Little Learners
PRESCHOOL
AT VERNON HILLS PARK DISTRICT
Family Handbook
Two-Year-Old Preschool
2019/20
2019/20 Two-Year-Old Preschool Calendar

Meet & Greet (parent/child)
September 10          Classroom (9:30-11:00 a.m.)

Two-Year-Old Preschool Calendar
September 12          Classes Begin - 1/2 Day
See Your Welcome Email For Your Scheduled Time
September 17          First Full Day For All Students
November 28           No School - Thanksgiving
December 19           No School - Winter Break Begins
January 7             Classes Resume
March 24-26           No School - Spring Break
May 7                 Last Day Of Preschool

Preschool Closings
Little Learners Preschool will be cancelled if Hawthorn District #73 closes for the entire day due to inclement weather. The Park District is registered with the Emergency Closing Center. Visit www.emergencyclosings.com and look for Little Learners Preschool - Sullivan Center for status updates. Class cancellations by the park district will result in a program credit or make-up day.
The Little Learners Preschool staff would like to welcome you and your child to the 2019-2020 school year. The following information will be used throughout the year and should be saved as a reference. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Recreation Supervisor, Julie Freels, at (847) 996-6808 or julief@vhparkdistrict.org. We look forward to a wonderful year of preschool with your family.

Little Learners Preschool Goals & Expectations

Little Learners Preschool instructors offer unique learning experiences that are play-based, developmentally appropriate, and respectful of social, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Our curriculum is guided by the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Age Three. We believe in the importance of fostering the mental, physical and social growth and development of the preschool child within a planned environment provided by trained personnel and the cooperative involvement of the parents. We achieve this mainly through play, a young child’s most important work. Through play, a child gains a sense of self, as well as developing social relationships with other children and adults. Children also are given the opportunity to develop both small and large motor skills, as well as cognitive and language skills. We recognize that each child is unique and special, with individual interests and needs. Above all, we want our time together to be comfortable, relaxed and happy. We hope that both you and your child will be pleased with our program.

Student Paperwork

Children enrolled in Little Learners Preschool must have the following paperwork on file. Forms are available online at www.vhparkdistrict.org.

- Student Data Form
- State of Illinois DHS Certificate of Child Health Examination (Completed By Child’s Physician) Due 11/1
- Medication Dispensing Form and/or Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (If Applicable)
- Copy of Child’s Birth Certificate (New Students Should Present Copy To The Registration Desk)

All forms should be completed accurately and thoroughly and submitted no later than the first day of preschool unless noted otherwise. If you would like to update your Student Data Form throughout the year, contact the Recreation Supervisor. Should your contact information change, notify the Recreation Supervisor and the registration desk to make changes in the registration database.

Tuition Payment Schedule

The first preschool tuition was due by July 5. A payment will be due on the 5th of each month through December 5. No refunds will be granted after Dec. 5.
Little Learners 2019/20 Preschool Staff (2s)

Miss Molly Kalsch
Miss Vicki Goldman
Miss Bonnie Imburgia
Miss Jill Wiegel

Communication

Little Learners Preschool staff are looking forward to providing your child with a positive and rewarding preschool experience. We hope to establish mutual relationships with each child and family. Your child will frequently come home with a note and/or project. Check your child’s bag on a daily basis in order to remain informed about classroom activities. For your convenience, preschool information will also be posted on the classroom bulletin board. Calendars informing families of themes, daily activities, and special events will be posted online at www.vhparkdistrict.org at the beginning of each month. A paper calendar will be sent home upon request.

Your child’s teacher will come out into the hallway a few minutes before dismissal to give parents an overview of the day’s activities and keep you up to date about upcoming events, reminders, etc. Notes regarding class activities and/or upcoming events will also be posted outside the classroom.

Parents are encouraged to download the Homeroom App. Instructors will post photos, announcements, and reminders on a regular basis. The Homeroom App invitation will be sent to the email account on file with the registration office. Families may not use the app for marketing or advertisement purposes.

Understand that drop off and pick up times are very busy; please be patient when approaching instructors or the Recreation Supervisor with questions/concerns. If you are rushed for time, you may submit your concerns in writing and staff will contact you by phone later in the day. Our instructors do their best to avoid returning calls during instructional time, but will contact you before or after class. If you have a pressing concern, please call or email the Recreation Supervisor at (847) 996-6808 or julief@vhparkdistrict.org.

Program Location & Hours

Little Learners Preschoolers have access to their preschool classroom as well as both indoor and outdoor areas for gross motor development and exploratory learning.

