# 2026-2027

# Pee Wee Paws

## 3-Year-Old

# Preschool

**In Collaboration & Partnership With**

**South O'Brien Elementary School**
**155 3rd St. NE**
**P.O. Box P**
**Primghar, Iowa 51245**
**(712) 957-3755**

**Pee Wee Paws Preschool Parent Handbooks are available on our school website and upon request in the South O'Brien Elementary office.**

# Preschool Policies and Procedures

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## I. WELCOME to Pee Wee Paws Preschool

The Pee Wee Paws 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 three-year-old children to take part in planned, active learning experiences to build their readiness skills. The preschool program has adopted and meets the Department of Human Services (DHS) Program Standards. The Iowa Early Learning Standards are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

***Tuition and fees:***
Pee Wee Paws Preschool has a $150.00 monthly tuition.
If your child will be using South O'Brien bus transportation, the fee is $20.00 per month.
Monthly tuition and optional transportation fees are due to the Elementary Office on the last school day of the current month. (Example- September tuition is due on September 30).
South O'Brien CSD reserves the right to withdraw a child from the PeeWee Paws program if reasonable attempts are not made to pay tuition and fees.

***Scholarships***
Scholarships may be available to families but to assist with monthly tuition, but are not guaranteed year to year. If scholarships are available, the resources will be shared with all families. Child Care Assistance can be provided through Health & Human Services to income-eligible families. It is the responsibility of the families to complete scholarship and assistance processes.

## II. MISSION, PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

***Mission:*** The mission of the South O'Brien Community School is to prepare students to be responsible citizens and lifelong learners

**Pre-K-6th *Grade School Philosophy of Education: SOS Learning Outcomes***
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 benefits 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.

**Pee Wee Paws 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.

**Pee Wee Paws 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

**EDUCATIONAL EQUITY POLICY STATEMENT (Code 102)**

The Pee Wee Paws Preschool in collaboration and partnership with South O'Brien Community School does not discriminate in its policies or programs on the basis of age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, attributes, physical or mental disability, ancestry, political party affiliation, political belief, socioeconomic status, or family status. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX, Section 504 or Title VI may be referred to the Superintendent of Schools, Wade Riley (712) 949-2115 or to Section 504 Coordinator, Jean Steen, at 216 S. Rutledge St. – PO Box 638 Paullina, Iowa 51046.
Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the region VII Office of Civil Rights, Us Department of Education, 310 W. Washington Ave., Ste 800, Milwaukee, WI 53203-2292, (414) 291-1111. Procedures and levels are outlined in district policy for resolving complaints and are available upon request from the South O'Brien Community School Superintendent's Office.

**Eligibility**

Children must be three years of age prior to September 15th of the current school year. Pre-registration will begin in the spring of the year. Final registration materials are available at the time of fall registration.

**Hours**

Classes meet for 4 days a week. The session is from 8:20 A.M. until 11:20 A.M. Children attend preschool on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The preschool follows the South O'Brien Community School calendar. If there is a 2 hour late start for inclement weather, there will be no preschool classes. IF there are three or more days of classes canceled due to weather conditions during a month, Pee Wee Paws classes will be made up on the soonest Wednesday morning.

**General Information**

The following information and documentation are required by the first day the child begins the preschool program:
1) Online Enrollment forms including, but not limited to, the child and parent/guardian name, address, telephone number, medical emergency consent, medical/dental service providers, emergency contacts (if the parent/guardian cannot be reached), and a list of individuals authorized to pick up the child from preschool. (See Section K, for information regarding a potentially life-threatening emergency, when the parent designated doctor or hospital information is not current and parent designated emergency contacts cannot be reached through reasonable efforts.)
2) Physical Report (dated within 6 months of enrollment).
3) Immunization Certificate indicating that the child is current on all required immunizations or submitted with a physician's waiver for immunizations not up-to-date.
4) Health Insurance Information card or other documentation of current health insurance information. (Please keep this information updated in our files, if parent/family insurance arrangements change during the year.) Parents shall be responsible for keeping all health insurance information updated for school files.

The maximum class size is 20 children. 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 call the elementary office and the principal will arrange for coverage of the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio.

**Inclusion**

The Pee Wee Paws 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.

**Discharging a student from Preschool**

Children can be discharged from preschool as a result of numerous, aggressive behaviors that could jeopardize the safety of other students, such as biting, kicking and shoving, or even for verbal classroom disruptions such as screaming, profanity or inappropriate language.. Parents will be notified concerning each incident that occurs with their child behaving aggressively or violenting toward students or staff. The principal or director will request a meeting with the parents if the behavior becomes consistent. The principal will follow progressive disciplinary procedures which may include out of school suspensions or discharging the student from Pee Wee Paws Preschool.

