

# **EUFULA**

## **EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

# **Parent and Student Handbook 2022—2023**



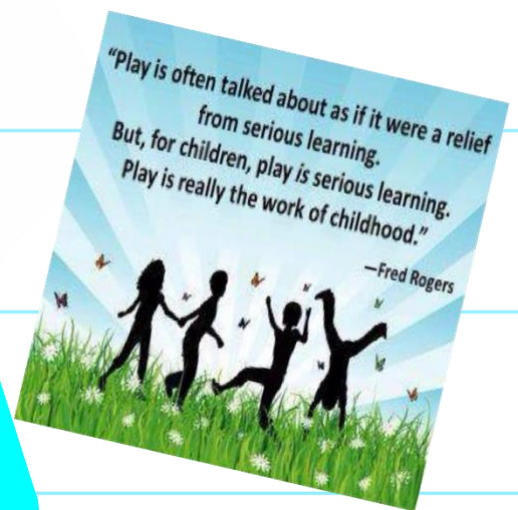
*The Eufaula City Schools Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jan Bowen or Deltonya Warren may be contacted at (334) 687-1100 or in writing at 333 State Docks Road, Eufaula, AL 36027 or email [jan.bowen@ecsk12.org](mailto:jan.bowen@ecsk12.org) or [deltonya.warren@ecsk12.org](mailto:deltonya.warren@ecsk12.org).*

**The mission of the Eufaula Early Learning Center is to ensure that children are healthy, self-confident, enthusiastic learners who have the skills necessary for success in life. This will be accomplished by a committed, highly-qualified staff in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment which fosters exploration, creative learning, and problem solving through the use of real-life experiences.**

## **Mission Statement**

**The vision of the Eufaula Early Learning Center  
Preschool Program is to prepare our children to enter kindergarten with a solid sense of security, positive self-esteem, and a love for learning.**

## **Vision**



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## Parents as Teachers P.A.T



## CERTIFIED TEACHERS

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## AUXILIARY TEACHERS

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 Annie Justice

# SCHOOL SAFETY: A **SHARED** RESPONSIBILITY



## Safety

Your child's safety comes first! They are as precious to us as they are to you. We kindly ask for your cooperation in adhering to the following:

- While on campus, which includes the parking lot, please do not use your cell phone. Morning arrival times and afternoon dismissal times are crucial transition times and require your full attention.



- When you are visiting our campus, we must ask that you respect the privacy of other families and children and not use your phone to video or photograph children.

- No tobacco, alcohol, or weapons are allowed on our campus.



- Always report to the office first when you visit our campus to get a visitor's pass. You will need your driver's license or state issued identification to obtain a visitor's pass EACH time you enter the ELC.





## Arrival Procedures 7:30 —7:50

Upon arriving at the ELC, enter the parking lot from State Docks Road at the sign marked “Enter” on the west end of the parking lot. Anytime you come to the ELC, please park only in the area designated for the ELC, and do not park in front of the Central Office or any other area on the campus.

When parking, please park in one designated parking space and be respectful of other parents (do not block them in or park in way that inhibits them entering or exiting their vehicle). For everyone’s safety, no one will be allowed to back into a parking space. Handicap parking is available for use with the proper placard or tag issued to you for **your** use.

You, or an adult designated by you, are expected to **hold your child’s hand, and walk to the front of your vehicle** to one of the two designated walking paths. If you park on the first row facing the fence and the school, you will walk on the path between your vehicle and the fence which takes you directly to a sidewalk that leads to the ELC. If you park on the second or third row (which face each other), there is a designated walking path between the concrete bumpers. Please hold your child’s hand at all times. You will follow the path to the “crosswalk” where a staff member will be directing traffic and allow you to cross to the sidewalk safely.

Follow the sidewalk to the last entrance which leads into the hallway where classrooms are located. Staff will open the doors at 7:30 a.m. each morning to begin welcoming students into the building. Teachers and staff will escort children into their classroom. Due to COVID safety measures, adults will not be allowed to enter with students.

The first bell rings at 7:45 a.m., and the tardy bell rings at 7:50 a.m. Once the tardy bell rings, the adult bringing the student to school must report to the ELC office to check the child into school. \*Please refer to the attendance policy below. Under no circumstances should a pre-k child be dropped off at any point on the campus and expected to walk into the building **ALONE**. All entry points to interior doors are enclosed by gates, and **ALL** doors will remain locked throughout the school day. The only access into the building is through the office.

