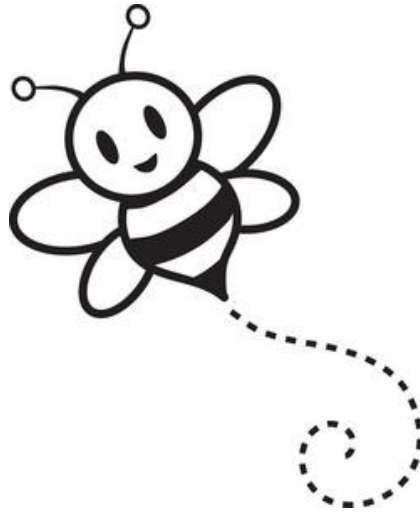


Preschool for All Parent Handbook



2021-2022

Lawn Manor School
4300 West 108th Place
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
708-423-3078

August 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to our Preschool For All program! We look forward to meeting and getting to know both you and your child. We have an exciting year planned, full of engaging studies, hands-on activities, field trips, and new experiences.

This handbook will be a great reference for you throughout the school year. The following pages outline our curriculum and daily routine, classroom policies, as well as events and field trips.

This is my twentieth year at Lawn Manor and twenty-first year teaching. This is my fourth year teaching Preschool For All, I have taught Early Childhood Special Education for twenty years and I also have experience teaching Kindergarten students. I received my Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education with my Special Education Endorsement from Saint Xavier University and I have a Master's Degree in Teaching and Leadership, also from Saint Xavier University. Mrs. Jenny O'Keefe will once again serve as our classroom paraprofessional. This is Mrs. O'Keefe's third year working at Lawn Manor in the Early Childhood and Preschool for All classrooms. We look forward to another fun-filled year!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me by phone, email, written note or via the Seesaw app. I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Phone: 708-423-3078

Email: cbrychel@ahsd125.org

Warmly,

Mrs. Colleen Brychel
Mrs. Jenny O'Keefe

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Preschool For All Transitions

Transitioning into the Preschool For All Program

Students who transition into the program will meet the requirements through the screening process, weighted eligibility criteria, and /or special education eligibility. When a child is found eligible for the program, the following information will be collected from the parent or guardian:

- Physical examination
- Home language survey
- Parent information form
- Media release
- Parent school agreement
- District residency and registration requirement
- Preschool For All Proof of Income

The early childhood coordinator, school secretary, and health clerk will work with parents to fulfill these requirements. Home language survey will be reviewed by the ELL coordinator. Physical exams will be reviewed by the health clerk.

An orientation session will be held to allow students and parents the opportunity to see the classroom and meet the staff prior to the first day of school. In September, a "Meet Your Teacher" night will be scheduled to allow additional opportunities to visit the classroom. When a student transitions into the program after the first day of school, the parent and child will be offered the opportunity to visit the classroom and meet the teacher. All parents will receive the Preschool For All Handbook and snack information. Parents will also be informed on how to continue communication with the staff, as well as, details related to field trips, family events, and parent workshops.

Transitioning out of the Preschool For All Program

Parents intending to withdraw their child from the Preschool For All Program need to contact the school office. If the student is enrolling in a new program, the program name/school district will be collected to assist with record transfers. The early childhood coordinator is available to assist parents in locating a new early learning program or other community resources. Any work or belongings will be returned to the family.

Transitioning into Kindergarten

Information regarding kindergarten transitioning is distributed to parents in January. This information will include enrollment information and transition activities for students and parents.

Parent Teacher Communication

Our early childhood staff uses a messaging program, “Seesaw,” to encourage ongoing, two-way communication between teachers and parents. This is a free, secure messaging program that can be used on any iPhone or Android device and allows you to communicate easily via secured text messaging. Parents and teachers can exchange information about student progress or answer non-urgent questions about the program or development. Parents should still rely on contacting the school via phone for urgent matters. Teachers will provide information on how to contact via the Seesaw App.

About the Curriculum

Our preschool program uses the **Creative Curriculum**. Inside the classroom, the Creative Curriculum creates an atmosphere in which children feel safe, feel emotionally secure, and have a sense of belonging. It describes activities and teaching strategies that are challenging, yet within the children’s reach. It also suggests giving choices and a role in determining how they learn. This curriculum helps children acquire social competence and the skills they need to succeed as learners.

