



# Utica Community Schools

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Early Childhood Programs

## **NURSERY & PRESCHOOL**



## **2018-2019 Parent Handbook**

## Welcome

Dear Early Childhood Parents,

Welcome to Utica Community Schools' Early Childhood Programs. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child. You may be enrolling for the first time or your family may be familiar with the variety and quality of our Early Childhood Programs. Regardless, your child's experience will be unique and is important to us.

We are pleased to be part of your child's earliest educational experience. I welcome your feedback. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any suggestions, questions or concerns; I can be reached at:

Phone: 586.797.6945.

Email: [sandra.jewell@uticak12.org](mailto:sandra.jewell@uticak12.org)

Sincerely,

Sandy Jewell, Coordinator  
UCS Early Childhood Programs  
586.797.6945

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## **Programs**

Utica Community Schools provides a variety of programs for young children and their families. Preschool and nursery are offered morning or afternoon. Montessori nursery/preschool is offered at two locations. Full day education and care is offered for infants, toddlers, and preschool age children at three locations. Parents and toddlers attend class together weekly in our Come Play With Me program. Additional information regarding our Early Childhood programs is available through the Early Childhood Office at 586.797.4660, the Early Childhood Accounting Office at 586.797.6985, or on our website [www.ucsccommunityeducation.com](http://www.ucsccommunityeducation.com).

## **Philosophy**

The early years of a child's life establish the foundation for their future and therefore, are among the most critical. Our program addresses the unique needs of each child and family and provides for growth in the school and community setting. Each child develops in a unique way and at an individual pace. Teachers observe each child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive and language development. These observations are the basis for planning activities that support each child at their current level of development and gently guide their growth.

Children learn best when they feel safe in an environment with age appropriate expectations. The tasks that children practice and master are the foundation for more formal educational requirements ahead. Young children are active learners. The daily schedule of activities encourages participation and exploration. Teachers interact with individual students, small and large groups. Staff observe and select materials to foster practice, mastery, and growth.

Early childhood programs provide a bridge from home to school. Teachers serve as a resource for parents, providing information about child growth and development. Our Early Childhood programs partner with families and together we meet the needs of the young child.

## **MDHHS Licensing Notebook**

- The center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- The notebook is available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

## Curriculum

Young children are welcomed into our Early Childhood classrooms with inviting materials and caring, experienced teachers. Children engage in activities designed to promote learning based on their abilities and interests. Teachers provide support, guidance and challenges so that children feel comfortable and confident as they learn. Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum provides a program framework that guides teachers as they observe, plan and assess the growth and development of children.

The housekeeping area may have cereal boxes, coupons and cookbooks. The sand and water table may have a book on sea shells nearby. Connections are made from objects to words by labeling items in the preschool room. Teachers ask children to tell about their drawings and write their comments down on the paper. The writing center provides pencils, paper, markers, scissors, stickers and other items that help children begin to translate thoughts to written words.

The ability to count, sort and classify helps children organize the world in an orderly manner. Concepts such as “more than” and “greater than” can be observed on graphs of the children’s favorite colors. Numbers play an important part of the routine as children count classmates for attendance and set the table for snack. A teacher may see that a group of children has sorted beads according to color. She can extend that activity by working with the children to count each color group, write down the color name and discuss how many are in each group.

Teachers encourage children to verbalize what is going on in their world and problem solve together. They are capable of working through social situations, such as taking turns and following classroom rules. Teachers ask questions to promote curiosity. Children may give clues to their fellow students in a guessing game or predict what might happen next in a story.

Teachers first observe and assess children and then plan accordingly. The Creative Curriculum provides a Development Continuum that allows teachers to arrange their observations according to each child’s development in each area. The Michigan Department of Early Childhood Standards aligns with the Creative Curriculum. This framework design assists teachers as they plan classroom activities that support children as they master tasks and are challenged to move on to the next level.

