



Preschool Handbook 2024-2025

10925 W. La Porte Road
Mokena, IL 60448
(708) 390-2401

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Mokena Community Park District is delighted to welcome you and your child to our Early Childhood Preschool Education Programs, a series of programs for preschoolers aged three through four. All of our Early Childhood Education programs are held in the Program Center, 10925 La Porte Road (south end of Main Park). We are looking forward to an enjoyable year and the opportunity to get to know each of your children.

Our teachers have many exciting activities planned, and we know your child will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of new and different experiences with their peers. Group and individual activities will help your child develop new skills in a unique early childhood education setting.

This packet was developed to help you become acquainted with various aspects of our programs, as well as answer any preliminary questions you might have. Please keep it handy so that you can refer to it when needed.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to your teacher or you can call the Administration office at 708-390-2401.

Contact information:

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Preschool Teacher (708) 390-2407

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Teacher Aide (708) 390-2407

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Administration Building (708) 390-2401
10925 W. La Porte Rd

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I have read and understand the Early Childhood Parent Handbook to its entirety. I agree to follow all the rules, policies, and guidelines.

I understand that the first month's tuition and the deposit is non-refundable and there are no refunds before or during the school year.

I understand that my child cannot attend The Mokena Community Park District Early Childhood Program (Preschool) until all of the proper paperwork is completed and turned in. Including this Handbook sign off sheet.

Child's Name

Program Name

Parent/Guardian's Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Bathroom Break and Personal Hygiene

All preschool participants must be toilet trained before beginning of the school year. A completely toilet-trained child is one that

- ◇ Wears regular underpants (not pull-ups, diapers or training pants)
- ◇ Knows when they need to use the restroom w/o prompting
- ◇ Knows how to take care of toileting procedures themselves, including wiping themselves
- ◇ Does not have regular toileting accidents during the school day

Children will be encouraged to use the restroom at least once per class or as needed and taught how to wash their hands properly. The staff will not be assisting with personal hygiene. We know that children have occasional accidents, and we are fully prepared to deal with those incidents. We ask that each child keep one set of spare clothes in their backpack. This should include, shirt, pants, underwear, and socks. Please be sure these clothes are for the correct season. If a child has a restroom accident, they shall be given extra clothes from their backpack to change themselves. Parents will be called to assist with personal cleanliness if needed. If your child needs assistance with buttons, snaps, zippers and belts, the teacher will gladly assist them.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are able to volunteer for upcoming projects, help with children classroom activities such as guest reader, and holiday parties. Volunteering is not mandatory for parents, but is much appreciated. Anyone who volunteers in the classroom will need to complete Volunteer Application and background check.

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School Calendar

The 35-week program begins the day after Labor Day (September) and continues to Memorial Day (May) The following holidays are observed:

- Columbus day
- Veterans Day / Election Day
- Thanksgiving Break 1 week
- Winter Break 2 Weeks
- Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
- President Day
- Spring Holiday
- Spring Break 1 Week

* *Dates are subject to change so please check the monthly school calendar*

Starting School

Parent Orientation Day

An invitation will be sent with the welcome email with the day and time. This will take place in the evening hours. This orientation takes about an hour. An orientation session is planned to inform parents about the program policies and other program procedures. Parents can meet the classroom teachers to receive necessary information regarding the preschool. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend the parent orientation program. **Please note that parent orientation is planned for adults only.** Please do not bring preschoolers or siblings to this session. We recommend that you bring your child school supplies on orientation day.

Meet and Greet Open House for Students

At this time, your child will meet the teachers and new classmates and have an opportunity to explore their new classroom. You and your child may visit their classroom during school hours. This is an optional open house.

School Supplies

A school supply list will be emailed to all parents in August. A welcome letter with other pertinent information will be emailed. The list will also be posted on Class Dojo. We may need additional supplies during the year. Periodically throughout the school year, we may request certain supplies for classroom activities. This is purely voluntary. We appreciate donations.

Communicable Diseases

Parents should immediately report any communicable diseases such as measles, chicken pox, COVID-19, strep throat, pink eye, or mumps to the preschool staff. To protect all the children and staff, we request that if your child is ill, please do not send them to class. If you are in doubt about the severity of the illness, on the side of caution, keep your child at home until they are well enough to attend.

- ◇ Children should be free of an elevated temp for 24 hours
- ◇ Antibiotics for their illness wait 24 hours after beginning the antibiotics to send them to school
- ◇ If the child has thick colored mucus from their nose do not send them to school
- ◇ Vomiting or diarrhea keep them at home until they have been vomit or diarrhea free for 24 hours.

