

Alice Cogswell Center Parent Handbook



2011-2012

Alice Cogswell Center (ACC)

PARENT HANDBOOK

Contacting ACC

Open and accessible communication is a priority at ACC. In recognizing the diverse means of communication, the ACC has TTY and voice telephone communication, as well as a Sorenson Video Phone (VP). Occasionally we may need to allow the answering machine to answer a line when we are all busy or if calls occur after the secretary has left. Please be assured we will contact parents as quickly as we can.

In addition, all staff members have electronic mail addresses. We encourage parents to talk directly with teachers and/or the ACC Coordinator to ask questions or offer suggestions.

Janet Lineberry, ACC Coordinator	Lineberry@osd.oh.gov
Mary Bonello, Teacher	bonello@osd.oh.gov
Gretchen Douglas, Teacher	douglas@osd.oh.gov
Malkah Bird, Teacher	bird@osd.oh.gov
Julie Papalia, Principal	papalia@osd.oh.gov
Denyse Woods, Assistant Principal	dwoods@osd.oh.gov
Kim Stewart, School Administrative Assistant	stewart@osd.oh.gov
Jennifer Behary, IEP Coordinator	behary@osd.oh.gov

ACC's teaching assistants may be full-time, part-time, or intermittent employees. Teaching assistants are often the most visible of our employees especially during early morning or late afternoon hours. While teaching assistants may be able to answer most parents' questions, parents should feel free to leave a message for a teacher or supervisor.

ACC's phone numbers are: **(614) 728-9766 (TTY/V)** and **(614) 728-6900 (TTY/V)**. The School office phone number is **(614) 728-1424 (TTY/V)**.

Welcome, Mission Statement, Goals

The Ohio School for the Deaf welcomes you and your child to the Alice Cogswell Center (ACC). ACC is a preschool and early childhood program for deaf and hard-of-hearing children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. Hearing children may enroll in our Summer Sign Camp. Those who are accepted tend to have a relationship to deafness within their families and communities, and have at least a basic knowledge of sign language.

Mission Statement of ACC:

To enable deaf and hard of hearing children to develop cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically to their full potential. This is accomplished by providing developmentally appropriate activities presented in a barrier-free communication environment that uses American Sign Language and English.

Goals:

1. Provide a safe environment for very young children which encourages good hygiene, proper nutrition, health and wellness, and physical activity;
2. Encourage communication growth through daily interaction, use of open-ended questions, and experiences that stimulate conversation;
3. Facilitate development of self-control, responsibility, and independence;
4. Support social-emotional development by recognizing and identifying feelings and by supporting children as they progress through stages of development;
5. Provide a stimulating environment where children learn by doing, develop their own interests, and discover the joy of learning about themselves;
6. Execute a developmental curriculum for students that exceeds State standards for early childhood and prepares young children for entry into kindergarten; and
7. Create a partnership between preschool providers and families as children transition from one stage to another and from one program to another.

Facility

ACC is composed of two buildings with two playgrounds. In the main building (B-1) are the Lobby, Parents' Resource Library, Coordinator's office, Administrative Assistant's office, one infant area, one toddler room, restroom facilities for young children, and a kitchenette. Outside of the main ACC building is an enclosed playground for younger children.

In the attached building (B-2) are the Pre-School classrooms for 3, 4, and 5 year old children, speech and auditory therapy classrooms, a large room for special activities and motor development, restroom facilities, and a kitchenette. Please note there is no receptionist assigned to the B-2 building. All visitors must sign at the front entrance of the ACC. Once a visitor has signed in, a staff member will greet the visitor at the door of B-2 or someone will walk with the visitor to the building as needed. All parents remaining on campus outside of ACC must sign in and receive a Visitor's badge from the school office.

Both buildings are locked at all times and are connected via a covered sidewalk area, which doubles as play area for bicycles and scooters and chalk play. Outside of the preschool building is a larger playground area with climbing areas and swings.

Organization and Supervision

The Alice Cogswell Center is part of the comprehensive educational program of the Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD). ACC's curriculum, immersion in American Sign Language and exposure to English auditorially and in print allow deaf and hard-of-hearing youngsters to have maximum opportunities to ensure readiness for kindergarten. OSD operates under the supervision of the Ohio Department of Education.

The Principal of the Ohio School for the Deaf supervises the educational program and staff of the ACC, while OSD's Curriculum Coordinator supports effective teaching, curriculum compliance, and assessment of student progress. The ACC Coordinator oversees day to day management of the ACC and is the initial point of contact.

Licensure

ACC is licensed by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) as a preschool program and School Age Child Care provider during the summer months, serving learners with disabilities. The staff possesses all of the necessary valid, current licenses as teachers and aides as required by law. ACC meets all of the requirements for record keeping, facilities, health and safety, student management, and curriculum that are required by law. ACC is inspected annually by ODE and the Columbus Fire Department.

Budget

ACC's budget is provided through grants from the federal government and through OSD's general revenue fund (GRF) from the State of Ohio. Fees that are collected for day care services for which we have no statutory obligation, and are a small part of ACC's overall budget. ACC's budget is developed by OSD's Principal, Chief Operations Officer, ACC Coordinator and the Superintendent annually and is dependent upon available state and federal funds in any given year.

Eligibility and Admission Requirements

Eligibility: Parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children between the ages of 6 weeks and 5 years may apply to enroll their child in the Alice Cogswell Center. The number of children we may serve per room is determined by State guidelines.

