The Early Learning Center

Itinerant Services Parent Handbook

2026-2027

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Staff

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Lorain County Special Needs Preschool Program. Throughout the year you and your child will be involved in a variety of fun and exciting activities. This booklet is designed to help guide you in making this a successful year. We encourage you to be involved and hope you enjoy the year as much as we do. We look forward to meeting and working with you and your child.

Program

The Lorain County Early Learning Center began serving children in the fall of 1991. The program serves children with developmental delays in cognitive skills, adaptive behavior, communication skills, hearing abilities, motor functioning, social-emotional/behavioral functioning, and/or vision abilities. Our program follows the rules and regulations as developed by the Ohio Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood.

Our itinerant program serves four participating school districts in Lorain County. The itinerant teacher(s) work with children in a variety of settings such as private preschools, daycares, Head Start, and homes. These sessions occur at regularly scheduled times. Parents and other family members are included in follow-up activities in order to reinforce new skills as they are learned. Our itinerant teacher(s) utilize a consultative model when working with parents and classroom teachers. They provide support for those professionals who may also be working with your child.

The skills that the teacher(s) work on are determined by the results of testing and ultimately an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This plan is a legal document with goals and objectives to work on for the year with your child. The goals and objectives are agreed upon by the parents, teachers, and other team members (i.e. therapists, psychologist, etc.). Regular conferences are scheduled throughout the year with parents and/or teachers to discuss progress and results. Working as a team on this IEP will ensure the most success for your child.

Program Philosophy

The Lorain County Early Learning Center is a child-centered program devoted to meeting each child's unique needs. Our concern is for the whole child. We believe it is important to provide a safe and nurturing setting in which to foster each child's self help, motor, language/communication, social/emotional, and learning/cognitive development.

Preschool children learn best through meaningful play. The teachers serve as facilitators to guide children in varied learning experiences. These activities are primarily child-oriented and child-directed.

It is strongly believed that family involvement is critical to a child's growth. Parents are important partners in the development and provision of learning situations. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in their child's individualized preschool program. They will be kept aware of learning expectations and available agency services through periodic progress reports, newsletter, home visits, notes, and/or telephone contacts from the preschool teacher. Parents will participate in Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings.

Children progress at their own developmental pace. The overall goal is to foster in each child a positive sense of their self-worth and a belief in their own ability to learn and grow as capable, independent individuals.

Standards of Conduct

The Lorain County Early Learning Center staff respects and promotes the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.

The Lorain County Early Learning Center staff will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families and other staff members.

The Lorain County Early Learning Center staff does not leave children alone or unsupervised while under our care.

The Lorain County Early Learning Center staff does not use corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse or humiliation.

Program Goals

Physical Development

1. The child will develop gross motor skills.
2. The child will develop fine motor skills.
3. The child will develop sensory perception skills.

Cognitive Development

1. The child will develop critical thinking skills.
2. The child will develop complex play skills.
3. The child will develop pre-academic skills in the areas of general knowledge, reading and math.

Social/Emotional Development

1. The child will develop inter-personal skills.
2. The child will develop social skills.
3. The child will develop social problem solving skills.
4. The child will develop responsible behaviors.

Self-Help Development

1. The child will develop independent eating and drinking skills.
2. The child will develop independent grooming skills.
3. The child will develop independent toileting skills.
4. The child will develop independent dressing and undressing skills.

Language Development

1. The child will develop pre-speech skills.
2. The child will develop expressive language skills.
3. The child will develop receptive language skills.
4. The child will develop phonological skills.
5. The child will develop self-identification skills.

Aesthetic Development

1. The child will develop creative representation skills (i.e., making and building, drawing and painting, pretending).
2. The child will develop rhythm and movement skills.
3. The child will develop music skills.
4. The child will develop language and literacy skills.

Parent Responsibilities and School Procedures

1. Please secure all pets, whether the pet be placed outside or placed in another room. Pets often cause unnecessary distractions.
2. Since our time with your child is limited, we would appreciate it if other distractions such as TV, radio, visitors, etc. were held to a minimum. This will help us to provide the best possible learning environment for your child.
3. Please have a cleared space available for play. This space should include table space for art or writing activities and floor space for games and other activities. Messy art supplies, such as painting or play-doh, are used at times. We will bring materials (newspapers, tablecloths, paint shirts) and promise to clean up afterwards.
4. Your child should be dressed, have eaten, and be ready to start upon the arrival of his/her teacher.
5. We ask that you participate and observe as often as possible.
6. When an activity is sent home, it is your responsibility to see that it is well cared for and returned the following week.
7. Please check your child's folder every week for lessons and important papers. Papers requiring a signature should be sent back immediately.
8. Please notify your child's teacher at the Lorain County Early Learning Center if your child or a family member is ill or unavailable on his/her scheduled day. You may reach the teacher by calling 440-324-3178 x1225 (Brooke Yenkevich).
9. An adopted Lorain County Early Learning Center calendar will be distributed to you at the beginning of the school year. If schools in your district are canceled (i.e. snow, holiday), your child's session will be canceled for that day as well.
10. By law, when we work with your child in your home, a parent or legal guardian must be present at all times. Please plan any trips to the store, etc. accordingly.

Your cooperation will help us to provide the best
possible learning experiences for your child.
We thank you for this cooperation.

Acknowledgement

I have read the parent handbook and understand its contents.

Child's Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Comments, Questions, or Concerns:

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