

LAC Preschool

Parent Handbook



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Getting to Know LAC Preschool

Section 1

LAC Preschool
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Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Preschool family. We are looking forward to working with you and your child this year and to getting to know each of you. Our mission is to provide a loving, nurturing, and creative environment for children; an environment that encourages not only learning, but a lifelong love of learning.

Larchmont Ave Church Preschool is an outreach program sponsored by the church to the community. Over the years we have served thousands of children and families from Larchmont, Mamaroneck, and the neighboring communities. The number of families who have entrusted us with their children over and over again measures our success. We have accomplished this success by adhering to a system based on a commitment to the parents and children of the community. Our reputation is well-known and we continually strive to be worthy of the support of our families and the community at large.

The Parent Handbook is one of our most useful tools. It will provide you with the basic information you need to know, policies, procedures, and practices. There is a great deal of information contained within it. I encourage you to use it as a reference. If you have any questions, I hope you will ask me.

The staff and I want your child's experience with us to be a happy rewarding one. Open communication between the school and home can only serve to help us achieve this goal. Please feel free to stop by the office at any time. I am always available to you should you have a question, concern, observation or should you just have a few spare moments to say hello.

Cordially,

Kristin DeFelice
Interim Director

Our Philosophy

1.0

At Larchmont Ave Church Preschool, hereafter referred to as LAC Preschool, we believe each child is a unique individual. We strive to provide a loving, nurturing, and creative environment for children and are sensitive to their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs. We provide developmentally appropriate programs that promote best practices and that focus on the process of learning while also helping children to enjoy many other successful experiences. We encourage not just learning, but also the love of learning.

LAC Preschool's Curriculum framework is aligned with the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (See 2.A.02)

Our school is designed to provide a physical environment that is safe, clean, and healthy, and child friendly. Classrooms are arranged to offer challenging play and learning choices at a range of developmental levels.

The strength of our program is the experience, expertise, and dedication of our staff. We support the teachers with training, resources, and the freedom to create a unique learning environment. We provide many opportunities for the teachers to share ideas and grow professionally. Our teachers create a caring and nurturing atmosphere that fosters each child's creativity and positive self-image.

We believe in positive methods of discipline. We establish consistent and appropriate limits to help children function in their world. Our programs are designed to develop in children a sense of independence and responsibility. We strive to strengthen each child's own cultural identity, while instilling a respect for others.

Parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. We strive to create mutual respect between parents and teachers - a partnership for the benefit of the child. We encourage daily communication between parents and staff. We believe parents should always be welcome in the classroom and adhere to an "open door" policy as a part of our philosophy.

LAC Preschool is licensed by the New York State Office of Child and Family Services. It is also accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a division of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.



Congratulations!

You have chosen a program for your child that is accredited by the **National Association for the Education of Young Children**. NAEYC administers the largest and most widely recognized accreditation system for all types of early childhood programs and child care centers. NAEYC is the nation's largest organization of early childhood educators.

What is accreditation?

Early childhood programs accredited by the NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of internal self-study and improvement. Each NAEYC-accredited program must meet all 10 of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards. For more information about the standards and NAEYC Accreditation, visit www.rightchoiceforkids.org.

NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation

1313 L Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005-4101

www.rightchoiceforkids.org

What is a high-quality early childhood program?

High-quality programs provide a safe and nurturing environment while promoting the development of young children. NAEYC-accredited programs show their quality by meeting the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards, which are based on the latest research on the education and development of young children. All NAEYC-accredited programs must

1. promote **positive relationships** for all children and adults.
2. implement a **curriculum** that fosters all areas of child development—cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
3. use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and **effective teaching approaches**.
4. provide **ongoing assessments** of child progress.
5. promote the **nutrition and health** of children and staff.
6. employ and support qualified **teaching staff**.
7. establish and maintain collaborative relationships with **families**.
8. establish and maintain relationships with and use resources of the **community**.
9. provide a safe and healthy **physical environment**.
10. implement strong **program management** policies that result in high-quality service.

NAEYC Accreditation is valid for five years. During that period, programs make annual reports documenting that they maintain compliance with the program standards. All NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits by NAEYC assessors. For more information about NAEYC Accreditation, please visit our Web site at www.rightchoiceforkids.org or call 800-424-2460, ext. 3.

The NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation is not affiliated with and is not responsible for the administration, acts, personnel, property, or practices of accredited programs.

NAEYC #917

Preschool History

1.2

LAC Preschool was founded by a group of church members for the purpose of providing a weekday nursery school for children from the church and the community. The objective was to provide a safe haven in which children could grow, develop, and test their world. The school opened its doors in January 1974 as a non-sectarian outreach program sponsored by the Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church to the community. It is a not-for-profit organization and is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs.

It began as a co-operative nursery school with a paid Teacher/Director who was assisted by parents. Our first class consisted of 12 four-year-olds. Over the years, we have grown and added many classes along the way. The premise of the school, however, has remained the same. Our primary goal was and is to provide a high quality first school experience to the child, one that will nurture his or her emotional, physical, cognitive, and social growth. We meet our goals by providing a developmentally appropriate curriculum taught by Early Childhood professionals.

The school is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of representatives of Church boards, parents, and community resource persons. The Board supports the Director and decides policy.

The program is geared to meet the individual needs of the child and is designed to ensure the child is happy, and encounters a rewarding first school experience. Play is the universal language of children, the medium through which a child learns to feel, see, hear, smell, and touch their world. It is through play children learn to express their feelings, to develop self-confidence and to test their world. They develop dexterity needed for writing by manipulating the paintbrushes, crayons, and by playing with small manipulatives. The skills they use when playing with blocks or measuring ingredients for cooking help them to develop principles necessary for mathematics development. The myriad of sensory experiences a preschooler has is a prerequisite for reading. As a child “works” at his/her play he is interacting with others, practicing language skills, and the art of negotiating. All of these experiences provide the child with learning opportunities that enhance their growth and development.

School Policy
Section 2

Enrollment

2.0

Enrollment at LAC Preschool is open to children from 2.9 – 5.6 years and in the Little Friends (toddlers) program from 24 months to 36 months.

Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy or disability. **(See Appendices, Appendix G for Inclusion Policy/Special Care Plan)**

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in LAC Preschool by completing the Registration Form and paying the indicated amount. The registration fee of \$100 is non-refundable. The tuition portion of the initial payment will be applied to the child's tuition and is non-refundable once the child has been accepted into the program.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed registration application, registration fee, and deposit.

