

CARDINAL PACELLI

Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten Handbook

Updated February 2026

CARDINAL PACELLI EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

The education philosophy of the Cardinal Pacelli Early Learning Program (Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten) is to develop the whole child. We strive to guide the total growth of each child, compatible with his/her maturation and style of learning in the following areas of development: emotional, social, intellectual and physical. We strongly believe a child must feel good about him/herself to learn and to develop a sense of being an autonomous person who can take initiative.

Goals

It is our goal to meet the needs of each child in the following ways:

- By providing a safe environment.
- By providing emotional security through consistency of the head teacher and aide, the daily schedule and discipline methods.
- By giving love and affection with sensitivity, hugs, smiles, and laughter.
- By fostering healthy self-esteem.
- By creating an emotional climate that supports the development of positive relationships with peers and adults.
- By providing activities that spur curiosity and a sense of competence.
- By the promotion of cognitive skills through providing learning opportunities in developmentally appropriate ways.
- By encouraging creative self-expression through materials, language, music and movement.
- By endeavoring to strengthen the relationship between the child and her/his parents.

Safety Policies

- A staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their safety.
- No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- At drop-off, children are to be dropped off to the teacher or aide at the designated drop-off location and time. Early Learners (Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten) students may not be escorted by siblings or older students. At dismissal, the parent or authorized

individual should wait at the designated pick-up location until dismissal time. Children will NOT be released to anyone other than the parent or authorized individual.

- There is a telephone located in the office for use in case of an emergency.
- A monthly fire drill will be held.
- A staff member trained in first aid, CPR and recognition of communicable diseases is always available on the premises. A first aid kit is always available in the classroom.
- A plan is posted which explains action to be taken in case of fire emergency and weather alerts.
- Use of any spray aerosols shall not occur while there are children in the classroom.
- The teacher or aid shall immediately notify the local public children services agency when they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.
- When an accident or injury occurs, the school shall complete a report in accordance with Rules 5101:2-12-49 of the administrative code.
- Field Trips are only for pre-kindergarten students.
 - A first aid box shall be available on the trip, which meets the requirements of the administrative code.
 - A person trained in first aid and CPR shall be available on the trip that meets requirements of the administrative code and child abuse prevention.
 - Each child on the trip shall have identification attached to him/her containing the child's name and the school's name, address and telephone number.
 - For each field trip, the parent must sign and date a permission slip and return it to the teacher prior to departure.

Discipline Policy

As adults, we want to guide children to learn self-discipline, so that in gaining inner control they can ultimately direct their own behavior. In the Early Learning Program, we know the importance of growth-producing limits on a child's behavior. However, we maintain a positive approach. We guide rather than punish. The teacher knows and uses the cognitive abilities and limitations of young children as the basis for choosing guidance techniques. The teacher tries to help the children take steps toward responsible self-direction, as they are ready.

Fundamental to this process is the child's feelings about her/himself. The teacher enhances the self-esteem of children, communicating in an open and loving manner. This includes providing reasonable ground rules necessary for safety or to protect the rights of others. Our discipline, i.e., guidance, does not allow the teacher to issue threats, humiliate or label the child "bad". Children in our Early Learning Program will not be subjected to any form of corporal punishment.

When it is appropriate, children will be redirected from a negative situation towards a positive one. When ground rules are broken, they are clearly and firmly restated, emphasizing the reason for the rule. Children who have conflicts or problems with each other will be

encouraged to verbalize their angers and concerns. When a child infringes on the rights of another, the other child is encouraged to talk about how that makes her/him feel. The role of the adult at school is to be the facilitator to positive problem solving and to explain the need to take responsibility for one's own behavior. Children whose behavior endangers others will be isolated and given a brief "time out" until they gain self-control. They will then process the problem with the teacher and any other concerned parties. Other positive guidance techniques used are good timing of teacher intervention (giving children time to work out their own differences) and logical consequences of actions.

If a child exhibits a consistent behavior problem, efforts will be made to understand the dynamics of the behavior by a parent-teacher conference, if necessary. If a problem does occur, it is important that the staff and parent(s) use a consistent approach to the problem both at school and at home. If, after a parent-teacher conference and a reasonable trial of various guidance techniques have been used, the child does not show significant improvement, we may refer the child and parent to the principal and may request removal of the child from the program.

