



Parent Handbook

Rockingham County
Partnership for Children



Welcome to the NC Pre-Kindergarten Program!

We are delighted to have your child join our NC Pre-Kindergarten Program. Pre-Kindergarten is an exciting time for children. There is so much to learn and so much to do! I hope that your child's experience in the NC Pre-K program will be a wonderful one.

Each NC Pre-K classroom is equipped with a variety of materials to help your child explore, create, play and learn! NC Pre-K classrooms have a teacher and an assistant teacher to help guide your child in learning. When needed, speech therapists and other support personnel are available to assist your child. You may see some of these helpers in your child's classroom from time to time.

In this handbook, you will find useful information about the NC Pre-Kindergarten program including information about our school year, school day and information about what you may find in a pre-k classroom. Please take a few minutes to review this information before your child's first day of school.

As you prepare for the school year, please remember that regular attendance is very important to your child's success in school. Pre-K is preparing your child to be successful in kindergarten and attending school regularly plays a big role in that! Being involved in your child's classroom is welcome. Please talk with your child's teacher about ways you can be involved. Teachers can always use helping hands both in and out of the classroom.

I hope that you will get to know the teachers at your child's school and feel free to ask questions throughout the year. You may feel free to contact me at the Rockingham County Partnership for Children at 336-342-9676 or via e-mail adinat@rockinghamkids.org, to share concerns or successes. Thank you for sharing your child with us!

Wishing you a great year!

Adina H. Tompkins, NC Pre-K Coordinator

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 www.rockinghamkids.org

 [/rockinghamcopartnership4children](https://www.facebook.com/rockinghamcopartnership4children)

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Here are answers to the most
FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS about NC Pre-K.

When does school start?

NC Pre-Kindergarten will follow Rockingham County Schools' Calendar. Visit www.rock.k12.nc.us to find the school calendar for the current year. The school year will start with a week of staggered entry for NC Pre-K children. (ex. 9 children will attend on Monday/Wednesday and the other 9 children will attend on Tuesday/Thursday). Your child's teacher will determine the exact schedule.

Is there a charge for NC Pre-K?

NC Pre-K is a state funded preschool program. This program is no charge for families that qualify. You will not be charged for any services during the 6 ½-hour NC Pre-K day. You will not be asked to pay for anything while participating in the program. You may periodically have the opportunity to purchase fundraiser items, school portraits, etc.; however, this is not required. In addition, teachers may provide "wish lists" for the classroom but you are not obligated to purchase anything.

Someone said something about a home visit. What is that and when will our child's teacher come to our house?

As soon as your child's teacher is available, they will call you and set up a home visit. During your home visit, your child's teacher will meet you and your child and become familiar with both of you. Your child's teacher will bring important paperwork to review with you and will talk to you about what to expect at school. They are not looking at your home! They just want to meet you and your child in a place that is comfortable for you. You can expect a phone call about 1 week before school begins to set up your child's home visit.

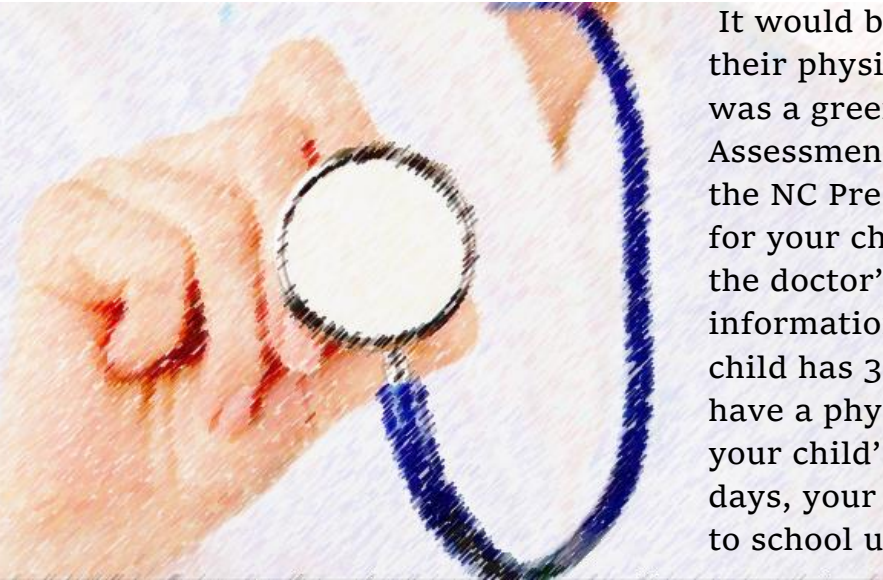


What if my phone number or address change?

