



Worcester Child Development Head Start Program *Worcester Public Schools*

Building A Future For Children And Their Families

Family Handbook

**Thank you for choosing Head Start as your child's preschool program.
For over 45 years, Head Start has proudly and successfully served families
who reside in Worcester.**

**Our Program provides your child with a strong foundation for lifelong
learning and actively engages the entire family.**



Brain Building in Progress

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<http://headstart.worcesterschools.org/>

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**Building Locations
and
Phone Numbers**

Greendale School

130 Leeds Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01606
508-799-3227 ~ Main Office
508-799-3243 ~ Family Service Advocate
508-799-3244 ~ Nurse

Mill Swan School/ A

337 Mill Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01602
508-799-3498 ~ Main Office
508-799-3251 ~ Family Service Advocate
508-799-3239 ~ Nurse

Mill Swan School/ B

337 Mill Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01602
508-799-3255 ~ Main Office
508-799-3262 ~ Family Service Advocate
508-799-3256 ~ Nurse

Millbury Street School

389 Millbury Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01610
508-799-3235 ~ Main Office
508-799-3696 ~ Family Service Advocate
508-799-3236 ~ Nurse

Program Overview

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program/WPS is based on the premise that all children share certain needs. The philosophy maintains that a child can benefit from a comprehensive, interdisciplinary program that fosters their social/emotional development and promotes school readiness skills. Families are able to access a broad range of services that include health screenings, special education services, nutrition and dental programs, and family engagement and support services. The program builds upon the strengths of each family and the unique experiences of the child. Families are considered to be the principal influence of their child's development and are encouraged to be actively engaged in their child's education in order to ensure positive outcomes.

Mission Statement

The mission of The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program/WPS is to provide a high-quality preschool program that prepares children to succeed in tomorrow's world. The program enhances the self-esteem and personal growth of all children, including those with special needs, while preparing every child to enter school ready to learn. Respectfully building on each family's strengths, goals and role as their child's first teacher, Head Start works in partnership with children, families and the community to promote and advocate for healthy development.

Licensing Information

Department of Early Education and Care

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program located at Greendale School, Mill Swan School and Millbury Street School are part of the Worcester Public Schools system and therefore are license exempt facilities. These buildings meet or exceed all local, state and federal licensing requirements and guidelines as well as the Head Start Performance Standards and Head Start Act.

A copy of the license exempt certificate from the Department of Early Care & Education is posted in all Head Start buildings.

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program is Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Enrollment and Registration

In order to enroll a child in The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program/WPS the following documentation must be provided:

1. Verification of Date of Birth - example: birth certificate
2. Proof of Residency – example: bill from utility company
3. Proof of Income
(income must fall within the income guidelines established by the Federal Government)
4. Proof of up-to-date immunization and a current physical *

Children with disabilities or are homeless receive priority consideration.

There is no fee for the part-day program. A sliding scale fee may apply for full-day options.

*Full day placements may require additional documentation to determine eligibility.

For additional information, please contact the Head Start Intake Specialist

Head Start Administrative Office

Taylor Building
770 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01610
508-799-3608

Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM (Bilingual staff available)

Located next door to the Worcester Public Schools Parent Information Center and Jacob Hiatt School

** The requirement for immunization records may be temporarily waived for a child who qualifies as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.*

**WORCESTER CHILD DEVELOPMENT
HEAD START PROGRAM
Worcester Public Schools**



Brain Building in Progress

Program Options

9:00 AM – 12:30 PM and 1:00 PM – 4:30 PM - (Head Start Funded)

Families Receiving TANF or Supplemental Security Income
Children in Foster Care regardless of income
Children with special needs or homeless

8 AM – 3 PM and 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM - (Head Start & EEC Funded)

Parent needs to be in school or working a minimum of 20 hours a week
Federal income guidelines apply to the above options

Half day program

- Child's Birth Certificate
- Proof of Household Income (DTA, SSI, SSDI, Child Support, Unemployment etc.)
- Proof of Address (utility bill/rental lease)
- Parent Picture I.D.
- Social Security Cards or Passports (parent & child)
- Health Insurance Card and Immunization Records

Full day program (in addition to the required documents for part day)

- Social Security Cards or Passport (parent & child)
- Child's Health Insurance Card & Immunization Records

- Birth Certificates for all siblings that reside in the home or a copy of last year's income tax form
- Pay-Stubs (4 consecutive pay stubs or 2 for those who get paid bi-weekly)
- School Verification (schedule and bill)
- Restraining Order Information (If applicable)
- Guardianship Information (If applicable)
- Proof of Address for absent parent (if applicable)

Fees for full day slots are established by EEC and are based on family income.

