



“Merritt Academy students will achieve academic excellence, character development, a love for lifelong learning, and provide service to others.”

Introductory Information

Tuition Preschool

Merritt Academy’s environment will allow for a fun learning experience where each child will be able to learn and feel safe within a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Philosophy

Merritt Academy will provide each child with an active learning experience that promotes the whole child. Our environment will allow for an anti-bias learning experience where each child will be able to learn and feel safe within a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Program Goals:

- Children will learn how to get along with their peers through problem solving.
- Children will develop large and small motor skills.
- Children will be allowed to share ideas and feelings
- Children will be allowed to make choices and feel they have a decision in what they do.
- Children will learn to accept their peers feeling and opinions.
- Children will develop the necessary cognitive skills needed for school age learning.
- Children will develop an understanding of the diverse community around them.

- Families will be openly accepted into the classroom and parent participation will be welcomed.

DHS Licensing Notebook

- The center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- The notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

Enrollment Information

Admission

Merritt Academy admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. Age requirements must be met to be eligible for admittance to the program. Children must be two years nine months on or before September 1st of the school year.

All required forms must be completed and signed before a child may attend the program. Parents must agree to keep all information updated as necessary.

Recruitment occurs year round using the school website and Facebook page as well as Great Start Macomb. An open house takes place yearly in April to identify those students that meet GSRP or tuition paid preschool requirements. This open house gives parents an opportunity to meet the teachers, visit the classroom, and ask questions regarding the program. Open enrollment will continue from the date of the open house through the summer. Applications that are received will be carefully reviewed and documentation supporting risk factors will be gathered. All information submitted is confidential. Children meeting Head Start requirements will be referred to Head Start for services. In some cases, a waiver may be obtained allowing them to attend Merritt Academy GSRP. Parents will be notified if their child has qualified for GSRP. If more families apply for GSRP than slots are awarded, those children with the greatest need based on the qualifying risk factors will be admitted first.

When the program is enrolled to capacity, a waiting list is established. Families on the wait list will have an initial phone screening to help determine eligibility. Wait list names are shared with other GSRP programs. If space becomes available during the school year, qualified families are contacted and enrolled.

Enrollment

We maintain an 8:1 child/adult ratio. Children should be two years nine months old on or before September 1st of the school year in which they are enrolling. To attend, children must have on file:

- Parent Handbook agreement signed.
- Complete Emergency Card. Please let us know if you have any changes to your contact numbers or address ASAP. We must be able to contact one parent or emergency contact person at all times.
- Up-to-date immunizations and physical (Health Appraisal Form)
- Media/Photo Release Form
- Child's Original Birth Certificate with seal will be required the first day of class.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. Merritt Academy Early Childhood does not provide bussing. Children should be dropped off on time at the designated location. Parents are also responsible for picking up their children from the designated location in a timely manner (see Late Fee Policy page 4).

Tuition Schedule

Tuition is due the last school day of each month. Families will pay tuition monthly and make checks out to Merritt Academy. Monthly statements will be provided. Cash or Check is accepted.

Schedule of Operations

Merritt Academy Preschool operates September through May and is a full day program which operates Monday-Thursday 8:00am-3:00pm. Merritt Academy Preschool will follow the Merritt Academy School calendar and will not operate on any days Merritt Academy is closed due to Holidays, scheduled days off, or weather days. You will receive a school calendar for the year. Please keep it and make arrangements if needed.

Latchkey services are available if needed at extra cost. 6:30 am – 6:00 pm.

Late Fee Policy

For every week tuition is not paid a \$5.00 fee will be added to the families account.

If you are late picking up and are not signed up for Latchkey services you will be billed a late fee. Parents who are late picking up their child will be billed, using standard Merritt Academy latchkey rates.