Please contact Adina Tompkins, NC Pre-K Coordinator at (336) 342-9676, and give her your new information. Mrs. Tompkins will give that information to your child's teacher.

Does my child need to have a physical before school begins?

It would be a good idea for your child to have their physical before the first day of school. There was a green NC Pre-Kindergarten Health Assessment form provided when you applied for the NC Pre-Kindergarten program. If it is not time for your child's physical, please take the form to the doctor's office and ask them to fill it out with information from your child's last physical. Your child has 30 days after the first day of school to have a physical in their file in the classroom. If your child's physical is not turned in within 30 days, your child may not be allowed to come back to school until this is turned in.



Will my child's class take field trips?

Yes, each NC Pre-K class will take at least 2 field trips per year. For each of these you will be asked to fill out a permission slip and may have the opportunity to go with your child. You **will NOT** be asked to pay for this field trip or supply your child's lunch. If you are asked to pay for your child's field trip please contact Adina Tompkins, NC Pre-K Coordinator, at (336)342-9676.

If we move during the school year, can my child's spot transfer to another classroom?

If you move within the county, we will make every effort to find a space for your child in another classroom. If this is not possible, your child will be placed on the waiting list for a school closer to your new home. We cannot guarantee that a spot will be available. If you move to another county in the state or to another state, you will need to contact their local pre-school program to get more information on what is available for your child. (If you remain in the county and are able to provide transportation for your child to continue in their current classroom, you will not be required to move them).

My child received a dental/hearing screening referral during the summer screenings. What do I do now?

Please take your child to the dentist or doctor to have the concern checked out. After your appointment please submit the referral form (received during screenings) to your child’s teacher. Our goal is to best prepare children to enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. We strive to keep track of all children’s referrals and follow up information.

What time will my child need to be at school? When does the school day end?

NC Pre-K is a full day program. Each classroom operates 6 ½ hours a day. Most classes begin around 8:00 and end around 2:30. (*Times may vary slightly from school to school*). Ask your child’s teacher about the times for their classroom.

What if I need before and after-school care?

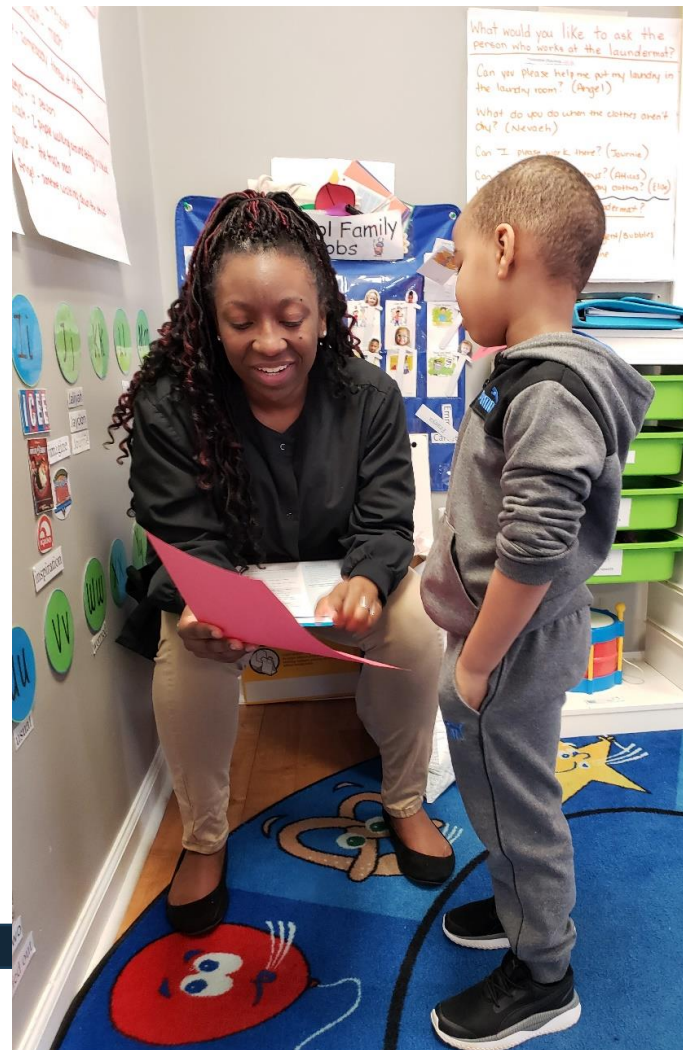
If you are placed within an NC Pre-K classroom within the Rockingham County School system, before or after-school care is **not provided** on-site. If your child is placed in one of our private preschool sites, before or after-school care **may** be available. Please see the center director at your child’s center for more information. If you need a referral for afterschool care, please contact the Child Care Resources and Referral line at 1-800-289-5098.

