



Parent Handbook

Michelle Steffey, Preschool Director

847.960.7487 (Office)

847.962.0679(Cell)

msteffey@lith.org

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Michelle Steffey	Preschool Director	847-960-7487	msteffey@lith.org
Kim Buscemi	Recreation Superintendent	847-960-7462	kbuscemi@lith.org
Village Hall	Customer Service	847-960-7400	
Village Hall	Classroom	847-960-7496	
Annex	Landline for building	224-333-0374	

PRESCHOOL ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY

At Lake in the Hills Preschool Academy, we nurture the social, physical, and cognitive development of young children through a wide range of developmentally appropriate, hands-on activities. Our program offers both individual and group experiences that encourage exploration, creativity, and growth.

With gentle guidance from our caring staff, children build independence, learn responsibility, and develop essential problem-solving skills in a supportive and engaging environment.

Please note: Lake in the Hills Preschool Academy is a DCFS license-exempt program.

PARENT MEETING

A parent information meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 6:30pm, in person, at the Village Hall Board Room (600 Harvest Gate). If you are unable to make the meeting, please contact Preschool Supervisor, Michelle Steffey at msteffey@lith.org for a copy of the PowerPoint. The PowerPoint will be shared on August 28, 2025.

MEET THE TEACHER

On the first day of your child's class, each class will be given a designated time slot to meet their teachers and explore their new classroom.

TUITION AND LATE FEES

Tuition is charged on a monthly basis. Tuition remains the same regardless of the number of days in a school month. Tuition is based on the student's schedule for that month. Tuition is not pro-rated for absences, vacations, illness or disciplinary reasons. All household accounts must upload an automatic payment request in CommunityPass. A late charge of \$20 will be assessed for any payments received after the 15th day of the month. In the event your tuition is not received by the end of the month, services may be suspended until payment is made.

2025/2026 School Year Fee Schedule

4 Day | Resident \$300 per month- Non-Resident \$310 per month

3 Day | Resident \$250 per month- Non-Resident \$260 per month

2 Day | Resident \$185 per month- Non-Resident \$195 per month

PAYMENT DATE

Automatic payments will process on the first of each month for the predetermined amount.

PAYMENT MONTH	PAYMNET CHARGED ON	PAYMENT MONTH	PAYMNET CHARGED ON
Payment for September	August 1, 2025	Payment for February	January 1, 2026
Payment for October	September 1, 2025	Payment for March	February 1, 2026
Payment for November	October 1, 2025	Payment for April	March 1, 2026
Payment for December	November 1, 2025	Payment for May	April 1, 2026
Payment for January	December 1, 2025	No Payment is due in May 2026	

RECORD OF PAYMENT

Your monthly credit card statement will show the amount and date of your automatic payment. Please keep this record as proof of payment for future reference.

If you have any questions about a transfer or notice a discrepancy between your statement and your bill, you must notify both us and your financial institution within 60 days of the statement date in question. Your financial institution can provide you with information regarding your rights in the event of an error.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

It is your responsibility to ensure that sufficient funds are available in the designated account on your scheduled payment date.

If an automatic payment is returned due to non-sufficient funds (NSF), a \$25.00 NSF fee will be charged. This fee must be paid by cash or cashier's check only. In addition, you will be required to provide an alternate form of payment.

A \$20.00 late fee will also be applied.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION

It is your responsibility to keep your records current. Please update any changes to your account information—including your address, phone number, email, medical information or emergency contacts—through both CommunityPass and ePACT.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions concerning this automatic payment, please contact the Finance Department at (847) 960-7400.

WITHDRAWAL / CANCELLATION PROCEDURE

Arrangements to withdraw a child must be made in writing 30 days in advance. If a child attends only a portion of the month that the child is withdrawn in, the tuition will not be refunded. Registration fees are non-refundable for any reason.

STUDENT INFORMATION- ePACT

What is ePACT? ePACT is your secure online emergency network where you can store all your important information in one place. It helps us efficiently manage critical information needed to support your child's safety and well-being.

Through ePACT, we collect the same details previously gathered on paper forms—such as medical information (allergies, health conditions, medications) and contact information for guardians and emergency contacts.