Withdrawal

Merritt Academy will make every effort to keep your child in our program. In the event that a parent voluntarily withdraws their child, no refund will be given. The Director of Merritt Academy may request withdrawal of a child from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to provide documentation on qualifying factors
- If a child endangers the health or safety of staff or other children
- If the director, in consultation with the staff, determines Merritt Academy is unable to meet the needs of a child and/or a parent
- If conferences between the director and parents do not satisfactorily resolve inappropriate behavior
- If a parent does not provide the center with required paperwork concerning their child or refuses to abide by other licensing requirements
- If a parent behaves inappropriately in front of other parents, staff, or children

Confidentiality

It is important that the privacy of our children, families and staff is maintained. All staff is required to keep information about children, families and co-workers confidential. Staff and parents are asked to refrain from commenting about children or families in the presence of other adults or children. This includes personal contact that parents and staff may have outside of school times. There are times when information regarding a home situation would help our staff take better care of your child. Please know that all information shared will be confidential.

Curriculum

Our program provides a curriculum that is appropriate for three old children at diverse developmental levels. Initial screening using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire provides the teacher with a baseline of information needed to plan appropriate activities. Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum is the research based curriculum teachers implement. Teachers observe, plan and assess the growth and development of children daily. This allows children to engage in activities designed to promote learning based on their abilities and interest. Children feel comfortable and confident as teachers challenge support and guide students.

Creative Curriculum uses ACTIVE LEARNING where children are involved in direct, hands on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events. ADULT CHILD INTERACTION involves adults observing and interacting with children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. The LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world. Finally, the DAILY ROUTINE includes a plan-do-review process which gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them and reflect on their experiences with peers and adults.

Visit www.TeachingStrategies.com for additional information.

Objectives for Development and Learning

Every Early Childhood program is expected to follow and incorporate the following into their lesson plans:

- Creative Curriculum
- MI Early Childhood Standards of Quality
- Merritt Academy Standards

(Please note that television and movies will not be watched on a regular basis. If they are utilized in the classroom, they will tie in with learning and objectives.)

Teachers work together to make a weekly lesson plan based on the objectives listed above. The weekly lesson plan is posted outside of your child's classroom.

Inclusion

Cultural Competence

Statement of Compliance with Federal law In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972, Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the Merritt Academy School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, military status, national origin or ancestry, sex (including sexual orientation), disability, age (except as authorized by law,) height, weight, or marital status be excluded from, participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service or employment.

Special Needs

Children with special needs will be accepted into our program under the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All families will be treated with dignity and with respect for their individual needs and/or differences. Merritt Academy Preschool will be responsible for ensuring that confidentiality about special needs is maintained for all families in the program. We will ensure that when a child with special needs is identified on the child care application form, the family will be given a special health care plan and emergency information for children with special needs form to be filled out by the family and health care provider collaboratively with a member of the child care program staff. Children with special needs will be given the opportunity to participate in the program to the fullest extent possible. To accomplish this, Merritt Academy may consult with agencies/organizations as needed, provided parental permission is granted. The individual written plan of care for children with special care needs will be followed in all emergency situations. Merritt Academy Preschool is responsible for making sure the plan shall be updated annually, at a minimum.

Classroom Information

Ratio

All classrooms are at a one teacher to eight student's ratio.

Sample Daily Schedule

Full Day Monday - Thursday

8:00-8:30 Arrival/Work Time

8:30-8:45 Hand Wash/Breakfast

8:45-9:05 Morning Meeting

9:05-9:20 Music and Movement

9:20-9:30 Planning Time

9:30-10:45 Work Time

10:45-11:00 Small Group

11:00-11:30 Outside or Gym Time

11:30-11:45 Hand Washing/Lunch Set-up/Story Time

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:15-12:30 Clean-Up/Bathroom

12:30-1:45 Rest Time

Individual Table Activities Until all Awake

2:00-2:15 Snack

2:15-2:30 Afternoon Meeting

2:30-3:00 Outside or Gym Time/Dismissal

When dropping off your child please accompany your child into the class and help them put their things away. You must sign them in and out for safety issues.