Parent co-payments:

7:30 AM – 4:30 PM: ½ of the daily rate for their family size

Families are billed monthly and required to complete a contract prior to the child entering the program.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51, A & B govern the reporting of child abuse and neglect and requires all professional school employees to report suspected cases of abuse of a student to the Department of Children and Families.

Any Head Start staff member that has reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred must work with the center Family Service Advocate to file a report with the Department of Children and Families. Generally, families will be contacted regarding the filing of the report unless the situation is critical or dangerous.

Head Start Family Service Advocates will continue to work with and support families regardless of the action taken by the Agency or the Department of Children and Families.

Start of School

All children should be in their classrooms no later than 9 AM daily or 1 PM if enrolled in the afternoon session. Bringing a child to school late causes them to miss important educational opportunities. Consistent tardiness will result in a meeting with your Family Service Advocate. If you are going to be late please call the school as early as possible to inform them.

Attendance Matters

Good Attendance makes all the difference and goes hand in hand with school success. Help your child succeed by building the habit of good attendance early. If your child is going to be absent, please contact the center main office staff to inform them of the reason for the absence. If we do not receive a phone call from you, we will be calling you. We appreciate your support in this.

Release of Children/Pick-Up Policy

Head Start staff members **may only release children** to parents, guardians or those listed on the ***child's authorized pick up form***. Parents/guardians will be asked to complete this form when the

child begins school. It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to notify the school of any changes or updates immediately. Only those 18 years of age or older are allowed to pick up a child unless the parent is a minor.

All parents/guardians or other authorized individuals must wait at the bus stop each morning and meet their child at the bus stop each afternoon. **Children will only be released to those individuals on the authorized pick up list.** Each day a parent/guardian or authorized individual **must have a picture identification with them.** This identification will be verified by the Head Start bus monitor. If you do not have a picture identification please see a Head Start staff member for assistance in securing one.

If you are not at the bus stop when the bus arrives your child will be returned to the school building. If this should occur it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or authorized individual to make arrangements to pick the child up at the school. Should there be repeated incidents of not picking up your child at the bus stop this could result in termination of transportation services.

Children will only be released to authorized individuals 18 years of age or older who have a picture identification.

Bus transportation is limited and not guaranteed!

Photo Identification Policy

Each parent/guardian or authorized pick up person must show a picture identification each day to the office staff member. The staff member will give the authorized individual a card that will identify them as the proper individual to pick up the child. This card will be left with the classroom teaching team. This process will repeat itself daily regardless of how well the staff knows the pick up person.

This is for your child's safety! A picture identification is required daily to pick up your child.

If you do not have picture identification one will be made for you at no cost by building staff. Please ask a Head Start staff member to assist you in this process.

Emergency Changes in Authorized Pick Up Individuals

Emergencies can happen at any time. If a parent/guardian or other authorized individual cannot pick up a child at school or the bus stop it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or authorized individual to contact the school before 12 o'clock noon. The caller will need to state the **child's code (this should be something only you would know) when calling the main office. Do not share your code with anyone.**

Transportation Policy

The program offers limited bus transportation. Bus transportation is reserved for families who can demonstrate a need. **Families are not guaranteed transportation.** Parents/guardians who are seen either at bus stops in a vehicle or driving their child to and from school on a regular basis will be asked to provide their own transportation.

