

# **Glidden-Ralston Preschool**

## **Program Policies and Procedures**



**Glidden-Ralston Community School**

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## I. WELCOME to Glidden-Ralston Preschool

**QPPS 10.1**

Glidden-Ralston Preschool was awarded the statewide Voluntary Preschool Program grant in the summer of 2008. The program's goal is to provide a high quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including children with disabilities and those from a diverse background. The preschool provides a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for all four-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, administered by the Iowa Department of Education. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

## II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

**QPPS 10.1**

### ***Mission:***

The mission of Glidden-Ralston Community School District is to ensure the process for lifelong learning, while preparing students to behave respectfully and responsibly, to be effective communicators, to be self-directed learners and to be thinkers/problem solvers and successful, productive citizens. This will be accomplished by recognizing the value of each individual and promoting academic and personal growth in a challenging and caring environment.

### ***Preschool-6<sup>th</sup> Grade School Philosophy of Education:***

We Believe

- Students learn best in a safe and caring environment.
- Innovative learning activities and various teaching strategies enhance learning.
- Respect for diversity develops tolerance within the school and our society.
- Effective learning produces life-long skills.
- Teaching the importance of citizenship benefit's the school and the community.
- Productive discipline incorporates control, consistency and care.

- Memorable and enjoyable activities foster learning.
- School, home and community cooperation facilitates and reinforces learning.
- Student learning is the most important element of our society.

**Goals for Children:**

- Children will show competence in social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development skills.
- Children will be enthusiastic and curious learners.
- Children will be safe and healthy.

**Goals for Families:**

- Families will feel welcome in the classroom and school.
- Families will work with the school in a meaningful partnership to help their children be better prepared to learn to read and write.
- Families will advocate for their children.

**III. ENROLLMENT**

**Equal Education Opportunity**

It is the policy of the Glidden-Ralston Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district’s Equity Coordinator, Kaylee Bach at 712-659-3411.

**Eligibility**

Children must be four years of age prior to September 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year to attend Preschool. Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the year. Registration will take place in August, a week or two prior to the beginning of the school year. You may mail in registration materials, or attend a walk-in registration day.

**Hours**

Classes meet from 8:10-3:25 each day, five days per week. The preschool follows the Glidden-Ralston CSD calendar. The calendar is available on the school web page at [www.glidden-ralston.k12.ia.us](http://www.glidden-ralston.k12.ia.us)

**General Information**

**QPPS 5.1 10.4**

Within 6 weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The maximum class size is 20 children based on square footage of the current location. A teaching staff-child ratio of at least 1:10 will be maintained at all times to encourage adult-child interactions and promote activity among children. The elementary principal will maintain a current list of available substitutes for both the teacher and teacher assistant. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room, the teacher will notify the elementary office and the principal will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio.

**Inclusion**

**QPPS 9.10**

The preschool program serves all children, including those with disabilities, and unique learning needs. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff is aware of the identified needs of individual children and is trained to follow through on specific intervention plans.

## IV. Who Works in the Preschool

### Staff

**QPPS 10.2, 6.3, 6.4, 10.10**

Program Administrator The Elementary Principal is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal meets all qualifications described in the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

Teacher A full-time teacher licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and holding an early childhood endorsement is assigned to the preschool classroom.

Teacher Assistant A full time teacher assistant in the classroom carries out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistant will have specialized training in early childhood education.

School Nurse The preschool will have the assistance of the school nurse. The current nurse is employed full-time, is a certified RN, and is recertified every three years. The nurse maintains student health records by updating them quarterly, and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. The nurse is available for parent consultation when necessary.

Support Staff Heartland AEA support staff provides resources and assistance to the teacher upon request to help all children be successful in the preschool setting. Such support staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

### Daily Schedule of Activities:

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoors with outdoors, quiet play with noisy play. Children will have an opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

Large and Small Group Activities	Learning Center Activities	Healthy Snack
Individualized Activities	Large Motor Activities	Self-directed Play
Story Time		Outdoor Activities

Lesson plans for each week are posted in the classroom to inform parents how these learning activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Monthly notes will be sent home to families in children's backpacks.

