

Freeman School District ● Early Learning Center

Introduction. Welcome to the Freeman Early Learning Center, home of the Scottie Puppies, where we strive to provide excellent educational care for all children!

The Freeman Early Learning childcare program is available on a limited basis for preschool and early elementary-age children. This handbook contains important information about our facilities. Please review this guide, and keep it for future reference.

Nondiscrimination Policy. The Freeman School District complies with all federal and state rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, veteran or military status, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX officer and/or Section 504/ADA coordinator: Randy Russell, Ph. D., Superintendent, 15001 S Jackson Road, Rockford, WA 99030, 509-291-3695.

Mission. To provide a safe and positive educational environment that prepares young children for a successful school experience.

Principles. The early years are crucial learning opportunities for children.

Planned, developmentally appropriate activities nurture each child's social, emotional, cognitive, creative and physical needs.

Children with disabilities benefit from classrooms with peer models.

Typically developing children benefit from an increased appreciation and acceptance for individual differences.

Classroom designs should meet individual needs and goals.

Inclusive settings are beneficial for both children with special needs and typically developing young children. (*Washington Association for the Education of Young Children*)

Goals.

- Provide trained staff who establish a fun, caring and structured learning environment.
- Provide an educational program where children with learning challenges learn together with typically developing children.

Classes and Opportunities. We are proud to serve children with and without disabilities within our inclusive preschool classroom. WAC 392-172A-02000 Students' rights to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) provides:

Each school district and residential or day schools operated under Chapters 28A.190 and 72.40 RCW shall provide every student who is eligible for special education between the ages of three and twenty-one years, a free appropriate public education program (FAPE).

Classes are guided by state Early Learning Benchmarks, coordinated with the Kindergarten Common Core Standards and use research-validated early literacy curriculum to provide a smooth

transition to Freeman Elementary School.

Policies & Procedures

Attendance. All children must be signed in and out daily. Only those specified by parents on school forms will be allowed to pick up your child, unless advised by parents. For the safety of the children, identification may be requested. Please contact the Early Learning Center at (509) 291-3637 if your child will be absent. For bus questions, contact the transportation office (509) 291-5555.

Busing. Busing is available for preschool students who have an older sibling, K-12.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy. Our program complies with Washington State laws that require childcare providers to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services and/or local law enforcement agencies.

Closures/Late Starts. The program closes to observe state and national holidays, and during the spring and winter breaks, consistent with the approved Freeman School District calendar. The exception is late-start Wednesdays. Preschool follows the Late Start schedule for the district, and PM preschool remains the same on late-start days.

Clothing. Please dress children in weather-appropriate clothing. Send an extra full set of clothing in a labeled large Ziploc™ bag with your child's name that can remain at the center. If your child stays for rest time, they may bring a special blanket or pillow from home. It should be brought home at the end of each week for washing.

Diapering / Toilet Training. We require children be toilet trained prior to starting preschool, unless arrangements are made through their plan.

Discipline. The wellbeing of your child is top priority. Rules are designed to develop self-control, acceptable behavior and respect for self and others. If a child is unable to demonstrate appropriate behavior, a “time out” occurs. Discipline will be fair and consistent and corporal punishment is not used. If a child requires more individual attention than can be given within the child to staff ratios, it may be necessary to contact a parent. Repeated uncontrolled behavior can lead to discontinuation of childcare services.

To support positive behaviors, we use the following guidance techniques:

- Cues as to what is upcoming, “You have 3 minutes to play before clean up time.”
- We give choices. “You may play with playdough or read a book.”
- We have a regular, predictable routine.
- We are consistent so that the children know what to expect and learn to trust and feel safe in this setting.
- Affirmative words. “We walk inside” rather than “Don’t run.”
- Sometimes negative behavior is best ignored or gently redirected with a distraction.

We ask for the child’s attention, make eye contact and ask the child to repeat the directions to make sure they have heard and understood the expectation.

Emergencies.

Closures: In the case of

emergency school closures and/or canceled afterschool activities for the Freeman District, the early learning center is also closed. In the case of a two-hour late start due to weather or other emergencies, AM preschool is closed, and PM remains the same. All-day preschool students will be on the delayed schedule. Families should maintain their contact information with the early learning center. This contact information is used in Freeman’s alert system, through which parents receive phone calls or emails regarding closures, etc.

When afterschool activities/sports are canceled due to weather or other emergencies, afterschool childcare will also be closed.