Bus stops are designed to minimize the time children spend on the bus. Bus stops cannot be changed unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Each Durham bus is equipped with two-way communication systems, appropriate safety equipment, video cameras and bus monitors. The buses utilized by Head Start are equipped with individual child safety restraints. The program provides training on bus evacuation procedures, bus and pedestrian safety, and the proper use of child safety restraints within 30 days of the start of school. Notices informing families of these trainings are sent home. All families are welcome to participate.

Bus safety information is available to all parents/guardians and is sent home with children. During Open Houses and other family events additional materials are available. If you have any questions please contact a Head Start staff member.

Access to Student Records

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained in school buildings. The following personnel have access to a student's record in the performance of their official duties:

- Teachers, Center Coordinators, Coordinators, Family Service Advocates/ Associate, Special Education staff, secretaries, nurses and other health staff such as the Dietician or Dental Hygienists, and administrators who are employed by the Head Start Program.
- Worcester Public School Special Education staff who evaluate the child pursuant to Chapter 71B in the performance of the Massachusetts General Laws will also have access to a child's records.
- Local, state and federal department personnel in the performance of their official duties. This includes the Department of Children and Families, any court, Bureau of Special Investigation on Welfare and Fraud, Administration for Children and Families, etc.

Individuals serving in the parental role shall have access to a student's records:

- custodial parent (parent with physical custody)
- Legal guardian
- Person legally authorized to act on behalf of a student or in conjunction with the student's father, mother or guardian

Non-custodial parents **shall not** have access to a student's records when the:

- Parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial parent.
- The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation.
- A parent's access to the child or custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order or any subsequent modification specifically allows access.

Mass General Law, Chapter 71, 34H, requires the non-custodial parent to submit written request for access to the student's records to the school administration.

Once the written request has been reviewed for student information, Administration shall review the student record for any documents limiting or restricting parental access. The Administration shall immediately notify the custodial parent of the receipt of the request. Notification must be made by certified mail and First Class mail. The notification shall inform the custodial parent that information requested shall be provided after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the administration documentation of any court order which prohibits contact with the child or prohibits the distribution of information due to a temporary or permanent order or any subsequent order which modifies the protective order specifically allowing access to information described in the above section. If the administration is presented with an order from a Probate or Family Court Judge which prohibits the distribution of information, the school shall immediately cease to provide information and notify the requesting parent that distribution shall cease. All information requested is forwarded to the City Solicitor's Office for review prior to disseminating it to the party making the request.

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program requires copies of all custodial agreements and visitation schedules for enrolled children. By law, Head Start staff members are required to follow **all existing court orders** and **court imposed visitation schedules**. If no visitation schedule has been imposed by the court, the Head Start Program reserves the right to require the custodial parent/guardian to sign a written document setting out their agreement regarding visitation. Without prior written consent or approval of the custodial parent/guardian, the program will not release a child to a non-custodial parent outside of their normal visitation schedule.

Health Information

WHEN SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL?

- A temperature of **100 degrees or greater**. Temperature should be normal for 24 hours **without** the help of Tylenol or Motrin.
 - A diagnosis of ***strep throat***. Your child should remain at home until he/she has been on an antibiotic for a full **24 hours**.
 - If your child **has vomited** during the previous night or in the morning.
 - If your child **has diarrhea** during the previous night or in the morning.
 - If your child has a **moist productive cough, chest congestion** or **thick nasal drainage**.
 - If your child has a **red swollen eye that itches and has a yellow drainage**.
 - If your child **has live head lice**.
 - **Please** contact the school or school nurse if your child has a communicable disease, such as ***head lice, chicken pox, measles, ringworm, impetigo*** or ***scabies***.
-

FLU LIKE SYMPTOM CHECK LIST;

SHOULD I KEEP MY CHILD HOME?

- Has your child had a fever of 100.4 degrees or more in the past 24 hours?
- Does your child have a cough **OR** sore throat?

If you answered YES to both questions above, keep your child home.

Your child has an influenza-like illness.

CAN MY CHILD RETURN TO SCHOOL?

- Has your child had a fever of 100.4 degrees or more in the past 24 hours?
- Has your child had acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) in the past 24 hours?

If you answered NO to both questions above, your child can return to school.

