

Gentle Learning

PRE SCHOOL

L I S L E P A R K D I S T R I C T

2020-2021 Parent Manual

OUR STAFF

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OUR PROGRAM

Gentle Learning Preschool's classrooms provide a variety of high-interest centers to encourage young students to learn while playing! Much of a young child's knowledge comes from interaction with the surrounding world, direct experience with real objects, and talking about experiences and ideas.

Learning is fun at Gentle Learning Preschool! We weave Kindergarten Readiness skills into our daily activities. Arts and crafts introduce little learners to the concepts of color, shape, and space. Science is explored through hands-on experiments, mixing, and cooking. Play in the sensory table exposes our students to different textures as well as measuring and volume. Math is developed through sorting, counting songs, comparing, and patterning. The development of fine motor muscles necessary for writing happens while manipulating play dough and building with table toys and blocks. Self-expression is encouraged throughout our room but is especially fun in our dramatic play areas. Our kiddos run, climb, pedal, jump, and slide daily on our playground or in the motor room on cold or rainy days to allow for gross motor development.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Gentle Learning Preschool, children participate in play-based activities to encourage learning and development through hands-on experiences.

We recognize the value of providing a developmentally appropriate curriculum for our young learners. Our curriculum has been thoughtfully aligned with the Illinois Early Learning Standards. We carefully select and create lessons to engage our students' intellectual, social, and physical needs that will help prepare them for future academic success.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Gentle Learning Preschool Staff

Gentle Learning Preschool staff consists of the Youth and Early Childhood Manager as well as teachers and teacher's aides. Each of our dedicated teachers have taught for many years and hold a Bachelor's Degree in education. Many of our teacher's hold education related Master's Degree as well. We are committed to creating a nurturing learning environment for each of our students. Our class sizes for the 2020-2021 school year are 50% of our capacity to ensure enough room for social distancing. Each class is staffed with a teacher and an aide. The Lisle Park District has the right to decrease or increase the class size at their discretion.

School Supplies

Each day we use a variety of items to foster students' creativity and help them learn. Please bring the following supplies to school the first week we are in session.

- 1 - 16 or 24 Count Crayola Crayons - 4-year-old classes
- 1 - 8 count Large Crayola Crayons - 3-year-old classes
- 1 - 8 count Crayola Washable Markers
- 4 - Large Elmer's Glue Sticks
- 1 - 4 oz. Bottle of White Elmer's Glue
- 1 box of Kleenex
- 1 box of gallon size Ziploc bags (boys only)
- 1 box quart size bags (girls only)

Footwear for Motor Time

Each day, we will spend at least 20 minutes on our playground, in the grassy area or in the motor room when the weather isn't cooperative. Running, jumping, climbing, and pedaling require proper shoes. We strongly encourage each student to come to school in closed-toed shoes. Sneakers are ideal, but any shoe that stays on your child's foot and covers their toes is acceptable. If an outfit dictates a fancy shoe, you can send a pair of motor time appropriate footwear in your child's backpack for them to change into.

Communication Between Teacher & Parent

A whole school newsletter will be emailed at the beginning of each month containing information about upcoming school events and activities, days off, special presentations, etc. This is our way of keeping you up to date with what is happening throughout our school!

In addition to the monthly newsletter, teachers send out a weekly email informing parents of what is taking place, specifically in their classroom. The email address we have on file will be the one we use for these newsletters. If your email changes or is incorrect, please let us know so that we can get it updated.

Lastly, your child's teacher has an email that she checks throughout the day, as well as a direct telephone number with voice mail. The best way to reach your child's teacher during class time is by email. We will not be able to answer the phone while we are in class but will check voicemails before and after school.

Virtual Giving Tree

Ordinarily, teachers have a "Giving Tree" poster outside their classroom doors. When a teacher is in need of a particular item to be used in their classroom, she will write it down on a paper apple. This year, we are adding a virtual "Giving Tree" to the end of our weekly newsletters. If you would like to shop for any of the items listed, we would be most grateful. Lots of the items are things you might already have at home like paper towel tubes or old magazines. Just let us know if you're able to provide an item and send it with your child within a few days of its posting.

