

Paddock's Early Childhood Center GSRP Parent Handbook



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Welcome to Paddock's Early Childhood Center!

When the School Age Child Care Program started in Milan, it was advertised as a "safe alternative" to other choices for children whose parents were not home. While that is still a primary goal, there is much more depth to the quality of childcare you can expect from us.

Paddock's Early Childhood Center offers a play-based preschool curriculum and extended childcare hours to meet the needs of many family situations.

We are concerned that all aspects of our environment benefit the children and families we serve. We strive for a relaxed and enriching program that is enjoyable and comfortable for parents and children.

By combining all of the Early Childhood Programs Paddock has to offer, including our infant program, preschool, School Age Child Care, First Steps, and Early-On program, our Center can provide every child comprehensive services from the time they are born.

Our Philosophy

We believe children benefit by planning, implanting, and evaluating their own experiences each day, alone and with others. Children have experiences with early literacy, math concepts, music, art, drama, and critical thinking skills as a part of the everyday world. Planning activities in themed units encourages children to organize information and form learning patterns linking new information with familiar subjects.

Children learn by their own actions. They learn in spurts, not a steady stream. Therefore, we see ourselves as facilitators to intellectual development outside the classroom. We provide many activities each week, so children can follow their natural curiosity and learn about things that interest them. We will embrace the idea of being outside and learning in a natural environment when weather permits. Children will feel challenged to explore new ideas, or find out more about and old favorite.

We know that families come to us with many needs. Some children arrive at Breakfast Club early in the morning and need time to wake up, eat breakfast, and finish their homework before school starts. Other children come to PrimeTime after school, until Mom or Dad arrives to take them home and eat dinner. It is important to them that they get exercise, socialize with friends, and relax after a long day in class. There are children who may be away from their homes only occasionally when not in school, and others who are in the building eleven hours a day. It is our job to balance the exciting with relaxing, the stimulation with calm, and discipline with the freedom to make choices.

Although it is a tall order, we take our job very seriously. Safety comes first – children must observe safety rules, and are supervised at all times. Our equipment must be clean and in good repair. Children who become ill should be able to find a quiet place to rest while parents are on the way.

Because children cannot be with their working parents much of the day, it is the Child Care staff that offers emotional support for children within the confines of our program. We help them make friends, attend to minor injuries, and listen to sad stories about a hard day at school. This is only possible with a parent-staff partnership! We will help children learn to make choices, and encourage relationships with others.

Our environment allows for time with friends, time alone, and time to move, and time to rest. You can expect us to talk to you about your child's day. We may work through a problem, or celebrate an accomplishment with you. We will make every effort to make our program a pleasant and secure place. Thank you for trusting us with your cherished and wonderful children!

Paddock's Early Childhood Center

Paddock's Early Childhood Center Mission Statement

“Our purpose is to provide a quality, developmentally appropriate, educational experience for your child. We view ourselves as an extension of your family. There is a commitment to having a constant atmosphere of love, learning, and security in order to help create a strong foundation for lifelong learning.”



Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of Milan Area Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, religion, marital status, disability or sexual orientation, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination in employment of its programs or activities.

Program Guidelines

Confidentiality Policy

Paddock's Early Childhood Center is sensitive to the fact that information concerning you, your child, and your family is private and personal. Trust and confidentiality are essential to building trusting relationships. We are committed to maintaining your privacy and protecting your personal information. Paddock's Early Childhood Center will not disclose information except as required by law or when there is a threat to the health and safety of the individuals and families we serve.

Admission

The child will need to bring a copy of his/her Immunization record, a physical signed and dated by a physician and a completed emergency card on the first day of school.

Withdrawal

A parent may withdraw a child from the program at any time. Parent must notify two weeks in advance by phone or in writing of the last day of attendance.

Parent Orientation

A parent orientation meeting is held every year before the start of school. Please look for your summer mailing package for important information and the date and time of the parent orientation meeting. This meeting is for adults only and at least one parent should attend. Remember, children should **not** attend the meeting.

Parent Questionnaire

Paddock's Early Childhood Center parents are asked to evaluate the program every year in April/May by filling out a questionnaire. If there are any questions or concerns at any time, we ask you to please contact us immediately.



Grievance Procedure

If a parent has a concern regarding their child's enrollment or learning experiences within the program, the parent should follow the procedure listed below:

1. Talk with the classroom teacher about your concerns.
2. Contact the Early Childhood Director, Lisa Mellinger at 734-439-5159.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Your child's teacher will meet with you once in the fall and once in spring to discuss your child's progress. Additionally, you will receive two observation reports during the school year. If you have any concerns, you may set up a conference with your child's teacher any time during the school year.

