



506 West Second Street
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-875-8658

Dear Parent:

Welcome to Frankfort Independent's Preschool Program! We look forward to working with you and your child this year to provide the best learning environment possible.

Our preschool program is a public preschool serving children who have a developmental delay or are four years old by August 1st of the current school year and qualify for up to 160% of poverty (see Federal Income Guidelines). Parents that are concerned about their child's development can make a referral for a free developmental screening by completing a preschool application and contacting Heidi Givens at 875-8661. Our program also includes tuition spots for children who do not qualify for free preschool.

We also offer a Wraparound Child Care Program for preschool age children. This program allows your child access to the preschool program for part of the day and then provide child care for the other portion of the day. Families can apply for Child Care Assistance and the school can help with this process if needed. Please contact Tonya Thornsberry, Childcare Director, at 875-8661 for more information.

We look forward to your child attending our program. Please take the time to read this handbook and remember that we have an open-door policy and any questions, comments, or concerns are welcome.

Sincerely,

Heidi Givens

Director of Student Services

502-875-8661

Philosophy

The purpose of the Frankfort Independent Schools (FIS) Early Learning Academy is to provide all children in our program with developmentally appropriate, child-centered learning experiences designed to educate the whole child. We are committed to providing a language rich environment designed to meet the needs of children while integrating the development of the child's physical, emotional, creative, intellectual, social and cultural skills through experiential learning activities. We promote opportunities for your child to explore, to question and to succeed at their own individual pace. We acknowledge that every child is unique and appreciate the cultural diversity, various social backgrounds, and religious beliefs of each child.

Frankfort Early Learning Academy Goals

- To provide a program where children develop intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally.
- To provide opportunities for children to gain independence, self-control, and respect for others.
- To build a partnership with families to help children become enthusiastic lifelong learners.
- To meet individual needs of all ability levels.
- To instill in children a positive self-worth and feeling of confidence.
- To expand children's understanding of the world through field trips, interaction within the community, and parents as volunteers in the classroom.
- To promote a child's sense of individual worth and belonging as a part of a group and community.

Registration

All children must be fully registered before they can attend the FIS Early Learning Academy.

Requirements

The following documents are required to fully registered a child for attendance:

Child's Official Birth Certificate from the Office of Vital Statistics

Custody Papers (if applicable)

- Must have court stamped on front page
- Must name the residential parent
- Must have a signature page

Child's Immunization Records

- Must be up-to-date and complete

School Physical on KY form

Eye Exam by an optometrist by January 1 of the current school year

Other Helpful Forms

Child's Social Security Card

Proof of Residency

- Rental or purchase agreement/mortgage statement
- Most recent electric, gas, or phone bill
- Driver's license, checks

Confidentiality

Information is gathered so that the preschool staff can completely understand the needs of the child/family and work together to meet those needs. All information obtained from parents are completely confidential. Except for the local school district, records will only be sent to another agency with written permission of the parents or legal guardian. Only the teacher and the parent or legal guardian will have access to the records.



Important Information

- PRESCHOOL HOURS:** Morning Session: 8:00am-11:00am
Afternoon Session: 12:00pm-3:00pm
Monday through Thursdays only, NO Preschool on Fridays.
- CANCELLATIONS:** When weather is bad, we follow the same schedule as the Frankfort Independent Schools (FIS). Listen to your local radio station or television for school closings. When FIS is delayed, the preschool morning session is automatically cancelled for the day, but the afternoon session will continue as normal.
- ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Regular attendance is important for your child to gain the most of the planned activities. It also establishes the expectation for future school attendance. All Preschool students arriving late or leaving early must be checked in or out with their preschool teacher at the classroom. Please send in notes for excused absences. When your child has missed two consecutive days, you will receive a phone call from your child's teacher. When your child has missed four consecutive days, you will receive a phone call or home visit. If your emergency contact phone numbers change, it is your responsibility to let the school know in writing immediately for the safety of your child.
- ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE:** If your child does not ride the bus, you will need to drop off and pick up your child at the front door. If an adult fails to meet a child at the bus drop-off or are late picking up the child at school, staff will attempt to contact parent or emergency contacts. If your child is not picked up within one hour of the end of your child's preschool session, social services or the police will be called.

