

# **East Lyme Public Schools**

## **INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**

**2021-2022**

East Lyme Public Schools Mission Statement

*East Lyme Public Schools will inspire, engage and educate each student to become a contributing citizen and a responsible, independent and critical thinker.*



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## **STAFF:**

The East Lyme Integrated Preschool Program is staffed with many experienced professionals whose goal is to provide children with a nurturing, stimulating and individualized program. Staff members are listed below.

1. Jennifer VanDusen, Special Education Coordinator
2. Dawn LeMay, Special Education Teacher
3. Lori Skelton, Special Education Teacher
4. Michelle Gada, Special Education Teacher
5. Leslie Moffett, Special Education Teacher
6. Melissa Stedman, Special Education Teacher
7. Heidi Grant, Speech and Language Pathologist
8. Alicia Rose, Occupational Therapist
9. Sandy Robitaille, Physical Therapist
10. Nancy Doyle, School Psychologist
11. Annah Roasa, Teaching Assistant
12. Jayne Dumais, School Nurse
13. Cindy Campbell, Administrative Assistant

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM:**

The East Lyme Integrated Preschool Program is located at Lillie B. Haynes School. It serves children with special needs and their typically developing peers from East Lyme.

*Play is a child's work.* The program philosophy is that children learn best through active participation in a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences. It is essential that these experiences be provided in a safe environment, staffed by adults who are sensitive and responsive to children's needs. The program uses a reverse mainstream model, which allows for an integrated education, and benefits both children with and without special needs. This inclusive education provides an opportunity to build friendships, social interaction, and teaches all children to understand and accept human differences.

The preschool program is a language-enriched program that adheres to the standards of the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT-ELDS). The program focuses on all areas of development including language and literacy, cognitive development, physical development and social-emotional development. The program follows a structured routine, which provides consistency and predictability. The children participate in table activities, circle time, play, snack, outdoor or gross motor activities, creative movement, songs and finger plays.

The program goals are:

1. To promote social, emotional, and cognitive growth.
2. To use positive health, safety, and nutritional practices.
3. To empower children, allowing them to take control of their own learning and thereby enhance self-esteem.
4. To respect and acknowledge diversity.
5. To foster open communication between home and school.

### **ENROLLMENT AND TUITION:**

The preschool program serves children three to five years of age who are residents of East Lyme. Planning and Placement Teams (PPT) identify children with special needs and may determine that the preschool program is the appropriate placement for the child.

Parents may also enroll their child as a typically developing peer. This selection is determined through a lottery system and is a tuition-based program.

All students must provide proof of residency at our Central Office prior to attending the program. Our team will provide you with enrollment information prior to entering.

**Tuition for the 2021/2022 School year**

Tuition for the 3 hour session:

$$\mathbf{\$170.00/month \times 10 months = \$1700.00}$$

Tuition for the 5 hour session:

$$\mathbf{\$191.00/month \times 10 months = \$1910.00}$$

Parents will receive monthly invoices emailed to them from our online software called RecDesk. Upon receipt of the invoice, parents should process their payments online. There are no service fees for paying online.

Account balances can be checked at any time. Parents can easily make an extra payment or request an individualized payment plan.

**Tuition is due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

*A \$25 late fee will be assessed to all invoices that become 30 days past due. At 60 days past due, students will not be able to participate until the invoices have been paid.*

**Contact Karen Armstrong for any billing questions or for help with the RecDesk.**

## **INTEGRATED PROGRAM SCHEDULE:**

If your child is enrolled in the 3 hour session, the hours are 8:30-11:30 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

If your child is enrolled for the 5 hour session, the hours are 8:30-1:30 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

*Children with special needs will attend the program as determined by the PPT meeting.*

The preschool program follows the East Lyme School calendar. The first day for preschool is Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **SNOW DAYS/WEATHER CANCELLATIONS:**

The preschool will be closed at the discretion of the Superintendent whenever necessary due to severe inclement weather or emergency early dismissal. In the event of a school cancellation, delayed opening or early dismissal, parents will receive a message via text, email or phone from Infinite Campus. Notification settings can be modified by accessing your Infinite Campus parent portal.

### **3 Hour Session:**

If your child is attending the three hour morning session (8:30-11:30) and there is a two hour school delay, then there will be no morning preschool. The afternoon session will begin at its regularly scheduled time. If there is an early dismissal, students will leave at the regularly scheduled time (11:30).

### **5 Hour Session:**

If your child is attending the five hour program from 8:30-1:30, and there is a two hour school delay, preschool will begin at 10:30. If there is early dismissal, preschool will dismiss at 11:30.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION:**

It is an important goal of the preschool program to maintain close communication between home and school. In forming a partnership with families, the staff is better able to provide the highest quality program for your child. A Back-to-School Night is scheduled in the fall to introduce parents and staff. We will maintain contact with parents through written notes, phone conversations, and parent workshops.

Weekly communication is shared with parents. Parents are encouraged to respond or share news from home. Parent Conferences are held in November and April. Parents may also request to meet with their child's teacher, if necessary. Should a staff member have a concern about your child, she will request a meeting with you.

## **NEW: ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDUES FOR 2021-22:**

Parents drop off will be in front of the school building. Parents should pull up to the curb and wait for a staff member to come to their car. When you see the staff member, please exit your car and assist your child in getting out of the car. The staff member will bring your child into the building. We will try to do 3-4 cars at a time with multiple staff so please pull out in a timely manner so other cars can continue to pull up and drop their children off.

Your children will be dismissed from the front of the building the same way as they arrived. Staff will bring your children out to your car and ask you to sign them out. All parents and guardians will be **required** to show a license to our staff and sign their child out when picking up their children from school each day.

