



**Zeeland Public Schools
Preschool Childcare Handbook
Early Childhood Center
140 W. McKinley
2016-2017**

Childcare Room: 748-4777 x 2253*
Office: 748-3275



Welcome to the ZPS childcare program. We are happy to have your family in our program at the Early Childhood Center. Please read this ZPS handbook carefully so we can partner with you in providing the best care for your child. Concerns regarding fees, payments and policies should be discussed with the Director of the ECC.

ZPS Childcare Philosophy

Our goal is to provide a child-centered daycare facility that surrounds children in an environment of warmth and security, and is nurturing and enriching. We use play, movement, music and appropriate activities to develop loving relationships with your child, and maximize their strengths and growth. We respond to the needs of the children by providing positive words and actions encouraging children to make choices, ask questions, and feel a joy and curiosity for learning. We help them to grow in self-confidence, self-control, and respect for themselves and others. We also believe that partnering with parents is an important part of our program. We want to work together with you in sharing the experience of your child's continuing growth and development.

Parent Involvement

You are our most important resource! We encourage parent participation in our program. When your child enters the program or enters a new year in the program, you may want to spend time in the room to facilitate the adjustment to the new routines. There is an open invitation for you to participate in activities all year. You are always welcome. Please see the "volunteer/visitor" section of this handbook for details on classroom participation guidelines.

Please read newsletters and calendars sent home. This is a great way for us to communicate daily activities, unit themes, and other important information.

Staff Screening & Training

ZPS Childcare is staffed by certified staff and paraprofessionals who have training and/or experience in school age childcare. All staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid. They also must have a criminal background check, be fingerprinted, go through Right Start Orientation, and fill out a sheet stating that they have never been investigated for any child abuse and neglect cases.

Volunteers & Visitors

All adults who have contact with children at the ECC will be supervised at all times by the ECC staff. No one is allowed to leave the room with children or be unsupervised with children. All volunteers and visitors must be cleared with a background check through the Michigan State Police ICHAT, Internet Criminal History Access Tool. ICHAT clearance directions can be obtained from the office. You can sign up at:

<https://v2ms.zps.org>

Enrollment Policy & Hours of Operation

ZPS Childcare is licensed by the State of Michigan. Staffing and group size will comply with State regulations.

Children will need to be potty trained, per licensing, to enroll. Our facility must follow licensing rules for child care centers. Due to these regulations, we are not equipped for diapering at our preschool center. Our policy must comply with these regulations which in turn requires our students to be potty trained.

We are open and follow the ZPS calendar. Hours are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. These hours of operation stay the same for teacher records days and parent teacher conference days for ZPS employees. Late pickup will result in late fee charges explained in the Late Fees Section.

Your child's scheduled times in the childcare room remain the same, even if the district does not hold preschool or parent's work times change. If parents need extra care added to their regular childcare schedule, we will follow the process explained in the Registration & Fees section.

School Closures and Delays

ZPS School closures due to inclement weather will close the childcare. 2 hour delays for school will result in the childcare opening at 9:00 a.m. Payment for these closures is noted in the registration and fee section.

Behavior Management Policy

- Positive reinforcement: Children will be encouraged when he/she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
- Redirection: Children are redirected away from the problem area to another activity.
- "When ... Then" statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to accomplish something before going on to something else. Sample: "*When* you are finished picking _____, *then* you can _____."
- "If ... Then" statement: A statement in which the child is encouraged to make a positive choice. Sample: "*If* you pick up those blocks, *then* you can go to the Dramatic Play area."
- Take a Break: Otherwise known as time-out. The child is separated from the group for a *child-regulated* period of time. This technique is used **only** when a child is exhibiting *temper tantrum* type behavior or *hurting self, others, or equipment*. The caregiver will sit and talk with the child in a calm, non-judgmental voice about acceptable behavior and the child is ready to join the group and try again.

If the negative behavior continues,

- 1.) A written notice will be given.
- 2.) The second time, you will receive a 2nd written notice along with a parent conference to discuss whether enrollment in the program should continue.

Registration

Current and new families pay a yearly Registration fee of \$30. This is due upon signing contracts for enrollment and is not refundable. Enrollment will be complete when the following required forms are on file with the ECC:

- Health Appraisal Form
- Immunization Record
- Child Information Card
- Handbook signed (3 pages)
- Contract signed

Billing Information

Payments for ZPS Childcare need to be paid on Mondays of the current week's care. Payment covers that week of attendance. Checks need to have the week that the payment is for and the child's name written on them in the memo area. Checks should be made to ZPS Childcare or ECC. Electronic payment options will be available, either via check or credit card. No refunds will be given for absences. Late payments will result in \$15.00 late fee.

