



Mechanicsburg

EARLY EXPLORERS Classroom Information





Welcome to Early Explorers!

Dear Parent,

Welcome to the Early Explorers classroom! My name is Heather Kinsey, and I will be one of your child's teachers.

In our classroom, your child can look forward to meeting new friends, exploring different arts and crafts, practicing their alphabet, numbers, shapes, colors, working on potty training and much more! We will be engaging in Circle Time, using age appropriate flash cards, reading books, and doing numerous new arts and crafts to ensure they are reaching their educational and developmental goals.

I joined the Tender Years family in August of 2019. Before working for Tender Years, I worked for the transportation department at Rohrer Bus Services. I love working with the toddler age group because I enjoy watching them learn and grow into their own personalities. I am currently working towards obtaining my CDA. In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family, especially my two daughters.

I look forward to getting to know you and your child. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have while your child is enrolled in my classroom.

Sincerely,

Heather Kinsey



Daily Schedule

The schedule in Early Explorers is partially child-led. The following is what a typical day in our classroom may look like...

7:00am - 9:00am: Arrival/Breakfast/Free Play

Children will be greeted as they arrive. Teachers and parents will converse about your child's weekend to help them get settled in for the day. They will be offered breakfast and will be allowed to have free play time.

8:30am – 9:00am: Potty Break/Wash Hands

9:00am - 10:00am: Clean Up/Quick Circle Time

At the quick circle time, we will read a story and have a short discussion about the theme of the week. I will briefly talk about the calendar.

10:00am - 11:00am: Learning Activities/Art Project

We will be doing an art project based on the theme and have age appropriate activities.

10:30am – 11:00am: Potty Break/Wash Hands

11:00am - 11:30am: Outdoor Play (Weather Permitting)

11:30am - 12:15pm: Lunch

Children will sit with their friends at the lunch table and either eat their lunch from home or a school lunch.

12:30pm – 1:00pm: Potty Break/Wash Hands

12:30pm - 3:00pm: Nap Time/Quiet Time

At this time, your child will probably be ready to rest for a little while. They are not required to nap and may have quiet time.

3:00pm - 4:00pm: Wake Up/Potty Break/Afternoon Snack

This is a pretty busy hour for everyone. They will be getting up and going potty and getting ready for the rest of the day. They will be offered snack and will be able to free play afterwards.

4:00pm - 5:30pm: Free Play/Departures



Additional Notes

- Each child's potty schedule may look a little different. Potty breaks are on an as-needed basis.
- During play time we will work on developmental skills and individual goals.
- Please make sure there is extra clothes for your child.
- Back packs are not required.
- There will be a snack schedule for the month to bring in a snack.
- Please check tadpoles daily for notes from the teacher.



Helping You Get Settled In

Arrival and Pick-Up

Tender Years, Inc. is using a secure app called Tadpoles. This is a simple way to log your child in and out of school. You will simply sign your child in on the iPad in the lobby as soon as you enter the building. You and anyone else authorized to pick up your child will be given a 4 digit pin and with just one swipe your child will be in our system for that day. At the end of the day you will follow the same procedure to sign your child out. At the time of sign out your child's care sheet will automatically be sent to your email. This app will also alert us when your child is due for a Well Child Physical and/or immunizations. We will notify you in order to collect the proper paper work for your child's file.

House Shoes (Mechanicsburg Center Only)

In an effort to decrease the amount of dirt that is tracked into classrooms, we require all students to use a pair of house shoes. House shoes can be slippers, sneakers or crocs. We ask that all house shoes have a sole on the bottom in the event that we would need to leave the building unexpectedly. Along with the children's use of house shoes, we also ask that all adults remove their shoes or put on shoe covers prior to entering the classroom.

Refrigerators

There are refrigerators in every classroom. If your child has something that must be kept cold, please label this item and place it in the classroom refrigerator. Unfortunately, our refrigerators are not large enough to hold all students' lunch boxes, so please remove items from your child's lunch box before placing them in the refrigerator. Lunch boxes can be left in your child's cubby or on a shelf designated by the teachers.