The Registration Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

Continued enrollment at LAC Preschool is contingent upon the parent's emergency contact person's and child's adherence to school policies and procedures as outlined in the Parent Handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify LAC Preschool immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit.

Please refer to Appendix H for Preschool Lottery Procedure.

Tuition

2.1

1. Children will be accepted without discrimination with regard to race, ethnicity, sex, religion or handicapping condition.
2. Enrollment will be open to any child provided the school can meet the needs of the child.
3. Preschool children must be between 2 yrs 9 mo. when enrolled and no older than kindergarten age. Little Friends(toddlers) must be 2 by Sept. 30th.
4. All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in LAC Preschool. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.
5. Payment schedule is as follows:
 - a. Tuition payments are divided into 4 installments.
 - b. Non-refundable registration fee of \$100 is due with first installment
 - c. Second-fourth installments, as indicated on individual Tuition Agreements.

Please Note: Should you feel unable to meet the payment schedule outlined about, please see the Director and a schedule that will fit your needs will be developed.

Cash, money order or check is an acceptable form of payment. Receipts will be given for tuition payments made by money order or cash. All cash payments must be handed directly to the Assistant Director or to the Director. Your canceled check will serve as your receipt for payments made by check.

There will be a \$30.00 fee charged for tuition checks returned by the bank.
Returned tuition checks will not be re-deposited.
Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second check.

6. There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God.
7. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at LAC Preschool; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Director immediately.
8. LAC Preschool offers a scholarship program to families of children enrolled in the 4-year-old PM program. For a copy of the scholarship application and guidelines please ask the Assistant Director.
9. LAC Preschool offers multiple child discounts for one or more siblings enrolled in the same year. The child enrolled in the program with the highest cost is given a 10% discount for the school year.

Once the child has been accepted into the program, the initial payment is non-refundable.

Confidentiality

2.2

Within LAC Preschool, confidentiality and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of LAC Preschool who have a “need to know” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents, and/or children will not be shared with parents, as LAC Preschool strives to protect everyone’s right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and other health related information of anyone associated with the school.

Outside of LAC Preschool, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parents of the child has given written consent, except where otherwise provided by the law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of the school, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

You may observe children at LAC Preschool who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy. Employees of LAC Preschool are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

2.3

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of LAC Preschool are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The staff is not required to discuss their suspicions with the parent prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making the report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at LAC Preschool take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of LAC Preschool cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks or cuts on the child’s body.
- Severe verbal reprimands.
- Improper clothing related to size, cleanliness, season.
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child.
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time.
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child.
- Sending a child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

Parent Code of Conduct

2.4

LAC Preschool requires the parents of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of LAC Preschool is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the staff of LAC Preschool, but is the responsibility of each and every parent/adult who enters the school. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this environment.

Swearing and Cursing

2.4a

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language in school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of staff.

Threatening of employees, children, or other parents or adults associated with LAC Preschool:

2.4b

Threat of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, LAC Preschool cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the proper authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the school will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

Physical/verbal Punishment of your child or another child at LAC Preschool:

2.4c

While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse a child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional stress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. No parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the teacher or director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for once parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the teacher or director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the director are

strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our school have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the school.

Smoking:

2.4d

For the health of all LAC Preschool employees and children, smoking is prohibited anywhere on Church Property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building or on the grounds of the Church. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the Church.

Confrontational Interactions with Staff and Other Parents:

2.4e

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the staff of LAC Preschool or the parents of other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner.

Violations of Confidentiality Policy:

2.4f

LAC Preschool takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the school. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but to all children, families, and staff members associated with the school. Any parent who shares any information considered confidential, pressures employees or their parents for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Parent's Right to Immediate Access

2.5

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at LAC Preschool, as provided by law.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the director, and are allowed in the school only at the discretion of the director or designee. An employee of school will accompany visitors at all times.

Court Orders Effecting Enrolled Children

2.5a

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g. Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), LAC Preschool must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with LAC Preschool, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. LAC Preschool cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parents by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parents does not want the other parent to have access to their child, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access, LAC Preschool suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued. LAC Preschool staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, LAC Preschool is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of LAC Preschool cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. LAC Preschool will report any violation of these orders to the court.

Discipline Policy

2.6

A very important part of the preschool experience is helping children learn how to get along in the world, enjoy being with other children, and follow the directions of an adult other than their parent. A caring and positive approach will be taken regarding behavior management and discipline. The teachers will focus on the positive behaviors of children and reinforce those behaviors as often as possible. (See Appendix I for our Discipline Policy)

Health/Safety

2.7

Pre-Enrollment Requirements

2.7a

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the office prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up-to-date immunization record on file at LAC Preschool. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized, please ask the director for an immunization waiver form. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

In order to attend LAC Preschool, all children are required to have a Physical Examination Form filled out by a licensed medical professional and returned to the Director before the first class day. The Physical Examination Form indicates the child's fitness to attend LAC Preschool.

Children with Allergies

2.7b

On occasion there may be a child enrolled with a dietary special health care need, such as an allergy to eggs or wheat. The parent and school work together with the child's physician to ensure that proper snacks are provided. We do not serve lunch or breakfast so the only things we are concerned about are birthday treats brought in by parents.

Parents bring in treats that are kept frozen in our office refrigerator so that the child will have a treat should one be brought in that he/she cannot have.

Parents are told when a birthday is going to be celebrated and when the parent is able to check the ingredients to see if they are appropriate.

Parents have a list of the snacks the school provides and check the ingredients regularly to ensure they are suitable.

We work very closely with the parent to assure the safety of the child.

Each child who has an allergy must have a Food Allergy Emergency Plan and Written Medication Consent Form on file in the office indicating what steps need to be taken if there is an allergic reaction. In most cases, it is customary to first administer Benadryl. This is the first avenue taken and in very rare instances the EpiPen would be used.

Communicable Diseases

2.7c

LAC Preschool follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual. A copy of this manual is on file with the director and is available upon request for review. Additionally, copies can be purchased, for a nominal fee, from the National Association for the Education of the Young Child(www.NAEYC.org).

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. LAC Preschool reserves the right to refuse a child to return if the director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur 3 or more times in a 24 hours period of time. The child may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

If your child is absent due to an illness for more than 2 days, we request that you notify the office. This enables us to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with the faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. LAC Preschool will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share (or not), the reason for your child's absence from school.

Biting

2.7d

LAC Preschool recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the toddler classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit, or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which, provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior, they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior.

