



DeWitt School District
DeWitt Preschool Handbook 2018-19

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Jonathan Eggerman, Program Director
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870-946-4651

870-946-4652 (fax)

The Preschool Program

The preschool program is planned to help each child develop skills and attitudes that will foster their development and learning through:

- Thinking and problem solving
- Communicating in a range of media: language, music, movement, art, play
- Forming basic concepts in literacy
- Developing positive self-esteem and an interest in the well-being of others
- Making friends, sharing and cooperating
- Developing physical skills

Parents... *You* play the most important role in the education of your child, so we welcome your involvement, you can help by:

- Sharing information that will help us understand and meet your child's needs
- Visiting the school and partnering in with the program
- Sharing your hobbies (music, pottery, art, crafts, cooking, carpentry...)

DeWitt PDG Preschool:

The DeWitt Preschool is funded primarily by the PDG-Preschool Development Grant, also known as the High Quality Preschool Program funds; therefore, the program is noted as a PDG/HQPP classroom. This does not eliminate children that are not PDG/HQPP eligible.

The PDG/HQPP Program serves children who are 4 years old, and will be Kindergarten eligible for the next school year. The students who are qualified as eligible are from families with gross income not exceeding 200% of the FPL (Federal Poverty Level).

The six key areas of program include:

1. Low student to teacher ratio
2. Well qualified and compensated staff
3. Professional equipment
4. Developmental Screening and Child Assessment
5. Meaningful parent and community engagement activities
6. Approved curriculum and play based learning

Eligible children for the program must meet qualifications:

- Must 4 years of age by **August 1, 2018. Must not be 5 by August 1, 2018.**
- Gross family income shall not exceed 200% of the FPL

-OR-

- Foster child
- Child with incarcerated parent
- Child in the custody of/living with a family member other than mother or father
- Child with immediate family member arrested for or convicted of drug-related offenses.
- Child with a parent activated for overseas military duty
- The program is available in the district and there is available space for the child to attend
- Non-PDG tuition is \$60 dollars per week which includes breakfast, lunch, snack

In determining income eligibility, programs shall use a family's gross income from employment plus any unemployment compensation. To enroll an eligible child, the child's parent or guardian shall furnish documentation of eligibility and other required information. Pay stubs are used to document eligibility; (recent documents within 30 days) shall be used. Families claiming no earned income (full-time student or unemployed) shall produce a signed and notarized statement to that effect. Children entering the program must receive a developmental screening that must include, at a minimum the following areas: vocabulary, visual-motor integration, language and speech development, fine and gross motor skills, social skills and developmental milestones. The purpose of screening is to identify developmental delays and/or educational deficiencies. Children so identified shall be referred to Special Education within seven (7) calendar days of date of screening. The program has to comply with state and federal laws for Special needs students. Early Childhood falls under the umbrella of Special Education.

The program provides free nutritious meals and snacks for all children enrolled. All PDG students must complete a free/reduced lunch application. No matter the status of the application, all PDG students will be fed without fee. Mealtime is an opportunity to engage children in conversation about the day and themselves. Children are given an appropriate amount of time for meals and conversation.

The program has an open door policy for parents and encourages visitation and participation in classroom activities. Parents will be involved in at least two (2) parent teacher conferences.

Admission Requirements

1. Four year olds must be four by August 1, 2018.

All preschool forms, copies of birth certificates (or documents mentioned above), immunization information, physical assessment, and social security number must be provided before the child enters the program. **Your child will not be allowed to begin preschool until all requirements are met.

All preschool applicants and their guardians will be considered for placement in the DeWitt School District Preschool Program if they have completed all proper applications. Admission is open to all preschool students meeting PDG/ABC Criteria regardless of their race, color, nationality, sex, age, or disability.

Immunizations

State law requires that a student's immunization records are available and up-to-date. When the Health Department conducts its final check, **failure to have these records on file and up-to-date will result in immediate denial of attendance.** Each child must have a complete record of their immunizations in order to be allowed in school.