What if I need transportation?

Transportation is **NOT AVAILABLE** for Preschool age students. (**Buses are no longer available at Elementary schools**).

What are the attendance requirements?

In order for your child to fully benefit from the program it is very important that your child attend NC Pre-K on a regular basis. If your child has on-going attendance problems they could lose their space in the classroom.



Working with Families

Parent Participation:

Parent participation is an important part of the NC Pre-K Program. We like to hear your ideas about your child and their education. Your child's teacher may ask for ideas on how to plan for your child in the classroom. The NC Pre-K program has an open-door policy. This policy allows parents and families to spend time with their children in the classroom, have lunch together or observe. *(With the first few weeks being the exception. Children need time to adjust to the classroom and schedule before there are visitors in their space).*

Parent/Teacher Communication:

Children have the best chance of being successful when there is on-going communication between families, teachers and schools. Your child's teacher may send notes home about your child, as well as, classroom newsletters. At the beginning of the school year your child's teacher will make a home visit to get to know you and your child. Throughout the school year you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's teacher for conferences to discuss your child and their progress in the classroom. Use this time to ask questions and share your ideas about your child's learning.

The staff is excited to learn about new interests your child has or new events in your child's life. Your child's teacher will use this information to meet the needs of your child and plan classroom activities which will make the most of your child's development and learning.

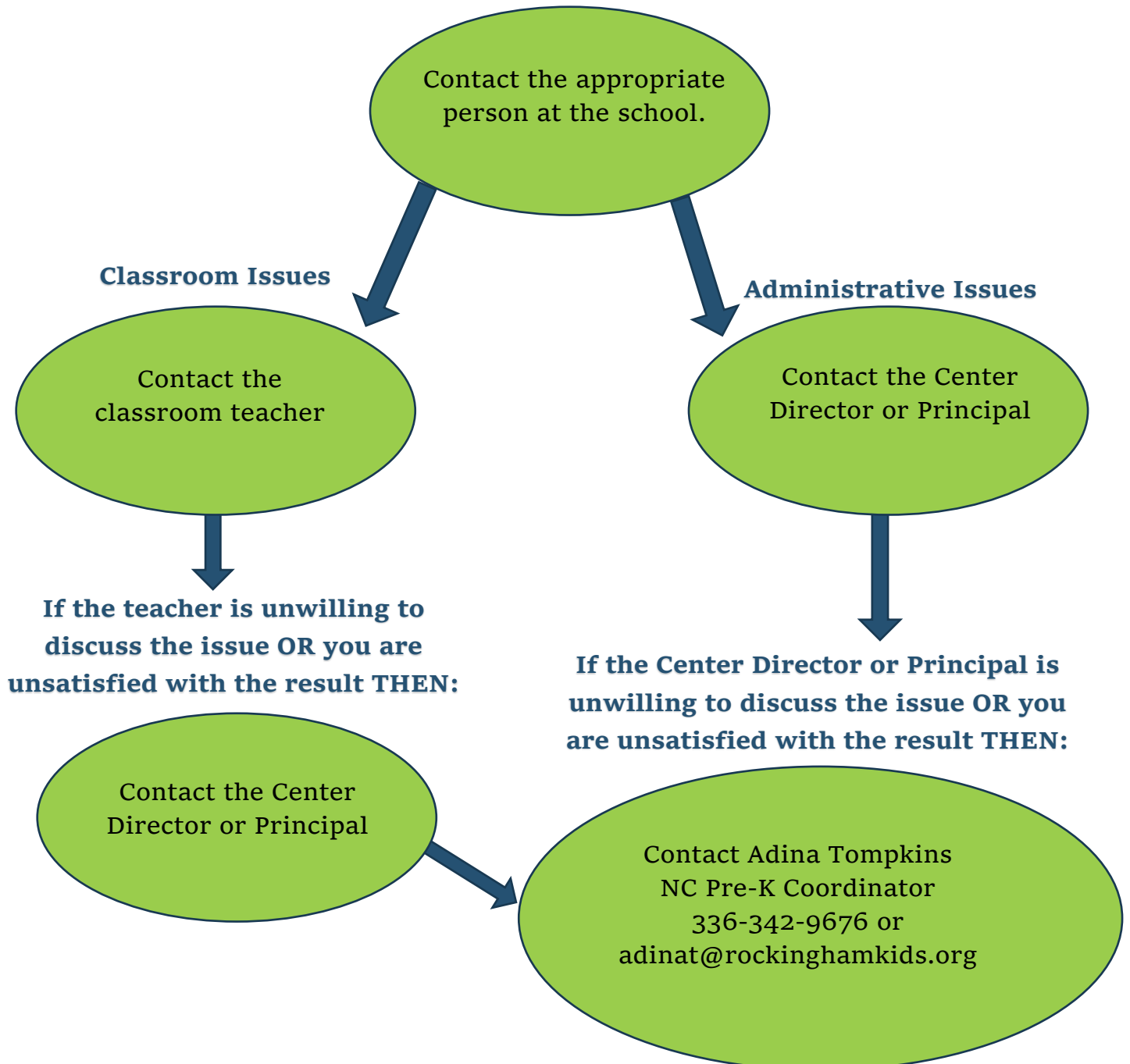
From time to time, parents and families may have concerns about the child or program. Please let the teacher and/or Center Director/Principal know as soon as problems come up, so these concerns can be talked about. (Please see "Process for Submitting a Complaint/Concern" in the Parent Handbook packet). NC Pre-K wants to hear your recommendations so we can continue to develop and improve our program to best meet the needs of each child.



