

**Osage R-III Early Childhood Center
2017-2018 Parent Handbook**



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Welcome!!!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to the Osage R-III Early Childhood Center. This handbook is designed to give you important information about our preschool program. It is designed to answer many of your questions about OECC. It is also a point of reference for policies and procedures used at the preschool. Please keep this handbook in a safe place at home so that you may review it when needed.

The Osage R-III Early Childhood Center (OECC) is part of the Osage R-III school district in Westphalia. We are licensed by the Missouri Division of Family Services for children ages 3 to 6 years old on a year around basis.

We believe preschool will provide a positive foundation for your child's educational future. Our goal at OECC is to help your child develop the skills to become a self-motivated and independent thinker. We will provide a safe, caring, and healthy educational environment that will help promote the physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development of your child.

A child's job can be summed up in one word – play. Play is an essential part of your child's development. Play will help your child build language skills, encourage social interactions, practice motor skills, and develop critical thinking. Your child will participate in both child-directed and teacher-directed activities. They will have free activity time to continue exploring their interests and scheduled activities that will be so fun that they won't even realize they are learning.

The preschool years are a very inquisitive and exciting time for you and your child. At OECC, we believe that every child is an individual and our staff is devoted to bringing out the best in each child. Having a caring and devoted staff at OECC is essential to our belief that every child can achieve his/her greatest potential when given the opportunity to explore the world around them.

We understand how precious your child is and want to do everything possible to help your child have a positive school experience. We believe that all children learn at their own pace, so activities at OECC are designed to develop a variety of skill levels. Our goal is to allow preschoolers the opportunity to explore the world around them while preparing them for the structure of the kindergarten classroom.

OECC Philosophy

The goal of the staff and management at OECC is to provide quality care in all areas of development for the individual child. To meet our goal, we work in partnership with parents to set goals and objectives for their children's development. We believe that children may succeed when provided with an atmosphere that encourages exploration and growth in the different areas of child development. We know that a team approach with parents and staff working together can provide an environment that all students can be successful in.

Staff

The staff members at OECC are trained and experienced in child development and early childhood education. They possess knowledge of developmentally appropriate activities for all ages of young children. The teachers at OECC enjoy bringing affection and warm encouragement to each child, appreciating each child, and understanding that each child is an individual. The teachers are able to maintain a comfortable setting for all of the preschoolers by being observant of the classroom. They use observation, careful listening, and gentle words or suggestions to encourage the preschoolers to learn good social skills.

A major aim of the staff at OECC is to help build a positive self-image for each child. Together as a team, the staff members work on encouraging good choices and instilling attitudes and actions that will shape better lives. We encourage honesty, respect for others, kindness, love, self-discipline, and responsibility in all of our preschoolers. Group and individual activities are planned that encourage preschoolers to utilize their strengths and to develop weaker areas in a non-competitive atmosphere. This helps to instill that all-important, positive self-image in each preschooler. The staff also works to provide support for parents who may need it.

Our staff has a combination of education, experience, and in-service training. Staff will complete required professional development hours every year. Staff members continue this learning through educational courses, trainings, workshops, conferences, observations, and conferences with educational consultants. Our staff is certified in CPR and first aid by the American Red Cross.

Mandated Reporting

The most important job is the safety of our preschoolers. The staff at OECC is required by law to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child in our care.

Reporting requirement (Section 210.115.1 RSMo)

“When any physician, medical examiner, coroner, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, podiatrist, resident, intern, nurse, hospital or clinic personnel that are engaged in the examination, care, treatment or research of persons, and any other health practitioner, psychologist, mental health professional, social worker, day care center worker or other child-care worker, juvenile officer, probation or parole officer, jail or detention center personnel, teacher, principal or other school official, minister as provided by section 352.400, RSMo, peace officer or law enforcement official, or other person with the responsibility for the care of children has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or observes a child being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, that person shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the division in accordance with the provisions of sections 210.109 to 210.183.

Reasonable cause to suspect means a standard of reasonable suspicion, rather than conclusive proof. When a person is required to report in an official capacity as a staff member of a school facility, the person in charge shall be notified. That person in charge becomes responsible for immediately making or causing a report to be made. This is not meant to relieve anyone of their responsibility from making a report. A report may also be made to any law enforcement agency or juvenile office, although this does not take the place of making a report to CD. Section 210.109.3, RSMo, states mandated reporters may not make child abuse/neglect (CA/N) reports anonymously provided the reporter is informed that reporter information will be held as confidential.

Abuse is defined as: “...Any physical injury, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse inflicted on a child other than by accidental means by those responsible for the child’s care, custody, and control, except that discipline including spanking, administered in a reasonable manner, shall not be construed to be abuse.”

Neglect is defined: “...Failure to provide by those responsible for the care, custody, and control of the child, the proper or necessary support, education as required by law, nutrition, or medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the child’s well-being.”

