

## Edina Family Center Preschool (3's – 5's) Parent Handbook

We hope this handbook includes helpful information for your family! We have included answers to commonly asked questions and details about the classes and programs. If you have questions about the information in this handbook either ask your classroom teacher or call the office at 952-848-3908.

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## **Family Center Overview**

- **Mission Statement**
  - The mission of the Edina Family Center is to enhance the quality of family life through early childhood and family education
- **Program Information**
  - The Edina Family Center operates its program at the Edina Community Center and is a Community Education Service of the Edina Public Schools. The Edina Family Center offers Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes, child only preschool classes and part time child care options for children 33 months and above. The Edina Family Center welcomes all children.
- **Our Goals**
  - To encourage parent-child relationships which support children in:
    - Physical well-being and motor development
    - Social and emotional development
    - Approaches to learning, (e.g. curiosity, persistence, attentiveness, reflection, interpretation, imagination, invention)
    - Language development and communication skills
    - Cognition and general knowledge
- **Standards**
  - To accomplish our goals, we adhere to the following standards:
    - Minnesota Department of Education
    - Edina Public School District policies and procedures

## **Accident, Emergency care and transportation and first aid policies**

- In the event of an injury received at the Center, parents will receive an injury report form completed by the staff member who observed the incident. Minor injuries and illnesses will be treated with established first aid procedures. Teachers and assistants are trained in first aid and CPR and will administer in case of an emergency. Parents will be notified immediately in the event of a more serious injury or illness that requires medical intervention. All poison situations must be reported to the Poison Control Center who will advise what treatment is indicated. In instances where severe or life threatening emergency occurs, 911 will be called. Parents will be responsible for medical charges.

## **ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)**

- Community Education programs are required to reasonably accommodate all ISD 273 children if space is available.
- There are times when it is not reasonable for Community Education programs to accommodate the needs of a family.
- EFC programs are not able to provide one to one care on a continuous basis for a student.

## **Arrival and Pick up**

- All classes begin and end on time. It is important that you pick up your child on time because children worry and the teaching staff need time to clean up and prepare for the next class. If you would like to continue visiting with classmates please move to the foyer.
- Late fees are \$1.00 per minute. Fees double for the second occurrence. If there is a third occurrence, the fee will be tripled and the child may be dropped from the program. Late fees are charged to the credit card on file.
- After a few minutes, your child will be brought to the office to wait for your arrival. Every attempt will be made to contact you and your emergency contact.

## Behavior Expectations

- The Edina Area Schools Early Childhood Programs will use teaching strategies and positive behavior management strategies to help children learn appropriate behaviors for interacting with other children, for being in a school environment, and for being a member of a group of learners.
- All staff is dedicated to establishing a safe and comfortable environment for your child.
- Rules for personal safety and effective group management will be consistent and fair.
- These rules are explained to the children and reminders of these rules and their rationale will be given accordingly.
- When problems arise, children will be assisted in problem solving skills. Attention may be redirected toward a constructive activity.
- If your child needs additional support to learn appropriate behavior, our staff will seek and encourage your input to develop and implement a guidance plan to ensure a safe and secure classroom for all children and staff.
- Failure to cooperate with the recommendations may result in your child being dropped from the program.

## Birthdays

- If you would like your child's birthday to be recognized please let your teacher know. Birthdays can be recognized in many different ways. Ideas include bringing in a favorite book to read, choosing the songs for the day, etc. Talk with your classroom teacher about how birthdays will be recognized in your child's classroom.
- We follow the district wellness guidelines regarding food. Healthy snacks that are commercially prepared are welcome. **We do not serve cake, cookies, candy or ice cream.**

## Cancellation Guidelines

- Cancellations must be received in writing or by email by May 2, 2016 to receive a full tuition refund. Registration fees are nonrefundable.
- **For those registering after May 2, 2016** – cancellations must be received in writing or by email by August 5, 2016 to receive a full tuition refund. Registration fees are non-refundable. If you cancel after August 5, 2016 September tuition is nonrefundable.

## Cell Phones

- Cell phones should be turned off or put on vibrate while attending class.