Early Childhood classrooms are busy places. The active learning that takes place throughout the day often does not result in a product. Teachers can provide photographs, anecdotes and portfolio work to help parents appreciate how children learn through play.

## Objectives for Development and Learning

Every Early Childhood program is expected to follow and incorporate the following into their lesson plans:

- Creative Curriculum
- MI Early Childhood Standards of Quality
- UCS Standards

Lesson plans must include what goals and objectives are being reached through each activity. Please note that television and movies will not be watched on a regular basis. If they are utilized in the classroom, they will tie in with learning and objectives. These goals and objectives are listed as follows:

### Social-Emotional

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
  - a. Manages feelings
  - b. Follows limits and expectations
  - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
  - a. Forms relationships with adults
  - b. Responds to emotional cues
  - c. Interacts with peers
  - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
  - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
  - b. Solves social problems

### Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
  - a. Uses fingers and hands
  - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

## **Language**

8. Listens to and understand increasingly complex language
  - a. Comprehends language
  - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
  - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
  - b. Speaks clearly
  - c. Uses conventional grammar
  - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
  - a. Engages in conversations
  - b. Uses social rules of language

## **Cognitive**

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
  - a. Attends and engages
  - b. Persists
  - c. Solves problems
  - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
  - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
  - a. Recognizes and recalls
  - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
  - a. Thinks symbolically
  - b. Engages in sociodramatic play

## **Literacy**

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
  - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
  - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
  - c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound

16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
  - a. Identifies and names letters
  - b. Uses letter-sound knowledge
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
  - a. Uses and appreciates books
  - b. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
  - a. Interacts during read-aloud and book conversations
  - b. Uses emergent reading skills
  - c. Retells stories
19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
  - a. Writes name
  - b. Writes to convey meaning

## **Mathematics**

20. Uses number concepts and operations
  - a. Counts
  - b. Quantifies
  - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
  - a. Understands spatial relationships
  - b. Understands shapes
22. Compares and measures
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

## **Science and Technology**

24. Uses scientific inquiry skills
25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

## **Social Studies**

29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

## **The Arts**

33. Explores the visual arts
34. Explores musical concepts and expression
35. Explores dance and movement concepts
36. Explores drama through actions and language

## **English Language Acquisition**

37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

### **The following activities will be included daily:**

- Fine/small and large motor
- Language and Literacy
- Social and Emotional
- Math
- Science/Discovery
- Sensory/Art (not product art, PROCESS art)
- Technology (whenever appropriate)

## Enrollment

Enrollment takes place annually in the spring. District residents, with children currently in Early Childhood programs, enroll first. Children should enroll in the program serving their elementary attendance area. Next, registrations are taken from other district residents and non-residents. Registrations will be taken through the end of December. The registration fee is non-refundable.

We maintain a 10:1 ratio for 3 year olds and 12:1 for 4 year olds. Children must be three years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year in which they are enrolling in nursery and four years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> for preschool. Children must be independently toilet trained, without diapers or pull-ups.

Program times and locations are subject to change. Please check with the Early Childhood Office at 586.797.4660 for specific information regarding locations and times or visit our website at [www.ucsccommunityeducation.com](http://www.ucsccommunityeducation.com).

To attend, children must have on file:

- Complete updated Child Information Card  
Please notify your teacher immediately if you have a new phone number (cell, home or work). **We must be able to contact one parent or emergency contact person at all times.**
- Health Appraisal form must be renewed every two years and signed by a physician with up-to-date immunizations and physical.
- Media Release
- Use of Student Work / Photograph
- Child's original birth certificate with seal
- If your child has an IEP, the parents must provide the most current IEP to the Early Childhood teacher in order to address the recommendations.

Questions regarding enrollment, eligibility, fees or classroom issues should be shared with the teacher and forwarded to the Early Childhood Coordinator if necessary. Decisions will be made within the guidelines of Utica Community Schools' policies and procedures, Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Early Childhood Professional organizations, and the discretion of the Early Childhood Coordinator.