Process for Sharing a Concern

The Rockingham County NC Pre-Kindergarten program wants to ensure that each child and family have a positive experience in the program. If you have any concerns about the program we ask that you follow the procedure below:

If you have a concern:












Curriculum

Children learn best through play. NC Pre-K classrooms in Rockingham County use *The Creative Curriculum*® (learn more at www.teachingstrategies.com).

On a typical day in a Creative Curriculum classroom it looks like children are simply playing. While visiting the classroom you may see dress up, painting, building, reading stories and dancing all happening at once. Beneath this play, your child will be learning important social skills, language and literacy skills, physical skills and they will be growing academically, as well. Throughout the day, your child will choose many of these activities. At times, the teacher will work with your child in a small group to target goals they are working on for your child. When using the curriculum, teachers and staff make it possible for children's development to blossom. Children are the focus in the classroom.

As part of the curriculum, our teachers access Teaching Strategies GOLD™, an online program used to track your child's learning. Your child's teacher will share this information with you during your parent/teacher conferences. There is also a way for you to view your child's progress online throughout the year. Ask your child's teacher for more information.

A typical preschool day may look like this...

Our Pre-k Day	
Arrival	
Snack	
Group Meeting (around 20 mins)	
Choice Time (play in centers)	
Outside Time	
Story Time	
Lunch	
Rest Time	
Group Meeting	
Goodbyes!	

While at school...

Interest and Learning Centers (Choice Time)

During the day, your child will be engaged in play in learning centers. Learning centers help your child grow and learn. Each center has materials and activities that allow your child to work one on one, with another child, or with a teacher, so individual needs are met. Teachers and staff move around the room and work with children in the learning centers. During the first few weeks of school, your child will learn how to use each learning center to make the most of their learning. Except for group time and lunch, the children will be involved in small group and individual activities during most of the day. Preschool is not the same as elementary school. Requiring children to sit for long periods, do worksheets or complete homework is not what is best for children at this age.

The interest centers that you may find in the classroom include Blocks, Music, Toys and Games, Dramatic Play, Science/Discovery, Library, Writing, Art, Math, Sand/Water and Gross Motor. Your child's teacher can give you information about each of these interest centers and what your child is learning through play.

Outdoor Play

Spending time outside is very important to a child's growth and development. Children need fresh air and movement in open spaces for healthy development. The outside environment includes activities to motivate learning for the whole child. While outside, there are opportunities for climbing, sand and water play, painting, blocks, woodworking, and large motor activities. Children will play outside daily, weather permitting. If your child is not well enough to play outside on any given day, he is likely not well enough to be at school. Children should be dressed in appropriate clothing for outside play. **Closed toes shoes and dressing in layers is recommended.**





Listen up...

Child Care Health Assessment/Physical

Each child in the NC Pre-K program must have a medical examination/physical by a licensed physician/doctor within thirty (30) days of the child's first day of school. This examination must be documented on the ***NC Pre-Kindergarten Health Assessment*** form. (This form is **green** and was included in the application packet). You can also access this online on our website www.rockinghamkids.org under the NC Pre-Kindergarten tab.

Immunizations (shot record) will be required according to the current schedule mandated by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Please ask your child's physician to attach a copy of your child's immunization (shot record) to the NC Pre-Kindergarten Health Assessment form. Without these, your child **may not be allowed to remain in the program**.