Those responsible for the care, custody, and control of the child are defined as: "...Those included but not limited to the parents or guardian of a child, other members of the child's household, or those exercising supervision over a child for any part of a 24 hour day. It shall also include any adult, who, based on the relationship to the parents of the child, members of the child's household or the family, has access to the child." (Section 210.110 RSM0)

Immunity/Penalties (Section 210.135 RSMo)

The law provides immunity from civil or criminal liability to those who are required to make reports with CD, any law enforcement agency, or the juvenile office in the completion of an investigation/family assessment. Immunity is provided regardless of the outcome of the investigation/family assessment; however, it does not apply if a person intentionally files a false report.

Failure to report is a Class A misdemeanor for a person who is required under the law to report. Filing a false report is also a Class A misdemeanor.

Building Security

The outside doors to the preschool building are kept locked, except for during arrival (6:30 – 8 am) and pick-up times (3 – 5:30 pm). The doors are equipped with safety locks. This means the doors push open from the inside even when locked, but cannot be opened from the outside. Please ring the doorbell or knock loudly to gain entrance into the building when doors are locked. We ask for your patience when waiting to gain entrance. It can be difficult to hear the doorbell/knocking when all staff are in classrooms.

Crisis Plan

OECC has a crisis plan to protect the health and safety of the children and staff should a disaster or emergency, be it natural or deliberate, affects the facility, its operation, or the community. The plan includes the designated safe zones at OECC and places outside of the preschool that we may evacuate to during an emergency. As part of the school district, OECC will evacuate to the main campus. If the district campus is not an option, OECC will evacuate to St. Joseph Catholic School, our designated partner school. Emergency kits have been prepared and stored in each classroom. Preschoolers will participate in drills for emergency situations. A condensed version of the crisis plan is posted by every exit. The full copy of the crisis plan is in the office for review at any time.

Educational Program

Our educational program at OECC aligns with Project Construct. Project Construct is based on the Constructivist theory for early childhood learning. This theory suggests that children learn knowledge as a result of interactions with both physical and social environments. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education introduced this theory into classrooms in 1988 and deemed it a successful learning style. They named it Project Construct and it is now used in over 212 public school districts.

Project Construct uses “hands-on, minds-on” experiences to help foster learning. Students in a Project Construct classroom attain a deep understanding in the core content areas while learning to work collaboratively with adults and peers. This helps to create life-long problem solvers.

The Project Construct curriculum and assessment is research-based and is linked to the Missouri Early Learning Standards. The program is designed to address the whole child, including socio-moral, cognitive, representational, and physical domains. Our program fosters children’s literacy and language development, scientific and mathematical knowledge, art, construction, music, movement, and play to promote learning at many different levels. Lessons are planned with both the individual child and the whole group in mind.

All classrooms at OECC follow a curriculum that focus on skills that are necessary for kindergarten entry. Our curriculum includes weekly themes and units as well as instruction in math, social studies, language arts, and science. Children will be introduced to letters/numbers, math and language concepts, colors/shapes, science experiments, gross and fine motor activities, and calendar. These core area concepts are introduced at this level to help with mastery at the kindergarten level.

Progress reports are completed and sent home twice during each preschool year to help keep parents informed of the progress being made by the child. These progress reports evaluate the preschoolers in all areas of development.

Centers

A center is an area that provides your child with various activities and materials to help foster their learning. Centers will include science, math, language, art, block, dramatic play, sensory experiences, fine and gross motor, music, and manipulatives. Each center will have many different activities to accommodate the preschoolers in their different stages of learning.

Happily Ever After Reading Curriculum

Happily Ever After is a reading readiness program developed by the Rowland Reading Foundation and is the precursor to the Superkids Reading Program that is used by Fatima Elementary. We will be using this curriculum with the children in the prekindergarten classroom. This program is designed to give children a strong foundation in early literacy skills that will help them be successful when they start formal reading instruction in elementary school. Parents will be given further information on the program when it is implemented starting in September. Parents can visit the program website at <http://www.superkidsreading.org/> to see how this program aligns with the Missouri Early Learning Standards.

Communication

At the OECC preschool, we all know the importance of communication with each child's family. This is a vital component in the success of each child. The preschool has a parent information calendar that is located in the main entry of the preschool. It will remind you of upcoming activities for the center. Important reminders will be posted on the front door or window of the office.

Daily sheets are posted outside the door to each classroom for parents to view when they pick up their child each evening. These "Day in Review" sheets give the parents an overview of the activities that took place in the child's classroom that day and can be used to spark conversation about your child's day at preschool. Monthly newsletters go home at the beginning of the month and will give you information about themes, upcoming events, and preschool activities. The newsletter will also include a calendar and learning activities you can do at home. Monthly newsletters are also on Osage R-3 School District website.

