



The John Schroder

Early Childhood Center

Family Handbook

1519 S. Grace Street
Lombard, IL 60148

(630)827-4260
Attendance Line (630) 827-4261
Fax (630) 216-8412

Principal: Catherine Angelos

Dear Families,

Welcome to the school year with Lombard District 44's distinguished Early Childhood Program! Our program has received the Gold Circle of Quality which recognizes high quality programs within the State of Illinois. We have also received the Award of Excellence for the Inclusion of children with special needs.

The information outlined in this handbook includes District 44 information along with specific pages that are devoted to Lombard's Early Childhood Program. It is designed to serve as a quick reference guide to answer your questions. Similar information can be found on the school website (www.sd44.org).

Welcome to the new school year! We look forward to working with you and your children as we nurture the love of learning in all our students.

Sincerely,

The John Schroder Early Childhood Team

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EARLY CHILDHOOD MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to shape the social, emotional and intellectual development of children with varying abilities in partnership with families and our community. We strive to maintain a developmentally appropriate environment, which fosters individuality, creativity, and respects academic and cultural diversity. We seamlessly integrate children of varying abilities into our classrooms. Together we support our children by holding each child to high expectations in hopes they become empathetic lifelong learners.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

The John Schroder Early Childhood Center is a unique, multi-aged program that provides experiences for young children ages three through five who have varying abilities and young children who are considered at-risk. All children have an opportunity to play and learn together in an accepting and engaging environment. Each classroom is staffed by at least one certified teacher and one classroom assistant. Consistent with District 44's philosophy, the Preschool serves the needs of all children utilizing a developmentally- appropriate approach to instruction. It is not mandatory for preschoolers to be independent in their toileting skills, but it is encouraged.

The purpose of our program is to assist families in meeting the developmental needs of children, to promote the educational and social/emotional growth of children, and to provide a safe, secure and nurturing classroom environment. The program emphasizes the process of growth through active, hands on experiences. The program provides high quality enrichment experiences for our students, as well as activities and educational opportunities for parents and families throughout the year.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Classes are in session Monday-Friday and follow the D44 Early Childhood Calendar.

EC Structured: 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
 EC Blended Morning: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
 EC Blended Afternoon: 12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

| Role | Staff | Phone | Email |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| EC Teacher | Savannah Bays | (630) 827-4034 | sbays@sd44.org |
| EC Teacher | Katie Bernas | (630) 827-4039 | kbernas@sd44.org |
| EC Teacher | Alyssa Gorecki | (630) 827-4096 | agorecki@sd44.org |
| EC Teacher | Jennifer Damitz | (630) 827-4031 | jdamitz@sd44.org |
| EC Teacher | Amanda Montes | (630) 827-4020 | amontes@sd44.org |
| EC Structured Teacher | Jennifer Mazurkiewicz | (630) 827-4044 | jmazurkiewicz@sd44.org |
| EC Structured Teacher | Jennifer Suggs | (630) 827-4025 | jsuggs@sd44.org |
| Occupational Therapist | Deb Wallenberg | (630) 827-4038 | dwallenberg@sd44.org |
| Occupational Therapist | Lenell Vitale | (630) 827-4177 | .lvitale@sd44.org |
| Physical Therapist | Julie Segatti | (630) 827-4038 | jsegatti@sd44.org |
| Speech Language Pathologist | Jamie Dunford | (630) 827-4229 | jdunford@sd44.org |
| Speech Language Pathologist | Kim Wolf | (630) 827-4036 | kwolf@sd44.org |
| Speech Language Pathologist | Kristin Ellis | (630) 827-4098 | kellis@sd44.org |
| School Psychologist | Kim Foster | (630) 827-4270 | kfoster@sd44.org |
| School Nurse | Eileen Rydelboesso | (630) 827-4157 | erydelboesso@sd44.org |
| School Social Worker | Amy Schmidt | (630) 827-4097 | aschmidt@sd44.org |
| Principal | Cathy Angelos | (630) 827-4167 | cangelos@sd44.org |
| Building Secretary | Virginia Erguven | (630) 827-4265 | verguven@sd44.org |

BLENDED AND BILINGUAL CURRICULUM

Creative Curriculum:

Lombard's Early Childhood program uses the Creative Curriculum as the framework for the preschool program. This is a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is accepted by The National Association of Education for Young Children. A variety of active and quiet work/play centers are provided so children can make choices, create, and interact with peers within their environment. The materials used provide concrete experiences and are adaptable to the many different play and developmental levels of children. The teachers also develop "Units of Study" that thematically complement the children, their cultures, and the community.

