

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Federal Programs Preschool provides a high quality, active learning environment for at-risk four-year-old children in twenty-three (23) locations. The adult-child ratio is 2 to 18 (2:18), with one (1) teacher and an instructional assistant.

New Bridge Learning Center is one of the twenty-three (23) locations. Students attending New Bridge Learning Center were selected from surrounding schools with existing preschool programs.

An inclusion model for four-year-olds is offered at four (4) schools. This model is a collaboration between Federal Programs Preschool and Exceptional Education. The classes consist of ten (10) at-risk four-year-old students and eight (8) four-year-old exceptional education students. Staff consists of two (2) teachers, one (1) trained in exceptional education and one (1) in early childhood and an instructional assistant.

Henrico County Public Schools Federal Programs Preschool is a federally and state funded non-profit program. Parents are not required to pay tuition or fees and all supplies are provided.

REST TIME

A daily rest time is provided for all children. Quiet music is played and children are encouraged to rest quietly if they do not sleep. Children who are awake after 15 minutes are encouraged to participate in quiet activities while others are resting.

Your child is provided with a rest mat that only he or she uses throughout the year. Please send a large towel or child size blanket for use at rest time to help him or her feel comfortable. These items should be labeled to ensure their safe return. When items are sent home to be laundered please return promptly. Children are not allowed to remove their shoes during rest time.

DRESS

Keep in mind that preschool children have a very active day. Shoes should be sneakers or tie-on shoes with low, flat soles (for safety reasons, especially on the playground). Warm clothing for outdoor play during the winter is necessary. A complete change of clothing labeled with the child's name, including underwear and socks, must be kept at school in case of emergency. Change of clothing should be appropriate with the season and the child's growth throughout the year. Please label coats, sweaters, mittens, boots, hats, and any other clothing that might be taken off and lost.

Children attending New Bridge Learning Center will wear uniforms consisting of navy blue bottoms or dresses and white tops. If you need further information regarding uniforms, please contact New Bridge Learning Center office at 328-8106.

FIELD TRIPS

As part of enrichment provided by New Bridge Learning Center, several field trips will be planned. A permission form signed by a parent/guardian must be received by the teacher for each field trip in order for your child to attend. We welcome parents to attend as chaperones, however due to limited space, please contact your child's teacher if you wish to accompany the class on a field trip. **SIBLINGS MAY NOT ACCOMPANY PARENT CHAPERONES.**

DISCIPLINE: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Teachers use a variety of approaches to promote appropriate behaviors in the classroom. These include proactive strategies such as establishing a positive classroom climate, structuring the classroom environment, engaging the children in learning, having explicit rules and expectations and providing

direct instruction of expectations and routines. Children are encouraged to solve conflicts through problem solving.

Every effort is made by New Bridge Learning Center staff to assist parents in modifying unacceptable behavior. Examples of possible interventions include meeting with Federal Programs staff to develop behavior plans, parents spending time in the classroom, and-or a modified schedule.

Children who repeatedly fail to follow classroom and school rules are sent home. Reasons to be sent home include but are not limited to: hitting other children, hitting a staff member, biting, kicking, spitting or using abusive language. If behavioral issues cannot be resolved, it may be necessary to remove the child from the program or find a more appropriate educational placement.

ATTENDANCE ENROLLMENT POLICY

Regular attendance at school is essential for children to become successful learners. PLEASE CALL your child's school as early in the day as possible to report an absence due to illness or an emergency. Parents should send a written excuse explaining the child's absence on the day they return to school. If your child is absent, please follow these procedures:

- Regular attendance at school is expected. If your child is absent THREE (3) consecutive days without any communication between home and school, you will be contacted by your Family Service Worker.
- Children who miss school frequently for reasons other than illness may be in danger of losing their place in New Bridge Learning Center.
 - If a student has five (5) unexcused absences in a nine week period, the parent will receive a warning letter from Federal Programs reminding them of the attendance policy.
 - If a student has a total of ten (10) unexcused absences, the parent will be required to meet with Federal Programs staff to develop an attendance plan.
 - Five unexcused absences after the development of an attendance plan will constitute review for possible dismissal from the program.
 - It is Henrico County Public School's policy to withdraw a student who is absent for fifteen (15) consecutive days without notice.

