

Little Vikings Preschool Handbook



Welcome to Little Vikings Preschool!

We are excited that you have chosen Little Vikings Preschool to be part of your child's educational journey and developmental growth.

At Little Vikings Preschool, we prioritize your child's overall development needs. We provide a stimulating environment with hands-on experiences that enhance creativity, build a positive self-image, and foster growth in language, science, and mathematics. Additionally, we focus on improving both fine and gross motor skills.

Your child will play and share while developing emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually. We look forward to embarking on this incredible adventure of learning together!

Students Meet the Teacher

We are excited to welcome students to our "Meet the Teacher" event! Scheduled times will be provided for students to visit their classrooms and meet their teachers before the school year begins. This event offers an excellent opportunity for children to explore their new environment, connect with their teachers, and meet some of their new preschool friends.

Attending this event is crucial for helping your child adjust to preschool and feel comfortable in their new learning space. We look forward to seeing you there!

A New Beginning

Starting preschool is a significant step for many children. For some, it may be their first experience away from home. Our teachers understand that the initial days can be challenging and have seen the "first day of tears" many times.

Helpful Tips for a Smooth Transition:

- **Leave on a Positive Note:** When saying goodbye, do so cheerfully. Avoid lingering or hesitating, even if your child shows signs of anxiety.
- **Reassure Your Child:** Let them know you love them, hug them, and remind them that you will return to pick them up after class.
- **Be Prompt:** Timely pick-up is important. Some children adjust quickly to new environments, while others may take longer. Both reactions are entirely normal.
- **Expect Readjustments:** It is also typical to notice some changes in behavior after long weekends or vacations.

Your positive attitude will support your child best during this transition. Our teachers are here to collaborate with each parent to ensure that this "giant step" is a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Personal Items

Children may sometimes want to share a special item with their friends. To encourage this, we will have "Show and Tell" on specific days, which the teacher will announce. Please remind children not to bring toys to class unless it is a scheduled Show and Tell day.

If your child needs a special "security" item, we ask that they keep it in their backpack or locker to prevent it from getting lost, broken, or forgotten at school.

Backpack/Book Bag Guidelines for Preschool

When selecting a backpack or bookbag for your preschooler, please consider the following:

- **Ease of Use:** Choose an easy bag for your child to open and close.
- **Size:** The backpack should be large enough to hold daily projects and important parent notes but not so large that it becomes cumbersome for your child to carry.

Daily Routine:

- Ensure your child brings their backpack to school every day. This helps teachers organize projects and facilitates a smoother dismissal process.

Encouraging Independence:

- Children will be encouraged to pack their bags, zip them up, and take responsibility for their belongings. This practice promotes independence and self-management skills.

Parental Involvement:

- Please check your child's book bag regularly to stay informed about their projects and any notes from teachers.

Clothing Guidelines for Preschool

We encourage all children to wear comfortable clothing. Preschoolers are very active and will explore various art and science activities that may get messy. When children don't have to worry about their clothes, they can fully enjoy their experiences.

Please choose clothes that allow for unrestricted movement and activity. Children should wear sturdy shoes, such as tennis shoes, for climbing and running. Sandals are not recommended due to the mulch on the playground.

Additionally, ensure that your child's clothing allows them to manage their bathroom needs independently.

Extra Clothes Policy

We ask that you send your child to preschool with an extra set of clothes. These will be stored in their locker for easy access. Sometimes, little accidents happen, and having a change of clothes can help keep your child comfortable and happy.

Snack Information for Little Vikings Preschool

At Little Vikings Preschool, we provide daily snacks at no cost to families. Your child will have access to water throughout the day. Additionally, we offer milk or juice as part of our snack service.

If your child has a food allergy, we are committed to working with their educational team to create a suitable allergy action plan. It is essential to inform the school nurse and your child's teacher about any allergies to ensure your child's safety and well-being.

Absences

If your child will be absent from preschool, please call the Newark Grade School office at 815-695-5143 to leave a message. Alternatively, you can email your child's teacher. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please send a written note or email to the teacher.

Curriculum Overview

Our preschool curriculum is designed to align with the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) and the Common Core State Standards. We offer a variety of engaging activities that promote holistic development, including:

- **Large Group Instruction**
- **Small Group Instruction**
- **Gross Motor Activities**
- **Outdoor Exploration**
- **Dramatic Play**
- **Math and Art**
- **Block Play**
- **Science and Discovery**
- **Sensory Experiences**

Our dedicated teachers use units of study to inspire students while responding to each child's unique interests, learning styles, and abilities. We maintain a balanced schedule incorporating small and large group instruction, ample time for gross motor activities, and play-based learning experiences. This approach ensures that each child can thrive in a nurturing and stimulating environment.