Creative Curriculum discusses the characteristics and experiences that make each child unique. It offers strategies for building positive relationships, helping children develop self-regulation, and responding to challenging behaviors. It shows teachers how to guide children’s learning during daily routines and everyday experiences. It also explains the role of assessment in learning about each child, following children’s progress and planning.

The curriculum explores the benefits of working with families as partners in the care of their children. The curriculum touches on how partnerships are built by exchanging information on a daily basis, involving families in all aspects of our program, communicating in respectful ways, and working through differences in ways that sustain the partnership and the benefit of the children.

The Creative Curriculum helps teachers be intentional about the experiences that they offer while still having the flexibility to respond to the changing interest and abilities of the children.

Our daily routine and picture schedules give preschoolers a sense of control over the events of the day by planning a consistent daily routine that enables the children to anticipate what happens next. Central elements of the preschool daily routine include greeting time, small and large-group times, and large motor/outside time.

Assessment

Assessment in preschool is authentic, comprehensive, and ongoing. It is aligned with the Illinois Early Learning Standards and the curriculum. A portfolio of anecdotes, artworks, work samples, and photos documenting progress will be kept and shared with you.

Welcome to Our Classroom

Daily Schedule:

Greeting/Wash Hands/Sign In
Large Group/Chart Time/Story Time
Work Time/Snack Time/Small Group Time
Clean Up Time
Review Time
Outside/Large Motor Time

• **Greeting/Wash Hands/Sign In:** Welcome children to class, hang up coats/backpacks, wash hands, sign in and sit at rug. Each child will be expected to wash hands upon entering the classroom each day.

• **Large Group/Chart Time/Story Time:** Large group time builds a sense of community. Up to 15 children and two adults come together for movement and music activities, interactive storytelling and other shared experiences. Children have many opportunities to make choices and play the role of leader. Various Chart Time activities include days of the week, months of the year, letters, colors, rhymes, counting, and weather.

• **Work Time:** During work time, children will be very busy exploring materials and learning through play in the interest areas of their choice! Children will be encouraged to clean their work areas before moving on to next activity. See details on following pages.

• **Snack Time:** Children drink and eat a nutritious snack while socializing with peers and teachers. Snack is offered as a choice during Work Time, although occasionally we will have group snack. See more about Snack on the following page.

• **Small Group Time:** During Small Group Time, a group of five children or less meets with the teacher for up to fifteen minutes. During this time, children experiment with materials, try out new skills, and solve problems. Adults develop a small-group activity based on children's interests and particular skills, materials, or content area that suit children's developmental learning needs. Though the adult plans the activity and sets it in motion, children make choices about how to use the materials and freely communicate their ideas.

• **Clean up Time:** Children will clean up toys and interest areas, go to bathroom as needed, and wash their hands.

• **Review Time:** Students and teachers take time at the end of the day to review special events, share what they did at work time (what center they played in, who they played with, what they made, or what they liked and so on), and anything that may be coming up during the week.

• **Outside/Large Motor Time:** Finally, we go outside for some fresh air, weather permitting. **Weather permitting means the temperature is generally above 30 degrees with wind-chill and below 90 degrees with heat index. Please dress your child appropriately for all weather:** jackets, hats, mittens, and boots as needed. Don't forget to **label clothing with your child's name.** We will take walks, play on the blacktop, play ball, and participate in outdoor games. If your child cannot fully participate due to illness and you do not want them outdoors, please keep them at home. Outside/Large Motor Time is an important part of our daily routine.

Additional Information

• **Clothing:** we encourage comfortable, easy to wear clothing. Belts and some snaps can be difficult for the preschool child and can be a challenge for independence in the bathroom. In addition, since preschool can be messy (we love sand, water, paint, play dough, gardening, digging in dirt, and other sensory experiences) and accidents happen, your child may sometimes need a change of clothes. **Please provide a change of clothes (extra masks, socks, underwear, pants, t-shirt).** All clothing will be returned at the end of the school year. This will ensure that each child is prepared in case of an accident.

• **Snack Time:** snack is a social and relaxing part of our day. We provide milk and a nutritious snack, which may include fruit/vegetable, cracker/cereal, protein (cheese or yogurt). **Please notify the teacher immediately if your child has any food allergy or special dietary needs.**

About Snack Time & Birthdays: Due to the current situation, birthday treats will not be allowed to be brought into the classroom this year. We will not forget your child on his/her birthday. We have our own birthday routine with a song and will make each child feel special on his/her birthday. Also, please do not send birthday party invitations with your child to hand out at school. Please understand we have a lot of school related paperwork being handed in and out of our classroom daily. Feel free to pass birthday party invitations during drop off and pick up times outside of school.

