's only)	12/07 (MW 3's) & 12/8 (TTH 3's)
Christmas Vacation	12/17 - 01/02
School Begins Again	01/3
White Day (3's only)	01/11 (MW 3's) & 01/12 (TTH 3's)
Grand Rapids Public Museum Field Trip	01/25 (MWF AM 4's, GSRP 4's & Y5's)
Orange Day (3's only)	01/25 (MW 3's) & 01/26 (TTH 3's_
Winter Fun Night (sessions run from 6:30 - 7:30)	01/30 (MWF AM 4's)
	01/31 (GSRP Y5's)
	02/01 (GSRP 4's)
	02/06 (MW 3's)
	02/07 (TTH 3's)
Valentine Parties	02/13 (MWF AM 4's, MW 3's)
	02/14 (TTH 3's, GSRP 4's & Y5's)
Pink Day (3's only)	02/15 (MW 3's) & 02/16 (TTH 3's)
Grand Rapids Art Museum	02/15 (MWF AM 4's, GSRP Y5's)
Children's Museum Field Trip	02/16 (GSRP 4's)
Mid-Winter Break - NO SCHOOL	02/20 - 02/24
Purple Day (3's only)	03/01 (MW 3's) & 03/02 (TTH 3's)
Circle Theater Play, <i>Pete the Cat</i> , Field Trip	03/03 (MWF AM 4's)

Parent/Teacher Conferences	03/13, 03/14, & 03/15
NO SCHOOL due to daytime parent/teacher conferences	03/12 (MW3's, MWF AM 4's, GSRP 4's/Y5's)
NO SCHOOL due to daytime parent/teacher conferences	03/13 (TTH 3's, GSRP 4's/Y5's)
Black Day (3's only)	03/22 (MW 3's) & 03/23 (TTH 3's)
R Athletics Field Trip	03/29 (AM 4's, GSRP 4's)
R Athletics Field Trip	03/30 (GSRP Y5's)
Spring Break - NO SCHOOL	03/31 - 04/9
School Begins Again	04/10
Gray Day (3's only)	04/12 (MW 3's) & 04/13 (TTH 3's)
Downtown Library Field Trip	04/19 (MWF AM 4's, GSRP Y5's)
Downtown Library Field Trip	04/2 (GSRP Y5's)
Art Show (church dining room)	05/02 - 05/11
Brown Day (3's only)	05/10 (MW 3's) & 05/11 (TTH 3's)
Open House/Meet Your Teacher's Night for 2017-2018 enrollees	05/15
Ada Park Family Fun Day (10:30 AM - 12:30 PM)	05/19 (all classes)
Crazy Hair Day	05/22 (MWF AM 4's, GSRP 4's & Y5's)
Last Day of School	05/23 (TTH 3's)
	05/25 (MWF AM 4's, MW 3's, GSRP 4/Y5's)

## FIELD TRIPS/FIELD TRIP FEE

The AM 4's & GSRP classes typically take around 7 field trips in a year. The Young 5's class takes an extra 2-3 field trips. Transportation for field trips is provided by parent/teacher volunteers. All children will be placed in car/booster seats. While we have extra booster seats available, we occasionally may need you to leave your child's booster seat for him/her if we do not have enough available booster seats. All children less than 40 lbs will be placed in full-size children's car seats.

Non- GSRP Y5's field trip fee	<b>\$70</b>	Due by: <b>10/15</b>
AM 4's field trip fee	<b>\$70</b>	Due by: <b>10/15</b>

## PHOTO FEE

As part of our desire to enhance the curriculum, and to provide more photographs for our children and parents to remember important preschool events, we are requesting that preschool parents assist us in the increased costs associated with the taking of photos. **A photo fee of \$15 is due by May 15, 2017 for each preschool child enrolled in our program.** All children will receive a book at the end of the school year in which the photos we have taken will be mounted and labeled.



## TRANSPORTATION

Carpools are the responsibility of parents. Every parent is assigned a carpool number. Please keep it in your car. A teacher will always be at the door to greet children when we are ready for their arrival. **Please keep children in your car until you are the 1<sup>st</sup> car in the line and a teacher is at the door.** A teacher will bring your child to the car at the end of the session. Please do not bring children early, and remember to pick up promptly.

## WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School closings are reported to **Channels 8 and 13**. Look for the name **Eastminster Preschool** on the scrolling line at the bottom of the television screen. School will be closed when safe driving to and from school cannot be assured. School is typically closed due to snow or ice. **We will not close school for a tornado watch**, but parents have the option of not sending their child, or picking up their child if a tornado watch occurs during the school session. **School is cancelled when a tornado warning occurs before a session begins.** If a tornado warning occurs during a session, the children will be taken to the safest part of the building. Feel free to call your child's teacher if you are unsure of a weather closing (phone #'s on page 1).

## RULES AND DISCIPLINE

We promote behavior that creates a safe and harmonious environment for all the children. **Hitting or hurting another person is never allowed, and results in a short time-out for the child.** We find that discussion and redirection are successful for the majority of the behavior issues we see. When a child's behavior requires further action, we use Thomas Phelan's **1-2-3 Magic** for time-outs and other discipline issues. Eastminster Preschool places a strong emphasis on learning social skills and cooperative problem-solving. Even when behavior may not be acceptable, the children are always accepted, valued, and loved.

## BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are fun for all at preschool! Since every child is special, particularly at birthday time, we prefer to celebrate only one child's birthday at school on any day. As such, we encourage you to call us **2 weeks in advance** to reserve your child's special day for the best possibility of dates. Summer birthdays may be celebrated anytime that works for you, and become a child's 'Special Day' at preschool. We encourage you to come and celebrate along with us if you'd like. Parents provide a birthday snack for the children in their entire class to enjoy. Parents may also choose to provide a special beverage for the entire class to enjoy if desired. Check with your child's teacher for the number of children in your child's class.

## CHILDREN'S ILLNESS POLICIES

Children entering the program are expected to be toilet-trained, though we expect and understand that the process may be ongoing before your child becomes accident-free. **All children must have a physical examination by a physician** and are required to receive all State of Michigan required immunizations. Call if you have any immunization questions.

In case of illness, we ask that you keep your child at home if s/he exhibits the following symptoms:

- fever of 100.8 degrees or higher (oral, non-medicated) - child must be free of fever for 24 hours before s/he may return to school**
- diarrhea (2 times) - child must be diarrhea-free for 24 hrs. before s/he may return to school**
- vomiting (1 time) - child must wait 24 hrs from last vomit episode before returning to school**
- excessive cough - every 3-5 minutes, or deep**
- excessive drainage from nose (not related to allergies)**
- unidentified rash**
- anytime an infection requires medication to ameliorate symptoms, until the child's physician has determined s/he is not contagious**

If your child develops illness symptoms while at school, you will be notified and expected to arrange for your child to be picked-up from school immediately. S/he will be made comfortable and supervised in a separate area away from the play rooms until you or your emergency contact arrives. **We highly encourage you to have your child vaccinated yearly against seasonal or other pandemic flu viruses. Please notify us when your child will be missing school due to illness.** We are required to report communicable diseases weekly to the Kent County Health Dept., and follow their guidelines for notifying parents due to an infectious outbreak. We know you are appreciative of every precaution taken to prevent the spread of illness with the preschool. These include hand washing before eating and regular disinfecting of the preschool toys, equipment, and surfaces. You will be contacted if your child exhibits any symptoms of illness while at school. **Our guideline is: Would you want a stranger's child sitting next to your healthy child if s/he were exhibiting the symptoms your child is exhibiting now? If the answer is no, then please keep your child home.** If all parents follow this guideline, we will enjoy a healthy and productive educational year for all.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT/VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Parents will have many opportunities during the course of the year to become involved with our program and participate in the life of the school. For volunteers who will have unsupervised access to children (i.e. field trip driver), the State of Michigan requires parent volunteers to be screened in two ways. The Department of Human Services screening assures that no one with a history of child abuse is allowed access to the children. This form will be available during parent orientation sessions and in the preschool office. Additional screening is done through the Michigan State Police ICHAT system, and checks for any past convictions for felonious assault. Both these screenings only require proof of identification. Volunteers are not allowed to be alone with children unless they have completed the two-step screening process. Volunteers assisting only in the classroom are under the supervision of the teaching staff, therefore do not have to complete the screening policy to become involved. If you have any questions about the screening process, contact Shannon Rybarsyk.