Our first commitment is to deaf and hard-of-hearing children, who depend on access to American Sign Language to participate in the learning process. During the summer months, the ACC operates a Summer Sign Camp immersion experience that is open to children with typical hearing, as well as our deaf and hard of hearing students. Typically these children may have family members who are deaf, or parents who work in the field of deafness, and therefore have a basic functional use of ASL. The Summer Sign Camp is a fee based program. Families may contact the ACC Coordinator in the spring for information on summer programming and fees

Admission Requirements: State law regulates admission requirements for any publicly funded preschool setting. No child may start at ACC until all records are complete and documentation is on file:

- Application, including:
 - If applicable: a list of allergies and treatments, list of food or fluoride supplements, or modified dietary needs
 - Medication list (prescription and over-the-counter medication)
 - List of chronic physical problems and any history of hospitalization
 - List of any diseases child has had
 - Names and contact information for physician and dentist in case of an emergency
 - Parents' name, address, and work contact information
- A physical examination from a medical doctor (within 6 months of enrollment date) which specifies:
 - Immunization record with up-to-date immunizations
 - Child is free from communicable diseases and eligible for enrollment
 - Relevant blood work results for iron content and lead exposure, if applicable
- Dental examination by a dentist for children two years old or older
- Copy of birth certificate
- Custody agreement if parents are separated or divorced
- Emergency contact list (names and address of two individuals)
- Permission for emergency medical or dental treatment and transportation for emergency or dental medical treatment.
- Copy of audiogram and evaluation documenting hearing loss (as applicable).
- Copy of eligibility determination from *Help Me Grow* documenting child as having a hearing disability or is at risk for delays in language development.

ASL: the Language of Instruction

All children are entitled to and need language. Language allows children to communicate their wants and needs, learn new information, and build the foundation for the cognitive learning that leads to literacy, regardless of their hearing status. American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language that is accessible to all children in the program provides equal language opportunities for both hard of hearing and deaf children at ACC. American Sign Language (ASL) is used throughout the day and promotes language opportunities for our deaf youngsters since language development is often enhanced by peer interactions. Because ASL's grammar structure (word order in sentences, etc.) is so different from that of English, it must be signed without voicing English at the same time. ASL is the language of instruction at ACC.

Spoken English is used when working with our children who have strong auditory access during our language arts period, and then throughout the day as appropriate, when natural opportunities and peer interactions are occurring, such as snack, lunch and recess time. Children who have speech or audiology services as part of their IEPs will also have this therapy time as individually scheduled in addition to the language arts period.

In the classrooms and lobby areas, staff use ASL at all times, in order to ensure a common communication modality for all. All children are encouraged to learn and use ASL. Opportunities for speech and auditory activities occur in separate areas to promote phonemic awareness (an understanding of the sounds that make up words which assists in reading development) and the development of spoken English to the extent possible.

Children are encouraged to use ASL to the best of their ability. Research suggests that babies who understand and use basic sign language to express wants and needs seem to cry less.

Further, school-age children who learned sign language at an early age tend to be skilled readers. ASL has benefits for all children.

Daily Operation and Hours; Checking In and Out

ACC operates from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. daily. ACC is in session Monday through Friday throughout the year; although there are holidays and a week at the beginning and at the end of the summer, during which ACC is closed. Before and after school day childcare activities generally happen in the main ACC building (B-1) since there are smaller numbers of children and staff during these time periods. Students are escorted by staff to classrooms at 9:00 A.M. (in B-1 or B-2 for preschoolers) and back to wraparound care at 3:30 P.M. Children will also be escorted to any brief, special activities away from their classrooms such as going to the playgrounds, or attending therapy prescribed on the IEP.

Activities occur in this manner:

7:00 to 8:45 A.M.	Childcare (general care, independent playing and guided play supervised by teacher aides) Breakfast available until 8:05 A.M.	Childcare fees apply
9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.	Educational program for Toddlers and preschoolers (instruction and guided learning provided by teacher and aides); Nap after lunch Mid Morning Snack—Between 9:00 and 10:00 A.M. Lunch—Between 11:00 A.M. and 12:15 P.M. Mid Afternoon Snack—Between 3:00 and 3:30 P.M.	No charge for deaf or hard-of-hearing children under an IEP/IFSP
3:30 to 6:00 P.M.	Childcare (general care, independent and guided play supervised by teacher aides)	Childcare fees apply

Arriving to School: It is less disruptive to the learning experience of all children at the ACC, if children are dropped off at 8:45 A.M. and remain until the end of the school day at 3:30 P.M. Medical appointments may necessitate a late arrival or early departure. Walking through classrooms at other times distracts other children for a few moments from their learning activity.

Each day parents should plan for at least ten minutes to drop off or pick up children. You should be able to park in front of the ACC building. PLEASE NOTE: During construction of our new school building 2010 – 2012, alternative entry and parking will be available. Please check with ACC staff for current information.

Please plan to:

- Sign children in or out at the desk in the lobby
- Drop off paperwork, messages, medication, or supplies
- Escort children to their cubbies to take off or put on jackets and pick up “mail”
- Walk child/ren to his/her own classroom to get settled
- Check the parent bulletin board for important messages

Babies and Toddlers classrooms are in the main building (B-1) while Preschool classrooms are in the next building (B-2), connected by the covered sidewalk. Cubbies are in the building where the child's classroom is located.

All children are required to be signed in when they arrive at ACC. Parents need to record the time they arrive or leave with the child. For the security of our Center and safety of all children, it is important that ACC have up to the minute attendance documentation. We use this information during fire drills and to schedule additional staff in classrooms when necessary.

The ACC staff will release a child only to those people listed on the pick-up authorization form and will ask for photo identification when someone other than the child's parents is picking up children. No one under the age of 16 years will be allowed to pick up a child, unless he/she is the child's parent.

If a child will be absent, parents should phone the ACC office before 8:45 A.M. on the morning of the absence. The ACC office number is (614) 728 9766 V/TTY.

Picking up Children: Please pick up children before the Center closes at 6:00 P.M. Our staff has families of their own and other responsibilities to attend to after work. There will be an additional charge for picking up children late — \$15 for each 15 minute interval. Children start to get lonely when all of the other children are gone for the day.

It is essential that you call when you will be late to pick up your child to indicate the time you expect to arrive. *If parents are extremely late without a phone call or habitually late to pick up a child, ACC will need to make a referral to the Children's Services Board in your county for an investigation.*

Communications with Staff

Please feel free to talk to ACC staff daily. If ACC staff has a concern or other important information to share with parents, a note will be left in the child's "cubby." However, the written notice is provided to assure that ACC won't forget to let you know about a situation, so please follow-up by talking with staff.