## Tuition

**Registration Fee:** \$65 Child / \$90 Family In-District Residents

\$110 Child / \$135 Family Out-of-District Residents

**Registration fee is non-refundable.**

<u>Preschool/Nursery</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
4 day (3.0 hr) preschool	\$2,115	or \$235
3 day (3.0 hr) preschool	\$1,620	or \$180
3 day (2.5 hr) preschool	\$1,440	or \$160
2 day (3.0 hr) preschool	\$1,305	or \$145
2 day (2.5 hr) preschool	\$1,215	or \$135
2 day (2.0 hr) nursery	\$1,125	or \$125

**Tuition is due September 1. The total tuition is divided by 9 months to allow monthly payments to be equal. The remaining (7) payments are due on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month October until April or until paid in full.**

The following payment options are available:

- Authorize an **automatic monthly deduction** from your credit card. The Community Education Early Childhood Accounting Office will automatically charge your credit card on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month (8 times) September through April or until account is paid in full. Download and complete the Credit Card Payment Authorization Form on the Early Childhood website [www.ucsccommunityeducation.com](http://www.ucsccommunityeducation.com) and mail form to the Early Childhood Accounting Office.
- **Visa/MasterCard/Discover** payments are accepted by calling the Community Education Center Early Childhood Accounting Office 586.797.6985, the Early Childhood Office 586.797.4660 or using Tuition Express online. Download and complete the Tuition Express Authorization Form on the Early Childhood website [www.ucsccommunityeducation.com](http://www.ucsccommunityeducation.com) and mail form to the Early Childhood Accounting Office.
- Payments may be made by **check** (make check payable to Utica Community Schools) and mailed to:  
Community Education Center  
Early Childhood Accounting Office  
38901 Dodge Park  
Sterling Heights, MI 48312
- **Cash** payments are accepted only at the Community Education Center Early Childhood Accounting Office, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm.
- In class, your teacher will provide you with a pink tuition envelope for U.S. mail. Teachers may not accept tuition payments of any kind.

## **Fees**

Payments received 5 business days after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month are subject to a \$25 LATE FEE. Declined credit card payments are subject to a \$5 FEE. NSF checks are subject to a minimum \$25 FEE. Any payments NSF must be made with a money order, cashier's check or cash. A personal check or credit card WILL NOT be accepted. Accounts that are more than two weeks in arrears are subject to exclusion and a \$50 RE-ENROLLMENT FEE. A LATE FEE of \$15 will be charged every 15 minutes beginning with scheduled release time.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

If you need to drop a class for any reason, please provide a two week written notice to the Community Education Center, Early Childhood Accounting Office. Tuition and registration fees are non-refundable. If your child is excluded, you are still responsible for the unpaid monthly tuition. All tuition must be paid in full in order to register for any other Community Education program in the district. Furthermore:

- Families will be asked to withdraw from the program if fees are not paid up to date.
- Teachers work closely with parents to create a smooth transition from home to school. There may be situations where a child does not adjust to the group setting. The staff will meet with the parent and discuss concerns regarding the child. Parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the program if the child is unable to adjust to the setting.
- Children whose behavior presents a safety risk to themselves or others may be asked to withdraw from the program.

## **Daily Schedule**

Children do best with a consistent, predictable schedule. The routine provides a sense of security. Classes include choice time, large and small groups and snack. Although each class may have a slightly different sequence, the daily routine remains the same. The schedule is posted in each classroom so that parents, children and teachers know what comes next each day.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

The nursery and preschool programs are offered at different times based on the location and program. Registered families receive a registration confirmation through email prior to the beginning of school. A parent/child welcome session will be scheduled prior to the first day of school. Parents provide transportation to and from class. Bus transportation is not available. If your child is unable to attend class, please call and leave a voice mail message with your child's teacher.

Upon arrival, please be sure your child is in the care of a staff member before leaving and sign your child in. Classes begin promptly at starting time. Please do not arrive early. At dismissal, please arrive on time and sign your child out.

