

Reaching Individuals Seeking Education

Blount County R.I.S.E. Preschool Program

Guide

The Blount County RISE Preschool Program is an inclusive preschool program for 3- and 4-year-old children with and without disabilities. This is an innovative program that is offered for preschoolers who reside in Blount County. RISE is based on the philosophy of Developmentally Appropriate Practice. This means the emphasis is on learning through a play-based, child-initiated approach. Instruction for each child is age appropriate as well as individually appropriate. The focus is to teach children how to learn rather than what to learn in order to facilitate their development and transition for school readiness.

Combining children with and without disabilities is a fundamental component of the program's philosophy. Children without disabilities benefit from learning about differences in same age peers and learn about disabilities at a young age before they form misconceptions. At the same time, children with disabilities benefit from appropriate interaction and observation of same-age peers.

Activities are adapted and/or modified based on children's individual needs and according to Individual Education Programs (IEPs). A variety of curriculum techniques will include the following essential areas: play behavior, listening, speaking, pre-writing, manners, feeding skills, personal hygiene, pre-literacy, problem solving, thinking skills, gross and fine motor skills, social skills and safety.

Enrollment

Children with special needs who meet the state requirements for eligibility and need a full range of services as determined by the IEP team are eligible for services on or after the child's third birthday. They must reside in Blount County.

Children without special needs must reside in Blount County or be a child of a family member of the Blount County School System. These students must turn 3 **on or before January 31st** of the current school year and **MUST BE** potty trained to be eligible to attend at the beginning of the school year.

The enrollment of siblings of students within the RISE program will be determined on an individual basis. One of our goals is to instill independence in our students with special needs.

Application Process

The class will be approximately 50% children without special needs and 50% children with special needs. **The number of typically developing peers accepted will depend on the number of students with special needs enrolled in the classroom.** The number of available spaces will vary each school year.

Children with disabilities or suspected disabilities go through the special education referral process as defined in the Alabama Administrative Code. Children may be referred at any time during the year.

Typically developing peers (without disabilities) may begin applying for the upcoming school year during open enrollment in the month of April. Applications may be obtained through the Blount County website or at the RISE location. Waiting lists are not maintained from year to year, you must reapply annually.

Tuition

The tuition for typically developing peers is **\$60 per week** for the 5 day program or **\$45 per week** for the three day program. Tuition will be due on Monday (or the next school day if Monday is a holiday) and is late on Tuesday afternoon. If the tuition is not paid by Tuesday afternoon, the student cannot return until paid. Tuition starts the first week of school starting (based on school calendar). Full tuition is due each week whether the child attends five days or less per week.

A \$60.00 non-refundable application fee will be required to reserve your child's spot in the program once he or she has been accepted into the program.

Administration has the right to dismiss a student from the RISE program due to poor attendance or noncompliance of policies and procedures.

Meals

Breakfast and lunch may be purchased from the school lunchroom. Please ask for prices as they might vary from year-to-year. You may send your child's lunch each day but no foods can be warmed or microwaved at school. You will need to send a healthy snack for your child daily.

Free and reduced lunches are available by application. Meals are not included in the monthly tuition.

HAND BOOK

In addition to this guide, we also follow Blount County Board Policies and Procedures as stated in the system handbook.

Transportation

Daily transportation is not provided for typically developing peers who pay tuition. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from school.

Guidance and Behavior Management

The teacher and paraprofessionals use guidance and behavior management techniques to encourage the development of positive self-concepts, appropriate behaviors, and self-control in the children. By using guidance and positive reinforcement, children learn that they are rewarded for appropriate behavior.

Other techniques used in behavior management may include: ignoring/removal of attention, verbal warnings/reprimands and the use of time-outs within the classroom, withholding privileges and/or activities.

If a child exhibits severe behavior problems or any of the techniques mentioned above are used excessively, a parent meeting will be held to discuss options. The team may recommend suspension as a consequence for severe behavior or removal from the program. In addition, the team may recommend a half-day alternative if a student experiences difficulty remaining in the school for an entire school day. A discount in tuition will **NOT** be made if this is the case for typically developing peers.

Health & Medical Emergencies

The staff will make every effort to protect the health and safety of all children. Cooperation of parents is essential in this effort. Parents should keep their child at home when **any** of the following symptoms occur and must be symptom-free for **24 hours** before returning:

Fever of 100 degrees or greater	Severe headache
Diarrhea	Rash with fever or behavioral change
Vomiting	Eye discharge / Pink eye
Severe cold	Mouth sore with drooling

In the event that a child becomes ill or suffers an accident while he/she is at school, the child's parents will be notified. If the accident or illness requires medical attention, the child's parents will be called immediately. In an extreme emergency, paramedics will be called, and the child will be transported to the hospital when appropriate. A staff member will stay with the child until his or her guardian arrives.