### Curriculum

**QPPS 2.1-2.3, 1.7**

#### Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities

The preschool program uses Creative Curriculum, research and evidence based comprehensive curriculums designed for 3-5 year old children. They are content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support

active learning and promote children's progress in all developmental areas. Curriculum is designed to provide children the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways-through play, problem solving, movement, art, music, drawing and writing, listening, and storytelling.

The teaching staff counters potential bias and discrimination by treating all children with equal respect and consideration, initiating activities and discussions that build positive self-identity and teach the valuing of differences. Staff members provide models and visual images of adult roles, differing abilities, and ethnic or cultural backgrounds that counter stereotypical limitations.

### **Child Assessment**

### **QPPS 4.1-4.2**

#### *Guiding Principles:*

It is the school's belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in a natural setting by familiar adults. All results shall be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- *GOLD Teaching Strategies Assessment* can be used for Ages infants-7 years old. These goals are aligned with Iowa Early Learning Standards. It records student progress in all developmental areas in 4 checkpoints throughout the year.
- *Observation data* provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- *Families* are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the administration, teaching staff, and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

This information will be used in the following way:

- Provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities;
  - Plan developmentally appropriate experiences for them;
  - Provide information to parents about their child's developmental milestones;
  - To indicate possible areas that require additional assessments;
  - To plan program improvements;
- Arrange for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment when indicated.

When program staff suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families during a conference, sharing documentation of the concern. Suggestions for follow-up steps may include the following, with the knowledge and consent of the parents:

- The teacher requests assistance from the Building Assistance Team as an early intervention process.
- A request made to Heartland AEA for support and additional ideas or more formalized testing.

The preschool teacher will assist in arranging for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment.

### **Program Assessment**

The preschool program implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. Administrators, families, staff and other routinely participating adults will be involved annually in an evaluation process. The program uses this information to plan professional development and program quality-improvement activities as well as to improve operations and policies.

### **Supervision Policy**

### **QPPS 9.2**

Before children arrive at school, the preschool teacher will complete a daily safety checklist. The primary purpose for "supervision" is to keep all children safe. The indoor environment is designed so staff can

supervise children by sight and sound at all times without relying on artificial monitoring devices. Semi Private areas are designed for both children and adults to be observed by an adult from outside the area.

### **Behavior Management and Discipline**

### **QPPS 1.11**

Teaching staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and planning ahead to prevent problems. Staff will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self disciplined. The teaching staff will help children manage their behavior by guiding and supporting children to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs and learn turn taking.

### **Challenging Behaviors**

### **QPPS 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10**

The teaching staff evaluates and changes their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- Modeling turn-taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors;
- Engaging children in the care of the classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group; and,
- Encouraging children to listen to one another and help them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed.

For children with persistent, serious, and challenging behaviors, teachers, families, and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.

If a child has a difficult time following directions or treating others or equipment with respect, the staff will use developmentally appropriate behavior guidance techniques. These techniques include:

- Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged and praised when demonstrating acceptable behavior.
- Redirection: The child will be redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
- "When... Then" Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to accomplish something before going on to something else. For example: "When you finish picking up the blocks, then you may go outside!"
- "If....Then" Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to make a positive choice. For example: "IF you pick up the blocks first, THEN you can go to another area to play!"
- Time Out, also known as a "Cooling off Period": The child is separated from the group for a child-regulated amount of time. The technique is used if the child is demonstrating a "temper tantrum" type of behavior or hurting him or herself, others or equipment. When the child shows that he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to rejoin the group.

### **Prohibited Practices**

The Glidden-Ralston Preschool staff does not, and shall not, employ harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children and will not make threats or derogatory remarks. They will not use physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing or use any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect. Food will not be withheld nor threaten to be withheld as a form of discipline.