## **HEALTH RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

1. All teachers are required to wash their hands with soap and running water before each session, before food preparation, before snack time, and any time they have come in contact with a potential contagion.
2. All children will be provided anti-bacterial soap for their hands when they arrive at school.
3. All children are required to wash their hands with soap and running water before they eat, and any time they have come in contact with a potential contagion.
4. If bodily fluids are expelled in the preschool area, all children will be moved into an adjoining room until the spill is cleaned and disinfected.
5. If bodily fluids are expelled in the preschool area, the teacher in that room will notify the custodial staff. The custodial staff will assume responsibility for the clean-up and disinfection of the area. The custodial staff is trained and competent in the clean-up of bodily fluids.
6. All staff must wear latex gloves when coming in contact with bodily fluids.
7. Soiled clothing will be encased in a plastic bag and kept in the office area until given directly to the parent/guardian when the child is picked up.
8. All staff are required to prepare snack tables by using a 3-step method of cleaning (spray cleanser - water - bleach solution) after each use.

9. All equipment, toys, and other surfaces will be cleaned 3 times annually (fall, winter, spring). In addition, all toys will be cleaned when they are rotated to the storage area after being available to the children for play.
10. All toys will be cleaned using the church dishwasher, detergent, and bleach; or, by hand washing, using water, detergent, and bleach.
11. Staff will use universal precautions to prevent the spread of infection.
12. Kleenex and hand sanitizer will be available in each preschool room at all times.
13. Parents are to be notified whenever a caregiver observes a change in a child's health, a child experiences an injury, or when a child is too ill to remain in the group.
14. A child too ill to remain with the group will be taken to the Preschool office and remain in care of the Program director until the parent is able to arrive.
15. The Preschool director will notify parents when a child/children has been potentially exposed to a communicable disease. All health information/resources will be maintained by the Preschool director in the black file, under 'Health Info'.

Kent County Health Department

700 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids, MI  
616-632-7100

[www.accesskent.com/Health/HealthDepartment](http://www.accesskent.com/Health/HealthDepartment)

Kent Regional 4C's

232 E. Fulton, Suite 107, Grand Rapids, MI  
616-451-8281

[www.4Cchildcare.org](http://www.4Cchildcare.org)

Michigan Department of Human Services

415 Franklin SE, Grand Rapids, MI  
616-247-6300

[www.michigan.gov/DHS](http://www.michigan.gov/DHS)

National Center for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

## NUTRITION

Water will be served to all children during snack and lunch periods. Parents of lunchtime class students may choose to send an alternative drink in their child's lunchbox if they desire. The preschool will provide, on occasion, a special beverage related to a theme being studied or as a special treat during a holiday celebration.

All children are provided a snack by the preschool. We follow USDA and CACFP guidelines when planning and purchasing snacks for the children. As such, snacks are predominately low-fat and low-sugar. Menus are posed weekly in the preschool office. Your child will occasionally be cooking his/her snack, and we often choose a snack that corresponds to the unit being studied. **For children in the M/W 3's class, parents are required to provide a box lunch.**

If your child has mild food allergies, please tell us the details fully. We will serve alternate snacks to your child when necessary. If your child has major food allergies, we will ask you to provide snacks for us to keep at school to provide your child, per your instructions.

## NEWSLETTER/CALENDAR

The calendar and newsletter are sent to all parents around the beginning of each month. It is our key link with you, and it is full of dates and information you will need each month. Please take time to read about our teaching units to springboard dinner table conversations!

## SCHOLASTIC BOOKS

We provide you an opportunity to purchase age-appropriate, quality literature at discounted prices through Scholastic Book Club. This is voluntary. **Checks are to be made payable to: Eastminster Preschool.** The date the order forms need to be returned will always be noted on the form. Ordered items will be sent home via your child's tote bag/backpack. Please let us know if the items are gifts, and we will brown bag them so little eyes will not see!

## SCHOOL BACKPACKS/TOTE BAGS

We would like every child to bring a **large**, personalized backpack or tote bag to school each day. We will send it home at the end of every session with his/her projects and any communications from school tucked inside. Individually personalized Eastminster Preschool clear vinyl bags are a perfect size and are available for purchase (at our cost) during orientation sessions in fall. Put all communications from home (i.e. notes, tuition checks) inside the **main** pocket of the backpack, **Please check and empty the bag daily.** We do allow parents to provide a change of clothes inside their bag if the child is one who might have an accident at school; or an epi-pen for us to use if your child has severe allergic reactions.

## ME BAG AND BOOK BAGS

Each child will have times to 'Show and Tell' special treasures and toys from home. We call this the ME Bag. It will come home in your child's tote bag (with instructions) when it is his/her turn. Please help them to limit it to **5 items**. Book bags include a stuffed animal and corresponding storybook for your child's to read and enjoy. Return book bags to preschool on your child's next school day, so another child can have a turn.

