

Early Childhood Program Family Handbook 2017-2018



Linn-Mar Community School District

Inspire Learning. **Unlock Potential. Empower Achievement.**

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Educational Equity (Board Policy 105.1)

The Linn-Mar Community School District will not discriminate in its educational activities and is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, covered military veteran, disability, genetic information, familial status, physical attribute, political belief/party preference, or social-economic status.

The Linn-Mar Community School District requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

The Linn-Mar Community School District is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and genetic information. Further, the Board affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and harassment.

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The Linn-Mar Early Childhood Program

The Linn-Mar Early Childhood Program values and understands the critical importance of play by observing, supporting and participating. Play is infused throughout the preschool day to form an integrated curriculum. It is an essential piece in all areas of development.

Early Childhood Blended Program (ECBP)

Linn-Mar's Early Childhood Blended Program is offered to children that are five years old by September 15th and not yet ready for our standard kindergarten program. Half of the days are spent in a blended classroom of four year olds and five year olds focusing on social, emotional, and behavioral growth, as well as academics. The other half of the school day will have literacy and math focus with only the five-year-old students attending.

Enrollment in this program is determined by Linn-Mar's screening process and parental input. The main areas under consideration include: social readiness, fine motor skills, pre-reading skills and pre-math skills. Screening dates are in February and March at the Learning Resource Center.

Pre-Academic

Children expand their knowledge by interacting with people and real objects. Math, science, social studies and pre-reading are blended into the curriculum. Thematic units create a foundation for counting, number recognition, shape identification, measuring and the ability to reason.

Language/Literacy

The five basic areas of literacy: listening, speaking, writing, reading and thinking, are interdependently woven into the preschool day. Story time and group language enrichment activities are part of the daily curriculum, along with opportunities for structured dialogue.

Motor Skills

Many components of children's play help develop both fine and large motor skills. Staff facilitate students as they participate in activities that require agility, balance, coordination and strength. As they master their large motor skills, their fine motor skills become more controlled. Art activities, journaling, play dough, cutting and other manipulatives are all used to help advance the child's dexterity.

Social/Emotional

The programs include a nurturing environment where positive self-esteem and an appreciation of individual differences and cooperation are key. Teachers, parents and children all work together to create and maintain a learning community.

Music and Movement

Music and movement is incorporated each day to promote self-expression. Singing and dancing are coordinated to help the children refine their large motor skills.

Art

Art is an essential component of curriculum. A large variety of art materials are available every day. The program emphasizes the art process over the final product as the children use their imagination to explore the world of artistic expression. Children are encouraged to experiment with many different types of art techniques.

Creative Dramatics

Children use creative dramatics to role-play, imitate and dramatize experiences from their everyday life. Puppets, dress-up clothing and interest centers are favorite areas for children to practice their developing social and communication skills.

Curriculum

Little Lions utilizes Creative Curriculum, which is based on early childhood theories and research. It creates purposeful and productive play experiences that help children grow in all areas. The goal of the program is for children to become independent, self-confident, curious learners who work well with others.

Assessment

The assessment that compliments Creative Curriculum is Teaching Strategies GOLD. It is based on developmentally appropriate objectives that are predictive of school success and aligned with state standards. Staff will ask for input from families to help assess developmental progress of their child as well. The assessment information is then used to guide lesson planning and report progress to parents.

Staff

The Linn-Mar Early Childhood Program provides staff licensed by the State of Iowa. There is an educational assistant in each classroom.

Locations

Little Lions and Early Childhood Blended Program classrooms are located in the following elementary buildings for the 2016-2017 School Year:

Echo Hill Elementary

400 Echo Hill Road, Marion

Principal: Dan Ludwig

Office phone: 730-3560

Attendance: 730-3561

ECBP Teacher:

Andie Paasch

Shawna Widdel

Linn Grove Elementary

2301 50th Street, Marion

Principal: Chad Buchholz

Office phone: 730-3500

Attendance: 730-3501

Little Lions Teachers:

Melissa Bray

Carly Remington

Novak Elementary

401 29th Avenue, Marion

Principal: Carol O'Donnell

Office phone: 447-3300

Attendance: 447-3303

Little Lions Teachers:

Amy Nicholson

Pam Hackbarth

Christy Martin

Megan Kucera

Peggy Wakefield

ECBP Teachers:

Cyndi Hofstetter

Janice Vogel

Linn-Mar partners with two community preschools, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center and Rockwell Collins Childhood Development Center to offer more opportunities for free four year old preschool. Please contact them directly with questions regarding their programming.

Hand in Hand

377-5686

Rockwell Collins Child Development Center

295-4440

Associate Director of Student Services

Kristin C. Hicks

Learning Resource Center

2999 10th Street, Marion

730-3663

Early Childhood Number

730-3627

Please check the Linn-Mar website at www.tinyurl.com/lmearlychildhood for more information.

Hours and Days of Operation

All Little Lions Classes meet Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Morning and afternoon sessions may differ slightly depending on dismissal times from building to building.

Little Lions is a fully inclusive preschool. The classes are a combination of three-year-olds and four-year-olds. Some of these students may require additional support and qualify for Student Support Services through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Students on IEPs also attend class on Wednesdays, except for the first Wednesday of the month, which is Professional Development time.

Animals

Most of the preschool classrooms have a class pet. Visiting animals are dealt with on an individual basis due to allergies and other health concerns.

Attendance

Parent should call the building your child attends to let them know of an absence, late arrival or early pick up.

