

Park District of Oak Park Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Playschool, Preschool, & Pre-K Programs



In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences in programs, parks, and facilities.



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PARK DISTRICT of OAK PARK

218 Madison Street
Oak Park, IL 60302
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www.pdop.org

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Park District of Oak Park's Playschool, Preschool, and Pre-K programs! Your child is about to begin an exciting journey over the next year where they will learn and grow socially, emotionally, and cognitively in a nurturing environment. They will look forward to coming to school each day to learn and socialize, through play!

The following handbook has information that will answer many questions you may have regarding our programs. In addition to the handbook, you will receive a variety of communication from your teachers on a regular basis regarding the curriculum, daily class schedule, and your child's growth through handouts, email, phone, and day-to-day interactions.

Please take a moment to read all our program's policies and procedures provided to you in the following pages. This handbook will be a helpful reference tool to keep throughout the school year.

We cannot wait to work closely with you and your child as we grow, develop, learn, and play together! If you have any questions, or if I can be of assistance, please contact me at any time. The teachers and I look forward to a safe and fun-filled school year!

Kind Regards,

Natalie Kurek
Early Childhood Program Supervisor
Natalie.kurek@pdop.org
(708)725-2155



Staff

Our teachers have a wide variety of experience in the education and/or recreation field. They are committed to providing each individual child with a safe, fun, and positive school experience. We pride ourselves on the quality of our staff and their professional development. Each of our teachers has successfully completed a background check and are required to have active First Aid & CPR certifications. Our teachers are required to participate in a minimum of fifteen continuing education hours each year by participating in Early Childhood workshops, college courses, or conferences. Many of our teachers have been with us for years and currently possess certifications in the education field. They put much of themselves into the program, and we value them for their individual strengths and team player attitudes!

Center/Program Contact Information

<u>Location</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Cell Phone Number</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
Austin Gardens	Nature Preschool	(708) 851-8480	Austin.Preschool@pdop.org
Carroll Center	Preschool	(708) 851-8476	Carroll.preschool@pdop.org
Carroll Center	Pre-Kindergarten	(708) 851-8474	Carroll.prek@pdop.org
Carroll Center	Playschool	(708) 851-8479	Playschool@pdop.org



Our Goals

Playschool, Preschool, and Pre-Kindergarten

A developmentally appropriate, nurturing environment provides young children opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively with hands-on exploration, experimentation, and socialization.

Teacher-directed activities and center-time play engages your child in literacy, math, science, art, and motor activities while creating an experience focused on the 21st century problem-solving and flexible thinking habits.

Park District of Oak Park Mission

In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and facilities.

Our Curriculum

Our preschool/playschool program uses an emergent play-based curriculum. Play is an essential part of each child's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development based on the interests of the students. Play is important to us because it:

- Fosters a sense of self-awareness, self-control, and self-confidence.
- Develops communication, cooperation, and conflict resolution.
- Encourages responsible risk-taking, curiosity, and independence.
- Builds a strong academic skill base through hands-on experience, and exploration.

Through structured teacher-directed activities and unstructured center time play, your child will be exposed to colors, numbers, letters, shapes, and relational concepts. Learning will be through large and fine motor activities as well as open-ended play in drama, science, math, literacy, and art. Teachers will provide you with a weekly calendar outlining the curriculum and learning concepts your child will be introduced to in class, using play as a vehicle.



Playschool

Playschool (Ages 2-3)

This class is a great first independent experience for your child! Playschool is designed to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children 2-3 years of age. This transition from home to school will emphasize the active development of your child's social, emotional, motor, and cognitive skills. The caring, qualified teachers will focus on preschool preparedness such as: taking turns, following directions, listening, and sharing. Language development is supported through daily theme-based activities that include ABC's, counting, story time, songs, games, and projects.

Potty training is not required to enroll in this program; however, upon an accident, parents/guardians will be contacted to return to school to assist their child. Diapers will not be changed by our staff as they are not equipped to do so.

Sample Playschool Daily Schedule

9:00am	Welcome & Sign in
9:15am – 9:25am	Morning meeting
9:25am – 10:15am	Center Choice & Snack Time
10:15am – 10:25am	Clean up/Gear Up for Outside
10:25am – 10:50am	Outside/Large Motor
10:50am - 11:00am	Circle Time
11:00am	Dismissal

Please note program schedules vary per program/center and are a guideline for classroom routines; adjustments to daily schedules may occur due to unique events, activities, or student needs.