Disaster Plan: The Freeman Early Learning Center will follow the established and practiced policies and procedures of the Freeman School District. The complete policy is available for review.

Entry/Drop off. Drop off shall be no earlier than scheduled. Children dropped off earlier than the scheduled time are charged a \$10 fee for every 10 minutes. Children picked up 10 or more minutes later than pickup time also are charged a \$10 fee for every 10 minutes. A late pickup charge of \$10 per child will be applied for every 10 minutes after closing time for childcare. Charges are billed. Please arrange a backup plan in case the need arises to be late.

Fees. See Registration Form.

Field Trips and Transportation.

When age appropriate opportunities arise for field trips, parents will be notified in

advance and will be required to sign a field trip permission slip to allow their child to participate.

Healthcare.

Illness: We are prepared to care for well children. In the event a child has any of the following symptoms, the child will be isolated, and parents will be contacted to pick up their child.

- Fever of 100° F or higher
- Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea – 3 or more watery stools within the past 24 hours
- Suspicious rash
- Communicable diseases, including chicken pox, pink eye, strep throat, etc.

Children must be symptom-free of the above conditions for a 24-hour period before returning to the center. Temperatures must be below 100° F, without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Medication. Medication is stored in a locked cabinet and administered by staff (school nurse, if available). Forms for the administration of medication must be signed by parents AND the physician before medications can be dispensed at school. Forms are available in the school office. The medication must be in its original container and properly labeled with the instructions clearly stated and must be brought to school by the parents.

Medical Emergencies: When a minor emergency occurs, a staff member will administer treatment. Parents will be

notified as soon as possible. If the emergency is more serious, assistance will be requested and the child will be transported to the hospital if deemed necessary.

Meals and Snacks. Parents are asked to contribute healthy snacks occasionally. We participate in the school lunch program for all-day preschool children. Parents have the option of paying for a hot lunch or bringing a sack lunch for their child if your child is full time.

Payment/Deposit. A nonrefundable deposit is required at the time of enrollment and will reserve your child's spot in preschool. Credit cannot be extended for days missed due to illness, absences or late-start days due to district or inclement-weather late starts. Unpaid fees will result in termination of services. Payment must be received by the first day the child attends preschool for the month. Make checks payable to *Freeman Early Learning Center*. Please return the fee along with your child's registration paperwork, policies and procedures, and updated immunization forms, birth certificate. (See Registration Form.)

Schedule.

Sessions: Three preschool sessions are offered for the school year: AM Class, Monday through Thursday, 8:13-11:00; PM Class, Monday through Thursday, 12:15 – 2:45 PM.; and all-day class, Monday through Thursday, 8:13 AM to 2:45 PM.

Fridays are available only for four-year-olds. For more information, call the Early Learning Center.

Typical Schedule:

- 8:15-9:00- Entry task and Choice Time
- 9:00-9:30-Circle time
- 9:30-10:15- Centers
- 10:15-10:30- Snack
- 10:30-11:00- Outside/Gym
- 11:00-12:15-lunch and Quiet Time
- 12:15-1:00-Entry Task and Choice time
- 1:00-1:30-Circle time
- 1:30-2:15-Centers
- 2:15-2:30-Snack
- 2:30-2:45- Outside/Gym

Before & Aftercare (4-year-olds only): Drop-off is available at 7:30 AM.

Children may stay from 2:45-5:30 PM for aftercare. See fee schedule, page 2 of Registration.

Schedule Requests. We strive to maintain consistency and honor schedule requests. However Freeman School District serves three-year-old students with disabilities, and we are mindful and sensitive of their individual needs. As a result, it may necessitate families to change their child's schedule, and staff will make a request accordingly.

Separation Anxiety. It is very normal for your child to shed a few tears on the first day of school. We love having classroom helpers but have found that for the first few weeks of school, it works better for parents to say goodbye without it being too long of a process. If you have uneasy feelings about leaving your child, please talk with staff ahead of time, so any questions and concerns can be answered. When *you* have positive feelings, it helps your child have positive feelings. If the anxiety continues, we will problem-solve together. We all are on the same team, and this is an exciting time. We

understand it is a bittersweet time, too--it's great when our children reach these milestone moments, but it can be tough on parents. Try not to worry – we promise to take very good care of your child and help them feel comfortable.

Supplies. The required supplies are listed in the summer letter sent home to parents.

Please send your child with a backpack. We will send home art projects, monthly newsletters and calendars, along with any other notes concerning preschool activities every month. ■