Teachers are in classrooms from 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. except for their lunch period and when children are napping. Teachers may be in other areas in scheduled curriculum meetings, parent conferences, or engage in planning before and after instruction hours. Aides and the ACC Coordinator are available at these times. Rather than interrupting instructional time to talk with a teacher, please schedule a private time to talk with teachers. Teachers in general have allocated planning periods from 7:30-9:00 A.M. The ACC and OSD will try to accommodate parent's scheduling needs. In the event a conference cannot be scheduled during the above mentioned times with the teacher, please contact the ACC Coordinator so she can work out a substitute teacher to cover the class. ACC will automatically schedule parent teacher conferences at least twice a year, but a parent may request other conferences as well.

A child's teacher can provide parents with the most up-to-date information about a child. She evaluates the child's performance on a regular basis and can share her insights on a child's development with the parent. ACC teachers have had experience with this age group for several years and understand typical child development, the development of hearing and deaf children's

language, and social-emotional development including occasional behavioral concerns. Teachers can explain instructional strategies, the curriculum used at ACC that aligns with State requirements for all young children, and the progress your child is making. Teachers are encouraged to send home the week's theme, daily reports of progress and any supplemental instruction that is encouraged at home.

Information for parents of infants and toddlers, including "guided instruction," is provided through a daily sheet left in children's cubbies. These daily sheets tell what activities aides and the teacher worked on with children that day, upcoming projects, or any new skills observed. It will also mention how well your child ate or rested that day or if behaviors were unusual. Please note that the infant and toddler rooms are currently facilitated by teacher's aides.

Confidentiality: Staff members are required to respect the confidentiality of all students. Certain conversations should be held in private areas. While staff members often have a need to know private information about children and observe children themselves, they may not share this information with those outside of ACC. They cannot share information about one student with another student's parent. Routine day to day communications with a parent, such as whether a child ate lunch or needs additional diapers, might be held in a public area since sensitive information is not being discussed. In recognizing that we are nurturing young children who will make mistakes and grow from them, we ask that parents also heed the confidentiality standards set forth by the Center.

Visiting and Observing at ACC

Visiting before Enrolling Your Child: Planning a visit of 30 or more minutes before your child begins ACC will help you and your child feel more comfortable. Parents should be ready to jump in and learn with other children. Please follow communication rules in classrooms, using the best skills you have. Your child will probably make the best adjustment in this manner surrounded by his or her new friends.

Observations and Visits: Parents are welcome at the Center any time. We encourage parents to observe or interact in the Center. Please make arrangements with the child's teacher or the ACC Coordinator and let us know if you'll be staying for lunch. We do encourage visits to be limited to 30 minutes in order to maximize learning opportunities and minimize distractions in the classrooms. Parents can also be a helper for the day; an extra pair of hands can allow a teacher to plan a special activity not otherwise possible and provide us with additional assistance on field trips. Spending a half day or whole day at ACC can allow parents to see what happens at times other than when you are dropping off or picking up your child. Feel free to share a talent or hobby or story with the class. Children like having their parents visit occasionally.

Meals and Snacks

Good nutrition and a balanced diet are important for child development, learning, and growth. All preschool programs must emphasize good nutrition, hygiene, health including dental health, and fitness. Children generally need to eat smaller meals, but more often than adults, as they are on the go, burning up calories all day. Because of this ACC offers breakfast to children who arrive very early and provide two snacks and a hot lunch every day, except during school breaks and during the summer program, when the OSD cafeteria is closed. Parents provide a daily

lunch for children during the summer and during childcare for holiday breaks and other times when the OSD cafeteria is closed.

It is important that children start off the day right with a good breakfast. Most children eat breakfast at home. However, if a child needs to be dropped off earlier than 8:05 A.M., ACC can provide breakfast. Children may also bring breakfast from home to eat at ACC. Children do need to stay seated until they finish eating or until it is time to clean up (8:20 A.M.) so that toys, books, and other play areas remain clean. We want children to finish breakfast by 8:20 A.M. so that tables are cleaned up in time for school to start. It's a problem to have children still clutching cereal bars, cereal, waffles, or yogurt during Circle Time or as the school day starts. Children eating past this time would miss Circle Time; eating during Circle Time would distract other children.

Preschool is a preparatory time for kindergarten. Some kindergarten programs start as early as 7:30 or 8:00 A.M. Encouraging your child to wake up early enough to eat breakfast before coming to school is wise. Some school-age children have to board buses early or walk to school; breakfast at home helps children develop this good habit as they get older so that they can have enough energy for a full morning of school activity.

ACC's schedule of meals and snacks:

Breakfast	7:00 A.M. to 8:05 A.M. (until 8:20 A.M.)
Mid-Morning Snack	Between 9:00 and 10:00 A.M.
Lunch	Between 11:00 A.M. and 12:15 P.M.
Mid-Afternoon Snack	Between 3:00 and 3:30 P.M.

Children are served nutritious foods that are generally low fat and low sugar in content. Please let ACC know if your child has special dietary needs, food allergies, or provide supplements as recommended by your child's doctor. Children are encouraged to eat and try a variety of foods. Please note the Center does not withhold food as a punishment nor are children punished for not trying a food. The ACC offers a hot lunch option daily during the school year free to all children. On your child's checklist, you have the option of choosing this hot lunch at no cost to you or providing your own lunch for your child. Please do make a note of this and communicate your wishes to the aides accordingly. During the summer months and holidays, the cafeteria is closed and all parents must provide a packed lunch for their child.

Medication

No medication, even over-the-counter medicine, can be given to any child without a written doctor's order. In addition, parents need to fill out and sign a "Consent to Administer Medication" form. ACC employees receive annual training in dispensing medications.

Prescription medicine needs to be in the original pharmacy container, with the original label stating the child's name and dosage. It's sometimes helpful to have the pharmacist "split the order" between two containers, one to keep at home and one to keep at preschool, but both containers must be labeled.

Certain non-prescription medicines can be given to the child with written instructions from the child's health care provider. These instructions are filed and are good for one year. Parents must complete a new authorization each time the order is re-activated.

ACC staff will:

- Give the medicine according to the health care provider's written directions
- Record the date, time, and amount given on our form (which parents may view)
- Keep all medications out of the reach of children and store them properly
- Return unused or empty prescription bottles to the parent.