TARDINESS

School starts at 8:45 a.m. every morning and all children are expected to be in their classrooms ready to start the day. Late arrivals disrupt the educational activities of all children. If your child arrives after 8:45 a.m., you must report to the school office to sign in your child. All students must be accompanied by an adult to their classroom. If tardiness becomes a chronic problem, you will be asked to meet with Federal Programs Preschool staff to develop an attendance plan.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure we have a correct address, telephone number, emergency number, and babysitter number at all times while your child is attending New Bridge Learning Center. This information is needed for the following reasons: inclement weather, sickness or injury of the child, or any other emergency reason in which the school may have to close early. Failure to provide the school with updated emergency telephone numbers or make arrangements for a sick child to be picked up promptly is considered child neglect!

HEALTH

Sick days:

If your child is ill, please follow these procedures:

- Please call the school as soon as possible to alert them to your child's illness. You must send a letter with your child on the day that they return explaining your child's absence.
- Children who have any of the following symptoms should stay home from school and not return until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.
 - fever over 99 degrees
 - diarrhea
 - vomiting
 - persistent cough
- If your child becomes ill at school, the nurse will call you to pick up your child immediately. It is the parent-guardian's responsibility to inform the school of any changes in address, phone numbers, or emergency contact numbers. If a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached to make arrangements for a sick child to be picked up, it may be considered child neglect and social service called.

Medications:

- Children who need to take medications while at school must have a medical request form completed by their physician and sent to the school. If you need copies of the form, the school nurse can provide them for you.
- Parents-Guardians have the option of keeping medication at school or bringing it daily. If you choose to transport medication daily, it must be carried to and from school by a parent or guardian. You will be called immediately if medication is sent in the child's backpack, as this is against school policy.
- All medication must be brought to school in the original prescription package. Medication may not be sent in a container that does not contain original prescription and dosage information.

TRANSPORTATION

Safety is our main concern when transporting your child to and from school. Children attending New Bridge Learning Center may arrive and depart by Henrico County bus, private day care van, or be dropped off and picked up by a parent or an authorized person.

SAFETY EDUCATION

All classrooms are required to participate in developmentally appropriate activities centered around transportation and pedestrian safety, within the first thirty days of the school year.

Children receive information pertaining to:

- safe riding practices;
- safety procedures for boarding and leaving the bus;
- safety procedures in crossing the street to and from the bus stops; and
- recognition of the danger zones around the bus.

Emergency evacuation procedures including bus evacuation drills will be conducted by the school system during the program year.

Safety Education training for parents is also important.

Parents should:

- visit the bus stop with your child.
- have your child at the bus stop on time.
- accompany your child to and from the bus stop.
- have a plan for emergencies.
- review school bus rules with your child.
- make sure your child understands and recognizes the danger zone around a school bus.

BUS RIDERS

Transportation provided by HCPS is a privilege dependent upon following the guidelines established by HCPS Transportation. Each preschool student must be accompanied by a person authorized by the parents, on record with the school, when the bus picks up in the morning. The authorized person must be present to meet each preschool student at designated bus stops when the bus returns the child. Students not met by an authorized person will be returned to school and the parent or guardian will be contacted by the school. The parent or guardian will be expected to come immediately to the school to pick up their child.

NON-BUS RIDERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE-RELEASE OF STUDENTS

Children should not arrive at school before 8:45 a.m. If your child does not ride the bus, he/she must be picked up at 3:05 p.m. Any change in transportation arrangements for your child, including picking him or her up early, must be sent to your child's teacher in writing. If your child needs to leave school early for an appointment, please sign him or her out in the office and he or she will be dismissed. Your child will be released only to the parent, guardian or person(s) listed on the authorized pick up form. Upon arrival, the person picking up the child must present a photo ID. If the person is not listed on the authorized pick up form, the parent must get prior approval from school administration granting the person permission to pick up the child. These procedures guard against unauthorized persons picking up your child and for your child's safety.

Children not picked up on time or who are brought back to school on the bus are taken to the school office, and parent or emergency contacts are called to pick up the child. Failure to pick up your child is a form of Child Neglect and may be reported to the Child/Abuse/Neglect Hot Line. Three (3) occurrences may be cause for a child's removal from the program.

THE FOLLOWING POLICY APPLIES WHEN:

- THERE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZED PERSON WAITING AT THE BUS STOP WHEN IT DROPS OFF THE STUDENT IN THE AFTERNOON
 - THE PARENT-GUARDIAN IS LATE PICKING UP HIS or HER CHILD FROM SCHOOL (PICK-UP AFTER 3:25 p.m. IS CONSIDERED LATE)
- First Incident: The child will be returned to school and it will be the responsibility of the parent to pick up his or her child IMMEDIATELY.