Parents are also encouraged to make the day-to-day contact with the child's teacher during drop off/pick up times. If the teacher is not available at these times, please feel free to contact the preschool during normal working hours for that particular teacher. You can also write a small note in the sign-in book requesting a phone call.

Parents will also be given the opportunity twice each school year for a Parent Contact Week. A progress report documenting your child's developmental growth will be sent home in conjunction with the Parent Contact Week. We will plan one for fall and one in the spring. During these designated contact weeks, the teacher or parent may initiate contact to discuss a specific child's progress. These weeks will be used for extra conferencing time if it is deemed necessary by the parent or teacher. Notification of specific dates will be given in the monthly newsletters.

Parental Roles

We always encourage the parents of OECC students to be our partners in the preschool education of their child. This is a very important time of development and cooperation will only enhance this learning period. Studies have shown that family support and involvement has a positive influence on a child's development.

Please keep us informed of any changes at home that may affect your child's behavior. Keep us updated on any changes in address or phone number for home or work.

It is the parent's responsibility to read and be in compliance with the operating procedures in this handbook, as well as any supplemental notes and newsletters, which are sent home regularly. In addition to your financial and moral support of the OECC center, we encourage your suggestions and comments. While we are as a preschool excellent in many ways, no one within our community is perfect, and misunderstandings do and will occur. When a problem or disagreement arises, we at OECC will make every effort to contact you to clarify the situation. Parents, guardians, and family members who experience problems or are confused with some matter regarding a child's educational/developmental experience, are asked to first learn the reasons behind a policy or inquire about the teacher's or preschool's understanding or decision before judging or forming an opinion. Those who are still not satisfied with what they have learned from the teacher or source are asked to approach the director to investigate the matter. In this way, positive resolutions can be reached and the education of the preschooler will not be sacrificed.

Schedule

At OECC, our schedule is designed to meet the needs of the preschool-aged child. It is flexible yet still provides a predictable routine each day. The schedule allows time for both teacher-directed activities and student-directed free play activities. Our schedule attempts to give each preschooler the right mix of structured time needed to prepare for kindergarten entry while still allowing for that freedom needed to explore, learn, and play. Regular attendance is encouraged so that your child may become comfortable with the routines, schedules, surroundings, teachers, and friends at the preschool.

A sample daily schedule for the school year can be found on the next page.

OECC Daily Schedule

(3 – 6 Year Olds)

6:30 – 8:00	Arrival/Free Choice Activities
8:00 – 8:15	Pick- up / Separate to classrooms
8:15 – 8:45	Breakfast/Clean up
8:45 – 10:00	Transition time/Bathroom Breaks/Free Choice Centers/Outside Play
10:00 – 11:30	Theme Concepts/Center Time
11:30 – 11:50	Outside Play/Free Choice Centers
11:50 – 12:00	Bathroom Breaks/Prepare for lunch/Group Time
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch/Clean-Up
12:30 – 1:00	Teacher Choice Activities/Brush Teeth/Bathroom
1:00 – 3:00	Nap/Quiet Time
3:00 – 3:15	Wake-up Routine (cots, bathroom break)
3:15 – 3:30	Afternoon Snack
3:30 – 5:30	Large Group Activities/Outside Play

Preschool Hours of Operation

The preschool operates during the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day. Our center is opened Monday through Friday on a year-round basis. We will be closed for some major holidays. A listing of these days may be found in the "Preschool Closings" section of the handbook.

The doors to OECC **DO NOT** open before 6:30 a.m. each morning. In addition we are **NOT** opened beyond 5:30 p.m. Please respect these times. Your promptness in picking up your child each day is a common courtesy to the OECC staff, who may have other commitments after the center closes.

Any parent arriving late will pay **cash** to the staff members who had to stay late. Payment is expected upon arrival. Our late fee schedule is \$1.00 for every minute you are late for each child you have attending the preschool.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures

It is very important to ensure our preschoolers' safety at all times of the day. For this reason, there are some guidelines to follow when dropping off/picking up your preschool child each day. After signing your child for the day, each parent is **required** to escort his/her child to a classroom with a staff member at the center. We encourage parents to give their child a kiss and hug in the classroom before they depart. This allows the front door area to remain as open as possible for other parents coming into the center. This will also eliminate the possibility that a child will try to run outside after a parent who is leaving.

When you pick up your child, **be sure that a staff member knows that you are taking the child**. Do not let your child run out the front door or to your car without you. We encourage all children to observe safety rules and to walk along with a parent to the vehicle.

Parents are required to sign in/out their child each day in the log book which can be found in the main entry of the building. There is a special "Comments" section on the form in case you need to let us know of any special circumstances for that day. This is a great place to inform us if someone else will be picking up your child that day or if you can be reached at a different phone number for the day.

