



Oak Lawn Park District
Play School
Prep School
Handbook

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Welcome to the Oak Lawn Park District Play School/Prep School Program!

Play School is designed for 3 and 4 year olds and Prep School is designed for 4 and 5 year olds. This handbook is intended to inform you of the curriculum and procedures of the program. Please read this book carefully and keep it for future reference. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to grow with your child.

WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN EXPECT TO DO AT SCHOOL

Our room is set up with many different interest centers to encourage different kinds of play and interaction: gross motor skills area; small manipulatives (puzzles, games, beads, etc.); art; music; science; library; housekeeping and of course, toys.

INDEPENDENT PLAY

Play is the most important aspect of a child's life. It's where they can interact, share and cooperate with classmates. Through play, your child learns how to deal with frustrations and solve problems. Carefully supervised free play is a vital part of our program. Our room is designed to be safe and appropriate for their age group. This time may be spent anywhere in the room.

Clean Up: Children share the responsibility of putting the toys and materials back in their proper places.

CIRCLE TIME

Each day, the class comes together as a group for circle time. During this time, activities are presented that will develop and refine skills and concepts. Examples of these are: problem solving, listening and following directions, increasing memory and attention span, language skills, colors and shapes, numbers and letters, etc.

ART

Creative art activities are made available to the children on a daily basis. Because we encourage creativity, not conformity, this area has process, not product in mind. Crayons, scissors, paper, paint and glue are available to the children daily. Your child may not choose this activity regularly; please respect their choices. Admire your child's artwork without going overboard! Many times, he/she has just experimented with the materials for the fun of doing it.

MUSIC

Music will consist of singing, finger plays and games. This promotes fine motor development, memory, listening and speaking skills. Throughout the year, parents will be invited to attend parties and the children will share their music with you.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIME

Classes begin at 9am and 12pm and end at 11:30am and 2:30pm. Please bring your child on time and pick him/her up on time. We do not open the classroom door before the starting time, as this is our time to prepare those last minute details of the day. Being on time to pick up your child is important too. We find that children are more secure and comfortable in our classroom when they can be certain that Mom or Dad will be there when the door opens for dismissal. If you are unavoidably detained, a staff member will stay with your child (either in the classroom or the office) until you arrive, but we ask that you make every effort to be on time. Please call the office at 708-857-2200 in the event that you will be late picking up your child.

Late pick-ups will result in late fee charges following the Oak Lawn Park District's policy of \$5 for every 15 minutes. After two late pick-ups, your child may be dropped from the program.

The drop-off and pick-up point is in the classroom. Please walk your child into the room and sign in daily. Do not let your child out of the car at the entrance to the building! Your child may hang his/her coat in the hallway on our side of the hall. Please have your child's name on all outerwear.

CLOTHING – WHAT SHOULD MY CHILD WEAR?

Please send your child in comfortable, loose-fitting play clothes and rubber-soled shoes. Our children paint, play outside occasionally, tumble, and generally get dirty! The children in our program are expected to handle their own toileting needs and we have found that overalls and leotards are very hard for some children to manage.

CRYING AND CLINGING – WHAT DO I DO?

A child coming to school for the first time may feel some separation anxiety, especially if he/she sees anxiety on the parent's face. It has been our experience that most children stop crying within a few minutes after their parent leaves. Our advice is to leave your child with a smile and a kiss, tell him/her when you will return, then leave. Be sympathetic of the tears that may come, but be firm and DON'T LINGER! Be assured that we are prepared for these situations and will comfort your child. This separation may be as hard for you as it is for your child, but prolonging the departure is twice as hard for your child. If the crying persists for an extended period, we will call you.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

For your child's protection, as well as other children and our staff, you will need to keep your child home if he/she has any of the following:

Sore throat and/or cough
Discharge from the eyes or ears or severe nasal discharge
Diarrhea
Vomiting
Temperature over 99 degrees
Contagious disease

You are not hurting your child by keeping him/her home for the day, because usually when children are not feeling well, they prefer to be home, safe and secure.

We ask that your child be symptom free for at least 24 hours before returning. If your child experiences any of these symptoms while in class, you will be called to come pick him/her up. In the case of contagious disease, please contact your child's teacher immediately. All parents will be notified as soon as possible. Your cooperation is appreciated.

HOLIDAYS

The following holidays will be observed during the school year:

Columbus Day
Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day; Thanksgiving Day and the day after
Winter Break
Martin Luther King's Birthday
Presidents' Day
Casmir Pulaski Day
Good Friday
Spring Break

Classes will be held as scheduled on all other "holidays".

SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of a severe winter or spring storm, please refer to the following:

How do I know if there is class?

If School District 123 cancels school, then Oak Lawn Park District Preschool and Tot classes will be cancelled. School District 123 announces cancellations on TV stations WGN – Channel 9 and ABC – Channel 7 and on their website: www.d123.org.

What if School District 123 announces a late start instead of a school day cancellation – is my child's class cancelled?

School will not be cancelled and will follow regular school schedule. We do not make up missed days.

TOYS FROM HOME

Toys from home can be lost or misused by other children. Therefore, children will not be permitted to bring them to school, unless it is for Show and Tell. Show and Tell toys are kept on teacher's desk until it is the appropriate time to bring them out.

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline is to help a child develop self-control and to learn to assume responsibility for his/her own actions. We use only positive statements and reinforcement to redirect negative behavior. Should a child need more than that, a "time out" period may be initiated. In the case of reoccurring or severe problems, a discipline report will be sent home for your signature. After a second report has gone home, a letter will go home for you to set up a meeting with the teachers and Recreation Supervisor.

SUPPLIES

Please provide your child with a school bag or folder to carry home his/her important papers and art projects that your child may have done in class. We ask that you check the school bag or folder daily, as many times, letters are attached to your child's papers. Note: You will be receiving a monthly newsletter, which will give you information about the concepts and skills we will be covering, as well as activities going on during the month.

SNACK TIME

Snack time is one of the most enjoyable and valuable times of the school day. Peer interaction is encouraged as the children try new and old favorites. We never force the children to eat, but for many children, just watching their peers enjoy a food is usually enough to stimulate them to try new foods. In addition to developing simple table manners, special friendships develop around the snack table.

Due to allergies please do not bring any snacks with nuts or peanut butter

Approximately 2-4 times during each session, you will be asked to furnish a nutritious snack and juice/water for your child's class. These times will be assigned to you and printed on the monthly calendar. Because we believe that we can never start too early to teach good nutrition, we try to set an example that may have lasting effects on your child. Please choose a snack from the following list, unless you have some other snack in mind, which would be considered healthy and enjoyable for the children.

FRUITS: Apples, applesauce, apricots, avocado, bananas, fruit kabobs, 100% fruit juice, popsicles, melons, oranges, nectarines, kiwi, pears, peaches, pineapples, plums, seedless grapes, raisins, strawberries, canned fruit.

VEGETABLES: Raw vegetables and dip, such as carrot and celery sticks.

BREADS: Assorted breads with butter, corn bread, muffins, bread sticks, pretzels, crackers, graham crackers, finger sandwiches, granola bars, bagels with cream cheese.

MILK PRODUCTS: Cheese slices or cubes, string cheese, yogurt, cream cheese with crackers, pizza, milk.

JUICE/WATER: Any kind that is 100% juice OR bottled water. Please do not send any opened bottles or cans. Absolutely NO Nutrasweet or other artificial sweetener will be accepted!

BIRTHDAYS: We celebrate each child's birthday. On such an occasion, you may send mini-cupcakes, ice cream or cookies. You will need to provide plates, napkins, bowls, cups, etc. if necessary for your particular snack.

PLEASE NOTE: All snacks must be store bought, sealed with ingredients listed on package.

PRESCHOOL FORMS

In accordance with Park District regulations, all children enrolled in preschool must have the Child Information/Emergency form on file. You will receive this through email as well it can be found on the Oak Lawn Park District website under Preschool Programming tab. Please complete the form and return to your child's teacher by the first day of class. Please include the name of authorized people to pick up your child, your child's medical information, including any allergies and any other pertinent information that will aid teachers in getting your child adjusted to the preschool experience. If your child has a severe allergy and needs to have an Epi-pen and/or medication on hand, you will be given a Medical Dispensing form to keep on file and will need to instruct staff on administering.

PRESCHOOL SCREENING

Preschool screening is available through all elementary area school districts. Please contact your school district for more information.

PHOTO DAYS

Class and individual Photos of your child will be taken. The photo dates are listed on your school calendar. An informational letter and order form will be sent home with your child in September.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

There is a non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 included in the preschool program fees.

There are three payment plan options to choose from:

1. Payment in full at the time of registration, receiving a fee discount
2. Automatic Credit Card Deduction Plan, paying a deposit at the time of registration and having seven monthly installment payments automatically charged to your credit card beginning in September and ending in January.