Orientation

Parents are expected to attend an orientation session, conducted by the preschool programming staff. Parents who cannot attend should send a responsible substitute since this meeting provides valuable information. Parent involvement is very important and expected in order to promote a parent and school relationship. **Students may not begin school until a guardian has completed the orientation process.**

Arrivals and departures

Children are expected to attend the center daily. They are expected to arrive on time and leave at the end of the scheduled day.

Children may begin arriving from 7:30 – 8:00. **Parents must sign their child in and out of school each day. All children shall be walked in by adults. No children shall be “dropped off” and allowed to enter the building alone. No exceptions.**

Departure time is from 2:30-3:15. Please be on time to pick up your child. Only an authorized adult may pick up a child either regularly or in an emergency. The name of the person must be written on “Child Information Card” or written authorization must be provided to the office. **No child will be released without previous notification.** Consistent failure to pick up your child on time will be addressed. At no time will a student/child be allowed to pick up a preschool student. For Safety reasons the children must be brought inside the classroom and collected from the classroom by an adult. **If you have to arrange for someone else to collect your child at any time, please inform the teacher first. Any person picking up a preschool student can be asked to provide a form of photo identification in order to help staff properly identify such persons.**

*Children who attend the DeWitt Preschool must follow procedures to ensure the safety of all students on the DeWitt Elementary Campus. Parents are to park in the designated parking spots in the DES parking lot. They are to drop off and pick up their children at the designated times. The end door will be open during these times. If a parent has to drop off or pick up their child at any other time, the hall door will be locked. Parents will need to check in at the DES office and inform office staff that they are on campus. The office staff will then notify the preschool staff, and someone will open the door.

Parents: We ask that you hold your child's hand while in parking lot and on sidewalk as an extra measure of caution.

We ask that preschool parents are not to be in the elementary hallways at any time unless you've checked in at the office and gained approval. We thank you for keeping all kids safe!

Absences and Tardies

Parents should notify the school office by 8:15 in the morning if the child will not be attending that day. Should we not receive a telephone call, the office may attempt to contact you. Excessive absences and tardies are discouraged. ***This is a preschool not a daycare, educational goals and objectives are aligned with the district's and state's curriculum.*** If a student is absent for three (3) days an excuse from a doctor is required. The phone number for the Preschool is the same as the Elementary: 870-946-4651.

Tardiness is a disruption to the learning environment. A pre-k student is considered tardy at 8:05 a.m. Please make sure your child is at school on time so as to participate in all learning activities. Part of the PDG Program involves eating breakfast. If your child is late, it is an infraction upon the school. Each child has to properly wash hands before going to breakfast. This is a routine monitored by ECERS. Also, each child is to have a certain amount of time in each "center" to learn the activities planned for the day. Kindergarten readiness is essential to your child entering public school and having a successful start. Each child deserves to start kindergarten with the same abilities as other students. How your child starts school is sometimes indicative of how they will graduate and go on to college. Make sure your child is given every opportunity to be successful in their future.

****A child that has excessive absences/tardies may be at risk of losing their slot in the program.***

Communication between home and school

Working together to support your child's development depends on clear and frequent communication. Please check your child's backpack daily for any notes sent home by the staff. During arrival and pick-up it is important for staff to focus on the children. We ask that you do not choose this time for nonessential conversation. Please ask your child's teacher to arrange an appointment time if you feel that you need to meet to discuss any issues that are of concern to you.

Each student will have a parent/school communication folder. We ask that you check this folder each day for important updates from the program staff and for student work.

School visits

We welcome your participation and involvement at school. Visits by parents to preschool should be scheduled after the preschooler has adjusted to school. We appreciate advance notice of you coming, and we welcome your volunteering for our program. You are asked to stop in the office to let them know that you are in the building. When visiting the preschool, please do not bring other siblings as this is distracting for you, the students, and the staff.

Leaving school

There are times when it is necessary for a child to leave school early for an appointment, etc. We would appreciate if you would attempt to schedule those appointments either before or after school, or on the days when school is not in session. However, when it is necessary for your child to be excused during school hours, we ask that a note with your request be given to the staff that morning.