• **Health Issues:** Any student that is new to an Illinois school needs to provide a **physical exam with up to date immunizations before the first day of school.** Parents/guardians are required to submit documentation of all three examinations prior to beginning in the Preschool For All program. Due to Preschool For All enrollment guidelines, your child's place in the program cannot be held for an extended period prior to completion of a medical, dental, and vision examination. If you need assistance with completing these examinations, please contact the health clerk, Mrs. Zintak.

While regular attendance is very important, in consideration of the staff and other children, **please do not send your child to school when they are sick.** Vomiting, fever, or a disruptive cough, are reasons to keep your child home. **Students must be fever free and vomit free without the use of medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.** Also remember, we spend time outside most days, please dress appropriately.

Please check the district website or call the school office at (708) 423-3078 for the most up to date health information and procedures regarding health, safety and measures in place during the pandemic.

Work Time Details

As noted, Work Time consists of playtime! We have several interest/play areas in our classroom. See details below.

- **Art:** we have a wide selection of art materials. Children will have many choices while being creative. *Due to COVID-19, students will have individual materials to use in the art center.
 - *Painting:* children can choose to paint whenever they want. They will become very independent in this activity, as they access the materials and make their own creations.
 - *Drawing:* we have many whiteboard surfaces and plenty of paper, crayons, colored pencils, and markers to encourage our young artists and writers.
 - *Sculpture:* children have access to materials for collage and three-dimensional objects. Items may include: recycled items, containers, small boxes, paper towel rolls, magazines, stickers, or buttons.
 - *Play dough:* we like to make our own play dough with the children, so we will make several batches to use with a great variety of play dough toys and stampers (letters, numbers, bugs, dinosaurs, sea animals). As their finger strength increases we will also use clay to promote the development of those fine motor muscles needed for writing and cutting.
 - *Sensory Table:* our sensory table will change throughout the school year. For example, we love sensory experience provided by sand or water. Children can measure, mold, pour, sift, build, or dig for buried treasure. They can splash, float, or sink items. These activities also build up those fine motor muscles.
- **Books, Building, and Play:**
 - *Cozy Corner:* we hope you get a chance to visit our very comfortable cozy corner. There are many books (English/Spanish) and comfortable and washable furniture. We think the children will love to spend a lot of time there.
 - *Writing:* children can use many different materials, including dry erase markers, markers, pencils, or crayons on a variety of surfaces (white boards, paper, and special trace a letter boards) to develop their writing skills. They will sign-in, write their name, label their artwork, and dictate simple sentence stories.
 - *Blocks:* we have a classic wooden dollhouse and red barn with a variety of wood blocks and accessories (people, families, occupations, animals, play buildings, cars, trucks) for a child to build just about anything they can imagine!
 - *Magnatiles:* magnetic building toys that transform geometric shapes into three-dimensional structures. Magnatiles enhance visual spatial skills to encourage our future designers, builders, engineers, and architects.

- *Dramatic Play*: in our well-stocked play kitchen your child can prepare anything for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. They may be interested in opening up their very own restaurant with a working cash register, or having a tea party with friends and dolls.
- *Music*: music is a big part of our Pre-K program. We will enjoy a variety of genres and artists including: Hap Palmer, Ella Jenkins, Jim Gill, Raffi, Dr. Jean, and classic children's songs. We also have instruments available, including: rhythm sticks, tambourines, bells, and shakers.
- **Science and Technology**:
 - *Science*: our science center lets children observe, classify, experiment, predict, measure, draw conclusions, communication ideas, and enjoy nature. We plan to examine leaves, acorns, pinecones, sticks, plants, rocks, shells, feathers, nests, magnets, x-rays, and other items of interests.
 - *iPad*: iPads are used during large group times for reading stories or looking at images of a topic of interest. Students will also be encouraged to "ask the iPad" when questions come up during work time. These activities are teacher-guided.
- **Toys**: yes, we have a lot of these, including: little people/house, pegs, beads, puzzles, tinker toys, magnetiles, and other manipulatives.

As you can see, your child will be very busy at work time and just like adults, they will develop a brief plan of what they want to do and later share (recall) what they did. This process promotes their critical thinking and language skills.

Studies

A classroom newsletter will be distributed monthly, listing current studies, items for collection, reminders, field trip information, and announcements. Studies are an important part of the Creative Curriculum. We look forward to sharing more about our studies with you as the year progresses!