If a child has a rash, please do not send them to school unless a doctor has specified that the inflammation is not contagious. The rash may cover the entire body or just a tiny area. Wait for the rash to clear or doctors approval before sending them back to school.

Sickness at school

Children will be sent home from school if the child is determined ill by the preschool staff. For the protection of all the children, your child must be kept at home or will be sent home if they show any of the following symptoms:

- ◇ Elevated temperature in the past 24 hours
- ◇ Vomiting or diarrhea within 12 hours of school
- ◇ Any undiagnosed rash, especially “weeping” rash
- ◇ Sore eyes or ear or discharge coming from eye or ears
- ◇ Profuse nasal discharge

You the parent or guardian will be contacted at once to pick up your child. Your emergency contacts will be called if you cannot be reached.

Order of contact:

- Guardian 1
- Guardian 2
- Emergency contact 1
- Emergency contact 2
- Emergency contact 3

A doctor signed explanation may be required to allow a child with a contagious or communicable illness to return to school.

Inclement Weather Days

In the event of inclement weather a message will be sent out on Class Dojo if we have a weather emergency and close school. Also, if Mokena School district #159 is closed due to inclement weather, our classes will be canceled. We do not schedule make-up classes or offer refunds for inclement weather closings.

Health

Staff should be informed of the students particular physical or medical conditions to provide a quality learning experience. If your child has any allergies, please let the teacher know. If the teacher needs to dispense medication such as an Inhaler or Epi-pen there will be additional forms for the parent to fill out, giving consent and directions.

Absences

If your child will be absent, please message your child's teacher on Class Dojo before class begins.

Food Allergies/Special Diet

If your child has allergies, the school must be aware of this. A list of all foods your child has shown sensitivity to, must be on the registration form. If your child is on a special diet due to medical reasons or religious beliefs, a written notice regarding the above must be given to the park district upon registration.

Snacks

Each child will be required to bring a snack. Send ONE snack and water bottle. Due to various allergies, we are attempting to be as nut free as possible. Your child should bring a filled water bottle (spill proof, please) to school—no glass. ONLY WATER in the bottle. Please put your child name on the water bottle.

Birthday Celebrations

We enjoy celebrating birthdays in our classroom. Each child will be able to bring in a special treat to share with their class. All food items sent should be store bought and prepackaged. Please do not send in cupcakes or cake as it tends to be messy. Parents are welcome to send in treat bags to celebrate their child's birthday to be sent home with classmates. School year birthdays will be celebrated close to the actual day. Summer birthdays will be marked as a special day at the half birthday. Birthday invitations will be placed in the children's folder to go home to parents. We do not discuss with the students or families that there is an invitation in their folders.

Personal Belongings

Children should be discouraged from bringing personal belonging from home except on specific "show and tell" days. If items are brought from home, it should be marked with the child's name. The Park District cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal belongings the children bring to school. Candy, gum, or toy weapons are not allowed.

Craft Supply donation suggestions

Cardboard egg cartons	Paper towel rolls	Buttons
Cotton balls	Clothespins	Ribbon
Toilet paper	Paper grocery bags	Sponges
Cupcake liners	Fabric scraps	Sequins
Crepe paper	Mason jars	Feathers
Scrapbook paper	Lace and trim	Wiggle Eyes
Clear deli tubs	Pipe cleaners	Tissue Paper
Paper plates	Craft Sticks	
Paper lunch bags	Plastic laundry scoops	

Class Offerings

**Children do not need to attend previous program to enroll in each class*

Preschool– 3-year-old (Tuesday & Thursday) 9:00-11:30 AM

This class is for children ready to interact with their peers for an extended period. Sharing, listening and taking turns are social/academic building blocks introduced in Preschool. Free play and teacher-directed activities to explore colors, numbers, and the alphabet. Children must be three years old by September 1st of the school year. Must be toilet trained and not in pull-ups.

Preschool– 4-year-old (M/W/F) 9:00-11:30 AM

This three day a week program is for children ready to combine their developing social and academic skills thoroughly. Children will continue to build their language and math readiness skills by exploring the worlds of science, art, and music. Fine and large motor skills are also incorporated into the curriculum. Children must be 4 years old by September 1st of the school year. Must be toilet trained and not in pull-ups.

Kinderbridge– 4-year-old (M-F) 12:30-3:00 PM

This 5 day a week program is for the second year of preschool or for a third year if your child has a late birthday and/or needs an extra year of school before officially starting kindergarten. Children will continue to build their language and math readiness skills and explore the worlds of science, art, and music. Fine and large motor skills are also incorporated into the curriculum. Children must be 4 year old by September 1st of the school year. Must be toilet trained and not in pull-ups.