## ASSESSMENT/SCREENING

Teachers conduct informal assessments of children throughout the school year. These take place while children are engaged in play. These are called "authentic assessments" and are considered the most accurate way to determine that a child has incorporated new skills and knowledge into their everyday life. They are the most effective way to evaluate social, emotional, and language development. For these authentic assessments, the children are blissfully unaware that the teacher is even engaging in assessment of any kind. Formal assessments and screenings are also conducted as a way to evaluate the children in a more specific and standardized way, to check for developmental skills that are critical for future kindergarten success. As part of our formal assessment of children, we conduct the Brigance Screen III twice per year, once in late-September, and again in March. This is a standardized test performed one-on-one that takes about 8 minutes. It covers all realms of development, and is a powerful tool for us to use in determining whether a child's development is within normal expectations. It also helps us to know that our curriculum is meeting the age-appropriate needs of the children. We conduct other formal assessments to evaluate skills within specific realms of development. For example, does this 4-year old child possess the small-motor development to cut straight, curved, and angular lines; or, does this 5-year child possess the large motor development to efficiently balance on one leg, hop, jump, leap, and skip. The results of these formal and informal assessments will be shared with you at our spring conference.

## CONFERENCES

We conduct parent/teacher conferences twice per year. In November, we conduct phone conferences, except for GSRP students, who have home visits that month. These conferences address early considerations, such as adjustment to school. In spring, our conferences take place at school and include a report card and examples of your student's work. Spring conferences will be held on **March 13, 14, & 15**. Daytime and evening conference times will be available on March. Evening-only conference times are available on March 15. **There will be no school for all children on Monday, March 13 and Tuesday, March 14.** Additional informal or telephone conferences are encouraged anytime you feel the need. Parents are welcome to come and observe school at anytime. No appointment is necessary.

## CLOTHING

Play clothes and shoes are most appropriate. We provide paint shirts for the children to use , but cannot guarantee that clothes will not get dirty during the course of the day. We encourage your efforts in helping your children to be increasingly independent. **Learning to dress themselves, putting on and zipping their jackets, and learning to put on their shoes are all important milestones in the preschool years.** Allow the children to do these activities on their own if they are able.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Label all belongings the child might remove - coats, jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts. **Security items are allowed, but bringing of toys is strongly discouraged, except on ME Bag day.** We frequently encounter problems with lost toys or difficulty in sharing when children bring possessions from home that we are not anticipating.

## WINTER OUTDOOR PLAY

For our classes that meet for 2 ½ hour sessions (AM 4's, MW 3's, TTH 3's), winter outdoor play WILL NOT take place, due to the limited time spent at preschool and the difficulty of helping many children get into outerwear. For that reason, children in those classes do not need to bring boots or snow pants to school. To provide increased gross motor opportunities for those children in winter, the MWF 4's and Y4's participate in a weekly physical education class, while the 3-year old class children are provided increased opportunities to play on ride-on toys, spring horses, gym mats, etc. throughout winter months.

For our classes that meet for 3 hour sessions (GSRP & Young 5's), winter outdoor play WILL take place. We will spend our play time outside at the start of our sessions (12:10 PM). Please dress your child appropriately to the weather, particularly during the winter months when we expect children to wear winter coats, boots, snow pants, hats, and mittens. We provide extra storage for the children in those classes to keep track of winter gear.

## CHILDREN'S VISITORS

We occasionally receive calls asking whether a visiting cousin or friend may attend school with a child enrolled in our program. We regretfully must always answer no. Our license specifies the maximum number of children we may teach in our classrooms, and our enrollment is at capacity. We are able, however, to have visiting adults come and spend time with their special little loved one during the day, or have a visiting child come accompanied with an adult for a portion of the day, especially for events such as birthdays.

## WHEN TO CALL US

Questions or concerns are always important to us, and can be directed to your child's teachers or the preschool directors at anytime. Please also call us if:

- **your child is ill and will not be in school**
- **your are going on a trip**
- **someone other than you or a person designated on your school firm will be picking your child up (we will not release your child to anyone not specifically authorized by a parent)**
- 

## ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Eastminster Preschool admits students without regard to national origin, ethnicity, religion, or family structure. Children need to be potty-trained, but do not need to be accident-free. We allow children to wear a Pull-Up at school if that is the parent's preference. Parents need to notify the preschool in writing 2 weeks in advance of withdrawing their child from the program to be eligible for any refund of paid tuition. If notice is not given, parents will pay the original agreed upon weekly payment for 2 weeks after the withdrawal. Should a child pose a consistent concern as to behavior which is of physical or emotional harm to children, and after conferring with parents, seeking advice from an outside professional observer, and documenting concrete examples, the preschool may dismiss a child from the program.