Children older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of LAC Preschool cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

Dispensing Medication

2.7e

LAC Preschool does not dispense medication of any kind with the exception of EpiPen when warranted.

Fire/Emergency Drills

2.7f

LAC Preschool conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, with exception of Shelter in Place, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill (including Shelter in Place drills) or real fire/emergency situation the following protocol will be followed:

Parents may not drop their children off at the classroom. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to bring their child into the classroom. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the director or designee will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

Parents wishing to pick their child up during a fire/emergency or real fire/emergency situation are expected to have patience with the staff as they are trying to maintain order during an often hectic and dangerous situation. If the school is in the midst of a fire/emergency drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to pick up their child. If the school is having a real fire/emergency situation, parents will be asked to wait until the director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and gives the staff permission to release children. Once again, it is important for parents and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate during these important and critical situations.

Shelter in Place

2.7g

As a center licensed by the NYS Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS), we will now be required to conduct two Shelter in Place drills per year.

What is Shelter in Place? Shelter in Place is a technique or precaution taken in response to an emergency where in it becomes safer to remain in the home or program, rather than trying to evacuate. Simply put, it means staying indoors. Some situations may include locking all doors, closing all available window shades, remaining in a room away from large windows or in some situations turning off heat and air conditioning systems. Most situations calling for shelter in place are in response to events that have a relatively short duration, of hours, not days or weeks. Drills do not include actually keeping children overnight. A drill typically takes a half hour or less to conduct.

Alternate Safe Location

2.7h

Should the administration of LAC Preschool or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the school to be evacuated, the staff and children will be taken to Chatsworth Ave Public School. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick-up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

Incident/Accident Reports

2.7i

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be placed in a sealed envelope and put in the child's school bag. It must be signed and returned to school the next class day.

If the parent doesn't pick the child up, the classroom teacher will call the parent to let the parent know about the incident/accident.

Peanut Free Center

2.7j

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to Peanuts and products containing peanuts in some children, LAC Preschool prohibits peanut and/or foods containing peanut products on LAC Preschool property. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from consuming peanuts or peanut products, smelling peanuts on someone's breath, or touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top.

Parents are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free for their child's lunch, and/or snack. We have included a reference a list of acceptable food items that are peanut and peanut product free. However, this is only a partial listing of foods. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut and peanut product free in stores.

The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child.

Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts, or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for the statements such as, "May contain traces of peanuts." For example, plain chocolate M&M's have this statement on the label.

PEANUT FREE FOOD IDEAS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carrot Sticks• Celery• Peppers• Broccoli• Applesauce• Grapes• Oranges• Apples• Bananas• Melon• Raisins• Plain Cheerios• Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graham Crackers• Pizza• Teddy Grahams• Shortbread• Egg Salas• Fruit by the Foot• Dried Fruit• Nutri Grain Fruit Bars• Full Size Ritz Crackers (Not Ritz Bitz)• Chicken Salad• Tuna Fish• Yogurt• Cream Cheese
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This list is not inclusive and is only meant as a guide. **Please read the labels of all food brought to the center to be sure that it does not contain peanut and/or peanut products.**

Additionally, all snacks brought in must be age appropriate. For example, carrot sticks and grapes, while appropriate for 4-year-olds, are not appropriate for 2's and early 3's.

Staff Employment by School Families

2.8

The staff of LAC Preschool is prohibited from being employed by any family current or former. Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment. Staff members who accept employment with current and former families of the school will have their employment with LAC Preschool terminated.

Employment refers to any relationship outside of the school's services, which involves an employee of LAC Preschool to interact with a current or former family of the school. Such relationships include but are not limited to babysitting, housesitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling. Regardless of whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.

Supervision of Children

2.9

Two and three-year-old children are supervised by sight at ALL times. If the bathroom is not located in the classroom, a staff member is required to accompany the child to the bathroom, wait for the child, and accompany the child back to the classroom. At no time is a child allowed to leave the classroom without a staff member.

Four-year-old children are also supervised primarily by sight. Their classrooms are double sized but with a ratio of 1:6, 3 staff and 17 children. They do not leave the classroom unsupervised at any time.

When other professionals are working with the classes, regardless of age, all classroom staff are required to be present at all times. SEITs and others, including parents cannot be counted in ratios.

During snack and Enrichment/Extended Day, staff is required to sit with children and eat with them. This is not only for safety reasons, but also to promote language development and social interaction through enjoyable conversations between children, and children and staff.

Parent Information

Section 3

Arrival

3.0

Children are required to be escorted into the classroom by their parent or the adult dropping them off. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times. Parents are required to help the children put away their outerwear and to get settled for the day.

LAC Preschool discourages parents from sneaking out of the classroom. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. LAC Preschool believes it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug, and say goodbye to the child. This prepares the child for their departure. The staff will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child stays the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. There is a saying, "the shorter the goodbye, the shorter the cry." The staff is available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time.

Birthdays

3.1

We love birthday celebrations however, to minimize the number of special treats your child will get at school, all birthdays that fall in a particular month will be celebrated on one given day.

If you choose to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please notify the teacher. He/she will have suggestions as to what nutritious snack would be appropriate to share with the class. Birthday celebrations are also a good time for sharing ethnic foods and traditions.

Please Note: **Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must either be whole fruit or commercially prepared packaged foods in a factory-sealed container. (as per the NAEYC Manual located in the school office).**

We ask that invitations to home parties not be brought to school for distribution.

Allergies:

In an effort to keep all of our children as safe as we can, we ask that:

Parents of children with allergies:

1. Notify the teacher of any allergies your child may have.
2. Supply the teacher with a list of foods that your child can have.
3. Send in a special treat that can be frozen in the office freezer for times when birthdays are celebrated and you cannot have the treat provided.

Book Orders

3.2

Each month an order form will be placed in your child's cubby. If you decide to order, you are invited to place your order online. Access to our account is HQQ2D and only online orders will be accepted. Your order will be delivered to the school and sent home with your child.

Bulletin Boards

3.3

Parent bulletin boards are located outside each classroom and in the preschool office. They contain important information and are continuously updated. As such, please refer to them often. The classroom bulletin board lists the latest activities, learning programs, etc. for your child's room. Please review it on a weekly basis.

Car Pools

3.4

Due to the parking situation on Wendt Ave, we encourage the formation of car pools. We hope the class lists will be of use with this matter. If you would like to post a notice on the community bulletin boards located at each end of the hall, please feel free to do so. You can also use the Parent bulletin board in the office for this purpose. Whenever possible, park on Larchmont Ave, and use the entrance there.