Student Evaluations

We believe it is essential to assess our young learners throughout the year so that we can not only see their academic growth but also identify any areas of concern related to their development. Progress reports will be sent home 3 times for our 4-year-old classes and twice for our 3-year-old classes. Teachers are always available to discuss the information on the evaluations and give you tips for addressing any struggles that your child may be having. The first evaluation of the year focuses on social and emotional skills only. The second and third evaluation (if applicable) covers your child's physical and academic progress.

Celebrating Birthdays

We want to make your child feel special on their birthday. Each of our teachers celebrates in a slightly different way in their classroom.

We like to allow our birthday child to either bring in their favorite storybook for us to read or to pick one out of our library. If you would like to send a birthday treat, we just ask that each treat be individually wrapped and store-bought. We are mindful of allergies and want to ensure safety for each of our students. Take home favor bags are a good alternative to edible treats and always a big hit with our little ones.

If your child's birthday is during the summer months, the celebration can take place on their half birthday or at the end of the school year. Your child's teacher will contact you to arrange a date. If you are planning a party for your child outside of class, please do not send invitations to school unless EVERY child is invited.

Play Items from Home

We ask that all toys and play items be left at home. We don't want any special toys or lovies lost or broken. Each teacher allows opportunities for show and tell throughout the year so that special toys and interests can be shown off.

Restroom Procedures

All children attending Gentle Learning Preschool must be toilet trained and self-sufficient when using the restroom. Pull ups are discouraged in our 3 and 4-year-old classrooms. All children are required to wash their hands after using the restroom. We will help students change clothes should a wet accident occur. We will discretely call a parent to come change a bowel accident as staff will not.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Gentle Learning Preschool Hours

Class	Arrival	Dismissal
M-F 4's Classes	8:45am	11:15am
M, W, F 4's	9:00am	11:30am
3's Classes (ALL)	9:15am	11:45am

Pick Up & Drop Off Procedures

This year, in an effort to keep everyone socially distanced, we are going to do drop off and pick up using a car loop. Please arrive in the car loop line no earlier than 5 minutes before your scheduled start or end time. Start and end times are staggered so that we do not have a long line of cars waiting in our parking lot. Please enter the lot from Ohio Court (which is the entrance by the Senior Center). Please see map for directions.

There will be a Gentle Learning Preschool sign in front of our loading/unloading zone (blue star on your map). We ask that parent and child have their face coverings on for drop off and pick up.

DROP OFF: Please do not get out of your car until you are first in line, please wear a face covering when outside your vehicle. A teacher will approach your car and ask you to get your child out of their car seat. If your child is staying for Kids Day Out or an Enrichment class, please let the teacher know. We will get your child signed in and then walk them into the building to start our day! Please exit the lot onto Ohio Street, we will see you at pick up

PICK UP: Enter the parking lot from Ohio Ct. (entrance by the Senior Center). Please have your child's name sign in your windshield so that we can quickly and easily get all of our students out to their parents. We will bring children to the first 2 cars in our line. Parents can exit their vehicles and help buckle children into their car seats. Once the first two cars have moved, we will bring the next two children out and repeat the process until each child has been picked up.

We ask that you are patient for the first few weeks as we work through these new drop off and pick up procedures.

Regarding pick up times: If, after 5 minutes, the child has not been picked up, a \$1.00 per minute charge will be imposed. The late fee will be added to your monthly tuition and a letter will be sent home notifying you of the fee due. Please call Jill Jehs directly (630)886-2265 if you are going to be late so we may notify your child's teacher. You may also email your child's teacher directly to let them know if you are running behind.

Please know that all entrances and exits of the preschool will be locked and secured as soon as children and teachers have entered the building. If you arrive after your scheduled drop off time, we ask that you park in the spots across from Door 15 and contact your child's teacher so that they can come get your child.

For safety and security reasons, all children will need be signed in and out by an authorized adult. An emergency contact number is also required. Note:

Pick Up Authorization forms are included in the new student packet and also may be obtained from the teacher. Any person picking up a student must be included on this list!