## PEST CONTROL ADVISORY

As required by State of Michigan licensing guidelines, the center shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program when pesticide applications occur in the building. The integrated pest management program will include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Annual notification will be provided to parents informing them that they will receive advance notice of pesticide applications.
2. Annual notification to parents or guardians will be given by posting on the office bulletin Board and by written notification sent home in your child's backpack
3. Advance notice will contain information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of the application, contact information at the center, and a toll-free number for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.
4. Liquid spray or aerosol insecticide applications may not be performed in a room of the preschool unless the room will be unoccupied by children for not less than 4 hours or longer if required by the pesticide label use directions.



# GREAT START READINESS PRESCHOOL (GSRP)

We are pleased to have been chosen by the Kent Intermediate School District (KISD) to provide free preschool to area children through the Great Start Readiness Preschool (GSRP) program, authorized and funded by the State of Michigan and administered in our area by KISD. We accept all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. This program is for 4-year old children whose birthdates are from 09/02/11 - 09/01/12.

## Program Overview

Our GSRP program is offered Monday-Thursday from 12:10 PM - 3:10 PM. We have 2 classrooms of GSRP for the 2016-2017 school year. Your child will be assigned to either our traditional 4-year old GSRP classroom, or our Young 5's GSRP classroom. Classroom assignment is based on birthdate and previous preschool experience. You are responsible to transport your child to and from preschool. We start our day with outside play, year-round. Please dress your child in weather-appropriate clothes for outdoor play. We WILL NOT play outside if the wind chill is below 20 degrees.

As part of GSRP requirements, we will make 2 home visits to meet with you and your child. The first will take place September 11, 2014, as outlined in your enrollment confirmation. The second will take place in May. We will meet with you for parent-teacher conferences in November and March, at which time we will provide a report of your child's progress, as well as work samples. We will conduct 2 Brigance screenings of your child, one to take place shortly after school begins, and the second shortly before spring conferences.

If you have any questions or concerns about our GSRP program, please contact our director, Shannon Rybarsyk at 616-247-0433 (preschool) or 616-446-2497 (cell).

## Child Eligibility and Enrollment

### Enrollment

Enrollment in Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) will begin once funding is announced by the State of Michigan. Ninety percent of all children enrolled in Kent County will have family income under 250% of the Federal Poverty Level. If space allows ten percent of the children enrolled in Kent County can have family income above 250%.

### Prioritization

Children are enrolled by ranking the family's Federal Poverty Level; families with the lowest income will be enrolled first. Risk factors will be used to further prioritize children in the same poverty level.

**Eligibility**

All children who attend a state-funded preschool (GSRP) must live in Michigan. This includes migrant children during the times they are living in Michigan. Children, who live in bordering states, even if their parents/guardians work in Michigan, are not eligible for GSRP.

**Age:** The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) was designed to provide high-quality preschool to children at risk for lower school success in the school year before they are able to go to kindergarten; children enrolled in GSRP must be at least four, but not five, on or before the age cut off for GSRP.

	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Kindergarten	Age 5 on or before 12/01/12  Date of Birth: 12/02/2006 - 12/01/2007	Age 5 on or before 11/01/13  Date of Birth: 12/02/2007 - 11/01/2008	Age 5 on or before 10/01/14  Date of Birth: 11/02/2008 - 10/01/2009	Age 5 on or before 09/01/15  Date of Birth: 10/02/2009 - 09/01/2010	Age 5 on or before 09/01/16  Date of Birth: 09/02/2010 - 09/01/2011
GSRP	Age 4 on or before 12/01/12  Date of Birth: 12/02/2007 - 12/01/2008	Age 4 on or before 11/01/13  Date of Birth: 11/02/2008 - 11/01/2009	Age 4 on or before 10/01/14  Date of Birth: 10/02/2009 - 10/01/2010	Age 4 on or before 09/01/15  Date of Birth: 09/02/2010 - 09/01/2011	Age 4 on or before 09/01/16  Date of Birth: 09/02/2011 - 09/01/2012