Our day begins precisely at 7:50. Faculty and staff will close the doors precisely at 7:50 as they are needed to fulfill breakfast and morning responsibilities. (If you are arriving “just in time”, please don’t expect staff to wait for you to get from the parking to the entrance. If the doors are closed to the classroom hall, please do not knock or expect someone to let you in.) **BEING ON TIME IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

### Student Check-ins end at 9:00

Check-ins will cease at 9:00 a.m. No child will be admitted to school after 9:00 a.m. without a written doctor’s excuse.

Routine and predictability are important to children. Arriving late to school results in stress and confusion for your child and the class.



Breakfast time is a prime opportunity to work on social and academic skills. Therefore, all pre-k students will eat breakfast together each morning beginning at 7:50 a.m. in their classrooms. Breakfast service ends at 8 a.m.

Please exit the parking lot at the “Exit” sign, and turn right toward the industrial park. Cars will not be allowed to turn left back onto State Docks Road when exiting the parking lot per the Eufaula Police Department.

*\*Administration will require a conference with the parent or guardian if chronic absences or tardiness arises. This will include being late to school, excessive checkouts, or more than 3 late pick-ups in the afternoon. At the conference, the administration reserves the right to consider the possibility of dismissal from the program. This is always a last option for our staff as our desire is to keep every student in school until the end of the school year. We will make every effort to work with any family who has evidence of extenuating circumstances.*

# Dismissal Procedures

## 2:30—2:45



Dismissal begins at 2:30 p.m. and ends promptly at 2:45 p.m. Parents or designees picking up children in the afternoons follow the same traffic procedures used in the mornings. Everyone **MUST** have the child's car tag. Once you are parked, please get in line at the covered area while maintaining social distance. The line may not form before 2:15. For safety reasons, please remain in your vehicle until this time.

Students will be seated with their partner class or "pod" under the large covered area. Once you advance in the line, you will pick up your child from his/her teacher at a designated "colored spot".



Staff members will check dismissal tags. For the safety of all students and staff, **EVERYONE** must have the child's car tag and be listed on his/her emergency card for the ELC to release the student. Each family was given 2 dismissal tags at open house. Additional tags may be purchased by parents or guardians for \$4.00.

In the event that you or your designee do not have the dismissal tag, report to the office to be cleared to pick up the student by presenting your state issued identification. The office will then issue a one-time pick-up pass, and you will be expected to go to the end of the dismissal line to wait your turn. Please understand these measures are in place to protect our students. We will follow these procedures in all cases of someone not having a dismissal tag (even if you/he/they have picked up numerous times previously). Children will not be released, under any circumstance, to a person not listed on the emergency card and/or to persons who do not present a valid state issued ID.

If you utilize the services a local day care center for afternoon pick-up or morning drop-off, please make sure you share the arrival and dismissal expectations with them, and that you give them one of your child's dismissal tags and list them on the emergency card. We will only dismiss the students to individuals who are listed on the Emergency Card and who have the dismissal tag. Remember, safety is our number one priority during these crucial transition times.



Dismissal ends at 2:45. If a child is not picked up by 2:45, there is a \$7 late pick-up fee. If on any day your child is assigned to the late pick-up location, and you do not pay the late pick-up fee, you will be required to meet with one of the administrators before your child returns to class the following school day. After the third instance of your child not being picked up on time, a conference with one of our administrators will be required and may result in dismissal from the program.

We realize that there are extenuating circumstances from time to time. If you see that you will not be at school by 2:45, call the office at 687-1100, extension 1021. It is important that arrangements are made for your child to be picked up daily by 2:45 p.m. (Please refer to the attendance policy below.)

*Administration will require a conference with the parent or guardian if chronic absences or tardiness arises. This will include being late to school, excessive checkouts, or more than 3 late pick-ups in the afternoon. At the conference, the administration reserves the right to consider the possibility of dismissal from the program. This is always a last option for our staff as our desire is to keep every student in school until the end of the school year. We will make every effort to work with any family who has evidence of extenuating circumstances.*



***The Early Learning Center does not provide after- school care. Several local daycares. provide private after-school care and pick up students from the ELC.***

## **Student Checkouts end at 1:00**



**All students will have a short rest time from 1:15 until 2:00 p.m. Most of our students use this time to nap. Please understand that when we use the intercom to call for students, it disrupts the entire class. Therefore, if you child has an afternoon appointment or needs to be checked out, please do so by 1:00 p.m. Check-outs for any reason are not allowed after 1:00 p.m. We begin dismissal at 2:30 p.m.**

**EVERY day  
counts  
attendance matters**

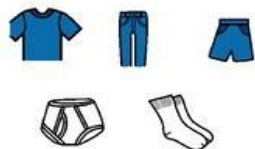
Research supports that one of the most important things you can do to ensure your child is successful in school is also one of the most basic: be sure they attend school every day and that they are on time. In fact, research has shown that your child's attendance record may be the biggest factor influencing his/her academic success.