Conscious Discipline:

Conscious Discipline integrates classroom management and social-emotional learning. It utilizes everyday events rather than an external curriculum, and addresses emotional intelligence.

What is "Developmentally Appropriate Practice"?

- You will probably notice that our classrooms have a lot of bustle and noise with children talking, playing, and exploring. Such a classroom environment differs from the old images of a teacher doing a lot of talking while children sit and listen quietly.
- Research and experience tells us that to be effective with young children, teaching practices need to be "developmentally appropriate." What this means is simply that educators need to think first about what young children are like and then create an environment and experiences that are in tune with children's characteristics.
- Early childhood, after all, is a time of life quite different from adulthood, and even from the later school years. Children 3-6 learn far better through direct interactive experiences than through just listening to someone talk. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration.
- A developmentally appropriate program like ours is age-appropriate, but that's not all. To make our program a good place for every child, we gear our classroom environment and activities to this community and the families involved. We're eager to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experience, and current circumstances. With this knowledge we can work to create a program that fits the children and the families we serve.

Copple, Carol, and Sue Bredekamp. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009. Print.

DAILY SCHEDULE COMPONENTS

Student Arrival: Includes individual greetings, students identify their name, hang coats, empty backpacks, mail, and library books, attendance, table activities.

Circle Time: Children sing songs and fingerplays, share views, complete attendance, talk about the day's activities and choices. Activities include; stories, dramatics, literacy, music, dance, and games.

Center Time: One hour of child-initiated play at learning centers which include: blocks and floor toys, dramatic play, table toys & games, art center, library area, discovery table, scooping table, water table, writing table, and computers. School provided snack will be incorporated during center time. Children will sit together for a self serve snack. During this time children have opportunities to make requests, use self help skills and practice conversation. Children put papers, artwork, snack bag and communication folders into their backpacks.

Clean Up: Children sort, categorize, and organize as they put away materials.

Small Groups: Children participate in small group activities designed to meet each child's individual needs. Topics may include; graphs, charts, games, writing, communication, and academic skills.

Gross Motor: Children will participate in 30 minutes of gross motor activities such as playground equipment, balls, group games, etc. Gross motor will be outside weather permitting. During inclement weather children will have indoor gross motor play. Children will play outside daily when the temperature is above 25 degrees with the windchill.

Closing Activities: Class reviews activities from the day. Children are encouraged to put on coats and backpacks independently. Class sings songs.

****Individual classroom schedules may vary and allow for flexibility but will include the daily components listed above.****

Communication with Families

Communication with families is a vital component of our program and facilitates a relationship with the classroom teacher, educational team and school staff. This may be accomplished through a variety of ways such as:

- Bloomz (phone app)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences or team meetings
- Daily "Today We..."
- Monthly Newsletters
- Emails and phone calls
- Parent Education and Family Activities
- Trimester goal updates (IEP students)
- Family surveys to assist staff in meeting the needs of students/families

EARLY CHILDHOOD DROP OFF PICK UP PROCEDURES

****BY LAW CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED WHILE OPERATING A VEHICLE IN THE SCHOOL PARKING LOT OR SCHOOL ZONE****

The procedure is as follows:

Each family will receive 2 large rectangles and 1 small rectangle that is attached to your child's backpack.