If you answered YES to either one of the questions above, your child CAN NOT return to school.
Keep your child home for another day to observe for additional symptoms. Then use the check list questions again to decide whether you should continue to keep your child home.

Head Start nurses will be responsible to administer medications to children only with a written order from the child's physician or clinic. Medication must remain in the original package and be labeled with the child's first and last name, date the prescription was filled, expiration date and instructions on how to administer and store the medication.

The only exception would be epi-pen or other medications such as Benadryl prescribed by a physician as the first line of defense to prevent anaphylactic shock. Inhalers will be administered in case of respiratory distress if prescribed by the child's physician.

If you have any questions, please see the building Nurse or Center Coordinator

Tips and Reminders for Families

- Please do not send toys or food with your child.
- No toys or food are allowed on buses.
- Children should dress in comfortable clothes and shoes.
- For safety reasons children should not wear flip flops or open toed shoes.
- Dress children appropriately for the weather each day since they will be playing
- outside on a regular basis. (weather permitting).
- Send in an extra change of clothes that can be left at school with your child in the

- event of an emergency.
- Adhere to drop off and pick up times and follow all procedures for dropping off and picking up your child.
- Take advantage of family engagement opportunities to increase your knowledge about child development.
- Volunteer in the program and take advantage of parent leadership opportunities.
- Attend parent meetings, workshops, advisory groups and other opportunities to become an active participant in your child's education.
- When dropping off or picking up your child at school or the bus stop, we ask that you refrain from cell phone use.
- Work in partnership with teachers and other Head Start staff members.

Outdoor Play Policy

Outdoor play is very important for young children and is a regular part of the curriculum. You can foster the enjoyment of all outdoor activities by dressing your child properly for the weather. Children will participate in outdoor activities, weather permitting.

Field Trip Policy

Field trips enhance the classroom curriculum and provide opportunities for parents/ guardians and other family members to spend time with their children. Parents/ guardians are welcome to join their children on field trips. Parents/ guardians must sign a field trip permission form before participating in any field trips. Field trips may include the Ecotarium, Fire Station, Grocery Stores or other locations.

You will be notified prior to all field trips.

Classroom Curriculum

The program uses research based curriculums that support high-quality early education. Activities are developmentally appropriate and meet each child's individual needs. The curriculum is aligned with the state's Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences, the MA Curriculum Frameworks and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Teaching is purposeful and allows each child to explore, engage in play and have opportunities to build essential skills that are important for school readiness and long-term success. Teachers use observation and samples of children's work to assess children's progress three times per year. This information is shared with parent/guardians during parent/conferences and is used as a basis for classroom instructional practices and to develop high-quality professional development opportunities for staff.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year. These conferences acquaint parents with the curriculum and provide an opportunity for teachers and parents/guardians to work together as a team to support their child's school success.

Home Visits

Teaching teams, Nurses, Family Service Advocates and other Head Start staff will arrange home visits throughout the school year. The purpose of the home visit is to learn about each child and to help offer resources and support for the entire family.

Holiday Celebration Policy

To respect the cultural diversity of our families and staff, the program does not celebrate holidays in our schools. If you have any questions please speak with a Head Start staff member.

Disabilities/Mental Health/Special Education Services

At least ten percent of the Head Start enrollment consists of children with a specific special need or disability. All children are screened within 45 days of enrollment. Screening results are shared with each family. Every effort is made to meet the needs of all children. At times a referral may be warranted. Parents, teachers and other Head Start staff work together to determine whether a referral or assessment is needed. The program works with the Worcester Public Schools and other agencies to ensure the needs of each child are met. If a child requires an Individual Education Plan (IEP), it is developed by the WPS Special Education department, with input from the Head Start Disabilities Coordinator and the child's parent/guardian. Special Education services for children on an IEP are provided by the staff of the WPS Special Education department.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

Discipline and guidance is consistent and based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of each child. The following principles are followed:

1. Corporal punishment including spanking is not used.
2. No child is subject to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
3. No child is denied food as a form of punishment.
4. No child is punished, humiliated, or sent home for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet. Any child not toilet trained or who has a specific developmental or medical condition has a specific toileting procedure. This procedure reflects an agreement between the parent/guardian and the Head Start team and is included in the child's individual plan.
5. Expected appropriate behavior is clearly and simply specified. The program recognizes that children are in the process of learning how to function as a part of a group and each child is encouraged according to his/her needs. Compliance is praised. Inappropriate behavior will be addressed on an individual basis by the classroom teacher. Teachers and staff are trained on different behavior management techniques, including redirection to guide children on appropriate behaviors.

