

2020-2021

# Preschool Parent Handbook

East Marshall Little Mustangs



201 E. Weissenburger Street

Laurel, IA 50141

## MISSION STATEMENT

**The Little Mustangs Preschool Program at East Marshall Community School District will be an integral part of the community as well as parent involvement. We are committed to providing high quality care and excellent early childhood educational programs for four-year-olds.**

**We look forward to sharing the joy and excitement of early childhood education with you, your child, and your family!**

**Thank You For Sharing  
Your Child With Us!  
The Little Mustangs Preschool Staff**

**NOTIFICATION OF NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

**STATEMENT: East Marshall Community School District does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, military affiliation, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Inquiries or grievances may be directed Equity Coordinator, 204 West Center Street, Gilman, IA, 50106, (641) 498-7483, or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60661.**

## **Philosophy**

The East Marshall Preschool Program serves as a model and sets standards for the community regarding quality developmentally age appropriate care for young children in an educational setting.

## **Introduction**

The preschool program will provide children the opportunity to explore, observe, and experiment. The learning environment encourages a preschooler to ask questions, make conclusions, and develop independence. Large group activities, small group activities, and center activities will stimulate a child's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Throughout the school year the children will develop skills while learning about themes meaningful to their lives. In our program, we continuously meet the developmental needs of the children as they develop skills and require new challenges throughout the year.

## **Curriculum**

Little Mustangs Preschool has adopted the Creative Curriculum. This is a researched based curriculum that focuses on the process of learning and is individualized for each child. Your child's progress will be assessed with the follow tools:

**-Gold Assessment:** Observation-based assessment for birth through kindergarten.

**- IGDIs Assessment (Individual Growth & Development Indicators):** is a comprehensive set of assessments for monitoring the growth and development of young children.

**-Kindergarten Readiness Assessment** Your child's progress will be shared with you on quarterly progress reports, home visits, and as needed if concerns arise and further assessment is needed

## **Preschool Committee**

The East Marshall Community School District has formed a preschool committee. The preschool committee will meet once a semester at the elementary in Laurel. The committee will discuss all issues concerning the preschool including curriculum, home visits, parent education, and guest speakers (AEA Services). Parental involvement is welcomed and encouraged.

## **Parental Input**

Parents are encouraged to make suggestions and bring up any concerns to the teachers or the administration. The staff believes that no concern is too small. This exchange of information will help create the optimal learning experience for your child.

## **Open House**

There will be an open house before the start of school. Parents and preschoolers are encouraged to attend to familiarize themselves with the classroom, the elementary building, and the preschool staff. This is a great time to bring in school supplies and sign up for conferences.

## **Parent Conferences/Home Visits**

Conferences are scheduled three times during the year. The first conference is a home visit prior to the child's entrance into a new classroom. It is an opportunity for parents to share information about their child with the teachers, and a time for the teacher to share a little about the classroom. There will be two more scheduled conferences that will take place at the school. The school conferences will be a time for the teacher to share how your child is progressing academically, socially, and emotionally as well as a time to answer questions or concerns. These conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring semesters of school.

## **Family Night**

There will be one family night a year held at the elementary school. During the family night, the parents will be actively involved in working/playing with their children. The teacher will provide information to parents regarding educational items that are imperative to the program such as curriculum and literacy.

## **Parent Visits/Volunteers**

Parents are welcome to visit our preschool program. Please call in advance to arrange a visit. It is best to wait until the students get settled into the class routine.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact the classroom teacher or the elementary office.

## **Monthly Newsletter**

You will receive monthly newsletters, describing the activities that happened throughout the month, what to expect in the upcoming month and any reminders. Behavior issues, successes, activities, injuries, illnesses and any special needs of your child will be given on a daily basis as needed.

## **Field Trips**

Field Trips are part of the East Marshall Preschool. Community involvement will be an important factor in planning field trips. Parents will be notified in advance when a field trip is planned. Parent volunteers may be needed and encouraged to participate.

## **Accidents**

Although it may be unsettling to find a bump, bruise, scrape or bite on your child, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, getting hurt is a normal part of growing up. Children of this age group are especially active throughout the day as they explore their environment. It is also important to keep in mind that although an injury may have left a mark on your child, it does not mean your child cried or even noticed. Unless it is a serious injury, children usually get up and walk away and continue what they were doing. Whatever mark may be on your child is not necessarily an indication of how much pain s/he may be feeling or the severity of the injury. You will receive accident reports for all injuries that occur and require treatment. Often a phone call will be made to advise the parents of injuries or other situations.

