



Active Learners & Little Learners Preschool

Welcome...

We would like to welcome you and your child to the Clarendon Hills Park District's Active Learners Preschool and Little Learners program. We hope this handbook will answer any questions you may have regarding our Terrific Threes (3 year old) and Fabulous Fours/Pre-K (4 year old) programs, as well as our 2-1/2 year old Little Learners program.

Philosophy

The Clarendon Hills Park District's Active Learners Preschool believes that while children learn through play, we strongly believe in meeting the developmental needs of the whole child by providing an age-appropriate academic curriculum that will prepare your Active Learner for later school success. The staff is guided by a philosophy that each child develops at his or her own pace, and we will provide daily experiences that develop self-esteem, as well as promote independence. The staff will plan activities that will help your child develop physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually in a fun nurturing environment, as well as addressing the current Illinois Common Core Standards and NAEYC standards.



Class Information

The preschool is staffed with two Teachers at the ratio of 1 to 8 in the Terrific Threes and 1 to 9 in the Fabulous Fours programs. The Little Learners ratio is 1 to 6. The Preschool Director oversees the classes and teachers and is in the classroom regularly.

The Terrific Threes program meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 8:45 - 11:15am. The Fabulous Fours program meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday: 12:30-3:00pm. The Little Learners program meets Tuesday and Thursday from 8:45-10:15am.

CLARENDON HILLS PARK DISTRICT—315 Chicago Avenue—Clarendon Hills, IL 60514 *630-323-2626

2017-18 School Year

Special points of interest:

- ☺ Recreation Based programs.
- ☺ Children have access to various activities throughout the day.
- ☺ A child initiated, teacher-supported curriculum which addresses Core Standards

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Clarendon Hills Park District...Where Families Come to Play & LEARN

What is Little Learners (2.5 year old)

- ☑ Little Learners is a child's first experience away from parent and a chance to develop Independence.
- ☑ Little Learners is an introduction to Preschool.
- ☑ They will learn to work and play in a group and to wait their turn when many want to use the same materials.
- ☑ They will improve their gross and fine motor skills.
- ☑ They will begin to learn how to get along with other children.
- ☑ They will be introduced to basic skills such as colors, counting, and letters
- ☑ They will learn how to look at books, to love them, and realize that printed words convey meaning.
- ☑ They will participate in music and singing, drawing, and painting.
- ☑ They will introduce children to many art mediums, allowing for messy exploration and the understanding that art is about the process and not the product
- ☑ Little Learners is not a "Play" class, because the child is always learning and developing . As they engage in dramatic play in the kitchen area, they gain information about home and family. As they paint, or work with clay, they are developing the use of arm and hand muscles which they will later use in handwriting. As they play in the block area they learn teamwork and problem solving skills.



General Design of a Classroom

Someone casually looking into our classroom might say, "All they do is play!" This statement is true, and we could not be more pleased. NAEYC suggests 60 minute blocks of un-interrupted play. Except for the time spent as a group listening to directions, a story, music, and gym time, the children are encouraged to move from center to center. Exploring, problem solving, socializing, and learning through PLAY. The children can also be seen working in a small group or one-on-one with a teacher to master a skill or concept. Our children learn to explore their environment, make a decision as to what they want, make new friends, learn to share and take their turn, develop discipline, independence, and experiment with new materials.

Centers are set up around the classroom to offer different types of activities that are changed frequently to keep curiosity aroused. The centers change from week to week depending on the theme. The following types of centers are available:

Fine Motor Table—Group activities such as sorting games and matching. Individual activities such as puzzles, games, and play dough.

Fine Art— Art easels, tracing, cutting and coloring.

Dramatic Play Center—Complete with kitchen center, dress area, dolls and other items that will expand your child's imagination.

Large Block Area—Allows for socialization and creativity.

Reading Center—Provides a rest spot for children needing quiet play time.

Large Motor Skills— Scooters, hula-hoops, parachute, mini basketball hoop and other equipment are available to use for large motor development.

Project Table— Used daily to teach a specific skill, STEM activity or Common Core goal. This may be done individually or in a small group. Projects are tied into the theme or Common Core concept currently being taught in language; math; social studies and science.

Sand / Water Table—Materials are included to provide experience with measuring, pouring, textures, and temperature through using water, sand, and rice.