- SCHOOL CALENDAR:** Preschoolers are on the same school calendar as the Frankfort Independent Schools, with the exception of Fridays, start of the year, and end of the year. Fridays are for preschool teachers' planning and home visits. Wraparound Daycare is available Monday through Friday 7:15am to 5:30pm. When FIS is on break, so is the preschool. Since there is no preschool on Fridays, school will be in session any time the rest of the district is on an early release day. Please see the current calendar in the handbook.
- NOTES HOME:** FIS Preschool has many activities going on for children and parents. Our best means of communicating this information to you is by our weekly class letters, Remind, and notes sent home. Teachers are busy with the children during class time so it is important to only call between 11:15am to 11:45am and after 3:00pm unless it is an emergency.
- MEALS:** Breakfast will be offered for our morning session and lunch will be offered for our afternoon session. All meals will be at FREE to all preschool students regardless of income. The preschool staff will be working with your child on encouraging independent eating skills and table conversation. This type of eating arrangement promotes healthy eating habits, appropriate table manners, and communication skills. If you would like to join your child for a meal, talk to their teacher to make arrangements. Visitors are welcome throughout the day, but must check in at the front desk and get a visitor pass. You are welcome to pack your child's meal if you like, but please do not send peanut butter products due to student allergies.
- CHILDREN'S CLOTHING:** Preschool children will be involved in active play since this is the best environment for learning. Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and in clothing that you don't mind being ruined by spills or accidents. Children attending preschool must wear socks and tennis shoes or other shoes that are totally enclosed at all times. This prevents accidents on the bus, in the school and on the playground. We will play outside on a daily basis, weather permitting, so be sure your child has appropriate clothing for the season. When the temperature is 30 degrees or below or the heat index is 95 degrees or above, students will have recess inside. Please put your child's name on coats, hats, mittens, etc. Your teacher will also request a change of clothes be left at school for accidents.
- TOILET TRAINING:** Preschoolers who are not toilet-trained will be changed as needed. Parents are to provide pull-ups, wipes and a change of clothes. Please do not dress your child in diapers so that we can help your child practice going to the bathroom in the toilet. Your child should be dressed in clothes that are easily removed for toileting needs, e.g., avoid overalls, belts, etc. Please consult with your child's teacher about how to schedule/plan to send these items; daily, weekly, etc.

- HOME VISITS:** Teachers will conduct a minimum of two home visits with each family during the school year. The purpose of the home visit is an opportunity to support the parents as the primary educator of their children. Your child’s teacher will discuss any concerns you have and set educational goals with you.
- BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS:** Preschool staff uses positive discipline practices to prevent behavior issues and teach appropriate social skills. Teachers will use appropriate management techniques such as redirection (encouraging the child to get involved in another activity), separation from problem situations, talking with the child about the situation, and praise for appropriate behavior. Behaviors are dealt with in the moment and communication is sent home when needed. Parents are partners in carrying over behavior expectations at home.
- REPORTING CHILD ABUSE:** Kentucky School employees are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services immediately upon visual suspicion or report. KY State Law requires that any individual that is aware of a suspected case of child abuse or neglect must report the suspected abuse to the Department of Community Based Services at 564-5390. All FIS employees are required to adhere to and follow this Kentucky Law.
- BUS POLICY:** Free bus service is provided for preschoolers living in the FIS district boundaries. Preschool children are the only students on this bus during the preschool bus run. The bus includes a seat belt for each child that the bus monitor checks to make sure that they are securely belted. It is important that your child be ready when the bus arrives. The bus driver will sound his horn and wait briefly, but the bus has a schedule to keep in order to arrive promptly at school. Please allow your child to walk up the steps and do not carry them onto the bus for everyone’s safety. When the bus returns your child, an adult listed on the emergency contact list must meet your child at the bus. If there is no adult at the time of drop-off, your child will be returned to school. During the first week of school, the bus arrival time for pick-up and drop-off may vary.
- TUITION PAYMENTS:** Tuition is \$40 per week (in-district) and \$50 per week (out-of-district) for those not eligible under KERA (Kentucky Education Reform Act) guidelines. This fee does include breakfast or lunch. Payments are made on several different payment schedules. Please see the tuition contract for specific payment schedules. Payments should be made in the Central Office to Sheryl Morgan. Payment is expected for every week that school is in session.
- WRAPAROUND DAYCARE:** The optional daycare program for preschool age children is \$130 a week. The program is in session Monday through Friday from 7:15am to 5:30pm. This program will stay open during most holidays and some snow days unless deemed too dangerous. Please see the Wraparound contract for more information or contact Tonya Thornsberry at 875-8658.
- NONDISCRIMINATION:** In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC



Keeping Your Child Home Due to Illness

Please do not send an ill child to school. Your child may need to stay home if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

Student Symptoms/Diagnosis	Student May Return to School When....
Fever of 100.4 or higher degrees orally depending on other symptoms	Temperature below 100.4 degrees orally for at least 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Motrin
Vomiting	Consult the school nurse or your doctor
Diarrhea	Consult the school nurse or your doctor
Contagious disease being treated with antibiotic	24 hours after first dose of antibiotic and fever free for 24 hours or as directed by doctor
Diagnosed strep throat	24 hours after first dose of antibiotic
Unusually tired, fussy or pale	Consult the school nurse or your doctor
Eye drainage	Symptom-free, 24 hours after first dose of antibiotic or as directed by doctor
New or sudden undiagnosed rash or rash with fever	Consult the school nurse or your doctor
Ringworm	24 hours after beginning treatment with anti-fungal medication
Head Lice	After treatment and removal of live lice. Students without live lice (nits only) may remain at school.

Please note some students have serious medical conditions that can become life threatening when exposed to certain conditions. Please alert your teacher if your child has measles, Rubella, chicken pox/shingles, whooping cough, or any other condition of concern.



Curriculum

The Frankfort Independent School Preschool Program utilizes a variety of curriculum resources including, but not limited to:

- Creative Curriculum
- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R)
- Second Step Violence Prevention
- Work Sampling

Creative Curriculum

The philosophy behind Creative Curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. Learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and learn firsthand about the world we live in. Play provides the foundation for academic or “school” learning. It is the preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters (which are symbols for sounds) and numbers (which are symbols for number concepts). Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum. Play is the “work” time of young children.

The most important goal of the Creative Curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners.

The Creative Curriculum identifies goals in the major areas of development:

- **Social:** To help children feel comfortable at school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of the group.
- **Emotional:** To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence, self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life.
- **Cognitive:** To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their ideas and experience success. To help children acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical:** To help children increase their large and small muscle skills.

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS)

This is a rating scale that our program will be evaluated on by the Kentucky Department of Education. This rating scale looks at the whole preschool program including the room layout, materials, schedule, sanitary conditions, and staff interactions with the children. Children are given 30 minutes daily of large gross motor time on the playground outside. A significant portion of the day (1 hour) is given for “free choice” each day. During this time, children can choose where they would like to “work” from a variety of areas, which may include a house/dramatic play area, a block area, a manipulatives area (to work on fine motor skills), an art

area, a book/quiet area, a science center, a math area, a music center, and a computer center. Throughout their day, preschoolers participate in small-group activities, one on one instruction, whole group lessons, and active movement activities. Staff spends time engaging children in conversation to extend their vocabulary, introduce new concepts, and develop reasoning skills. Staff encourages children's independence by teaching them to feed themselves, take care of hygiene needs, and follow 2 and 3 step directions.

Second Step Violence Prevention

Second Step for preschoolers is a curriculum designed to reduce impulsive and aggressive behavior in young children and increase their level of social competence. Children are taught skills in empathy, impulse control, and anger management. The goal of the program is to build children's self-esteem and social skills by giving them tools to solve everyday problems. Children who learn and use the skills presented in this program are more likely to get along with peers and do better in school.

Work Sampling

Preschoolers are assessed throughout the school year with the Work Sampling System. This assessment provides a useful system for implementing ongoing, authentic assessment in the preschool classroom. This system is made up of three complementary elements: checklists and guidelines, portfolios, and summary reports. Progress and performance are assessed in seven domains: (1) personal and social, (2) language and literacy, (3) mathematical thinking, (4) scientific thinking, (5) social studies, (6) the arts, and (7) physical development.