**IV. A CHILD'S DAY**

**Staff**

Program Director / Teacher The Pee Wee Paws Teacher is designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool program. The principal is the elementary building administrator.

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 part-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.

**Daily Schedule of Activities:**

A daily schedule of activity times will be posted on or near the Parent Information Board. Although a schedule helps children develop a sense of the routine they will experience in the South O'Brien Elementary School – our goal is to be flexible enough to take advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities! Children will have an opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Large and Small Group Activities | Choice Time | Music/Movement Activities |
| Individualized Activities | Motor Activities | Self-directed Play |
| Story Time | Snack time | Outdoor Choice Activities |

Notes will be sent home to families in children's backpack weekly or monthly. The preschool does ask that parents have their child(ren) here on time and picked up shortly after our session ends for the day. If parents will be late, they are asked to inform the teacher in advance or the school office.

**Curriculum:**

**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. It is a content-rich, developmentally appropriate program that supports active learning and promotes 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 will counter 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**

*Guiding Principles:*
The Pee Wee Paws Preschool in collaboration and partnership with South O'Brien Community School believes 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:

- *Observation data* provides an ongoing anecdotal record of each child's progress during daily activities.
- *Child portfolios* are organized by the teaching staff and include the assessments, observational data, and child work samples collected on an on-going basis.
- *Families* are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

This information will be used in the following ways:
- 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;

**Program Assessment**

The Pee Wee Paws Preschool in collaboration and partnership with South O'Brien Community School implements the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards. The preschool completes a yearly desk audit during the current school year to confirm compliance with the 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**

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.

Students arrive at the classroom by parent drop off or via bus. The classroom paraprofessional meets students at the bus and walks them into the classroom upon arrival. Parents who drop off their child(ren) will walk them to the classroom.

If your child will not be at school, please call the school at 957-3755 between 7:30 and 8:20 AM. If the school does not receive a phone call from the parent, an official from the school will contact the parent to check on the student’s whereabouts. All absences will be recorded in the student records system.

When a student must leave early, the parent or guardian must sign their child out in the office. If plans change for a student’s transportation after school, please call the school by 10:30 AM so we can get the message to the teacher before dismissal.

If a student leaves the school grounds without permission, law enforcement will be contacted for the safety of the child.

**Behavior Management and Discipline**

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, and to use language to communicate needs. On rare occasions, children may exhibit significant behavioral concerns that warrant involvement by the school administrator or designee. These behavioral concerns will be dealt with at the administrator's discretion, which may involve suspension and/or law enforcement involvement.

**Biting Policy**

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected for toddlers. Biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve the issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, it serves to protect the children that were bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

**Challenging Behaviors**

The teaching staff evaluates and will change 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;
- 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 behavior; teachers, families, and other professionals will 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:

- Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged and praised when he/she is 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 can 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!”

- “Calm Down” area: The child is separated from the group for a child-regulated amount of time. The “Calm Down” area may be in or out of the classroom and may include a conference with administration.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. Tools, such as social stories, fidgets, etc., will be provided and modeled to help the child learn to regulate their emotions.

***Prohibited Practices***

Pee Wee Paws Preschool staff does not, and shall not, employ harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children and do not make threats or derogatory remarks. They will not use physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, 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**

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 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 supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

**Snacks/Food and Nutrition**

Snacks will be served once each morning session.. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. A written snack menu is posted in the classroom and will be sent home with each student.

It is our goal to not just provide a nutritious snack, but also to use snacktime as a learning opportunity to teach manners, portion control, counting, measuring, and much more! All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Parents/Guardians may provide the snack for special days (such as birthdays, class parties, etc.). All snacks must be PRE-PACKAGED – home baked goods are no longer allowed due to the possibility of food allergies. Please DO NOT send any treats that have peanuts or peanut butter in them. All snacks sent to the classroom must be store bought, with an ingredient label so school staff can read, or the snack will not be distributed to the students. Remember our staff members are required to participate in snack time, to role model serving portions and table manners, so please plan to bring enough for a child-sized portion for them, as well. Students who have a summer birthday are welcome to choose a school day to celebrate with their class. Parents may choose not to have their child drink milk or water at snacks. Snack milk is an additional cost as determined yearly by the South O'Brien Board of Education.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and the specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the respective 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 disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information.

