



August 28, 2023

Dear Kindergarten Enrichment Parents:

We are gearing up for another terrific year of KE at the Glen Ellyn Park District! Hopefully your summer has been a good one and each of you has been able to enjoy some time in the sun, the pool or a family vacation. We are working hard to plan a school year that is safe and filled with learning, fun, and plenty of room to expand our minds! Teachers are preparing classrooms and getting ready for the children to head to KE, and we cannot wait to have them back in the classroom!

This year, school starts the week of September 5th. The first day of class will be a regular school day for children. More information on orientation presentations is included in the attached email. However, if you should have any questions prior to the start of school, you may contact Ms. Candi at 630-858-2463 x2304, beginning August 28, or by email at ke.ms304@gepark.org, or feel free to contact me.

Please read through the enclosed Family Handbook, it contains important information regarding the coming school year as it relates to any updates or changes to the program. Also included is the school year schedule and general information regarding our online emergency information forms, etc.

For 2023, families will be asked to complete the emergency information sheet ONLINE through a separate link that will be emailed to you from **ePACT**. Using the online form allows us the opportunity to eliminate the need for paper forms and provides more consistent information in the way it is collected and stored. It is imperative that you complete this form prior to the start of the KE school year. If we do not receive your child's completed form online, you will receive regular email reminders with the link to complete the information. During this process, you will also be asked to submit a copy of your child's *Medical Examination or Immunization Form (which can be obtained from your physician). The purpose of the examination form is for us to see that your child's immunizations are up to date and to inform us of any childhood illnesses. You can upload the form to this site or bring a copy to orientation or the first day of school, and to give it to your child's teacher.

**This may not require a separate doctor visit if your preschooler has been seen by his/her physician in the last year. Contact your doctor and they can supply a copy of the form they have on record.*

As a reminder, lunch times will be available for students at MSRC after or before Kindergarten Enrichment for 2023-2024; Mrs. Brown is our lunchroom monitor. More information will be available at orientation next week.

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 630-942-7267 or email me at jrobinson@gepark.org.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Robinson
Superintendent of Recreation Services

Family Handbook



**Kindergarten Enrichment Program
at Main Street Recreation Center**

630-858-2463 x2304

Our email address is:

ke.msrc304@gepark.org



NO SCHOOL dates for 2023-2024

Please note that we **WILL** have school on D41 SIP days in ALL classes.
(SIP dates are NOT listed below.)

FALL 2022:

August 29	<i>Meet & Greet Orientations:</i> Families will meet teachers in the classroom between 5:30-6:30pm
Tuesday, Sept. 6	<i>1st Day of School: Tu/Th AM-PM</i>
Wednesday, Sept. 7	<i>1st Day of School: MWF AM</i>
Friday, Sept. 22	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> - Holiday/Teacher Institute Day
Monday, Oct. 9	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> - Holiday/Teacher Institute Day
Oct. 5-6	<i>Photos at MSRC – schedule to come</i>
Nov. 20-24	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – Thanksgiving/Fall Break
Dec. 25-29	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – Winter Break

SPRING 2023:

Jan. 1-5	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – Winter Break
Monday, Jan. 8	<i>Classes Resume</i>
Monday, Jan. 15	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> - Holiday/Teacher Institute Day
Monday, Feb. 19	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – President’s Day
Friday, Mar. 1	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> - Teacher Institute Day
March 25-29	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – Spring Break
Friday, Apr. 26	<i>NO SCHOOL</i> – Teacher Institute Day
May 16/17	<i>LAST DAY of KE</i>

**The Glen Ellyn Park District follows the District 41 school year calendar.*
Snow/Cold Weather Days

If District 41 is closed for weather, the GEPD Preschool Program will also be closed. Please check the D41 website, or listen to AM stations WGN (720), WMAQ (670), WBBM (780), WLS (890), or check local TV stations for D41 closures. If we expect inclement weather and choose to close prior to the next school day, we will send an email to the household account holder. Please make sure your email is current.

Welcome to Kindergarten Enrichment!