***If a student is checked in or out after the beginning of the instructional day, we ask that you check in with the elementary office.**

Custody Orders

Certified custody orders must be provided to the school prior to enrollment or immediately upon the child entering school if the school is expected to carry out court orders. Any changes of custody orders need to be made available to the school as soon as possible.

Celebrations and birthdays

Parents are welcomed to send nutritional commercial treats for snack time to celebrate your child's birthday. Home baked items are not acceptable, according to state law. Please discuss your plans with your child's teacher well in advance, and feel free to ask for suggestions. Fruit, popcorn, cheese, crackers...all make good treats. If your child is allergic to nuts or anything else please let us know.

Birthday Parties and Invitations

We ask that you not send birthday favors or party invitations of any kind to school. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Accidents

If a minor accident occurs, the student will be sent to the nurse for first aid, if necessary. The nurse or school personnel will attempt to contact the parents if the accident is more serious in nature. Please keep the office updated on all emergency numbers. An accident report will be filled out for serious injuries. An attempt will be made to contact parents if there is an injury to the head regardless of the seriousness of the injury.

Emergency Notification

Emergency information is kept on file at school. In case of illness or injury, the cards are used to notify and advise you or the person(s) designated by you of your child's status. **It is extremely important that the information be kept current with correct phone numbers.** If your information changes at any time, please notify us so that we can better serve you and your child.

Hand Washing Procedures

Children will wash their hands after entering the building from outside, at the beginning of school, coming in from the playground, before and after meals and snacks, before and after water play, before and after messy play (sand, art...), and after use of the restroom. If a child sneezes or has a runny nose they will be asked to wash their hands each time they need to wipe their nose. Children are monitored by the teacher to ensure that hand washing occurs at each of these times throughout the day. We encourage parents to help your child wash their hands each morning upon arrival. This is a great family moment before you depart to start your day.

Head Lice

The management of lice should minimally disrupt the education process. When a child gets lice, it does not indicate neglect on the part of the parent and does not indicate the child or the environment has not been kept clean. When a student is initially identified as having live head lice the student is to be referred to the parent immediately. Any siblings of an infested student who attends the elementary school or preschool will also be checked for live lice by designated school personnel. Distribution of education material to parents on head lice, nit combing and treatment will be provided. Upon returning to school

after being sent home with lice, the parent must provide proof of treatment. This can be a package or a UPC code. After a student has been sent home two times a semester with head lice, a doctor's note stating that they are free of lice will be required for re-admission into school.

Health Policy

Classroom staff will make a daily health observation of children. Children will be checked each morning on arrival for contagious or infectious disease. Also, no child will be admitted who displays any of the symptoms listed below.

Parents or guardians will be notified to pick up the child if the child exhibits any of the following symptoms: (State Licensing)

- A. **Fever:** Any child or staff with a body temperature of 100, accompanied with Lethargy (tired, sluggish) or any of the symptoms indicated below.
- B. **Diarrhea:** Three (3) or more watery stools in a 2 hour period, and continued episodes over a 3 or 4 day time frame unless the child is under the supervision of a physician with written documentation.
- C. **Vomiting:** Children who vomit at school will be sent home. They should be free of symptoms for 24 hours without aid of medication before returning.
- D. **Rash:** Children will be observed daily for signs and symptoms of a contagious or infectious rash. If a child is found to have a rash not obviously associated with diapering, heat or allergic reaction to a medication, the parent or guardian will be notified to pick up the child immediately. The child will not be admitted back until the rash has completely cleared and they have a signed release from a doctor. Skin conditions that have not been diagnosed as non contagious by a physician may include but are not limited to:
 - “ *Yellow (jaundiced) eyes or skin*
 - “ *Children in contagious stages of chicken pox, measles*
 - “ *Untreated impetigo*
 - “ *Untreated scabies or head lice*
- ****Ringworm**—students who show signs of ringworm, must be treated by a physician and proof of treatment should be provided to school staff. Students may return after 24 hours of beginning treatment. Parents are encouraged to cover the affected area while students are at school.
 - “ *Any lesions with drainage from an infected site. Ex. (Cellulites)*
- E. **Sore throat:** If associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
- F. **Severe coughing:** episodes of coughing which may lead to gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing.
- G. **Pink Eye:** Pink or red eye (s) which may be swollen with white or yellow discharge, until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.