Items from Home

Teachers may have show and tell in their classrooms. When bringing in possessions from home, please make sure that it is age appropriate. No weapons of any kind are allowed at school. We are not

responsible for lost, broken or stolen items. It is better to keep possessions at home, but we do understand that some children may find bringing a favorite animal or toy for comfort. Just understand that the possessions will be kept in your child's cubby until it is allowed in the class.

Please provide your child with a blanket, pillow and/or sheet. Make sure these items fit in the nap time bins located outside of your child's classroom. We will provide each student with a cot to sleep on. They will be sanitized at least once a week with a bleach and water mixture. Your child's bedding will be sent home weekly to be laundered.

Clothing

Children should wear clothes which are comfortable and easy to fasten. An extra set of clothing may be placed in the child's cubby for spills or accidents which may occur. Please label all clothing, including coats, with your child's name. Warm clothing including boots, caps, snow pants, and mittens are needed on cold days.

Children will not be permitted to go outside when the "Feels Like" temperature is under 10 °F or above 100 °F. The "Feels Like" temperature takes into consideration the wind chill or heat index and is a better measure of the weather conditions for outdoor play.

Food and Special Occasion Food

Merritt Academy GSRP provides each student with breakfast, lunch and snack. If you wish to supply your child with a meal from home you must fill out the parent request to provide food. The food provided from home must meet CACFP or NSNP requirements except when documented food allergies or intolerance or family beliefs prohibit. See attached meal plan for more information.

We do understand that holidays and birthdays may call for special treats. Due to allergies we ask that you talk with your child's teacher before bringing in any special treats.

Use of Photos

Merritt Academy uses photos/videos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project/craft, identification of personal belongings, classroom/hallway decorations or Merritt Academy publicity. Parents will be given a document to sign releasing the use of their child's photo/video.

Use of Media

Movies, books and computer games need to be age appropriate with a "G" rating. A maximum of two hours of media per week is acceptable. Media means the use of electronic devices with a screen, including but not limited to, televisions, computers, tablets, cameras and electric game consoles.

Field Trips

Throughout the year your child's class may go on field trips. Parents or guardians may need to attend field trips. Transportation is not provided to the field trip. You will be notified of these trips and have the right not to participate.

Child Health and Safety

Child Health Policy

We understand it is hard to find care for your child when emergencies come up, but please do not send your child to school when they are not feeling well. If your child is sick please call them in at 586-749-6000. If a child has a fever of 99 or above they are not allowed to attend school that day. Likewise, they may be sent home if they have a fever of 99 or above. Your child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. In addition to fever, please do not bring your child if they show signs or symptoms of repeated diarrhea or vomiting.

The health department requires that children with certain communicable diseases be excluded from school until a physician says they are no longer contagious. These diseases include:

- Chicken Pox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Pinworm
- Ringworm
- Impetigo
- Scabies
- Pink Eye
- Lice
- Rash that has not been identified

If your child has been treated by a doctor, we will need a doctor's note to allow them back into class. We would also require that you notify your child's teacher of any communicable disease so we can take protective measures within the classroom.

If your child gets sick at school the parents will be contacted to pick up their child early. If we are unable to contact the parents, a number on your child's emergency card will be called. We will then keep the child in an isolated area as comfortable as possible until they are picked up. The child must be symptom/fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Michigan Universal Health Care Plan

We follow the state of Michigan's Health Care Plan

* Hand washing will be done before and after handling food.

* If contact with a bodily fluid occurs, hand washing will take place after gloves are removed.

The following will not be permitted in replacement of soap and water:

- Hand sanitizer
- Water Basins
- Pre-moistened cleaning wipes

The following steps are to be followed for cleaning and sanitizing:

- Wash area/surface with warm water and soap detergent
- Rinse area/surface with clean water
- Submerge, wipe, or spray the article or surface with a sanitizing solution
- Let area/surface air dry

The sanitizing solution will be a water and non-scented bleach solution with a concentration of 1tbs. of bleach to one gallon of water. Commercial sanitizers will be specified on the label to be safe for food contact surfaces and used according to the manufacturer's directions.

