

Community Three's Preschool

Parent Handbook

This handbook is designed to introduce the Community Three's Preschool to you, the parents of a three-year-old. It contains information about daily schedule and routine, skills your child will be learning, as well as policies that govern the program.

The class is taught by a licensed Early Childhood teacher. Classes consist of no more than 14 students, a mix of typically developing children and children who have delays in development or disabilities. Needs of particular students may necessitate additional staffing (i.e. paraprofessional(s)). Contact information is as follows:

Tiffany Teske, ECFE/School Readiness Director and Teacher

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Karen Meiners, Community Education Director

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Class hours are 8:00-11:00; most students attend two days a week with a one day a week option also available. Some students with developmental delays or disabilities may attend four days a week to best meet their learning needs.

Preschool meets for 32 weeks (two days/week = 64 days). See tuition brochure for payment information. You DO have to pay for days your child is scheduled to attend and does not (i.e. illness, family trip). There is a monthly registration fee that is non-refundable after June 28th. This amount is deducted from the last month's tuition payment. Tuition is used to pay teaching staff, provide craft supplies and special snacks. A free or reduced fee scale is available, based

on income please see Community Ed Director. Please let us know if you need an application for this.

Parent Communication Folders are sent home with each student. Children will bring home a calendar in their take-home folder at the end of each month, with the next month's schedule. Please post the calendar in an important place so your child can recognize what days school is scheduled. Days there are not school due to inservice or break will be indicated on the calendar. The take-home folder will also be used to communicate with the daily note, special activities, and tuition information. Any notes from home can be tucked in here as well.

Transportation

Children participating in Three's Preschool have the opportunity to ride the "big bus" **to school**; this is the regular bus route with Pre-K to 12th grade students. This service is available at no charge.

At 11:00, after preschool, transportation is available for a fee. This fee is based on the number of students using transportation and the number of miles the bus will have to travel. You will be informed of the fee for transportation at the beginning of the school year. Transportation fees will be billed with tuition and sent home at the beginning of the month. Only students in Three's Preschool are transported at this time, and a mini-bus or mini-van is used with seat belts.

If your child's transportation arrangements change (a different person is picking them up, they are to go to grandma's instead of home, they are not to ride the bus) please provide this information to preschool staff in writing.

Daily Routine/Schedule

8:00-8:20	Arrival / Lockers / Gathering Activities
8:20-8:30	Bathroom Break
8:30-9:00	Circle Time / Morning Meeting
9:00-10:00	Work and Play Time / Child Choice
10:00-10:10	Bathroom Break
10:10-10:30	Music and Movement
10:30-10:50	Small Group Activities / Centers
10:50-11:00	Prepare for Departure

School Rules

Children will be taught—visually and verbally-- the four rules that the classroom is governed by: walking feet, inside voice, gentle hands and feet, say nice things. These provide the behavior expectations for the classroom and their interactions with other children, to be responsible, respectful, safe, and prepared to learn.

It is the goal for our classroom that children learn the daily routine, learn to listen and take direction from the adults in the program, and learn to interact with and learn from their peers. This is truly a learning process for young preschoolers. We do expect mistaken behavior to occur. When it does, the child will be gently reminded of the rule they forgot. If the behavior continues, the child will be asked to “take a break” away from the group until they are able to show appropriate behavior. On rare occasion—if the child’s behavior is too disruptive to the rest of the classroom—a child may be taken into the hallway to calm down, or to the quiet room. If such an incident occurs with your child, it will be noted on your child’s daily note and / or a phone call will be made to discuss the incident. If hurtful behavior happens more than three times a parent teacher meeting will be necessary for your child to continue the

program. At this meeting, our hope is to come up with a plan for success.

What to Bring to School

Please help your child “dress for success”—so they are able to be independent with toileting, dressing and undressing. Consider shoes and boots that are Velcro or z-strap rather than lace and tie. These simple things will help your child feel successful. Also, please consider that we will be painting and doing other messy projects as well as going outside. Clothes that are okay to get dirty, perhaps stained, are recommended. Sturdy shoes that do not slip off the feet are necessary for the playground and gym.