**Water activities****QPPS 5.9, 9.15**

Water play delights the senses and is far more than simply pleasurable for young children. This type of sensory play is important for the development of the young child. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water play does not spread infectious disease. Children must wash their hands before participating in water play. Children are not allowed to drink the water. Children with sores on their hands are not permitted to participate in communal water play. Fresh water is used, and the water is changed before a new group of children come to participate in the water play activity. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

**Snacks/Food and Nutrition****QPPS 5.12-5.21**

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

Children may choose to have breakfast before class begins. Breakfast begins at 7:40 am. Children are served a snack two hours after lunch has ended. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. A written menu is posted in the classroom and available to families. All menus are kept on file for review by a program consultant. The preschool serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks, and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered.

All food is prepared, served and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutritional needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than four years, these include hotdogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The school district does not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

**Outside Play and Learning****QPPS 5.5, 5.6, 9.5 -9.7**

Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play (when weather, air quality, or environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). The time spent outside accommodates motor experiences such as running, climbing, balancing, and riding, jumping, crawling, scooting, and swinging. Also it is a time when exploration

of the natural environment takes place.

When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible, because of various conditions, the program will provide similar activities inside.

To protect against cold, heat, sun injury, and insect borne disease, the preschool program ensures that:

1. Children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather
2. Children have the opportunity to play in the shade
3. When in the sun they wear sun-protection clothing, applied skin protection or both. (With written parental consent.)

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellents, due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used. (Staff apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental consent.)

A Playground Safety general maintenance checklist will be completed by staff weekly.

### **Clothing**

Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing as well as tennis shoes or sandals with a strap on the heel. While we encourage the use of paint smocks or shirts during art projects, we can't guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal or disruptive in nature. Shirts with spaghetti straps are not allowed. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

### **Toilet Training**

### **QPPS 5.5**

Students do not need to be toilet trained to be enrolled in preschool. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, diapers/pull-ups will be checked consistently and changing procedures will be followed accordingly. An available bathroom will be designated for changing. Signs designating the changing areas will be posted. Bathroom reminders are done routinely. Children will be encouraged to change themselves with staff assistance. Staff and the child will thoroughly wash their hands after changing according to universal precautions. Staff will be required to sanitize the bathroom. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diseases. All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

### **Objects from Home**

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from your home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

### **Weapon(s) Policy**

No student shall carry, have in his or her possession, store, keep, leave, place or put into the possession of another student any real weapon or look alike weapon on any school premises, in any school vehicle or any

vehicle used by the school or for school purposes, in any school building or other buildings or premises used for school functions, whether or not any person is endangered by such actions. "Look alike weapon" means any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. *A zero tolerance policy on dangerous weapons (real or toy) is in effect; i.e., gun, squirt guns, water rifles or pistols, slingshots, toy guns, toy grenades and other similar items, knives, etc. Violation may result in a student suspension/expulsion.*

### **Classroom Animals or Pets**

### **QPPS 5.26**

No live animals are to be inside the Glidden-Ralston School building or classrooms at any time. If you, as a parent or legal guardian, want to bring your family pet to share with your child's classroom you are welcome. However, all animals must remain outside the school buildings during the visit. The preschool teacher ensures that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal would appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals.

Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking requirements have been met.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. The teacher will provide families a list of foods meeting the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Those who have summer birthdays are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Invitations to parties outside of school that do not include the entire class will not be distributed at school.

## **V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

### **QPPS 1.1, 7.5**

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations or email. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. Teaching staff will write notes for families no less than weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs-email, in person, notes, or phone calls.

### **Parent Participation-Open Door Policy**

Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school office. Visitors are asked to please use discretion with regard to bringing babies and toddlers to school as young children may disrupt class sessions. Photo identification will be required for any unknown visitor to the classroom.

### **Arrival and Departure of Children**

### **QPPS 10.11**

All motor vehicle transportation provided by parents, legal guardians or others designated by parents or legal guardians are required by Iowa Law to include the use of age-appropriate and size-appropriate restraints.

When bringing a child to school, parents are asked to park their car in the parking lot and turn off the engine before entering the building. Parents are asked to hold their child's hand as they enter the building to eliminate the possibility of an accident. Parents or legal guardians shall accompany children to the classroom at the beginning of the day or leave their child in the care of one of the teaching staff. No child shall be permitted to leave the building without an adult.