Preschool

Preschool (Ages 3-5)

Our preschool program offers children an opportunity to participate in a variety of age-appropriate activities as they develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively through play. Classroom activities are planned to meet the varying needs of each child. Students will be introduced to letters and numbers as they explore different themes, shapes, colors, and concepts. Teachers focus on the development of each student: problem solving skills, ability to make real life connections, and peer relationships through everyday math, reading, social, and science discovery offer a well-rounded experience for young children.

We prefer that participants in preschool are potty/toilet-trained but will work with the family.

8:45-8:50	Welcome/Sign-in
8:50-9:10	Table Time/Fine Motor
9:10-9:25	Circle time
9:25-10:45	Center and Snack Time
10:45-10:55	Clean-up
10:55-11:30	Outside/Gross Motor
11:30 – 11:45	Closing Story time/Finger plays/Songs

Please note program schedules vary per program/center and are a guideline for classroom routines; adjustments to daily schedules may occur due to unique events, activities, or student needs.



Pre-Kindergarten

Pre-Kindergarten (Ages 4-5)

Our Pre-Kindergarten program offers a developmentally appropriate, play-based class designed to meet the needs of children as they take their next steps in learning. Classroom activities are planned so that children can work independently, as well as in small and large groups. Curriculum materials focus on phonemic awareness, writing, math, and reading readiness while promoting independent thinking and problem-solving skills. Our program goal is to provide academic opportunities that are critical in developing your child's foundation for future school success through interactions with materials, peers, and teachers. To enhance our students learning for a bi-lingual future, this readiness program will introduce participants to basic colors, shapes, and numbers in Spanish as well as English.

Pre-Kindergarten Sample Class Schedule

8:30am-8:50am	Sign In/Table Activities/Journal writing
8:50 – 9:20am	Class Meeting
9:20 – 10:30am	Planned Activity Time/Snack Time
10:30 – 10:40am	Clean Up
10:40-11:15	Outdoor/Large Motor
11:15 – 11:25	Independent Quiet Reading
11:25 – 11:50	Small group work
11:50 – 12:00	Final Class meeting

Please note program schedules vary per program/center and are a guideline for classroom routines; adjustments to daily schedules may occur due to unique events, activities, or student needs.



Program Times and Locations

Playschool (Ages 2-3)

Carroll Center	Mon/Tues/Wed	9-11:00am
1125 S. Kenilworth	Thurs/Fri	9-11:00am

Preschool (Ages 3-5)

Carroll Center	Mon/Tues/Wed	8:45-11:45am
1125 S. Kenilworth	Thurs/Fri	8:45-11:45am

Nature Preschool (Ages 3-5)

Austin Gardens	Mon/Tues/Wed	8:45-11:45am
167 Forest Ave	Thurs/Fri	8:45-11:45am

Pre-Kindergarten (Ages 4-5)

Carroll Center	Mon thru Fri	8:30-Noon
1125 S. Kenilworth		

All Playschool/Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten programs in the PDOP system honor the Illinois State Standard September 1st birthday cut off structure.

School District 97 (Oak Park) requires that students enroll in the grade that is age-appropriate for your child beginning in the 2024-25 school year. In some instances, this means if you were enrolling your child in an “extra” year of Preschool, they would essentially “skip” Kindergarten. [Follow this link for details regarding the SD 97 policy.](#) For questions regarding which class is appropriate for you child, please contact the program supervisor.



Registration

Registration is available on-line at: www.pdop.org through late August 2023. All enrollment completed will take place online. At the time of registration, you will need to:

- Pay a \$100 non-refundable administration fee.
- Pay the first month tuition (fees vary per program)

Following registration, you will receive a welcome email and link for submitting your child's emergency contact information, birth certificate, health information, etc.

- Oak Park residents actively enrolled in Playschool/Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten at the time of registration are eligible for priority enrollment for the following school year. (Siblings of currently enrolled Oak Park households are also given priority.)
- Currently enrolled non-residents will be able to register during the “non-resident priority” enrollment period. Non-residents (that are not registered for Playschool/Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten) will be able to register for the following school year after the priority non-resident registration has begun. This is to ensure that the residents of Oak Park, along with the non-resident currently enrolled families, have priority.