We will close on snow days and will not charge you for the first 2 snow days. If there are more than 2 refundable snow days, these days will require payment for half of the day. This aligns with staff payment for snow days. Year-end statements will be provided.

The following are our rates:

Rates:

5 days a week = \$175

5 hours or more = \$40/day

2-5 hours = \$22/day

0-2 hours = \$8/day

Schedules that are different than the offered days/times can be considered on an individual basis. A waiting list will be kept for families wanting to register a child when there is not a position available.

Adding care to your regular schedule requires advanced sign up. Requests are honored in the order they are received, if space and staffing allows. No discounts will be applied to extra care.

It is considered adding care to your regular hours if ZPS preschool is closed due to K-5 being closed (for conferences, in-service, etc.), and you need your child to come to **childcare** during their regular **preschool** time. Check the school calendar for these dates.

Late Fees

Late fees will be charged for pick up after 5:30pm.

Charges are as follows:

5:30 p.m.–5:45 p.m. = \$16.00 per child

5:46 p.m.–6:00 p.m. = \$ 8.00 per child

Arrival & Departure

ZPS Childcare will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Parents are required to sign their child in, remove their child's outdoor clothing, and discuss child's needs with caregiver. Children should arrive dressed and ready for the day. In the afternoon, **parents must arrive by 5:25 p.m.** to allow sufficient time to sign their child out, talk with the caregiver, and dress the child to go home.

Under no circumstances will children be released to anyone other than a parent or those listed on the child information card. If another person is to pick up the child, changes must be made on the information card and staff must be verbally notified as well as in writing. In unusual circumstances, you may notify us by phone. Ask the person picking up your child to bring ID with them to show the caregiver. Children will not be released to non-parents (even those on the list) without prior parent notification.

Please notify us by 9AM if your child will be absent or late. We can be reached at the direct classroom line **748-4777 x 2253** or the ECC office **748-3275**.

If you cannot pick your child up on time, please make arrangements for someone on the child's information card to pick them up.

Food Service & Nutrition

All children attending childcare over lunch must bring their own lunch labeled with the child's name. Lunch bags or boxes may not be put in the refrigerator, per licensing rules. They must be unpacked into the child's cold cubby. All food must be labeled—this includes sippies, snacks, juice boxes, and containers. Snacks must be in individual servings and ready to eat, labeled and dated. Meals should be well balanced including something from all the food groups and cut into bite-sized pieces for your child.

Children bring their own snacks if they are here over snack times: 9:30a.m. & 3:15p.m. We have limited space, so please only bring in snacks for 2 weeks. All childcare breakfasts should be finished by 8:30. Lunch is served at 11:45 a.m.

Due to Health Department regulations:

We cannot cut up any food. Please cut up food at home.

Leftovers must be taken home daily.

Large containers of juice & juice boxes may not be kept in the refrigerator door.

(Please bring small amounts that fit into your child's cold cubby.)

Non-perishable snacks may be stored in the snack cubby.

All food must come fully cooked. We can heat it, but not cook it. We CAN cook toast and toaster waffles only. Example: If you cook the easy mac at home first, we can reheat it.

Paper plates and utensils are not provided by ZPS Childcare. These are provided on a rotating schedule by parents and assigned at the beginning of the year. We will have a list for parents to sign up, as well as a list of what you need to bring in.

Water Bottles: We request that your child bring their own water bottle daily.

Birthday

We enjoy celebrating birthdays at the center and you are invited to send a birthday treat. Please keep it simple. Cupcakes tend to be a favorite and are quite easy for the young children to handle. Please ask a staff member about food allergies so that no one is left out. Also as an additional precaution, we ask that you supply an ingredient list for all treats or snacks brought in for the group. This will help to narrow down any new reactions.

Holiday Parties

Classroom parties to celebrate holidays occur throughout the year. Parents are invited to contribute to the menu. Sign up sheets will be posted prior to the holiday party. Some of these parties or gatherings may be in the evening and the entire family is encouraged to attend. This gives parents a chance to meet other parents and staff.

Clothing

Parents must provide 2 changes of clothing appropriate for the season. All items should be marked with the child's name and placed in the bathroom. Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothing. The children play with messy materials that are wonderful learning tools and are not compatible with dress clothing

Please label all clothing and personal items with your child's name. We are not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. Please, no flip-flops or open toed sandals—this will help protect little toes. During the snow and muddy seasons, we require that children remove outdoor shoes/boots and have a pair of slippers or indoor shoes to put on.

It is important to know that the children go outside everyday, weather permitting. Parents must dress their children appropriately so they can enjoy the outdoor activities. If your child is not well enough to play outside, please keep him/her home until fully recovered.