In the event that you are unable to pick up your child at the end of class, please make other arrangements in advance. A child will only be released to a person whose name appears on the Child Information Record. Photo identification is required. If the person is not on the emergency card a note written by the parent authorizing the adult to pick up the child on a specific date is allowed if the adult shows photo identification. In order to deny release of a child to non-custodial biological parent, a copy of the legal court document must be on file. Please see your child's teacher with any questions.

If an adult arrives to pick up a child and it appears to our staff that she/he may not be able to safely transport the child, our staff will:

1. Offer to keep the child in our care for an extended period of time.
2. Ask the adult if they would like to contact a friend or family member to pick them up.
3. Offer to arrange for a taxi.
4. Advise the parent that it is not safe for the child to ride with him/her. We will then notify the police that the adult has left our facility with the child.

## **Parking**

We are fortunate to have Early Childhood programs in schools throughout the district. Some buildings have limited parking at times when parents with young children arrive and depart. PLEASE follow the guidelines set forth by the school you attend. Building administrators develop policies based on the safety of ALL students. Please do not leave an unattended car running or any child unattended in a car. If you need assistance, please contact your child's teacher.

## **Parent Involvement**

Children learn to value education when they see their parents take an interest in school. Teachers provide a variety of ways in which parents may contribute to the classroom during the school year. If you are volunteering in a classroom, you are subject to background checks. Please follow UCS policy: sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge while in the building. Please adhere to the UCS Volunteer Guidelines for Early Childhood Programs; a handout is available from your child's teacher. Please do not bring food or beverages into the classroom unless it is a classroom snack or a special treat for the entire class.

Parents are encouraged to share comments or concerns with their child's teacher. Teachers are available to return a phone call or schedule a meeting. Concerns will be handled in a professional, confidential manner. Some situations need additional input. Teachers and parents may contact the Early Childhood Coordinator when necessary. Our priorities are the health, safety and education of all children in our classrooms.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Our teachers have education and experience with typical behaviors of young children. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled annually for preschool and nursery age children.

Parents of preschoolers will receive a Development Progress Overview at Preschool Conferences in January and at the end of the school year in May. This document will give you an in-depth look at your child in all areas of development according to the Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives.

Our teachers work cooperatively with families and strive to meet the need for additional meetings and conferences. When a child's development or behavior is of concern, the Early Childhood Coordinator will be contacted. The situation will be reviewed and a plan will be discussed with parents.

## **Discipline Policy**

Young children gradually develop the ability to control their behavior. Teachers apply their knowledge of child development as they guide children in this process. Our goal is for children to grow in the ability to verbally state their needs, avoid the use of physical force and develop a variety of ways to solve problems.

When children experience a difficulty, teachers first help by asking them to show or tell what happened. Children are reassured that school is a safe place, encouraged to verbalize their feelings, think of simple solutions and ask adults for help. When the difficulty involves the use of physical force (hitting, destruction of property), teachers work closely to help the child identify feelings and work on ways to act out the feelings appropriately.

If a child's behavior presents a risk to others or regularly requires one-to-one supervision, the coordinator of the program will be contacted. A plan will be developed to monitor the frequency, intensity, motivation and risk of the behavior. The plan will be discussed with the child's parents. If the behavior continues to be outside the range of normalcy, a recommendation will be made and may include the child's dismissal from the program.

State of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing R400.8140 prohibits:

- Corporal punishment
- Mental or emotional punishment
- Restriction by tying or binding, deprivation of rest, meals or toilet use
- Exclusion from outdoor play or gross motor activities, daily learning activities
- Confining a child in an enclosed area

## **Staff Qualifications/Screening**

Our Early Childhood teachers have the necessary combination of education and experience to meet the Michigan Licensing requirements. At least one staff member with current certification in CPR and First Aid shall be on duty in the center at all times. Staff members receive training in blood-borne pathogens. All teachers and assistants are required to have 16 hours of annual professional development training related to child development.