Administration Fee

The \$100, non-refundable administration fee aids in covering the program cost for such things as: postage, newsletters & calendars, copy paper & ink, and processing fees.

Paperwork

Each child is required to have completed emergency information online prior to your child's first day of attendance. The medical information is to be completed by you and your physician on our Certificate of Health Form (found on-line).

All children must be enrolled three business days prior to starting school.

This time is necessary for the Park District to process your registration, turn in paperwork, and for the teachers to prepare for your child's attendance.



Each program must reach a minimum of
8 participants by August 30th to run.

If the minimum enrollment requirement is not met by August 30th, the Program Supervisor will keep a list of families that are interested in joining specific locations and we will re-evaluate opening a section once the minimum is reached.

Monthly Payment Information

You will be billed monthly for your child's tuition. Billing dates will be the 15th of each month, starting in September. Payment is due to our registration offices by the 22nd of the month BEFORE the service is received. If you sign up for our auto debit program at the time of registration, charges will occur on the 15th of each month.

If payment is not received by the 22nd of the month, a Park District customer service staff member will contact you to make payment. If past due payment is not received by the last day of the month, your child will not be allowed to participate in the next months' program until the installment is paid in full.



Monthly Payment Instructions

Automatic Payment Deductions

For your convenience, the Park District offers and encourages the use of an automatic payment system, where payments are deducted monthly from your credit card (MasterCard, Visa, Discover or American Express) when billing is processed on the 15th of each month (or first business day should the 15th fall on a Sunday). If you are interested in using this program, please visit one of our registration facilities to obtain and complete a copy.

Manual Payment Options

- Online through your family's account at www.pdop.org after bills are processed. A username and password are required.
- Over the phone. Please call one of our registration facilities at 708-725-2000.
- Checks may be mailed to one of our registration facilities (addresses above). If mailing a payment, allow at least seven days for the payment to be received and processed by the 22nd day of the month.

On-site staff members do not have payment information and will not accept payments. Their primary responsibility is your child's safety and enjoyment.

All monthly payments are the same. Program costs are tabulated for the entire year, and then divided evenly between the September-May payments. Even if your child miss days occasionally, you are still responsible for your regular monthly tuition rate. We hire teachers, purchase supplies, and pay for field trips based on the number of children enrolled.

Please contact Scott Sekulich, Registration Manager at (708)725-2023 or scott.sekulich@pdop.org should you have a situation that requires special attention, are looking for scholarship information, or have other questions pertaining to billing.



Refund Policy & Receipts

Refund/Credit Policy

Refunds will be prorated and based on the number of full program days remaining in the month. Daily rates are different for each program and will be calculated upon the receipt of the required Program Withdrawal Request form. This rate is based on the tuition for the entire school year (daily rate/program fees vary) divided by the total number of attendance days for your child's specific program (number of program attendance days vary).

Refunds are only processed and prorated for days that the program is scheduled to operate during any month; scheduled school holidays and breaks are not included. There are no discounts or refunds given for absences. Parents may not deduct payment for days their child is registered for but does not attend.

Withdrawing from the Program

Should at any time, you need to withdraw from the program please contact the program supervisor at (708)725-2155 or our Customer Service team at 708-725-2000. We require a 2-week notice and a Program Withdrawal Request form to be completed and turned in to one of registration facilities. This will allow us to properly cancel automatic debit, communicate with teachers, and transition the child out of the program properly. If notification of withdrawal is not given, billing will continue.

Receipts

Receipts are available from your family's account (www.pdop.org). Receipts can also be emailed or printed during payment of program fees at the Administrative Office. The Park District will mail tax statements to families at the end of the year upon request.

The Park District of Oak Park's Tax ID Number is 36-6006028.

In case of a separation or divorce, the custodial parent is responsible for making payments on time and will receive all bills and tax statements.



Sign-In/Sign-out Procedure

Signing-in

Please do not bring your child to school more than five minutes prior to the start of class. The teachers need adequate time to prepare for student arrival. At the time of drop off, staff will be completing a health check and signing in your child to prevent germ transmission. Children will begin the day by washing their hands, using the restroom, and changing into shoes/slippers which are required to stay at school. Staff will assist the children with their morning routine as we are asking that drop off occur at the building entrance, rather than at the classroom door. Teachers will be using their tablet/phone to check your child in, please be aware of some delay.