Authorization for Pick Up

At enrollment time you will be asked to list the people who are authorized to pick up your child from the center on the Emergency Information form. It is best to list as many people as possible. In case of emergency, if someone other than an authorized person is to pick your child up, you must notify us in advance. Please always specify the approximate time and a description of the person who will be picking your child up. Please inform the individual to have an I.D. card ready for verification when they arrive at the center to pick up the preschooler. We can not allow a preschooler to leave with someone who is not listed on the form. Parents are responsible for updating or changing this information as needed.

Enrollment Requirements

Enrolling your child at OECC is an exciting experience for the young child, but it can also be a difficult transition. Parents may feel anxious about the initial separation. These feelings are normal. Please remember that children seldom cry for more than a few minutes after the parent is out of sight. We have discovered that a quick hug and kiss and "Good bye. I love you. It is time for you to be at preschool," is the least painful for all involved. After a routine is established, these fears seem to disappear and full adjustment can be expected. Parents are always welcome to call the center to check on their preschooler if this transition time seems difficult.

Children must be between the ages of three and six and not yet be in kindergarten to enroll at OECC. Parents/Guardians may be asked to show proof of the child's age with a copy of his/her birth certificate. All children must be up to date on all immunizations **prior** to starting at the preschool. Parents will be asked to provide an up to date shot record on the first day of enrollment and physician's documentation of a wellness exam within 30 days of the child's enrollment in the preschool.

Our licensure does not allow for diapering, so **all attendees MUST be completely potty-trained prior to enrollment.** The center's definition of potty-trained is that the child is wearing underwear at all times of the day and night and that the child can independently use the bathroom facility.

Toileting Concerns

We understand when an occasional potty accident occurs as we realize that we are dealing with preschool-aged children. However, when the accidents become too frequent and interfere with the daily functioning of the classroom, some form of action must be taken.

Toileting issues must and will be handled on an individual basis at the OECC center. When potty accidents are deemed a reoccurring problem, the director will contact the parents and a plan will be made. Since we are not licensed to potty train students, this may include suspension from the center until the problem is under control.

Withdrawing from Preschool

If for any reason it is necessary to withdraw your child from OECC, please notify the director immediately. **We require a two-week notice so that we will have sufficient time to fill the vacancy.** If the two-week notice is not given, OECC can require the parents to pay the fees for a two-week period after the child withdraws.

OECC will grant a trial period, not to exceed a month, for new preschoolers. During this time, if a parent or the OECC Director feels that the preschool placement is not benefiting the child, the two-week notice will be waived.

Last Day for Preschoolers Entering Kindergarten

OECC is licensed to care for preschoolers up to the day that they enter kindergarten. However, it is important to be able to start our new school year at the same time that the district begins a new school year. For this reason, OECC will make the Friday in August, immediately preceding the beginning of the district's school year, as the final day for all preschoolers who will be beginning kindergarten.

OECC does require a two week notice regarding the final day for all preschoolers.

Fees at OECC

Full time care is encouraged for all preschoolers because it is considered to be more routine and consistent for the child. Much of what we teach one day builds on the skills taught from the previous day. It becomes difficult when a part-time student misses out on fun activities or field trips on his/her days off. For this reason, full-time status will be given precedence over part-time care at OECC.

- **Full time fees at OECC are \$23.00 per day** (\$20.00 per day for Osage R-3 School District employees). Full time status is considered to be 5 days per week.

- **If your child attends preschool 4 days per week, fees will be \$25.00 per day** (\$20.00 per day for Osage R-3 School District employees). This is still considered to be full time status.

- **If your child attends preschool 3 days or less per week, fees will be \$30.00 per day** (\$20.00 per day for Osage R-3 School District employees). This is considered part time status.

In order to keep our center running smoothly, parents are asked to pay their fees for preschool **on time**. Fees may be paid on a weekly basis or monthly basis. If you would prefer to set up a different payment schedule, this can be done by talking to the OECC Director. Payment can be made in cash or checks.

When making a payment for preschool fees, please indicate the week or month being paid for and the name of the child in the memo section of the check. This is helpful for our record keeping because some families will be on different payment plans and some children's last names differ from their parents'.

Payment is expected at the **beginning** of the week or month. Reminder notes will be given to those parents who do not pay at the beginning of the week or month. The Director at OECC reserves the right to discontinue service to any child on an individual basis if payment is not made on time. OECC also reserves the right to discontinue services to any repeat offender of late payments. One documented warning will be given if there becomes a pattern of late payments. After one warning, OECC has the right to refuse services immediately.

There will be a service charge on all returned checks. Repeat offenders of returned checks will be asked to make money order or cashier check payments. No further personal checks will be accepted until the situation is deemed resolved. The Director at OECC reserves the right to discontinue services to any child on an individual basis if the parent is a repeat offender of returned checks.

Fees are due regardless of whether or not your child is in attendance!!

