



MT. VERNON
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

Mini-Marauder PRESCHOOL



Early Learning Academy

1806 W. St. Rd. 234

Fortville, IN 46040

317-485-3100

Parent Handbook



**Early Learning Academy
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Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will *Engage, Educate, and Empower* today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities.

Early Learning Academy's Mission Statement

To ensure that all children attending the Mini Marauder Preschool develop a positive self-concept, the ability to problem solve, the ability to negotiate with their peers, and engage in a variety of hands-on, language rich, learning experiences that will establish the foundation for lifelong learning.

Beliefs

- We believe that children learn best through play
- We believe that all children have the capacity to learn and grow as individuals
- We believe that young children learn best by doing
- We believe that children learn through active involvement with their environment
- We believe that each new experience adds to the learning process

GOALS

Social Emotional Development:

- Each child will develop a positive sense of self worth
- Each child will develop the confidence to challenge himself/herself
- Each child will develop an acceptance and appreciation of the similarities and differences among everyone

Cognitive Development:

- Each child will expand his/her play skills
- Each child will build upon his/her problem solving skills
- Each child will expand upon his/her curiosity of the environment and the events that occur in his/her environment
- Each child will acquire concepts and information that lead to a greater understanding of his/her world

Speech and Language Development:

- Each child will expand upon his/her ability to communicate with friends during play
- Each child will expand upon his/her ability to communicate wants, needs, ideas, and thoughts
- Each child will expand upon his/her understanding of language

Physical Development

- Each child will participate in a wide variety of games and activities with friends that incorporate both fine motor and gross motor skills
- Each child will expand upon his/her ability to explore and learn from the environment

Welcome

We want to officially welcome your child and family to the Early Learning Academy at the Mini Marauder Preschool. The Early Learning Academy is your school. We are excited for your child to experience all of the fun and engaging learning opportunities that we have planned. Please know that you are always welcome here at the Early Learning Academy. We encourage you to participate in your child's learning experiences whenever possible. Monthly newsletters provide information about what is happening in the classroom as well as upcoming school activities or events. Periodically, throughout the year, special events or activities are planned for your child and family to participate in together. You will be notified of any special events or activities through the Parent Newsletter and/or note from your child's teacher.

Family Involvement

Families are always welcome to visit and participate in their child's classroom. Please sign-in at the front desk if you visit your child's classroom. Additionally, we welcome family members who may be interested in volunteering at the school. The preschool follows MVCSC school corporation policy regarding classroom visitors and volunteers. This includes completing a Classroom Volunteer Release Form and waiting for approval from MVCSC central office following State Criminal Background Check. We also have several other avenues available for supporting your child's education such as preparing materials (can be done at home) and Box Tops for Education.

Special Needs Programming

The Early Learning Academy's special education team evaluates children ages 3 - 5 with suspected learning problems or disabilities. Parents with concerns about their child's development or learning should contact Laura Durig at the Early Learning Academy at 317-485-3100 to initiate an evaluation. An individual will schedule a meeting with you to explain the evaluation process, gather information about your child's development, and obtain your written permission to evaluate your child. Once the evaluation is completed, a case conference will be scheduled with you at a mutually agreed upon date and time to review the evaluation results. If your child is determined eligible for early childhood special education services, goals will be developed and services will be recommended to enable your child to meet the goals outlined in his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). All services outlined in your child's IEP are provided at no cost to your family.

Enrollment

The Early Learning Academy at the Mini Marauder Preschool follows the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's approved calendar. Our doors open at 7:00 am for families who choose to access before school care. Your child must be picked up by 6:00 pm each day or your family will be charged \$1.00 for every minute that your child is at the preschool after 6:00 pm. Enrollment is filled on a first come, first serve basis. Enrollment must be updated annually for returning students.

The following pieces of information are required for enrollment:

- Completed enrollment form
- Copy of child's birth certificate
- Copy of the child's immunization record
- Signed

Hours of Operation / Calendar

Before School Care (Breakfast is served during this time): 7:00 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.

AM Preschool: 7:45- 10:30

Lunch: 10:40-11:10

PM Preschool: 11:15-2:00

After School Care: 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

At this time, the Mini Marauder preschool program will follow the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation calendar. We will be open all days that Mt. Vernon is in session. Please see information regarding inclement weather on page 11.

Vaccines

Indiana Code (IC 20-34-4-5) states that a child is not permitted to attend school beyond the first day without furnishing a written record, unless:

- The school gives a waiver (for a period not to exceed 20 days)
- The local health department or a physician determines that the child's immunizations have been delayed do to extreme circumstances and the required immunization will not be complete by the first day of school. The parent must furnish a written statement and a time schedule approved by a physician or health department.
- A medical or religious exemption is on file.