Age Eligibility

Gentle Learning Preschool follows the Illinois state guidelines that a child must turn the age listed for each class prior to September 1st of that year. We will not accept enrollment for 3-year olds after February 1st of the school year.

Classroom Expectations

We believe that children learn best through experiences. It is our goal to shape behavior through positive and meaningful interactions with our students. We will model and reinforce desired behaviors that encourage and enhance each child's growth and development while in our program.

We believe that we can best accomplish this by:

- Having a variety of engaging and interesting activities for the children
- The use of group management techniques, limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid over-crowding and to allow for sufficient materials and the opportunity for constructive interactions
- Speaking with children if their behavior is inappropriate for the area or material that they are using, i.e. "This is the way we use a paint brush," etc
- Using positive language with children to give praise for appropriate behavior; i.e., "I like the way John is sitting"; or "Walk, please" instead of "Don't run."

Our teachers are consistent with their classroom expectations. Each child will have the tools necessary to make good choices. Consistency helps lead children to positive experiences within the classroom.

Absences and Sickness

Especially now, it is important to know when your child is sick and should stay home.

Below is the typical list of symptoms to help you decide:

- A persistent cough and wheezing with a thick or constant nasal discharge
- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea the previous day or night
- Any undiagnosed rash, especially when there is a fever and a behavior change
- Any physical or emotional condition that would prevent your child from participating comfortably in class
- Pink eye: Redness of the eye, a white or yellow discharge often with matted eyelids after sleep, eye pain or itch
- Strep throat/Scarlett fever

Please let your child's teacher know if they are going to be absent. If your child contracts a contagious disease (Hand, Foot and Mouth, Fifth's disease, head lice, etc.) that restricts them from returning, we ask that you contact Jill Jehs via email or phone so that a health alert notice can be distributed to affected classrooms.

If serious medical emergencies arise during class time, 9-1-1 will be called. You will be notified immediately if your child needs medical care.

COVID-19 Procedures

Symptom Assessment Prior to Attending Preschool

Before coming to class each day, assess your child:

- Does my child complain of being sick or look sick?
- Is anyone in the home sick or not feeling well?
- Does my child have any of the following COVID-19 like symptoms: fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, gastrointestinal concerns (e.g., abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea)?

If you answered "YES" to any of the above three questions, do not proceed to the preschool. Please notify the program manager. Students who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should call their doctors and follow CDC guidelines. Upon arrival each day, parents and child must wear a face covering that covers both their mouth and nose.

Returning to Preschool

Before being allowed to return to school after exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, child must have:

- Gone 72 hours without having a fever without the aid of a fever reducing medication
- Other COVID-19 related symptoms must have improved
- At least 10 days has passed since their symptoms first appeared.

If participant does contract COVID-19, they should remain isolated at home for a minimum of 10 days after symptom onset and can be released

- After feverless and feeling well (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 72 hours OR
- Has 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart

If the child has been away from school based upon the order and/or recommendation of their physician, we will require a note from a physician indicating that the child can return to school.

Procedures for Experiencing Symptoms at Program

If a child begins to feel COVID-19 symptoms while at school, they will be sent home from the program. While waiting for their parents to come, child will wait in a designated isolation area as determined by staff until picked up.

Before being granted admittance back to program after exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, child must have:

- Gone 72 hours without having a fever, other symptoms must have improved, and
- Other symptoms have improved, and
- At least 10 days has passed since their symptoms first appeared.

If child does contract COVID-19, they should remain isolated at home for a minimum of

- 10 days after symptom onset and can be released
- After feverless and feeling well (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 72 hours OR
- Has 2 negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart.

Positive Case of Covid-19

If a child or staff member has contracted COVID-19, a message will be sent to anyone who has had close contact with that participant. They are advised to quarantine 14 days after the last recent contact with the individual and seek a COVID-19 test.

Safety Procedures & Parking

Safety is of great importance at Gentle Learning. After parking your vehicle, please help your little one out of their car seat and stay near your vehicle. A staff member will come to you. They will get your child signed in for the day and then take your child to the grassy area with their class.