**Income:** Families with less than 250% of Federal Poverty Level will qualify for free preschool (for actual income guidelines see:

[http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/GSRP\\_Income\\_Eligibility\\_Guidelines\\_3.10.15\\_483\\_689\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.gov/documents/mde/GSRP_Income_Eligibility_Guidelines_3.10.15_483_689_7.pdf)

Families that are over 251% of FPL can still qualify for GSRP on a sliding scale fee. The amount of the fee will be determined by what percentage of the FPL the family's income is in. Over Income information will be distributed by the ISD. Please speak with your program administrator or call the ISD if you have questions concerning this.

**Other Eligibility Factors:**

- Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay (IEP, medical report)
- Documented severe or challenging behavior (medical, therapist report)
- Primary home language other than English
- Parent/guardian with low educational attainment
- Abuse or neglect of child or parent

- Environmental risk (one/both parents missing from the home, sibling issues, teen parent, family is homeless or without stable housing, living in a high-risk neighborhood, pre/post-natal exposure to toxic substances that are known to cause learning or developmental delays.

## **Documents Needed for Acceptance**

Proof of income (Tax form 1040, W2, TANF documentation, pay stubs, unemployment, written statements from employers, Foster Care reimbursement, SSI award letters, Child Support, Alimony, Disability)

Proof of Age (Birth Certificate, Hospital Record, Passport)

Proof of Residency (Rental/Mortgage contract or utility bill)

Proof of Health (physical form from well child visit)

Proof of Immunizations (immunization record, MCIR, Waiver)

Head Start Waiver (if applicable)

Age Waiver (if applicable)

## **Securing and Maintaining Enrollment Requirements**

To secure enrollment in the program, the parent must:

- Meet the enrollment guidelines.
- Return completed forms.

**If paperwork is not completed within 30 calendar days of enrollment a child can be dismissed from the program, and their spot will be given to another child.**

## **Child Screening and Assessment Tool**

All GSRP classrooms use an approved age and growth related screener that is used when a child is enrolled. Teachers will continue to measure children's growth and learning through observations and notes that will show how your child is progressing during the school year. All the teachers observing children are trained on how to get and give this information to enrolled families, as well as strategies for communicating with families whose primary language is not English. Eastminster Preschool uses:

### ***Brigance Preschool Screen II***

All GSRP teachers will observe and note how children are progressing during the school year to see where children are developing and what supports the teacher can provide to help students develop further. Information about your child's growth and development will be discussed during conferences and home visits. If you would like more information about your child's development please see their teacher.

## Program Evaluation (collection of student & family data)

All GSRP programs are required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask parents questions about their child and family.
- Observe children in the classroom.
- Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, etc.
- Ask teachers how children are learning and growing.

Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law.

Questions? Contact: [mde-gsrp@michigan.gov](mailto:mde-gsrp@michigan.gov) or 517-373-8483

Or MDE, Office of Great Start, 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909

## Parent Involvement

GSRP will only be successful if parents are involved. Ways parents can be involved:

- Agree to keep the Child Information Record up to date; i.e., telephone numbers, workplace address, emergency contact, etc.
- Support teachers in keeping up a safe and enjoyable environment through a positive, preventative discipline approach.
- Attend and share in scheduled parent/teacher home visits and conferences. GSRP requires there be a minimum of four required contacts: two home visits and two conferences is preferred.
- See that students are in school unless absence is unavoidable (illness, emergency, etc.). Parents are responsible for letting the teachers know when a child is ill or absent for some important reason.
- Respond to teacher recommendations concerning physical conditions, i.e., scheduling appointments with appropriate professionals. Parents are requested to provide teachers with results.
- Respond to requests for information or help needed to support your child's success in school.
- Become a member of Great Start Collaborative Parent Coalition (see your program's director to get more information).
- **Parents will not be required to volunteer in the classroom or participate in group meetings as a condition of enrollment.**

## **Staff Credential requirements**

At Eastminster Preschool, GSRP teachers and associate teachers are highly qualified and meet qualification requirements set forth by the State of Michigan.

Lead Teachers a valid Michigan teaching certificate and an Early Childhood Education (ZA) or Early Childhood-General and Special Education (ZS) endorsement

Associate or Assistant Teachers must have one of the following:

- An associate's degree (AA) in early childhood education or child development or the equivalent

OR

- A valid classroom CDA credential

## **Attendance/Dismissal policy**

If a child is absent for 30 **school** days in a row, they will be dismissed from the program, and their spot will be given to another child.

