



Little Falls Township
Public School District

Inclusion Preschool Program Parent Handbook

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Welcome to the Little Falls School District Inclusion Preschool Program!

The Inclusion Preschool Program is open to all Little Falls Township children who turn 3 or 4 years old by October 1, 2021 and who are toilet trained.

The program will continue to be housed at School Number 2 and will feature two sessions: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The 3 year old morning session will start at 9:00 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m. The 4 year old afternoon session will start at 12:50 p.m. and end at 3:20 p.m. The program runs 5 days a week.

The classes will be taught by two certified teachers co-teaching in conjunction with several paraprofessionals in the room. The Program is an integral part of the Little Falls Township Board of Education's plan to develop programs which will help our present and future students. The Little Falls Township Board of Education recognizes the importance of a quality early childhood program for the youngest members of our community. This program, based on proven research, will provide the children of Little Falls Township with an excellent child-centered curriculum. This program is designed to provide the support and services needed for our students to be prepared to succeed academically and socially in school. We will be using the Creative Curriculum for Preschool which is aligned with the New Jersey Preschool Teaching Learning: Standards of Quality.

Our inclusion preschool is comprised of both children with special needs and typically developing preschoolers. In an atmosphere of "We All Belong", children with and without disabilities are provided with learning opportunities to facilitate academic and social success.

We anticipate a year of physical, social, emotional and academic growth for all of our children!

There is a registration fee of \$100.00 for all students (except for Special Education Students placed by the Child Study Team). The tuition for this 10 month program is \$3,000.00. Your monthly payment is due the 15th of each month. The registration fee will be applied toward the first month's tuition.

The first step in the enrollment process is to complete the online forms located under the Preschool Tab on the district's website www.lfschools.org. Placement is granted on a first come, first served basis pending availability. Once all seats are filled a wait-list will be developed.

The Inclusion Preschool Program follows the calendar of the Little Falls Township Public Schools. The Program will be open when the Little Falls Township Schools are open, and will be closed when the schools are closed. The Program will also follow the District Policy for emergency closings due to weather or other unseen emergencies. There are no makeup days in addition to the days already scheduled in the school district calendar and tuition will not be discounted due to the changes in the school calendar due to inclement weather.

Children are encouraged to attend every day. Attendance will be taken every day by preschool staff.

Parents are responsible for notifying the school of the child's absence from the Inclusion Preschool Program by leaving a message with the school nurse. The school nurse has a 24-hour voicemail.

Parents are responsible for providing transportation for their child to and from school.

Educational Program:

Educational Philosophy

The Inclusion Preschool Program offers a developmentally appropriate program designed to enrich and expand a child's learning.

Preschool is such a unique time for children and their families. Children are beginning to see themselves and their world in a whole new way. At School Number 2, we believe that this time in a child's life is very precious and we enthusiastically welcome the opportunity to be a part of it! Many things such as sense of self, language development, independence and other social-emotional skills need to be developed and cultivated in a positive, caring and engaging learning environment. Beginning your child's early learning in this unmatched program will ensure their seamless transition into the district's elementary school setting.

A balance of student and teacher driven learning activities support our teaching strategies that inspire a Constructivist approach to learning. This research-based theory suggests that we create our own knowledge through active, hands-on lessons where we can explore, ask questions, and connect to what we already know.

Our goals:

1. Develop strong social emotional skills by modeling appropriate behavior
2. Offer real life experiences that help children connect to the learning
3. Ensure a safe, exciting, fun and content rich learning environment
4. Provide each child with a foundation and readiness to learn for current and future school success
5. Cultivate a lifelong love of learning

The Inclusion Preschool Program is dedicated to provide a multitude of opportunities for your child to grow and maximize his/her potential. We meet your child where they are in their learning through differentiated instruction to focus on individual and diverse needs.

We encourage

- ❖ Curiosity through inquiry
- ❖ Conversation and self-expression through small and large group activities
- ❖ Problem solving and critical thinking through scaffolding questions during authentic learning opportunities
- ❖ Exploration of the world around us through experimenting with materials and manipulatives
- ❖ Purposeful play that facilitates learning
- ❖ Ongoing opportunities to use language to share, cooperate and interact with their peers and teachers

We provide opportunities for your children to

- ❖ Feel valued as an integral part of the classroom community
- ❖ Progress at their own pace
- ❖ Be challenged by thinking out of the box

The "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" philosophy is based on knowledge of how young children learn. Research shows that young children learn through a mixture of their experiences in the world and their own thinking. They learn by actively interacting with the objects and people around them.

The staff provides lots of opportunities and uninterrupted time for children to interact with materials and people. This is done by offering different learning centers containing many different materials from which the children may choose. The teaching staff interacts with the children in the centers as the children interact with the materials.

Curriculum

Our unique program taught by New Jersey State Certified teachers and highly-qualified instructional assistants, utilizes a blended approach of the Creative Curriculum with additional supplements specifically designed for early childhood to deliver developmentally appropriate instruction to ages 3 to 5 years old.