Pickups by Relatives, etc.

If someone other than a parent is picking up your child, please let the teachers know in advance. We will always check the ID of the person picking up your child, as well as the emergency contact form, to be sure that you have given permission for your child to be released to that individual. If a situation arises where another party (who is not on the emergency contact form) needs to pick up your child, please see an office staff member to fill out a "Permission to Release Your Child" form.

Daily Contact and Communication

To communicate with parents, each classroom has an iPad with specialized management & communication software called Tadpoles. If you would like to receive daily communications via text message or email, including photos from your child's teacher, please be sure to complete the email and phone section of your Emergency Contact form. You will then be assigned a four digit code, which will allow you to clock your child in and out of the center daily from the main iPad, located in the front lobby. Parents are required by DHS to clock in and out of the center daily.

Tadpoles is meant to be a two way communication system for parents and teachers, providing a convenient way to relay basic information and/or updates on a child. (Example: "John did not sleep well last night. Please let me know how his morning is going."). Please download the Tadpoles parent app onto your smart phone and feel free to choose the settings that best suit your needs.

All children enrolled at Tender Years, Inc. will receive daily updates via our Tadpoles system. These daily reports will tell you when your child was changed or used the bathroom, when and how much they ate, their nap schedule for that day, daily lesson plans and activities, and other pertinent information. At the end of the day, when your child is checked out, a complete daily sheet will be sent to your email address.

Additionally, please feel free to call the center at any time to check in on your child. If your child going to be absent, please let us know by marking your child absent or on vacation in the Tadpoles app. If your child is diagnosed with an illness, please let us know by marking your child ill in the Tadpoles app and sending us a note with any pertinent information. Per Department of Human Services we must post any illnesses that are in your child's classroom.

Open Door Policy

Tender Years has an open door policy, which means you may come in to visit your child at any point, unannounced. If you would like to come have lunch with your child, observe them in the classroom or just check in to say hello, you are more than welcome.



Toys from Home

Tender Years provides all of the classroom toys, activities and art supplies that are needed throughout the day. Bringing toys from home is prohibited. However, your child may bring a quiet stuffed toy to lay with during nap/quiet time. This policy has been put in place to ensure that your child's personal items are not lost or broken.

Snacks/Celebrations

Snack time will occur daily after your child's nap/rest period. Snack will be brought in by parents on a rotating bases. We ask that all snacks are store-bought and in a sealed package. Your child's teacher will send home a snack calendar monthly. You may also bring in a special snack for your child's birthday! Please see the Healthy Snack Choices form for more details. *Reminder: Camp Hill & Hershey centers are nut & allergy conscious, while Mechanicsburg is a NUT-FREE center!*

Items Needed

Nursery:

- 2 Crib-Size Sheets
- Sleep Sacks or Wearable Blankets (optional)
- Bibs (If your child is eating jar or finger food a vinyl/plastic bib may be left at the center.)
- Burp Cloths
- 2 Complete Change of Clothes (including socks)
- Pacifier and Pacifier Clip
- Diapers (Children are changed every 2 hours, or sooner if needed.)
- Wipes and a Reusable Wipe Container
- Diaper Cream
- Family Pictures (optional)
- Baby Food/Bottles (All bottles must be pre-made and have a lid on them. We cannot mix formula at the center.)

Toddlers:

- 1 Crib-Size Sheet
- Blanket for Nap Time Use Only (optional)
- Quiet Stuffed Animal for Nap Time Use Only (optional)
- 1 Vinyl/Plastic Bib (to be left at the center)
- 2 Complete Changes of Clothes (including socks) (more if potty-training)
- Pacifier and Pacifier Clip (optional)
- Diapers (Children are changed every 2 hours, or sooner if needed.)
- Wipes and a Reusable Wipe Container
- Diaper Cream (optional)
- Family Pictures (optional)
- Food/Bottles - if needed (All bottles must come in premade and have a lid on them. We cannot mix formula at the center. All food and drinks will be sent home daily.)
- House Shoes (Mechanicsburg Only) - to be left at the center
- Labeled Reusable Water Bottle (This may stay at the center overnight, but will sent be sent home at the end of every week, or sooner if you would like.)