The Glen Ellyn Park District Staff would like to welcome you and your child to the next Kindergarten Enrichment school year. The following information is presented for use throughout the year and should be saved as a reference for your family. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the program supervisor listed below for assistance.

Jeannie Robinson

Superintendent of Recreation Services

630-942-7267

jrobinson@gepark.org

How We Are Learning? An Introduction to the Project Approach

What is the project approach?

The project approach is a method of teaching in which an in-depth study of a particular topic is conducted by a group of children.

How is the Project Approach different from other ways of learning?

Our children study one topic for a long period of time. Topics are selected partly based on student interest or on subjects that are meaningful to the children and their lives. Students will go into great depth and often at a level higher than many adults would expect. The teacher integrates content knowledge like math, reading, and science into the project.

How is a project planned?

The children make many of their own plans with the teacher's guidance. Plans might include an onsite visit and/or interviews with experts. An expert is anyone who knows a great deal about the topic of study. Family members and friends can serve as experts.

How will the children learn?

Children use a variety of resources to find answers to their questions. These include traditional resources like books. The project approach is one way among a variety of ways that children learn. The project integrates much of the same knowledge and skills presented in more formal ways in the classroom. Projects have the added advantage of providing an opportunity for children to apply and use what they are learning as they solve problems and share what they know. It provides opportunities for cooperative learning where children are challenged to think creatively and problem solve to support brain development.

How does the teacher know if children are learning?

The teacher collects and displays children's work, observes what they do, and analyzes their work for interest and understanding. This is a form of documentation. The curriculum goals of the project are reviewed and documentation is planned to be sure that children are learning concepts and skills specified in the goals.

How can others help with projects?

Realize that children have their own questions and are learning to use you and many resources to find answers. Take their questions seriously and listen to what they have to say. Provide space and opportunities for them to draw or photograph what they are studying. Children learn best when many senses are involved so anything that they can touch, see up close, or hear is helpful. Things that can be borrowed for study in the classroom are valued and appreciated, especially parts of machines, tools, samples of products, and so forth. We hope you will follow up, view our documentation, and find out how children have processed what they have learned from each project.

DAILY SCHEDULE and CLASSROOM HOURS

- **Circle Time:** Children will gather together with the teachers and discuss that day's focus regarding the project theme and answer a question of the day.
- **Center Time:** Children will break into small groups and work at 4 different centers. 2 centers will be teacher directed and 2 will be child directed. Activities will vary and focus on literacy, math and ways to explore the topic being studied.
- **Free Play:** Children will have time to independently investigate and play with various activities in the classroom. This may include dramatic play, blocks, legos, book corner, listening station, etc.
- **Project Work:** Project work will vary depending on what stage of the project the children are in at the time. Idea mapping, site visits, model building, documentation, and observations are all part of the project process.
- **Play Time:** Teachers will plan for large motor activities for the students and go outdoors for recess when weather permits.
- **Outdoor Time:** Teachers will incorporate "outside time" for learning throughout the week, weather permitting. Our goal is to provide at least 20-30 minutes of outdoor instruction when permissible. We ask that parents please dress students for the weather, as we may be outdoors when it is warm, just after rain, or if it is a little chilly.

CLASSROOM HOURS

Our class schedule is as follows:

Morning classes begin at 8:45am, end at 11:30am.

Afternoon classes begin at 12:30pm, end at 3:15pm.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES:

Monthly visits from B#Sharp Music for Children - Music classes are held in a large room where students have plenty of room to move and interact.

Monthly visits from GEPD Naturalist for science/nature element – these generally take place outdoors when weather permits.

CLASS ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL

Teachers will open the classroom door for drop-off at the start of class time. Arriving promptly to KE ensures that your child can fully participate in class and reduces class disruptions. Detailed instructions for drop-off/pick-up will be provided for each class prior to the start of the school year.

Students and one parent/caregiver should approach the classroom door at Main Street Recreation Center on the 3rd floor (room 304) for check-in.

Staff will tell parents/guardians to say their goodbyes at the door. Please understand that when one parent/guardian lingers, it is a distraction and can be upsetting for other children in the classroom. We ask that parents drop-off and exit the facility after check-in to limit traffic in and around the building. Classroom doors will be locked after the start of class. If you need to pick your child up from class early, please notify the teachers at drop-off, or contact the teacher by phone before returning to the facility. Unannounced visitors should go to the office before knocking on the Kindergarten Enrichment classroom door.