Clothing

3.5

School activities include: painting, crafts, outdoor play, and active play. Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that you will not be concerned about getting dirty.

1. Long pants or tights are required during the winter months. We plan to go outdoors each day for at least a short period of time unless it is wet or extremely cold.
2. Since self-help is one of the preschool objectives, please be sure snow pants, rubbers, and boots are LARGE enough for the child to handle. Plastic bags (bread loaf sized) over the shoe makes the task of putting on and taking off boots an easier one.
3. Mark all of your child's clothing and other belongings with his/her name. Each child is REQUIRED to carry a small tote or shopping bag to school each day. Children will be bringing home many "creations" and papers they have done. Label the bag with your child's name and it becomes a very special bag to the child.
4. Each child is required to have an extra set of clothing here at school for spills and accidents. A zip lock baggie is ideal for this purpose.
5. For your child's protection, please remember that rubber soled shoes or sneakers should be worn at all times. Children love to run, jump, and climb.

Cubbies

3.6

A cubby is provided for each child at the preschool. Please hang coats, hats, etc. there when your child arrives. Please also leave their knapsack or show and tell items there. **Please label all of your child's belongings.**

Dismissal

3.7

Please go directly to your child's room at pick up time. If you will be late, please call. It helps to minimize unnecessary concerns.

There will be a sheet for in-house pick up on the classroom door.

If someone other than the regular person is to pick up the child, please let the teacher know at arrival time. If it is someone we do not know, the parent must have notified the teacher or the office. The person picking up the child must have a photo ID with their name on it (Driver's License).

Please help us to ensure the safety of our children. Even an occasional daddy is unknown to us.

Unless you need to pick up a child early, be patient and wait until the teacher opens the classroom door. She will hand the child to you. Do not call out the child's name. There is confusion at dismissal time and it is imperative that the teacher dismisses children. It will take a few weeks for her to recognize your face, but once she does the dismissal will be very smooth.

In the case of a separation/divorce, the parents maintaining custody will be asked to submit in writing when the visiting parent may pick up the child.

Emergency Closing

3.8

Should the school be closed for any unforeseen reason, you will be contacted by the class mom or a staff member.

Enrichment or Extended Day

3.9

The "Enrichment Program" or "Extended Day" is offered when there is classroom availability. These programs are optional and are offered to morning parents of three or four-year-olds. Children bring their lunches and stay from 11:45 AM to 3:15 PM. The programs offer age-appropriate experiences for the children in the areas of art, literacy, science, cooking, math, and more.

Fundraising

3.10

We use fundraising on a very limited basis. Monies raised from any efforts made are used to purchase items on the teacher's wish list. In the past, they have included a laminating machine

and cameras for each classroom. This has added to the quality of the program, we encourage your participation but we recognize your other obligations.

Hours of Operation

3.11

The Preschool will be open from 9 AM to 3:15 PM, five days per week. We will observe the national and federal holidays, and will be closed when the local public schools are closed. Our beginning date is mid-September and our closing date is the first Friday in June.

Parent Participation

3.12

LAC Preschool is committed to working with our families. We strongly encourage them to participate in every aspect of your children's program. Parents are welcome to visit the school after the first six weeks of school. Our main focus is the children and the first weeks are a very important period of adjustment for them. They learn to separate from their parents or caregivers and to learn the classroom routine.

Parents as well as other family members are encouraged to share personal interests including hobbies, talents, cultural and ethnic traditions, favorite recipes, etc. They also serve on the advisory committee and as class parents. A few ways in which you will be able to participate are:

A. Four-year-old Community Field Trips: Parents and/or other family members are invited and needed to join the classes on trips to the library, fire house, post office, etc.

B. Classroom Activities: Feel free to come in and read a story to a child's class, do a cooking project with the class, bring in something of a cultural nature to share with the class, etc. These are a few of the many ways you might participate.

It is important to emphasize that while we would love for all parents to visit and see the workings of your child's classroom, we fully understand that not all parents are able to take the time to do so. Please do not feel that this is mandatory or that it will reflect negatively on your child's experience. Please know that dads, grandparents, as well as moms are welcome.

Parent/Teacher Communication

3.13

In order to ensure the most positive experience for your family and child, there must be ongoing dialogue between home and school. It is vitally important that you as parents communicate your needs and desires regarding your child's development openly and honestly with your teacher. You are encouraged to discuss any developmental milestones you have encountered and share any other information that may be appropriate. In order to keep our parents informed we offer the following:

A. Parent Conferences: Parents are asked to come in for conferences in January and again in May. A notice will be sent home with information a few weeks before the scheduled dates so that you have an opportunity to set a date that is convenient for you (adults available to translate, if necessary).

B. Informal Parent Teacher Communication: You will have the opportunity to speak informally with your child's teacher daily. If, however, you have a concern or personal question please ask her to call you send her a note or an email. Your privacy is important in arrival or dismissal times or not appropriate times to discuss your child (adults available to translate).

C. Contact between parents and teachers will take place through email on a monthly basis.

Parents are welcome in the director's office at any time. If you are a working parent and cannot come in, please call or send an email. Your call or email will be answered as soon as possible. If you feel there is a need to address a concern beyond the classroom please contact the director.

It is not always convenient to call a teacher from her class, therefore we ask that you leave your name and number and she will contact you as soon as she is free.

Promoting Wellness

3.14

Snacks

3.14a

In this day and age, we are becoming more and more aware of the need to educate children early about good nutrition and health habits. We as a school are trying to promote better nutrition for all our children as well as protecting those food allergies by making small changes in our program. We have discussed nutrition with our nutritionist, as a staff and follow the NAEYC guidelines. We have decided on doing the following:

1. All children sharing a birthday in the same month will be celebrating on one day. If you would like your child to participate, please talk to your child's teacher. The teacher will be responsible for setting up the "celebration" for the day. He/she may ask for alternatives to cupcakes or for the ingredients to bake a special treat in class.

Food that comes from home for sharing among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared package foods in a factory sealed container (as per the NAEYC manual located in school office).

2. In lieu of "goody bags," you might consider donating a book to your child's class.
3. As you know, we provide snack on a daily basis and offer crackers, cheese, gram crackers, etc. The children get fruit or veggies plus two or three small crackers, a mini bagel, etc. for snack. **They are portion controlled**
4. Bottled water is given instead of juice.
5. While we truly appreciate our families' generosity, we ask that you check with your child's teacher before bringing in treats for the various holidays. As stated above, foods that come from home for sharing among the children must be either whole foods or commercially prepared package foods in a factory sealed container.