## **Weapons and Rough Play**

Research has proven that toy weapons increase aggression and negative interactions. Therefore, no such toys are permitted. Hitting, fighting, biting, and destructive (Ninja/ Power Ranger) role-playing is discouraged at all times.

## **Behavior Management**

The East Marshall School District is committed to having an inspiring academic atmosphere. East Marshall is using Mustang STRONG in correlation with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to develop students' positive behavior and create a healthy learning environment.

### **What is PBIS?**

PBIS is a process for creating a safer and more productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn. It enhances the capacity of schools to educate all children by developing research-based, school-wide, and classroom behavior support systems. The process focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students.

### **What is Mustang STRONG?**

Mustang STRONG are core values at the East Marshall Elementary.

**S**upportive

**T**houghtful

**R**espectful and Responsible

**O**ptimistic

**N**eighborly

**G**rowth Minded

Goals for student success are:

1. To teach students appropriate behavior options
2. To provide opportunities to practice these skills
3. To recognize students for appropriate behaviors
4. To assist students in determining and utilizing appropriate behaviors
5. To reduce behaviors that may harm or show disrespect toward themselves, staff, other students, or school property.

The purpose of discipline is to help children learn ways of behaving that are acceptable to themselves and to others. With very young children, this usually means setting limits for their safety, the safety of others and the safety of property. Young children need to be reassured that the people who care for them will guide and protect them. All behavior has a reason, and it is part of our behavior management to find out the cause of the behavior before setting a program to help a child deal with those difficult times.

The East Marshall staff members have been trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI). No discipline shall be severe, humiliating, or frightening. No discipline shall be associated with food, rest, or toileting. Spanking and any other form of physical punishment is prohibited. Teachers facilitate the development of self-control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits for the benefits and safety of all children. In the

event that the unacceptable behavior is not resolved, a child's teacher will call his/her parent(s).

We encourage and expect appropriate behaviors. However, if inappropriate conduct prevails, a student may have the any of the following consequences:

- Loss of privileges
- Restitution
- Referral to the principal
- Suspension - Certain acts of student misconduct may warrant imposition of a suspension as a corrective action. This suspension may be served in or out of school. These actions of exceptional misconduct may be defined but not limited to:
  - Extreme cases of intentional physical harm to another student or staff member
  - Willfully defacing or injuring school property or the property of school employees, visitors, or students
  - Extreme actions or verbal statements that harm others and/or severely disrupt the educational process or operations of the school
  - Bringing a weapon to school

### **Illness**

East Marshall Preschool is a family, and we tend to share everything, including colds. Staying at home at the first sign of illness is important. Your cooperation is extremely important to ensure that we will be able to provide all of our children, families and staff with a happy and healthy preschool.

**Healthy Mustangs Are Happy Mustangs!  
Always Remember To Wash Your Hands!**

### **Birthdays**

Birthday parties are a wonderful experience for a child. A child's self-esteem is developed in celebrating that special day. At East Marshall we love to recognize each one of our children on his/her birthday celebrated during the school year. We will celebrate the occasion on the day closest to your child's birthday. If your child has a summer birthday, your child will celebrate their "Half Birthday" in December, January, or February. If you would like to be a part of your child's birthday celebration please let the teacher know in advance, this way they can plan ahead for an exciting activity for you to participate in with the children.

## **Birthday Treats**

Students may provide birthday treats for classmates and teachers, but it is not required. Please follow the district's current guidelines and send prepackaged, pre wrapped candies or treats. Homemade treats are prohibited. Please ask your child's teacher if there are any children with special food restrictions. The teacher will decide when the treats are to be distributed. Parents are welcome to join in their child's birthday celebration.

## **Birthday Invitations**

From time to time students bring invitations for birthday parties or other social events to school to distribute to classmates. Children are welcome to distribute invitations at school as long as everyone in the classroom is invited. If some children are excluded, parents should mail the invitations instead of having their child bring them to school. If you need an address, you can contact the elementary secretaries at 641-476-3342 to inquire if parents have given permission for their address to be shared for birthday invitations.