Two-Year-Olds

Classroom D - Green Room  510201-1  Tu/Th  9/10-12/17  9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Classroom D - Green Room  510201-1  Tu/Th  9/10-12/17  9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Classroom B - Purple Room  510201-2  Tu/Th  9/10-12/17  9:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
Classroom B - Purple Room  510201-2  Tu/Th  9/10-12/17  9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Classroom Interest Centers
Little Learners Preschool classrooms are equipped with activity centers designed to create defined interest areas that limit distractions, foster more complex play, and promote collaboration & socialization. Within each classroom, you will find the following:

- Dramatic Play
- Art Exploration
- Library
- Math & Manipulatives
- Sand & Water Table (Sensory)
- Learning Toys & Games
- Science & Discovery
- Technology / Writing
- Music & Movement

Preschool Daily Schedule
The Little Learners Preschool daily schedule is designed to incorporate individual, small group, and large group interaction between children and their peers/teachers. The children are kept active and engaged throughout their day. All aspects of the curriculum, as well as classroom centers and toys, are carefully selected to encourage exploratory learning. Children may participate in choice time, small group learning, art, circle time, and fine/gross motor activities. Our daily schedule is relaxed to encourage self-exploration and a love of play and learning!

Class Arrival/Dismissal
Escort your child into the building and enter the preschool wing through the security door. You will receive the security code via email prior to the first day of school. This code should only be shared with the authorized drop-off/pick-up individuals on your child’s Student Data Form.

Upon arrival, wait in the hallway outside of your child’s classroom. Instructors will open their doors promptly at the class start time. Arrival activities are an important component of the daily schedule. Arriving promptly to preschool ensures that your child can fully participate in the arrival sequence and also reduces class disruptions. You will sign-in your child and indicate the best phone number to reach you at during class that day. Classroom doors will be locked after the start of class.

Children must be picked-up promptly at the end of class by a parent/guardian or an authorized individual. Authorized individuals must be listed on the child’s Student Data Form and be able to present a valid state identification card or driver’s license. To update this form throughout the year, contact the Recreation Supervisor. All updates need to be submitted in writing; staff are unable to alter pick-up arrangements on verbal requests alone. Your child’s teacher will come out into the hallway a few minutes before dismissal to give parents an overview of the day’s activities and keep you up to date about upcoming events, reminders, etc. Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your child. If an emergency occurs, please call the preschool at 847-996-6808 or front desk at 847-996-6800.
**Separation Anxiety**

Children may experience separation anxiety at the beginning of the session or throughout the year. Children usually do best when parents project a confident, positive attitude and depart with a quick goodbye. If your child experiences difficulty at drop off, you may wait in the lobby. Class instructors can typically comfort an upset child and engage him/her in an activity. If the child has not been comforted or engaged in activities, the instructor will contact the parent/guardian to provide an update.

**Daily Supplies Needed**

Children should dress in comfortable, washable clothing as many preschool activities are messy. Gym shoes are recommended to permit full participation in preschool activities. Children will be participating in both indoor and outdoor activities. Dress in layers and provide outerwear for fluctuating temperatures. Each child will have a cubby and hook on which to hang jackets/bags. Assist your child in locating the proper cubby/hook. Each child should bring a change of clothes & socks in a plastic bag to be stored in the classroom. This ensures that your child will have a change of clothes in the event of a spill or toileting accident and a parent/guardian needs to return to preschool to change the child.

All clothing and personal items should be labeled with your child’s full name including jackets and hats. Staff/Volunteers are not responsible for lost/stolen money, valuables, or personal items. With the exception of show-and-tell, all personal toys, games, and electronics should remain at home.

Little Learners Preschool will issue a student bag in lieu of a backpack to be used for transporting projects, notes, and class essentials. You may personalize this bag to make it easily recognizable. Note: Turn in any paperwork, supply donations, etc., directly to the instructor. Staff do not check student bags for such items.

**Family Involvement**

Family involvement in Little Leaners Preschool is important as it allows parents/guardians to gain an understanding of the program while showing the child that they value the school, the instructors, and the classroom community. Throughout the school year, parents/guardians will be invited to special events and celebrations. Your attendance is encouraged and appreciated. Details regarding each celebration will be sent home with the monthly calendar. If you have a special holiday tradition or celebration that you would like to share with the class, please contact your instructors. Our children enjoy learning about various holidays and celebrations.

Parents/Guardians who have a special talent or career and would like to provide a preschool learning experience may contact their preschool instructor to make arrangements.

Parents/Guardians who would like to visit the classroom should contact their preschool instructors to make arrangements. All other visitors must contact the Recreation Supervisor at (847) 996-6808 to schedule an appointment.
Box Tops for Education

No more clipping... Box Tops for Education has gone digital. Download the mobile app, select Vernon Hills Preschool as your school, shop as you normally would, and then scan your receipt to find participating products. The app will automatically credit our school account with your Box Top earnings.

Class Lists

Once school begins and everyone turns in their Student Data Forms, we will compile and distribute a list of all the names, addresses, phone numbers and parent’s names of the children in your child’s class. Parents find this list helpful for organizing carpools and arranging playgroups. If you do not want your name or contact information included on the list, please let your teacher know on the first day of class.