Staff have completed the Michigan Department of State Police criminal history record check, criminal record check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a Department of Human Services check for a history of substantiated abuse and neglect.

If a volunteer will have unsupervised contact with children in care, they shall provide documentation from the Department of Health and Human Services that he or she has not been named in a Central Registry case as the perpetrator of child abuse or child neglect.

## **Confidentiality Policy**

It is important that the privacy of our children, families and staff is maintained. The staff are required to keep information about children, families, and co-workers confidential. Staff and parents are asked to refrain from commenting about children or families in the presence of other adults or children. This includes contact that parents and staff may have outside of school time (personal contact).

There are times when information regarding a home situation would help our staff take better care of your child. Please know that all information shared will be confidential.

## Health Policy

When children are in a group setting it is a challenge to keep everyone healthy. There are several guidelines in place in order to prevent the spread of disease and infection. These guidelines apply to children, adults and volunteers in our program. Children need to learn to wash their hands properly before they eat, after they use the bathroom or wipe their nose and when their hands are dirty. Parents need to keep children home if they have the following symptoms or communicable disease:

**Chicken Pox**

**Measles**

**Scabies**

**Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

**Pin Worm**

**Ring Worm**

**Strep Throat**

**Impetigo**

**Lice**

**Diarrhea**

**Vomiting**

**Unidentified Rash**

**Infectious Mononucleosis**

**Temperature of 100 degrees or more (axillary)**

Children with a temperature of 100F or more must be fever free without fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Many times children are contagious before these symptoms are observed. Parents may be requested to pick up their child if symptoms are contagious or children are uncomfortable in the group setting.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and our school nurse assists our teachers in matters regarding the health of our children. We will let you know if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Please call your child's teacher and report any of the above symptoms or diseases.

In compliance with state law, we are required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect to Children's Protection Service.

## Allergies

Please inform your child's teacher of any allergies. Our school district has policies and procedures in place that safeguard the health of children while they are in our care. A Health Care Plan and an Authorizaton For Medication form are required for staff administration of prescription medication for your child. Health Care Plan forms are available from your teacher.

## **Immunizations**

A record of all immunizations must be on file in order for a child to attend class. All children who attend an early childhood program in Michigan are required by law to be fully vaccinated. If your child is not in compliance with health department standards, they could be excluded from the program. Questions regarding these requirements should be directed to the Macomb County Health Department School Immunization program at 586.466.6840.

## **Medication**

If a child must receive medication while at school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. Parent must accurately complete the Medication Authorization form. (Physician signature may be required.)
2. Medication must be in the original container with label intact and child's name and dosage clearly marked.
3. Parent must provide appropriate medical spoon or cup if required.
4. Medications will be kept in a designated area.
5. Staff will note the date, time and initial the medication log after each dosage.
6. In order to apply over the counter lotions, creams, sunblock, etc., a parent's written permission is required.

## **Procedures for an Injured Child**

Staff will verbally notify parents at pick up time of typical, minor injuries. These injuries will be treated with first aid such as rinsing a cut or applying a cold compress to a bump. All programs have staff trained in CPR and first aid.

If a child has a symptom or injury that might result in the child needing to be picked up, the teacher will call or email the parent when the concern is observed, such as the child looking pale, seeming lethargic, or pulling on their ear.

In the case of a serious injury or accident, the teacher will immediately begin first aid and direct other staff to contact the supervisor and/or call 911 if necessary. Parents will be contacted immediately.

## **Hearing, Vision and Speech**

Preschool students will have their hearing and vision tested by Macomb County Health Department technicians. All 4 year olds should be tested before they enter Kindergarten. **Please keep the Hearing and Vision record in a safe location, as you will be required to provide the results at Kindergarten registration.**

If, for any reason, by the end of the school year your child has not been tested, please contact the Macomb County Health Department Hearing and Vision Program at 586.412.5945. If you have concerns regarding your child's development, residents of UCS are serviced through the UCS Special Services Department and parents are referred to the Early Assessment Center (EAC). Please contact Special Services at 586.797.1020.