Appeal Process for Parents/Guardians with Regard to Special Education Services

The program strives to educate families on the importance of early identification and services for children with disabilities. Parents/Guardians' participation in the Special Education process is

essential and beneficial. Parents/guardians will better understand the services and be reassured that their child will develop to their fullest potential in the least restrictive environment.

If a parent/guardian denies the program the authority to proceed with early identification the following steps are taken:

1. A meeting is scheduled with the Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator and the parent/guardian at their earliest convenience.
2. The Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator reviews the screening results with the family and provides additional explanations.
3. If difficulty accepting the screening results continues the parent/guardian is given the option of taking part in the screening process scheduled at a time convenient for the family. If the parent/guardian still does not feel comfortable with the option a follow-up meeting is scheduled within the next 2 months.
4. If the parent/guardian still feels uncomfortable with the service after this second meeting then their refusal is documented and accepted.

All parents/guardians are invited to attend a Special Education Advocacy training offered each fall.

Mental Health Services

Our program paves the way for your child's healthy self-esteem. Head Start provides mental health services to help each child achieve success at home, school and in the future. Mental Health services are supervised by the Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator who is a certified school psychologist. An integrated approach that strengthens the social, behavioral and emotional health of children and families includes:

- Formal screenings twice a year on all children that address social/emotional development. Screening results are shared with families.
- Ongoing parent contacts provide opportunities to solicit information regarding observations or concerns parents have about their child's mental well-being.
- A behavior plan is implemented when a new or reoccurring developmental concern is identified. Teachers are provided support relating to a child's behavior and development.
- Additional assistance is provided through contracts with community partners. Mental health consultants provide guidance through observation of the classroom, training, parent/guardian contacts, case management, referrals and recommendations for treatment if needed.
- Families receive mental health education and support concerning early identification, prevention and treatment. Topics include ways to strengthen their environment, relationships, age appropriate social behaviors, realistic expectations and setting limits.

Nutrition Services

All children are served breakfast and lunch daily. Full day children also receive a snack. Students enrolled in the afternoon session will receive lunch and a snack. The program provides one-third to one-half of the child's daily nutritional needs. All meals meet the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food

Program meal pattern guidelines based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Meals served are low in sugar, fat, and salt and include a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein, and milk.

Meals are served family-style with children and teachers sitting together at the same table. Children are taught proper handwashing, participate in table-setting and help clean up after themselves. If your child has any special dietary concerns including food allergies or food intolerances, a form will be provided for you to be filled out by your child's physician.

Oral Health/Toothbrushing

Children brush their teeth daily. Each child has their own labeled toothbrush provided by the program. Brushes are stored in a holder and kept out of reach of children when not in use. Toothbrushing is supervised by staff that have been trained to monitor activities. Dental Hygienists provide classroom support and dental education for all children. The dental hygienists also meet with parents/guardians regarding oral health issues and work with each family to establish a dental home. It is recommended that children visit the dentist every six months. Head Start Dental Hygienists will send home reminders to families.

Health and Safety/Injury Prevention

Head Start staff members are required to maintain current First Aid and CPR certification to remain familiar with proper emergency medical and dental procedures. First Aid and CPR instructions are posted in each classroom. The program's emergency policies and procedures, evacuation routes and local emergency numbers are posted for easy access. The program strives to provide a safe environment by conducting regular safety audits and emergency drills. Ongoing instruction to children about safety rules is provided. Any child injured will receive immediate attention. Parents/guardians are notified of all injuries. Injuries that require the attention of medical personnel off site will be reported to the parent/guardian immediately. For this reason Head Start requires the family to complete an emergency medical and dental treatment permission form.