Children must be checked out promptly at the end of class by a parent/guardian or an authorized individual at the classroom door.

Authorized individuals must be listed on the child's Emergency Information Form and be able to present a valid state identification card or driver's license. To update this form throughout the year, contact your child's teacher or log in to your ePACT account and update the information online. Once completed, please notify your child's teacher so they may obtain a revised copy of your child's information. A written notification will serve as a temporary update to the Emergency Information Form; however, staff are unable to alter pick-up arrangements on verbal requests alone.

CLOTHING and FACE COVERINGS

Children should dress in comfortable, loose-fitting clothes and sturdy shoes that do not restrict their range of movement. Gym shoes are recommended to permit full participation in all activities. Each child will have a hook on which to hang jackets/backpacks. Children should have a backpack to carry items to/from school and a filled water bottle.

Before the cold of winter arrives, think carefully about snowsuits and boots. Children are expected to put on their own coats and boots. Tight fitting and hard to manage fastenings are frustrating to children; it is difficult to be independent when they must have help dressing. Please label all of your child's clothes, including boots and bookbags. Staff are not responsible for lost/stolen money, valuables, or personal items. All personal toys, games, and electronics should remain at home.

Children in the KE Program are not required to wear a face covering at school but are welcome to do so if you would like them to. If you prefer to do so, please be sure to have an appropriately sized, well-fitted, child-size face covering (preferably cloth) if you would like them to wear one. A clean secondary face covering should be kept in their backpack should their first become soiled during class.

BIRTHDAYS IN KINDERGARTEN ENRICHMENT

KE will celebrate birthdays during the school year and a treat at the end of the year for all students will be provided, including summer birthdays.

CLASS PARTIES

We celebrate holidays with class parties for fall (Halloween) and winter break. Our Valentine's Day party for KE is generally in the form of a service project. Parent helpers for snacks/drinks/games/crafts are needed for the Halloween and holiday parties. Parent helpers may also be asked to participate in some of our unit activities, such as being an expert on a topic; or sharing artifacts, pictures, or your knowledge in a particular subject.

KINDERGARTEN STANDARDS

Kindergarten Enrichment will focus on meeting goals from the Illinois Kindergarten Learning Standards. We work with the Glen Ellyn School Districts to make sure we are following the same guidelines set for the school district curriculum.

THE STAFF

All our staff has course work or experience in the field of Child Development, Early Childhood Education or Special Education. Lead Teachers have either earned a degree in these areas or have extensive experience working in a school setting. All staff members are encouraged to continue their education through workshops and classes, and all are certified in Infant/Child CPR, AED, and First Aid. All of our educators have had extensive background checks.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY

Emergency information and medical forms must be completed online through the ePACT Network prior to the start of the school year. Please check your inbox for an invitation to complete these forms prior to the start of the school year. Families are also asked to submit a copy of their child's immunization record from their family physician. This form can be uploaded to the ePACT Emergency Information Form or brought to class on orientation day or the first day of school. Please check with your physician, you may not require a special visit to complete the immunization form.

CANCELLED CLASSES

In cases of inclement weather and the like, we follow School District #41 and #89 closings. For information on whether there will be class, please listen to the radio for announcements on these school districts. There will be no call from our program. We will attempt to update our GEPD Weather Hotline with Park District closings ASAP.

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES and COVID

Teachers have detailed guidelines for any parent who may have questions about whether their child is able to attend class. We all work to keep illness out of our homes. Therefore, in respect to you, our policy concerning under-the-weather children is clear.

