

Preschool Community Parent Handbook

Russell Preschool community

"Where Tradition Begins"



We're a 5 STAR
rated program!



Russell
Preschool
Community

Russell Independent Schools

2021-2022

Preschool Program



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"Where Tradition Begins"

Dear Russell Preschool Families,

I would like to welcome you to Russell Primary School and the Russell Preschool Community. Our mission is to instill a love of learning in a safe, child-centered environment while meeting the needs of every child, every family, every day. This handbook was created to help you understand our Preschool program and procedures. This will help ensure that your child has a positive experience while in Preschool. I hope you find it a useful reference throughout the school year when you have questions. It is important for you to read and review the contents of the handbook. Please share important information with your child.

Positive communication between school and home is essential and we try to keep you informed. Our social media sites are listed in the handbook and our teachers will communicate with you regularly. The district website is Russell-ind.ky12.ky.us. There is a link to the Russell Preschool Community within the "Schools" button.

The faculty and staff of Russell Preschool Community work very hard to make this the best experience for your child. We believe that a good Preschool experience is the start of a GREAT education. A GREAT education starts with a partnership between school and home. We want to have a collaborative, supportive relationship between home and school. When we work together, educational experiences for your child are enhanced.

I am looking forward to the new school year and can't wait to see you!

Sincerely,

Kimberly Staton
Preschool Coordinator

KY Preschool Program Description

Russell Independent Schools provides a high quality education program for children that are 3 and 4 years old. We offer a full day, Monday through Thursday schedule. We follow the Preschool Standards set forth by the Kentucky Department of Education. It is our intent to create a learning climate where all students will reach their full potential and to support students and their families through personal, academic, and social guidance.

Kentucky All Stars Rating

We participate in the Kentucky All Stars Rating system. Kentucky All STARS is Kentucky's expanded five-star quality rating and improvement system for early care and education programs. Studies show that children who attend high quality early learning environments have better math, language and social skills. Kentucky All STARS is based on Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and research-based indicators of quality. It recognizes programs that have made a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

We are proud to be a 5 STAR rated program!

Entry Requirements

The Kentucky Preschool Program is governed by the guidelines set forth by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Students that are eligible for state funded preschool can attend at no tuition charge. Students must be determined eligible based on the following criteria:

Four Year Olds:

- Four years old by August 1st of the school year
- Meet the eligibility requirement of 160% of the poverty level OR
- Determined eligible for special education services, such as speech therapy

Three Year Olds:

- Determined eligible for special education services, such as with a developmental delay
- Eligible three year olds are enrolled when they turn 3 during the school year

We enroll out of district state eligible students if room is available. We enroll all students throughout the year. If you know of a child that would benefit from the Preschool Program, please contact us!

Preschool Records

Listed below are the items that your child must have on file in the Preschool office in order to complete his/her permanent record. These items are required by the KY Department of Education.

- An official copy of your child's birth certificate (school district personnel must make a copy)
- An initial entry Physical Examination on the KY Physical Form
- Current Immunization certificate, on KY form. Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year all public schools in Kentucky require all students, regardless of age or grade, to have the Hepatitis A vaccine. All immunization certificates must be printed. No hand written certificates can be accepted by the school.
- KY eye exam for school entry
- Social Security Card (optional)

We also ask that you complete the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program Application.

Arrival, Departure, and Release

Due to COVID 19 and based on the recommendations and guidance provided by the KY Department of Education, local health department, the Center for Disease Control, and the Governor's office, visitors must be limited.

Parents will bring their child to the front doors and wait outside, while socially distancing, 6 ft apart. Parent will sign child in using an app. Staff member will walk child to the classroom. Drop off begins at 7:50 and ends at 8:05. Class begins promptly at 8:05.

At the end of the day, parents must wait in their cars for the child to be brought to them. Pick up begins at 2:45 and ends at 3:05. Have your parking pass visible. Students must be signed out each day using the app. We will use a staggered pick up system, classes will dismiss at 2:45 and at 2:55. Please wait until your child's dismissal time to get in line.

Students will not be released from school without written permission from the custodial parent. Only persons identified on the emergency card, with a social security number or driver's license will be allowed to take children from school (after identifying themselves with a picture id). This is for the protection of students. Any changes **must** be in writing.

Illness Policy

To maintain a healthy environment for all students and staff, parents are asked to not bring their child to Preschool if there are signs of illness. If a child becomes ill during school hours, parents will be contacted immediately and requested to pick up the child.

Parents will be contacted if child shows any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Discharge from ears
- Discharge from eyes, or red eyes
- Excessive signs of cold, tiredness, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing or coughing
- Lice
- Appearance of acute illness or complaint of severe pain

When contacted due to illness, child must promptly be picked up from school. Until the parent arrives, child will be excluded from activities with other children. Child may rest in a quiet area in the room or in the nurse's office.