Prospect Park - The Park District has a tot playground in Prospect Park and plenty of open space in the Park for games and activities.



Dress

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes so the child can manage themselves. There are many different art activities that tend to be messy. Children will enjoy the program more if they do not need to worry about their clothing. All removable clothing should be marked with your child's name (including boots). Nametags or indelible ink can be used. Gym shoes or play shoes (rubber soled shoes) should be worn at all times. ***The Park District will provide your child with a book bag and a homework folder to carry their projects and important information home. Please put their name or initials inside the book bag. Please remember to check their book bags daily.

Classroom Routine & Schedule

We firmly believe in routines for children. Classroom routine promotes a feeling of continuity and security for preschoolers, who are not yet able to manage or gauge time by themselves, but rather by routine events (group time, story time, free play and snack time). When young children feel secure in their environment they find discovery and learning easier. For this reason, we will be following a basic schedule each day. Our schedule is flexible when necessary, provides a balance of quiet times and active times, and it allows for various types of play as well as group activities. Within the center's daily schedule, each child has opportunities to create, explore the environment, and learn concepts through first-hand experiences. The routine is one of the most important aspects of teachers, and we ask that you adhere to our time schedule and routine as much as possible.

Each session is planned out for both the three and four year olds with plenty of fun, special events, wonderful arts and crafts projects, education in areas of nature, science, letters, numbers, colors, music, and activities that emphasize motor skills development. The following is a general "Flow-chart" of the day. All general areas are covered each day,

however, the order may be switched depending on the goals of the day.

Opening—Children are encouraged to enter the room independently and begin circle time. The day's activities are introduced at this time. This is when the children learn to recognize their names, learn about the weather, how to dress for it and days of the week through fun colorful charts numbers, and songs.

Free time—Children move independently from center to center. **Project or art activities**—This is normally related to the letter or theme of the week., and the Common Core goal or STEM activity being introduced.

Snack—Our weekly newsletters have the names of each child responsible for bringing the snack.

Special Activity—Music, story time, large motor or outdoors. We plan outdoor time each day, weather permitting.

Closing - Getting ready to go home! Children will gather their backpacks in which the instructors have put necessary notes, permission slips, newsletters, and art projects. We encourage the children to independently get themselves



ready to go home. When they are ready to go they will wait for their name to be called if their parent has chosen the pick up line. The teacher will escort them to the car and help them into their car seat. It is the responsibility of the parent to safely fasten the child in their car seat. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the staff if anyone other than designated persons will be picking up their child.

Little Learners will follow a similar routine:

Opening—Gathering and discussion of the day

Free Time—Children move from center to center

Project/Art Activity—Related to theme

Special Activity—Music, story time, large motor or outdoors.

Closing—When they are ready to go they will wait for their name to be called if their parent has chosen the pick up line. The teacher will escort them to the car and help them into their car seat. It is the responsibility of the parent to safely fasten the child in their car seat. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the staff if anyone other than designated persons will be picking up their child.

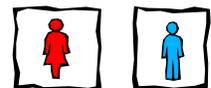
Arrival / Departure

The classroom doors open promptly at the scheduled time to begin class and to dismiss class. Please be on time. If all the other children have gone home, the few extra minutes your child waits can be traumatic. Please notify the office at 630-323-2626 if you are going to be extremely late, due to uncontrollable circumstances, so that we can prepare your child. ***Let the teacher know if someone other than yourself will be picking up your child from preschool. It is necessary to fill out the pickup form on the information sheet listing those authorized to pickup your child. If you choose to walk your child into class, or come in to the building to pick up your child, please park in a parking space on the west side of the building. We offer a Drop off/Pick up line for your convenience. There is additional paperwork to be completed if you choose this option.



Bathrooms

Terrific Threes & Fabulous Fours MUST be able to take care of their own bathroom needs (pull-ups are not acceptable). There are separate gender bathrooms in the preschool room.



Little Learners must require minimal toileting assistance.

When to keep a child out of school



If you will not be sending your child to preschool please inform the Office at 323-2626 as soon as possible. If your child contracts a communicable disease, notify the Preschool Director or the office immediately. All parents will be notified as soon as possible. When releasing this information the child's name will be kept confidential. If the instructors feel that your child is sick and should not be in the class, they will use their discretion regarding whether or not to send your child home. Please keep in mind that if your child is experiencing any of these symptoms it is best to keep your child home. This will help minimize the spread of germs, and keep everyone healthier and happier!

