

# North Riverside Recreation Preschool Handbook



Bright Futures Start Here!

## **NORTH RIVERSIDE RECREATION PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**

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## **NORTH RIVERSIDE RECREATION PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**

Welcome to Preschool! This handbook contains our philosophy and program goals that we follow in order to give your child a happy and fulfilling experience in preschool. It also contains information that will be necessary and useful for you to know throughout the school year. Please keep it handy so that you will be able to refer to it from time to time.

### **Philosophy Statement**

The emphasis of our program is “Learning Through Play.” Children will be encouraged to develop at their own rate – physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually through activities which foster creativity, self-expression and decision-making. Our goal is to help each child feel good about himself/herself in order that a positive attitude towards learning, growing and playing with others is achieved.

### **Program Goals**

It is the goal of North Riverside Recreation Preschool program to help children:

- Develop a positive self-image
- Develop independence
- Develop social skills
- Learn positive interaction with classmates and teachers
- Experience sharing with others
- Learn responsibility for one’s own actions
- Develop listening skills and learn to follow basic instructions
- Develop large motor skills through exercise, creative movement and other physical activities
- Develop small motor skills through the use of puzzles, scissors, finger paint, crayons, etc.
- Develop problem solving skills using puzzles, matching games, sorting materials
- Experience creativity and self-expression through art, music and literature

### **Teachers**

All lead teachers are DCFS Lead Teacher qualified by completing college coursework in Early Childhood Education. Assistant teachers all have a high school diploma and at least one-year experience in an early childhood setting.

All staff are trained on first aid and CPR. Preschool staff is under the administration of the park district’s full-time program director.

## **Curriculum**

The North Riverside Recreation Department follows the curriculum goal from the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), which encourages children to be actively involved in the process, to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials, and to pursue to their own interests in the context of life in the community and the world.

Our curriculum teaches children to:

### **Language & Literacy Development**

- recognize their own names
- recognize letters
- communicate their needs and thought in words, to develop their spoken language, and to expand their vocabulary
- develop letter-sound matches
- listen with understanding and respond to directions and conversations
- understand the purpose of print and become familiar with books

### **Math Development**

- sort and match
- recognize patterns
- identify and name shapes and colors
- recognize numbers
- count objects using number sequences
- incorporate estimating and measuring activities into play

### **Social Studies Development**

- identify community workers and the services they provide
- cooperate and work well with others
- recognize similarities and differences in people
- accept a variety of cultural practices and celebrations

### **Science Development**

- appreciate science through hands-on activities
- make observations and draw conclusions
- use scientific tools such as thermometers, balance scales, and magnifying glasses for investigation
- understand basic safety practices
- be aware of health & nutrition through healthy-eating and proper hand washing routines

### **Artistic Development**

- explore various art forms
- expand their fine motor skills through use of scissors, crayons and glue
- develop an appreciation for music

### **Physical Development**

- develop large muscle skills through balancing, running, jumping
- develop fine motor skills through use of scissors, crayons, puzzles, and beads

### **Social-Emotional Development**

- develop self-control and comfort away from a parent
- manage transitions and begin to adapt to change in routine
- engage in cooperative group play
- share materials and experiences and take turns
- develop relationships with other students and adults

- show initiative and independence in actions
- exhibit eagerness and curiosity as learners

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### **Admission Procedure**

- 1) Fill out an application for enrollment.
- 2) Put down a deposit to hold your child's place in school.
- 3) Submit all medical and emergency forms.
- 4) Attend the scheduled Open House so you and your child can talk to the teachers and learn about the program and become familiar with the preschool routine.

### **Tuition Responsibilities**

For your convenience, tuition is payable either all at once at the beginning of the school year or by using our monthly installment plan due the first of each month, September\* through May. Monthly reminders will be sent home with your child. **If payment is overdue more than two weeks, your child will not be admitted to school.** If you pay by cash, you will be issued a receipt. If you pay by check, your cancelled check will be your receipt. Any questions regarding your bill should be directed to the Recreation Department office.