Tuition

Full-Day: Tuition is \$125.00 per week for your first child, \$95.00 for your second child, and \$85.00 for a third child who attend the Early Learning Academy at the same time.

Half-Day: Tuition is \$75.00 per week.

Tuition is prepaid for the week (tuition is due on Friday and is applied to the following week). We accept personal checks (made payable to Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation), money order, or cash (exact amount only). You will receive a receipt of payment by the end of the school day. Continued enrollment in the Early Learning Academy is contingent upon the parent's adherence to the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook, including, but not limited to, timely payment of tuition.

Material Fee

A \$60.00 material fee is required at the beginning of the school year. The material fee covers the following for your child: consumable art supplies, consumable materials for science experiments, consumable materials used to create rotating pretend play centers, and a MVCSC Mini Marauder T-shirt for your child. If your child qualifies for free or reduced lunch/textbooks, your material fee will be waived or reduced.

Supplies

Upon enrollment, you will receive a supply list for your child's class. Additionally, please send a clean, dry change of clothes that is kept in your child's bag or backpack. If your child is not yet independent with toileting, please send diapers for your child. You can either send a bag of diapers labeled with your child's name or send a couple diapers on a daily basis in his/her backpack.

Withdrawal from the Program

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child from the Early Learning Academy. If proper written notice is given, any prepaid fees will be refunded. If a child is withdrawn without giving the required written notification, the parent or guardian will be financially responsible to pay for an additional two weeks of preschool fees. All unpaid tuition and material fee will be subject to collection via MVCSC's procedures for collections.

What to Wear

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing that you are okay with your child wearing while he or she engages in fun messy activities. We spend significant amounts of time creating art, engaging in science experiments, and playing with materials such as sand and water. Your child's clothing may become soiled during hands on activities. We suggest that your child wear shoes that allow him or her to safely participate in any activity. Flip flops are discouraged.

Student Drop Off and Pick Up

Drop Off Procedures:

- Walk with your child into the building
- Walk your child to his or her classroom
- Sign your child into preschool

Pick Up Procedures:

- Sign your child out of preschool
- Pick your child up in his or her classroom

Procedures for picking your child up early:

- Go to the office
- Sign your child out (office staff will call his/her classroom to let the teacher know your child will be leaving).
- Pick your child up in his or her classroom

Children are only released to adults designated on the child's enrollment. If, for some reason, someone other than a custodial parent or an individual designated on your enrollment needs to pick up your child, the parent must come to the office and add the person to the list of adults authorized to pick up the child. NO NOTES WILL BE ACCEPTED. The person picking up the child will be asked to show photo identification. If a person that is not listed as authorized comes to pick up your child, a call will be made to the custodial parent. If the custodial parent cannot be reached, the child will NOT be released to this individual. For this reason, it is important to keep the list maintained in the office with updated and new information and contact numbers.

Snack

Snack time is considered a learning time when teachers sit with children and help to facilitate social conversation. Good experiences at snack time help children develop positive attitudes regarding nutrition. Teachers will emphasize nutrition and healthy eating choices throughout the school year. **Families are asked to provide nutritious snack and drink for the class on a monthly basis for approximately 15 children.** Here are some examples of snacks and drinks for your child to bring to school.

Drink Options

Milk
100% Fruit Juice
Water

Snack Options

Cheerios	Cheese & Crackers
Yogurt	Pretzels
Fresh Fruit	Pudding
Applesauce	Animal Crackers
Fruit Snack Cups	Graham Crackers
Fresh Vegetables	Fruit Bite Snacks

Breakfast & Lunch

Breakfast Price = \$1.65 Lunch Price = \$2.75

Please send in your child's cafeteria money on Mondays, if your child will be purchasing breakfast and / or lunch. Our computerized accounting system allows parents to pay as far in advance as they like. You will be notified when your account runs low. Our system (and the Indiana State Board of Accounts) will not allow students to charge for later payment. If a child's account has insufficient funds for the day, he or she will not be allowed to buy breakfast and they will be given a cheese sandwich for lunch. If you do not want your child to be able to use their account to purchase "extras," send a note stating this with your child. Please either send money to school in a sealed envelope with the child's name, teacher's name, and amount of check or cash inside, or enroll in Mt. Vernon Community Schools' internet-based cafeteria payment service called My School Bucks. This service is a website where you can pay for your child's breakfast, lunch and snacks using your Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express. Participation in this service is voluntary; you may enroll at any time. Also, please note that you will be charged a convenience fee of \$2.50 per transaction. Transactions made through My School Bucks before 10 a.m. should be available to students for that day's cafeteria purchases. Mt. Vernon Schools download payments from the My School Bucks website three times a day, so if you find that your payment isn't reflected in your student's balance update within 24 hours (during the normal school week), please contact the Food Service Director, Doris Johnson, at 485-3100 immediately. Students should NOT bring carbonated beverages or drinks in glass bottles in their lunches.