Signing out

Pick up time is promptly at the end of your child's scheduled program. At pick up a staff member will sign-out your child from the program. Persons authorized to pick up your child will be indicated on the emergency contact form on Amilia Activity Messenger filled out prior to the first day of school. Teachers will be using tablet/phone to check your child out, please be aware of any delay.

If you wish to authorize additional people to pick up your child, their contact information must be indicated on the completed emergency form. The Park District must receive written or verbal notification from parents of any additions or changes to this list.

Please inform anyone who picks up your child that they will be asked to show photo identification; this may include parents who we do not see regularly.

If the teachers have any questions about an individual's authorization to pick up your child, you will be contacted before your child is released.

While we will always attempt to follow parental wishes, the Park District cannot stop a parent from picking up their child unless there is legal documentation in place. Please provide the Program Supervisor with confidential custody information.



Late Pick-Up Policy

If you are running late, please call your child's teachers on the program cell phone to notify them of your arrival time (page 3). If you are stuck in traffic or unable to pick up your child for any reason, please contact one of the authorized adults listed on your child's emergency form.

Late Fee:

5 to 15 minutes after program ends	\$10.00
16-30 minutes after program ends	\$20.00
31-45 minutes after program ends	\$30.00
Over 46 minutes after program ends.	\$40.00

Teachers cannot accept late fee payments. All parents picking up their child late will be required to sign a late payment form and will be billed accordingly through our registration office.

If we have no contact from a parent 15 minutes after the scheduled end of the program, a responsible party from your emergency form will be contacted to pick up your child. If we are unable to contact anyone who can pick up your child 30 minutes after the program ends, we will contact the Oak Park Police Department for assistance. If you are late and there is no one at your child's school when you arrive for pick-up, first contact the individuals listed on your emergency form to see if they have your child.

After three late pick-ups of 30 minutes or more, the Park District will dismiss the student from the program. This policy is enforced for the entire school year for all program locations.



Reporting an Absence

If your child will be absent from the program, whether due to illness or any other reason, you must call the center cell phone and leave a message for your child's teachers or send an email. Center numbers and email addresses can be found on page 3 of the handbook or on-line at www.pdop.org/preschool/. When calling or emailing to report an absence, please give your name, your child's name (first and last), reason, and the date(s) they will be absent.

Calendar, Days Off & School Holidays

The Playschool, Preschool, and Pre-K programs follow School District 97's school calendar. Please note the Park District school programs may be closed on additional dates due to other reasons, i.e., teacher institute days. Your child's teacher will remind you of non-attendance days in the weekly calendars, postings at school, or email reminders.

School Year Dates:

- **First Day*:**
 - Mon/Tues/Wed and Pre-K classes: Tuesday, September 5, 2023
 - Thurs/Fri classes: Thursday, September 7, 2023
- **Last Day:**
 - Mon/Tues/Wed classes: Wednesday, May 22, 2024
 - Thurs/Fri and Pre-K classes: Friday, May 24, 2024

*Playschool will have an adjusted schedule on the first day of school to help the separation process. Your child's teacher will email with details.

2023-2024 Non-Attendance Day Calendar

Monday, September 25th

Monday, October 9th

Thursday, October 26th

Friday, October 27th

Friday, November 10th

Wednesday, November 22nd

Thursday, November 23rd

Friday, November 24th

Winter Break:

Friday, December 22nd –Friday,
January 5th

(School resumes 1/8/24)

Monday, January 15th

Thursday, February 8th

Friday, February 9th

Monday, February 19th

Tuesday, March 19th

Spring Break:

Monday, March 25 -Friday, March 29
(School resumes 4/1/24)

Emergency Closings

For weather-related school closings check the park district website www.pdop.org, as well as the Homeroom app for more information. An email blast will be sent out to program participants. School District 97 may suddenly schedule a “Remote Learning Day” in case of extreme weather. (In previous years, this would have been described as a “Snow Day.”) In this instance, programs may be cancelled. Please make sure your contact information in the Amilia is accurate to ensure you receive such alerts.

Should the Park District facility where your child attends school experience issues like technical or mechanical difficulties or other unforeseen situations, our programs will be cancelled, and parents will be notified.