**Outside Play and Learning**

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, riding, jumping, crawling, scooting, and swinging. Also it is a time when exploration of the natural environment takes place. When weather permits, children are taken outside in the morning for outdoor activities.

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, Pee Wee Paws Preschool 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. Staff will apply approved sunscreen and/or insect repellant only with written parental consent.)
*Parents need to provide sunscreen and insect repellent.

**Safe Sleep/Nap**

Pee Wee Paws preschool dismisses at 11:20, so naptime does not occur at preschool. Therefore, there is no need for a “safe sleep” policy.

**Clothing**

In order for children to enjoy their time at preschool, parents/guardians are advised to dress them in play clothes suitable for the weather. Appropriate clothing shall include mittens, hats or hoods (with elastic), and snow boots for winter weather. So children will be comfortable, parents should have their children dress in layers for those in-between days. Children will be outside, weather permitting, and some of our art and other activities may soil the clothing. Parents should take this into consideration when selecting clothes for their child to wear.

Drawstrings are a strangulation hazard. Hazardous items shall not be allowed on children's clothing in Preschool. Parents shall be responsible for removing drawstrings and other hazardous items from children's clothing.

**Toilet Training**

It is understood that children of preschool age (and even older) can become so involved in their play that they "forget" to go to the toilet in time. It is recommended that an extra set of clothes be sent to Preschool with each child, so the staff can assist them with changing, should such toileting accidents occur. Parents are asked to clearly label the clothing with their child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes. Clothing should be sent in a plastic Ziploc bag clearly labeled with the child's name.

*When accidents do happen*:
Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces shall be immediately placed in plastic bags (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering and a clean set of clothing shall be used to replace the soiled clothing.

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the bathroom in the classroom. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 7:
3. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
4. Staff checks children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
5. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
6. Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
7. Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have

a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.

8. Diapering and gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
9. 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. Please place the clothes in a plastic Ziploc bag clearly labeled with the child's name.

**Toys and Other Items from Home**

**PLEASE do not allow a child to bring toys or costume jewelry from home.** Favorite toys can become broken, misplaced or cause disagreements between the child who owns the toy and those who would like to own the toy!

**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 or look-alike weapons** on any school premises vehicle or at/during any school sponsored event. "**Look-alike weapons" mean any item that resembles or appears to be a weapon. A zero tolerance policy on weapons (real or toy) shall be in effect.**

**Classroom Animals or Pets**

Parents must contact the teacher with principal approval prior to bringing a pet to school. Pets or visiting animals shall be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to verify that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected). Teaching staff shall supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals. Reptiles shall not be allowed as pets or visiting animals because of the risk for salmonella infection.
Any child allergic to such a pet or animal shall not be exposed to the pet or animal.

## V. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Pee Wee Paws Preschool will promote regular, on-going, two-way communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversation or e-mail. 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 in the form of weekly/monthly newsletters. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs.

### Parent Participation-Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome at the Pee Wee Paws Preschool! Parents are a very important part of our program! If parents wish to stay for snack, please let the school staff know ahead of time so they can plan accordingly! Parents who plan to volunteer at the Preschool, for any reason, should meet with the Elementary Principal before volunteering for a brief "orientation" of responsibilities and rights.

### Arrival and Departure of Children (Sign in / Out)

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 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 may 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. **All adults need to check-in at the office anytime they drop off or pick up a student during regular school hours.**

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 and have parental permission 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.

**Transportation / Fee**

South O'Brien Community School will provide school bus transportation to and from locations on the school designated bus routes for a $20 monthly fee. Parents or legal guardians may request this service at the time of enrollment, indicating the pick up or drop off address, the name of the responsible person at the address, and emergency contact information for all parties involved.

**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. Parents will be informed of each field trip through a newsletter and signs posted in the classroom in advance. A parent or legal guardian shall sign an informed consent form for trips at the time of registration. Adult family members may be 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.

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 Pee Wee Paws Preschool 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 a child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Parents and guardians are asked to call the office with the reason for a child's absence no later than 8:30 A.M (morning session). If a student is absent without notification, the school staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

**Ethics and Confidentiality**

The staff follows 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**

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. Permanent files are secured in our Elementary File Room. Child files will be kept in a securely locked filing cabinet in the Pee Wee Paws Preschool classroom.

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 how the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

**Preschool Advisory Committee**

The Pee Wee Paws Preschool has a preschool advisory committee composed of parents, school staff, and other community members interested in the preschool program. This group meets 3 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. Parents are asked to inform the preschool teacher if they are interested in being part of the Preschool Advisory Committee.