Birthdays

Please talk to your child's teacher if you plan to bring a special snack or treat to celebrate your child's birthday. We welcome your family to take part in snack time on/near your child's birthday. Typically, birthday treats are shared during snack time.

Outdoor Play

Gross motor play is part of the daily preschool schedule. Gross motor activities such as running, climbing, pedaling a tricycle, swinging, and playing ball provide valued opportunities for overall development. Developing strength and coordination builds the necessary foundation for being able to use small muscles (i.e used for writing, cutting, etc.) effectively in the classroom. Additionally, these activities provide opportunities to engage socially with peers. On most days, the class goes outside. We go outside unless it is raining, snowing, or below **33** degrees. Please dress your child accordingly.

Questions & Concerns

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your child please don't hesitate to ask. Your first contact is always your child's teacher. If you have additional questions/concerns that your child's teacher may not be able to address, please talk to the Director.

Behavior Support

The Early Learning Academy teaches and encourages positive, prosocial behaviors through a variety of methods. Typically, preschool children need to be taught and positively reinforced for demonstrating prosocial behaviors. Some examples of prosocial behaviors include: requesting to take a turn with a toy by verbally asking or using a “My Turn” card, inviting peers to play by asking, gesturing, or using visual supports, etc. Methods to teach pro-social behaviors are incorporated throughout the preschool curriculum. This includes establishing classroom rules and procedures at the beginning of the year. The rules are printed (pictures paired with words) and explicitly taught through modeling, role playing, and feedback. Children also learn how to express their emotions in a manner that is respectful to all.

When an inappropriate behavior occurs, staff addresses it immediately. Staff attempts to identify why the behavior occurred (i.e Does the child want a toy that another child is playing with? Does the child want to play with a group of peers but is unsure how to join?) Staff teaches children how to respond next time the situation arises.

When a child demonstrates physically aggressive behavior towards peers or staff, the staff attempts to determine what the child is communicating through his or her behavior. The child may be asked to sit for a couple minutes in order to calm himself or herself; however, more importantly, staff will teach the desired behavior so the child will be better able to respond next time. Sometimes pictures are paired with words so that the child better understands what to do next time. Additionally, teachers model appropriate behavior, role play, and provide positive feedback when the child demonstrates the desired behavior. Positive feedback includes verbal descriptive praise, smile, high five, positive attention, etc.

If inappropriate behavior occurs repeatedly, staff communicates with parents and develops a plan to support the child’s social emotional development.

Child’s Name

Parent Signature

Printed Name

Date

Disaster Plans

Severe Storm Drills

The school has a disaster plan that will be implemented in case of severe storms, winds, or tornados. If alerted by authorities, children will be taken to their designated safe place until an all clear is received. We practice these drills while in preschool.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held once a month in accordance with state regulations. Maps of buildings escape routes are posted in each room.

Inclement Weather

The Early Learning Academy follows the approved Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation Calendar. School closings and delays are communicated through the SkyAlert System, the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's website, twitter feed, as well as local television networks.

- E-Learning day (school closed due to inclement weather): Preschool is closed
- Two hour delay: Preschool will open at 9:00 am.
- Early Dismissal due to inclement weather: Preschool children will be dismissed per the Superintendent's decision.

Health Services

The school nurse is not in the preschool at all times, but can be contacted at anytime during the school day by our preschool staff.

When Your Child is Sick - Should He / She Stay Home?

Determining whether your children should be kept home from school is not always an easy decision. Mild colds and complaints come and go often with young children. Signs of something more serious include the following: • fever over 100 degrees F. • a rash or outbreak (This could be symptoms of a variety of things from poison ivy to chicken pox.) • vomiting or diarrhea • deep coughing or congestion • constant itching (This could be a sign of head lice or chicken pox, depending where your child is scratching. If you find your child does have head lice, please let the school nurse know, even if you have already treated your child.) • flu symptoms. Please do not allow your child to return to school until they have been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication. **Healthy children perform at their best. After any illness, your child should be fever free (temp < 100) for 24 hours before returning to school. Not all contagious illnesses are accompanied by fever; therefore, the child must also be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school in order to protect others from infection. (Symptom free would include fever, vomiting and diarrhea free for 24 hours.)**

Administration of Medication

Administration of medication is consistent with Indiana Law. Absolutely no medication shall be given or dispensed by the school nurse, health room assistant, or school employee unless a medication authorization form has been properly filled out.