A large colored rectangle must be displayed on the front or back passenger window of your car. (A second large shape is provided for each family in the event different people participate in the drop-off/pick-up process.)

| DROP OFF | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Structured Program: 8:20 a.m. | Morning Classes: 8:50 a.m. | Afternoon Classes: 12:20 p.m. |

- Enter into the side drive and line up in a single file line along the curb. DO NOT exit your vehicle to walk your child to the preschool staff, remain inside your vehicle.
- Starting at 8:20 a.m. (structured classes), 8:50 a.m.(a.m. classes) and 12:20 p.m. (p.m. classes) a staff member will come to your car and remove your child from the vehicle and take your child to the lining-up area indoors. DO NOT release your child from the car until a staff member arrives.
- After your child is removed from your vehicle, please wait until the car in front of you moves before exiting the lot.. DO NOT PASS the cars in front of you, as this is a major safety concern.
- During arrival the front circle drive is ONLY for school busses.
- Any student that arrives late must be brought to the main office for late sign in.

| PICK UP | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Morning Classes: 11:20 a.m. | Structured Program: 1:30 p.m. | Afternoon Classes: 3:00 p.m. |

- Be sure the large classroom colored rectangle is displayed on the front or back passenger window of your car in order for your child to be released by the preschool staff. In the event that the sign is forgotten, parents will be asked to park and come to the office to show a driver's license and sign out their child.
- After your child is placed into the car, you must seatbelt your child before exiting the lot.
- After your child is buckled in safely, wait until the car in front of you moves before exiting the parking lot. DO NOT PASS the cars in front of you, as this is a major safety concern.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Blended Classroom Colors</u> Miss. Alyssa - Pink Miss Amanda - Orange Miss. Katie - Green Ms. Jenn - Yellow Miss. Savannah - Red</p> | <p><u>Structured Classes</u> Miss. Jenn M - Blue Ms. Jennifer Suggs - Purple</p> |
|--|---|

ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent (sick, vacation, etc.) from school, please call the school office as soon as possible.

Attendance line

Before 9:00 a.m. (630) 827-4261

After 9:00 a.m. (630) 827-4265

Families are responsible for reporting student absence each day a child will be out. If you have questions regarding your child's illness and when it is safe for them to return to school, please call the school nurse, Eileen, at (630) 827-4157.

Sick Child Guidelines

Our goal is to have your children in school, feeling healthy, happy, and able to pay attention and learn as much as possible. In order to help keep our preschool children as healthy as possible, as well as that of our staff, we ask that you do the following:

Keep your child home if:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- White patches on the tonsils
- Difficulty swallowing or talking
- Rash
- Red or irritated eye or eyes, which may possibly be pink eye
- Nasal discharge, especially if very thick or greenish in color
- Persistent cough/extreme congestion

Keep your child home until:

- Temperature is normal without Tylenol or Ibuprofen for 24 hours
- No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours
- Your child's doctor sends the school a note stating that your child's rash is NOT contagious.
- On antibiotics for 24 hours and temperature has returned to normal for Strep throat.
- Nasal discharge has cleared or doctor sends a note to school stating your child can return to school and is not contagious.
- Cough does not interfere with school functioning and your child is able to cover his/her mouth when coughing.

If your child has any contagious disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, scarlet fever, pink eye, impetigo, mono, lice, ringworm, scabies, Fifth Disease, etc., the health office must be notified immediately.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that present threats to the safety and well being of students, staff, or property, the Superintendent of Schools may deem it necessary to close school. District 44 utilizes an automated calling system to alert parents of school closings. The District also posts information on the district's website, www.sd44.org. In cases of emergency early dismissal, the Superintendent allows one hour, if possible, from the time the announcement is made to the time of dismissal.

CLOTHING/SHOES/BACKPACKS

**Please label items with your child's name*

- Please send an extra set of labeled clothing for your child to keep at school (including underwear and socks).
- Children should have comfortable clothing and be dressed to play.
- Children should have shoes that are comfortable and allow for moving, running, jumping and climbing. Please no flip flops, Crocs, or sandals.
- Children should have a backpack that is at least 17" high x 13" wide that allows for papers and art projects to fit. Please check your child's backpack everyday and return permission slips promptly.
- Please do not send toys, food or items from home unless requested by your child's classroom teacher.