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization shall be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, shall be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

If a child rides the school bus to school, teaching staff shall go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus.

When all children have arrived, teaching staff will walk the children to the classroom where the preschool teacher will record attendance for the day. Throughout the day each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. classroom to outdoor, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

### **Transportation**

The Glidden-Ralston Community Schools will provide school bus transportation for preschoolers. Parents or legal guardians may request transportation at enrollment, indicating the pick up and drop off address, the name of the responsible person at that address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved. Parents or legal guardians are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes to the preschool teacher or elementary school secretary. All information will be updated as needed by the teaching staff.

For children who have special needs for transportation, the facility will use a plan based on a functional assessment of the child's needs related to transportation that is filled out by the child's physician. This plan will address special equipment, staffing and care in the vehicle during transport. Any accommodations indicated in the child's Individualized Education Program will be implemented as described.

### **Field Trips**

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant to and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. The Glidden-Ralston school buses are used for these field trips. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and signs posted in the classroom well in advance. A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for trips for each child before each trip. Adult family members are asked to volunteer to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. A notice posting the dates, time of departure, time of return, and the destination location will be posted prominently at least 48 hours before the field trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult for every part of the trip. Before every trip, the teaching staff will instruct children and all adults using the bus about the 10-foot danger zone around the vehicle where the driver cannot see.

During the field trip, all children shall wear identifying information that gives the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group shall be taken on all trips. Children will be counted every 15 minutes while on a field trip. Children shall only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children shall never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

### **Attendance**

Students who are enrolled for classes in the Glidden-Ralston Schools are expected to be in school for the full

session and are expected to be punctual in their arrival and departure. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call the elementary office with the reason for an absence no later than 8:00 AM. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

### **Ethics and Confidentiality**

Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. Children are people who deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child negatively or positively. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. The Staff continually strive to model such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children as well as for other adults.

### **Children's Records**

#### **QPPS 4.1**

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest, are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular school hours. Parents may also file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they feel their rights regarding their child's records have been violated. For a complete copy of the school district's policy on student records or the procedure for filing a complaint, contact the board secretary in the administration office.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and the way the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

### **Preschool Advisory Committee**

#### **QPPS 7.2**

The Glidden-Ralston Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets 3-4 times a year to provide feedback on services that meet children and family needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. If you would like to be included in this committee please contact the classroom teacher.

### **Grievance Policy**

#### **QPPS 7.6**

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. The preschool staff want parents to be confident that their child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time parents have a concern regarding their child, parents are encouraged to address their concern with the child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the Elementary Principal.

If parents have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, they are asked to contact the Elementary Principal who is the program administrator for the preschool.

As part of the preschool program assessment, in the spring of each year, the staff will provide parents with a family questionnaire to evaluate our program. This information helps the staff to assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children, as well as to identify strengths and weaknesses.

## VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## QPPS 7.1, 7.2

Glidden-Ralston School encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Family members are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions.

Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year. Program staff communicate with families on at least a weekly basis regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requires. At least one family activity is held during the year.

Glidden-Ralston Preschool values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences, or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

Although in-person daily contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also rely on notes home, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and bulletin boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication.

Glidden-Ralston Preschool invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways and welcomes other ideas as well.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Attend family meetings.
3. Return all forms, questionnaires and so on promptly.
4. Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring semesters.
5. Take time to read the family bulletin board.
6. Check your child's backpack each day.
7. Participate in field trip activities.
8. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
9. Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations or customs.
10. Read all the material sent home with your child.
11. Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, running errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards.
12. Serve on the Preschool Advisory Committee.

It is the policy of the Glidden-Ralston Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status or physical disability in its education programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972

Education Amendments and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

The school district believes that families should be supported in making decisions about services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

### **Home Visits**

Home visits are made prior to the start of school. This is an opportunity for the preschool teacher to get to know you, your child, and your family and for you to begin to create a partnership between home and school in order to best meet your child's needs. This is a great time for you to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share your knowledge about your child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. You can help the teacher understand what your goals are for your child and whether you have any concerns you'd like to address. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns and questions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

### **Family Teacher Conferences**

The preschool program will have formal family teacher conferences at the same time as the elementary school-fall and spring. The teacher will send home a sheet before the conference asking you to consider what new skills you see your child developing at home or in the community, to think about what you'd like more information about the classroom, and whether you have new or different goals for your child. During the conference the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of your child's work. Together you can make a plan to continue to encourage your child's growth and development.