Prescription medications require a parent and physician signature. Over-the-counter medications only require a parent signature. This form must be on file in the school administrative offices at the time the medication is given to the student. These forms may be obtained by contacting the school office and are available on our website:

www.mvcsc.k12.in.us. **IMPORTANT: MEDICATIONS PRESCRIBED FOR AN INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SHALL BE KEPT IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER BEARING THE ORIGINAL PHARMACY LABEL SHOWING THE PRESCRIPTION NUMBER, DATE FILLED, PHYSICIAN'S NAME, DIRECTIONS FOR USE, DOSAGE, AND THE STUDENT'S NAME. FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL MT. COMFORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, WE CAN HAVE NO EXCEPTIONS. ALL OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS MUST BE BROUGHT IN THEIR ORIGINAL CONTAINERS.** We suggest that parents send in only the amount of medication needed to take at school.

Ask the pharmacist for a second prescription container with a label so that the amount needed to be taken at school can be in one container and the remainder left at home in the second container. Written consent is valid for the time specified on the consent and not longer than one school year. Non-prescription medications will not be given at school unless sent from home by the parent and with the properly completed medication authorization form. When no longer needed, the medication shall be returned to the parent or destroyed if left at school at the end of the school year.

Possession and self-administration of some medications is permitted by Indiana State Law. Students with a chronic disease or medical condition may possess and self-administer medication for the chronic disease or medical condition. The student's parent must file an authorization with the school to possess and self-administer the medication. The authorization must include: A physician states in writing that: 1) the student has an acute or chronic disease or medical condition for which the physician has prescribed medication; 2) the student has been instructed in how to self-administer the medication, and 3) the nature of the disease or medical condition requires emergency administration of the medication. The authorization and statement must be filed with the school annually. Release of student's medication: Medication that is possessed by a school for administration during school hours or at school functions for a student may be released to: 1) the student's parent; 2) an individual who is at least 18 years of age and designated in writing by the student's parent to receive the medication; or 3) the student if the student's parent provides written permission for the student to receive the medication.

Food Allergies

MVCSC recognizes the growing number of students enrolling in our schools with potentially life-threatening food and other allergies. As educators we recognize our responsibility to understand the emergency treatments needed while proactively addressing conditions to prevent exposure to specific allergens. We believe a collaborative partnership between the school and family is the best way to achieve this goal. While the medical and health-related needs are unique for each child, we feel that this collaborative partnership between school, families and medical personnel can provide a safe and healthy learning environment. Families along with their medical staff are the experts on their individual child. MVCSC asks that as your child's advocate for food allergies, that you provide updated medical documentation on the specifics of the child's allergies on a yearly bases. Please also provide any medication prescribed by a physician that the student would need should a reaction occur at school such as an Epi pen. You will be notified if snacks are being provided for your child's classroom, and we encourage the families to send in a supply of "safe snacks" for their student with allergies. MVCSC will do everything possible to educate the teachers of your student for the upcoming year of these allergies, but as a precaution we ask that you contact your teacher and nurse assigned to the preschool at the beginning of each school year. Please contact the MVCSC school nurse or director of the Early Learning Academy if you have any questions or concerns about the plans to accommodate your child's needs.

Latex Precautions

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation will take precautions to protect known and unknown persons with latex allergies (NO known latex products in school, ex. balloons, gloves, bandages).

Meningitis Information

An Indiana law requires each year that parents/guardians be informed about meningococcal disease and its vaccine. Meningococcal disease is a dangerous disease that can strike children and youth. The disease can progress rapidly and within hours of the first symptoms, may result in death or permanent disability including loss of hearing, brain damage and limb amputations. Symptoms of meningococcal disease often resemble the flu and can include a fever, headache, nausea, and stiff neck, making the disease difficult to diagnose. The bacteria that cause meningococcal diseases are transmitted through air droplets and by direct contact with an infected person. Fortunately there is an immunization available and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends routine meningococcal immunizations at 11 to 12 years old. For teenagers, immunization is recommended at high school entry and incoming college freshman. Please talk with your child's healthcare provider about meningococcal disease and vaccination.