If you do not want your child having the snacks we provide, please feel free to bring in your own snack. We appreciate your help and understanding and hope that you will assist us as we try to achieve our goals. We are trying our best to provide a more nutritionally balanced approach, if there are any questions please feel free to contact us at 834-3984 or stop by the office.

On the playground you can see:

Children climbing, running, sliding, balancing on the apparatus, and generally using their large muscles.

At LAC Preschool the children are encouraged to move freely within the classroom. They are taking outdoors, weather permitting, every day for half an hour in the morning and half an hour in the afternoon. Since we do not have our own playground, we comply with the timeslots that Chatsworth Elementary school have set for us.

In the event that we cannot go outdoors, we have access to Carhart room in the church which we use as a gym one class at a time. There are rides on toys, climbing apparatus, balls, etc. and a boom box, which is used for movement and rhythms.

Classes are required, by state law to go to the playground and/or play room one group at a time.

The Importance of Movement and Exercise ***3.14b***

Being active along with good nutrition are the key elements to a healthy lifestyle. Our world is vastly different from the world my children grew up in. Today children spend less time outdoors, actively playing. They have more choices of what to do with their time.

Studies have shown that many preschool children spend 32 hours per week playing video and or computer games and watching TV. An adult's full-time job commitment is usually 40 hours per week! The children are not moving, probably snacking if watching TV, and bombarded with food messages in the ways of ads.

This causes great concern because we are seeing children getting conditions that were once exclusive to adults. We see children developing type two diabetes, high blood pressure, liver disease, and sleep apnea. There is substantial research done showing that 77% of obese children grow up to be obese adults. A sedentary lifestyle can begin this process fairly early on.

What can we do about this? We are trying to stop this before it begins. We build movement, and exercise into our curriculum, and encourage active play on a daily basis.

How do we do this? We know the characteristic of child development at the various ages and develop our program around this.

We know that TODDLERS:

Come to us with some basic skills that are already in place.
Need an environment that allows them to test and explore.
Need to challenge their skills to develop them and move forward.
Need our environment to be safe for them to practice and develop their skills.
Are “whole body people” and use it freely.
Need to balance our supervision to keep them safe with their need to meet physical challenges.
Physical activity is part of everything they do.
Play activity can be incorporated into every domain of they’re learning environment.

We know that for PRESCHOOLERS:

Moving freely and being physical active is pure enjoyment.
Movement and exercise come naturally to them; it helps them maintain fitness, improves coordination and agility.
Active play is rich and supports all learning domains.
They learn who they are and what they can do through active play.
They learn to navigate through their world, communicate, and negotiate.

We also know, from studies done, that:

There is a connection between fitness and academic achievement.
When children are fed, they can concentrate more and better concentration promotes neural networks, elevates moods, and makes it easier to internalize cognitive themes and refocus.

How do we put theory into practice and how do we support and promote wellness?

In order to help children grow and develop optimally, you will see the following examples of putting theory into practice.

In our classrooms, you can see:

Children moving about freely, deciding what areas they wish to work in.
Music playing and children, humming, dancing or keeping up the beat.
Children acting out stories.
Children doing finger plays and action songs.
Rhythm bands.

In our playroom, you can see:

Unstructured play: Toys for climbing and riding
Structured play: Beanbags, balls, scarves, parachutes, hula hoops, record or CD players for dancing and gameplaying.

Safety at Arrival/Dismissal

3.15

Parking can be difficult at certain times of the day. Please help us in providing a safe environment. We offer the following tips and ask for your cooperation:

- Hold your child's hand when crossing the street.
- Make sure your child doesn't run ahead or behind you upon arrival and pick up.
- Upon arrival, please turn off your car.
- Do not leave a child unattended in the car for any amount of time.
- Feel free to call the office or tell the teacher if you want us to have your child ready for an early pick up.
- Drive slowly on Wendt Avenue.
- Please take our neighbors rights and their property into consideration. Blocking driveways is not conducive to being a good neighbor.

On a day-to-day basis our teachers each have a walkie-talkie that they are required to carry with them at all times. This facilitates communication between the office and classes.

Show and Tell

3.16

Show and tell is a wonderful learning experience for all involved. The child presenting is offered a great opportunity to get up in front of a group of peers and talk with confidence about something he or she is familiar with and comfortable with.

In addition to expanding vocabulary and information base, the listeners develop their listening skills, their attention span, and how to wait their turn. The teacher will let you know what day she will have show and tell. Please be sure your child's name is on any item used for show and tell.

Toilet Training

3.17

Most of the children will be toilet trained when they begin school. If they are not, it is not a problem. We are happy to work with them to achieve this important milestone and will work closely with you to help reach it. There is usually a window of opportunity that comes out approximately 2 1/2 years of age. We try to maximize this opportunity and will do our best to support our at home initiatives.

Tuition Payments

3.18

1. Payment is to be made as per financial agreement signed by parent.
2. Installment payments are due on the first class day of the month.
3. Semi-annual payments are due September 1st and February 1st.
4. Checks should be made to: LAC Preschool and brought to the office. Please do not give tuition checks to the teachers.

Where to Call

3.19

Please call Mrs. DeFelice at 834-3984 should you have any questions. We are part of a team who is dedicated to making your child and families first school experience a rewarding one.

Our email addresses are: Mrs. DeFelice kdefelice@lacny.org

Ms. Haq adminassistant@lacny.org

Appendices

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Assessment Plan

A

As part of our self-study on our path to re-accreditation, we look very closely at our program. We assess how our children have or haven't met our state standards for early childhood; we take into account the feedback we get from our parents; we talk about what we feel needs to be improved and we build upon all this to set our goals. The new accreditation criteria requires a written assessment tool. While assessment has always been a part of our program, it was never required that it be written. In keeping with the National Association of Early Childhood Program Guidelines and with the Academy Criteria we have incorporated focused portfolios into our program. This is our seventh year using this approach and the feedback from our parents has been extremely positive. Using this approach, the teachers are able to give you a very clear picture of your child's school experience.

LAC Preschool is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Program and we adhere to their standards and criteria. Our curriculum is built upon what we learned from the observations and assessments. Our program is designed to meet the individual needs of the children by providing a developmentally appropriate curriculum that addresses growth and development that is specific to each age group as well as adapting to the needs of the individual children.