## **Weather, Fire and Safety Drills**

It is necessary to practice safety drills in all of our programs on a regular basis to be best prepared for emergencies. Whether at home or in school, children need to be able to follow the directions of an adult in an emergency situation. Our practice drills provide the opportunity for children and adults to become familiar with the guidelines necessary in each situation. Our staff reassures children that adults are with them to keep them safe. Each building and program has routines and guidelines particular to their setting. All classrooms have telephones. Staff are instructed how to respond in case of an emergency, including placing 911 calls.

We encourage parents to support our efforts and follow through by planning safety procedures in the home. All parents present during the drill are asked to please follow the instructions given by the teacher.

## **School Closing**

Inclement weather or building problems sometimes bring unexpected school closings. There are several ways parents can be informed about these unanticipated days. School closing information is broadcast on radio stations WJR, WWJ and WOMC. Television stations that air school closing information are Fox-2 News, WDIV-Channel 4 and WXYX-Channel 7.

Telephoning any school and selecting the school closing option from the calling menu gives parents access to emergency school closing hotline. Parents can connect to the web page, [www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org) lists school closing page.

**There are no refunds or make-up classes for weather related or emergency closings.**

## Food and Snacks

Snack time provides much more than nourishment for young children. Healthy habits are encouraged as children learn to wash their hands, eat with utensils and choose nutritious foods. Social interactions and fine motor skills are nurtured as children practice passing, pouring and socializing. Healthy foods provide children with the energy they need to play and learn.

Your child's snack, whether individual or for the whole class, must be a healthy choice and in compliance with classroom guidelines accommodating allergies. Snacks provided for the entire class, especially when allergies are considered, are safest when they are store bought and individually packaged. This allows us to better monitor ingredients.

The following snacks are suggested and approved by the UCS Early Childhood Programs:

**Fresh cut fruit or vegetables**

**Raisins (not yogurt covered)**

**Applesauce cups**

**Cheez-It Crackers**

**Teddy Grahams**

**Nilla Wafers**

**Graham Crackers**

**Cookies**

**Goldfish**

**Bagels (plain)**

**Rice Krispie Treats (store bought)**

**Kraft Handi Snacks**

**Fruit Bowls**

**Nutri Grain Bars**

**Gold Pretzels**

**\*No peanut/tree nut/coconut can be brought into the classrooms.**

Beverages must be 100% juice, 2% milk or water. Bottled juice or water poured into individual cups is the best way to make sure that children consume their portion and receive more if necessary.

**Birthday/Holiday Treats** must be store bought and may be selected from the list provided. This allows us to better monitor for children with allergies or other health concerns. A treat can be festive with special plates and napkins, or small items such as a sticker.

## **Toilet Training**

Children enrolled in either our nursery or preschool programs must be independently toilet trained. Children should **not be** in pull-ups or diapers. A child should be able to communicate to the teacher that he or she needs to use the toilet. Teachers will assist a child with buttons or snaps. Occasionally, a child may soil his or her clothes while attempting to use the toilet. Please provide an extra change of clothes. If a child is unsuccessful using the toilet in the group setting, it may be necessary to dis-enroll until such time that toilet training is reliably established.

## **Television, Videos and Technology**

The presence of television, videos and computers is common in the lives of children today. Although these things are inviting to even the youngest child, nothing can replace human interaction and play with real objects. We do not use technology as a substitute for adult-child interaction. Computers and videos do not replace three-dimensional playthings that have texture, weight, color and shape.

When children in our program watch videos, it reinforces a theme that was presented in class. Computer programs provide children with opportunities to practice concepts introduced in conjunction with a language or math lesson.

Technology is used sparingly in the preschool classrooms. When children enter elementary school, they can quickly acquire the skills necessary to put technology to good use. Our primary focus in the preschool years is to facilitate your child's growth through quality interaction with our staff, your child's classmates and carefully selected classroom materials.