In accordance with code PS 3301-37-10, the following additional discipline procedures will be in effect:

- Cruel, harsh, corporal punishment, or unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting will not be permitted.
- Discipline will not be delegated to another child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child will be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, box, or a similar cubicle.
- No child will be submitted to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- Techniques of discipline will not humiliate, shame or frighten a child.
- Discipline will not include withholding of food or drink.
- Separation, when used as discipline, will be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability, and the child will be within sight and hearing of a staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated area.
- No child will be abused or neglected, and the program will protect every child from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.
- Parents of children enrolled in the program will receive a copy of the discipline policy.
- All Early Learners staff members will receive a copy of the discipline policy for review upon employment.

Health Policies

➤ Child's Medical Statement

Each child must be examined by a licensed physician prior to enrollment and must be re-examined each year thereafter. A physician's signed statement certifying the child is free from communicable disease with a complete list of immunizations and a TB test is required. The Preschool provides the medical form to be used by the child's

physician. This must be on file in the preschool within 30 days of the child's first day of attendance.

➤ Accidents

Minor injury - If a child receives a minor injury while at the school, appropriate trained personnel will administer first aid. The teachers hold current First Aid Certification from the American Red Cross or appropriate training as certified. We will notify parents about minor injuries when the child is picked up at the end of the class.

Serious Injury - If a child receives a serious injury, parents will be contacted immediately. If parents or guardians cannot be reached, instructions on the Emergency Medical Authorization Form will be followed. Parents must have an EMAF (provided by the preschool) on file on or before the first day of attendance.

Transportation – As the firehouse is nearby, the life squad will be called for any emergency and for transporting a child to the hospital. The aide or teacher will accompany the child in the event the parents cannot be contacted.

➤ Mildly Ill

If a child is mildly ill i.e., allergy or sniffles, he/she may be cared for within the child's group and shall be made comfortable and shall be properly supervised. An adult shall be always within sight and hearing. The child shall be observed carefully for signs and symptoms of worsening condition.

➤ Management of Communicable Disease

If a child becomes ill while at school, he/she will be isolated and discharged to the care of his/her parents as promptly as possible. A child will be discharged from the Early Learning Program upon recognition of the following signs of illness:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within an hour.)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficulty or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Vomiting
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Untreated or infected skin patches
- Evidence of lice or scabies infestation
- Conjunctivitis
- Temperature of 100°F or more and in combination with any other sign of illness
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck
- Occurrence of other significant symptoms listed on the Day Care Center Communicable Disease Chart

Students with Conjunctivitis will be picked up and may return to school after 24 hours of medication.

The teacher has special training in recognizing communicable diseases. He/she relies on this training as well as the communicable disease chart posted in the classroom. Each child will be checked for signs of illness daily when he/she arrives. The teacher reserves the right to decide when a child is not well enough to be at school.

A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:

- a. Observed carefully for worsening condition; and
- b. Discharged to parent, guardian, or person designated by the parent or guardian as soon as practical.

Children who display any of the signs of illness should be kept at home. Please notify the school when your child has been exposed to any communicable diseases of other family members so we may be alerted to early symptoms.

➤ Notification

The school shall promptly notify any parent whose child has been exposed to a communicable disease by telephone and/or email and a letter sent home.

➤ Re-Admittance Following an Illness

Children who have been ill with a fever may not return until the temperature has been normal for 24 hours **without medication**. Parents of children who have contracted a communicable disease must make arrangements with the teacher for re-entrance to school. Some illnesses may require a physicians' written verification for re-entry.

➤ Release of Child

The Early Learning Program will not release the child to anyone other than his/her custodial parent or guardian without a written note or email from the custodial parent or guardian.

➤ Teacher or Aide is Ill

A qualified substitute will be secured so that the school day can proceed as normal and required teacher-to-aide ratios are maintained. ***If a qualified substitute is not available, school will be canceled for that day, and all families will be notified by phone and/or email.***

Hygiene Instruction

A nurse or qualified person will instruct all staff before school starts in "Hand Washing" and communicable disease.

Medication, Vitamins, Special Diets or Supplements will not be given.