Children do not have to be toilet-trained to attend Three's Preschool, although we strongly encourage families to work on this skill over the summer. We do ask that you (or your child's care provider) make sure the child has a clean pull-up on when they come to school. Pull-ups are recommended as they allow the child to participate in toileting at school more easily. A supply of pull-ups and diaper wipes can be left in your child's locker and they will be changed if needed.

An extra set of clothing, marked on the tag in permanent marker with your child's name or initials, should be brought to be left in your child's locker. We can never predict when water will get spilled or sleeves will get wet during hand-washing.

When the weather permits we will go outside. A light jacket will suffice in the fall but as winter weather approaches, snow pants and boots will be needed in addition to coat, hat and gloves or mittens. Please use permanent marker to write your child's name or initials on the tags of their clothing.

Other supplies for school:

- backpack, large enough for a folder and art projects (no wheels please)
- 3 glue sticks
- roll of paper towels
- package of napkins
- box of 4 oz cups (note 4 oz size, smaller size too flimsy in little hands, bigger size lots of water to spill)
- box of crackers or cereal for snack—snacks must be store-bought and in original packing
- box of kleenex

These can be brought to school and will be stored there. You may be asked to supply another box of snacks as the year progresses.

Parent Education and Involvement

When your child was born, he/she did not come with a handbook, and every age and stage brings new joys and challenges. **You are your child's first and most important teacher.** There is growing recognition that being a parent is demanding and difficult work that requires learning new skills focusing on your child's needs. This learning can be supported by family, friends, and the community. Research has shown that early childhood programs that involve parents are more effective than programs focusing on children only. Involving families in the school experience early on encourages parents to play an active role in their child's learning, which is key to success as your child progresses into elementary and high school.

The purpose of parent involvement is to:

- promote a positive relationship between home, school, and community
- increase support of parents and increase confidence in their role as parents.

- give parents the opportunity to see how their child reacts and interacts in a school setting
- promote understanding of realistic expectations for their child's development and behavior
- allow parents and staff to interact about the child and their progress in the program

There are two ways that parents can be involved. You can attend ECFE classes with your child, the equivalent of three hours of class. Look for an ECFE class targeted for those families in the Three's Preschool program as well as other fun classes. These can be found in the Community Education newsletter that you receive. You can also volunteer in the classroom the equivalent of three hours. If you choose this option, please inform the teachers ahead of time when you will be coming so they can plan accordingly.

Community Three's Preschool is partially funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Education and funding is dependent on parent participation. Thank you for doing your part!

In addition to this parent involvement, you will be asked to participate in a beginning of the year meeting with teaching staff, as well as a parent-teacher conference in the spring.

Other things you need to know:

- Please listen to Marshall radio stations or go to www.marshallradio.net for information about late starts or cancellations due to weather. If school is two hours late or cancelled, Three's Preschool is cancelled. It will state "**No AM Preschool**" at Lakeview Elementary School. These days will be made up. If school dismisses early, Three's Preschool will dismiss as well; these days are not made up. You will be asked to provide the name of a "snow home" in Cottonwood in case the weather becomes so poor that the busses are not able to go out.

- If your child is ill, please keep them home, and inform the teaching staff you are doing so. The Minnesota Department of Health describes illness as having had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours. Children will be more comfortable being at home if they do not feel well. It can be a scary experience to be ill at school and waiting for a parent to arrive. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted to pick them up. Thank you for your help in keeping everyone healthy!
- Birthdays will be celebrated as close to your child's birthday as possible, or on "half-birthdays" for those in the summer. If you wish to have your child celebrate at school, we ask that you consider the purchase of a book for the classroom rather than a sugary treat. If a book is too costly, your child can bring in a favorite book to read with the class.
- Teachers and paraprofessionals are considered to be "mandated reporters". This means that if we suspect that a child has been abused or neglected in any way, we are required by law to report this to the appropriate authorities. It is that authority's responsibility to determine if an investigation of the incident needs to be made.
- Any money sent to school should be in an envelope marked with its purpose and placed into your child's take home folder.