Portfolio items are collected in five of the domains in the Work Sampling System: (1) language and literacy, (2) mathematical thinking, (3) scientific thinking, (4) social studies, and (5) the arts. The teacher selects two important areas of learning that he/she will sample three times per year in each domain. By the end of the year, then, they will have six samples per domain. The teacher also may collect samples that represent the child's unique interests or ability to apply knowledge, skills, or dispositions in an integrated way. Items collected for the child's portfolio present a picture of how the child learns and works. These items are meant to be shared with parents at regular parent-teacher conferences. Data is collected on an ongoing basis and parents will receive a detailed report in the Fall and Spring.



Parent Involvement

As the parent of a preschooler, you are your child's first teacher. We recognize that parents are the primary teachers of their children, and strive to form a partnership with parents in order to enrich the learning experience. Research shows that children who have parents that are involved in their child's education have higher achievement throughout their school career.

Suggestions for Parents at Home

- Read to your child every day. Reading to your child increases vocabulary, models reading, and increases print awareness so that your child is ready to begin reading in Kindergarten. Reading materials are available at the public library, school library and through your child's classroom. Ask your child's teacher for more information.
- Establish regular bedtime and wake-up routines. Children need a minimum of 10-12 hours of sleep each night at this age.
- Have your child participate in everyday chores in order to develop a sense of responsibility (picking up toys, folding clothes, washing dishes, etc.)
- Sit down and eat as a family several times a week. This enables families to model healthy eating habits, table manners, and listen and talk with your child.
- Create learning opportunities at home such as singing songs, saying nursery rhymes, counting together, drawing, identifying and sorting shapes, etc.

Suggestions for Parents at School

- Have your child at school on time for preschool or to catch the bus.
- Be an active participant in developing goals for your child's education.
- Attend parent education workshops hosted by preschool and participate in family fun nights at the school.
- Attend your child's parent/teacher conferences and be available for home visits throughout the year.
- Help on field trips (FIS requires a background check prior to being a chaperone on field trips or volunteering in the classroom).
- Donate items to the preschool program.
- Volunteer in the classroom by working with children, reading to the class, showing a special interest such as talent or profession.
- Even if you work during the day, ask the teacher if there are any projects you could prepare at home for the classroom.

Frequent Issues for Preschool Children

School Adjustment

Children can take a while to adjust to new environments. Please be aware that, for some children, hesitation for the first few weeks is normal, especially if your child has not been away from you before. Take a few moments to help your child transition from to school. Schedule a visit before school starts so that they can see the classroom and meet their teachers. When you take your child to their room help them hang up their coat, greet other children, or participate in the beginning of an activity to ease their transition. Reassure your child that they will have fun at school with new friends and that you will return to pick them up at the end of their session. Be encouraging, your smile, eyes and body language communicate a lot. If a child senses any type of apprehension on your part, this enhances their own feeling of uncertainty. At this point, it is best to say goodbye and leave the room. Lingering can make your child believe that you are going to stay on a regular basis. Leaving without saying goodbye or “sneaking” out is not recommended. Your child will wonder where you went and this will make them more anxious to leave your side the next time since they aren’t sure when you are leaving. When you say goodbye, preschool staff can assist by helping your child find an activity or a friend. Before you know it, the “adjustment” will be over and your child will be asking to come to school every day!

Biting

Biting is a natural stage of development that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between 13 and 24 months, but can continue into 36 months. Children bite other children for many different reasons. They might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or their peers. Some preschoolers may have poor verbal skills and be impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting may occur for no apparent reason. Preschool staff will encourage the children to “use their words” if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times. The safety of the children in our preschool program is our primary concern. Preschool staff will take the following actions for biting.

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm “no...we don’t bite people, biting hurts.”
- Staff will remain calm at all times.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- The wound of the bitten child will be assessed and cleansed with soap and water and apply ice.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation and the child will be closely watched for any more incidences.
- Staff will carefully observe the involved child to identify precipitating events and prevent recurrences.
- Staff will maintain a log to track when the behavior occurs.
- When there is a pattern of behavior, conferences may be held with parents to generate ways to work together to improve behavior outcomes.