WINTER WEATHER

Guidance from Illinois State Board of Education

Children will play outside daily unless there is active precipitation or if it is under 25 degrees with a wind chill. In order for your children to remain warm, dry and safe on the playground, we ask all parents to send your child in proper winter weather clothing.

Winter Clothing Includes:

- Warm Winter Coat
- Hat
- Scarf
- Mittens
- Snow Pants
- Boots

****Please label ALL items with your child's name****

When your child wears boots to school we recommend you send a pair of gym shoes that can be kept in their backpack to be sent back and forth each day.

SNACK

Snack is provided by the program on a daily basis during center time. Snack items are state approved snacks (ex: various crackers and juice). If there are cooking activities occurring within the school day, teachers will confirm approval with families via a permission slip to confirm any allergies or food restrictions.

- *If you have any allergies or dietary restrictions, be sure to let your child's teacher and the school nurse know.*

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are an exciting and special celebration. We celebrate birthdays for a short time during our school day. You are welcome to attend this celebration and celebrate your child by reading your child's favorite book to the class, singing along or sitting with your child during a special birthday story. If you are unable to attend you can still send in your child's favorite book for the teacher to read. We ask that you do not send birthday treats, food or favors. If you wish, we invite you to donate a copy of your child's favorite book to expand classroom libraries. These books can include a special message from you to your preschooler and create a lasting memory of your child's birthday in the classroom.

Also, please be aware that students are not allowed to distribute birthday invitations at school unless all of the students in the class are invited.

FAMILY EVENTS

Family is a very important part of a child's life, and we would like to encourage you to set aside some time to spend with your preschooler. The John Schroder Early Childhood Center invites you and your family to attend our family events, which are held multiple times throughout the year. This is a great opportunity for you to spend some quality time with your child and have fun. These events are planned by the preschool team and include developmentally appropriate activities such as games, art, singing, and dancing. Not only are these events beneficial for your child, but also for you as a parent/guardian. Family events provide opportunities for you to learn about some of the activities that your child participates in during the school year and teaches you how to bring them into your home. It also allows you to meet many of the other children and families in the preschool program. Information about dates and times of events will be sent home with your child.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

District 44 believes parents are the child's first and most important teachers. For this reason, the John Schroder Early Childhood Center embraces family involvement as a basic component of the early childhood program. Research has shown that the greatest benefits are derived when parents and teachers work as partners to guide children in their growth, development, and education. Volunteer opportunities are provided within the classroom, on field trips, and for special occasions. Please refer to the [Lombard District 44 School Volunteer Handbook and Program Guidelines](#).

To ensure the safety and well-being of students, District 44 requires that all visitors to school buildings report to the school office and obtain a visitor's badge after being let in through the secure entrance by school personnel. The badge is to be worn during the entirety of the visitor's stay in the building. A notice regarding the requirement for visitors to report to the office upon entry is posted on the entrance doors of all District 44 schools.

GOALS THAT GUIDE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

- Helps parents/guardians understand developmentally appropriate practices
- Provides parents/guardians with information related to how children grow and learn
- Provide support through resource, materials, referrals, and parent conferences
- Aid parents/guardians in recognizing and coping with stresses related to parenting
- Provide ideas and materials for learning at home
- Help parents/guardians understand the importance of regular, consistent school attendance for their child's future success

VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

In order to volunteer a District Volunteer Form and it must be on file in our office. Family volunteers contribute greatly to classroom activities and we encourage you to sign up through our Parents/Guardians Volunteer Forms. If you enroll mid year please inquire about volunteers options through your child's teacher. These volunteer opportunities do not include parent/guardian volunteers for field trips.

When volunteering adhere to the following guidelines:

- We ask that you do not bring siblings.
- Volunteering in the class must be arranged with the teacher prior to the volunteer date.
- Volunteers are reminded to maintain confidentiality in regard to students.
- When you volunteer in the classroom you will be working with all of the students in the class and not just your child.
- Once you have been given your volunteer assignment, the teacher's primary responsibility will be with the children. While the teachers are available to answer questions about the project you are working on, they will not be available for conversations or to answer questions about the children in the classroom.