## Children with special needs

- The Edina Family Center collaborates with the Early Childhood Special Education Program, (ECSE), District 273, to provide parent support and information related to child development; speech, language, behavior, cognitive, and motor skills. After conferring with the parent, a referral may be made to Special Education Service. Parents of and children with special needs often participate in various components of our program. Children with either an IEP or IFSP who participate in any Family Center Programs need to have their IEP/IFSP on file with our office prior to start date. Families may call 952-848-3973 with any questions.

## Clothing

- Children and families should dress for creative, messy and active play.
- Please label backpacks, jackets, hats, boots, etc.
- Please have a complete change of clothes (labeled) available.
- Classes will go outside if the temperature/wind chill is above 15F so please send jacket, snow pants, boots, hat, mittens.

## Communication

- Each classroom has a parent bulletin board with parent information and special announcements.
- Teachers will email parents weekly lesson plans that include any special information.

- You will receive a monthly newsletter called “Growing Together” which provides you with the latest information about what’s happening at the Edina Family Center.
- Anytime you have questions or concerns, please feel free to talk to your child’s teacher. It is best not to talk about your child while the child is present. Set up a time to meet, or talk on the phone, confidentially. This provides time for you and the teacher to focus on the conversation without distractions.

### **Conferences**

- You will have the opportunity to sign up for a short, preliminary conference before school starts to become acquainted with your child’s teacher and visit the classroom.
- Your child’s progress will also be shared with you at two additional conferences. Conferences will be in late fall and early spring.

### **Diapering/Toileting**

- Children do not need to be toilet trained. Please inform your teachers of any toileting habits and/or concerns. We are happy to assist in the “training stages”.
- Diapers are changed as needed while in class. Please send disposable diapers (or pull-ups), diaper wipes, and an extra change of clothes. Please label everything.

### **Emergency Contacts**

- Please keep your child’s Emergency contacts updated throughout the year. If there are changes to either the phone number or address please call 952-848-3908 or [click here](#) to log in to your account and update the information.

### **End of Year Celebrations**

- Your classroom teacher will be giving you information about end of the year celebrations.
- These events are age appropriate and are an opportunity to celebrate the progress your child has made during the school year.

### **Evaluations**

- At least once a year parents will be asked to fill out an evaluation form to provide us with feedback on your experience. Please know that we welcome your feedback and comments throughout the year—do not wait for a formal evaluation to let us know how we can better meet the needs of your family.

### **Feedback and grievances procedure:**

- Our staff welcomes comments and suggestions to improve the quality of care for your child and the quality of our children’s program. When areas of concern arise, the problem should be brought to the attention of the classroom teacher who will hear your suggestions and/or grievance and attempt to work through the problem. If further communication is necessary, please contact the coordinator at 952-848-3908. Grievances will be considered in a timely manner. Should you have a grievance please let us know your concern. We’ll make every effort to get back to you within 48 hours.

### **Forms**

- All children participating in school district early childhood programs are required by the state of MN to provide proof of immunizations or record of legal exemption.
- The Edina Family Center requires each participant to submit a Parent Permission Form for each child registered.
- Please fax (952-848-3951) or bring your completed and required forms to the office or your classroom **by the first day of class.**

## Hand-washing

- Children who are developmentally able are taught hand- washing procedures. All others will be assisted as needed to successfully complete the task. Please wash your child’s hands prior to exploring the classroom or entering child care. Children and adults wash their hands following diapering or use of the toilet, after handling bodily fluids, (coughing, runny nose), before and after meals and snacks, after playing in water shared by 2 or more people and after handling animals or other materials that might be in contact with animals.

## Health Services

- In order to ensure the health of others, children should not be brought to preschool if they are ill. We follow the school district health guidelines. **A child should not come to school if he/she has any of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours:**
  - A fever of 100 degrees or more
  - Vomiting or diarrhea
  - A significant cold with green or yellow drainage, severe coughing, or mucous in eyes
  - An undiagnosed rash
  - A strep throat culture with results pending from your doctor’s office. If the child has been diagnosed with strep throat he/she needs to be on an antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Please email the attendance line at [edinafamctr@edinaschools.org](mailto:edinafamctr@edinaschools.org) to report if your child develops a communicable disease (chicken pox, strep throat, lice, influenza, etc.) so that we may maintain a healthy environment. Parents will be notified if children have been exposed to a communicable disease.
- Care of ill children – if your child becomes ill while in the Center’s care, he/she will be isolated from other children under supervision of a staff person. You or your authorized emergency contact will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. Until you arrive, your child will be monitored and comfort measures provided according to the Center’s procedures. If staff deems necessary the child’s health care provider will be contacted. Parents must pick their child up within 1 hour of notification that their child is ill.