Napping

Children in ACC are active throughout the day. Toddlers and preschoolers are ready for a nap or at least a "quiet time" on cots after lunch. Each child has his/her own cot, blanket, and a small pillow and is encouraged to rest. Most children readily fall asleep but a few rest quietly, look at a book, or work a puzzle on their cots during nap time. A parent may send a special blanket or pillow but please label the item with the child's name. All bedding items are washed weekly. Babies nap in cribs according to schedules parents suggest along with the babies natural sleeping patterns.

Nap/Rest time is required for preschool programs but shall not exceed 90 minutes in the daily schedule. The Nap/Rest time must be flexible to accommodate non-nappers and early risers. Children are supervised during nap time.

Supplies for Your Child

Many of the supplies your child will need during the day (crayons, art supplies, and scissors) are provided at the Alice Cogswell Center. Every precaution is taken to ensure that your child stays clean and dry, but sometimes learning can be messy. Sometime children need a change of clothes during the day so please leave other clothes appropriate for the season in your child's cubby in case this is necessary.

Parents need to provide diapers, wipes, and formula/milk, baby cereal and baby food as needed for infants and toddlers. Children who are potty training will need to be provided with pull-ups or training pants, and have several sets of backup shorts/pants and underwear. Talk with staff about the signs of readiness for potty training, and additional information will be shared regarding supplies.

Occasionally, ACC will ask parents to provide a box of tissues during winter time when colds or coughs are prevalent or wipes for quick, sanitary clean up after meals. A detailed list of supplies will be provided to parents at the beginning of each school year. Parents will be notified if replacement supplies are needed.

Staff

Teachers and aides work together to provide a quality early childhood program. All staff members are proficient in ASL knowledgeable about child development, and hold the credentials

that are required for their position. All employees also participate in yearly professional development activities in the form of college coursework, professional seminars, workshops, or guided training. Annual training includes first aid, CPR, hygiene, safety and security, recognizing communicable diseases, medication administration, child abuse and neglect recognition, and universal procedures for handling urine, vomit, or blood. All employees are screened, pass a Bureau of Criminal Investigation background check and an FBI background check before hiring, and submit to a medical examination including screening for tuberculosis to rule out infectious diseases.

Teachers hold licensure as an Intervention Specialist: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, as required by law for preschools serving students with hearing disabilities, and demonstrate skills at the Advanced Level as evidenced by the Sign Language Proficiency Interview assessment. Teachers may also hold dual certification in Early Childhood.

Teacher aides hold an Ohio certificate for educational assistants and demonstrate skills at the Advanced level as evidenced by the Sign Language Proficiency Interview assessment. Teacher aides work at the direction of the teachers and are qualified to work in some situations in the absence of the teacher, such as during wraparound hours or napping. Teacher Aide 3's are qualified to lead the class in the place of a teacher in an emergency in preschools, though ACC is generally able to make arrangements for a qualified substitute teacher in case of teacher absence.

Other specialists serving children hold the required professional licenses for the work they do with children. Those specialists may include:

Audiologist	Hearing and hearing aid evaluation
Speech Pathologist	Speech and Language therapy as prescribed by IEPs or IFSPs
Occupational Therapist	Fine and Gross Motor Therapy as prescribed by IEPs or IFSPs
ASL Specialist	ASL role modeling, analysis, and development
Psychologist	Assessment of cognitive development, learning styles, and social-emotional development
MFE Team	Multi-factored Evaluation Team assesses development of students 2½ years or older in required areas prior to IEP development
Mental Health Specialist	Parent consultation, play therapy, family counseling

The Parent Mentor assists parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children throughout Ohio. The Parent Mentor can be helpful with understanding the unique needs of deaf and hard of hearing children, family interactions, family activities and options, and parent rights and responsibilities. The Parent Mentor may attend IEP/IFSP meetings at the parent's request and may assist in

communications with the school district of residence. She can be reached by calling (614) 752-2647.

ACC also uses volunteers who work alongside of employed staff in classrooms or playgrounds. These volunteers may be college students studying education, sign language interpreting, and/or child development. Volunteers follow an agreed upon schedule for a specified time period. They are not counted as part of the ACC staff to student ratio, nor do they supervise children alone.

Classroom Ratio and Assignments

ACC bases decisions about student’s classroom assignments on different factors. While age is an over-riding factor, other issues may need to be considered. Students served under an IEP may necessitate a particular assignment to comply with legal requirements. Children may also be grouped by their auditory access ability in conjunction with their cognitive abilities during the language arts period of the day for exposure and use of auditory and verbal skills. All children follow the same State of Ohio curriculum regardless of instruction in ASL or spoken English. Parents should see the Principal or ACC Coordinator if they have questions about classroom assignment. ACC follows state regulations for the age span allowed in any classroom.

Staff: Pupil ratios are based on state regulations for day care centers and preschools which serve students with disabilities, along with the NAEYC (National Association for Education of Young Children) guidelines. Those ratios are:

Classroom	State Standard	ACC Standard
Infants (6 weeks to 18 months)	1 adult: 6 children	1:3
Toddlers (18 to 36 months)	1:7	1:5
Preschoolers (two and a half to three year olds)	1:12	1:6
Preschoolers (four and five year olds)	1:12	1:6

Children who turn three during the academic year will be placed in the Preschool classroom as they will require a licensed teacher. During napping, ratios reflect State standards. During active play and learning, ACC Standards apply which reflect the need to serve students with disabilities with greater numbers of staff.

Curriculum

The Ohio Department of Education mandates standards for the education of preschoolers. The Early Learning Content Standards reflect the concepts that must be taught to prepare youngsters for kindergarten in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. In addition the Early Learning Program Guidelines mandate instruction in the areas of physical development, health and nutrition learning, and technology. Parents may view copies of these documents in the ACC office, request copies from the Ohio Department of Education, or download them (72 pages and 38 pages) from the Ohio Department of Education website on the link for the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness at www.ode.state.oh.us/ece/standards.