As part of the parent responsibilities associated with pre-k, you agree to the following:

- Avoid Chronic Tardiness which is defined as a late arrival or early departure more than 2 days per week.
- Avoid Chronic Absences which is defined as missing more than 4 days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. This could also be defined as an established regular attendance pattern. (Late every Monday or absent every Tuesday or leave early every Friday for example)
- In such situations, parent conference with administration will be required, the regional monitor for the Department of Early Childhood Education will be consulted, the truancy office for Eufaula City Schools will be consulted, and possibility of dismissal from the program will be considered.

***Administration will require a conference with the parent or guardian if chronic absences or tardiness arises. This will include being late to school, excessive checkouts, or more than 3 late pick-ups in the afternoon. At the conference, the administration reserves the right to consider the possibility of dismissal from the program. This is always a last option for our staff as our desire is to keep every student in school until the end of the school year. We will make every effort to work with any family who has evidence of extenuating circumstances.***





### Extra Clothing

Please send a complete change of clothes including underwear and socks to be left at school.

### Toileting Accidents/Potty Training

Please note that children must be completely potty-trained when entering Pre-K. This includes being able to clean themselves following toileting. Faculty and staff are not allowed to change and/or to clean children due to toileting accidents or toileting needs. If a child wets his/her pants, staff can offer baby wipes and coach them on getting cleaned up, changing the wet underwear and clothing, and washing their hands. However, if a child has a BM in their pants, parents will be called to come to school to change the child's clothing or to take them home if necessary to clean them properly.



### Dress Code



For safety reasons, **tennis shoes must be worn to participate in P.E. and outside playtimes.** We strongly encourage you to consider purchasing tennis shoes with Velcro. Preschool students' fine motor skills typically are not ready to tie shoes especially at the beginning of preschool.



Preschoolers are very active at school and spend time sitting on the group rug, playing on the playground, painting and other art activities that may be considered "messy". Please dress them comfortably and in a manner that does not interfere with their learning and participation at school. Preschool students may not wear spaghetti strap shirts or halter tops. Shorts should be worn underneath dresses due to the activities typical in a preschoolers' day. Further information on the dress code may be found in the Eufaula City Schools' Code of Conduct Handbook.

### Rest Time

Preschool students have 45 minutes of rest time each day. We provide cots for each child. Parents are asked to send a clean child-sized blanket, cot-cover or towel each Monday. These will be returned on Friday to be washed over the weekend.

### Toys

Please do not send toys to school with your child. Toys can get broken, are difficult to share, and may get misplaced. Occasionally, we will have special days when children can bring an item that pertains to what we are learning. Also, no lip gloss or lip balm as these tend to be passed around and shared.



### Parties

Each class may have several parties during the school year. Your assistance, as requested by the teacher, is appreciated.

Birthdays are very important to young children, and we like to make them special here at school. Let your child's teacher know, in advance, if you are going to send goodies to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Individually wrapped treats of your choice may be sent to school with your child to be served at the regular snack time. Please do not send party invitations to school unless you send one for each child in the class. Also, gifts, flowers and/or balloons should not be brought to or delivered to school for students.



# healthy AND READY TO learn

Eufaula City Schools is taking every possible precaution to keep our students and staff safe and healthy. It is with this in mind, the decision has been made that visitors will not be permitted in our school at this time. The decision was not an easy one to make, but it was necessary. We will communicate often with you and continue to look for ways to involve you in your child's school experience that are safe for everyone.



## Breakfast

All children will have breakfast in the classroom each morning. Breakfast will end at 8 a.m. This time is one of our daily learning experiences, and it is very important for your child to be here on time to benefit. Breakfast is served at no charge.

## Lunch

We are participating in the Community Eligibility Program. There is NO charge to students for lunch. If you choose to send a lunch from home, we encourage you to send a healthy lunch and ask that you do not send candy, sodas, or glass bottles. We also ask that you practice with your child opening (especially Lunchables) and organizing their lunch. This whole process can be overwhelming to small children.