You will receive an invitation to join ePACT, where you can easily upload and update your information and important documents.

DROP OFF PROCEDURE

All students will be dropped off at either the Village Hall or The Annex. Caregivers will be required to walk their student(s) into the classroom, sign them into class using your ePACT QR Code to check in your student. *NOTE: the QR code is updated and changed every 24-hrs.*

All individuals dropping off or picking up a child must bring a valid ID and be listed as an authorized pick-up person on the child's ePACT account, with authorization signed by the child's guardian.

CURBSIDE PICK UP

At dismissal, caregivers will drive up, and staff will escort your child to the car. Caregivers are required to:

- Remain in their vehicles to maintain a safe and efficient dismissal process
- Have a valid ID and the child's ePACT QR code ready for verification
- Secure the child in their car seat before leaving the pick-up area

For safety and security, caregivers must be listed as authorized pick-up persons on the child's ePACT account, with approval signed by the child's guardian.

Each student and authorized pick-up person are assigned a unique QR code, which is required for secure and accurate check-out.

These procedures help ensure the safety of all children and a smooth dismissal process for families and staff.

LATE PICK-UP FEES

We understand that occasional delays happen; however, if a parent or caregiver is late more than three times, a late fee will be applied. Late fees begin 15 minutes after the scheduled end of class and are charged at \$15 for every 15-minute interval the child remains in our care.

If you anticipate being late, please call your child's classroom or preschool director as soon as possible. This allows us to reassure your child and make necessary arrangements.

BATHROOM POLICY

All children must be fully toilet trained and able to independently manage their own bathroom needs. We understand that occasional accidents can happen. In the event of an accident, a parent or caregiver will be contacted and required to come and either change the child or take them home.

CLEANING PROCEDURE

Daily cleaning is performed to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all children and staff.

- Each classroom will be deep cleaned and disinfected at the beginning or end of each day, before your child's arrival.

- High-touch surfaces and bathrooms will be regularly cleaned using CDC-approved disinfectants.
- Toys and shared materials will be disinfected between uses and before the next class session.

These measures are in place to ensure a clean, safe, and welcoming environment for your child each day.

Handwashing is encouraged throughout the day to promote good hygiene and prevent the spread of germs.

Students will wash their hands:

- Upon arrival each day
- Between transitions to new activities
- As needed throughout the day

Staff members will follow the same handwashing procedures to model healthy habits and ensure a clean environment for all.

DAILY ROUTINE

Every classroom will have no more than 12 to 16 students (depending on the class) and 2 teachers at any given time.

All preschool locations will follow a daily schedule. This schedule is displayed in your student's classroom. See example below:

- Free time – ½ hour
- Clean up- 5 minutes
- Circle Time- 20 minutes (depending on age)
- Project – 10 – 15 minutes
- Quiet Time (books & puzzles) – 10- 15 minutes
- Snack – 15 minutes
- Music – 10 minutes
- Gross motor/ Outside- ½ hour

CONFIDENTIALITY

All records, progress, and behavioral information related to children in our program will be kept strictly confidential. This information will only be shared with authorized individuals as required for the care and well-being of the child or as mandated by law.

All records, progress and behavior of the children will be kept confidential.

INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

If your child is involved in an incident or accident during the day, a staff member will notify you with a phone call to inform you of the situation.

If the incident requires immediate medical attention, we will call emergency medical services and contact you right away.

ILLNESS OR ABSENCE

If a child becomes ill, has diarrhea or is vomiting at school, the parent or other emergency contact person will be notified immediately. The child should be picked up from school within one hour. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick up their child within sixty minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed as emergency contacts until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

For the protection of all children and staff, we are unable to accept a child who appears to be ill. The teaching staff has the right to refuse admittance of a child who appears to be too ill to attend on a given day.

Please call or email your child's teacher if your child will be absent from school. If we do not hear from you regarding your child's absence, preschool staff will email to ask the reason for their absence.

Children will need to remain at home for at least 24 hours after they stop vomiting or having diarrhea and are fever-free without using any fever-reducing medicines.