1. Any child who becomes ill and unable to participate in daily activities will be isolated and supervised.
2. Facility staff will be subject to the same exclusion guidelines for contagious or infectious disease that are enforced for children.
3. Any child who is injured will have immediate attention. Appropriate action will be taken to meet the child's needs. Parents will be notified of all injuries. Injuries that require the attention of medical personnel will be reported to the parent immediately.
4. Parents or guardians of all children will be notified of contagious illness as soon as possible.

If a student has a unique or chronic health problem, the office shall be notified in writing, as to how assistance may be given. Any medication to be administered during school hours is to be dispensed only through the school nurse or designated adult.

Medication

The following policy, adopted by the DeWitt Board of Education, will be followed:

If a child is required to take medication during school hours and the parent or guardian of the child cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the school nurse, principal or the principal's designee, in the presence of another adult, will administer the medication in compliance with the instructions of a physician (as indicated on the prescription label).

The child or parent must bring the medicine to school in a prescription bottle labeled by the pharmacy or physician. A form for medication disbursement is available in office and must be completed by parents before medication will be given.

The parent or guardian must assume responsibility for informing the nurse or principal of any change in the child's health or change in medication.

The parent or guardian is responsible for claiming the unused portion of the medication. In the event that medication is not claimed by the parent or guardian, the nurse or principal will destroy it.

The school district retains the right to reject a request for administering medicine to a child.

At least one member of our staff trained in CPR and certified in first aid is present at all times in case of an emergency. In all situations, we will follow instructions of the poison control center or physician in providing first aid procedures and /or administering emergency medications.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

We are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect. In some cases, we are directed by the state's child protective agency not to notify the parents of the report. Please understand that we are legally obligated to comply with these guidelines.

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-482-5964

Safety

Students need to practice good safety habits at all times. School and playground rules are established so students will be safe. However, if accidents or injuries should occur, they will be reported to the office.

The possession or use of toy guns, lighters, knives, or other potentially dangerous articles are prohibited and may result in suspension from school in compliance with School Code 1311 and The Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994.

Discipline

Behavior Management Procedures:

DeWitt PDG Preschool will encourage self-control and respect for the feelings and rights of others. When a dangerous/aggressive behavior has occurred, the child will be released to their parent/guardian or emergency contact as soon as possible to ensure the safety and well-being of all concerned.

The method of discipline will not be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to the child. It will be consistent and individualized for each child so as to be appropriate to their level of understanding and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

The DeWitt PDG Preschool Program believes that the staff and parents should work together to address the social and emotional needs of their children. ***This is a team effort, and families are expected to be part of that team.***

Limits are set and firm consistent controls for defiant behaviors are to be enforced. The following steps will be used when a child demonstrates behaviors which are disruptive to the class, aggressive toward others, destructive of property, or defiant to class instructions and/or rules.

Step 1: The classroom teacher and staff will talk with the child about the behavior, choices and consequences of those choices, and will **redirect** the child to a specific task.

Step 2: At the time a child's behavior is out of control and likely to cause harm to the child and other people, or the child's behavior is so disruptive to the class activities, the child will spend time away from the group to enable him to calm down and return to the group. Teachers will complete a challenging behavior incident report to inform parents of the behavior.

Step 3: If the inappropriate behavior continues or intensifies the teacher will make a **phone call** to have the parent talk with the child about their behavior.

Step 4: If the inappropriate behavior continues or intensifies or is a safety concern for themselves, other children or staff, the child will be sent home for the remainder of the day. **The child must be picked up within 30 minutes of receiving a call.** The mental health specialist or the preschool administration staff will be notified when a child has been sent home for the remainder of the day.