Preschool and PreK / K-Readiness:

- 1 Crib-Size Sheet or Small Seeping Bag/Pillow
- Blanket for Nap Time Use Only (optional)
- Quiet Stuffed Animal for Nap Time Use Only (optional)
- 2 Complete Changes of Clothes (including socks)
- Accidents and spills do occur. Please note that preschoolers are expected to wear underpants. Every effort is made to teach independent toileting skills, but help is provided if necessary. You may send in wipes if needed.
- Lunch (To be brought in and sent home on a daily bases. Also, please see our lunch service option.)
- House Shoes (Mechanicsburg Only) - to be left at the center
- Labeled Reusable Water Bottle (This may stay at the center overnight, but will sent be sent home at the end of every week, or sooner if you would like.)



Kindergarten / Kindergarten Enrichment / Before & After School:

- 2 Complete Change of Clothes (including socks)
- Lunch (If your child is in our half day kindergarten enrichment program, they will eat lunch before leaving. Lunch is to be brought in and sent home on a daily bases. Also, please see our lunch service option.)
- House Shoes (Mechanicsburg Only) - to be left at the center
- Labeled Reusable Water Bottle (This may stay at the center overnight, but will sent be sent home at the end of every week, or sooner if you would like.)

Medication Policy

Diaper Cream, lip baum or Vaseline may be brought in. A permission slip must be filled out by the parents allowing us to apply any over-the-counter cream. All creams must be handed to the teacher so that the teacher can properly store them in a locked cabinet. No creams, lotions or lib balms are permitted in your child's cubbies, lunchboxes or back packs.

Prescription medication can only be given if a doctor's note is present. All prescriptions must be approved by the director, and the proper medication log must be filled out and signed in the office in order for the medication to be given. No prescription medications are permitted in the classrooms.

Lunch Options

You may bring your child's lunch in daily or you may purchase a lunch. A purchased lunch is a well-rounded meal costing just \$2.60 a day. All lunch orders must be submitted monthly via our online order form, located on our website at TenderYearsPA.com. Orders will be accepted between the FIRST MONDAY and the THIRD FRIDAY of each month, for the following month's lunches. For your convenience, we send out regular reminders via email.

Upon placing your lunch order, you will be prompted to submit a payment via our payment processor. Payments must be debited directly from a bank account, therefore, you must complete our One Time Payment Authorization Form prior to ordering. (Your bank account information does not need to be filled in, unless it is a different bank account from which we withdrawal your tuition.)

Lesson Plans/Academic Activities

Lesson plans are created by each teacher individually. The lesson plans follow PA State standards and are designed to meet the needs of every child. Lesson plans follow a weekly theme. For example: If children are showing an interest in bugs, the teacher will base a weekly lesson plan around this. Lesson plans also reflect the seasons and holidays. Once you are in our Academy Program (Preschool, Pre-K, K-Readiness and Kindergarten Enrichment) your child will also participate in extracurricular activities such as music or science. These extra classes are taught by professionals on a weekly basis (and monthly basis for science).

Outside Play

It is a Department of Human Services regulation that all children go outside at least 2 times per day, weather permitting. We will go outside for 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon. Outside play time consists of playing on the playground, taking walks to nearby parks, drawing with sidewalk chalk, bike riding, etc. While outdoors, sneakers must be worn. No sandals or crocs are allowed on the playground.

Fall/Winter: We will go outside if the temperature is 27 degrees or above. We will stay inside if the temperature is below 27 degrees or if there is any precipitation or snow on the ground (we follow the "feels like" temperature).

Spring/Summer: We will go outside if the temperature is 90 degrees or below. We will stay inside if the temperature is above 90 degrees and/or there is a heat or air advisory (we follow the "feels like" temperature).



Tender Years, Inc. Behavior Plan

At Tender Years, we believe that every child should be treated with respect and dignity. We have put a discipline policy in place to ensure consistency among all classrooms. We use techniques such as . . .

Calming Corner

In some situations removing a child from a group may be required. In this case, we calmly remove the child with as little disruption as possible, state the violated behavior, and place the child where visual supervision can be maintained. Children should never be placed or set in a corner, hallway or any other humiliating situations. If a child is removed from the group, it will be for a short period of time where they will be redirected to another play area or activity (puzzle, book, etc).

Negotiation Station

Negotiation Station is a great place for children to go when they are having a conflict with another child, teacher or themselves. Negotiation Station is a calm, peaceful area in the classroom (usually with a small table, pillows, books about emotions, pictures of different emotions, puppets, etc.) where children can talk about the problem and come up with a solution. Teachers are often involved in the Negotiation Station but encourage and teach children ways to solve problems on their own.

**According to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS)...*

No child will be punished by corporal punishment or verbal abuse. Please keep in mind, this policy also applies to parents. Children may not be spanked or threatened to be spanked at the child care center. The following behaviors are prohibited (by ALL persons) in ALL child care settings:

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;*
- Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or use of the bathroom;*
- Abusive or profane language;*
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment;*
- Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing or isolating a child.*



Behavioral Health Community Resources

General Information

- Cumberland/Perry Office of Mental Health & IDD: 717-240-6320
- Dauphin County Department of MH/ID: 717-780-7050

Behavioral Health System

PerformCare - All Counties
8040 Carlson Road, Harrisburg, PA 17112
717-671-6500 or 800-700-7370

If your child already has Medical Assistance and you would like to access mental/behavioral health care services directly, PerformCare manages and coordinates behavioral health services through contracted service providers. They will be able to help schedule an evaluation and make referrals to different agencies for services such as TSS, BSC, PCIT, Mobile Therapy, and Family Based Therapy.

Case Management

Case Management Units will conduct and intake interview, establish eligibility, and assess your child's needs. A case manager will be assigned in order to help plan and access services, navigate the behavioral/mental health system, and access community resources.

Cumberland County CMU (2 Locations)

- Behavioral Health Center at Holy Spirit
503 N. 21st St.
Camp Hill, PA 17011
717-763-2219
- Case Management at NHS: The Stevens Center
33 State Avenue
Carlisle, PA 17013
717-243-6033

Dauphin County CME (2 Locations)

- Harrisburg Area CMU
1100 South Cameron St.
Harrisburg, PA 17104
717-232-8761
- Upper Dauphin Area CMU
295 State Drive
Elizabethtown, PA 17023
717-362-1212 or 866-820-3521



Healthy Snack Choices

Once a month, you may be asked to bring in a snack for your child's classroom. We ask that you choose a healthy, child-friendly snack. Below are ideas for healthy snacks and drinks that are safe for our school.

**REMINDER: Camp Hill & Hershey centers are nut & allergy conscious, while Mechanicsburg is a NUT-FREE center!*

Fruits and Vegetables

- Fresh fruit and Vegetables
- Frozen Fruit
- Applesauce
- Fruit Cups
- Fruit Leather
- Dried Fruit

Dairy Snacks

- Cheese Sticks
- Cheese Slices
- Go-Gurt Yogurt

Fruit Snacks

- Annie's Organic Bunny fruit snacks

Drinks

- Water
- Milk
- 100% Juice

Crunchy Snacks

- Graham Crackers
- Fig Bars
- Granola Bars
- Cheeze It's
- Goldfish Crackers
- Popcorn
- Triscuits
- Wheat Thins
- Pretzels

Chips

- Tortilla Chips
- Original Sun Chips
- Vegetable Chips