Health Care Policies

For the benefit of all the children and teachers in the program, we ask that you keep your child home if they are showing any signs of illness.

The Site Director, or designer, will conduct visual and verbal health checks of all that enter the center including children, parents, and staff. It is the parent's responsibility to verify their child's daily health is adequate before bringing them to school.

A physician is to diagnose any child who experiences symptoms of a contagious disease. If you have any questions regarding an illness, please call your health care provider in advance before dropping your child off.

Staff will refuse entry to any child or adult with signs of illness, such as:

- **Temperature of 100.4 degrees or above**
 - **Vomiting or Diarrhea**
 - **Congestion or runny nose**
 - **Continuous coughing**
 - **Symptoms consistent with conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**
-
- **Contagious Infestations or Infections:** These need prompt treatment to prevent the spread to others. If your child should come down with a contagious infection, other parents will be notified; names will be kept confidential.
 - Below is a partial list of contagious infestations for which a doctor's clearance note is required prior to your child's return to school. This is not a full list.
 - **COVID-19**
 - **Strep throat**
 - **Chicken Pox**
 - **Ringworm**
 - **Head Lice**

- **Impetigo**
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease**
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

Make sure you have a plan in place in case your child gets sick while at school. If you are unable to leave work yourself, please have someone who can care for your child lined up. This is for the well-being and comfort of your child, as well as all the other students and teachers.

All PDOP Playschool/Preschool/Pre-K classes will follow the guidance of the Village of Oak Park Local Health Department and other applicable governing bodies.

Children will be excluded from school until 24 hours symptom free, without the use of fever-reducing medication.

If your child will not attend the program due to an illness, you must call the center cell phone and leave a message for your child's teachers or send an email. Please give your name, your child's name (first and last), reason, and the date(s) they will be absent.

If a child becomes ill or injured while on the site, the parent will be notified immediately. Please always leave a phone number where a person authorized to pick up your child can be reached quickly. Teachers will call the emergency contacts listed on your child's emergency information form if they are unable to reach a parent or guardian directly. In case of a severe injury or illness that may require care from a health care professional, teachers will first contact emergency services to provide immediate care for your child on-site or for transport to a local hospital.

Dispensing Medication

If your child requires medication during the time they are in our care, please notify your child's teacher as soon as possible. Before any medication (prescription and non-prescription) may be given to teachers to keep secured at school, a medication dispense form must be completed; these are available through your child's teacher or online at www.pdop.org/preschool/.

Both prescription and non-prescription medicines must be in their **original container and clearly marked with the child's first and last name, medication name, doctor's name, dosage, and other specific directions**. Parents must bring medication directly to the teacher at the program location; please verbally review all instructions and any other special considerations with your child's teacher at this time.

All medications will be kept in a secure place determined by your child's teacher. Our teachers are not authorized to directly administer any medications unless given written permission otherwise.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us to provide a safe and healthy environment for all participants.



Snacks

The Park District of Oak Park will be providing snacks to the students.

Due to the increased prevalence and risk of anaphylaxis associated with children who have peanut/nut allergies, **we are a peanut/tree nut-aware facility**. Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment. The goal is to create an atmosphere that will reduce the risks to children with life threatening peanut/nut allergies. Please note that there are black walnut trees on the property at Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center and children will be investigating natural materials. The PDOP cannot guarantee that a child will not have direct exposure to tree nuts or other allergens.

When providing snack, we will not knowingly provide:

1. Nuts of any kind (peanuts, walnuts, pecans, almonds, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios,) and any other nuts.
2. Food that “may contain peanuts or tree nuts.”
3. Food that is “made on the same equipment as peanuts or tree nuts.”
4. Food that is “made in the same facility as peanuts or tree nuts.”
5. Food without labels or official ingredients

If you wish to celebrate your child’s birthday with a special snack, the above peanut-free/tree nut-free requirements must be met. The snack must be store purchased and prepackaged. We will send the snack home with the students at dismissal time. Each family then may make their own choices regarding the extra birthday snack.

The following snacks are examples (this is not an exhaustive list):

Fruit cups	Rice Cakes	Bagels & low-fat cream cheese
Apple Sauce	Yogurt	Pita bread & hummus
Cheese bites	Graham Crackers	Goldfish Crackers
Cheese & Crackers	Granola or Fruit Bars	Animal Crackers
Fresh Veggies (Like cucumber slices, green pepper strips) & hummus	Fresh Fruit: small oranges, berries, small apples, bananas, etc.	Fresh vegetables: cucumber slices, green pepper strips, etc.