Restrooms

Children should visit the restroom with their caring adult upon arriving at the Sullivan Center before class begins. Children are able to use the restroom as needed and if necessary will be prompted by an instructor to take a restroom break. Children who are able to use the restroom independently should wear clothing that aids in bathroom independence (avoid difficult belts, buttons, and one-piece outfits). Please keep instructors informed regarding your child’s progress in “potty-training”. Children enrolled in two-year-old preschool may wear diapers or pull-ups to class. If your child needs to be changed while at class, a parent/caregiver will be contacted for assistance. Instructors are not responsible for changing soiled clothing. A parent/guardian or caring adult must be available within fifteen minutes.

Birthdays

Instructors will recognize each birthday child in a special way.

Preschoolers who would like to celebrate their birthdays may send mini cupcakes, muffins, cookies or a special treat. Healthy birthday snacks are also encouraged. Please do not send cakes or full size cupcakes.

Children may distribute personal party invitations only when all classmates will be included in the celebration. Families are asked to make alternate arrangements for invitation distribution when possible. A class list is provided for your convenience.
Food Allergies / Dietary Restrictions

Indicate your child’s food allergies and/or dietary restrictions on our child’s Student Data Form. Parents of children with food allergies and/or dietary restrictions may choose to send their own individually packaged snack to store in the classroom to be served to their child in lieu of a birthday treat. Notify your preschool instructor of any food allergies and/or dietary restrictions. If your child has food allergies, a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan signed by the child’s physician must be submitted prior to participation.

Medication

Under the guidance of a physician, parents/guardians should make every effort to adjust medication schedules so that medication may be administered under parent/guardian supervision. If your child needs medication dispensed to him/her during preschool hours, staff may be authorized to do so as long as the proper forms have been fully completed. In some instances, the administration of medication cannot be performed by park district staff due to specific and/or complex physician and/or manufacturer instructions or invasive procedures. If medication needs to be dispensed please see the Recreation Supervisor to obtain the proper forms.

All medications sent to preschool, including over-the-counter medications, must be brought to the preschool instructor in the original container properly labeled by the pharmacist and/or with a physician order. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all medications are within their expiration date and for collecting medications once discontinued and/or on the last day of school.

Health Policy

Preschool children play closely together. To maintain a healthy preschool environment, keep your child home if they have experienced any of these symptoms within the past 24 hours: sore throat, cough, runny nose, rash, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, fever, earache, or any communicable disease. All children must be symptom-free within 24 hours of attending class.

To report an absence, please call (847) 996-6808 and leave a voicemail or message for the preschool instructors. You can also report an absence via email to julie@vhparkdistrict.org.

Parents/guardians whose children develop communicable diseases; i.e. chicken pox, head lice, pertussis, etc. are asked to notify the Recreation Supervisor as soon as the child is diagnosed. The name of the affected child is not released; however, parents are notified of the occurrence of a contagious illness. A doctor’s note may be required for your child to return to class. Should a child become ill at preschool, parents/guardians will be notified immediately so that the child can be picked up as soon as possible. If we cannot reach a parent, the emergency contact will be called.
Behavior Management
Our preschool instructors implement a variety of positive guidance strategies including modeling skills, offering choices, employing redirection, altering the environment, and reflection. All behavior management strategies are suggested to the children in a gentle, positive, and discreet manner. Instructors will maintain open communication with families to work through behavior concerns. The park district reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any participant whose behavior disrupts the program or endangers him/herself or other participants. A parent/guardian or authorized individual must be available to pick up the child within fifteen minutes.

Inclusion Services
The Vernon Hills Park District is committed to promoting and encouraging positive interactions among participants with and without disabilities. Staff members are available to assist participants with accommodations needed for success in and enjoyment of our programs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once registered, contact the Recreation Supervisor at (847) 996-6808 at least five days prior to the start of the preschool year to discuss your child’s special needs and how the district may accommodate those needs. Should a request for inclusion services arise throughout the year, please contact the Recreation Supervisor as soon as possible.

Little Learners Preschool works together with SRACLC (Special Recreation Association of Central Lake County), to provide additional services for children identified with special needs.

Early Childhood Screenings
Little Learners Preschool is committed to working with your family to prepare your child for preschool. On occasion, preschool staff will refer families to an outside agency for an early intervention screening. Staff will be part of your support team as long as a signed consent & authorization to release information form is on file with the park district. A release from the agency or provider will also serve this purpose.

Scholastic Book Club
Your child will receive Scholastic Book Club fliers throughout the school year. All orders must be submitted online by the advertised deadline. Participation in the Scholastic Book Club program allows our program to purchase books and materials for our classrooms while allowing you to expand your home library. Online ordering information and our class code will be sent home with your child’s first Scholastic Book Club flyer.

Thank you for choosing Little Learners Preschool at the Vernon Hills Park District. We look forward to a successful year of preschool with your family!