Fast food restaurant breakfast or lunch may not be brought into the school lunchroom or classroom. Teachers are not permitted to refrigerate or to heat up foods for students.



## Snack

Please send a snack and a drink for your child each day. We encourage you to send healthy snacks and ask that you do not send candy, sodas or glass bottles.



**Water bottles** (already filled with fresh water) should be sent to school daily with your child. We highly recommend the re-usable type with a small drinking spout or straw that is closable, but a disposable type is acceptable. Please be sure to label it with your child's name. Young children need to stay hydrated, especially in the warmer months at the beginning of the school year (and again in the Spring).



## Handwashing

Research shows that regular and proper handwashing are imperative to reduce the spread of illnesses. Students and staff will wash hands NUMEROUS times each day. Teachers and Nurse Carly will teach proper handwashing techniques as well as other important health and safety routines and practices (i.e. cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze, and more). Teachers will facilitate and monitor handwashing at all restroom times, before meals, after meals and throughout the school day.



## Cleaning and Sanitizing

Our staff is committed to providing a clean and safe learning environment at the ELC while striving to protect everyone. Surfaces, restrooms, door handles, playground structures, tables, toys, play areas, and learning materials will be cleaned throughout the school day.

Our custodial staff will sanitize all classrooms, restrooms, and common areas after students leave each day.





## Too Sick for School

As mentioned in the parent responsibilities, if a child has a fever (100.4 degrees and higher), diarrhea, vomiting, pinkeye or any illness deemed contagious by our school nurse or a physician, parents should keep the child at home until they are symptom free. When Nurse Carly calls a parent to come and pick up a child for any of the above symptoms, the child will not be allowed to return to school for 24 hours. In an effort to keep everyone healthy, we ask that you not send your child back to school until they are symptom free for a 24-hour period without medications to control or lessen symptoms (fever, diarrhea, vomiting, etc...).



With COVID concerns and practices, the above guidelines for "Too Sick for School" will be strictly followed. Students can be denied entry to school due to a screening and/or temperature concern. Nurse Carly will work closely with you if your child exhibits any symptoms to get them the medical care needed.

Nurse Carly and all of our nurses in the system keep up to date with the on-going changes in guidelines from the Alabama Department of Public Health. We will send out updates as they pertain to our practices.



## How does your child feel today?



- ◆ Is there new onset of runny nose, cough, or shortness of breath?
- ◆ Is there new onset of diarrhea or stomach irritability?
- ◆ Has there been a change in energy level or overall wellness?
- ◆ Has there been a change in taste or smell?
- ◆ Has your child taken any fever reducing medications in the past 24 hours?
- ◆ Has your child been within 6 feet of anyone who is COVID positive?



If you answered "YES" to any of these questions, please call Nurse Carly before coming to school.

Her number is 687-1100, ext. 1028.

# Pre-K Discipline Plan

*Discipline is not something  
you do to children; it is something you  
develop within them.*

*Becky Bailey PhD*

Teachers and staff of the Early Learning Center model and support children in the process of learning to solve their own problems and conflicts using redirection and self-regulation techniques by:

1. Acknowledging the conflict and the feelings of the children
2. Allowing each child to speak and explain his/her perspective
3. Helping the children decide on and implement a solution and plan different ways to behave in the future.

Teachers and staff establish routines and procedures for all aspects of the Pre-k day which increases the likelihood of success for all the children in the class. Teachers are proactive and provide clear expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect challenging behaviors by fully planning and preparing for the Pre-K day with materials readily accessible. Effective verbal acknowledgement that describes a child's appropriate words and actions is given rather than only addressing the negative behaviors and actions. Time-out or isolation, threats, and/or loss of playtime all lack the reflection and follow-up needed to bring about change in behavior and are not utilized at the ELC.

Specific consequences for incidents of aggressive behavior may be used. In these cases, the teacher may provide a space and materials that will help a child regain control of emotions, words, and actions. When the child is calm, the teacher will facilitate a discussion with the child to give him the opportunity and support to discuss his feelings and how to handle such situations differently in the future. No form of physical or mental punishment is permitted. The belief and practice of the ELC is that children should always feel safe and valued. All teacher interactions with children should support the child's development of trusting relationships and sense of security in their surroundings.

Occasionally, chronic behavior problems may persist. In cases where challenging behaviors (tantrums, physical aggression, bullying, biting) pose a risk to the child or to others, the family is expected to meet with the teacher, ELC/ECS administration, and other appropriate professionals (behavior specialist, guidance counselor, school psychologist, school nurse, and/or mental health professionals). This team will make decisions based upon individual needs and best practices.