## **Clothing**

Children are very active and spend long periods of time in school; for that reason dress your child in comfortable, loose clothing. There are many activities that may be messy, so do not dress your child in expensive clothing. Also be sure to provide an extra set of clothing for your child. Be sure to **LABEL EVERYTHING**.

## **Snack Time**

We offer a healthy snack during the day. Snack time is usually scheduled for shortly after naptime. We will keep in mind the dietary requirements and restrictions when making these choices. The children are encouraged to try the foods provided and are encouraged to clean up when they are finished.

## **Rest time**

Young children need a certain amount of "rest time/quiet time" to ensure they are not overwhelmed by daily routines. Please provide a rest mat for your child. A cuddle buddy and blanket is okay to bring for rest if your child needs these. Please label all rest items. Classroom toys and pillows may not be used for rest/quiet time. Please take home your child's blanket every Thursday/Friday for laundering or as necessary. The length of naptime will be one hour for preschoolers.

**Good nutrition, activity and rest will make Little Mustangs grow up strong!**



## **Toilet Learning**

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will be done only in the designated diaper area located in the classroom bathroom.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Department of Public Health: 13
  - Staff will check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every two hours. They will also check after naptime. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
  - Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
  - At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
  - Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
  - Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
  - Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
  - Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
3. Families may be asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

## **Outdoor Play and Walks**

Outdoor play is a scheduled part of the daily program. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the day's weather conditions and is wearing an appropriate pair of shoes (sneakers). If your child wears sandals or dress shoes to school, please bring a pair of sneakers so the teachers can help your child change his/her shoes before going outside.

## **Toys/Show & Tell**

Show and Tell will take place on a daily basis. There will be a rotation among the students. The teachers will send the share bag home when it is your child's turn to share. The children will be allowed to bring a picture, toy, or a book. Books are always welcomed in the classroom for us to share during story time. Please no weapons or toys that will cause classroom disruption.

## **Meal Time**

Each child will have a meal account with the East Marshall Community School District. Preschoolers will eat lunch in the East Marshall Elementary lunchroom. Parents are welcome to join us for lunch; all we ask is that you call the elementary 641-476-3342 in the morning to let the secretaries know so a lunch can be ordered for you. Further information about the lunch accounts can be found on page 13.

## **Late Arrivals**

School starts at 8:15 AM. Students will be counted tardy after 8:15 AM. If your preschooler will be arriving after 8:15 AM, parents/guardians need to bring the preschooler into the main office.

## **Centers**

Center time is a learning time for the children. It is their time to create, discover, explore, interact with their peers, and just have fun. Many of the center activities revolve around the main topic of learning. Although it may look like children are just playing throughout the day, please remember that the children are learning through their play.

## **Security/Safety**

For the safety of the children:

- Children will be supervised at all times within the facility and on the playground.
- Emergency evacuation plans are posted by all exits.
- Emergency numbers are posted by each telephone.
- Emergency contact telephone numbers for each student are recorded on the Student Record Form.
- Tornado and Fire Drills will be practiced monthly.
- All staff will be certified in first aid and CPR.
- First Aid kits are clearly labeled and available.
- Emergency numbers for each student are taken on all field trips.

## **Arrival/Departure**

Please have your child dressed appropriately with shoes on. We realize that sometimes it is easier to coax your child out of the house and into the car with toys. However, this presents a problem when s/he brings the toy into class. Many times, a child gets attached to the toy and will not share, creating a disciplinary problem and a disruption in the class. Furthermore, space is limited and it is difficult to store toys from home.

It's normal for children to have a difficult morning, from time to time; but lengthy good-byes often do more harm than good. Let us know if we can assist with your departure and make it easier for both you and your child. Also, always say good-bye at your child's eye level. If you need to speak to your child's teacher, feel free to schedule a meeting. It is important that the teachers are involved with the children at all times, including arrival and pickup.

If you need to pick up your preschooler early, please report to the elementary office. The secretaries will inform the classroom teacher to have an adult bring your child to the main office. If you are picking your preschooler up at the end of the day, you need to report to the child's classroom or preschool playground. Please do not call your child over to you. For the safety of all our students, an adult will get your child for you.