Step 5: If the child continues to have aggressive behavior in the classroom, the family service manager along with the center director will determine on an individual basis if a formal conference is deemed necessary. As needed, a conference will be scheduled to include the parents/guardians, teacher and mental health specialist to work on a plan to improve the child's behavior. The child will continue to be sent home if aggressive behavior continues to disrupt the classroom activities or the behavior could potentially harm others.

Step 6: If teaching staff is unable to observe improvements with the child's behavior plan, the program director will request a meeting with PDG officials for a possible referral to behavior specialists. If a referral is deemed necessary by the mental health professional, parents/guardians are required to make an appointment for a professional mental health observation and provide documentation of the appointment.

Immediate Dismissal: (See School District Policy) the Superintendent, Program Director and School Board officials will use discretion to modify this policy on a case by case basis. The DeWitt PDG Preschool Program will also follow the school district policy on bringing weapons to school.

Dress Code

Children should wear play clothes. All outerwear should be clearly labeled because your child's jacket may be the same as another child's. Your child should practice dressing himself/herself at home. We will help the children, but we encourage them to try themselves first. Children must wear shoes in preschool, no flip flops. ***Please bring extra clothing in case your child experiences personal accidents.***

Labeling Clothing

Label all clothing articles such as tennis shoes, hats, coats, gloves or mittens, lunch boxes, book bags, etc. Labeling should include child's first and last name. Articles left behind will be placed in the lost and found. If your child does not return home with articles mentioned above, please check the school's lost and found.

Field Trips

We enjoy giving children the opportunity to learn about the community by providing exciting field trips. You will be notified in advance of all scheduled trips and parents will be asked to sign a permission form. All students are requested to ride the school bus to and from trips. Only children enrolled in school will be allowed to ride the bus. Parents may ride the bus as long as room is available. Check with the teacher.

School Closings

The DeWitt PDG Preschool follows the DeWitt School District calendar. If DeWitt Public Schools are closed because of weather conditions, there will be no preschool. Please tune to your local TV and radio stations. A School Reach APP is also used, so information regarding how to receive notifications will be sent to you at the beginning of the school year.

Toys and personal possessions

The school strongly discourages students from bringing toys and personal items to school. The exception to this request would be the child's "Show and Tell" time. Please do not send electronic devices to school (Walkman, CD players, IPOD,) When personal items are brought to school by a child, the school will not be responsible or liable when items are lost, stolen, traded, damaged, or broken. The classroom has ample supply of equipment and materials; therefore, children are encouraged to leave their personal items at home.

Transportation

Transportation of DeWitt Preschool students is not provided by the district. Students are to be brought to school and picked up from school by a parent or guardian, or a person appointed to do so by the parent or guardian.

Volunteers

Parents are encouraged to come into the preschool classrooms to volunteer or visit. Arrangements with your child's teacher are encouraged. Parent helpers are needed in a variety of activities. Research has shown that parent involvement is beneficial to your child's education.

Withdrawal Policy

Parents who wish to withdraw their children from the preschool program should fill out withdrawal forms the last day of the child's presence. You must submit a written statement of sort to officially withdraw your child from the PDG Program.

Licensing and Administrative Policies

It is the Administration and Board's responsibility to operate the facility and ensure that the facility meets licensing requirements. We have met fire and health inspections. Safety drills will be conducted monthly. However, if a serious licensing violation occurs it shall be reported to the Licensing Unit. These include, but are not limited to, violations relating to transportation, inappropriate behavior guidance, leaving children unattended or unsupervised, staff/child ratio violations or any other violation that could imminently affect the health and safety of children.

Your child may be subject to interviews by licensing staff, child maltreatment investigators and/or law enforcement officials for the purpose of determining licensing compliance or for investigative purposes.

** Please direct questions to Rachel Mitchell, Carrie or the classroom staff. If the classroom staff is busy with students and engaged in instruction, please make an appointment to speak with them at another time.