Program Requirements

To be eligible to enroll in classes during the school year, the following requirements must be met:

- ◇ Every child must be toilet trained and capable of caring for their bathroom needs at the start of the program.
- ◇ 3-year-old must be three on or before September 1, 2024
- ◇ 4-year-old must be four on our before September 1, 2024
- ◇ A copy of your child's birth certificate is required at the time of registration
- ◇ A copy of updated immunizations is required at the time of registration
- ◇ A non-refundable deposit of a \$50 registration fee plus the first month's tuition. **ENTIRE DEPOSIT is non-refundable!**

The following **forms and information** are required at registration. You will not be allowed to save your child's spot without these forms. They include:

Early Childhood Registration Form: Must be filled out completely. List any medical conditions to better serve your child. List emergency contacts and a list of persons authorized to pick up child. Refusal to sign is cause for denial of program participation. If a person picking up child is not recognized by staff, he/she will be asked to provide identification. This will then be checked against the Pick-Up Authorization Form. No child will be released to unauthorized persons.

Parent Handbook Signature Page

Located at the back of this handbook, there is a signature page that needs to be filled out at the time of registering.

Timeliness

Our morning class begins at 9:00 AM and ends at 11:30 AM. Our afternoon class begins at 12:30 PM and ends at 3:00 PM. Your child must be on time for class. We start our days promptly. Please speak with the preschool staff if this will be an issue. **Late arrivals can be very disruptive to the learning of all students.**

Charges for Late Pick-up

Child picked up between 5-15 minutes late-Charge of \$5.00
Child picked up between 16-30 minutes late-Charge of \$10.00
Child picked up between 31-45 minutes late-Charge of \$15.00
Children picked up between 46-55 minutes late-Charge of \$20.00

After 25 minutes late, children may be taken to the Administration Center to wait for their parents, especially if there is another class beginning. After 55 minutes and staff has called the parents, the Mokena Police Department will be contacted. Children can become very apprehensive when parents are late. Please make every effort to pick up your children promptly. Children will not be released to anyone not listed on the Registration Form without special written permission.

Charges for late pick-up will be put on your Civic Rec account and you will have one week to pay, otherwise this will result in another late fee.

Separation Anxiety

A child coming to class for the first time or two may feel some separation anxiety. Our experience has been that these children adjust within minutes of their parents' departure. We advise leaving your child with a smile and kiss telling them you will return and go. Be sympathetic to the tears that may come, but be firm. To calm your fears, if your child cries due to being separated from you, you are doing the best by sending them to class. As hard as it may seem, be assured that we are prepared for these situations and will comfort your child. It feels like the most challenging thing you ever had to do, but it will get easier for both with time. If we cannot comfort your child, we will call you.

Curriculum

Our Early Childhood Education programs stress the social development of children and the importance of learning through play with hands on experiences. Developmentally appropriate activities are selected to emphasize concrete experiential learning. Our program includes free play, learning activities, circle time, gross motor skills, colors, shapes, art, phonics, social and emotional interaction.

Children Schoolwork

Frequently, your child will bring home their school work and projects; they are usually anxious to share their work with the family. Please always praise and encourage your child. Homework is not mandatory, but it will occasionally be sent home to help reinforce letters, numbers, colors, etc.

Assessments

Teachers will perform a formal evaluation in October/November, February/March and May and send a progress report home. This assessment is designed to aid you in understanding the social and cognitive skills your child has demonstrated to us in the classroom environment. Understand that some children do not “test” well and may do certain things at home that they do not do in the classroom setting. The assessment is a guideline for you to know what we have done in the classroom and what your child has shown us on the given testing day. Parents can schedule an appointment to meet with the teacher to discuss their child’s progress.

Drop off/Pick up

To ensure the safety and well-being of children enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program, the following drop-off and pick-up plan has been implemented:

- ◇ Please park in designated parking space at the Program Center. Please do not park in the handicapped accessible parking spaces
- ◇ Please walk your child up to the door, where one of the teachers will meet you.
- ◇ ID’s will be required for pick up. Teachers will only release your child to someone on your authorized pickup. If you need to add someone to your pick-up form it must be done in writing at the Admin building.
- ◇ If you are going to be late please notify us. Please note: there are late charges. Refer to the charges for late pick-up paragraph.
- ◇ If you must take your child from school before the end of class, please let the teachers know prior to the start of class.

For the safety of our children, all entry doors will be locked during school hours.

Birth Certificate

The original birth certificate at the time of registration.