**T**ogether  
**E**veryone  
**A**chieves  
**M**ore



# COMMUNICATION IS KEY



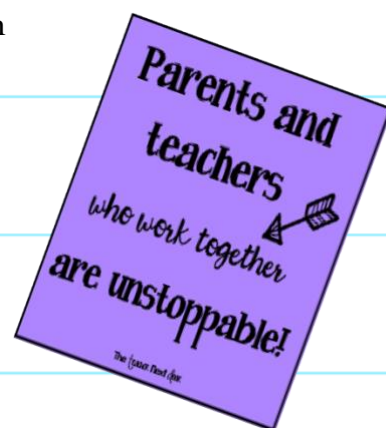
## Daily Folders

Your child will be provided with a folder for class work, notes to and from school, and money. Anything you send to school (notes, money, etc.) needs to be in their folder. A two-way communication sheet will be included in the folder. Please make notes on this sheet to communicate with your child's teachers. Folders are checked daily. Please note that we do not check book bags. It is also important that you check the folder each day for notes from school. Newsletters are sent home each week in the folder.

Should you damage or misplace your child's communication folder, you will need to purchase one from our office for \$5.

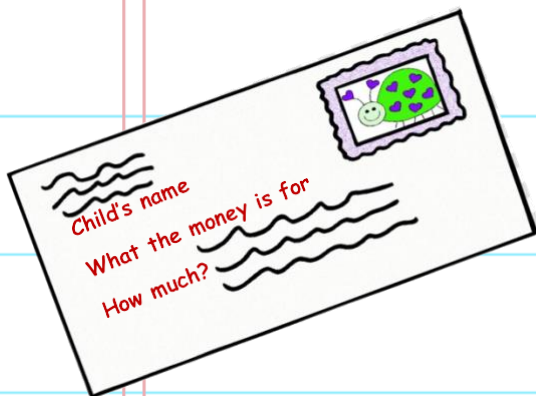
## Messages

Oral messages brought by your child cannot be accepted by the teacher or staff. Please send written correspondence only. These should be put in your child's daily folder.



## Money

Any money that is sent to school should always be placed in a sealed envelope, labeled with your child's name, teacher's name, and purpose for the money and be placed in the daily folder—this is where teachers will check each morning. Money for separate purposes should be placed in separate, labeled envelopes. Unlabeled and/or loose money can get lost or sent to the wrong place. Please do not give your child money to keep in his/her pocket or to give the teacher. Children of this age use money as a toy and it distracts them during our learning activities and coins can be a choking hazard.



## Progress Reports

Progress reports are given each nine weeks for Pre-k students. The first progress report will be given to parents during the mandatory parent conference in the Fall. The final Progress Report will be given to parents during the mandatory parent conference in May. The progress report will show how your child is progressing academically, socially and developmentally. The ELC staff will make every effort to schedule your conferences during a time that is convenient for you.

Assessments Teaching Strategies GOLD is the on-going yearly assessment system used by all Pre-k teachers. Students are observed and anecdotal notes are recorded daily to give a summative report at three checkpoints on student growth. Work samples are also collected along with checklist and reports. Do not be alarmed if samples are not in the folder weekly as they may be saved in a journal to show parents at conference time.



# Parent Responsibilities

## **I understand that as a parent of a pre-k student enrolled in the ELC, I will:**

- Attend orientation at the beginning of the year.
- Provide proof of residency prior to the start of school.
- Walk with my child to the arrival point each morning and arrive before 7:45
- Pick my child up from school each afternoon between 2:30—2:45.
- Check my child out before 1:00 p.m. in the event of an afternoon appointment or commitment, understanding that nap time is 1:15-2:00 p.m.
- Attend two parent conferences per year.
- Meet with my child's teacher or designee in my home or at school if requested.
- Complete 12 hours of parental involvement this school year. Six hours of parental engagement must be completed by December 17th to be eligible for preschool services the second semester.



### **Notify my child's teacher and office staff of address changes or phone number changes during the school year.**

- Answer and respond to the safety call that I will receive each day my child is absent.
- Send a written excuse for every absence within 2 days of the absence (After 2 days or 48 hours, if no note has been received, the absence is considered "unexcused".)
- Answer health screening questions each day and make the school staff of any COVID symptoms, exposures, or positive tests.
- Check and return my child's folder every day.
- Keep children home from school for at least 24 hours or until they are fever free for 24 hours without medication and free from virus symptoms such as diarrhea and vomiting or persistent coughing.
- Assume responsibility for my child's conduct.
- Work cooperatively with my child's teachers and other school personnel.