Weather Conditions

In case of snow storms or other stormy weather, the Lisle Park District staff will determine a school closing by 7:30 am on the day of school. Once a decision is made to close, the information will be posted online at www.LisleParkDistrict.org. School days cancelled due to weather are not rescheduled. In case of severe weather conditions, your child will only be released to their parent or legal guardian.

Insurance

Participants in Lisle Park District programs are not provided accident insurance. Those desiring such coverage should check with their own insurance companies.

Accident Reporting

Staff will fill out accident reports for all incidents, no matter how minor an incident may seem. If something happens to a child, that we do not need to contact the parent immediately for, we will advise the parent or send a note home with the child explaining what happened and what action was taken (i.e., washed wound and bandaged it). All reports will be submitted to the Recreation Program Manager and then given to the Safety Coordinator for review.

Emergency Response Plan

The Emergency Response Coordinator or other staff, shall be responsible in case of a fire, to see that the Lisle-Woodridge Fire District is contacted by dialing 911 and that building occupants are safely evacuated outside to "safe" areas. In the case of a tornado, the Emergency Response Coordinator will direct all building occupants to the designated "tornado safe area". In the event of a crisis situation, the Recreation Center is equipped with a Lock Down/Evacuation plan. The Emergency Response Coordinator will be responsible for any immediate decisions until authorities arrive. This includes but is not limited to; first aid and securing building entrances and exits. Every class practices fire, tornado and lock-down drills, one time each, during the school year.

Lisle Park District Code of Conduct

To ensure an enjoyable and safe program for all participants, the Lisle Park District has developed a behavior code. Participants shall:

- Show respect to all participants, staff, and volunteers. Participants should follow program rules and take direction from staff.
- Participants should follow program rules and take direction from staff.
- Refrain from using abusive or foul language.
- Refrain from threatening or causing bodily harm to self, other participants, staff, or volunteers.
- Show respect for equipment, supplies, and facilities.
- Not possess any weapons.

Additional rules are developed for specific programs, as deemed necessary by staff. The behavior required of participants and stated in the policy listed above applies to all parents, friends, relatives, or others accompanying the participants to any Park District program. The Lisle Park District reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers his or her own safety or the safety of others.

Behavior Management

The Lisle Park District reserves the right to suspend, expel or deny participation in any program, event or facility to any person whose behavior interferes or disrupts the quality of the offering, the enjoyment of them by other participants, or the ability of the staff to conduct or manage the activities or facilities.

In case of unacceptable behavior, we will do the following:

1. Notify the parents or guardians
2. Complete an incident report and call a meeting with parent/guardian, Teacher, Youth and Early Childhood Manager
3. Suspend the child from the program for an appropriate time period
4. If upon return to the program unacceptable behavior continues, the child will be dismissed from the program

These policies and procedures were developed to ensure the safety of all the children. We want all children in this program to have an enjoyable experience.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Lisle School District 202

Lisle Community Unit School District 202 has an ongoing early developmental screening process. This screening is used to discover whether there are concerns about your child's development. If difficulties are detected through the screening, an extensive evaluation may be considered.

If your child is 2 years 10 months, Lisle 202 Early Childhood professionals will review the completed and returned information and notify you of the screening results. If your child is 2 years 9 months and under, you may be referred to PACT, Inc. Child and Family Connections of DuPage reachable at 630-493-0400.

Who may be screened?

- Do you live in Lisle Community Unit School District 202?
- Is your child under the age of five and NOT eligible for kindergarten in the fall of 2018 (birthday after September 1)?
- Do you have concerns about your child in any of the following areas?
- Vision/Hearing, Speech and/or Language, Motor Skills, Social Skills,
- Cognitive/Thinking Skills

If you answered yes to all three of the above questions, call the Student Services office 630-493-8008 to request information about our screening. Developmental screening is not mandatory, but all preschoolers are encouraged to participate. If you would like additional information on our screening process and/or would like to request a questionnaire, please call the Student Services office at 630-493-8008.