We embrace the philosophy that children learn best when they are active learners, involved in play and in opportunities that help them to explore, question, investigate, and manipulate objects and materials in their environment. The foundation of learning is established through experience and we believe a play-based program provides the children with many opportunities to develop social skills by working and playing with other children; to develop physical skills; to express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play, and language; to learn effective ways to communicate feelings and ideas. The states early learning standards are always incorporated into all that we do for the children. Each age group has recommended expectations for all child's growth and development. We strive to help each child reach these expectations in a matter that is right for that child.

The assessment tool we use to document and evaluate each child is focused portfolios. Our teachers will carefully observe each child as he or she plays, works, interacts, and goes about his or her daily routine at school. Assessments are ongoing and the observations will each be documented and tied to a specific developmental milestone that has been identified as an important indicator as to how each child is learning and growing.

The portfolios will be shared with parents at conferences that will be held in January and in May or anytime the teacher or parent would like to meet. The portfolio will include, but not be limited to, samples of child's work, Favorites Collection Form, Friends Collection Form, and Developmental Milestones Collection Form.

Portfolios are confidential and will not be shared with any person(s) other than a parent without permission from the parent.

Common childhood diseases

B

Chickenpox

Symptoms: Red, quite itchy spots, or blisters are scattered over the entire body and the child has a moderate fever.

Treatment: The Varicella vaccine is a shot that can prevent chickenpox. It is called Varicella because the Varicella virus causes chickenpox. Up to 90% of people who receive the vaccine will not get chickenpox. People who get chickenpox after having the vaccine have a milder form of the disease.

Incubation period: Between 10 to 20 days from being exposed to the infection and showing symptoms.

Infectious period: Chickenpox is contagious from about two days before the rash appears until all the blisters are crusted over. A child with chickenpox should be kept out of school until all blisters have dried. Usually about one week. If you're unsure about whether your child is ready to return to school, ask your doctor. Pregnant women and anyone with immune system problems should not be near a person with chickenpox.

Croup

Symptoms: Croup is a common childhood viral illness that is easily recognized because of the distinctive characteristics that children have when they become infected. Like most viral illnesses, there is no cure for Croup, but there are many symptomatic treatments that can help your child to feel better faster. Symptoms often include a runny nose and a brassy cough. In addition, symptoms are often better during the day, and worse at night, but usually become less intense each night. Symptoms also become worse if your child becomes anxious or agitated.

Treatment: Like most viral infections there is no cure for Croup, however, there are many treatments that can help improve the symptoms and make your child feel better. Common treatments include using humidified air which can be delivered by a cool mist humidifier. On cool nights, exposure to the cool nighttime air may also help symptoms. Other treatments can include using a fever reducer (Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen containing products) and or non-narcotic cough syrup (although they probably won't suppress the cough of croup) if your child is over 2 to 4 years old. Since symptoms worsen if your child is crying and agitated, trying to keep your child calm may also improve his symptoms.

Incubation period: Symptoms developed about 2 to 6 days after being exposed to someone with Croup.

Fifth disease

Symptoms: 5th Disease is a mild viral infection caused by Human Parvovirus B19. Fifth Disease got its name because it was listed as the fifth of several illnesses that commonly caused rashes in children before the modern era of vaccines. The child has red specs on the cheeks, nose, arms, thighs, and buttox. These are often blurred which make it look like the child has been slapped. For this reason, Fifth Disease is often known as slapped cheek syndrome. It can

last up to 14 days and rarely causes a fever. It is mostly seen in children between the ages of 4 and 12.

Treatment: Most cases of Fifth Disease are mild, so the only treatment needed is that which relieves the symptoms. Fever and flu symptoms in children can be treated with Acetaminophen (brand name Tylenol).

Developmental Stages of Separation (“Learning to Say Goodbye” by Nancy Balaban)

C

Separation is related to attachment.

0 to 3 months: Babies experience parents as extensions of themselves.

4 to 6 months: Hatching, babies break out of psychological shell and begin to perceive difference between themselves and parents. They know their parents’ faces and bodies as different from their own.

7 to 10 months: Stranger anxiety, I know who I love best and it’s not you. It is reassuring to see that baby has strong attachment.

10 to 18 months: Explorers, love affair with the world (Mahler) they need a secure base from which to explore. They are now practicing with this new ability in their lives. But with this ability comes along danger. Separateness from their parents is now a physical reality. They need a lot of emotional refueling.

18 to 24 months: Formally independent beings now become very clingy, “Rapprochement crisis”, this is very different for parents and teachers. At this time “all hell breaks loose!” Child cannot always remember what mom looks like, mental image is not clear. Tense or anxious toddler has a harder time remembering, “Out of sight out of mind.” Parental absence is hard to bear, “Mommy may never return.” Crying, rage, and sobbing, are common.

Two-year-olds: Intensity of feelings continue to be aroused when separation continues or is suspected. Child often inconsolable. Now they understand that they need parents, afraid that they won’t be able to take care of themselves, I am hungry and scared that you are leaving me. How will I handle this? The way I do it best by crying, holding onto your skirt, following you, and calling you. These things will work because they worked before!

Preschoolers (three and four): Clear sense of themselves as individuals, attached but separate from parents. Now can mentally represent image of their parents, out of sight is no longer out of mind. The ability to separate is necessary if children are to become self-reliant and independent. It is easier for some than for others. Some children still need a lot of encouragement and support. Adults too have difficulty, but they have a longer history of saying goodbyes and they understand the meaning of time. Usually this age can keep mom and dad in mind at least a few hours a day. However, if a child hasn’t had the opportunity to make one reliable attachment in infancy, feelings of abandonment and helplessness are still likely to overwhelm them.

How I Learn, Milestones of Typical Child Development

D

Birth to three months

I began to smile and track people and objects with my eyes. I preferred to look at faces and bright colors. I reach, and discover my hands and feet. I can lift my head and turn toward sound. I cry, but will feel better when you hold and comfort me.

4 to 6 months:

I smile often. I'll even laugh, gurgle, and imitate sounds. I learn about my body exploring my hands and feet. I think they are part of me! I can sit up when you prop me. I like to roll over, scoot, and balance. I can grasp things without using my thumb, and like to put things in my mouth.

7 to 12 months:

I remember simple events and familiar voices and identify myself in the mirror. I understand my name and other words you use a lot. I can see my first words. I like to explore, and begin to shake objects. I can find hidden toys and put things in containers. I can sit up all by myself. I creep and can pull myself up to stand and walk. I am shy and sometimes people I don't know make me feel scared.