## **Have my child at school on time each day and avoid chronic attendance issues:**

- Avoid Chronic Tardiness which is defined as a late arrival or early departure more than 2 days per week.
- Avoid Chronic Absences which is defined as missing more than 4 days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. This could also be defined as an established regular attendance pattern. (Late every Monday or absent every Tuesday or leave early every Friday for example)
- In such situations, parent conference with administration will be required, the regional monitor for the Department of Early Childhood Education will be consulted, the truancy office for Eufaula City Schools will be consulted and possibility of dismissal from the program will be considered.



## Hands-on Learning

Young children learn by interacting with people and things, working with their hands, and being creative. While we do some paper-and-pencil activities in pre-k, you will not see your child writing rows of letters or doing other worksheets at school. The children will learn to identify and to attempt to write letters, and this will be accomplished in a manner that is meaningful to them. If your child does not bring home any paper activities, this means we did activities involving learning manipulatives. For example, children will be taught to identify letters using a set of letters they can touch and move around, using an alphabet bingo game, through morning message, and other methods. Children will learn to count using objects, such as counting bears or buttons in addition to so many other developmentally appropriate activities!

## The Preschool Curriculum

The core of the curriculum is designed around the Thematic Teaching. To ensure that our instruction is rich and meaningful several resources are used when planning units: The World of Wonders Curriculum, Creative Curriculum, and HighScope Curriculum. This approach promotes active learning, allowing children the opportunity to search, explore, and reflect on learning.

## Daily activities are based on the following key experiences:

### Creative Representation

- Recognizing objects by sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell
- Imitating actions and sounds
- Relating models, pictures, and photographs to real places and things
- Pretending and role playing
- Making models out of clay, blocks, and other materials
- Drawing and painting

### Language and Literacy

- Talking with others about personally meaningful experiences
- Describing objects, events, and relations
- Having fun with language; listening to stories and poems
- Making up stories and rhymes
- Writing in various ways: writing story-books, signs and symbols, one's own writing
- Dictating stories

### Music

- Moving to music
- Exploring and identifying sounds
- Exploring the singing voice
- Exploring melody

### Movement

- Moving in non-locomotor ways (anchored movement: bending, twisting, rocking, swinging one's arms)
- Moving in locomotor ways (non-anchored movement: running, jumping, hopping, skipping, marching, climbing)
- Moving with objects
- Expressing creativity in movement
- Describing movement
- Acting upon movement directions
- Feeling and expressing steady beat
- Moving in sequences to a common beat

### Classification

- Exploring and describing similarities, differences, and the attributes of things
- Distinguishing and describing shapes
- Sorting and matching
- Using and describing something in several ways
- Holding more than one attribute in mind at one time
- Distinguishing between "some" and "all"
- Describing characteristics something does not possess or what class it does not belong to
- Comparing attributes (longer/shorter, bigger/smaller)
- Arranging several things one after another in a series or pattern and describing the relationships (big/bigger/biggest; red/blue/red/blue)
- Fitting one ordered set of objects to another through trial and error (small cup-small saucer/big cup-big saucer)
- Seriation (organizing in a series or in rows)

### Number

- Comparing the number of things in two sets to determine "more", "fewer", "same number"
- Arranging two sets of objects in one-to-one correspondence
- Counting objects

### Space

- Filling and emptying
- Fitting things together and taking them apart
- Changing the shape and arrangement of objects (wrapping, twisting, stretching, stacking, enclosing)
- Observing people, places, and things from different spatial viewpoints (the amount of space between)
- Experiencing and describing positions direction, and distances in the play space, building, and neighborhood
- Interpreting spatial relations in drawings, pictures, and photographs

### Time

- Starting and stopping an action on signal
- Experiencing and describing rates of movement
- Experiencing and comparing time intervals
- Anticipating, remembering, and describing sequences of events

### Initiative and Social Relations

- Making and expressing choices, plans and decisions
- Solving problems encountered in play
- Taking care of one's own needs
- Expressing feelings in words
- Participating in group routines
- Being sensitive to the feelings, interests, and needs of others
- Building relationships with children and adults
- Creating and experiencing collaborative play
- Dealing with social conflict