**Grievance Policy**

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 Pee Wee Paws Director or the Elementary Principal.

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.

**Computer Policy**

Use of computers provides great educational benefits to students. Access is given as a privilege to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Abuse of the computing system may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

**Social Media Policy**

All parents have the option of allowing or declining their child's picture on the South O'Brien social media, school web site and area newspapers. The parents must answer this question with our registration.

## VI. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family members are welcome at the Pee Wee Paws Preschool! Parents and family are a very important part of our program. If family members wish to stay for snack time, they are asked to inform the staff ahead of time, so they can plan for them. Parents who plan to volunteer at the Preschool, for any reason, should meet with the principal ahead of volunteering for a brief "orientation" of responsibilities and rights.

Teachers and Administrators use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure; their preferred way of child-rearing and information family's wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Program staff communicate with families often regarding child's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Parent-Teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters, as well as when either party requests.

Pee Wee Paws Preschool invites family members to become involved in one or all of the following ways:

1. Parent's support of a child's daily transition to school by sharing information about a child's interests and abilities.
2. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect their child.
3. Attend parent nights.
4. Attend Parent-Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring semesters.
5. Participate in field trip activities.
6. Share family cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
7. Come and spend time in the classroom with their child.
8. Help with special events.
9. Serving on the Preschool Advisory Committee.

### Intake Visits

The teacher will arrange an intake visit in order to better meet the needs of the child and family at the start of the school year. This is a great time for parents/guardians to share what makes their family

unique, how they prefer to communicate with the teacher, and share their knowledge about their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs. Parents/guardians can help the teacher understand what their goals are for their child and whether they have any concerns they would like addressed. Parents are encouraged to share these preferences, concerns and inquisitions at any time with either the classroom teacher or administrator.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

The preschool program shall have one formal conference in the given school year. At the conferences, the teacher will share results of classroom assessments and samples of the child's work. Together parents/guardians and staff can make a plan to continue to encourage their child's growth and development. Weekly/monthly newsletters and notes regarding children's activities and progress will be sent home throughout the year. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time.

## VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

To help insure the health and safety of all children, the preschool staff will encourage and promote the following health and safety practices:

### Health and Immunization Certificates

When your 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. The school nurse and/or preschool will contact parents/guardians if screenings and/or immunizations are not complete.

### Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families shall be maintained in school files for each child. Files are kept current and

updated as needed. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to 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:**

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. 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.

**Lost or Abducted Child Policy**

South O'Brien Elementary is a locked facility, with access only given to staff by a key card system, and given to parents through a doorbell camera system. All exits stay locked during school hours so intruders cannot enter the building. Cameras are also located throughout the building for visual guidance by administration. Staff will count children frequently with a name-to-face count. When away from the school for field trips, staff may ask students to wear South O'Brien shirts to easily identify them. If an incident arises that a staff member cannot locate a child, the teachers, Principal, and office staff will be notified. All members will be given the child's last known location. Staff will then aid in the search of the child. If unable to locate the child, South O'Brien administrators will notify the police department and DHS of the incident. The staff will give authorities a description of the child and the location the child was last seen. The parent(s) and/or emergency contact person will be notified of the situation. Incident reports will be written and placed on file, and copies will be given to families.

**General Health and Safety Guidelines**

All staff and teachers will provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, sign 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.

- Accidents and Injuries: Basic First Aid will be administered to a child needing care for an injury. An accident report will be completed and put in the student's health file. If, in the event of an injury or incident, a staff member or child is suspected to have been exposed to blood of another person through an opening in the skin, etc., the source child or staff member will be required to be tested (at the Preschool's expense by the Preschool's choice of medical facility) for HIV, HCV, and/or HBV infectivity and a report will be given to the person who suffered exposure. A copy of the Preschool's Exposure Control Plan (ECP) is available for review upon request.
- Fire and Tornado Drills: Drills will be conducted monthly, with evacuation plans posted on the wall next to the exits.
- Hand Washing: The children's hands will be washed before and after snack, after restroom use, nose blowing or wiping, after handling pets, after special projects or sand play, before and after water play, and after outside time. A staff person's hands will also be washed at these times and after assisting with toileting or helping a sick child.
- Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse: Iowa Law states that Child Care and Preschool staff are required to report immediately to the Department of Human Services any suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Staff members are not obligated to inform the parent/guardian of this report.
- Toys and Equipment: Toys and equipment will be cleaned and sanitized weekly or as needed after use.
- Training: The preschool staff shall maintain current training in CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions for Infectious Disease Control, and as Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse.

**Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children**

Daily Screening: Children shall be visually "screened" as they arrive for Preschool. If a child exhibits signs of illness, it will be determined if the symptoms indicate the need for exclusion until remedied. In the event a child becomes ill at preschool and needs to be picked up, the child will be separated from the rest of the children as much as possible until the parent/guardian arrives.

Symptoms for Exclusion:

- Fever of 100 F degrees or higher
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- A draining or weepy rash
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis (“Pinkeye”)
- Cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge
- Sore throat
- If on an antibiotic – should be home the initial 24 hours of treatment
- Too tired or ill to participate in normal activities.
- Students should stay home for 24 hours after a surgical procedure (such as tubes in ears, etc.)

Non-Admittance: A Preschool child shall not be allowed to attend Preschool, unless they meet return policy requirements:

- 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.

If your child becomes sick at school, you will be called to pick up your child. Please make sure the school has updated contact information.

**Reporting Communicable Disease**

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 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.

**COVID 19**

If a student tests positive for COVID 19, the child must remain out of school for 5 days from the positive test date. On day 6, if fever free for 24 hours with the use of fever-reducing medication and if symptoms have improved. Per CDC guidance, the student should wear a mask from

days 6-10. If the child is unable to wear a mask, chooses not to wear a mask, has moderate or severe COVID illness or is immunocompromised, the child is excluded for 10 days. On Day 11, if fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and if symptoms have improved, the child is allowed to return to school mask free.

**Medical Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency, policies of the Pee Wee Paws Preschool to have the staff administer first aid. Every possible effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact to determine his/her wishes for treating the medical emergency. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, transportation to the closest hospital will be arranged first and then the parent will be contacted. The Pee Wee Paws Preschool assumes no financial obligation for transport or treatment of a child unless it is a procedure required under the Preschool's Exposure Control Plan.

**Medical Facility Used**

Every reasonable effort will be made to utilize the parent/guardian's designated medical and/or dental facilities. If the preschool staff cannot reach the designated medical treatment facility, the closest facility shall be used in the event of a life-threatening emergency. The closest medical facility shall be the following:

Orange City Area Health System ER
1000 Lincoln Circle SE
Orange City, IA 51041
(712) 737-4984

**Medication Policies and Procedures**

We do not encourage medication being given at school. Arrangements can be made to give most medications at home. If the child is to receive medication 3 times a day, one dose could be given before the child leaves for school, one right after school, and the last before bed.

The following guidelines MUST be followed if medication must be given at school:

- **Send medication in the prescription bottle only.** The bottle must contain the child's name (not the name of a sibling), the name of the medication, the dosage and number of times to be given, the prescription number, doctor's name and the other usual information on any prescription.

- **DO NOT** send any medication in an envelope, plastic bag, or any other container. Medication that is not in its original prescription or over the counter container will not be given.
- Written parental permission is required for all prescription and over-the-counter medications to be given at school.
- **If these steps are not followed, the medication will not be given.**
- **The policy regarding medication may seem strict, but it is done for your child's protection.**

Safeguards are used with all medications for children:

1. Staff administer both prescription and/or over-the counter medications to a child only if the child's record documents that the parent or legal guardian has given the program written permission.
2. The child's record includes instructions from the licensed health provider who has prescribed or recommended the medication for that child; alternatively, the licensed health provider's office may give instructions by telephone to the program staff.
3. Any administrator or staff who administers medication has specific training and written performance evaluation, updated annually, by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration:
   A). Verifying that the right 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.
   B). The person giving the medication signs documentation of items (1) through (5) above. School staff who are trained to administer special medication procedures have demonstrated to a health professional that they are competent in the procedures. School staff will be guided in writing how to perform the procedure by the prescribing health care provider.
4. Medications are labeled with the child's first and last names, the date prescription was filled or the recommendation the child's licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, the manufacturer's instructions or the original prescription label that details the name and strength of the medication and instructions on how to administer and store it. Medications must be in their original prescription or over the counter containers.
5. All medications shall be kept in a locked container.

**Cleaning and Sanitization**

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.

A toy that a child has placed in his or her mouth or that is otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion shall be (a) washed by hand, using water and detergent; then rinsed, sanitized and air dried or (b) washed and dried in a mechanical dishwasher before it can be used by another child.
The routine frequency of cleaning and sanitization in the facility will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist shall be completed as indicated in the table.