Specials

Your child will have each special class weekly for 15-30 minutes. Please remember to wear gym shoes on gym day.

	PM
MON	
TUES	Library
WED	Fine Arts
THURS	
FRI	Physical Education

Field Trips

Another important part of our preschool program is field trips. We welcome chaperones on most of our field trips and it is required that a chaperone come on one trip throughout the year. We have a tentative schedule that is still in the planning stages. Please note that there may be some revisions.

Tentative Field Trip Schedule

September	Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center
October	Children's Farm at The Center
December	All School Field Trip / Theater Performance
January	Alsip/Merrionette Park Library
February	Oak Lawn Children's Museum
March	Oak Lawn Park District Gymnastics
April	Oak Lawn Public Library & Picnic
May	Brookfield Zoo

Arrival/Departure Procedures

The Preschool For All Program is a two and a half hour program, which is in session Monday through Friday. It is imperative that your child arrive on-time for each session and uphold consistent school attendance. Students who arrive late to the program will lose valuable instructional time and may disrupt the learning processes, which are beginning within the classroom. If a student is experiencing frequent unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be contacted to develop a plan to improve program attendance.

It is expected that parents/guardians arrive promptly for student dismissal. Supervision is not available after school hours. If late pick-up becomes a chronic problem, the proper authorities will be notified.

Mrs. Alvarez's students should arrive at the blacktop gate to enter through door #7 together. Mrs. Brychel's students should meet at the Kindergarten doors on the blacktop. Please walk your child to the doors and wait with them until a staff member greets you. At that time, the staff member will bring students to their classroom. Please note that other students will also be entering the building at this time, as well as bus lines entering the building. **The school office must be notified of any changes to student pick-up routines.** Please park beyond the bus loading zone (directly in front of the school) when picking up your child.

Morning Session | AM 8:30am-11:00am

Arrival 8:25am

Dismissal 10:55am

Afternoon Session | PM 12:00pm-2:30pm

Arrival 11:55am

Dismissal 2:25pm

Absences

Please be sure to call the school each day your child is absent. We will be looking for your child each day and want to know that he/she is in your care, if not in school.

Absences can be reported by calling:

- (708) 423-8956 between the hours of 5:00am and 8:30am
- (708) 423-3078 after 8:30am

If your child is returning from an absence, please provide a note to the teacher briefly explaining the absence. If your child is absent five or more days due to illness, please provide a doctor's note when returning to school.

Parent Involvement

Parents and guardians are an integral part of the Preschool for All program and Creative Curriculum. Along with field trips, we will have family activities to enhance the parent-child-school relationship. Some of the activities we encourage parents to take part in are: pumpkin decorating (October), gingerbread houses (December), reading night (March), and the preschool end of year celebration (May). We will be sending activities home with students that will be requested to be returned to school for presentation by student or display. Note, in the Parent-School Agreement, it is stated that parents are to participate in a minimum of three parent/family activities during the school year.

Classroom Support Staff

We have certified staff that will work with students and parents as needed. We work closely with our school's Speech Pathologist, School Counselor, and Occupational Therapist, English Language Learner (ELL) Teacher, and Early Childhood Education Coordinator.

Important Reminders:

- ☐ Any student that is new to an Illinois school needs to provide a physical exam with up to date immunizations before the first day of school.
- ☐ Any person other than a parent or guardian who is picking your child up must notify the school at 708-423-3078.
- ☐ Notify the school of any allergies (especially food)/health concerns.
- ☐ All students are required to keep a full change of clothes at school at all times (masks, socks, underwear, pants (no shorts), and t-shirt).
- ☐ Please dress your child in easy to manage clothing appropriate for outdoor play and label all clothes. We go outside daily, weather permitting.
- ☐ We will work on hand-washing in school. Please encourage this at home.
- ☐ Additional updates and reminders will be posted on our classroom webpages, www.ahsd125.org (go to Schools > Lawn Manor > Our Classrooms > Mrs. Brychel/Mrs. Alvarez)

Our School

Lawn Manor Primary Center
Atwood Heights School District #125

Mission Statement

Our educational mission is to maximize the academic achievement and social competence of all students in a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment.

Vision Statement

We strive for Lawn Manor to be a developmentally appropriate, challenging learning environment in which highly qualified, enthusiastic and caring staff create and maintain the conditions where all students can achieve to their potential. This child-focused, innovative primary center promotes a secure, respectful school community that values diversity, high expectations for all students and involved families.