

# Gentle Learning

## PRE SCHOOL

### 2022-2023 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 is an amazing group! 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. Our diverse backgrounds and experiences make our teaching staff top notch! We are committed to creating a nurturing learning environment for each of our students.

### **Footwear for Motor Time**

Each day, we will spend at least 20 minutes on our playground 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**

Please LIKE our Gentle Learning Preschool page on Facebook. This is where we will post 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 Facebook, some teachers use ClassTag app to communicate with parents. Other teachers will send out weekly emails.

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.

The best way to reach your child's teacher during class time is by email or through ClassTag if applicable.

## Giving Tree & Loose Parts

From time to time, teachers will ask for specific items for special projects to use in their classrooms. Sometimes they are new items...sometimes they are Loose Parts like empty jars or paper towel tubes. If you are interested in helping throughout the year, there is a Giving Tree and Loose Parts shelf in front of Mrs. Jehs' office. We truly appreciate your support!

## 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 2 times a year for our students. 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 skills assessed on the progress report will be the same both times it comes home. This is done purposely so that you can see how much your little one has learned and grown throughout the school year!

## Celebrating Birthdays

We want to make each child feel special on their birthday. Each of our teachers celebrates in a slightly different way in their classroom. When it is your child's turn to celebrate their birthday, we invite you to come in and read a special story to your child's class. You can physically come into the preschool class or join us via "Zoom" to read a story, sing "Happy Birthday" and enjoy the treats you brought in.

If you would like to send a birthday treat, we just ask that treats are store-bought. We are mindful of allergies and want to ensure safety for each of our students. Take home favor bags are 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.

We are understanding that sometimes a blanket or special reminder from home is what will help your child feel most at ease at school. If this is the case, your child's teacher will help your little one tuck it into their cubby before coming into class. If they need a quick snuggle with it during the morning, we are happy to accompany them into the hall for a quick visit with their item.

## 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.

As most of our little ones are new to the potty, we try to be very helpful with reminders and guidance for flushing and handwashing. We are happy to assist with buttons or snaps and to help with tights or tricky jeans.

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### Pick Up & Drop Off Procedures

Drop off and Pick up will be done inside. We will dismiss your child to you from our classroom. Parents will wait out in the hallway and your child will come to you after they are called by their teacher.

Regarding pick up times: If, after 10 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.

**Car Loop Drop Off:** We have found that drop off is extremely quick and easy when we come to your car and help your preschooler out each morning. There is a separate Car Loop Procedure diagram included for your reference.

Children will only be dismissed to their parent or an approved pick-up person. If there will be a new person picking up, please let us know via email who we can expect.

## 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 learn and develop the tools necessary to make good choices. Consistency helps lead children to positive experiences within the classroom.

## 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.

## 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 (COVID-19, 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. Jill will help guide you through when your child may return to preschool.

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.

## **PAYMENT INFORMATION**

### **Payment Procedures**

Payments are due the first of each month, September 2022 - May 2023. Please ensure that you have a valid card on file in our registration software. This can be done through your account profile on CivicRec or by visiting the front desk.

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.

### **Late Payment 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.

### **2022-2023 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 of if the child is still enrolled in the preschool or not. \*\*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 school year. Information will be sent out to all those who qualify in December. Early Bird registration will be held in early 2022.

### **Safety Procedures & Parking**

Safety is of great importance at Gentle Learning. Be mindful of cars passing through the parking lot both during car loop drop off as well as during in person pick up.

## Weather Conditions

In case of snowstorms or other stormy weather, the Lisle Park District staff will determine a school closing by 7:30 am on the day of school. If a decision is made to close, the information will be posted online at [www.LisleParkDistrict.org](http://www.LisleParkDistrict.org). School days cancelled due to weather are not rescheduled. In case of severe weather conditions during school hours, 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

In case of a fire, 9-1-1 will be called and all building occupants will be safely evacuated outside to "safe" areas. In the case of a tornado, children will be safely walked 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. Our preschool will practice a fire drill and tornado drill during class once per year. We will talk about what to do if a stranger is in our building.

## 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.

## 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.