If your child is ill, please keep them at home. A sick child should be kept at home until he/she is well or a Dr. releases them to attend school. Some guidelines to follow are below:

- Temperature of 100° or above. Giving a fever reducer and sending your child to school will almost guarantee a call from school when the medicine wears off, as well as expose other students to whatever illness your child has. Your child must be 'fever free' with no medication for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. If your child has vomited or had diarrhea in the last 24 hours they should not be at school.
- Undiagnosed rash. If your child has a rash of unknown origin they should not be at school until cleared by a physician.
- Contagious illness. If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness such as strep, pink eye, etc., they need to be on prescribed antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Flu-like symptoms. Fever, body aches, cough, congestion and sore throat are symptoms of the flu. If your child is experiencing these symptoms, they should stay home until symptom-free for 24 hours or until cleared by his or her physician.

Please keep your child at home if he/she is not well enough to participate in all aspects of our day, including outdoor play.

If your child has been absent, they will need a note from the doctor or a parent note upon return to school.

Dispensing Medication

If your child has medication that has been prescribed by a physician, and it must be taken at school, you **MUST** complete a medication form in the front office. Medication is kept locked in the front office. Medications can only be dispensed if

- It is prescribed by a physician and is in the original, labeled container with the child's name on it
- Written permission accompanies it

Medications **MUST** be brought to the front office by the child's parent/guardian. **DO NOT send medication in a child's backpack.** This is not safe for the children in the classroom.

Please make every attempt to give your child's medication to them prior to school arrival or after the school day.

Visitors/Parent Involvement

Due to COVID 19 and based on the recommendations and guidance provided by the KY Department of Education, local health department, the Center for Disease Control, and the Governor's office, visitors must be limited. **At this time visitors are not permitted in the classroom.**

Parents (Guardians) are encouraged to visit the Preschool classroom. All visitors are required to sign in at the front office and obtain a visitor's badge. **Teachers are not able to conference with a parent in the classroom or at the door during the school day.** Please schedule a conference time with your child's teacher so that she may devote the time you need to your conference.

Family members that wish to visit or help in the classroom must go through the volunteer application process, including a background check.

Home/School Communications

Teachers send a newsletter home regularly so that you will be informed of what is happening in the classroom. Teachers may also use Remind 101 or other technology platforms to keep you informed.

We also send out information on our Facebook page, Twitter feed, and through the district website. You can access those through the following feeds:

Facebook: Russell Preschool Community

Twitter: @RussellPreK

Website: <http://www.russellind.kyschools.us> Find us under "Schools" at the top of the banner.

Instagram account: Russell_preschool

Parent Conferences/Home Visits

Parent conferences and home visits are an essential part of communication between you and your child's teacher. Each family is expected to attend conferences. Progress reports will be discussed at each conference. Home visits are also scheduled to better serve you and your child throughout the school year. Preschool families will have a minimum of 2 home visits per year. Home visits may be conducted virtually.

Arriving Late/Leaving Early

Excessive tardiness interferes with your child's ability to learn. Please be on time when dropping children off or picking them up. We begin instruction at 8:05.

If you arrive late you must enter through the front office using proper procedures.

Attendance

Regular, daily attendance is expected. Regular attendance is very important in the growth and development of your child. If your child needs to be absent, please send a written note upon your child's return. You will be contacted by staff after four consecutive unreported absences or if your child's attendance is irregular. A home visit may be necessary.

High quality preschool programs have many benefits for your child. Your child is not able to access all of the benefits if they are not here. Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.

Transportation

Bus transportation will not be provided to preschool students at this time.

Snow Days

Listen to local radio and television stations for school cancellations. If Russell Independent Schools are cancelled, Preschool is cancelled as well. If school is delayed, Preschool classes are delayed. Snow days must be made up at the end of the school year.

Non Traditional Instructional Days

Russell Independent Schools participates in Non Traditional Instructional Days as approved by the Kentucky Department of Education. When Russell participates in a Non Traditional Instructional Day, it will be announced on social media as such. Your child will have activities to complete while school is not in session that day. Your child's teacher will provide further information. Non Traditional days are utilized when there will be a short term closure. These days do not need to be made up at the end of the school year.

Clothing/Shoes

Preschoolers are very active and we spend time each day either participating in gross motor activities such as running, skipping, dancing, etc. We recommend that your child come to school in comfortable clothes and shoes that will allow running and climbing without injury. Please no flip flops.

We go outside unless there is a weather advisory or precipitation. Be sure that your child has appropriate outerwear for the weather.