## Holidays

- We do not celebrate specific holidays at school. We have your children for so little time; those celebrations are best acknowledged in the home. However, holidays are an important part of culture. Therefore we do expose children to holidays—some that might be familiar and some that might be new. Our educational goals for this approach are:
  - To develop an understanding of different beliefs and celebrations
  - To honor a variety of backgrounds, including family and cultural traditions
  - To value diversity—it is part of what makes us special and adds richness to life
  - To be exposed to new vocabulary

## Mandated Reporting

- It is the policy of the State of Minnesota and ISD 273 to require the reporting of neglect, and physical or sexual abuse of children in the home, school or community setting. Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- Any employee who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused within the last three years shall immediately report the information to the local county social services agency at 612-348-3552 or local law enforcement (City of Edina Police) at 952-826-1600.

## Medication

- Medication will be administered according to the Emergency Care Action Plan form completed and signed by your child’s physician. A signed Medication Administration Consent Form is also required. These forms must be completed and on file before your child is left in staff’s care.
- The Center does not administer medications with these exceptions:
  - EPI Pen in case of an allergic reaction if directed by parents and a Health Care provider

- Antihistamine, e.g. Benadryl, in case of an allergic reaction, if directed by parents and a Health Care provider
- Inhaler if directed by parents and a Health Care provider
- Diaper ointment is considered a medication and cannot be applied, we are also unable to apply sun screen or insect repellent.

### **Newsletter**

- You will receive a monthly newsletter called “Growing Together” which provides you with the latest information about what’s happening at the Edina Family Center.

### **Parking Lot**

- **Please teach your children to hold your hand in the parking lot!**
- It is illegal to leave children unattended in a vehicle, even for a couple of minutes.
- State law requires that drivers must stop and yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Please do not talk on the cellphone when driving in the parking lot.

### **Photographs/Videotaping**

- Because your children are in class for such a short period of time, we encourage you to spend the time actively engaged with your child rather than taking photographs or video images during class time. If you do want to take photographs, please ensure only your child is in the picture. If others will be included, please ask the appropriate parents for permission prior to taking the photo.

### **Physical Activity**

- All children will participate in 30 minutes of supervised gross motor activity at least once a day in either an outdoor or indoor space. We follow best practices in the key areas of fixed and portable play equipment that is diverse and available for children to use at the same time. Edina Family Center supports and encourages active play time. When outside, children have the opportunity to play in the shade.

### **Program Calendar**

- The ECFE programs will follow the district calendar and will be closed for the same breaks, holidays, and licensed staff workshop days. [Click here](#) to view the district calendar.
- On late start days, there will be no morning classes and on early release days there will be no afternoon classes. You have not been charged for these classes.

### **PTO (Parent Teacher Organization)**

- The Edina Family Center PTO advises the Coordinator in planning and evaluating Family Center procedures, programs and budgets in District 273. Please visit the [PTO page](#) on the Edina Family Center website for further information.
- Parental input and participation is welcome.

### **Release of child from class or child care**

- Each day your child needs to be signed in and if someone else is picking your child up, that must be noted:
  - Parent permission form will be checked to ensure the person has been authorized to remove your child from the building
  - If the person is authorized to pick up your child, staff will check a picture ID before releasing them
  - If the person picking up the child is not listed on the parent permission form, an authorization for pick form needs to be signed in advance. Proper ID again must be provided at time of pick up. This form is in addition to the daily sign in sheet. Once pick up has occurred the form will be brought to the Family Center office.

### **Safety, Security and Emergency Procedures**

- Fire, severe weather and safety drills are conducted in school buildings to ensure the safety of everyone.
- The Early Childhood staff will teach children how to respond and keep children safe during these drills.