Controlling Infections

- See universal precautions
- Toys that are mouthed will be removed, washed, and sanitized. Other toys and equipment will be washed immediately if dirty on a daily bases.
- Bedding will be stored so that it does not come in contact with other children's bedding. Cots/mats will be washed weekly. Cots will not be shared.

If you have any questions please contact:

Macomb County Health Department:

586-469-5520

Center for Disease Control:

www.cdc.gov

Accident/Injury/Incident Reporting

We will contact you if any accident occurs while in our care. In the event of an accident, an accident report will be completed. You will be asked to review and sign the report when you arrive to pick up your child.

1. Minor injuries (scrape, small cut, etc.) will be treated with basic first aid, including soap and water, band aids and ice.

2. Parents, guardians, or emergency contacts will be notified immediately by telephone of all head injuries, even those that are very minor.
3. Parents, guardians, or emergency contacts will be notified immediately for accidents requiring further medical attention.
4. If a parent, guardian or emergency contact cannot be contacted and the child needs immediate attention, employees will call an ambulance, accompany the child to the hospital, and stay with the child until the parent arrives. FOR ALL SERIOUS INJURIES, 911 WILL BE CALLED.

Allergies

If your child has an allergy we ask that you notify us of such. Special actions will be taken to make staff aware of allergies. If a child has a peanut allergy the classroom will be nut safe. The teacher will post any special needs. If your child needs prescription medicine, we will need a medication form completed by the physician. This will provide us with dosing information and times that it is to be given. You may have it faxed to the school.

Medication

We must have the medication in its original labeled bottled (must have physician's name, child's name, instructions, and name and strength of the medication). It also needs to have the expiration date and dosage. The first dose of the medication should be given at home in case of an allergic reaction. Over the counter medicine may be given as long as you provide us with written permission stating when to give it and the length of time it needs to be given.

If any lotion or sunscreen is to be applied, we will need a form on file also. The Health Department requires that we have up to date immunization records on file.

Vaccinations

If you are against vaccinations for your child you will need to contact the Health Department to schedule a class to attend. After attending you will receive a waiver that needs to be turned into your child's teacher.

Macomb County Health Department Telephone: 1-586-573-2090

Emergency Procedures

Emergency phone numbers for police, fire, poison control and animal control are posted in each classroom. There are also building maps showing routes for emergency evacuation and shelter during tornado warnings. Drills will be conducted throughout the year with each class. These are done in a very non-threatening and reassuring manner and include fire, tornado and lock down.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

- Fire Department: 1-586-749-9351 (Non-emergency)

- New Haven Police: 1-[586 469 5151](tel:5864695151).
- Macomb County Sheriff: 1-586-469-5151
- Michigan State Police: 1-248-584-5740
- Rescue: 911
- Poison Prevention Center: 1-800-222-1222

LOCAL HOSPITAL(S) USED FOR EMERGENCIES

- McLaren Macomb TELEPHONE: 1-586-493-8000 ADDRESS: 1000 Harrington Blvd Mt. Clemens MI 48043
- Henry Ford Macomb TELEPHONE: 1-586-269-2300 ADDRESS: 15855 19 Mile Road Clinton Twp. MI 48038

RELOCATION PLAN

In the event that we are unable to return to the child care center, children will be relocated to the following location:

The Rose Cellar
58316 Main St,
New Haven, MI 48048

Children will be relocated by the following method:

1. The children will line up in a single line and the Teacher will do a head count of the children. The Teacher will get the attendance and emergency cards and proceed to walk with the children to The Rose Cellar.
2. Once by at The Rose Cellar the Teachers will take roll call to account for all the children in attendance and keep the children calm and quiet.
3. Teachers will check the room for any children and get any medication.
4. Teachers will help keep the children calm and quiet.
5. Accommodations will be made accordingly for children with special needs.