1 to 2 years:

I like to imitate what adults are doing and help them with tasks. I can talk now and understand words and ideas. I like stories and experimenting with things. I can walk, climb stairs, and run. I show you my independence, but I am more comfortable with people I know. I recognize that toys and stuff are mine. I am proud of the things I can do and can solve simple problems. I have some friends and I'm starting to play make-believe.

2 to 3 1/2 years:

I like to learn new things. I can learn new words really fast now. I always like to be on the go. I have better control of my hands and fingers. I get frustrated easily. I act more independent, but I still depend on you. I like to act out familiar scenes when I play.

3 1/2 to 5 years:

I have a longer attention span. I act silly, boisterous, and use language that isn't nice. I talk a lot now and ask a lot of questions. I want real adult things and keep the art projects I make. I test my physical skills and courage with caution. I reveal my feelings to you in dramatic play. I like to play with friends, but don't like to lose. I sometimes share my stuff and take turns.

5 to 8 years:

I am curious about people and how the world works. I am interested in numbers, letters, reading and writing. I have more confidence now in my physical skills. I use words to express my feelings and to cope. I like grown-up activities. I like to meet and play with more lads and I play more cooperatively now.

Curriculum

E

LAC Preschool's curriculum is built upon two sources that embrace a developmentally appropriate approach to early learning.

The first is the **Preschool Curriculum Activities Library published by the Center for Applied Research in Education** which represents a multi-sensory developmental approach to curriculum development.

The second is an alignment with a **New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core**.

Our curriculum has been adopted from the Preschool Curriculum Activities Library published by the Center for Applied Research and Education and its theme basis.

The goals we set are determined by the five domains presented in the foundation. The domains are:

Approaches to Learning

Physical Development and Health

Social and Emotional Development

Communication, Language and Literacy

Cognition and Knowledge of the World

Teachers use both to guide them as they set goals for their class as well as for individual children in their class.

This is done by using the foundation as a guide towards planning developmentally appropriate activities based on best practices that will help the child progress and move towards his goals and by reference to the developmental characteristics checklist that are provided in Preschool Curriculum Activities Library.

All domains are interrelated and learning occurs when they are interactive with each other. The major portion of our day is child initiated with the children deciding on what they would like to do. The centers are set up to foster interest in exploration. Materials are accessible to children throughout their day.

Assessment is ongoing and align with program goals and objectives. It is done through observation and interaction as well as documentation. This approach will help address where a child is and how to best help him reach those goals.

Parents participate in a minimum of two parent teacher conferences each year. We use Focused Portfolios to assess the progress of the children and keep a folder for each child, accessible to the parents at any time.

For your information: A copy of the New York State Pre-kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core and the Preschool Curriculum Activities Library are available in the office.

Curriculum Overview

Language arts: Reading readiness: book and poetry reading, matching and differentiating, sequence of events, phonetics, picture clues, comprehension and word families.

Writing: Recording individual story dictation, printing when child is ready.

Talking: Vocabulary, telling a story.

Listening: Sound discrimination, comprehension.

Mathematics: Comparing, grouping, counting, recognizing sets and value quantities, measuring, sorting, classifying, shapes.

Science: Experimenting and observing, animal study/care, plant care, cooking (observing physical and chemical changes).

Current events: Daily calendar, daily news, where appropriate.

Music and dance: Creative movement, rhythm instruments, sticks.

Physical activity: Climbing, swinging, balancing, jumping, riding, running, sliding.

Block building: Imaginative creations, concepts of balance and size, organization of design.

Dramatic play: Role-playing, dramatic sizing nursery rhymes, poetry, stories.

Carpentry: Building, creating, experimenting with tools.

Self-care: Handwashing, toileting skills, dressing self, safety procedures, healthy eating, manners, cleanup, and responsibility for the classroom.

Social skills: Recognizing and verbalizing feelings, conflict resolution skills, problem-solving, empathy, cause and effect.

Our goal is to help each child develop his/her critical thinking skills, while becoming as independent and successful as possible.

What Will My Child Learn at Preschool?

F

You have probably heard the expression, “a child’s play is his work.” You may also have read Robert Fulghum’s, “All I ever really needed to know, I learned in Kindergarten.” Both are true! Most of life’s most valuable lessons are learned very early on at our parent’s sides and in our first school experiences.

You may wonder how all of it applies to your child and what he/she is doing at preschool. How does it translate into your child’s experience and what does any of it have to do with his/her reaching his/her full potential. The learning that takes place at this level sets the stage for future learning. As he/she interacts with other children and with the materials during the school day, he/she is also developing and learning pre-reading and pre-writing skills. He/she is becoming familiar with math and science concepts, is growing and developing socially, and is learning the art of negotiation. All of the skills will benefit your child now and in the future. All of them will be taken with her on her journey through life.

Let’s take a look at some of the many specific learning experiences your child will have.

Arts Effect on Learning

Pre-reading: Through the use of art materials, your child learns to make choices, and to discriminate between colors, shapes, and textures. During the early stages of reading, the ability to visually discriminate is needed to be able to tell the differences between letter forms.

Pre-writing: Through the use of art materials the child makes use of the small muscles in his hand and fingers. They cut with scissors, draw with crayons, and paint with brushes, large and small. These activities help the child’s small motor skills to develop and grow in preparation for holding and using pencils; art also affects pre-writing and the development of the skills.

Self-expression: Through the use of art materials a child’s creativity is nurtured. Art provides an outlet for expression of feelings and ideas. Because the children at this age are not as verbally proficient as adults, drawing and artwork frees them to communicate feelings and ideas.

Water Play’s Effect on Learning

Science Concepts: Experimentation at the water table introduces the child to the many properties of water. Water can be poured, pumped, and absorbed. It causes certain objects sink, others to float. Children experiment with a variety of items and come to conclusions in a way that is hands on.

Math Concepts: Children learn about math by using water, measuring it, pouring into containers of various sizes. They compare more and less, same and different, full and empty. This leads to an understanding of basic math concepts that will be applied to real numbers later on.

Emotional Development: Water has a calming effect on many adults. Children are no different, the cool feeling of the water, it’s smoothness, the sound of the water as they pour from one

container to another, all of this helps the child to relax and relieve tension. Water is very soothing and its effect on most children is wonderful.