- A moderate fever
- A sore, red throat, earache or swollen glands
- Any undiagnosed rash or skin eruption
- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Eyes that appear reddened and / or are crusted
- Coughing, sniffing or has a runny nose
- Strep-throat
- Pink-eye with discharge

Miscellaneous Information

Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes so the child can manage themselves. There are many different art activities that tend to be messy. Children will enjoy the program more if they do not need to worry about their clothing. All removable clothing should be marked with your child's name (including boots). Nametags or indelible ink can be used. Gym shoes or play shoes (rubber soled shoes) should be worn at all times. ***The Park District will provide your child with a book bag and a homework folder to carry their projects and important information home. Please put their name or initials inside the book bag. Please remember to check their book bags daily.

Snacks—Parents will be asked to contribute snacks. Keep in mind a light, healthy, *nut-free* snack. We request you not bring snacks high in sugar, such as cupcakes, cakes or cookies. Snack suggestions are fruit, veggies, cheese & crackers, pudding, Jell-O, applesauce, popcorn, etc. You will be supplied with Snack List with your dates. Children usually make their snack on Wednesdays. *Little Learners does not have Snack.*

Weekly Newsletter—Each newsletter covers one week of activities. It is sent home on Fridays outlining the upcoming week.

Bad Weather Days—The Park District follows SD 181 for school closings. If the Park District cancels class you will be notified by 8:15am. We do not "make-up" classes cancelled due to circumstances out of our control (weather, power, etc.).

Birthdays—The birthday child may (not required) choose to bring a special birthday snack to share with their classmates. Please check with the teacher regarding special birthday treats to be passed out.

Field Trips—There may be field trips to various places for the children to gain experience outside the classroom. Transportation will be provided and parents are welcome to attend (some trips may require an adult to accompany child). Field trips are optional, and may have a fee involved. If child doesn't attend the field trip there is no make-up or credit given for the day.

Registration & Class Information

All registration is taken at the Clarendon Hills Park District Administrative Office/Community Center at 315 Chicago Avenue, Clarendon Hills. A \$100 non-refundable deposit is due at time of registration. Tuition payment is broken into three payments September, January & April. *Child must be the appropriate age of the program by September 1st* & be toilet trained/independent.*

September 6, 2017—May 18, 2018

Terrific Threes MWF 8:45-11:15am **Fabulous Fours/Pre-K** MWF 12:30-3:00pm
Fee R/NR: \$1,650/\$1,750

Little Learners (2.5 yrs)*

September 12—December 14, 2017 Tu/Th 8:45-10:15am Fee R/NR: \$466/\$533
January 9-May 10, 2018 Tu/Th 8:45-10:15am Fee R/NR: \$566/\$708



Look at me, look at me,
look at me now.
It is fun to have fun,
but you have to know how.

—Dr. Seuss



"A growing body of research has emerged recently affirming that children learn most effectively through a concrete, play-oriented approach to early childhood education," the NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) notes. "Children's play is a primary vehicle for and indicator of their mental growth. Play enables children to progress along the developmental sequence from the sensorimotor intelligence of infancy to preparational thought in the preschool years to the concrete operational thinking exhibited by primary children. In addition to its role in cognitive development, play also serves important functions in children's physical, emotional, and social development. Therefore, child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice."



Just Playing . . . Author Unknown

When I'm building in the block room,
Please don't say I'm "Just playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play,
About balance, I may be an architect someday.

When I'm getting all dressed up,
Setting the table, caring for the babies,
Don't get the idea I'm "Just Playing."
I may be a mother or a father someday.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint,
Or standing at an easel, or molding and shaping clay,
Please don't let me hear you say, "He is Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I just might be a teacher someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some "playing" at my
school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted in "play."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.

When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don't think that because I enjoy it,
it is "Just Play."
I'm learning to follow directions and see the differences.
I may be a cook someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run and move my body,
Please don't say I'm "Just Playing."
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse, or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I've done at school today,
And I say, "I just played."
Please don't misunderstand me.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work is play.

-Unknown Author-