Using these five content standards, the OSD Curriculum Coordinator and the ACC teachers have developed an age appropriate curriculum of instruction for toddlers and preschoolers. Each curriculum is divided into nine units with all parts of the five content standards being integrated into each of the units. This curriculum has a focus on literacy, including skills that expose children to reading and writing English. Activities and materials are selected to build up each successive year to reinforce prior learning. Instruction takes into account the unique learning needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children including the need for intensive language development and a visual environment. Children are encouraged to think, reason, be creative, and experiment as they learn.

Preschool Provides the Foundation: Reading is a critical area for all school-age children; preschools in Ohio focus on development of the skills that contribute to reading and writing skills for kindergarten, first and second grades. Successful readers have a solid foundation in general knowledge and language (vocabulary), working memory, and eye coordination and visual skills such as visual discrimination and sequencing. ACC learners gain a solid background in language, concept development, and general knowledge through ASL and English and participation in learning activities through the curriculum. ASL promotes memory skills and eye coordination as well.

Exposure to English: Reading stories to children using the richness of ASL helps children begin to understand the richness of written English. Research into the reading skills of deaf learners show that they need to develop an understanding of English structure itself and an awareness of the phonemic code of English to be effective readers, in addition to the language development provided through ASL. Children need to be exposed to the rhythm of English sentence phrasing, number of syllables in a word, the knowledge that the letters in words represent speech “sounds,” and the word order of English. Some deaf or hard-of-hearing children can acquire skills in phonemic awareness through exposure to spoken English; others will pick up cues from fingerspelling, speechreading, visual systems for phonics, or explicit instruction in English at the word, syllable, and sentence levels.

Phonemic Awareness: Ohio standards require that phonemic awareness be taught to all students at the preschool level. Specifically, children must be taught to:

1. Identify matching sounds and recognize rhymes in familiar stories, poems, songs and words (such as, cat/hat, dog/frog).
2. Hear sounds in words by isolating the syllables of a word using snapping, clapping, or rhythmic movement (such as cat, ap-ple, can-dy).
3. Differentiate between sounds that are the same and different (e.g., environmental sounds, animals sounds, speech sounds).
4. Recognize when words share phonemes and repeat the common phoneme.
5. Recognize and name some upper and lower case letters in addition to those in the child’s first name.
6. Recognize that words are made up of letters.

At ACC, preschool children will have opportunities for development of these skills during the language arts period for those with auditory access. The classroom teachers and the Speech and Language Pathologist will align activities to reinforce learning in both areas. Children with IEPs/IFSPs that indicate alternate needs, will have the opportunity to use a visual means to expose them to these concepts.

Student Progress: Teachers evaluate students' progress individually in all areas of learning twice a year using standardized measures, a checklist of curriculum goals mastered and required assessments set forth by the Curriculum Coordinator and the School Principal. Teachers will share results with parents after assessment. Progression along the Auditory Communication Continuum will be ongoing, and children may move from one group to another, as skills develop, either auditorially or visually. The continuum is a fluid one, changes are to be expected.

Special Education

Deaf and hard-of-hearing children at ACC have individual plans which state the requirements for individual children. Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or present with other needs under age 3 have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) that is developed by law under the supervision of the county *Help Me Grow* program. Development of an IFSP involves the parent, ACC staff, *Help Me Grow* Coordinator (Department of Health), or other local providers. The plan states the services and support required for the child and his/her family and is the basis for an education at ACC at no charge to the parent or local *Help Me Grow* program.

Before a child with a disability reaches his/her third birthday, a complete multi-factored evaluation must be completed and an Individual Education Program (IEP) must be developed. The parent, the child's teacher, and the local school district are involved in developing the child's IEP along with any other necessary specialists or providers. Children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing have an IEP which states the child's present levels of performance, goals for the upcoming year, strategies for achieving those goals including any special related services, and how and how often the student will be evaluated regarding progress toward those goals. The IEP is the basis for an education at ACC at no cost to the parent or the local school district of residence.

Student Social and Behavior Development

ACC allows children an opportunity to interact with young children of their own age and with caring adults who can communicate with them and guide their interactions. As children get older, they naturally develop more self-control, an ability to make decisions, and a capacity to take responsibility for their own actions. They learn to identify their feelings of happiness, disappointment, frustration, and pride in their own accomplishments. In time, they start to have an understanding for the feelings of others as well. Childhood is a time of development, learning from example, and learning from one's own mistakes.

Children develop social skills, emotional responses, and an ability to control their actions through developmental stages. While we can anticipate that most children will develop these skills within certain age ranges, some children will need more time and direction to acquire new skills. In the meantime, parents may be concerned about children's behaviors, especially if their child is experiencing frustration, conflict with classmates, or having a hard time accepting direction from adults. Although it can be upsetting, it's not unusual for some children in a preschool to have a tantrum or even bite, scratch, or hit classmates occasionally until they develop alternative skills. ACC staff members intervene quickly to help children who have not yet developed more appropriate ways to interact. They model and offer appropriate choices to children who need extra guidance. Sometimes a child may need a brief time away from other children to get control of their actions. Eventually, children develop appropriate emotional responses, interactions with classmates, and ability to follow expectations.

Please discuss any concerns you have about your child's social or behavior skills with the teacher. Please be patient as the staff works with other children who may be going through a difficult time in their development. We promise you that we will give your child the same attention that may be now necessary for another child, when and if your child needs extra attention and time to develop additional self-control and maturity later.

ACC serves students with disabilities and has a legal obligation to try to keep students enrolled in our preschool program even if the child needs more time and attention to develop behaviors that are more acceptable for his/her age. While a short time away from ACC may be necessary in extreme situations, it is normally best to help children to gain self-control, social skills, and independence through guided instruction within the preschool.