Children should not attend preschool when any of the following symptoms exist:

- Persistent fever
- Nausea or vomiting or diarrhea
- Skin rash or sores, headache/earache
- Inflamed, swollen or reddened eyes
- Excessive coughing or sneezing or sore throat
- Runny nose
- Shortness of breath
- Chills
- Headache
- Unexplained Fatigue
- Loss of taste or smell
- Lice or nits in hair

If the illness lasts 72 hours/three (3) days or less, the participant may return under the following conditions:

- Participant has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- Participant is symptom free.

If the illness lasts for more than 72 hours/three (3) days, the participant will not be allowed to return to school until they are symptom free and have been medically cleared by a treating medical provider.

MANDATE REPORTER

Under the Illinois Child Protection Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The preschool staff are considered mandated reporters under this law. Under the Act, mandate reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS

Your child's classroom teacher is the best source of information regarding daily activities and classroom updates. Teachers will share important announcements through email or notes sent home in your child's backpack, so please be sure to check backpacks after each class. In addition, monthly classroom newsletters will be posted on the HomeRoom app to keep you informed about upcoming events, themes, and classroom happenings.

SNACKS

Parents are asked to bring snacks a few times throughout the year to share with the class. A detailed sign-up sheet will be available during Meet the Teacher Day. We also celebrate birthdays during snack time, making it a special moment for your child and their classmates.

If your child has allergies, we may ask you to provide a safe snack to ensure their health and safety.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Children love to celebrate birthdays—and so do we! All treats must be store bought and sealed. Many products are labeled "School Safe". We suggest that when purchasing treats, you consider purchasing those items.

We ask that you be sensitive when passing out birthday invitations at school. If you are inviting a select group of students, we respectfully ask that you do not hand invitations out in the classroom.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event school is closed due to inclement weather, you will receive an email and a post on HomeRoom from preschool staff. We do not issue refunds for days missed due to inclement weather.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trip fees for students are included in your tuition. Unless otherwise stated, we require a parent or caregiver to accompany and transport their child to and from all field trips. There may be an additional fee for attending adults. Detailed information and a permission form will be provided as each trip approaches.

CODE OF CONDUCT

To ensure safe and enjoyable programs and facilities for all participants, the Village of Lake in the Hills has developed the following Code of Conduct. Participants in programs, parents/guardians, and those using facilities shall

- Show respect to all participants, staff, equipment, supplies, and facilities.
- Refrain from using offensive or profane language.
- Refrain from aggressive behavior that could cause bodily harm.
- The Recreation Department reserves the right to dismiss a participant, parent/guardian, or those using facilities from a program if their behavior or language is deemed inappropriate by staff.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Our behavior management policy is an on-going process that promotes development of self-discipline and self-regulation in each child. Positive statements and redirection of behavior are used to help children learn self-control, problem-solving, negotiation, and assume responsibility for their actions. This policy incorporates the following:

- When speaking with a child, use a calm, quiet and confident tone of voice. Speak with the child at his/her eye level.
- Give clear, simple, positive directions.
- Encourage and compliment appropriate behavior using "I Messages".
- Role-model appropriate behavior.
- Encourage use of words to express feelings.
- Give positive suggestions and alternatives.
- Encourage empathy.
- Redirect children to another activity.
- Have appropriate, child-centered, consistent and fair rules that children help establish.

- Be attentive listeners.
- Help child problem-solve solutions to conflict.
- Ignore minor incidents.
- Enter in to play with children to reinforce appropriate behavior.
- Give children fair warning.
- Encourage relaxation.
- If necessary, remove child from a situation to help that child gain self-control.
- In incidents involving biting, we will work directly with families.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent / Teacher conferences are held in November.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Please dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for messy activities and outdoor play. To support independence, clothing should be “bathroom friendly”—easy for your child to manage on their own.

For safety, gym shoes are required for class. Children wearing sandals or backless shoes will not be permitted to participate in outdoor activities.

Please also provide:

- Jackets and coats with large zippers or buttons that your child can fasten independently
- Boots that are easy for your child to put on and take off
- An extra set of clothes, including socks, kept in your child’s backpack—these may be needed for bathroom accidents, spills, or wet outdoor clothing

To avoid mix-ups, please label all clothing items with your child’s name.