Field Trips

Field trips allow young children to explore and learn outside the classroom. They help children become more familiar with their community and provide experiences that promote language development, connect with what they already know, and help them learn new things.

Parents or guardians must sign and return the permission slip for their child to participate in a field trip. If we need chaperones to help during the trip, this will also be noted on the permission slip. We appreciate your support in making field trips enjoyable and educational for everyone!

Conference and Progress Reports

Parents can schedule an appointment to meet with their child's teacher to discuss their specific needs. Progress reports will be shared, and parent-teacher conferences will occur in the Fall and Spring for our 3-year-olds. A winter parent-teacher conference will be held for our 4-year-olds. We value your partnership in supporting your child's growth and development!

Program Details:

Little Vikings Preschool offers programs for three—and four-year-olds. Our preschool meets for 2.5 hours daily and focuses on students' overall developmental needs by providing a stimulating environment through hands-on learning experiences. Children will explore play and sharing while developing emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually.

Important Registration Information:

- Students must be potty-trained.
 - Children must reach the required age by September 1 to register for preschool.
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Preschool Programs:

Preschool (3-Year-Olds)

(Must be three by September 1)

- **Schedule:** Tuesday & Thursday
 - **Morning Session:** 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM
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Preschool (4-Year-Olds)

(Must be four by September 1)

- **Schedule:**
 - Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
 - **Morning Session:** 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM
 - **Or**
 - Monday through Thursday
 - **Afternoon Session:** 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Tuition Information

Students are required to enroll for the entire academic year. Tuition can be paid through monthly installments, due on the first of each month from September through May, or paid in full at registration. A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 is required by January 31st of the year before the enrollment year. The first month's tuition is due on September 1st.

Preschool Tuition Rates:

- **3-Year-Olds** (Tuesday & Thursday a.m.): \$125.00 mth (for 9 months) *
- **4-Year-Olds** (Monday, Wednesday & Friday a.m.): \$150.00mth (for 9 months) *
- **4-Year-Olds** (Monday through Thursday p.m.): \$175.00 mth (for 9 months) *

*Note: A nonrefundable registration fee of \$100 is due by January 31.

Registration Information

Current Little Vikings Preschool students receive priority in enrollment. Additionally, siblings of current students are also eligible to register first.

Registration for the Little Vikings Preschool programs will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis for anyone within the Newark & Lisbon school district, followed by those interested in enrolling in the program.

To enroll, all students must meet the following criteria:

- Be of the correct age by September 1
- Be potty trained.

How to Register

1. Visit the **Little Vikings Preschool Website** and select the program you wish to enroll in. An email will be sent to you to confirm your program. You might need to create an account if you are new to Newark Grade School.
2. Complete all required questions and pay the non-refundable registration fee of **\$100**.
3. Submit the Health Form, which must be completed and signed by your child's physician by **August 1**.

You can submit the Health Form via:

- Fax:
- Email:
- Or drop it off at Newark Grade School.

Please ensure you have all the necessary documents ready for a smooth registration process.

Little Vikings Preschool Calendar

Little Vikings Preschool will align its calendar with the Newark School District. This means that seasonal breaks will occur at the exact same times as those in the district.

In addition to these breaks, the Little Vikings Preschool will have a few extra days off. These may include days for parent-teacher conferences or special events.

You will receive a Little Vikings Preschool calendar, and teachers will provide reminders about these special days off throughout the year.

Arrival & Departure Procedures

At Little Vikings Preschool, we prioritize the safety and efficiency of our arrival and departure processes. Here are the key guidelines for curbside drop-off and pick-up:

- **Curbside Drop-Off Times:**
 - Morning: Starting at 8:25 a.m..
 - Afternoon: Starting at 11:55 a.m..
- **Pick-Up Times:**
 - Morning: 11:00 a.m.
 - Afternoon: 2:30 p.m.

Important Notes:

- Parents and guardians must remain in their vehicles during drop-off and pick-up.
- School staff will assist with helping your child enter and exit the vehicle.
- Please place your child's car seat on the vehicle's passenger side if possible to enhance safety. This allows your child to exit on the building side.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Steps:

1. **Pull Up:** Drive as far as you can in the lane closest to the building (the bus lane) in the direction of the staff member assisting with arrival and dismissal.
2. **Stay in Vehicle:** Please remain in your vehicle while waiting for a staff member to open your door and assist your child exiting or entering.
3. **Ready to Exit:** Once your child is out of the vehicle (during drop-off) or buckled in (during pick-up), you may exit the parking lot. Parents/guardians are responsible for buckling their children.
4. **Follow Ahead:** Wait until the vehicle(s) in front of you pulls away before following them out of the parking lot.
5. **No Overtaking:** Please do not go around vehicles ahead of you. This action slows the process and creates safety concerns for our students and staff in the parking lot.