To maintain a healthy preschool environment, keep your child home if they have experienced any of these symptoms within the past 24 hours: sore throat, cough, runny nose, rash, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, fever, earache, or any communicable disease. All children must be symptom-free within 24 hours of attending class. Students should be kept home until they are free of symptoms for a full 24 hours, without medication, or have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

We feel this is the best way to keep your child from catching something at preschool or passing illness to others. If your child should contract a contagious condition of **any kind**, please notify your child's teacher immediately. Exceptions will NOT be made to this policy. When in doubt, we ask that you err on the side of caution and keep your child home until they are symptom free. Please review the IDPH (Illinois Department of Public Health) Decision Tree at: https://dph.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/idph/covid19/guidance/school/school-decision-tree_8.23.2022.pdf regarding the current COVID-19 school guidance for recommendations for evaluating symptomatic individuals for Pre-K and K-12 programs. The Park District consults with the DuPage County Health Department's COVID-19 Team regarding policies and protocols for the Preschool and Kindergarten Enrichment Program. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to jrobinson@gepark.org.

ACCIDENTS / INJURIES

All staff is certified in Infant/Child CPR/AED. The appropriate first aid treatment will be administered to children who are injured at school. Teachers will inform the child's parent of such action when the child is picked up or call when necessary.

MEDICATION

Under the guidance of a physician, parents/guardians should make every effort to adjust medication schedules so that medication may be administered under parent/guardian supervision. If your child needs medication dispensed to him/her during school hours, staff *may* be authorized to do so if the proper forms have been fully completed. In some instances, the administration of medication cannot be performed by Park District staff due to specific and/or complex physician and/or manufacturer instructions or invasive procedures. If medication needs to be dispensed, please request a "medication dispensing form" from your teacher, online with the ePACT Network, or the Superintendent of Recreation Services.

All medications sent to school, including over-the-counter medications, must be brought to the staff in the original container properly labeled by the pharmacist and/or with a physician order. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all medications are within their expiration date and for collecting medications once discontinued and/or on the last day of school.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of serious injury or illness, it is the policy of the Glen Ellyn Park District to seek immediate medical attention by calling 9-1-1, before contacting a parent/guardian. All costs associated with medical attention are the responsibility of the parent/guardian as stated in the registration waiver. The Park District does not assume any costs associated with medical attention. Students may also participate in scheduled and/or impromptu fire, severe weather, and security drills.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT and DISCHARGE GUIDELINES

Classrooms are intended to be spaces where children feel safe, help one another, and feel a part of the group. An important component of our curriculum involves nurturing social capability where children gain an understanding of how to treat others and how they want to be treated by others. They will participate in friendships while acquiring the skills needed to cooperate, negotiate, and problem solve. Staff set limits and explain consequences in order to help the children understand why rules are needed.

As in the Preschool Program, Staff will continue to promote self-regulation skills and help children experience the benefits of managing their feelings and behavior in the classroom. The children will learn how to control impulses by not acting (behavioral self-regulation), plan and problem solve (cognitive self-regulation), and manage feelings (emotional self-regulation). The ability to understand one's own feelings and the feelings of others, to regulate and express emotions appropriately, to control impulses, tolerate frustration, follow limits and expectations, and delay gratification are critical to a child's success in school and in life. Teachers utilize a variety of strategies including speaking with children and/or modeling skills. They implement positive

guidance strategies including offering choices, engaging redirection, altering the environment, and reflection. All behavior management strategies are suggested to the children in a gentle, positive, and discreet manner.

Staff will maintain open communication with families to work through behavior concerns. The supervisor of the Preschool/Kindergarten Enrichment Program is also available to assist in meetings as needed. The Park District reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any participant whose behavior disrupts the program or endangers him/herself or other participants. A parent/guardian or authorized individual must be available to pick up the child within fifteen minutes of incidents that warrant removal from a classroom. After three such incidents, the child will be discharged from the program.

PHOTO POLICY

Periodically, photos are taken of children in class by park district staff. Such photos are for park district use only, for use in the program brochure, pamphlets, flyers, or other promotional materials.

CLASS PICTURES

Pictures will be taken of each student during the school year. The purchase of these pictures is optional. Photo information will be sent home the week before picture day.