Emergency Contact Information

Each child must have a completed Emergency Information Form. This form includes information with your address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, physicians, dentists and the designated hospital for emergency use. Your child's teacher will give you this form. (*Unless you completed one during the Summer Screenings*).

Care of Ill Children and Exclusions (for sickness) Policies

Please discuss Care of Ill Children and the Exclusions Policies with your child's teacher. Each site/classroom will have their own specific policy in compliance with NC Child Care Guidelines.

Accidents

Every precaution has been taken to make sure that NC Pre-k classrooms and schools/centers are safe. Teachers receive training so that they can take action quickly in case of emergencies. Should an accident occur:

- ! In the case of a child sustaining a minor injury, a NC Pre-K staff member trained in first-aid will provide care and the parent will be notified at the end of the day.
- ! In case of a serious injury, a NC Pre-K staff member will attempt to notify parents immediately. You should provide accurate and up-to-date phone numbers to your child's teacher throughout the year.
- ! If the parent cannot be reached and the NC Pre-K staff member feels that it is necessary, 911 will be contacted and a NC Pre-K staff member will accompany the child to the Emergency Room while continuing to attempt contact with the child's parent/legal guardian.
- ! An incident report describing the occurrence will be provided for the parent to review and sign.

Emergency Plan

Each NC Pre-K classroom has a written plan intended to help teachers be ready for emergency situations. The emergency plan is in the classroom for teachers and staff to review; if you have questions about the emergency plan, please feel free to refer to the posted policies or ask your child's teacher.



Children will practice what to do in case of an emergency. If you arrive at your child's school and children are taking part in a drill, do not be alarmed. **DO NOT** enter the building/classroom during an emergency drill. Once the drill is over, you can enter the building to get your child.

Inclement Weather Policy

NC Pre-K will make every attempt to maintain normal hours during poor weather. The Rockingham County NC Pre-K program will follow the same schedule used by Rockingham County Schools. To learn if there have been changes in your child's school schedule:

- Listen to local television, radio stations, and Facebook for school closings and delays.
- Listen for early dismissal due to snow if bad weather begins while your child is at school.
- Call Rockingham County Schools Weather Line at (336) 623-1385.

**Are you
moving?**

Withdrawal/Dropping from the NC Pre-k Program

If you choose to withdraw/drop your child from the program or move out of the county:

- 1st: Notify your child's teacher about your child's last day of school.
- 2nd: Contact Adina Tompkins, the NC Pre-K Coordinator at (336) 342-9676 or adinat@rockinghamkids.org.



Safe Arrival and Departure

- Each morning an adult must take your child into the classroom. (no person under 18-unless they are the parent may bring a child into the building).
- At arrival, parents must sign their child in to the classroom. It is important for you to bring your child to school **on time!** Classroom group time is first thing in the morning. During this time many teacher directed activities take place. It is important for your child to be there so they do not miss out on

new concepts being taught. Please make every effort to have your child at school at the beginning of the day! Repeated tardiness could result in your child losing a space in the classroom.

- At the end of the school day, an adult must come inside the classroom and notify the teacher that the child is leaving. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18 or anyone that is not on the child's pick up list. (Your child's teacher will get this information from you). For safety reasons, your child's teacher may ask guests picking up your child for picture identification.
- **DO NOT LEAVE SIBLINGS UNATTENDED.** (Please do not leave children under 16 in your vehicle while picking up your child).
- **Pick up your child ON TIME.** When planning for your child's pick up, please allow enough time to arrive, gather your child's things, chat with the teachers and leave before the end of the school day. Consideration of this policy is very important. Children not picked up on time will be reported to the Department of Social Services if this continues.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and neglect cases are often first suspected or detected by school personnel. By North Carolina Law (G.S. 110-118), any person suspecting child abuse and/or neglect is required to report any suspected cases to the county social services department in the county in which the child resides.

All teachers/staff members must follow the requirements of the Child Abuse Reporting Act by reporting any suspected case of abuse and neglect.



Confidentiality

All conversations and information given to a teacher about a child is confidential (except for Program Director/School Principal/NC Pre-K Coordinator). This information will be kept between you and the teacher. Information is never shared about a child to another child, parent, student, volunteer or staff person. Any person not complying with this confidentiality statement should be reported to the Program Director, School Principal or NC Pre-K Coordinator.

Rockingham County
Partnership for Children



For more information visit:

<https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov>

or

www.rockinghamkids.org

Program Contact:

Adina Tompkins, NC Pre-K Coordinator

adinat@rockinghamkids.org

336-342-9676