**Hand Washing Practices**

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 assist 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 hand washing 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 both food preparation and other purposes, staff shall clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

**First Aid Kit**

Fully equipped first-aid kits shall be readily available and maintained for each group of children. A first aid kit is located in the preschool classroom. Following each use of the First Aid Kit, the contents will be inspected. Missing or used items shall be replaced immediately. The First Aid kit shall be inspected monthly. The first-aid kit shall be taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the classroom.

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

The Pee Wee Paws Preschool has in place a Emergency Action Plan Binder that describes the following situation and procedures to follow:

- ♦ Emergency phone numbers
- ♦ Fire procedures
- ♦ Utility Failures
- ♦ Severe weather

♦ Bomb Threats

♦ Physical Threats/Armed Intruder

♦ Evacuations

♦ Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures

♦ Accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations

♦ School crisis team members and a checklist to use

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 accident report form and placed in the student's medical file. 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 updated twice a year.

**Inclement Weather**

In case of bad weather, unsafe road conditions, or other reasons requiring a cancellation, early dismissal, or a late start, the school will contact the emergency communication services provided by **SECURE NOTIFICATIONS OF WEATHER/URGENT CANCELLATIONS AND POSTPONEMENTS [SNOWCAP],** emergency services office who will relay the cancellation notification to area TV and radio stations. These cancellation broadcasts are to be aired between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. on the morning of any cancellation or delay and when possible at 10:00 p.m. the night before.

Use of EMERGENCY BUS ROUTES will be announced by TV, radio, internet and text messaging. IF WE START THE DAY WITH EMERGENCY BUS ROUTES, WE WILL END THE DAY WITH EMERGENCY BUS ROUTES AND SCHEDULES. Snow emergency bus routes require parents/guardians to bring their children to predetermined roads and bus stops for each bus route or to the school. Parents are required to pick their children up from the same location.

## Protection From Hazards and Environmental Health

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

The preschool classroom has been tested for lead, radon, radiation asbestos, or and other hazards that could impact children's health with documentation of file. Custodial staff maintains the building's heating, cooling and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

## Smoke Free Facility

Pee Wee Paws Preschool is in compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008. The building and grounds are smoke free. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

## Child Protection Policies

The health and well-being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. Hiring procedures ensure that all employees who come in contact with children in the program or who have responsibility for children have passed a criminal-record check, are free from any history of substantiated child abuse or neglect, and are at least 18 years old. In addition, no person with substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.
The program has a 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, and 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.

## Substance Abuse

Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises of the Pee Wee Paws Preschool. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Law enforcement may be contacted as determined by school staff.

## Volunteers

Parents, friends, grandparents, and other adults are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Please contact the teacher/director, the elementary principal, or our school office if you would like to be a volunteer. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer.

## Breakfast / Snack Milk

Breakfast will not be served at Pee Wee Paws. All students will receive a mid-morning snack, which is included in tuition. Snack milk is also available for $0.35 per milk.

# VIII. STAFF

## General Information

The Pee Wee Paws 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.

## Health Assessment

The preschool program maintains current health information from documented health assessments for all paid staff.

## Orientation

New staff members are given an initial orientation that introduces them to fundamental aspects of 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.

### Staff Development Activities

All staff members focus on strengthening their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community or region, and beyond. Teaching staff participate in informal or formal ways in local, state or regional public-awareness activities related to early care by joining groups, attending meetings, or sharing information with others both at 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 members are expected to attend all staff training and meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program / community.

### Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan

All teaching staff members are evaluated for the purpose of improving their professional performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. They develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.

## IX. COMMENTS OR CONCERNS

Parents are important to us. Pee Wee Paws Preschool welcomes the opportunity to discuss any concerns and/or comments. We ask that parents talk to their child's teacher immediately when a concern arises. The South O'Brien website has a complete list of all staff members. They can also mail their comments to the address listed on the front page of this handbook.

Parents:

Thank you for taking the time to review the 2026 - 2027 Pee Wee Paws Preschool Handbook. We are looking forward to another enjoyable and rewarding year at South O'Brien Preschool.

Just a reminder that all snacks brought to the school must be prepackaged. Also, we are a peanut allergy aware environment, so please refrain from sending snacks that have any type of peanut product in them.

During registration you are asked to answer a handbook question. Your yes/no response will indicate that you have read and reviewed the handbook.

Sincerely,

Ms. Jean Steen,
South O'Brien Elementary School Principal