## **Outdoor Playtime**

Healthy children benefit from regular opportunities to play outdoors. Please be sure your child has proper clothing for the weather. Classes may go outside when the temperature, inclusive of wind chill, is above twenty degrees Fahrenheit or below ninety degrees Fahrenheit. When the weather is warm, teachers take children outdoors during the coolest times of the day to play in shaded areas whenever possible. In order to maintain proper staff/child ratios, children who are healthy enough to attend class should be prepared to join the group outside. All playground equipment used by preschool age children is age appropriate and certified safe by a DHHS approved inspector.

The teacher of your child's program will be notified in advance, by the school district, of pesticide applications. The notice will be posted and you will receive a copy in your child's backpack. More information will be available from the School District and the Michigan Department of Agriculture, which can be reached at 1.800.292.3939.

## Items from Home

Please clearly label your child's outdoor clothing, backpacks, etc. with first and last name. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any items from home. It can be devastating to a child when a special toy becomes lost or damaged.

## Field Trips

Off-site field trips are intentional learning experiences that are related to the Early Childhood curriculum objectives. Field trips provide opportunities for parents and students (no siblings) to experience and enjoy a variety of community resources.

These off-site trips should correlate to classroom activities, bringing an educational purpose and value to your child's learning. Classroom teachers will have pre-activities and post activities. Some classes may tour the nature center, attend a play or visit a local grocery store.

These events are in place of regular scheduled class time. It is necessary to have a permission slip completed and returned to your classroom teacher prior to attending the field trip. Parents provide their own transportation and meet the teacher at the designated destination. Parents, guardians or appointed adults **MUST** remain with the child at all times during the field trip.

Field trips may be free or fees may be charged to cover the cost of admissions. If, for any reason, a field trip is cancelled or you are unable to attend, please note that your cost of admissions may or may not be refunded.

**If the school district or teacher, for any reason, cancels a field trip, the event is no longer considered a UCS school sponsored event.**

## **Holiday and Special Events**

Holidays are special times when we celebrate with family and friends. Predictable routines that children need are often disrupted with events that make holidays busy and more hectic than typical day-to-day life. We try to celebrate the essence of holidays without adding to the chaos. Celebrations focus on the meaning of the holiday: giving to others, family and friends and the seasons. Our classrooms try to remain calm, safe places while at the same time acknowledging these special times and family traditions.

## **Addressing Parent Concerns**

In order to address your concerns and/or suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following steps:

1. Daily concerns can be brought to the attention of your Lead Teacher. You can contact them by phone, email, leaving a written message or scheduling a meeting.
2. If parent concerns persist, contact the Early Childhood Coordinator, who is available for a meeting upon request. Please call 586.797.6945.

Guidelines from the Michigan Department of Education, Utica Community Schools and other regulatory agencies are used to guide policy and procedure decisions.

## Early Childhood Resources

Creative Curriculum

[www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com)

Great Parents Macomb

[www.migreatparents.org](http://www.migreatparents.org)

Early On Macomb ISD

[www.misd.net/earlyon](http://www.misd.net/earlyon)

National Association for the Education of Young Children

[www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Community Assessment Referral and Education

[www.careofsem.com](http://www.careofsem.com)

Utica Community Schools/Community Education

[www.ucsccommunityeducation.com](http://www.ucsccommunityeducation.com)

Utica Community Schools

[www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org)

Great Start

[www.greatstartforkids.org](http://www.greatstartforkids.org)

Zero to Three

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

[www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)

Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

[www.michigan.gov/lara](http://www.michigan.gov/lara)

**Poison Control Number  
1-800-222-1222**

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of Utica Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in , be denied the benefits of , or be subjected to discrimination during any instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Executive Director of Human Resources at Utica Community Schools, 11303 Greendale, Sterling Heights, MI 48312 or call (586-) 797-1000.



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