It is distinctly grounded in the National Association for the Education of Young Children's 12 Principals of Child Development and Learning, along with other current research-based best practices in early childhood education.

These best practices are ultimately aligned with the New Jersey Department of Education Preschool Standards (<http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/guide>) which drives our program's learning goals.

The primary goal of our curriculum is to foster a love of learning in a safe, welcoming environment through fun, active, engaging lessons with purposeful developmentally appropriate teaching.

The way a child approaches learning is a strong predictor of later success in school. Our job is to help prepare your child for future educational success.

Here are some of the ways we will effectively support their learning in our program:

1. Engage children in individual, small and whole group learning
2. Utilize learning "centers" that provide a structured play approach to learning
3. Provide hands on activities utilizing materials such as: building blocks, dramatic play items (i.e. dress-up or puppets), math manipulatives, literacy materials, science discovery and social studies resources, art supplies, fine motor tools and musical instruments
4. Offer learning opportunities that foster cultural diversity and tolerance through literature, games and character education
5. Ensure a technology infused setting with Smart Board and computers
6. Foster physical wellness through daily indoor/outdoor unstructured play that focuses on building gross motor skills such as running, jumping, climbing, hopping, and skipping
7. Include parents as partners, increasing teacher effectiveness for each student
8. Cultivate social-emotional development through the use of role modeling, teacher modeling and peer collaborations

The academic concentration will focus on foundational skills essential for kindergarten.

The needs of your individual child will be met whether he or she needs to deepen or enrich his or her understanding of a concept, or if he or she needs additional support.

Developmental Goals

Social/Emotional: children will develop independence self-confidence and self-control, follow rules and routines, make friends, and learn what it means to be part of a group.

Physical: children will increase large muscle skills - balancing, running, jumping, throwing and catching - and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like cutting, drawing, and writing.

Cognitive: children will acquire thinking skills such as the ability to solve problems to ask questions and to think logically - sorting, classifying, comparing, counting, and making patterns - and to use materials and their imagination to show what they have learned.

Language: children will use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversation with others, understand the purpose of print, recognize letters, sounds and words, and begin writing for a purpose.

Daily Program:

Daily Schedule

The schedule is flexible and depends upon the weather, the seasons, and the plan or theme of the day.

The students will follow the same day schedule with arrival procedures, meeting time, choice time, small group, gross motor, snack, story time, and dismissal procedures.

School Assemblies

Many school assemblies are held during the school day. Preschool children who are in attendance during their prescribed session will be able to attend the assemblies, as space, time, and interest allows.

Outdoor Play

The time children spend outdoors every day is just as important to their learning as the time they spend in the classroom. Unless the weather is severe, we take children outdoors every day.

Large muscle activities are essential for children's health and well-being. Children need time each day to run, leap, hop, jump, slide, climb, and throw and catch a ball. These activities build strong muscles and a sense of pride. Brain research shows that physical activity actually wakes up the brain for learning!

Dressing for the Weather

Children must have outdoor clothing at school that is appropriate to the weather every day. A warm coat, hat and mittens are necessary in the cold weather. Appropriate clothing is needed and a sweatshirt or light jacket should be kept at school at all times in case of a quick change in the weather.

Snacks

Snack time takes place in the regular class each day. Please be sure to send a healthy snack with drink to school with your child. Please contact your child's teacher for more information on snack procedures in his/her individual class.

Health and Safety:

School Nurse

A school nurse is on duty at School Number 2 during the time that the preschool program is in session. Children will be sent to the nurse if they show symptoms of any illness or if an accident occurs during program hours.

Medical Emergency Procedures

Any time you have a group of children together, accidents will happen. The preschool staff takes every precaution to prevent accidents, but they will occur despite our best efforts.

If a serious injury should occur, the program staff will first attempt to contact the parents/guardian. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the staff will contact the emergency persons named on the child's information form. If hospital attention is necessary, the child will be taken with a staff member to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment. The parent is responsible for any medical expenses incurred.

Illness

Please be careful about keeping your child home if he/she exhibits signs of illness or does not feel well. Preschool children are quite susceptible to illness as they are building their internal immunities, and minor illnesses can spread quickly. A sick child is an uncomfortable child! It is very important to follow district guidelines including fever and vomiting and waiting the full 24 hours before returning to school.

Terminating a Child's Enrollment

We will work closely with parents to assure a positive experience at the Preschool program for both parent and child. There are, however, some reasons that will cause the program to terminate a child from our enrollment.

1. Failure to meet tuition requirements as per the signed tuition payment agreement.
2. Display by a parent or verbal or physical abuse or threats toward staff, their own child, other children, or another adult while on or off of the premises.
3. The child's inability to adapt to the program's routine.
4. The child's aggressive behavior causing danger to self and/or others, including running away behavior.

Two weeks written notice is required to remove a child from the program before the end of the school year. Failure to do so will result in loss of the tuition deposit.