### **DISCIPLINE:**

The preschool staff uses positive methods of discipline encouraging self-control, decision-making, cooperation, and positive self-esteem. If a child exhibits inappropriate behavior, a staff member may first try to redirect the behavior. If this is not successful, the staff member may take the child aside to talk about the incident and the child may be asked to choose a different activity or area for play.

### **CHILDREN'S DRESS:**

Your child will be involved in many active learning activities. These hands-on activities and projects sometimes require a change of clothing. An extra set of labeled clothing should accompany your child and may be left in his/her cubby.

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that they may put on and take off by themselves as much as possible. Outdoor play is an important part of our day; be sure your child is dressed for the season (boots, mittens, hats, coats, etc.) We **will** venture out into the snow! Please be sure all clothing is labeled including diapers and wipes as needed.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS:**

The preschool program has a wonderful variety of developmentally appropriate toys. We understand that children like to share items from home but we need to restrict this practice to special times designated by the teacher. This will prevent loss and breakage. If your child needs to bring a security object from home, please discuss this with the teacher.

## **SNACKS and LUNCHES**

The children will be asked to bring in a healthy snack and drink each day. ***Please remember to cut grapes into quarters for three year olds.***

We ask that you also send your child in with a water bottle labeled with their name so they have a drink throughout the day. For students in our five hour session, please provide a lunch and drink for your child each day. In keeping with the Lillie B. Haynes handbook we will promote a healthy environment by following their food guidelines. Access to free & reduced lunch is available to eligible students.

**Because of peanut and tree nut allergies, all of the preschool classrooms will be peanut and tree nut free. Please be sure to check food labels and refrain from sending in anything that may contain these ingredients. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.**

### Suggestions for healthy snacks

Fresh Fruit - Fruit Cup or Salad - Low Fat Yogurt - String Cheese - Low Fat Popcorn - Raisins - Dry Cereal (low sugar) - Salsa and Fat Free Chips - Fresh Vegetables and Low Fat Dip - Graham Crackers - Pretzels - Animal Crackers - English Muffin with Jelly - Mini Bagels with Low Fat Cream Cheese - Rice Cakes - Whole Grain Crackers - Cheese and Low Fat Crackers

## **CELEBRATIONS**

To promote a healthier school environment and as an alternative to food, teachers will take time to recognize each child on their special day. **Please do not send in any treats or favors for your child's birthday.** For health and safety reasons, we will not accept home prepared baked goods due to student's wide varieties of food allergies.

## **HEALTH REGULATIONS**

The health of the children is a cooperative effort between the home and the school. The home should provide each child with a good night's sleep and nourishing breakfast or lunch. All children must have a current physical form on file with the nurse by the first day of school per State of CT guidelines. Please notify school if your child has a communicable disease. All students age 5 and under must have a flu shot by Dec. 2021 to remain eligible for school attendance. Please see our district website for further health and safety information regarding COVID-19.

## **KINDERGARTEN ELIGIBILITY:**

In order to provide learning opportunities for other children in our town, children who have participated in our preschool program for two years and are kindergarten eligible, will not be allowed to enroll for a third year of preschool. Please see your child's teacher to discuss this further if you have concerns. Children with special needs who are kindergarten eligible are also encouraged to attend kindergarten; however please see your child's team to discuss this in further detail.

## **EVALUATING AND IMPROVING OUR PROGRAM:**

The program has experienced significant change in recent years as part of an on-going improvement process. The staff is committed to continually modifying the program to meet the needs of our children and their families.

Parent input is an important part of this process and parents are encouraged to share ideas with the teachers at any time. Parents should first bring concerns to their child's teacher. If the parents are unable to resolve the issue with the classroom teacher, they should contact **Jennifer VanDusen, Special Education Coordinator at 860-876-6951**. She is directly responsible for the administration of the program.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If your child will be absent or you wish to speak with your child's teacher, please call 860-739-2922 and enter your child's teacher's extension number listed below. You will need to leave a message during school hours; however our staff will be checking messages prior to 8:20 a.m. or after 2:00 p.m. In case of an emergency or an urgent matter, dial the main number and then press 0 to speak to the main office. They will contact your child's teacher directly. The following is the certified staff e-mail and telephone extension numbers:

| Name             | Position                     | Phone Extension           | Email                         |
|------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Dawn LeMay       | PK Teacher                   | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4520 | dawn.lemay@elpsk12.org        |
| Lori Skelton     | PK Teacher                   | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4516 | lori.skelton@elpsk12.org      |
| Michelle Gada    | PK Teacher                   | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4518 | michelle.gada@elpsk12.org     |
| Melissa Stedman  | PK Teacher                   | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4519 | melissa.stedman@elpsk12.org   |
| Leslie Moffett   | PK ABA Teacher               | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4514 | leslie.moffett@elpsk12.org    |
| Heidi Grant      | SLP                          | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4523 | heidi.grant@elpsk12.org       |
| Alicia Rose      | OT                           | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4517 | alicia.rose@elpsk12.org       |
| Sandy Robitaille | PT                           | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4517 | sandra.robitaille@elpsk12.org |
| Nancy Doyle      | School Psychologist          | 860-739-2922<br>Ext. 4552 | nancy.doyle@elpsk12.org       |
| Karen Armstrong  | Bus Transportation & Billing | 860-739-3966<br>Ext. 5607 | karen.armstrong@elpsk12.org   |

|                   |                                     |              |  |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Jennifer VanDusen | Special<br>Education<br>Coordinator | 860-876-6951 | <a href="mailto:jennifer.vandusen@elspk12.org">jennifer.vandusen@elspk12.org</a> |
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