No credit is given for school holidays, vacation days or days missed due to illness. No tuition refunds are given for partial attendance. A place has been reserved for your child that cannot be filled on a short-term basis. We follow the calendar of North Riverside School District #94 for holidays and snow days. We will not have school on **January 28 & 29**, the teachers will be attending the CAEYC Conference.

### **Youth Scholarships**

The North Riverside Recreation Department does not want any North Riverside child excluded from our programs due to financial hardship. Therefore, the Youth Scholarship Program has been created to assist those parents who are experiencing economic setbacks and need some assistance in helping to pay their child's fees. Please call or come into our office to pick up an application. The application will be reviewed by the Director of Recreation, and the child may have a portion of his/her fees waived. **YOUR PRIVACY WILL BE ASSURED.**

### **Arrival and Dismissal Procedures**

Children should be brought to school no more than **FIVE MINUTES** before class time. Our teachers utilize the time before class for preparation and cannot be responsible for watching your child. Once the doors open, you may bring your child into the room where a staff member will greet your child and bring him/her to the play area. If you arrive after the beginning of class, you will be responsible for bringing the child into the play area and acknowledging his/her arrival to a staff member.

Do not be disappointed if your child should cry or seems unsure the first few weeks of school. It is expected that adjustments will have to be made, and these sometimes take time. When you leave, please do so without hesitation, but make sure your child understands that he/she will see you when the class is over. Please feel assured that your child is under excellent guidance and custody with our qualified staff.

**Dismissal Procedure:** Please come downstairs to pick up your child. **PLEASE BE ON TIME!\*\*** If you should need to pick up your child at an earlier time please stop by the Recreation Office and have the staff intercom the teachers to bring your child upstairs.

\*September payment due August 1.

\*\*\$1.00 per minute late fee will be assessed

Your child will look for you and worry if you are late. Your child may only be dismissed to those persons listed on your enrollment form as having your permission to pick up your child from school. In the event any changes occur as to who will be picking up your child from school, you must notify the school **IN WRITING**.

### **What Your Child Will Need for School**

All children should bring a complete change of clothes to school in a Ziploc bag marked with his/her name. All outer clothing should be marked with your child's full name. It is a good idea to dress your child in comfortable play clothes that are not easily ruined, and in tennis shoes to prevent slipping and sliding on waxed tile or on gym equipment. Each child will also need a school tote bag to carry items such as notes, newsletters and projects back and forth.

We would like you to bring us one individual close-up photograph of your child, approximately 3 x 3, or a photograph that can be cut down to that size. Your child's teacher will photocopy these pictures and use them for taking attendance, making matching games of pictures and names and creating various types of graphs. Convenient times for bringing the above items are at the Open House, before school starts, or on the first day of school.

### **Illness**

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her home from school: nausea, vomiting, fever, sores on the hand, mouth or body, inflamed eyes, skin rashes, or a wheezing or persistent cough. Be sure that your child is completely recovered before sending him/her back to school after an illness. We expect that if a child is well enough to come to school, he/she is well enough to participate in all activities. You should make the decision to keep your child home – not ask the child when he is sick.

If your child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the group and made as comfortable as possible. We will contact you so that you may come to pick up your child. When you fill out the Emergency Health Form, be sure to list only people who can drive, so

that they may be able to pick up your sick child if you are unable to do so. Teachers are not allowed to drive sick children home from school.

When communicable diseases such as chicken pox, etc., are diagnosed by the doctor, they should be reported to the staff immediately, and a notice will be posted informing parents.

A physical examination listing all shots, including an up-to-date T.B. test, must be signed by a physician and is required by the State of Illinois within 6 months of entrance into the program. This examination is valid for two years, and the doctor must sign and date the forms.