Release/ Custody

In case of child custody, a Court Order designating a parent or guardian who has full custody must be on file with the office. We cannot hold a child from the legal parent if we do not have a court order. If someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up the child, they must be on the emergency card and we will need to see identification before releasing the child. Children can only be released to persons who are on the Child Information Record (emergency card).

Pest Management

Merritt Academy will notify the parents if they request notification when a pest application will be applied to the campus. We will post a note on the parent board outside the classroom, and also on the preschool main entrance. If we have advance notice of an application being applied we will notify you as soon as possible through our newsletter. Pests are controlled to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Pesticide applications will not be applied during school hours nor will it be in contact with the children.

Preschool Guidance and Discipline

Staff will use positive methods of child management, which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.

Group Management Technique- Limiting the number of children in each area of the room avoids overcrowding and allows for sufficient materials and the opportunity for constructive interactions, which reduces opportunities for negative behaviors.

Positive Redirection- If a behavior is inappropriate we will use positive redirection. Your child's teachers will do every step necessary to positively guide your child in the right direction. You will be notified if a problem has occurred and will be responsible for following up on it.

Staff will **NEVER** and are prohibited from using any of the following forms of punishment:

- Hitting, shaking, biting, pinching spanking, or inflicting corporal punishment.
- Mental or emotional cruelty
- Confining a child
- Restricting a child's movement by forceful grabbing etc.
- Depriving of basic needs like food, bathroom and naps.

Parents are encouraged to talk to their child's teacher and the director about any issues they have with discipline. Our staff will follow the child protective law to report any instance where there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect.

Weather Days

Preschool follows Merritt Academy's weather policy. In the event Merritt Academy is closed due to weather or other reasons, Merritt Academy Preschool will be closed as well. You should receive an e-mail and/or phone call from Merritt Academy. You may also check the local news channels 4 and 7 for school closings as well as the Merritt Academy website.

Smoking Policy

Merritt Academy is a SMOKE FREE campus. This applies to field trips and after school events.

Employee and Volunteer Requirements

Staff

Lead Teachers have an Associates degree in Early Childhood or their Child Development Associate (CDA). Associate teachers have college education specializing in child development and early childhood education. At all times, at least one staff member on duty has current certification in CPR and First Aid. All staff members annually participate in 16 hours or more of professional development. All staff is background checked. In compliance with State Law, we are required to report suspicion of abuse or neglect to Children's Protection Service.

Volunteers

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. You are always welcome to set up a time to come in and observe your child. Parents must fill out a volunteer screening form, and the school must receive the results that you are cleared by the State of Michigan before you can volunteer. Parent interaction is important to children and shows you support them. Please make sure your child arrives on time and also keeps up good attendance. Good attendance conveys to your child that school is important.

All volunteers will work under the direction of staff and will be supervised by staff at all times while children are in care at the center. A staff person will provide the supervision. The staff person will have a line of sight observation at all times. The volunteers will not be allowed to take children out of the room alone, at any time. Volunteers will not assist any child in toileting. Volunteers will not have unsupervised contact with children if they have been convicted of any of the following:

- A listed offense, as defined in section 2 of the sex offenders registration act, 1994 PA 29, MCL 28.7222
- Child abuse or child neglect
- A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire.

*****Staff persons will receive training regarding the appropriate supervision of volunteers. *****

All volunteers must be approved by the Director. If the volunteer will be in contact with the children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks, they must provide documentation confirming a negative TB test. All volunteers must complete a State Police Clearance Form and a Children's Protective Service Clearance Form. Volunteers under eighteen years of age must provide references from an educator or other unrelated adult qualified to give a reference.

Volunteers are cleared by the Department of Human Services with documentation stating that they have not been named in a central registry case as a perpetrator of child abuse or neglect.

Parent Information

Conferences

Conferences will be conducted two times a year.

Parent Resources

A list of family health related resources is available in the hallway as well as trainings that are offered for the parents. We also send out information on various topics throughout the school year.

If you have any questions about our program please feel free to contact:

Meghan Smith, Director of Early Childhood, **586-749-6000**

Email at madamek@merritt-academy.org