Safety of Children

The safety of the children is top priority. Emergency procedures are explained and handled with great care to insure that the children are not frightened or upset in any way.

The following guidelines help to ensure safety:

- No child is ever left unattended or unsupervised.
- Upon arrival, parents must take their child to the caregiver. Upon leaving, parents must notify the caregiver of their child's departure.
- Children will not be released to anyone except parents, guardian, or person authorized to pick up the child unless the responsible party notifies the center in advance, in writing.

Health and Wellness Policy

A child should not attend childcare if he/she has:

Fever of 100 degrees under the arm

Diarrhea (Two or more watery stools within 24 hours)

Vomiting on one or more occasions during the past 24 hours.

Severe coughing: child gets red or blue in the face or makes barking croup sound.

Difficult or rapid breathing: this is particularly important in an infant under six months.

A draining rash

Eye discharge or pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)

Severe sore throat or trouble swallowing.

Severe cold symptoms: uncontrolled coughing or sneezing, greenish discharge from nose.

Lice or nits

Too tired or ill to participate in normal activities, requires one to one care or constant holding.

A child may return to ZPS Childcare when:

- Fever has been absent for 24 hours, without the aid of fever reducing medications.
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours.
- An antibiotic for 48 hours for strep infection / 24 hours for others.
- Stage of contagion for specific communicable disease has passed and child feels well enough to participate in activities. Please refer to the health info below.

Sudden illness:

1. If a child becomes ill at school, parent will be contacted and expected to pick up their child within the ½ hour. When the parent picks up the child, they will be notified of beginning signs of possible illness, i.e. change in behavior, loss of appetite.
2. If the illness is learned to be a contagious disease, parents must report this to us so other parents can be notified as to what their child was exposed to and when. Please remember that all precautions will be taken to maintain confidentiality.
3. Parents will be notified of any bumps and other minor injuries, which might have occurred during the day. We will use an accident or injury form if appropriate.
4. In case of serious accident or injury :
 1. One staff member will stay with the injured child.
 2. Second staff member will call 911 and notify parents.

If your child has asthma or allergies, please see the director to make a plan to be completed by your doctor.

All temps are required to be taken under the arm. In an effort to prevent spread of illness, a letter from your doctor may be requested. Per state requirements, you must report any illness to us as soon as possible.

Please keep in mind that these policies are not made to penalize the parents but to try and maintain a healthy environment for our children and staff as well. We understand that no parent would knowingly send a child to daycare sick but that sometimes children do become ill while at daycare. Detailed health information can be found at <http://miottawa.org/Health/OCHD/emergency.htm>

Please notify us by 9AM if your child will be absent or late. We need to report to the health department what symptoms occur with each illness. Please leave this information when you call to report an absence. We can be reached at 748-4777 x 2206.

Medication Policy

Prescription medicine must have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, name and strength of medicine, and will only be given in accordance with ZPS medicine policy. A ZPS med form MUST be filled out and signed by the child's doctor before we can administer medication.

A record will be maintained with us. The medication must remain in the original container, stored according to the instructions and clearly labeled for the specific child. The medicine will be kept in specific medication locations and will be returned to the parent or destroyed when no longer needed.

All medications must be easily administered. Those medications needing special attention or equipment must be cleared through the site director to determine if our staff can safely administer them. If your child has allergies you must have a ZPS allergy plan on file at the center.

Toys

We ask that children not bring toys from home. Children on cots will be allowed one small (not bed size) pillow and one small blanket for naptime. Only one stuffed animal for naptime please. The items must all fit in personal cubbies and we have limited space.

Maternity or Other Leave

- If current parent chooses to keep current enrolled child out of program during pregnancy leave or extended leave for any reason, 100% payment is expected to continue to secure position.
- If parent chooses to remove child from program without payment, the child can return when a vacancy becomes available.

Withdrawal or Dismissal

If you plan to withdraw your child, the program director must be notified in writing two weeks in advance. You will also be required to pay for these 2 weeks regardless of any situations. The program director has the authority to request a withdrawal at **any time** under the following conditions:

- Not fulfilling state health regulations
- Delinquent payment
- Non-compliance with handbook regulations
- Excessive discipline problems. Please see behavior management policy in the handbook.

Accidents

No matter how closely supervised, children will have occasional accidents. All of our staff members are trained in First Aide and CPR and can provide immediate help if it is needed. Steps we will follow in any accident or injury:

1. To care for the child and help the child care for themselves as fully as possible
2. To record the incident on an Injury/Illness Report form and give parents a copy
3. To inform you of details when you come for your child.

If the child appears to have an injury that should receive medical attention, you will be called immediately. Should a more serious injury occur, one staff person would stay with the injured child while another calls 911 and notifies the parents.