Please supply a change of clothes to be used in case of an accident.

Photographs and Social Media

When attending a school event, Russell Independent Schools requests that you take photos or videos of your child only. Do not post photos or videos on social media that contain children other than your own.

School Supplies

Students are not required to purchase school supplies for the Preschool program. We do recommend that your child have a full size back pack with a change of clothing. If your child wears diapers or pull-ups, it is your responsibility to provide diapers, pull-ups, and wipes. Please label these items with your child's name. It is helpful to send a week or more supply at one time.

Food Services/Meals

We participate in the National School Lunch/Breakfast program. Meals are served every school day. Parents should not send extra snacks. If you would like to send something for a special celebration, please discuss with your child's teacher. We cannot accept homemade items.

To receive free/reduced pricing meals for your child an application must be completed. Applications will be available at Open House. Students will be provided breakfast, afternoon snack, and lunch. If you do not qualify for free lunch, you may pay breakfast/lunch fees online. If you are interested, someone in the office can assist you.

Our schedules do not allow time during the day to provide a meal to your child other than during the scheduled meal time. If your child is coming to school after a scheduled meal time, they will need to be fed prior to being dropped off.

During the 2021-2022 school year, all meals will be provided at no cost to families.

Items From Home

We are a play based curriculum and we have carefully chosen the materials on the shelves based on skills that need to be taught or reinforced. Do not send items from home to school with your child.

Character Education

We believe that character education is essential. One of our objectives is to encourage each child to be the best they can be, perform to their utmost potential, and care about others. Building strong character with high morals is a key component for lifetime success. We utilize the Conscious Discipline program in the classroom to help build routines and character.

Discipline will be enforced with fairness and swiftness. Students will be instructed daily and reminded frequently of the classroom expectations, from the first day of school. We appreciate parents joining us in promoting good behavior and strong character.

Tuition Based Preschool Program Information

We are proud to announce that our tuition based program is also a 5 Star rated program. This means that your child is participating in a high quality early childhood program.

Dear Parent or Guardian of Tuition Based Preschool Program:

In addition to the information already provided in the handbook, tuition based families need to know the following:

The Russell Independent School Tuition Based Program serves families with children ages three (3), four (4), and five (5) years on or before August 1. Program is Monday through Thursday.

- Student's tuition is due on the **Monday** of each week. Accounts must be kept current. Students will not be permitted to attend when any account becomes 2 weeks past due, until the account has been caught up.
- There is an annual \$25 registration fee. This fee must be paid prior to the beginning of school.
- Tuition is \$84 per week for in person instruction, plus the cost of meals. \$20 per week for virtual instruction. Tuition is due for each day school is in session. You are responsible for tuition if your child is absent. You are responsible for tuition if your child does not complete their virtual assignment. Meals will be at no cost to families for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Families are required to pay for the number of days school is in session, not the number of days your child attends. Payment is expected even if your child is sick.
- In the event of inclement weather (i.e. snow day), the amount due will be adjusted.

All tuition payments questions may be directed to the Russell Preschool Community coordinator at 606 836-0007.

We participate in the Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP). More information can be provided through the Department of Health and Family Services at (606)-473-9126. If you are applying for CCAP, you are responsible for paying the full amount of tuition, on time, until you are determined eligible for CCAP. If you do not pay as expected you will be asked to leave the program.

Registration for tuition based preschool program can be completed online. For additional assistance or for any questions you may have, please call Russell Primary School at 836-0007 and ask for Kim Staton.

The Tuition Based Program follows the same curriculum and standards as the Russell Independent Schools KY-Preschool Program. We teach to the KY Early Childhood Standards using a play based curriculum.

All tuition based students are parent transported. Please observe established drop-off and pick-up times.

When registering for tuition based preschool please bring with you:

- Child's birth certificate
- Proof of disability (if applicable)
- Up-to-date immunization certificate (must be on a Kentucky immunization form)
- Physical Examination (must be on a Kentucky physical examination form)
- Eye Exam (must be on a Kentucky eye exam form)

Breakfast is served at 8:30. The cost for meals is not included in tuition. Breakfast and lunch are provided for all students. You may pack a breakfast and/or lunch for your child. If you choose to send a breakfast and/or lunch, it must meet USDA guidelines. USDA guidelines require the following for breakfast: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables, fruit, or both, and $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce grains. USDA guidelines require the following for lunch: $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of milk, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of meat, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fruit, and $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of grains.

Parents are welcome to send in snacks for a special celebration when scheduled with the teacher. **Any snack sent to the school must be store bought.** We are not permitted to accept any snack made from home. Please discuss with your child's teacher prior to sending a snack.