SIGN IN / SIGN OUT SHEET

All parents (or an authorized guardian) must sign their child in and out of school each day; **please plan your pick-up times to make sure that you are picking up by 11:30am for the AM program (12:00pm for those staying for lunch), and by 3:15pm for the PM program. Drop-off for the PM program is 12:00pm for those coming for PM lunch, or 12:30pm for those students not coming for lunch. All PM students must be picked up by 3:15pm.** Only authorized persons may pick up a child. Authorization must be obtained in writing from the parent or guardian. If you will have an alternate pick-up person that is not on your list, please inform the teachers when your child is dropped off at class. Teachers **will not** release students to anyone not on the pick-up list unless arrangements have been made otherwise. Please be sure to update and make changes to your ePACT file if you need to add/delete anyone on your list.

The Kindergarten Enrichment Sign-in/Sign-out sheet is posted on the hall bulletin board. In the case of carpools, the driver of the car pool will sign all children in and out. Please make sure that your carpool drivers are listed on your approved pick-up list. You are always welcome to adjust the list as needed throughout the school year on your ePACT list. The Sign-In/Sign-out Sheet is a procedure the Park District uses to help guard your child's safety. For the protection of all, it is strongly recommended that all parents/caregivers wear a face covering at drop-off/pick-up and certify that they will perform their child's wellness check prior to coming to school and check the box on the sign-in sheet that they have done so.

CARPOOLS and PICK-UP PROCEDURES

For the safety of all students, please follow the guidelines below for carpools and pick-up from Kindergarten Enrichment.

Carpools will need to provide a list with student and parent first and last names in their carpool and class (Tu/Th or M/W, and AM or PM). Submit these as soon as possible, so we can safely release students. Please keep the same schedule, if possible, throughout the school year for the safety of the children and the ease in dismissal for teachers.

Thank you!

Example: List of Students: Johnny Smith, Amy Adams, etc.

Tu/Th AM Class

“Tuesdays: Mrs. Susan Smith (Johnny’s mom)”

“Thursdays: Mr. Mark Adams (Amy’s dad)”

Only a parent/regular caregiver of a child may add or delete names of acceptable pick-up people to your Park District Emergency Form (in ePACT).

Please note: We understand parent’s busy schedules, but we have many students and several carpools. Carpool responsibility and the safety of those in their carpool is up to each parent.

OOPS! I’M LATE!

Classes will begin and end promptly at their respective times. Parents are asked to respect our class times and drop off and pick up their children at these times, unless otherwise instructed. It is our policy that the teacher remains with the children until each child is released to the parent or authorized party. Should you find that you will be late to pick-up your child, please call the MSRC at 630-858-2463 x2304. Consistent late pick-ups will result in the following:

1st time – a word of warning and request to be on time

2nd time – warning that charges will be assessed on 3rd offense

3rd time – parents will be charged a \$10 late fee for the first ten minutes; \$1.00 per minute thereafter.

***If you are dropping off late or picking up early, please go to the office on the 2nd floor and ask the staff to call the classroom before proceeding to the classroom. Teachers will not open the door for unannounced visitors/families who knock on the door without a phone call first.**

COMMUNICATIONS TO and FROM HOME

The Kindergarten Enrichment Program will be communicating as much as possible through email. Weekly updates will be featured and communicated through email. Please make sure we have a current email address on file with the KE teachers.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

We encourage you to visit your child’s classroom. Please let us know when you would like to observe so we can arrange a visit, as permitted by current health and safety guidelines.

CLASS SIZE

Each class is staffed with two educators/staff. Classes for Kindergarten Enrichment are typically limited to 12 children in the AM and PM programs.

PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Should you need to withdraw your child from the Kindergarten Enrichment Program at any time, please contact the program supervisor. Fees paid will be refunded based on the number of days attended during the school year. If you need to cancel prior to the start of the school year, you will be refunded the full amount paid, minus your commitment fee. The \$75 commitment fee paid is nonrefundable.

If you have any questions about the information included in this handbook, please contact:

**Jeannie Robinson at 630-942-7267, jrobinson@gepark.org;
or Ms. Candi at 630-858-2463 x2304, ke.msrc304@gepark.org.**

*Thank you for choosing the Glen Ellyn Park District Kindergarten Enrichment Program
for your extra-curricular school experience. We look forward to a year of learning and fun!*

HAVE A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR!