Immunizations Requirements – Children entering pre-school shall comply with the following appropriate school age immunization requirements. The records must be signed by a health care provider who gave the immunization or can verify those dates of immunization. This documentation must be presented during registration. A child will not be registered with out these documentations.

DTP/DTaP – Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (has rec’d 4 doses of DTP/DTaP by 2nd birthday

Polio (OPV, IPV) – Has received 3 doses of Polio vaccine appropriately spaced.

Measles – Rubella - Has rec’d Measles Vaccine on or after 1st birthday. History of disease NOT acceptable proof of immunity. *Usually given as MMR.*

Rubella (German Measles, 3 day measles)- Has rec’d Rubella Vaccine on or after 1st birthday. History of disease NOT acceptable proof of immunity. *Usually given as MMR.*

Mumps - Has rec’d Mumps Vaccine on or after 1st birthday. History of disease NOT acceptable proof of immunity. *Usually given as MMR.*

Hib – Haemophiles Influenzae Type B – Evidence of immunization appropriately spaced.

Hepatitis B– 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine appropriately spaced.

Varicella (chicken pox) – has rec’d Varicella vaccine on or after 1st birthday.

NOTE: The Will County Health Department sponsors an immunization clinic. Immunizations are provided at minimal cost. A parent must be present and is required to bring the child’s previous immunization record. For further information and appointments, call the Will County Health Department at 815-727-8670.

Tuition Fees

Monthly tuition fees are due in full the first of each month beginning with September through April (a total of nine months), whether the child is in attendance or not. *Please note tuition is due one month in advance.* The fee paid at the time of registration is a non-refundable deposit, and will be applied to first month tuition fees. (Should you decide your child will not attend Mokena Park District Preschool after registration, your entire deposit will be forfeited.)

Monthly payments can be made in person at the Administration Building, online by logging on to your Civic Rec account, or by automatic monthly deduction from a bank account or credit card. A monthly discount of \$5 will be applied to those who sign up for automatic monthly payments.

A late fee of \$10 will be assessed if payment is made after the 4th day of the month. After the 10th day of the month a \$25 fee will be added on. Failure to make payment prior to the 20th day of the month will result in your child being removed from the classroom. You will also be liable for any collection fees, reasonable attorney's fees, court costs and any other expenses incurred by the Park District in collecting an overdue account.

Absenteeism due to illness or vacation will not warrant a credit or adjustment in the monthly fees. Days missed due to extreme weather conditions or other unforeseeable circumstances, will not be made up.

Please notify the Park Office immediately if you are withdrawing your child from the program.

Prep School (3's)- \$145/155 monthly tuition

Pre-school(4's)- \$185/195 monthly tuition

Kinderbridge(4's)- \$280/290 monthly tuition

There will be 9 total payments:

Registration- \$50 deposit plus 1st months tuition

September 1– Monthly Tuition

October 1– Monthly Tuition

November 1– Monthly Tuition

December 1-Montly Tuition

January 1– Monthly Tuition

February 1-Montly Tuition

March 1-Montly Tuition

April 1-Montly Tuition

Behavior Policy

In keeping with our program goals, we encourage fun for all participants. However to ensure everyone's safety, appropriate behavior is expected at all times. Participants who are asked to leave a class or facility due to inappropriate or potentially harmful behavior are not eligible for a refund. For most students, preschool is their first experience in a school setting. The program is designed to teach children how to interact responsibly with others and respect others' belongings and personal space. The goal is to promote an atmosphere of class cooperation. Inappropriate/disruptive behavior will be met with verbal reminders of proper behavior and redirection to another activity. Serious, inappropriate or disruptive behavior will be reported to the parents. In carrying out discipline, teachers use firm positive statements or redirection of behavior. If necessary, to help a child gain control, the teacher may remove them from the group activity. Children will have a reasonable opportunity to resolve their conflicts and have input in resolving disputes.

Clothing

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and gym shoes to preschool. Daily activities include interactive and sometimes messy play, and the children should feel comfortable and enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothing. Children should wear clothes that can easily get up and down. Also, keep a change of clothes in your child's backpack. Fancy dress shoes and sandals are not safe for running and playing. All personal belongings must be labeled, including school bags, jackets, boots, hats, mittens, scarves etc.

Parent/Teacher Communication

A weekly newsletter will be provided and will list the weekly curriculum activities for each week. Each class will communicate through Class Dojo. This information will be sent at the beginning of the school year. Our staff is always available to help with any questions or concerns that you may have. If you need more than a few minutes to talk with the teacher, we ask that you call and set up a time that would be mutually convenient for you and the teachers. You can also send an email to the teacher. Please allow up to 24 hours for teachers to respond to your inquiries.