### **Snacks in School**

Each school term, we ask our parents to sign up for a convenient date on which they can bring a **healthy snack\*** for the children. The following are suggestions:

If you defer from this list, please check with the teachers.

Applesauce	Apple wedges and peanut butter
Raisins and nuts	Crackers and peanut butter
Crackers and cheese	Pretzels and raisins
Zucchini bread	Celery with cream cheese
Banana slices	Popcorn
Sliced apples or oranges	Yogurt (strawberry, vanilla)
Pudding (vanilla)	Jello Jigglers
Jello with fruit	Carrot sticks
Rice pudding	Carrot bread or muffins
Bran muffins	Canned pears, peaches
Fruit cocktail	Bagels

***\*Please send a healthy snack, unless it is a birthday or holiday celebration.  
Proper nutrition and healthy eating habits cannot begin too soon!***

### **Birthdays in school**

Every child may choose a day on which he/she would like to celebrate his/her birthday. Parents are invited to share in their child's day by participating in snack time. They can also read a story to the class or plan a short game for the last few minutes of class.

Be sure to sign up for the birthday date of your choice.

### **Emergency Closing of School**

If there is an emergency at school, such as no power or water, or if there are severe weather conditions, we will institute a telephone tree. Parent will receive a call at least one-half hour before their child's class would begin. The decision to close school will be made on the criteria of the safety and well-being of your children.

### **Sharing**

The experience of sharing is one that helps a child feel that he/she belongs. We welcome your child sharing with us flowers for the table, fruit or vegetables for tasting, nature specimens, vacation souvenirs, or a special book. Candy, gum or toys, however, do not belong at school.

A special time when a toy may be brought to school would be for "Show and Tell". Your child's teacher will inform you as to when your child will have his/her turn to share a toy or special item from home with his/her friends at school. Please label all items.

### **Found Objects**

If something that belongs to the school should show up at home, please send it back. Perhaps, out of fascination and certainly without malice, your child may have forgotten, and put the object in his/her pocket. Please do not embarrass or reprimand your child. Just put it in an envelope and return it to the teacher. No apologies are necessary.

### **Parent-Teacher Communication**

Each month parents will receive a calendar. It will highlight some of the activities your child will enjoy as well as provide you with information on "Show and Tell" days, special celebrations, days off, etc. Individual conferences with the parents and their teacher will be scheduled in the middle of the school year. If, however, at any time you are concerned or have questions about your child, please call the school to schedule a conference.

If we suspect that a child may have special needs, we will first discuss the situation with the parents and then with their permission a referral for preschool screening will be made through their respective school district and L.A.D.S.E.

### **Visitations**

Parents are encouraged to visit our preschool class prior to registration and also after the child has adjusted to school. Parents are also encouraged to participate in whatever way they wish to become an integral part of our program. Throughout the year there are special parent participation programs such as Halloween programs, Christmas programs, end of the year program, etc.

### **Discipline**

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by using positive guidance, redirection, and the setting of clear cut limits that foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to respect other people, to respect property and to learn to be responsible for their actions. If there are any instances of inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior, the child will be reminded verbally about what is correct and incorrect behavior. If the behavior is severe, the child will be asked to take a time-out, which means that the child is separated from the group for a specified period of time, generally approximately his/her age in minutes. Once the child has calmed down they will be asked if they are ready to rejoin the group. Parents will also be notified and discussions held, if necessary.

### **School Dress**

We recommend that each child wear comfortable clothing conducive to active indoor and outdoor play. They should not "dress up". There is always the chance children will get paint on their clothing or get dirty due to some types of play.

Children should dress accordingly for outdoor play during the different seasons of the year.

**Children should NEVER wear sandals or shoes with slippery soles. These make it difficult to run and can cause accidents on the climbing apparatus.**

### **Additional Concerns?**

Any additional questions or concerns that parents have regarding our program should be brought to the attention of the preschool staff or the Director of Recreation. We welcome your input.