Block Play and its Effect on Learning

Math, Science and Pre-reading Concepts: Block play offers the child many opportunities for exploration of these concepts. Children learn to estimate and take risks as they decide how much space they will need for their block structure, and how many blocks it will take to build a tower as tall as they are. They learn balance as they try to support their structures. They learn to classify as the sort by size and shape. They learn about disappointment while trying again as they see their tower collapse and trying to rebuild it. They learn to respect another child's space and efforts. They learn to work together towards a common goal as they create and build their magnificent structures.

These are only a very few of the many skills a child learns as she works each day at school. These are only a few of the curriculum areas in a child's day. Others include current events (daily calendar), music and movement (creative movement, rhythm, and songs), physical activity (jumping, climbing, balancing, and running), dramatic play (role-playing, stories), self-care (handwashing, safety, manners, and responsibility), social skills (sharing, Conflict resolution, empathy), etc.

Our curriculum's goals are to help each child develop positive esteem, to become independent thinkers, and to enjoy childhood and all of its wonderful offerings.

Inclusion Policy/Special Care Plan

G

When a parent or legal guardian of a child identifies a child has special needs, the director of LAC Preschool and, the parent or guardian will meet to review the child care requirements.

LAC Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child.

To help the program better understand the child's needs, the staff will ask the parent or legal guardian of the child with special needs to complete a special care plan in conjunction with the child's Health Care Provider. The program will attempt to accommodate children with special needs consistent with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act.

The director of LAC Preschool or her designee will work with the parent or legal guardian to find a suitable environment for the child. Special Education Itinerant Teachers (SEIT) are welcome and encouraged to work with the children in the classroom setting.

LAC Preschool Lottery

H

The following provided by the LAC Preschool board, is an overview of the lottery process; when a lottery is required and how it is conducted. We hope the following answers any questions you may have about your child's placement, but if you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the preschool office directly.

Overview:

Each December, based on the total number of applicants from parents of **current** students (those currently in rolled in the twos or threes programs), a lottery is held if any of the following criteria are met:

The total number of **current students** requesting an AM placement the following year (AM and PM) exceeds 34 for four-year-olds and 30 for three-year-olds.

When the total number of applications does not exceed the maximum number of available spaces, preference is given in the following order:

Siblings of current students or church members, public.

Once all open AM slots are filled a waitlist is started.

Lottery Process:

- All illegible applicants are assigned a random number by the Preschool Director.
- Numbers are randomly drawn by a representative of the LAC Board.
- The first 34/30 numbers are assigned an AM placement; all subsequent numbers are assigned to the waitlist in the order drawn.
- Multiples are assigned one number, but account for more than one slot.

LAC Preschool Discipline Policy

I

One of the goals of LAC Preschool is to help children develop a positive self-image. We hope to encourage children to be self-directed and to exhibit self-control. We believe the best way to handle problems is to prevent them from happening in the first place.

In order to do this, the physical environments and the program for our preschool are set up so that as few problems will take place as possible. The rooms and toys are arranged so that children can handle things mostly by themselves. They are not expected to perform beyond their abilities. Activities are age-appropriate. Additionally, the ratio of adults to children is such that there is a good deal of interaction between adult and child and less inappropriate demand for attention and opportunities for problems to develop. Staff has been trained in the pyramid model which is a conceptual framework of evidence– Based practices for promoting young children’s healthy social and emotional development.

Children need the opportunity to build a healthy self-concept. They need to get to know who they are as a person, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and where their talents lie. They need to be given respectful, and honest feedback; they need acknowledgment of their achievements; they need help with their limitations; they need help to realize their fullest potential.

Because of their developmental age, they cannot fully understand the ramifications of their actions. It is therefore important that they are supported by staff and that they are encouraged to make good choices. They need guidance to prevent them from hurting themselves or others. This is accomplished through:

1. Close supervision
2. Gentle guidance
3. Communicating to children using positive statements
4. Encouraging, with teacher support, the use of their words and solutions in order to resolve their own interpersonal conflicts.
5. Communicating with children by getting down to their eye level
6. Speaking to them in a calm, quiet manner about what is expected
7. Distracting them – changing the child’s focus to an acceptable activity without confronting the inappropriate behavior
8. Redirecting them – anticipate the problem and intervene beforehand with an appropriate solution.
9. Time out is discouraged and used **only** for the purpose of helping the child regain control and close supervision.

Our staff has been trained in the pyramid model which is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children’s healthy social and emotional development.

They are trained to be consistent and nurturing towards each child. Reasonable expectations help to keep conflicts to a minimum. Disciplinary action is rarely required when a child is kept in a stimulating, nurturing, and creative environment.

At no time is it permissible for any staff member to use any kind of physical, psychological or coercion to discipline a child. Appropriate use of restraint for safety reasons is permissible.

LAC Preschool does not permit or tolerate the use of any abusive disciplinary action such as:

Corporal punishment (examples include, but are not limited to: hitting, slapping, pulling hair, pinching, shaking), psychological abuse (examples include, but are not limited to: use of profanity, name-calling, shaming, withholding food, ridicule, embarrassment or humiliation of any child) or coercion.

If a child is showing behavior that is not normal for him/her, the teacher will call the parent to see if there is something they might share with her. In this way, she may be able to help the child through this time by working together with a parent to help the child address his/her feelings.

On the rare occasion that the teacher sees a pattern of disruptive behavior developing, the following procedure is followed:

1. An incident report will be completed. It will document the inappropriate behavior that impacts the other children, staff or group as a whole.
2. The report will be shared with the parents, behavior explained and its effect on the others.
3. It will address how the situation was resolved.
4. It will be signed by parents as well as teachers and placed in the child's file.

Should the behavior continue, a meeting is called with a parent, teacher and director to discuss what can be done to help the child. It may require the recommendation of the child be referred to his pediatrician who may or may not refer the child to a child psychologist for further observation.

Suspension/Expulsion Policy

Our goal is to always foster the social, emotional, and behavioral development of all children by doing this, my nurturing relationships and capacity building, with and on behalf of young children and their families, we can ensure that all of our youngest learners have the tools and experiences they need to thrive and we can illuminate exposure and suspension practices.

There may be times, however, when we need to consider this in the best interest of the child and other children. If all attempts to help have no positive results, and the behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive and/or presents a danger to the child or other children, it may become necessary to discuss keeping the child out of school for a period of time or being removed from the school.

These measures will not be considered unless all other possible interventions have been exhausted and there is an agreement by all parties (parents, teachers, administration and if needed other supportive staff).