Due to choking hazards, the following snacks are not permitted.

popcorn	Whole grapes (halved grapes are acceptable)
Uncut carrots (carrots in cut in thin, short strips are acceptable)	Cherry tomatoes (halved cherry tomatoes are acceptable)
Raw veggies that are not already cut into small manageable chunks.	

Food Allergies

If a child has special dietary needs due to medication, allergies, illness, or unusual circumstances, teachers must be notified in writing/email. Food allergies will be posted in the Park District facility's kitchen, so our teachers can ensure proper food distribution, if there are class-wide snacks provided for a special occasion. If a child has multiple food allergies or dietary restrictions and is unable to have the provided snack, we welcome families to provide snacks in a labeled container specifically for your child. In these unusual circumstances, please notify the Program Supervisor and teachers for approval.



Guidance & Discipline Policy

A positive approach will be used regarding discipline. Redirection, distraction, gentle persuasion, and loving guidance are used in handling most situations. We try to always work for the good of each child, as well as the class. If your child has specific circumstances that cannot be facilitated effectively by our classroom teachers, we will work with you to recommend outside resources to assist you.

We are committed to providing children and families with quality care in a safe and loving environment. A major part of that obligation is focused on the importance of redirection, guidance, and its effects on children in our care.

The following guidelines comprise our preschool discipline policy:

1. Teachers will set developmentally appropriate limits and behavior expectations.
2. Teachers will act with confidence, fairness, consistency, and patience when redirecting or providing consequences.
3. Teachers will praise and encourage positive behavior and serve as a role model for appropriate actions.
4. Teachers will state their directions and expectations in a positive tone and delivery, using a kind yet firm voice when redirecting or providing consequences.
5. Teachers will focus on the child's actions rather than their personality, making the child feel respected, confident, and reassured.
6. Teachers will address unexpected behavior immediately; consequences will be related to the act and may include a brief time away from the group.
7. Teachers will remove a child from one play area and direct them to another and use time away for repeated unexpected behavior.
8. Teachers will keep a child's unexpected behavior in perspective.
9. Teachers will involve a parent in the disciplinary process when uncontrollable behavior and/or harmful behavior to self or others persists.
10. Teachers will maintain discipline guidelines set forth by individual state licensing authorities.
11. Teachers will NEVER use food or bathroom privileges as a form of punishment.

12. Teachers will NEVER use corporal/physical punishment.

13. All children, families and staff are to monitor and follow related guidelines from appropriate agencies including IDPH, CDC, Village of Oak Park, and Cook County Public Health Department. This includes health and sanitation practices and other requirements deemed necessary by governing authorities.

The goal of discipline, redirection, and modeling is to help the child gain self-control through learning appropriate behavior. Time away from the group or activity provides the child with an opportunity to refocus themselves. This time is short in duration and facilitated by a teacher.

The Park District of Oak Park reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers the safety of himself/herself or others. Each situation will be evaluated on its own merit and appropriate action will be taken.

After attempts have been made to meet a child's individual needs, any child who demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of program offered or whose presence is detrimental to the group shall be discharged from the program. In all instances when the Park District decides that it is in the best interest of the child to terminate enrollment, parents' needs will be considered. Partnering with parents to meet the child's needs when he/she leaves the program, including referral to other agencies or facilities, will be provided.

The Park District reserves the right to dismiss a participant whose behavior endangers the well-being of themselves, or the program and no refunds are issued in these circumstances.



Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parent Teacher Conferences

Your child's teacher will schedule two conferences during the school year. As questions or concerns arise regarding your child's progress or development, additional meeting times can be scheduled. Please contact your teacher directly. As we approach the parent/teacher conference time a sign-up sheet will be posted online.

We believe that open communication between parents and teachers is essential to your child's success and happiness.

Family Events

There will be evening events held during the school year to accommodate and involve working parents. Events often revolve around the topics your child has been studying.

Field Trips/In-house Visitors/ Volunteers

Field trips, in-house visitors or volunteers will be scheduled for the classroom this school year. There may be volunteering opportunities outside of the physical classroom. Please contact your child's teacher with ideas.