Handling Student Discipline at ACC

ACC minimizes student behavior problems by:

- X Providing a warm, accepting atmosphere that promotes confidence and positive self-identity
- X Facilitating development of responsibility, self-control, and independence
- X Supporting emotional development by recognizing and identifying feelings
- X Giving the child full attention during interactions; before speaking, moving to the child's eye level and making eye contact so that instructions are clearly understood
- X Watching and listening for verbal and non-verbal messages children give us, such as stating, "You don't like it when the blocks fall down. Your face looks angry."
- X Turning the child's attention to an appropriate use of a material or a new activity of equal value or interest
- X Telling the child what to do rather than what not to do
- X Explaining why the rule or limit is set
- X Helping children to understand the feelings of others
- X Modeling decision making and appropriate self-control as adults
- X Offering realistic choices
- X Ignoring inappropriate behavior (not the child) when there is no danger to the child or other children; giving attention as often as possible for appropriate behavior rather than constantly telling a child "No"
- X Temporarily separating the child as a last resort when the child's behavior is harmful to another or the child needs to calm down (separation occurs only in the presence of a staff member and only for the number of minutes that equal a child's age in years [a three year old may sit for three minutes])

In accordance with Preschool Licensing rules under the Ohio Department of Education, the discipline policy at the ACC includes the following guarantees:

- X At no time will employees of the ACC use cruel, harsh, or corporal punishment or physical restraint other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain control.
- X Children will not be subject to profane language, threats, or derogatory remarks (verbal abuse) and will not be confined in a locked room or confined area. Separation used as

discipline will only be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age, as well as being under adult supervision at all times.

- X Discipline is never used that would humiliate, shame or frighten a child, or as a punishment for failing to eat, sleep, or having toileting accidents. Discipline will not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use from children. No discipline will be delegated to another child.
- X The ACC is a mandatory reporter of suspected child abuse. While in the Center, children will be protected from any abuse or neglect by staff or any other persons on the premises.

Transportation

Parents must sign a permission slip in order for their child to go on a field trip. A copy of the child's medical emergency form and a first aid kit are taken on all field trips.

Children in the preschool classes LOVE field trips. They are a great way to extend children's learning. Please allow your child to accompany us by completing the written authorization forms. OSD busses or vans are used for field trips in accordance with state law. Each driver has received a Student Transportation endorsement from the Ohio Department of Transportation. Child restraint systems are available and used according to state law.

When a child with an IEP becomes three years of age, the local school district may provide transportation to and from the ACC. We encourage all school transportation vehicles to drop and pick up the children outside of the main ACC office. A high school student or staff member may escort your child from the bus to the building. Please note that we will try, as part of the IEP team, to work with parents and school districts to resolve transportation issues BUT, ultimately, the issue falls between the parent and the school district. We may encourage parents to contact the district directly with concerns and advocate for their child.

Calendar and Days ACC Is Closed

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. throughout the school year except for federal holidays and a week at the beginning and end of the summer to prepare classrooms. Please plan to make other arrangements for childcare for your child for:

New Years Day (January 1)	Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January)
Presidents' Day (February)	Memorial Day (Last Monday in May)
Independence Day (July 4)	Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Columbus Day (October)	Veterans Day (November)
Thanksgiving Day and Friday (November)	Christmas Day (December 25)
1 Week after OSD Closes in June	1 Week before OSD Opens in August

Exact dates will be sent home to parents each year, along with reminders to parents in the cubbies.

Weather Emergencies

ACC is part of the Ohio School for the Deaf, which is a State agency. Only the Governor of the State has the authority to close a state agency. It is highly unlikely that ACC would close for

weather-related reasons, even if other schools in the area are closed. However, if radio or television reports state that the Governor has closed State Agencies in Franklin County, then OSD and ACC would be closed. While it is highly unlikely OSD will be closed in inclement weather, please follow your instincts as to whether it's safe to drive your child to school that day. If you decide to keep your child at home for the day, please notify the ACC office.

In the event the Governor makes a decision to close the school **OR** if Columbus Public Schools are closed, we will not charge parents for the day. If neither Columbus Public or the state is closed, regular daily charges will incur.

Fees for Students

There is no fee charged for the educational portion of the day (8:45 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.) for deaf and hard-of-hearing children whose educational program is stipulated on the IEP/IFSP. There is a fee for non-educational portions of the day (before or after school latch key), Spring or Winter Break weeks, and summer programming for all children. Children normally served under an IEP/IFSP whose parents want them to attend ACC during "Break" weeks or summer program, when school is not formally in session, are charged according to the fee schedule below.

Infants (6 weeks to 18 months)	\$205 per Week	7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.
Toddlers (18 to 36 months)	\$185 per Week	7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.
Preschoolers (3 or 4 year olds)	\$165 per Week	7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Part-time Status: A child is considered Full-Time if he/she is at ACC more than five consecutive hours or if he/she is here at 12 Noon. While some part-time placements are possible, there is a high demand for full time services. Full time placement allows the child to have steady and constant exposure to the language necessary for optimum development. Tuition is charged on a prorated basis for children who are accepted for part-time placement, whether it's fewer than five hours a day or fewer than five days per week. Pro-rated costs are on a daily dollar basis: Infant (41), Toddler (37), Pre-School (33) dollars per day times the number of days attending.

Subsidized Families: ACC is licensed to accept publicly funded child care services from the County Department of Jobs and Family Services for eligible families. Some families will qualify for subsidies based on family income. Please contact the ACC Coordinator to learn more about applying for these subsidies.

Parents who wish to place their children at OSD for care before and after school hours (prior to 9:00 A.M. and after 3:30 P.M.) are charged a flat fee for childcare of \$40 a week. The fee is charged regardless if a child attends for one day or all five days per week.

Other Fee Information:

- X Families are not charged for the week of June and the week of August when the ACC is closed for programmatic reasons.
- X Payment is due on Monday of the coming week. Payments may be made by cash, check or money order with a remittance to: The Alice Cogswell Center or the Ohio School for the Deaf.
- X Subsidized families must pay their monthly fees before the 7th of each month.

- X Families who are more than two weeks late in payments will be assessed a \$25 fee for each week the account remains late. Late fees can add up.
- X Families who are late more than three weeks, without payment, will receive notice that the account must be made current or the child or the child will not be eligible for wraparound care, holiday or summer programming.
- X Families will be charged \$15 for each 15 minute interval after 6:00 P.M. that the family is late in picking up the child
- X OSD will provide each family with a yearly financial statement in January for income tax deduction purposes.
- X Please refer to the “summer camp rates and information” for rates and rules during the annual ACC summer camp program.