Authorization for Pick Up

It's essential to ensure that every one authorized to pick up your child is included on the pickup authorization form. For your child's safety, they will not be released to anyone who is not listed on this form.

When picking up your child, authorized individuals may be asked to present a picture identification, such as a driver's license. If someone other than a parent is picking up your child, please ensure they are listed on your pickup authorization form or that you have provided written notification to the school with your child.

Discipline Policy for Preschool

At our preschool, the staff is dedicated to guiding children's natural curiosity and energy in a positive way. Our teachers actively encourage and praise appropriate behavior, creating a supportive atmosphere for learning.

Classroom Environment

The classroom is designed to allow children to play in small groups and choose from various activities. This range of options helps your child experience different learning opportunities and build confidence in making positive choices.

Guidance Approach

Our guidance focuses on helping children understand and follow basic rules for responsible behavior. We provide an environment where they can learn problem-solving skills, promote self-discipline, and take responsibility for their actions.

Children will be introduced to critical behavioral limits, including:

- Lining up
- Respecting others
- Table manners
- Free play
- Appropriate use of materials
- Interaction with peers

Behavior Management Procedures

- **Incident of Misbehavior:** If misbehavior occurs, staff will assess the situation and redirect the child towards more positive behavior.
- **Minor Corrections:** To guide the child back on track, a verbal cue will be provided for minor behavioral issues.
- **Time-Out:** A brief “time-out” may be implemented if a behavior becomes repetitive. This allows the child to step away from a negative situation and regain self-control.
- **Chronic or Serious Behavior:** Parents will be notified if inappropriate behavior becomes chronic, severe, violent, or dangerous to others.

We believe in fostering a nurturing environment that supports the growth and development of self-discipline in our preschoolers.

Photographs and Videotaping

At Little Vikings Preschool, School District 66 may photograph or videotape participants. These images and videos may be used on our websites and within the school to showcase our programs and activities.

Head Lice Guidelines for Preschool

Head lice are not harmful to health, do not indicate poor hygiene, and are not responsible for spreading diseases. Lice cannot hop or fly; they only crawl. They spread through direct head-to-head contact with someone who has them. Our preschool follows these guidelines regarding head lice:

- **Parent Notification:** If your child has head lice, please inform the school.
- **Exclusion from School:** Children found with live head lice or nits (eggs) attached to their hair within ¼ inches of the scalp may need to go home. We will notify their parents or guardians.
- **Treatment Instructions:** The school will provide written guidance to help treat head lice.
- **Return to School:** A child who has been sent home due to head lice can return to school after a check by the school nurse or principal, confirming that they are free of head lice and nits.

NGSD66 Illness Protocol: Should Your Child Stay Home?

In most situations the staff of Newark Grade School District 66 prefers students come to school and if they become ill at school the parent/guardian will be notified. However, here are a few guidelines to help you decide whether your child is too ill to go to school.

Fever

Your child should stay home if he/she has a temperature at or above 100.4° F. Your child may return to school when he has been fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours.

Contagious Illness

- Your child should stay home from school if he/she has a contagious disease. A contagious disease is one that is spread by close contact with a person or object. This could include chicken pox, influenza, vomiting, diarrhea, strep throat, "pink eye" with copious amounts of yellow or green drainage. Some illnesses may be contagious before the child shows signs of illness. It is very hard to prevent the spread of some germs, especially in a community setting. Good hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of disease.
- If your child has chicken pox or strep throat, ask your doctor when he/she may return to school. Generally, children who have active chicken pox should not return to school until all the lesions are dried and crusted. Children with strep throat should be on antibiotics for 24 hours and be feeling well enough to concentrate before returning to school.

Your child is too ill to go to school if he/she has any of these signs:

- Has vomiting or diarrhea, unless these are determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration and feels well enough to participate in school. Please keep your child home for 24 hours from the last episode of vomiting.
- Is wheezing or consistently short of breath.
- Has a cough that disrupts sleep and/or normal activity.
- Has copious amounts of yellow or green drainage from the eye. If the doctor has given antibiotics, the child may return to school after 24 hours of treatment or according to the doctor's note.
- Rash that is rapidly spreading or accompanied by fever or has open, weeping lesions (rash without fever or other symptoms usually does not require the student to stay home)

Your child may be able to come to school even if:

- He/she has a mild stuffy nose, sneezing, and a mild cough without fever. Reinforce the importance of frequent hand washing.
- He/she has experienced one or two episodes of diarrhea without vomiting, abdominal pain, or fever.