The key to injury prevention is ongoing training for children, families and staff. Children receive regular training on the use of child safety restraints, pedestrian safety, bus evacuation, fire drill and building evacuation procedures. Safety information is distributed regularly to families. First aid kits are located in all classrooms, offices and other key locations throughout the building. Classroom kits are transportable and accompany classrooms to playgrounds, outdoor areas or on field trips.

Each Head Start site is equipped with an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and there are designated staff in each center that have been trained on the use of this equipment.

Family Services/Family Engagement

Head Start Family Service Advocates (FSA) work to develop relationships with each family through a process of home visits, one on one contacts, phone calls, notes and other activities. Staff work in partnership with families to build upon their strengths and help them set realistic goals and achieve family engagement outcomes. Family goals are aligned with the Parent, Family, Community, Engagement frameworks and are monitored and supported by the family's FSA. Family Service and Engagement staff are available to assist families with identifying services, supports, and resources to help them reach their fullest potential; resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school.

FSA's work with community agencies and other organizations to provide coordinated support services to families. Head Start FSA's offer short-term counseling, crisis intervention, advocacy and referrals.

Families are encouraged to volunteer in the Program. Several opportunities to be actively engaged include:

- Reading a book to your child or a small group in a classroom
- Attending a parent meeting
- Providing assistance to the nurse or secretary
- Attending workshops or family events
- Helping the children plant in their raised gardens
- Participating in field trips
- Attending an Advisory meeting
- Participating in leadership opportunities
- Sharing your families culture with your child's classroom

Parent Meetings

As a parent of a Head Start child, you are already a member of your schools' parent group. The first meeting takes place in the fall and meetings are held throughout the school year. Parents play an important role in planning school activities for the year. These meetings are scheduled at various times in order to meet the needs of as many families as possible. The parents/guardians will have an opportunity to participate in an activity with their child and then attend the parent meeting while the children remain in the care of Head Start staff. As a member of your center committee you elect representatives to serve on the Program's Governing Board. The Governing Board works closely with Head Start Administration and School Board members to make important decisions that impact the operation of the program.

Policy Council/ Governing Board

The Policy Council/Governing Board consists of several key stakeholders. The largest group are parents of currently enrolled children in the program. 51% of the membership must be parents or guardians of children currently enrolled in the program. The balance of the membership consists of School Board members and Community Representatives. The group makes important decisions about programmatic and fiscal operations in conjunction with the Head Start Administrative staff and the grantee.

Members must limit the number of one-year terms to a combined total of three years. Meetings take place on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Childcare and limited transportation is available. For more information please see our Family Engagement Specialist or speak with a Head Start staff member.

Advisory Meetings

Several Advisory groups meet with key managers to discuss current issues that impact children and families. Parents/guardians work with staff and community representatives or agencies throughout the program year. Additional information about these opportunities are available by speaking with a

Head Start staff member. The Advisory Boards are: Learning Links (Education), Health Services and the “Men That Matter” Male Advisory Board.

Grievance/Complaint Process for Families and Community Agencies

The Worcester Child Development Head Start program has established the following procedures for families and community agencies in order to resolve a complaint or concern. This process is required by Head Start Performance Standard, 1304.50(d)(2)(v)

- Parents/Guardians or community representatives shall verbally state their grievance to the manager of the discipline within 5 days of the alleged grievance, complaint or concern.
- If the grievance, complaint or concern is not resolved within 5 days the parent/guardian or community representative shall place their complaint in writing and present it to the Head Start Director.
- The Head Start Director shall review and take proper action to address the grievance, complaint, or concern within 5 days.
- If the parent/guardian or community representative feels that the action has not been equitable they may submit an appeal in writing to the Head Start Policy Council/Governing Board. The appeal will be reviewed within 5 days and action will be taken.
- If the parent/guardian or community representative feels that the action taken by Policy Council/Governing Board was not equitable they must submit an appeal to the Program’s Grantee, the Worcester Public Schools (WPS). The WPS representative will respond to the complaint, grievance or concern with 5 days and that decision will be final.