## **Early Dismissal/Cancellation Procedures**

In the event of school postponements or cancellations due to inclement weather, road conditions, etc. the following radio and TV stations will be notified:

**KGRN Grinnell, AM 1410 WHO TV (Chan. 13)**

**KDAO Marshalltown, AM 1190 WOI TV (Chan. 5)**

**KFJB Marshalltown, AM 1230 KCCI TV (Chan. 8)**

Every effort will be made to have announcements on the air before 6:00 A.M.

Partner Communications Co-Op of Gilman has provided a phone bulletin board (641-498-2456) that contains a listing of each day's activities plus special announcements such as school closings.

If weather conditions necessitate an early dismissal (severe heat, winter storms, etc.) during the day, an announcement will be made on the above stations. To be sure that children are safe and parents know where their children will be, we ask you to follow these suggestions:

- Tell your child where to go if school is dismissed early. Plans need to be made ahead of time and clearly outlined for the child, since it is impossible to contact each parent.
- Make alternative plans in case the first plan doesn't work.

### **Breakfast/Lunch/Milk Accounts**

The school offers a nutritious breakfast and hot lunch for all children. Students may also bring sack lunches. Pop in sack lunches is not allowed. Your child may purchase milk for 55 cents.

East Marshall Community School has an automated lunch system. Once the balance in the account reaches -\$5.00 or -\$5.00 for EACH person on the family account, your child will not be allowed to have breakfast and at lunch will be given a cheese (or similar) sandwich. Contact will be made with the family the day before this happens. Please make every effort to keep your child's account in good standing.

In cases where parents feel their children will qualify for free or reduced priced meals:

Applications are available in the elementary office for free or reduced lunches. Free and reduced lunch guidelines are based on family income. All applications are confidential.

Food stamp households who received a letter from the Dept. of Human Services during the 1st week of August need only sign the letter and bring it to the school. All other applicants must personally make arrangements in the school office before free or reduced price meals will be granted.

Parents who completed an application last year must complete a new application this year to establish eligibility for children to participate in the school's breakfast/lunch program. Parents should file a completed application prior to the beginning of school. Application forms are also available on our web page at [www.emmustangs.org](http://www.emmustangs.org).

## **Emergency Information**

### **Emergency Information**

Emergency information is required during the registration process. Every attempt should be made to keep this information current. The emergency card must provide the requested information in case of an emergency situation requiring the notification of a parent or guardian.

In case of serious injury or illness of a student, it is our policy that parents are promptly called. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached at that number, the person listed as the emergency contact is called next. Emergency people listed on your emergency card should be easily contacted and live/work within close proximity of the East Marshall Community School District. Please promptly notify the school of changes in address, telephone numbers, emergency contact persons, etc. If you will be out of town for an extended period of time and/or if your child is to be supervised by another adult, please notify the preschool staff.

### **Medication Policy**

If a child needs to take any medication not prescribed by the child's medical physician (i.e. aspirin, cold tablets, cough drops, etc.) his/her parent/guardian must complete a medication procedure card before any medication will be given during school.

Medications taken at school and dispensed by a school official must be sent in the original bottle or packaging with correct label. Prescription medications must include a current label with detailed instructions on the specific time and dosage that it is to be given. Pharmacists will supply you with an extra-labeled container upon request. A letter from the prescribing physician, who has seen and treated the individual for the current condition, must also be on file at the school before any medication will be given. Letters may be faxed to the school at (641) 476-3904.

**Teachers shall be responsible for the supervision of students and shall remain with students until directed otherwise.**

Responsibilities include:

- Supervise students under their charge.
- Take steps to ensure the safety of students, staff, and other individuals in the implementation of incident management protocols.
- Direct students in their charge to inside or outside assembly areas, in accordance with signals, warning, written notification, or intercom orders according to established incident management procedures.
- Give appropriate action command during an incident.
- Take attendance when class relocates to an outside or inside assembly area or evacuates to another location.
- Report missing students to the Incident Commander or designee.
- Execute assignments as directed by the Incident Commander or supervisor.
- Obtain first aid services for injured students from the school nurse or person trained in first aid. Arrange for first aid for those unable to be moved.
- School staff should be trained to administer first aid, CPR and AED as needed.



This is Miss Marston's second year teaching at East Marshall. She is a passionate and creative teacher who is excited to share her love of learning with her students. She enjoys cooking, traveling, and spending time with her family.

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# East Marshall Little Mustangs Preschool