Health, Safety, and Security

Health: Each child must have a physical exam before starting in the program at ACC and updated every year. ACC will provide parents with a form for the doctor’s verification that the child is free of communicable diseases and has had all the required state immunizations. The form must be on file at ACC within 30 days of the first day of school or the child must remain at home until the physician certifies the child’s health. Parents with a child with unique health needs (such as an allergy to bee stings) should discuss the situation with staff providing details for treatment.

Sometimes children become ill. Parents should keep children who have the following symptoms at home, seek a doctor’s appointment, and make arrangements for other child care in a place where the child can rest and be well-supervised:

Fever at 100 degrees or higher	Yellowish skin or eyes
Severe cough	Conjunctivitis (pink/red eyes or with matter)
Diarrhea	Vomiting
Skin rash	Unusually dark urine
Abdominal pain	Stiff neck
White or grey stools	“Green” runny nose

The above symptoms may be signs of communicable diseases. A doctor should evaluate children with these symptoms. Children may return to school when they are symptom-free for 24 hours or more or when the doctor certifies in writing that they may return to school.

ACC staff receives annual training in recognizing communicable diseases. If a child at ACC develops any of these symptoms, the child will be separated from active play and the parent will be contacted to come to pick up the child. Please inform ACC if your child has been exposed to or has been diagnosed with any contagious disease or condition, such as chicken pox, so that we can send an exposure report home to other parents, without mentioning any child’s name in the report. These reports are anonymous.

When staff or learners experience the following symptoms or conditions, they need to be temporarily excluded from ACC until they are well or have been treated medically and have a doctor's note.

Condition	When Staff or Students may return to ACC:
Chicken Pox	After the 6 th day after the onset of rash or until all lesions are dry, whichever comes first
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	24 hours after the start of antimicrobial therapy (prescription medication)
Diarrhea (3 or more loose stools within a 24 hour period)	When diarrhea is resolved
Impetigo (skin rash)	24 hours after the initiation of antimicrobial therapy (prescription medication) providing lesions are not draining
Measles	After the 4 th day of the rash
Mumps	After the 9 th day of the parotid swelling (glands below and in front of each ear)
Rash with fever or joint pain	Until the doctor rules out a communicable disease in writing
Rubella	After 7 days after the onset of the rash
Strep Throat (or other streptococcal infection)	After 24 hours after initiation of antimicrobial therapy (prescription medication)
Vomiting (2 or more episodes during 24 hours with a fever)	When vomiting stops or when a doctor determines a cause that is not infectious
Runny nose (frequent yellow or green discharge)	When discharge clears up or doctors determines that the cause is non-infectious
Lice (Periculosis)	After one application of an effective pediculocide available over the counter at the pharmacy and if the hair is found to be free of nits (eggs)

Safety: Fire drills occur monthly. Children are guided outside during fire drills, generally on “good weather” days; babies are carried outside by staff or wheeled out in a crib during drills. Tornado drills occur monthly during tornado season. Children are guided to a protected, inner hallway surrounded by block walls and away from glass and taught to sit quietly in the “tornado position” (kneeling while covering the back of the head). Drills do not last a long time. As children get older they are taught about weather and the safety precautions necessary for fire emergencies.

All ACC employees are required by law as mandatory reporters to report if they suspect child abuse or neglect. They must report suspicions to legal authorities and allow Children's Services or law enforcement to investigate. ACC employees receive annual training in recognizing possible signs of abuse or neglect.

The speed limit for vehicles on campus is 15 miles per hour. Please report the car of anyone appearing to exceed the limit to the ACC Coordinator. Please teach children to stay near you and your car when on grounds.

Security: The adult who picks up a child from ACC must enter and leave through the main front door. Doors to both ACC buildings are locked throughout the day and require staff members to open doors for student safety. Please sign children in and out each day in the main lobby before taking children to classrooms regardless of which ACC building houses the child's classroom. Anyone, other than parents picking up children, needs to be listed on the authorization list and show photo identification when picking up children if requested.

Child Custody: Parents who are legally separated or divorced have written child custody agreements. Ohio law states that schools and preschools must have a copy of the custody agreement. For the sake of the children, please keep custody disagreements out of the preschool. Non-custodial parents must have the permission of the custodial parent on the authorization list to pick up the child. If a serious or dangerous custodial dispute is likely, the custodial parent needs to inform the ACC Coordinator.

Emergencies and Accidents: An incident report will be completed by ACC staff whenever an accident or injury occurs. Parents receive a copy and the ACC Coordinator is also informed in case follow through is necessary to correct a dangerous situation. ACC employees are trained in First Aid and CPR.

Through appropriate supervision and maintaining staff to student ratios that exceed state requirements, ACC is able to prevent most accidents and emergencies. If an emergency does occur, these procedures are followed:

- X A staff member trained in First Aid and CPR responds to the child's immediate needs
- X Another staff member calls the Student Health Services (or 911) and the parents or the emergency contact person
- X If transportation is needed to go to the emergency room or for emergency dental care and the situation cannot wait for the parent to arrive, ACC staff who have transportation certification, or emergency squad personnel will transport the child
- X An ACC staff member will remain with the child until the parent or emergency contact person arrives

Parents may access inspection reports of the ACC by calling the Security Office at (614) 995-5186 and requesting a copy of fire and safety inspections or the OSD Maintenance Department (614) 728-4043 for safety and compliance reports. Parents may view a copy of license compliance located at ACC.

Observing Holidays and Celebrations

Birthdays: ACC wants each child to feel special on his or her birthday. Some parents like to contribute to the celebration by sending in a special snack or decorations. Children can become extra excited on their birthdays so we ask that arrangements be simple. A parent may send in any kind of snack for the child's birthday and it will be served during the afternoon snack period in that classroom. If another parent requests that a child not have sweets or some other food, ACC will serve an alternative snack to that child.

Holiday Celebrations: Some holidays reflect individual religious beliefs. ACC children may have families that hold different religious beliefs. Therefore ACC understands that parents,

themselves, should best address religious beliefs concerning holidays. However, growing up in America also means having an understanding of holiday symbols and the language development that comes from identifying a star, a heart, candles, or a ghost; children, themselves, often bring up subjects such as Santa Claus or costumes at Halloween time. ACC will primarily focus on seasonal concepts such as harvest time, winter snow and ice, spring showers and flowers, and summer sun and fun, but it would be a disservice to the children not to acknowledge their own comments or learning about other cultures.