### School Closures

- You will not be notified if classes/school is cancelled. It is your responsibility to check for school closure information.
- We follow the school closing plans for the Edina Public Schools.
- Emergency school closings are announced on the Edina Public Schools district website ([www.edinaschools.org](http://www.edinaschools.org)), WCCO 830 AM, KARE-TV channel 11 and KSTP channel 5.
- If school starts 2 hours late morning classes are cancelled and if there is an early release afternoon classes will be cancelled.
- Make-up classes and refunds are not possible in these events.

### Sibling Care

- All sibling care will be provided in room 158.
- The purpose of the sibling care room is to provide a safe, supervised environment for siblings from 6 weeks through pre-school.
- Sibling Care is guaranteed for the siblings of children enrolled in ECFE classes with their parents.
- Sibling Care is scheduled at the same time as registrations is taken for the classes.
- For infants born during the school year, let the office know the date you anticipate needing sibling care (952-848-3908).
- Parents can enroll an infant in sibling care at 6 weeks but are welcome to bring the baby to the parenting discussion until they are 4 months. We ask that by 4 months all babies be enrolled in sibling care.
- Children in sibling care can be dropped off 15 minutes prior to class and must be picked up within 15 minutes after class so that staff can prepare for the next group.

### Sign-In and pick-up attendance

- Please sign your child in every time he/she comes to class or child care. Include any special needs for the day. Children may be escorted from class to child care or vice versa by one of our staff. Please communicate with your child's teacher if your child will need to be escorted to child care. If the child is to be brought to child care after class, the parent must sign the child in at the child care room before leaving the building. Please indicate on the sign in sheet who will be picking your child up from class or child care.
- Please email the attendance line at [edinafamctr@edinaschools.org](mailto:edinafamctr@edinaschools.org) to let us know when your child will not be attending class and/or sib care due to an illness or other family matters.

### Smoking

- This is a tobacco free building and grounds. This includes the building, parking lot, playground and all other areas.

### Snacks

- Snack time is important for children to experience taste, smell, color and texture while practicing self-help skills and socializing other children.
- Parents will sign up for a turn to bring snack for the entire class.
- Minnesota Department of Health Services regulations state that all shared snacks must be **commercially prepared, unopened, and brought to school in the original wrapper.**
- We are a **NUT FREE** Center so please no snacks with nuts or snacks that have been processed in a facility with nuts.

- If your child has a food allergy, you may be asked to supply an alternative snack for your child. Allergy information for teachers should be noted on the Parent Permission form.
- Water will be offered to children at snack time.
- We follow the Edina Schools wellness guideline regarding food. All school snacks need to be healthy for young children.
- Some ideas for snacks include fruit, vegetables, crackers, cheese, lunch meat, etc.
- Foods to avoid include cake, candy, donuts, cookies, fruit gummy snacks, chips.

**Staff Guidance**

- Our experienced and skilled staff uses positive guidance techniques, including re-direction and positive reinforcement to build children’s self-esteem, empathy and competence.

**Staff Qualifications**

- All parent educators and children’s teachers are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Education. Continuing education and staff in-service training are provided throughout the school year for all staff. The school district requires a criminal history background check on all individuals who are offered employment.

**Structure of Classes**

**ECFE Classes last about 1.5 – 2 hours and are usually made up of:**

Parent-Child interaction: Interaction time generally lasts for 25-30 minutes of class. This interaction is planned so you may understand and enjoy your child. Discussion with other adults at this time hinders the focused time with your child.

The activities during interaction are designed to:

- Promote a healthy and positive relationship between you and your child.
- Enhance social, emotional, intellectual, physical and language skills for your child’s development.
- Help your child learn cooperation skills while playing with you and other children

There will be a wide variety of activities to choose from during interaction time. While playing with your child, please remember to follow their lead; help them choose activities of interest to them. Focus on your child and their positive actions. We suggest using low posture, good eye contact and talking with your child while playing. This helps build self-esteem and promotes language skills.

Please refer to the Edina Family Center [website](#) to view catalogs and for further information regarding the Edina Family Center.

Edina Family Center | 5701 Normandale Road | Edina, MN 55424  
 Call (952) 848-3908 or email [edinafamctr@edinaschools.org](mailto:edinafamctr@edinaschools.org)  
 Visit [www.edinaschools.org/familycenter](http://www.edinaschools.org/familycenter)