Criminal Records Checks/Volunteers

All Head Start staff members are subject to a Criminal Records Check or CORI as stated in the Program Instruction, ACF-PI-HS-08-02 dated, April 14, 2008 and Fingerprinting (National Background Check). This process went into effect in April, 2014.

Head Start volunteers, parents, community representatives and student volunteers or interns are subject to a Criminal Records/National Background Checks prior to working or volunteering in the program.

Under M.G.L. c.71 & 38 R the Worcester Public Schools must request a CORI for both present and future employees and volunteers in any WPS program. The WPS can request a CORI and SORI on any subcontractor or laborer who may have direct and/or unsupervised contact with children while performing work or services on school grounds.

A CORI must be completed and reviewed prior to any Head Start employee or volunteer beginning service in the program and will be resubmitted every three (3) years. The Fingerprinting process is a one time requirement. The WPS will refuse to employ or continue to employ or to accept or continue to accept the volunteer services of any individual whose CORI check, in the judgement of the Superintendent or his/her designee, reveals a criminal violation which disqualifies the individual from

having direct or unmonitored contact with children. Documentation of CORI will be retained in the HS Administrative office.

Building Evacuation/Crisis Response Plan

You will be notified if there is an emergency situation that warrants the evacuation of a school building. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached an authorized individual on the pick up list will be contacted. Each school has an evacuation plan in place which is updated yearly. This information is posted in all school buildings and is shared with you during orientation, at parent meetings and via newsletters and notices.

If an evacuation is warranted your child will be brought to a pre-determined location by the Head Start staff. No child will be released to the parent/guardian until he/she has reached the predetermined evacuation location. All parents/guardians or other authorized pick up individuals will be required to present a photo identification when picking up a child. This individual must be on the current pick up list.

Early Release/School Delay and No School Policy

The Worcester Public Schools will exercise one of the following options when weather conditions or other variables dictate a change. This policy will apply to all Head Start school buildings.

Cancellation of the Worcester Public Schools

Should the WPS cancel school for the day, all Head Start school locations will be closed.

Delayed School Openings

If the WPS delays the opening of school for either one (1) hour or two (2) hours only children who attend a full day or the afternoon part day session will report to school according to the delay. All Head Start buildings will open either one or two hours later depending on the delay. **Half-day (AM) children will not have school on delay days.**

Early Dismissal

If the WPS dismisses school early the following will apply:

- Half Day classrooms will be released at 11:30 AM
- Buses will leave each school building at 11:30 AM
- Full Day classrooms – all families will be contacted and encouraged to pick up their children earlier.

Announcements for no school or delays will be made on the following radio and televisions stations:

WTAG 580 AM, WORC 1310 AM, WBZ 1030 AM, WXLO 104.5 FM, WSRS 96.1 FM, WCUW 93.1 FM

WHDH-Channel 7, WCVB-Channel 5 and WBZ-Channel 4

Information will also be posted on the WPS website <http://www.worcesterschools.org>

This is broadcast in Spanish between the hours of 5 AM and 6 AM

Important Contacts

School: _____

Phone: _____

Teachers: _____

Nurse: _____

**Please note: The program asks that you refrain from using your cell phone
when dropping off or picking up your child.
This is for your child's safety!**

WIC Office

Do you hate to wait for your appointment?

Do you want to make your life easier?

The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program is very fortunate to have a WIC office located in our program. The office is located at our Mill Swan School building, located at 337 Mill Street, and is open each Tuesday from 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM Families from all Head Start building locations are welcomed to make an appointment.

For more information or to make an appointment please call 508-755-4750.

Family Handbook

- I have received a copy of the The Worcester Child Development Head Start Program Family Handbook and understand my responsibility to adhere to the policies and procedures of the program.
- I understand that translation services are available to me if needed.
- You recibí una copia del libro para Padres del Programa de Head Start y entiendo que es mi responsabilidad el seguir los procedimientos y reglas del programa.
- También entiendo que hay servicios de intérpretes disponibles si son necesarios.

Parents/Guardians Signature/Firma: _____

Child's Name (Nombre del Niño): _____

Room Number/Numero del Salon: _____

Date/Fecha: _____