A Day at School

What to wear

Children should wear clothes that allow them to be comfortable exploring, playing, and getting dirty! Keep in mind that their play will involve experimentation with various media (clay, paint, mud, glue, play dough, sand, goop, grass, etc.) which may stain clothing. Please keep an extra change of clothes in your child's backpack and/or keep one at school for unexpected accidents or messes. Please label everything. Please also bring a pair of shoes/slippers to be left at school and used only while at school.

Outside play

Children will go outside daily, so dress appropriately for the weather. Please **label** all coats, boots, and backpacks. Footwear should be conducive to running, climbing, and playing. We recommend closed toe and heel, rubber-bottomed shoes.

Supplies

At the beginning of the school year, your teacher will provide you with a needed list of school supplies. There may also be other special project requests from your teacher such as paper towel rolls, a family photo, etc.

Personal Belongings

Children are discouraged from bringing valuables to school, as neither the Park District nor teaching staff is responsible for lost or stolen items. Items from home will need to stay in the child's backpack during the school day.



Specific & Special Needs

If your child has any specific needs, check, and fill out the appropriate information on our on-line forms as well as communicate these needs directly with your child's teacher. Depending on the specific details, special arrangements may be made to best serve the needs of your child. Our goal is to help every student enjoy their first school experience.

Should you or your child's teacher feel your child needs additional support or one-on-one assistance, the Park District will work with WSSRA (West Suburban Special Recreation Association) to provide an inclusion aide during program hours at no additional cost. We are an inclusive program and partner with WSSRA to provide extra services for students. If you feel your child would benefit from such a service, please contact the Program Supervisor to start the process in finding a fit for your child.



Emergency Forms & Paperwork

An on-line system is used by the Park District to fill out your child's emergency contact information, complete waivers, share information, and upload documents. Please note if you have more than one child in our program(s) we require a separate form and documentation to be completed for each individual child.

Prior to jumping on-line and getting started, we ask that you have the following information ready as you begin the process and next steps in getting your child ready for the upcoming school year.

- A scanned copy of your child's birth certificate
 - Hard copies are accepted on site.
 - Returning students already have a birth certificate on file. We do not need another copy.
- Certificate of Health Examination
 - Must be completed by you and your child's doctor (TB test & Lead Test areas on the form need to be completed and the parent section needs to be completed and signed)
 - Hard copies are also accepted on site.
 - The medical form must be updated every 2 years, at minimum.
- Emergency contact information for those authorized to pick-up/drop-off your child.
- Family health care provider contact information

Specific directions on how to complete the uploading of documents and indicating who is allowed to pick up your child from school will be provided as you work through the on-line document.

The link to begin will be emailed directly to parents/guardians from the Amilia Activity Messenger website. Please contact the program supervisor with any questions or problems with accessing the online database.

Medication at School

The Medication Dispense form only needs to be completed if your child receives medication during program hours. Please ask your teacher for this form or download it from our website at: www.pdop.org/preschool/.

Privacy

Information in your child's file will be shared with preschool staff, when necessary, to meet their educational needs. Otherwise, all records are to be kept private, and shared only with explicit written consent from the parent/guardian.

ALL forms must be completed, and documents uploaded to our secure site or turned in prior to your child's first day of school.



We Are Here for You!!

Questions and comments are always welcome! Additional information will be distributed to parents at each program location as the need arises. The Park District of Oak Park looks forward to a great school year.

Customer Service (708)725-2000

Carroll Center	Preschool	(708) 851-8476	Carroll.Preschool@pdop.org
Carroll Center	Pre-Kindergarten	(708) 851-8474	Carroll.Prek@pdop.org
Carroll Center	Playschool	(708) 851-8479	Playschool@pdop.org
Austin Gardens	Preschool	(708)851-8480	Austin.Preschool@pdop.org
Natalie Kurek	Program Supervisor ECE	(708)-725-2155	Natalie.Kurek@pdop.org
Pilar Martinez	Program Coordinator ECE	(708)-725-3135	Pilar.martinez@pdop.org



In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences in programs, parks, and facilities.



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK

I acknowledge receipt of the Park District of Oak Park's policy manual and the below listed policies:

Guidance and discipline policy

Hours of operation

School policy

medical procedures

Expulsion policy

financial policies

Snack policy

Parent Signature:

Date: