



2021-22 School Year **PARENT HANDBOOK**



Fox Valley
Park District 
where fun begins

foxvalleyparkdistrict.org

PHILOSOPHY

Welcome to Where Learning Begins!

Creative Play and Nature Play Preschool believe play-based learning creates the most well-rounded learners for life because it encompasses all aspects of your child's development. Early play connects the intellectual, social, physical, and emotional skills necessary for success in school and in life.

Our curriculum is aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and is built on traditional activities and early concepts of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math). Elements of the nature curriculum Growing Up Wild is woven into all of our classrooms. We also utilize Michael Heggerty's Ed.D. Phonemic Awareness curriculum.

While utilizing all of the above, Nature Play's curriculum is built with an emphasis on environmental education. Students learn to embrace natural surroundings and to investigate the world around them. Conservation is an integral part of this curriculum. Students will go outside every day, year-round unless the weather is inclement or the temperature drops below 25 degrees.

We take pride in being your community-based preschool, and enjoy working with each child individually. **Creative Play Preschool** is housed at Eola Community Center, Prisco Community Center and Vaughan Athletic Center, while **Nature Play Preschool** is housed at Red Oak Nature Center and Blackberry Farm. Blackberry Farm not only utilizes the natural environment of the 54 acre park, but also incorporates hands-on activities with the resident farm animals.

PREPARING FOR PRESCHOOL

Information Forms

Please make sure your information has been completed on ePACT.

Fox Valley Park District utilizes ePACT to obtain all emergency contacts and necessary medical information for your preschool participant. Parents will receive an email from ePACT asking them to complete the needed information for each preschooler which will need to be completed prior to drop off on the first day of the program.

For Your Child's Safety

Please notify us immediately of any change in your address, email, home or work phone numbers or place of employment.

Payment Information

Registration Fee (non-refundable and due at registration): \$75

Tuition payment options:

1. Pay in monthly installments via electronic funds transfer or credit card. Financial information will be required for the payment deduction from your bank account or credit card on the designated payment date. EFT payments will be processed on the 15th of the month (or the following business day), beginning in September and running through May.

It is the customer's responsibility to notify the Park District of any changes in EFT information, including updated expiration dates of credit cards and/or changes in account numbers. A \$25 service fee will be charged for any returned payment. The fee must be paid with cash or money order within seven days of notification from the Park District.

2. Pay in full for the entire school year at the time of registration.

Tax Information

We do not provide Section 125 reimbursement accounts or tax information to parents for preschool programs. It is the parents' responsibility to keep track of expenses by keeping canceled checks and/or credit card slips. To print a receipt, log into your FVPD account. On the left-hand side of your screen, select 'My Account.' At the top of your screen, select 'Reprint a Receipt.' Fox Valley Park District's tax ID number is 36-6001059.

Program Withdraw

To withdraw from the Preschool Program, we request that you provide written notice two-weeks in advance. Payments will be stopped or refunded with the exception of the non-refundable registration fee of \$75.

Mandated Reporting

All staff who work for the Fox Valley Park District are mandated reporters and as such, are required by Illinois Law to report all suspected instances of abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Arrivals

Parents, please park in a designated parking space and walk your child in. Please do not park in the fire lane or the handicapped accessible parking spaces! We ask that you arrive 5 minutes before class time and make sure your child has gone to the restroom before class starts.

Child Release Procedure

Please ensure that the Emergency Contact/Authorization Form is filled out completely. We will not dismiss your child to an unauthorized person or someone not indicated on the attendance sheet. You may add people to your list at any time. In emergencies, if the designated person is unable to pick up your child from school, the parent or guardian may call us to release the child to someone else who is on the list. A handwritten note from the parent or guardian is also acceptable if there are changes. Please note: The persons you authorize to pick up your child will be asked to show identification the first time they pick up your child.

Late Pick Up

It is important to be on time to pick up your child. If you are going to be late, please call your site's front desk as soon as possible. Parents will be required to pay a late pick-up fee of \$5 if the parent is 10 minutes late. If the parent is more than 10 minutes late, the fee is \$1 per minute thereafter. This late fee is per family, not per child. The fee can be added to your account or may be paid upon time of pick-up. If a parent is later than 15 minutes and has not called, the supervisor will begin to contact the child's emergency contacts. This policy also applies to labs.

It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the school has current contact information for their emergency contacts at all times. Emergency contact information must be on the child's ePACT account. If a parent is late, our staff will diligently call all phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts. Our teachers will maintain a positive, caring atmosphere for the child during this time and ensure that the child is comfortable and safe. Our teachers will only discuss the issue with a parent or emergency contact, never with the child.

Parent-Instructor Communication

Communication between parents and instructors is very important. The instructors try to maintain close communication with parents throughout the school year with blog entries and daily wrap-ups. At any time, you may schedule an appointment to meet with your child's instructor to discuss specific needs of your child.

Backpacks

Please send your child to school each day with a full size backpack or open tote bag with handles. It is important to check your child's school bag each day for notes from the teacher as well as any books or artwork your child may have worked on in class.

Please send an extra pair of clothing and face mask to be kept in the backpack.

Classroom Size

Our programs operate with an instructor-to-student ratio of 1:10 or less. Our goal is to accommodate as many children as possible, but still provide a quality experience.

The Park District reserves the right to set and/or re-adjust minimum and maximum program attendance per site throughout the school year in order to maintain the safety, structure and integrity of the program as a whole.

Special Needs

If your child has any special medical, physical, psychological and/or emotional needs, please list them in detail on your registration form. Lack of information may interrupt the Park District's ability to accommodate the needs of your child promptly. The Fox Valley Park District is not responsible for any injuries, complications, damages or losses due to withheld information. All participants must be toilet-trained and are responsible for all of their own toileting needs.

Illness & Absentee Procedures

A call is not necessary on a scheduled day off of school or a single absence. If your child will not be attending for an extended period, please call your site's front desk. Please refer to your school calendar for a list of days off.

- If a child becomes ill during the program, a parent will be notified to pick up the child as quickly as possible. The child must be fever, vomit and diarrhea-free for 24 hours before returning. If a child vomits, they must go home immediately. If a parent is unable to pick them up, emergency contacts will be called.
- Please be considerate of other children and staff and keep your child home if they show signs of illness.
- In case of contagious disease, please notify Deedee Buscher (630-966-4546) immediately.
- A child must receive appropriate treatment, depending on the condition, before returning to the program and may require a medical release from a physician.
- Paramedics (911) will be called to handle serious injuries. If a child needs emergency medical care, we will accompany them, and a parent/guardian must meet us at the medical facility immediately.
- If the child already has a fever of 100.4°F or above, or they have been exposed to COVID-19, they cannot return to preschool for 10 days after symptom onset and have been fever free for at least 72 hours or have had two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, per CDC guidelines.
- If a child tests positive for COVID-19, notify Deedee Buscher (630-966-4546) immediately so others can be notified of the exposure. The child will not be identified.

COVID-19 Guidelines

Pre-screening questions will be asked daily at drop off. Has the preschool student experienced:

- A fever of 100.4°F or higher in the last 14 days?
- Contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- An unexplained cough or sore throat?
- Any body aches or fatigue that can't be explained?
- A persistent headache in the last 48 hours?

If the participant does contract COVID-19, they should remain isolated at home for 10 days after symptom onset and can be released after feverless and feeling well (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 72 hours, or has two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, with testing done at least 24 hours apart. A doctor's clearance may be requested before your child can return to preschool. If an preschooler tests positive for COVID-19, notify Deedee Buscher (630-966-4546) immediately so others can be notified of the exposure. The preschool participant will not be identified.

If a participant or staff member is exposed to COVID-19, or contracts COVID-19, it may result in the suspension or closure of a specific preschool classroom for a period of time.

All participants are required to bring and wear a face mask to preschool every day. Face masks should cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the face without restricting a participant's breathing.

Medication

Strict policies are in place regarding the dispensing of medication to participants. These policies must be followed if a participant is required to receive medication while in the program. This includes restrictions for any over the counter medications (including cough drops and pain relievers) and any prescription medication. Parents are required to complete a Permission to Administer Medication Form for any and all medication to be administered to participants by the preschool staff or the participants themselves.

Insurance

As with all Fox Valley Park District programs, the Preschool Program does not provide insurance coverage for participants. Parents should check their individual insurance policy for coverage.

Tornado and Fire Safety

Preschool teachers incorporate fire and tornado safety training into their curriculum early in the school year, and practice fire and tornado drills at regular intervals throughout the year so that children will know exactly what to do and where to go should an emergency arise.

Severe Weather and Closings

Weather-related school closings for preschool follow the school district guidelines. If the school district is closed due to weather then the preschool will also be closed. Preschool does not make up weather-related days off, and no refund will be issued.

Preschool sites and their corresponding school districts are as follows:

- Vaughan & Blackberry: School District #129
- Eola: Indian Prairie School District #204
- Red Oak & Prisco: School District #131

Text and Email Alerts

Sign up to receive TEXT and EMAIL alerts about Creative Play Preschool. Alerts will provide you with reminders about scheduled days off and weather-related closings and other important information. You may opt out at any time. It's super easy! Here's how:

1. Go to RAINOUTLINE.COM
2. Type **Fox Valley Park District** in the search box
3. Click **Fox Valley Park District**
4. Click **Creative Play Preschool Eola, Creative Play Prisco, Creative Play VAC, Nature Play Preschool Red Oak or Nature Play Preschool Blackberry**
5. Click **Email & Text Alerts** (on left side of page)
6. Follow instructions to sign up to receive alerts
7. Choose to receive alerts through **Email, Text or Both**

Once you're finished registering you're set to go!

Restroom Procedures

Students in the 2s class do not need to be potty-trained, but instructors will not change diapers or pull-ups. **All other students must be fully potty-trained.**

Your child may use the restroom at any time during the school day. Please encourage your child to tell the instructor if they need to use the restroom. The instructor will not accompany your child into the restroom; they will, however, stand outside the door. Instructors do not wipe bottoms; this is a skill that you need to work on at home.