If paperwork is not completed within 30 **calendar** days of enrollment a child can be dismissed from the program, and their spot will be given to another child.

Children will not be excluded or expelled because of the need for additional medical or behavioral support, assistance with toileting, or staff attitudes and/or apprehensions.

## **Number of Weeks and School Hours**

GSRP requires a minimum of 30 week of programming with a minimum of 3 hours for part day programming and 7 hours for full day programming for at least 4 days a week. Programming typically runs Monday through Thursday.

Please see your program's handbook for specific begin and end dates and daily hours for the school year.

## **Ratio**

A 1:8 adult/child ratio must be maintained at all times. A consistent third adult (same teacher) must be present in any classroom where 17 or 18 children are enrolled. Class size must be capped at 18 children with three consistent adults.

## Daily Routine/Times

GSRP classrooms are expected to have a regular daily routine including: child planning, choice time, recall, small groups, large groups, snacks/meals, transitions, outside time, rest time (in a full-day program). Each day should follow the same schedule unless there are special events (field trips, visitors, etc.). Please refer to the daily schedule for routine and times.

## Weather and Outside

GSRP classrooms go outside to play for a minimum of 30 minutes a day. Refer to the daily schedule to see when outside times are scheduled.

## Food Service

Eastminster Preschool provides a daily snack. We adhere to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)/National School Nutrition Programs nutritional guidelines:

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal\\_Patterns.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm).

In addition, we follow guidelines of the DHS Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. All children eat the same foods unless there is a documented allergy or special need for individualization. The program incurs the cost for individualization at meals unless changes are part of a special education Individualized Education Program (IEP).

## Child Discipline/Conflict Resolution Policy

GSRP classrooms are set up to reduce most behavior issues; classroom set up, routine structure and quality relationships between child and teachers all help to create a positive classroom setting. Children are encouraged to do things for themselves and teachers focus on child-led learning activities. When conflicts do arise teachers are expected to use the following Conflict Resolution Process:

- Treat conflict situations with children matter-of-factly;
- Approach children calmly and stop any hurtful actions;
- Acknowledge children's feelings;
- Involve children in identifying the problem by gathering information from children and restating the problem;
- Ask children for solutions and encourage them to choose one together; and
- Give follow-up support when children act on their decisions

This Conflict Resolution Process puts the power in the children's hands to come up with and solve their own problems. This Conflict Resolution Process is **required** for GSRP programs.

## Transition into GSRP and Kindergarten Plans

Moving into preschool and from preschool into elementary school are important milestones for children and their families. Eastminster Preschool provides information to parents regarding all local options for Kindergarten. These include: free public school districts based on residency, free charter schools which do not have residency requirements, the schools-of-choice program administered by Kent ISD which allows parents to apply for enrollment outside of their home district, private schools, home-schooling.

Contact Eastminster Preschool Director, Shannon Rybarsyk, at 616-247-0433 (school phone) or 616-446-2497 (cell phone) if you would like to schedule a conference regarding kindergarten options.

## Kent ISD Contacts and Phone Numbers

The local Great Start Readiness Program that your child is enrolled in is administered and monitored through the Kent Intermediate School District. If you have any questions about GSRP administration or monitoring please contact the GSRP office at: 616-447-5679.

To apply for GSRP, you need to fill out an application form, available from us or from KISD. Alternatively, you may call the Kent County preschool hotline at 616-447-2409 to make an application over the phone. You will need to provide documentation for enrollment. This includes:

- Copy of child's birth certificate or passport
- Health appraisal, signed by your child's doctor/clinic and immunization record.
- Proof of residency (copy of a utility bill or W-2 form)
- Proof of income (copy of a pay stub or W-2 form)
- Application form
- Copy of your child's IEP, if applicable
- Head Start waiver, if applicable
- Child information record emergency card
- Signed contract placement

Priority is given to the neediest children in our county; with preference given to children with an existing special education IEP and children at or below the national poverty line. We use your proof of income to determine if you are income-eligible or over-income. For income-eligible children, there is NO COST to attend GSRP. For over-income families, you will be notified after September 1, 2015 if there is an opening for your child. You pay a one-time payment as an over-income family. For this year, that amount will either be \$75, \$180, or \$290, depending on what percentage over-income you are compared to national poverty guidelines.