Tuition based programs follow the regular preschool day hours Monday-Thursday. Parents may drop their children off 7:50-8:05 am and pick up 2:45-3:05 pm. **Please honor the beginning and end time of the school day.**

High quality preschool programs have many benefits for your child. Your child is not able to access all of the benefits if they are not here or if they are arriving late. Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.

All children must be signed in and signed out. We are transitioning to a paperless system. Families will have the capability to do this using an app on their phone.

All children should be picked up no later than 3:05. A charge of \$2.00 per minute will be billed to the student's family for every minute after 3:05 that a child is at school. If a child is picked up late 3 times during the school year, the case will be reviewed to determine eligibility to remain in the program. Failure to pick your child up on time may result in a call to the Kentucky State Police or Social Services.

Please provide your child a backpack (without wheels) large enough for a folder. Please send a seasonal change of clothes (including underwear, socks, pants and a shirt) in case of an accident. Please label each item of clothing with your child's name. Be sure to check your backpack daily for information from school. Ongoing and updated information will assure a strong home/school connection.

Please provide your classroom teacher and the school secretary with any new telephone numbers or addresses, in case of an emergency, but also for us to communicate program information with you.

We believe that parents are the child's first teachers. Our philosophy is to serve the total child. To do this, the entire family is asked to be involved. Family support is essential if the child is to have the greatest opportunity for success not only in school but in life.

Reports of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

It is our intent to build a partnership with parents and caregivers and to give them the most suitable environment for a child. It is very important that parents be aware that state laws require **any and all** incidents of **suspected** child abuse or neglect be reported to the appropriate agency. It is the responsibility of the agency to investigate each reported case.

Statement of Non Discrimination

Russell Independent School's Preschool Program does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, parental status, marital status, race, national origin, religion, sex, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identification, socioeconomic, or veteran status.

As required by federal law, Russell Independent does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, genetic information, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

COVID 19 Health Protocols Addendum to Parent Handbook
In addition to previous information, the following will be implemented:

Screening and Illness

- Students or staff should remain home if they are sick or have any of the following symptoms:
 - temperature of 100.4 or greater
 - cough
 - vomiting/diarrhea
 - new rash
 - exposure to a positive COVID 19 case within 48 hours
- If a child shows a fever or other contagious symptoms, the child will be removed from the classroom immediately and placed in a safe, secluded area
- Children that become ill at school must be picked up immediately
- Students must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school
- Students must be vomiting and/or diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school

Social Distancing

- Playground use will be staggered between classrooms
- There will be no family events (open house, literacy nights, etc)
- There will be no field trips
- A centralized drop off and pick up location will be utilized
- If family members wait outside the building for drop off and/or pick up, they must remain 6 ft apart and wear a facial covering
- Teachers and staff will use digital formats rather than paper formats as practicable

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Materials that have been placed in children's mouths or otherwise contaminated will be set aside and remain unused until cleaned and sanitized by a staff member
- Machine washable cloth toys will not be used at this time
- Each child's bedding (sheet, blanket) will be stored individually. Bedding will be washed weekly
- Classrooms and the rest of the building will be properly cleaned and sanitized
- Hands will be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds (sing "Happy Birthday")

- If sanitizer is used, it must be 60% alcohol. Adults MUST give sanitizer to children. Children cannot independently use hand sanitizer
- Hand hygiene will be practiced by staff and children frequently. Hands will be washed and/or sanitized at the following times:
 - upon arrival
 - returning from outside
 - after toileting
 - after contact with bodily fluids (i.e. blowing nose, etc)
 - after cleaning up spills
 - after cleaning, sanitizing, or using any cleaning products
 - after handling pets, pet cages, or other pet objects
 - before eating, serving, or preparing food
 - before and after completion of a medical procedure (i.e. cleaning a cut, etc)
 - before and after completion of administering medication
 - when visibly soiled (must use soap and water)
 - prior to departure
- Encourage limited touching of face, mouth, and nose
- Adults will provide hand sanitizer as appropriate-children cannot independently use hand sanitizer
- Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized regularly

Visitors

- Outside visitors must be limited
- Family members will not be able to walk students to the classroom due to limits on outside visitors
- Family members and other adults must follow safety protocol provided by CDC (facial coverings, 6ft distancing, etc)

*These guidelines are subject to change based on updated guidance.



Russell Independent Schools
Preschool Community Program

710 Red Devil Lane
Russell, KY 41169

I acknowledge that I have read the Preschool Handbook and understand the policies outlined in the handbook.

I agree to adhere to the policies and give my child permission to participate fully in this program.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

This handbook is subject to change as new information becomes available. Changes will be made available through our social media pages and classroom communication tools.