Home Visits

Your child's teaching team will set up two home visits during the school year as part of the GSRP program. One will take place at the beginning of the year and one will be mid-year. The purpose is to foster the home-school connection with you, your child, and the teaching team.



Daily attendance is mandatory

In order to participate in the GSRP program, your child will be required to attend on a regular basis. Extended or unexplained absences not related to sickness or family emergency can result in immediate dismissal from the program.

GSRP guidelines from the State of Michigan require at least a monthly 80% attendance in order to stay in the program.

Attendance will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Five tardies are equal to one absence.

If attendance becomes a concern, you will be notified in written form to make adjustments to your child's attendance and/ or tardiness.



Developmental Screening Tool

Every child enrolled in the GSRP program will have an Ages and Stages Questionnaire completed. This will be given to parents at the initial home visit and turned into the teacher at the start of school. If there is a developmental concern teachers will follow up with activities in the classroom, send activities home to work on. When needed, a referral may be done through Milan Area School's special education team. Parents will give written permission for their child to be evaluated and those results will be shared through a team meeting.

Child Recruitment Plan

The Washtenaw Intermediate School District has a formal county wide recruitment plan. They advertise the GSRP program via radio ads, billboards and community wide posters. There is one intake system managed by the WISD and families are interviewed by the program director to determine eligibility.

Physical Activity and Nutrition Program

Milan's GSRP program utilizes the district's food service program through the National Hot Lunch Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We also use the National Kidney Foundation's Regie Rainbow Nutrition Program to encourage healthy food choices.

Physical activity will be given every day, often both in and outdoor when possible. Both planned and open ended activities will be offered to help stress the importance of physical exercise.



Meal Guidelines

All GSRP participants are **required** to participate in the free and reduced lunch and snack program. All meals are served family style.

- GSRP students will receive a free breakfast and lunch daily
- GSRP students will be provided with one snack each day for children who are in attendance 4-7 hours.
- Staff will ensure sufficient quantity and nutritional quality of the snacks. Posted food allergy lists will be consulted before serving snacks to the children with special dietary needs.
- Students who have documented food allergies or special dietary needs may bring a nutritional cold lunch from home.
- Parents may be asked to provide snacks for a child with multiple allergies.
- We are unable to heat or microwave any food items from home.



Appropriate Clothing

Children should wear play clothes to school.

- There will be no reimbursement for clothes damaged at school.
- Please label all items with your child's name.
- Children should come dressed to play outside each day.
- Extended day requires a set of seasonal extra clothing.
- If your child has had an accident at school and comes home with the school's clothes, please wash and return them the next day.

Nap/Rest Time

Full-day preschool children must have a rest period as required by the State. Please send a small pillow, two small blankets and your child's favorite cuddly to be kept at school. All nap items must go home to be washed every two weeks. We provide disinfected cots and a locker to store each child's nap items.

Visitation

Parents of children enrolled in our preschool programs are welcome to observe classes at any time. However, if you plan on staying for any length of time, it is appropriate to notify the teacher beforehand. Many visitations on one day may disrupt the class.

Parent Involvement

- GSRP families are asked to attend Parent Voice meetings.
- GSRP families are to participate in at least two Family Fun events.
- GSRP families are to participate in two conferences.
- GSRP families are encouraged to participate or help with special parties, projects, reading, field trips, and classroom activities during the school year.
- GSRP families are encouraged to complete weekly or monthly "homework" activities as a family and return in a timely manner.





Paddock's Early Childhood Center follows the Milan Area Schools district closings. For inclement weather closings, such as ice, snow or fog, listen to radio stations **WJR(760AM), WAAM(1600AM) or television channels 2 WJBK-Fox 2, 4 WDIV, or 7 WXYZ-TV**. A notice will also be posted on the school website www.milanareaschools.org.

Sign-In / Sign-Out (Extended Day)

Extended day options [before and/or after school care] may be available. Participation is at additional cost to parents and is not included in the GSRP grant. When bringing a child to the AM Extended Care session, an adult must walk him/her to the classroom and sign the register. When picking up a child from the PM Extended Care session, an adult must come to the classroom and sign the register. Only a parent, guardian or person listed on the emergency information card can pick up a child.

Field Trips

- Staff will notify parents prior to each trip.
- Written permission will be obtained from parents prior to trips.
- Your child must follow the field trip rules or a parent will be asked to accompany the child.
- Only a limited number of parents may volunteer to chaperone a field trip due to site restrictions.

Note: If you choose not to have your child participate in any of our field trips, you will need to make alternative arrangements for the duration of the trip.