Naperville School District 203

Please call Ann Reid Early Childhood Center at (630)420-6899 and ask to schedule an Early Childhood screening.



SEASPAR, in conjunction with Lisle Park District, will provide inclusion assistance to residents in our programs. This service can be requested upon registration. If we feel that a child would benefit from the help of an aide, the staff of Gentle Learning preschool will consult with the parents, and ask our SEASPAR representative to evaluate him/her during class. The representative will offer suggestions on how better we can serve your child, including tips for the staff and parents, or the placement of a one on one aide for your child. Our goal is to provide a successful preschool experience for your child.

WE ALSO OFFER...

Enrichment Programs

A variety of academic and physical learning programs designed for children ages 3-5 who want to explore a special interest. These classes are usually 1 hour in length, beginning at 12:30pm and are held on the same day for three consecutive weeks. Classes include: math, science, reading readiness, art, outdoor exploration, and creative movement. Please see the Lisle Park District seasonal brochure for a detailed listing of programs offered each season or visit www.LisleParkDistrict.org.

Lunch Buddies

A lunch buddies punch card is available for participants of our preschool that are signed up for an enrichment class. Pack a lunch, let your preschool teacher know they are going to lunch buddies and pick up your child after their enrichment class. Each card has 3 punches. Lunch Buddies is available only for participants registered for an enrichment program. For more information, call (630)964-3410.

Kids Day Out

Bring a lunch and join the fun for an afternoon filled with games, stories, crafts, free play and time either outside, in the motor room or in the gym! The Kids Day Out Program operates from 11:30am - 3:00pm. The program will follow our preschool calendar. Participants must be age 3 by September 1, 2020. Registration is available ONLINE! We ask that register at least 48 hours in advance.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Payment Procedures

Payments are due the first of each month, September 2020 - May 2021. Please complete the payment authorization form which will enable us to charge your credit card each month or withdraw funds from your checking account automatically.

If you wish to pay more than one month at a time or the full year, you may do so. Please contact Jill Jehs directly.

The total fee for preschool is divided into 9 equal payments and charged as close to the first of the month as possible, or the next business day thereafter. If you withdraw during the year, you will be charged based on how many weeks you have attended the program.

Late Fees

Late fees will be assessed at the rate of \$20.00 if payment is received past the due date. Your child may not participate in preschool until the payment is received. Any questions concerning tuition should be directed to Jill Jehs at (630)353-4345.

2020-2021 Payment Schedule

Tuition will be withdrawn from your checking account or charged to your credit card at the beginning of each month September through May.

Withdrawal Policy

You must give a minimum one month's (30 days) written notice if you intend to withdraw your child from preschool. A "Withdrawal Request" form can be requested from your child's teacher or at the front desk. This 30-day period provides our school the time needed to notify families on the waitlist that a spot has become available and to organize transitions within our classes. If thirty (30) days written notice is not received, parents/guardians are still required to make tuition payments up until the thirty (30) day period is reached regardless if the child is still enrolled in the preschool or not.

If you want to switch your child from in person learning to all virtual learning as a personal choice (not mandated by the state), you must give us a minimum of two weeks' notice to make the change. We ask that you fill out a "Class Change" request form (available from your child's teacher and the front desk). We will offer your child's In-Person class spot to the next person on our waitlist. We will be unable to guarantee a spot back in our In-Person classes should you want to switch back for the duration of the school year.

If the state mandates that we revert to Phase 3 guidelines and all schools must go all virtual, we will automatically change your child's enrollment to the All Virtual Preschool option. Your tuition payments will be adjusted accordingly.

All registration fees are non-refundable.

Tax Information

We do not provide Section 125 reimbursement accounts or tax information to parents for Gentle Learning Preschool. It is the parent's responsibility to keep track of expenses by keeping cancelled checks, credit card slips or to ask the park district for a receipt. If you need receipts or tax information please contact Scott Silver, Superintendent of Finance at 630-353-4313.

Early Bird Registration

Families with children currently enrolled in the Gentle Learning Preschool program will receive priority registration for the following year. Information will be sent out to all those who qualify in December. Early Bird registration will be held in January.