Second Incident: (BUS RIDERS) If an authorized person fails to meet his or her child at the bus stop in the afternoon, transportation privileges will be discontinued for one week. It will be the parent's responsibility to transport their child to and from school. (NON-BUS RIDERS) If a parent is late picking up his or her child on a second occasion, a meeting with federal programs staff will be required.

Third Incident: (BUS RIDERS) If an authorized person fails to meet his or her child for a third time, their child may lose his or her place in the program. (NON BUS RIDERS) If a parent is late picking up his or her child for a third time, their child may lose his or her place in the program.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Successful early childhood programs actively involve families and others from the community. Our staff will develop partnerships with families because parents have both a right and a responsibility to participate in decisions about their children's care and education. Parents know their children best and can share valuable information about their development.

As parents, you are encouraged to participate in all phases of Federal Programs Preschool. If you have a special talent or special skill, we would like you to share it with us. You may volunteer to help in the classroom, go on field trips or help in the program office. Your time is valuable to us, and if it is difficult for you to be in the classroom, we appreciate your help with recruiting parents, making phone calls and sharing your knowledge and experience. Prior to volunteering in the classroom, going on field trips or working in the school building, you must fill out a volunteer application. This form must be completed and on file in the school for all adults that volunteer or chaperone.

Parents are strongly urged to attend a parent orientation prior to your child entering Federal Programs Preschool. Parents are invited to attend workshops on a variety of topics suggested by parents. Topics and resource materials may include child development, health and nutrition, career counseling, parent-child relationships, child behavior, and discipline. Should you have questions or concerns about your child's development or behavior, contact your child's teacher.

COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

A confidential needs assessment to determine family needs is mailed to families prior to the first home visit. New Bridge Learning Center staff will review the needs assessment with the family. Based on the assessment, parents are assisted in obtaining information and support for identified needs such as illness, unemployment, child care, education, and other related assessment areas.

HOME VISITS

The preschool staff is required to make at least two (2) home visits per year. Home visits are IMPORTANT. Families are contacted by Federal Programs Preschool staff to schedule visits at a convenient time.

CONFERENCES

Two (2) parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. Please check your school calendar for scheduled conference days. If you would like a conference at another time during the year, please write the teacher a note or call to arrange a convenient time.

BAD WEATHER AND LATE OPENINGS

When Henrico County Public Schools are closed due to inclement conditions, New Bridge Learning Center follows the announced schedule for all students. If school is delayed, students should follow the delayed schedule. WRVA-1140 AM, WRVQ-94 FM, and Comcast Cable Channel 99 will carry the closing information.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REPORTING

It is a Virginia State Law that school personnel report any suspected child abuse to Henrico County Child Protective Services. Failure to report such cases may lead to revocation of license and/or prosecution.

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NUTRITION & MEALS

Breakfast, lunch and snack are provided at each location, at no cost to participants. Free and reduced lunch applications must be completed by all participating families. This is a program requirement.

Meals are a relaxed, social time. New foods are often introduced. The children are encouraged to try the food, but are never forced to eat anything. If there are any special dietary needs or restrictions, please be sure you report these to the teaching staff and complete the required documentation for HCPS food services.

Due to Federal Regulations and Safety Guidelines, all prepared foods brought into the classroom (i.e., birthday cakes, cupcakes, cookies, etc.) must be store bought or restaurant prepared.

WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Withdrawing Your Child

If your child must be withdrawn from Federal Programs Preschool for any reason (e.g., moving), please notify your child's teacher in writing at least two weeks prior to withdrawal.

Policy for Removing a Child

We want every eligible child to have the opportunity to participate in New Bridge Learning Center. However, the following circumstances may result in a child being removed from the program:

- If a child does not have immunizations completed within the designated time period, usually within ten days after the immunizations are due;
- If there are problems with transportation, i.e. repeated failure to pick up a child from school on time;
- If there are repeated or excessive unexcused attendance or tardiness problems that cannot be resolved;
- If a child's address changes to a location outside of the New Bridge Learning Center attendance zone; (If this child moves to a school zone where another Federal Programs Preschool classroom is located, the child will be placed at the top of the wait list for the class.); or
- If there are repeated occurrences of disruptive behavior which interrupt or interfere with teaching and orderly conduct in the classroom, and these issues cannot be resolved.

If any of these circumstances occur, New Bridge Learning Center staff will make every effort to contact the child's parent or guardian to help resolve the situation. Parents will receive reasonable notification if their child must be removed.