Discipline

- Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious atmosphere. It is their home away from home and they need to feel safe and secure.
- Staff will use a positive method of discipline to develop self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and a spirit of cooperation within the classroom. Staff will direct children with the correct behavior wanted, i.e. "use walking feet" instead of "don't run." The staff will use a variety of strategies in helping children deal with their behavior. Positive approaches to assist children in eliminating disruptive behavior will be our primary course of action.
- Staff may use non-severe discipline or restraint when reasonably necessary to prevent a child from harming himself/herself or other persons or property.
- Chronic, disruptive behavior exhibited by a child on a continual basis will not be allowed. Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity that may include but not be limited to such behavior that requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses staff, ignores or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during school (examples of chronic disruptive behavior are biting, hitting, kicking, and etc...).
- Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children to adjust to the program setting. Expectations for behavior will be discussed with parents and they will be asked for input as to how they discipline their child. The staff will be prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment, restricting movement, inflicting mental or emotional punishment, depriving or confining of a child.

Conflict Resolution

All of PECC's staff uses Conflict Resolution to handle disagreements or concerns amongst children in the classroom.

A Practical Model for Conflict Resolution in the Classroom

Step 1: Initiate the mediation process

- Acknowledge child's feelings
- Establish the mediator role
- Keep the object safe
 - "You look angry what is the problem here"

Step 2: Clarification

- Clarify conflict based on each child's perspective
- State the issue as a problem

Step 3: Summing up

- Define the problem in mutual terms implying each child has responsibility for both the problem and its solution

Step 4: Generate alternatives/solutions

- Suggestions may be offered by the children involved or from bystanders

Step 5: Agreeing on a solution

- Help children agree on a plan of action that is mutually satisfying
- Verify that both children are accepting of the solution

Step 6: Reinforce the problem solving process

- Celebrate with the children for developing a solution together
- The PROCESS of the solution is as important as the solution itself
- "You did it! You guys solved your problem"

Step 7: Follow through

- Help children carry out the terms of their agreement

Accidents & Emergencies

- 911, as well as parents, will be called if a child needs emergency treatment.
- An evacuation plan, in case of fire, is posted in every room.
- Building Emergency Plans are in place in each building.
- The children are involved in periodic drills during the school year to prepare them to respond properly during an emergency.

Health

- Parents must be called if a child, while at school, vomits, has a fever, diarrhea, excessive drainage from the nose, pink eyes, a suspicious rash or if staff determines a child is lethargic and not able to participate in class. If a parent is called to pick up a sick child, the parent must arrive within an hour or will need to make arrangements for an emergency person to pick up the child. If the child cannot be picked up within the hour, the preschool supervisor will be notified and appropriate action taken.
- All children go outside every day, weather permitting. If your child is well enough to be in school, he/she is well enough to go outside.
- Our preschool policy is for children to go outside if the temperature is above 10F and other weather factors are favorable. Staff discretion is used.

To help stop the spread of contagious disease, please notify us if your child has a contagious disease.

- A child needs to be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. A child who vomits at school may not return for 24 hours.
- A child with a rash must be diagnosed by a doctor and bring a note from the doctor when returning to school.
- A child diagnosed with pink eye must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Be sure your emergency person listed on the child information card lives close to school and is available to pick up your child when needed.

Note: Your child can be released only to the people on the emergency card. If someone other than the parent, guardian or the emergency person will be picking up your child, you must notify us in writing. Staff will check photo identification.

Medication

- Children are not allowed to have any medication on their possession. This includes pain relievers (such as aspirin), vitamins, sunscreen, cough drops, and chap-stick.
- Prescription and over the counter medications, including aspirin, shall be given with written permission from a parent and a physician only.
- Medication must be in the original container.
- Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label, including doctor's name, patient's name, dispensing instructions, name and strength of medication given.
- A medication form is available from your child's teacher and must be filled out by a physician explaining the reasons for taking the medication, name of the medication, directions for administering, possible side effects and length of time the child is to receive the medication. The Medication Form must be signed by the parent/guardian.



Safety

- Your child will be released only to a parent, guardian or the persons listed on the emergency card.
- We must receive written notification from a parent or guardian if someone other than the parent, guardian or persons listed on the emergency card is picking up the child.
- Siblings or babysitters under 16 years of age are not permitted to pick up a child from school.
- Photo Identification is checked when necessary.
- Extended Care parents must sign-in/sign-out their child every day.
- Please make sure the staff acknowledges you when you drop off or pick up your child.



Mandated Reporters

- Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Milan Area Schools are considered mandated reporters under this law. The staff is not required to discuss their suspicions with parents before reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition before making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they **fail** to report suspected abuse or neglect. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on child's body

Severe verbal reprimands

Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season

Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)

Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol

Not providing appropriate nutrition for your child

Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time

Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside

Approaches to Learning

Initiative: Children demonstrate initiative as they explore their world.

Planning: Children make plans and follow through on their intentions.

Engagement: Children focus on activities that interest them.

Problem solving: Children solve problems encountered in play.

Use of resources: Children gather information and formulate ideas about their world.

Reflection: Children reflect on their experiences.



Social and Emotional Development

Self-identity: Children have a positive self-identity.

Sense of competence: Children feel they are competent.

Emotions: Children recognize, label, and regulate their feelings.

Empathy: Children demonstrate empathy toward others.

Community: Children participate in the community of the classroom.

Building relationships: Children build relationships with other children and adults.

Cooperative play: Children engage in cooperative play.

Moral development: Children develop an internal sense of right and wrong.

Conflict resolution: Children resolve social conflicts.

Physical Development and Health

Gross-motor skills: Children demonstrate strength, flexibility, balance, and timing in using their large muscles.

Fine-motor skills: Children demonstrate dexterity and hand-eye coordination in using their small muscles.

Body awareness: Children know about their bodies and how to navigate them in space.

Personal care: Children carry out personal care routines on their own.

Healthy behavior: Children engage in healthy practices.



Language, Literacy, and Communication

Comprehension: Children understand language.

Speaking: Children express themselves using language.

Vocabulary: Children understand and use a variety of words and phrases.

Phonological awareness: Children identify distinct sounds in spoken language.

Alphabetic knowledge: Children identify letter names and their sounds.

Reading: Children read for pleasure and information.

Concepts about print: Children demonstrate knowledge about environmental print.

Book knowledge: Children demonstrate knowledge about books.

Writing: Children write for many different purposes.



Mathematics

Number words and symbols: Children recognize and use number words and symbols.

Counting: Children count things.

Part-whole relationships: Children combine and separate quantities of objects.

Shapes: Children identify, name, and describe shapes.

Spatial awareness: Children recognize spatial relationships among people and objects.

Measuring: Children measure to describe, compare, and order things.

Unit: Children understand and use the concept of unit.

Patterns: Children identify, describe, copy, complete, and create patterns.

Data analysis: Children use information about quantity to draw conclusions, make decisions, and solve problems.



Creative Arts

Art: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through two- and three-dimensional art.

Music: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through music.

Movement: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through movement.

Pretend play: Children express and represent what they observe, think, imagine, and feel through pretend play.

Appreciating the arts: Children appreciate the creative arts.

Science and Technology

Observing: Children observe the materials and processes in their environment.

Classifying: Children classify materials, actions, people, and events.

Experimenting: Children experiment to test their ideas.

Predicting: Children predict what they expect will happen.

Drawing conclusions: Children draw conclusions based on their experiences and observations.

Communicating ideas: Children communicate their ideas about the characteristics of things and how they work.

Natural and physical world: Children gather knowledge about the natural and physical world.

Tools and technology: Children explore and use tools and technology.



Social Studies

Diversity: Children understand that people have diverse characteristics, interests, and abilities.

Community roles: Children recognize that people have different roles and functions in the community.

Decision making: Children participate in making classroom decisions.

Geography: Children recognize and interpret features and locations in their environment.

History: Children understand past, present, and future.

Ecology: Children understand the importance of taking care of their environment.

Licensing

Paddock's Early Childhood Center is licensed by the State of Michigan, and adheres to all licensing regulations regarding childcare. These rules specify adult to child ratios, staff qualifications, facility maintenance, health and safety policies, discipline, and equipment requirements. Our facilities are inspected every two years by a State Licensing Consultant. If parents would like a copy of the rule book, please contact the Director.

GSRP classes will start and end pending the approval of the School Aide Bill.

We are closed for major holidays.

Cultural Competence

Young children and their families reflect a great and rapidly increasing diversity of language and culture. The National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) recommendations emphasize that early childhood programs are responsible for creating a welcoming environment that respects diversity, supports children's ties to their families and community, and promotes both second language acquisitions and preservation of children's home language and cultural identities. Linguistic and cultural diversity is an asset, not a deficit, for young children.



Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)

GSRP is a preschool program offered Monday through Thursday for seven hours a day. Fridays will be reserved for conferences, home visits, parent education classes, and administrative duties for staff relating to this program.

The option of before and after school child care is offered on-site. *Participation in before and/or after care is at an additional cost to parents and is not included in the GSRP grant. If interested in before or after school care, please contact Lisa Mellinger at 734-439-5159.*

- Children must be four years old by December 1st of the enrollment year.
- Families must meet the grant criteria for entrance into this program.

GSRP Daily Routine

Morning Circle

Breakfast

Large Group

Small Group

Work Time (plan, do review)

Lunch

Rest

Large Group

Small Group

Snack

Outside/Gym Play

Times allotted to each activity vary and are planned daily at the discretion of the staff.