### **Open House**

Family night is an opportunity for you and your family to come to school to get acquainted with your child's school environment. This opportunity allows your child to feel more comfortable on the first day of school.

### **Transitions**

#### **QPPS 7.9, 7.10**

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

## **VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Glidden-Ralston Community Preschool is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

### **Health and Immunization Certificates**

#### **QPPS 5.1**

Within six weeks after a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

### **Health and Safety records**

### **QPPS 10.10**

Health and safety information collected from families shall be maintained in school files for each child. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to school administrators or teaching staff who have the need for access to records. The child's parent or guardian, and regulatory authorities shall have access as permitted by law.

### **Child Health and Safety Records will include:**

### **QPPS 5.1**

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency
2. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up-to-date by a specified method during the year
4. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child
5. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions; conditions that require regular medication or technology support
7. Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition or the family's beliefs. Staff shall implement a plan to exclude a child if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the preschool program.

### **General Health and Safety Guidelines**

### **QPPS 5.4**

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies or special medical conditions
- Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition
- All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures
- All teaching staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times.

### **Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children**

### **QPPS 5.3**

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms during the night, he or she will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of other children:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees F
- vomiting



- Diarrhea
- Pink eyes with drainage
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

The center's established policy for an ill child's return:

- Fever free for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- Strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- Vomiting/Diarrhea 24 hours after last episode
- Conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

### **Reporting Communicable Disease**

### **QPPS 5.4**

Staff and teachers shall provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

### **Medication Policies and Procedures**

### **QPPS 5.10**

**Policy:** The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

**Procedure:** The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's

record at the school.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last name; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer, and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe the medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication.

Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration and the person who administered each dose of the medication. Spills, reactions and refusal to take medication will be noted on this log. See sample form in Appendix.

### **Cleaning and Sanitization**

### **QPPS 9.11, 5.24**

The preschool facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately.

Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for at least 2 minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the IQPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the

table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Non Toxic substances will be used whenever possible.

## **Hand Washing Practices**

## **QPPS 5.8**

1. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- ◆ Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand washing procedures and are periodically monitored;
- ◆ Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing will reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others;
- ◆ Staff assists children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.
- ◆ Children wash either independently or with staff assistance.

2. Children and adults wash their hands:

- ◆ On arrival for the day;
- ◆ After using the toilet.
- ◆ After handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- ◆ Before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry);
- ◆ After playing in water that is shared by two or more people;
- ◆ After handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals.

3. Adults also wash their hands:

- ◆ Before and after feeding a child;
- ◆ Before and after administering medication;
- ◆ After assisting a child with toileting; and
- ◆ After handling garbage or cleaning.

4. Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include:

- ◆ Using liquid soap and running water;
- ◆ Rubbing hands vigorously for at least 10 seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, a single-use towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

5. Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for handwashing in any required hand-washing situation listed above.

- ◆ Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur.

- ◆ Staff members do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material;
- ◆ In situations where sinks are used for food preparation and other purposes, staff shall clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

### **First Aid Kit**

### **QPPS 9.13**

A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from Healthy Child Care Iowa. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

### **Fire Safety**

### **QPPS 9.14**

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually, smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

### **Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents**

### **QPPS 10.13**

The Glidden-Ralston Community School District has in place an “Emergency Procedure Guide” that describes the following situations and procedures to follow:

- Response to any emergency
- Staff responsibilities
- Severe weather/tornado procedures
- Fire procedures
- Media procedures
- Student unrest
- Weapons
- Assault/Fights
- Evacuation/Relocation Centers (in case of electric failure, water line break, gas leak, etc.)
- Bomb threats
- Suicide/Threat of suicide
- Sheltering procedures/CBRNE
- Serious injury/death
- Lock down procedures
- Intruder/hostage
- Crisis team members

This guide will be posted in the classroom. The guide will be reviewed by each staff member at the beginning of the school year and when changes are made to it.

In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, our teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an “injury and Illness” form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a device that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the Fire Department, Police Department, Hospital, and Poison Control will be posted by

each phone with an outside line. Emergency telephone numbers and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Emergency phone numbers will be updated at least quarterly. Emergency phone numbers will be verified by calling the numbers to make sure a responsive, designated person is available.

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event that the Glidden-Ralston Schools must be closed due to bad weather we will notify school patrons by radio as we have in the past. KCIM (1380 AM, KKRL (93.7 FM) and KIKD (106.7 FM) in Carroll will be the official station with all school closings and early dismissals. Announcements are also posted on KCCI TV, Channel 8. The school Facebook page will also list closings along with the text messaging announcements that families can opt into.

### **Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health** **QPPS 9.16. 9.17**

Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, or scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping.

The preschool classroom building has been tested for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation on file. Well water is tested by the City of Glidden under a contract with Peoples service as dictated by Iowa DNR regulations. Custodial staff maintain the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation and other exposure to children. The program uses the technique known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

### **Smoke Free Facility** **QPPS 9.19**

In compliance with the Iowa Smokefree Air Act of 2008, Glidden-Ralston Community School buildings and grounds are smoke free. A "No Smoking" sign meeting the law's requirements is posted at the entrance to the preschool classroom building to inform people that they are entering a non-smoking place. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children.

### **Child Protection Policies** **QPPS 10.8, 10.16. 10.19**

The health and well being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program involves direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

The program has written school board policy for reporting child abuse and neglect as well as procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is

malicious. All teaching staff complete “Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult Abuse” at least every five years and within six months of employment.

The school district does not tolerate employees physically, or sexually abusing or harassing students. Students who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, principal, or another employee. The Iowa Department of Education has established a two-step procedure for investigating allegations of physical or sexual abuse of students by employees. That procedure requires the school district to designate an independent investigator to look into the allegations. The school district has designated Kaylee Bach, school counselor, at 712-659-3411. The alternate investigator is Tricia Bock, school nurse may be reached at 712-659-3411.

### **Substance Abuse**

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Glidden-Ralston Community School. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Volunteers**

#### **QPPS 10.15, 10.17**

Parents, friends, grandparents and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher or the elementary principal if you would like to be a school volunteer. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. For safety’s sake, if a volunteer will be working with children, he/she will be expected to execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. If a volunteer works more than 40 hours per month with children, he/she will also need to provide a current health assessment, not more than one year old.

## **VIII. STAFF**

#### **QPPS 10.15 - 10.20**

### **General Information**

The Glidden-Ralston Preschool has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluations. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

### **Health Assessment**

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid preschool staff and for all volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children. A current health assessment (not more than one-year-old) is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children. The health assessment is updated every two years.

Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance.
- Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and

who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease.

Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Superintendent's office.

## **Orientation**

### **QPPS 6.2**

Employees must know their role and duties. New preschool teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- ◆ Program philosophy, values, and goals
- ◆ Expectations for ethical conduct;
- ◆ Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for
- ◆ Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques;
- ◆ Daily activities and routines of the program
- ◆ Program curriculum
- ◆ Child abuse and neglect reporting procedures
- ◆ Program policies and procedures
- ◆ Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria
- ◆ Regulatory requirements

Follow-up training expands on the initial orientations. See Staff Orientation Checklist.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The superintendent will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs and accompanying forms to the employee. Regular employees ineligible for the school district's group health plan will be given information regarding where they can obtain health care or health care insurance.

## **Staff Development Activities**

### **QPPS 6.6, 10.15**

Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community and beyond. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings or share information with others both in and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, the local Empowerment areas, and the area education agency. Staff are expected to attend all staff training and meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community.

## **Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan**

### **QPPS 6.5, 6.6**

All staff are evaluated at least annually but an appropriate supervisor, or, in the case of the program administrator, by the superintendent. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized

professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous development.