Parent Participation

- If a parent needs assistance with a problem or has a complaint related to the Early Learning Program, he/she should contact the teacher first before addressing the issue with the principal.
- Parents will need to be **SafeParish** (see p. 54-55) trained and compliant to volunteer for any event in school.
- During the school year, we will ask the parents to join us for special events. All parents must sign in at the school office and receive a visitor's badge.
- There will be a time set in the fall for Parent/Teacher Conferences to meet and discuss a child's needs and progress with the parents and to exchange information about the program.

Admission Policies and Procedures

- The State of Ohio licenses the Cardinal Pacelli School Early Learning Program. The school is licensed to provide service to a maximum of 20 three-year-old children, and 20 four-year-old children in class "A" and 16 four-year-old children in class "B". A staff to children ratio is 2 adults to 20 children.
- Any custodial parent, custodian or guardian of a child enrolled in the Early Learning Program can visit. All approved visitors must sign in at the school office and receive a visitor's badge.
- The Early Learning Program's licensing record, including but not limited to, compliance report forms from the department and evaluation forms from the health, building and fire departments that inspected the school are available upon request from the department.

Early Learning Program Admission Requirements:

- 3 – 4-year-old Pre-School children must have reached age 3 by June 1 of the year in which they intend to enroll. All children entering Pre-School must be potty-trained.
- With limited space in our Pre-School Program, students **cannot** remain in Pre-School for a second year without the recommendation of the teacher and school administrator.
- Pre-Kindergarten children must have reached age 4 by September 30 of the year in which they intend to enroll.

Eligibility

- There shall be no restriction on the eligibility for reasons of race, color, creed, sex and/or place of national origin.

- To be eligible for admission into the three-year-old class, children must be 3 years old by June 1 and toilet trained. (This includes no pull-ups)
- To be eligible for admission into the four-year-old class, children must be 4 years old by June 1, toilet trained (this includes no pull-ups) and plan to attend Kindergarten.
- All participants in the Early Learning program shall comply with the health regulations set forth in State Codes. All children must be toilet trained.
- Pre-Three (3-year-old) – One Monday-Friday morning class will be held for the 3-year-olds, with the option of 2, 3 or 5 days/week, as indicated during enrollment. There is also an option to stay for the whole day by registration for Extended Day. Hours for this program are:
 - 7:50 AM – 11:30 AM
 - 7:50 AM – 2:30 PM (Extended Day)
- Pre-Kindergarten- There will be one Monday-Friday morning class, with the option of full day sessions (Enrichment), as indicated during enrollment, for the 4-year-olds who will be entering Kindergarten the following year. Hours for this program are:
 - 7:50 AM – 11:30 AM
 - 7:50 AM – 2:30 PM (Enrichment)

Days and Hours of Operation

The Cardinal Pacelli Early Learning Program will operate its 3-year-old and 4-year-old sessions from 7:50 AM – 11:30 AM.

The start and end to the school year will follow the Cardinal Pacelli School calendar. Holidays and Teacher Professional Development will be observed.

You are responsible for your child being picked up at the designated times.

Conferences

Early Learning Parent/Teacher Conferences held in November, unless otherwise requested by a parent or a teacher. Specific dates will be announced each year.

Fees and Registration

Tuition payments are made in full (by July 15), in two installments (July 15 and December 15), or in ten installments (the 15th of the month, July-April).

Tuition and fees schedule are on the admission page of Cardinal Pacelli School Website.

Withdrawal and Refunds

If the child is withdrawn from the Early Learning Program for any reason, the parent must notify the teacher, the principal, and the Business Office in writing 30 days in advance of the date of withdrawal.

Closing of Early Learning Program for Weather and Other Emergencies

- In the event of bad weather, the Early Learning Program will follow the schedule of Cardinal Pacelli School. If Cardinal Pacelli is closed, the Early Learning Program will also be closed. If Cardinal Pacelli is on a delay, The Early Learning Program students will report to school at the time indicated by the delay (9:50 AM start). If the weather gets bad during the day, parents will be contacted by phone when the school administration deems it necessary to close school.
- Closing in the event of an emergency will be at the discretion of the principal. You will be notified by phone and email.
- The Cardinal Pacelli Early Learning Program will not make up any missed days due to weather or other emergencies.

Questions Regarding Early Learning Licensure

If you would like to obtain copies of inspection reports of the program or would like to file an official complaint with the Ohio Department of Education, please contact:

Ohio Department of Education
Center of Students, Families, and Communities
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183