If your child needs assistance with buttons, snaps, zippers and belts, the instructor will be happy to assist them. Please send a complete change of clothing (pants, shirt, underpants, and socks) in a Ziploc bag. This is necessary in case of accidents. The preschool program requires that a child must be toilet trained to participate. Diapers, Pull-ups and rubber pants will not be allowed.

Discipline Guidelines

Discipline is the ongoing process of helping children to develop inner controls and assume responsibility for their own actions. We accomplish this by setting, explaining and consistently enforcing clear and understandable rules, limits and consequences prior to and as part of any disciplinary action. As much as possible in carrying out discipline, teachers will use firm positive statements or redirection of behavior. If necessary, to help a child gain control, the teacher may remove him or her from the activity or group. Children will have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts and to have input in the resolving of conflicts.

Although discipline problems of preschool rarely warrants it, the Fox Valley Park District reserves the right to exclude from the program any child whose behavior seriously disrupts the program or is a danger to him/herself or others. When a child has a pattern of unacceptable behavior, the staff will work with the parents on a plan for helping the child to develop self-control and acceptable behavior. We may use the resources of Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) for assistance in observing and suggesting methods of dealing with the child. Parents will be notified before someone from FVSRA is called in to observe their child. If it becomes necessary to exclude the child, we will make every effort to assist the parents in locating an appropriate program to meet their child's needs.

Supplies

A supply list will be emailed to you over the summer for the upcoming school year. During the year we may need additional supplies and will send a note home asking for specific items. Thank you for your continued support.

Clothing for Creative Play

Children should wear comfortable clothes to play and create arts and crafts. School day clothing choices should include:

- Clothing that can get dirty. Playing and learning can be messy!
- Clothes that your child can easily handle in the washroom.
- Tennis shoes, athletic shoes or other rubber-soled shoes for safety in their participation in physical activities.
- Weather-appropriate clothing for playing outdoors. If it is above 28 degrees, children may go out to the playground.

Clothing for Nature Play

Please clearly label your child's backpack and send a complete change of clothing in a labeled zip locked bag and keep in your child's backpack every day. Children must wear comfortable and appropriate clothing, that they can easily take on and off themselves. Dress children in layers to accommodate for changing temperatures during the day. Please make sure that your child is dressed to go outside every day.

Please adhere to the following guidelines when preparing for the day:

- Athletic-style shoes with closed toes for safety (no sandals, flip-flops or crocs, please).
- If it is sunny – apply sunscreen before class
- If it is buggy – apply insect repellent before class
- If it is raining – please send your child in rain gear (boots, pants and jacket). No umbrellas, please.
- If it is snowing – please send hats, easy-on mittens, snow pants and snow boots

Photo Disclaimer

All registrants and participants permit the taking of photographs and videos of themselves and their children during Park District activities for publication and use as the Park District deems appropriate.

Weather

Since your child's safety is our priority during class, we will not explore the outdoors during a thunderstorm with lightning, bitterly cold days or on extremely windy days when branches might fall from trees. If there is a light rain, we will stay close to the building or indoors depending upon the teachers' discretion.

Cold Weather Guidelines

The teachers at Nature Play Preschool will decide before each class as to whether or not the children will be engaging in outdoor activities that day. Teachers base their decisions off of wind chill, temperature and sunlight. Due to incorrect weather forecasts or weather changes that may occur during a class allowing us to play outside later in class, we advise that you dress your child for the weather as specified on this page of the handbook.

If temperatures fall below 25 degrees or "feels like below 25 degrees" we will stay inside. If the temperature is above 25 degrees, or "feels like" 25 degrees, the children will go outside to explore for shortened periods of time between 10-25 minutes. When the temperature is above 32 degrees the children will be able to spend longer periods of time in the outdoors.

In keeping with our educational philosophy, we take time to explore in the outdoors, anywhere from 30-45 minutes. Our goal is to inspire children to go outside because they enjoy it!

Celebrations

Birthdays are important days in your child's life. As a parents, you have options when it is your child's turn to celebrate his/her birthday. For birthday celebrations, you may bring a special store-bought snack. Please remember that it must be nut free. We do have children with life-threatening allergies. You may also send in goodie bags for each child with non-food items that will go home with each child at the end of the day. Ideas of items include pencils, stickers, small party favors or bubbles.

Our preschool classes celebrate many different holidays throughout the year. If you do not want your child to participate in particular holiday activities, please let your child's teacher know in advance.

Snacks

Depending on your location, a daily snack time may be part of your child's routine. Your teacher will discuss the classroom snack policy at orientation.



Deedee Buscher
Preschool Program Supervisor
630-966-4546 dbuscher@fvpd.net

Blackberry Farm
100 S. Barnes Rd
630-892-1550

**Eola Community
Center**
555 S. Eola Rd
630-851-8990

**Prisco Community
Center**
150 W. Illinois Ave.
630-859-8606

**Red Oak Nature
Center**
2343 S. River St
630-897-0818

**Vaughan Athletic
Center**
2121 W. Indian Trail
630-907-9600