You must pay for all days your child is not in attendance at the preschool including illness, vacation days, etc. This also includes the summer months when the school district is not in session.

OECC is contracted with the State of Missouri as a child care provider to offer services to authorized clients of the Department of Social Services. Please talk to the OECC director if you receive these services.

Activities Fee

The Project Construct Curriculum offered at OECC gives the preschoolers many opportunities to explore. This requires many different activities to incorporate all of the student's senses and to ensure that the student is able to actively learn a new concept. There are times when the teachers must purchase items/materials to use in their classrooms that the preschool does not otherwise have (examples include but are not limited to: starch, jell-o, food ingredients, shells, etc.).

A \$25.00 Activity Fee per preschooler will be required for each school year that the child attends OECC. **This fee will be due between August 1st and September 1st, 2016.** Included in the Activity Fee price is a t-shirt for each preschooler. These shirts can be worn for field trips, special days at preschool, or just when the child wants to. The rest of the Activity Fee money will be used by the teachers to purchase items needed for their classrooms for special projects. **Please pay this fee with a separate check because it goes into a different account than OECC fees.**

OECC Fundraising

OECC will be participating in fundraising projects throughout the school year. These fundraisers help us to purchase many items for our preschool. We also do fundraisers to help benefit charities. We feel that this helps the preschoolers learn ways to help others in need. Parents will be notified in advance of upcoming fundraisers. Parents should **never** feel like they must participate in any given fundraiser. Fundraisers will be conducted on a voluntary basis. If a parent wishes not to participate in a fundraiser, that will be fine. If a parent wishes to make a monetary donation in lieu of participating in the fundraiser project, that too will be fine.

Preschool Closing Dates

OECC offers a year round program, with the exception of major or National Holidays when we are closed. There will be **NO** reduction of tuition fees for these days since they are observed by most business places.

A list of the 2017-2018 observed holidays are:

- **Independence Day Break – July 3rd & 4th**
- **Labor Day - September 4th**
- **Thanksgiving Day - November 23rd**
- **Friday after Thanksgiving Day - November 24th**
- **Christmas Break - December 25th and December 26th**
- **New Year's Break - January 1st**
- **Good Friday - March 30th**
- **Memorial Day - 28th**

In addition to the above dates, OECC has some other dates that the preschool will be closed. On these dates, parents **will not** be responsible for paying.

- **May 29th – June 2, 2018 - This week has been set for a shutdown at preschool for maintenance. Parents will not pay for this week.**

Inclement Weather

Our preschool is normally open when the Public School is closed due to inclement weather. Please let us know if you will not be coming on any given day due to road conditions. If it is deemed necessary to close the preschool due to extreme weather conditions, the announcement will be made on both TV and radio stations carrying the school district closings. Our school will be listed as Osage R-III, Fatima Preschool on the announcements. We also give parents the opportunity to receive preschool closings via email/text messaging. A letter will be sent home in early fall with the directions for signing up for this type of notice. If a day is missed due to the preschool being closed for extreme weather conditions, parents will **NOT** be responsible for payment for that day.

OECC Supply List

We ask that each family provide a few personal items for your preschooler. Please bring these items on their first day. The following items are essentials:

- A small blanket, small pillow, and **one** snuggling toy for nap time (we ask that these be a **small blanket and travel sized pillow** since our cubby and cot space is limited and the children are encouraged to fold their own nap items)
- A toothbrush and a **stand-up** bottle of toothpaste (Please NO battery operated toothbrushes. Our holders are too small for them.)
- A spare set of clothing in case of an accident (at least 2 pair of underwear).
- Swimwear for water days in June and July
- A box of Kleenex (as needed by individual classrooms-teachers will request these at different intervals throughout the year)
- A small tote bag/backpack
- Sunscreen – lotion only, licensing doesn't allow us to use aerosol spray

All other school supplies will be provided by OECC. On occasion, we may ask parents to save specific items for projects or to send items from home.

****Please do NOT send items from home unless they have been requested by the teacher, as our storage space is limited. Toys brought from home may become broken and sometimes cause hurt feelings when sharing becomes an issue.**

OECC Classroom Parties

OECC has several occasions throughout the school year where classroom parties are held. Party dates and times will be listed on the monthly newsletter and on the main calendar at preschool. A sign-up sheet for snacks and/or party needs will be hung up by each classroom door at least one week prior to the party date. Please remember that all snack items brought to preschool must be store bought. State regulations do not allow items made at home to be brought to preschool. If your child attends OECC less than 5 days per week and the party day lands on your child's day off, your child can still come to preschool during the party time to enjoy the party with their classmates; we just ask that they are attended by an adult as they are not counted in ratio for the day.

Meals and Snacks

We serve breakfast each day at the OECC center from 8:45 – 9:15 a.m. Please have your child here by that time if he/she will be eating that day. **Absolutely no food or drink should be brought from home for your child.** It is not fair to the other children in the center. If your child will not be eating at the center, then it is your parental responsibility to serve breakfast before dropping your child off at preschool.

Lunch is brought to us from the Osage R-III kitchen each day. Lunch will be served around 12:00 noon. An afternoon snack is served after getting up from quiet time around 3:15 p.m. each day. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board near your child's classroom door for your convenience.

Birthday Parties

Birthdays are very special days for our students. We understand how important it is to feel special on this day and to share the excitement with everyone around. Preschoolers can bring in a treat for their special day. This treat can be just for his/her classroom or for the whole preschool. The treat can be a food item and/or a drink item. Snacks brought from home must be store bought items. However, if you would like for your child and his/her class to **make** a special birthday treat at the preschool for your child that would be great. You would need to send in the mix and the ingredients needed. Please talk this over with your child's teacher in order to make plans that will work for all.

Field Trips

On occasion, OECC will take special field trips. A permission slip will be sent home prior to the trip. Parents are invited to attend most of these functions. Parents may sometimes ride the bus with the preschoolers if there is additional space. Otherwise, parents may drive and meet us at the destination. It is always desirable to have a couple of parent drivers just in case of an emergency.

Written permission is required for children to attend any field trip. No phone conversations will be accepted. When a school bus is taken for a field trip, all **children may be required to ride the bus to and from the field trip.** It will be at the discretion of the OECC director to make this determination for each field trip. Missouri statutes shall be followed with regards to safety restraints needed for each preschooler. If your child is three years old, you will need to leave your child's car seat for us to use on the school bus. All other children will use the buses' seatbelts.

Some of the field trips may be free, but others will require a fee in order to attend. The school generally pays for the cost of lunch and transportation. Parents may be responsible for paying any additional costs.

On occasion, OECC has taken short, walking field trips in town or ones that only require a short bus ride (ex. Petting zoo at Fatima). Notice will be given to parents about these field trips as well, if time allows. If a last-minute field trip is scheduled, OECC will use the permission given by parents on the Child Enrollment Form at the time of enrollment at OECC, as permission for the trip.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and make sure that his/her clothing is appropriate for the weather outside. On wintry days, make sure that your child has a hat, gloves/mittens, and a warm coat. We encourage outdoor play on a daily basis whenever the weather will allow. Please keep this in mind when you are dressing your child for preschool. You may want to keep a spare light jacket in your child's cubby during fall and spring. We request shorts to be worn under dresses and skirts.

Preschoolers will be involved in activities that can be messy. We do require that an extra set of clothes be sent and left in your child's cubby in case of an accident. This includes shirt, pants, socks and 2 pair of underwear. Be sure to change the clothing with the seasons. Extra set of clothing should be placed in a gallon sized sealable bag with your child's name on it.

Toys & Show-and-Share

OECC is well equipped with many educational toys and equipment to play with. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. This helps keep problems from arising and hurt feelings if a toy is broken. The staff will not be responsible for loss or damage of items brought from home. If toys are brought to preschool, they may be placed in the office or the child's mailbox and sent home at the end of the day.

Each month, there will be a Show-and-Share day at OECC. On this day, a toy may be brought from home. We will let you know if it a Kid's Choice (preschoolers choose what to bring) or a theme related show and share. The items will be shared during center time or activity time. Please be sure that the toy is small enough to fit in the child's tote bag or a Wal-Mart sized bag. Absolutely no guns/weapons are allowed to be brought from home.

Rest /Nap Time

All preschoolers will be encouraged to take naps or rest in the afternoons. We know that preschoolers need to allow their bodies a chance to relax and recharge each day. Stories will be read and relaxation techniques will be used to help the preschoolers get into a nap routine. While preschoolers do not have to take a nap, they will be required to lie quietly on their cot for a specified amount of time. Please furnish a small pillow, blanket, and one snuggling toy (optional) for your child. Be sure to label these items with your child's name. Cots and sheets will be provided by OECC.

Please take your child's pillow and blanket home each Friday for weekend laundering. These should be returned each Monday morning. We would prefer to have nap items for preschool and different ones for at home so these items do not have to be sent back and forth on a daily basis. If your child has been sick, we may need to launder the nap items during the week or send them home.

Behavior Management

The staff at OECC makes every effort to provide a safe and positive environment for all children within the program. In order to create a safe and nurturing atmosphere, we choose to be pro-active in implementing our behavior management system. The purpose of behavior management is to teach correct behaviors. Discipline is concerned with and focuses on the future. We discipline in order to teach correct behaviors. Disciplining is a much more positive approach than punishment. Children don't have to learn through being penalized. They can instead, learn by being firmly, lovingly, patiently, and calmly taught by an adult. The result is that children will have a greater knowledge of what is expected, what their limits are, and will feel a sense of security because their world is orderly. The child gains security, self-control, wisdom, and a positive self-esteem.

No form of physical punishment (spanking, slapping, pinching, grabbing, shaking, etc.) is to be used by staff or parents on the OECC property.

It is our goal at OECC to guide children through positive, non-threatening teaching techniques, to increase children's respect for themselves by guiding them to become more responsible for their own actions. In doing this, we hope to help the preschoolers to gain respect for the rights and feelings of other people.

A description of specific techniques used by our staff is listed below.

- **logic** - If a child spills some paint, they can help clean it up.
- **restitution** - If a child knocks down another child's blocks, they can help to rebuild them.
- **apology** - Accidents can happen, so a simple "I'm sorry" can be very effective.
- **peace talks** - Children are encouraged to talk out their problems together and come to an agreement.
- **class meetings** - Meetings can be called by the teacher or a student in the class and can be used as a means to discuss a particular problem and brainstorm ways to solve it.
- **exclusion** - A period of time to be away from the group, with the director to calm down and discuss alternative actions.
- **parental advice** - Sometimes a phone conversation or in-house conference may be used to brainstorm successful means of handling repeated problems. A journal may be used to document how a particular child's day has gone with the purpose being to give parents to an overview of the day so as encourage conversation at home. This is not meant as a disciplinary report.
- **taking away privileges** - Sometimes it may be necessary to take away special planned activities in order to curb particular behaviors. If this is a field trip, the school will not be responsible for reimbursement.
- **suspension** - If the problem still exists after repeated attempts to resolve it, parents may be asked to pick up their child and keep him/her home for a specified number of days until the child is ready to fully cooperate at the preschool. This will be used only for repeat offenders and serious behavior problems such as hitting, biting, and cursing. Being disrespectful to teachers and/or peers will not be tolerated. **(No refunds will be offered for these days. Payment will still be expected.)**
- **expulsion** - OECC has the right to discharge a child from the facility after attempts have been made to meet a child's individual needs. Any child who demonstrates an inability to benefit from the care offered by the preschool provider or whose presence creates a less than positive environment for the other children/staff members, will be asked to leave. The parent will still be responsible for paying for a two-week period of time, as the vacant spot will need to be filled.

Teachers may use any of the following guidelines to deal with disciplinary actions: modeling, verbalizing feelings, creating a community spirit, natural consequences, giving choices, redirection to appropriate behavior, ignoring inappropriate behavior, and a curriculum that develops positive self-esteem.

Serious Incidents

At OECC, we want to ensure the safety of all our preschoolers. If a child displays signs of aggression including, but not limited to biting, hitting, pinching, or any other type of physical harm to another child or a member of the OECC staff, the parent will be notified and may be asked to pick the child up early from the preschool. The OECC Director will use his/her best judgement in determining whether the parents will be asked to pick up the child from the preschool.

If a child displays actions/words that are deemed to be extremely violent by the staff and are threatening to those around, the parent will be called to immediately pick up the child from the center.

Staff members will complete an Incident Report Form for any of these types of incidents. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian and will be kept in the individual child's permanent file.

Accidents/Injuries

All precautions are taken to avoid accidents from occurring at the preschool. Your child's safety is our number one priority. However, children will be children; they can trip over their own feet, lose their balance, or put something in their ear/nose, etc. Active children will get bumps, bruises, scrapes, and scratches from time to time. Minor injuries will be treated with soap and water, Band-aids, cool paper towel, ice if needed, and lots of TLC. A staff member who either witnessed the accident or was informed of the accident will fill out an Accident form that will be placed in your child's mailbox. Parents/Guardians are asked to sign and return these forms and the forms are then placed in the child's permanent file. You will be notified by phone if we believe that your child needs medical attention. OECC is not liable for any medical expenses, including ambulance fees.

Emergency Procedures

In case of a serious illness, accident, or emergency the teacher will take control of the classroom and ensure that other children stay clear of the area. The child's parent and doctor or an emergency vehicle (depending on the situation) will be contacted. If a parent cannot be contacted, we will call the emergency contact from the emergency form. We will use the doctor and/or hospital you have listed on your child's emergency form if needed. It is your responsibility to keep this information updated and accurate at OECC. Emergency numbers (ambulance, fire, poison control, etc.) are posted by each phone in the preschool.

Medication

The licensing rules set forth by the Missouri Division of Family Services states that preschools are not mandated to distribute medications. However, OECC tries to accommodate working parents by helping out when medication is needed for a child. We use a "Permission to Administer Medication" form, which must be filled out before we will administer any medication to a child. You can find copies of this form in a red folder on the bottom of the sign in shelf or download one from the preschool page on the district website. **All** prescribed medications must be in the prescription bottles with the correct child's name on the label. If you ask the pharmacist, he/she can usually provide an extra bottle for the medication to be taken at preschool. Over the counter medications must be in the original bottle with your child's name on the package and information for correct dosage for your child's age and weight. No out-dated medications of any kind will be administered to the OECC students. All medications, their dosage, and time given will be logged each time they are administered.

Health Policies

Licensing rules require that all children be observed for signs of illness upon arrival and throughout the day. Parents will be notified if any contagious disease occurs in the facility.

Missouri Division of Family Services set these rules forth.

All attendees should be free of contagious disease. If children exhibit any of the following symptoms, they may not attend preschool:

1. A persistent cough or difficulty breathing
2. Diarrhea or vomiting
3. Unusual spots or rashes or infected skin patches (such as impetigo, ringworm, scabies, etc.)
4. Pinkeye
5. Sore throat, trouble swallowing, Strep throat, or other throat infections
6. Fever over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit by mouth/ear or ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit under the arm.
7. Headache and stiff neck
8. Severe itching of the body or scalp. These may be symptoms of lice or scabies.
9. Fever of ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit under the arm.

(For a more detailed list of illnesses that warrant staying at home, refer to the Missouri State Health Guidelines on page 24 of this handbook.)

Parental contact showing notification of an ill child shall be recorded and filed on record. The ill child shall be kept isolated from the other preschoolers until the parent arrives. A staff member will be in close proximity to the child until the parent arrives. Licensing defines close proximity as a caregiver being close enough to hear any sounds a child might make that would indicate a need for assistance. **Please be prompt in picking up your child!**

Children must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication in order to return to the preschool. Children must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school. If they return before the 24-hour time frame, we will have to send them home. This is the best way to prevent the spread of germs at our center. We ask that you notify us if your child does come down with a communicable disease, so that we may inform other parents to be on the watch for symptoms.

If we all work together, we can keep our preschool as germ-free as possible! **

Child Custody

OECC will presume that each parent has the authority to enroll the student, consent for the child to participate in various activities, have custody of the student, and has authority to discontinue services if desired. If only one parent has such authority, or if one parent has primary authority, that parent must, at the time of enrollment, provide the preschool with a complete signed copy of the court decree, which describes the custodial agreement. When consent by both parents is required by court decree in any/all matters relating to school, the undersigned parent represents that the other parent has been consulted and he/she consents to this enrollment.

A copy of the latest court order is to be in the file in order for staff to be in compliance with this request. It is your responsibility to provide us with this information. In a threatening situation or when the safety of others is at hand, your child may be released with the parent requesting the leave. OECC will not be held liable if this type of situation should arise. We will not jeopardize the safety of other children and staff in this situation. If necessary, we recommend that you keep your child at home.

Miscellaneous Information

We do allow video cameras, TV/news reporters, photographs, and taped recordings to be taken of our children on occasion. A form will be on file for each child with parental consent. Your child will not be included in any of these activities if you do not sign and return the consent form.

The Missouri River Regional Library Bookmobile visits our center every month. The books checked out by the children are kept at the OECC center to be shared with all of our preschoolers.

Each preschooler gets many opportunities to visit the Westphalia Hills Retirement Center to do fun activities and to visit with the residents who live there.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Osage R-3 School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. This policy pertains to admission/access to, or treatment/employment in its program and activities.

Any person having inquiries concerning complaints with the regulations implementing Title VI of the civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments on 1972, is directed to Mr. Joe Scott, Superintendent, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is directed to Mr. Jeff Buthod, Elementary Principal, Osage R-3 School, P.O. Box 37, Westphalia, MO 65085, telephone 573-455-2375.

Religion Compliance

The Osage R-3 School District does not maintain any policy that prevents or denied participation in constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary and secondary schools.

District Website

The Osage R-3 School District's web address is www.fatimacomets.org. The web site contains various information dealing with the district that can be very beneficial to the patrons of the district, including the school calendar, staff information, upcoming events at the school, etc.

2017-2018 OECC School Year

Parent Sign Off Page

Sign below and return form to the preschool on your child's first day of attendance.

I have received a Parent Handbook for the Osage R-III Early Childhood Center. I have read the information carefully. I have taken the opportunity to ask questions to the director for any part that I did not understand.

I do hereby agree to follow the policies and procedures set up by the Osage R-III Early Childhood Center and will work with the staff to make my child's experiences positive.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date enrolled: _____ Date returned: _____



Authorization to Photograph, Videotape, Audio tape, or Interview

I, _____, _____ do _____ do not authorize the OECC to make photographs, films, videotapes, or sound recordings, including interviews, of my child _____.

I consent that the photographs, film, videotapes, sound recordings, and interviews with OECC may be copied, published, telecast, or broadcast for educational, research, or promotional purposes together with description and editorial statements.

I, _____, certify that I am the _____ of _____ and authorize the above release on his/her behalf.

Signature _____ Date _____