Separation of Church & State:

This school is funded by Preschool Development Grants (PDG) and operated by DeWitt Public Schools.

It is not affiliated with any religious organization and teaches no religious orthodox.

No religious activity may occur during any PDG day and no PDG funds may be used to support religious services, instruction or programming at any time.

To assure that no religious activity is paid or subsidized by public funds or occurs in any manner suggesting governmental endorsement of any religion or message:

- A. PDG funds must be used exclusively to support allowable PDG program costs incurred to provide non-religious instruction and activities during the PDG day.
- B. No religious activity may occur during any PDG day regardless of the source of funds used to support the activity.

Facility Contact Information:

Physical Address:

Gillett ABC Preschool
313 S. 6th
Gillett, AR 72055

DeWitt PDG Preschool
1718 S. Grandview Drive
DeWitt, AR 72042

Mailing Address:

PO Box 700
DeWitt, AR 72042
870-548-2466
870-548-2281 (fax)

PO Box 700
DeWitt, AR 72042
870-946-4651
870-946-4652 (fax)

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Leah Endsley, Lead Teacher, Gillett ABC Preschool
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Claudette Cover, Lead Teacher, DeWitt PDG Preschool
ccover@dewittdragons.net

Jessica West, Gillett ABC Preschool Paraprofessional
jjames@dewittdragons.net

Wendy Currie, DeWitt PDG Preschool Paraprofessional
whake@dewittdragons.net

Community Resources:

**Arkansas County Health
Unit – DeWitt
1616 S. Madison
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-2934**

**Arkansas Children’s Hospital
800 Marshall Street
Little Rock, AR 72202-3591
Phone: 501-361-1100**

**Arkansas Dept of Human Services
100 Court Square
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-4519**

**Arkansas County Extension Services
1009 Liberty Drive
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-3231**

**Disability Rights Center
1100 N. University Suite 201
Little Rock, AR 72207
Phone (501)-296-1775**

**Dewitt Lions Club
P. O. Box 324
Dewitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-1642**

**Employment Security Division
1001 Tennessee St.
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Phone: 870-534-1920**

**Tracy Family Practice
1940 S. Whitehead Dr.
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-4505**

**Arkansas County Health Dept.
1602 N. Buerkle St.
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-673-1609**

**Area Agency on Aging
811 S. Buerkle Street
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-673-2929**

**Alcohol Recovery Helpline & Treatment
3100 West 34th Street
Pine Bluff, AR 71601
Toll-Free: 1-800-888-9383**

**Baptist Health Medical Center-Stuttgart
1703 N. Buerkle Street
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-673-3511**

**Urgent Care of Stuttgart
1012 E 22nd St.
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-672-0911**

**Division of Services for the Blind
P. O. Box 5670
122 West 6th St.
Pine Bluff, AR 71611-5670
Phone: 870-534-4200**

**Southeast Arkansas Educational Coop
1022 Scogin Dr.
Monticello, AR 71665
Phone: 870-367-6848**

**Dr. Stanley W. Burleson
Family Medicine
705 W. 16th St.
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-1326**

Dr. Ralph Maxwell, Family Practice
1641 S. Whitehead Dr.
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-3637

Baptist Health Family Clinic
Chris Morgan, M.D.
1703 Whitehead Dr.
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-0300

James Douglas Allen, DDS
1703 S. Whiteside Dr.
DeWitt, AR 72160
Phone: 870-946-4564

James L. Fish, DDS
2001 S. Buerkle St.
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-673-0561

Randall Hestir, DDS
1703 S. Whiteside Dr.
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-4564

Allen & Hestir Family Dental
713 S. Main St.
Stuttgart, AR 72160
Phone: 870-673-7181

Susan Wamble, DDS
Pediatric Dentristry
1301 Ridgway Rd., Suite 2B
Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: 870-535-8600

Caring and Sharing Food Pantry
P. O. Box 8
DeWitt, AR 72042
Phone: 870-946-3719