It is a delicate balance to teach cultural concepts that all children need as they will start to read but to avoid teaching religious concepts. Please work with teachers and the ACC Coordinator to help us to achieve this balance.

Family Learning and Activities

ACC will create a family roster so that you may contact other families in your child's classrooms. If you do not want your family's name and contact information to be included, please let the ACC Coordinator know. Families sometimes enjoy getting together when school is not in session.

ACC also plans several special events for families several times a year. Events are normally held in the early evening and sometimes involve a "pot luck" meal. Parents enjoy talking together and getting to know the other children and their brothers and sisters. Brothers and sisters have an opportunity to be part of hearing and Deaf culture coming together, including opportunities for ASL communication. Sign language interpreters are available to bridge the gap as needed.

Information will be posted for parents about events for families in the community. Watch for details on dates and times posted in the ACC, or call (614) 752-2647 (V/TTY).

ACC has a Parent Resource Room near the ACC Lobby. This room may be used to observe the toddler class or use the computer to look for internet resources for parents. There are many books and videotapes, including sign language videotapes and ASL stories, which parents may borrow. Please ask the ACC Coordinator if you're looking for information on a special topic. There are resources on toilet training, handling tantrums, signing with babies, the Shared Reading project, deaf education, child development, cochlear implants, understanding audiograms, and many more topics.

Parent Rights

Complaint Procedure: Should a parent have a concern or complaint that they feel has not been resolved by the ACC Coordinator, the parent should send a letter outlining the complaint to the School Principal.

Student Records and Information Management System

ACC is required to maintain comprehensive student records and to follow confidentiality policies in keeping that information private, releasing it only to authorized agencies or with parent

permission. The Ohio Department of Education verifies that required information is in student files each year when they inspect ACC. That information includes:

- X Child's full name and date of birth
- X Parents' names, address, and contact information
- X Emergency contact information
- X Student's immunization history
- X Student's medical and dental examination reports
- X List of any allergies, medications, dietary or dental supplements, chronic physical problems, hospitalizations, or diseases the child has had
- X Parent authorization for emergency medical and dental care and transportation for care
- X Name and address of child's physician and dentist
- X Student evaluation information (MFE), if applicable
- X Student's IEP and IFSP, if applicable

Summer Program

The ACC offers its Summer Sign Camp from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. daily during the months of June, July and August. The Center is open its regular hours from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. During the summer months, ALL parents pay the general weekly flat rate based on the age of their child. The price of camp includes any before or after care as needed. There may be additional fees for field trips or swimming sessions. Eligible families may apply for subsidized childcare through the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services. Occasionally grant monies become available that may be used for Summer Sign Camp tuition. The ACC Coordinator will inform parents of these opportunities as they become available. There are no teachers on duty during Summer Sign Camp. Team leaders select and run all camp activities that can include swimming, field trips, arts and crafts, computers, story times and much more. Parents provide lunch for their children during the summer months as the OSD cafeteria is closed at that time. Information regarding the availability of Summer Sign Camp is made available to parents every spring.

Testing and Assessment at the ACC

The state of Ohio mandates testing for all children ages three and up in a preschool setting. The assessment tool used in the *Get it, Got it, Go!* and is given two times a year. The GGG measures the skills of young children in the areas of picture naming (identifying by name a picture of a dog or a house for example), rhyming (the ability to give a second rhyming word, for example cat, hat) and alliteration (the ability to say a word that starts with the same sound (sad, sing). We do our initial assessment in the fall and again in the spring. The results are reported to the state via an electronic system. These results are also shared with families during Parent/Teacher conferences.

For preschool children with a disability, the state mandates two other assessments. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE) and the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO). The ASQ:SE is a simple questionnaire given by teachers to a child's caregiver, and is looking for any areas of concern a parent may have about a child's social emotional development. If any

concern areas are indicated, the classroom teacher will share this with the parent, and refer them to additional sources for assistance. The ECO is a collection of information from all those involved working with a child to give a more well-rounded indication of how a child is doing during their preschool years. It could include the classroom teacher, phonemic awareness teacher, speech pathologist, ASL Specialist, Teacher Aides, or even bus drivers.

Within the ACC itself, our teachers use the Language Accomplishment Profile, Third edition (LAP-3) with all the children to assist us in aligning our curriculum to individual student needs. The LAP-3 is given one on one between the teacher and the student, and is designed to identify any specific needs a child may have in one developmental area or another. The assessment includes Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Cognition, Language, Pre-Writing, Self-Help, and Personal/Social. Because the Alice Cogswell Center uses an ASL immersion approach, all testing will be administered in ASL. The teacher administering the assessment will have the option to present the material “voice on” in order to have a better understanding of a child’s ability. It will be noted within the assessment that voicing was used so that we keep a good record of any difficulties a child may be having in one or both languages.

All assessment results are shared with families during Parent/Teacher conferences.

We welcome your family to the Alice Cogswell Center.

Alphabetical Index of Topics

Accidents and Emergencies	21
Admission Requirements	3
Assessments	23
ASL	5
Birthdays	21
Budget	3
Child Custody	21
Classroom Assignment	12
Closed Days and Holidays	16
Communicating with Staff	7
Confidentiality	8
Contacting ACC	1
Curriculum	12
Daily Schedules	6
Discipline	15
Dropping Off Children	6
Eligibility	3
Facility	2
Family Learning and Activities	22
Fees	17
Fee Schedule and Policies	17
Goals	2
Health and Illness	19
Licensure	3

Meals and Snacks	8
Medication	9
Mission Statement	2
Nap/Rest Time	10
Organization	3
Parent Concerns	14
Picking Up Children	7
Phonemic Awareness	13
Religious Holidays	22
Safety	19
Security	21
Sick Days	19
Social-Behavior Development	14
Special Education	14
Staff-Student Ratio	12
Staff	10
Student Assessment	14
Student Records	23
Summer Program	23
Supervision	3
Supplies	10
Transportation (Field Trips)	16
Weather Emergencies	17
Visiting	8