Attendance Policy for students participating in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant (4 year old students):

The Iowa Department of Education has amended the Iowa compulsory attendance law regarding attendance for students enrolled in preschool effective July 1, 2013. The law allows school districts to remove from its enrollment a child who is not regularly attending the district's program. The Early Childhood Preschool Program follows the Linn-Mar Community School District's attendance policy.

The Linn-Mar Community School District Attendance Policy:

After 8 accumulated occurrences per quarter, a letter will be sent to notify families of the attendance issue. If, after receiving this letter, attendance does not improve, the family will be withdrawn from the program. Special medical problems, health considerations or absences due to ethnic holidays will be considered on an individual basis; however, physician documentation may be required.

Cancellations

If Linn-Mar has a late start due to weather, the morning session of Little Lions will not meet. If there is an early dismissal, the afternoon session will not meet. Please watch the local TV stations or check the Linn-Mar web site at <http://www.linnmar.k12.ia.us> for weather related announcements. You can also find information on Facebook and Twitter.

Drop off/Pick up Procedures

Drop off and Pick up procedures vary from building to building. Each teacher will share procedures at the Parent Informational Night held in the fall.

Arrival time is approximately 5 minutes before the start of the student day. Parking policies vary from building to building and will be shared by the teachers in each building.

Fees

For all children attending Little Lions, there is a \$45 supplemental fee.

Students attending the Early Childhood Blended Program will pay the school registration fees during the school registration times.

For the 2017-2018 School Year the monthly tuition for three year olds is \$200 per month. This is due on or before the first of the month, starting September 1st and ending May 1st. In order for current three year olds to pre-register, their accounts need to be up to date and in good standing.

The Iowa State Legislature has provided a Statewide Voluntary Preschool Grant. This allows children living in Linn County that are four by September 15th to attend preschool without paying monthly tuition.

Statements for tax purposes are available upon request in the business office. Contact the business office at 447-3018.

Health Requirements

Records

Proof of child's date of birth and an up-to-date immunization record is requested for every child to attend preschool. These can be given to the school prior to the first day of class.

Hearing Screenings

The Grant Wood Area Education Agency provides hearing screens during the course of the school year to students on Individualized Education Plans. Parents who do not want their child's hearing tested will need to indicate that in writing to the school.

Vision Screenings

Linn-Mar will partner with the Lions Club of Iowa to give our students to participate in the Iowa Kidsight Vision Screening Program. More information about this program and consent forms can be found at www.medicine.uiowa.edu/KidSight/.

Medication

School personnel cannot administer medication during the school day, including prescription and over-the-counter medication; unless a medication permission form is completed. These forms are available at the school.

Prescription medication must be supplied to the school in the labeled prescription container along with a permission form signed by the parent/legal guardian. All medication must be delivered to/from the school by the parent/legal guardian.

Hand Washing

All staff, students, volunteers, and visitors (including parents) must wash their hands upon entering the preschool classroom.

Sunscreen

Children will play outside whenever the weather allows. You are encouraged to put sunscreen on your child prior to their arrival at preschool. If this is not possible and you would like Little Lions staff to apply sunscreen, please send sunscreen with a note. Sunscreen must have an SPF of at least 15.

Illness

If your child becomes ill or injured at school, every attempt will be made to contact you. If this is not possible, an emergency contact will be called.

Is My Child Too Sick for School?

Each day many parents are faced with a decision: should they keep their sick children home or send them off to school? The following guidelines, recommended by experts at the Mayo Clinic, should be considered when making this sometimes difficult decision. A student should remain home when he or she:

- Vomits or has diarrhea in the last 24 hours.
- Has an oral temperature higher than 100 degrees.
- Coughs almost constantly or complains of difficulty breathing.
- Exhibits abdominal pain for more than two hours.
- Has sores on mouth or skin that are crusty, yellow or draining.
- Shows symptoms of contagious diseases such as chicken pox, mumps, whooping cough, strep throat.
- Has constant runny nose with green or yellow discharge.
- Displays an unexplained skin rash or red eye (with or without crusting/drainage).

Keeping a sick child home prevents the spread of illness in the school. It also allows the child opportunity to rest and recover. A sick child cannot learn effectively and is unable to participate in classes in a meaningful way. If you have questions, please contact the school nurse.

Communicable Diseases

Staff will inform parents when there has been any possible exposure to a communicable disease. Any child with a contagious disease should be reported to the preschool immediately.

Parent Involvement

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are welcome in the preschool classroom. All district volunteers are required to complete a volunteer information form. Preschool teachers will provide more information on volunteering opportunities.

For more information contact:
Community Relations Coordinator
Karla Terry
Phone:(319)447-3110

Special Events

Families will be invited to various events throughout the school year. Some of these include:

- Meet and Greet – Before the school year begins families have a chance to visit the classroom.
- Family Night – Once during the school year families will be invited to participate in a themed evening event.
- Seasonal Parties – Families will be notified of several parties during the school year. These will take place during the school day.
- Preschool families are also welcome to attend any of the events sponsored by the elementary not specific to preschool.

Home Visits

Home visits are an important part of the preschool program. These are scheduled prior to the first day of school or early in the school year. These visits allow the preschool teacher to get to know each child and family. This is a great time to share what makes your family unique, how you prefer to communicate with the teacher, and to share information about your child's interest and learning styles. It is also a time to share your goals and any concerns you may have. This visit helps strengthen the partnership between home and school

Parent Teacher Conferences

Two conferences will be scheduled for each child, one in the fall and one in the spring. At that time the teacher will share observations, assessments, and other information that they have learned about your child. They will also be interested in hearing your observations and goals for your child.

Snacks

Children will receive a monthly snack calendar indicating when they are requested to bring a healthy snack for the class. Suggested snack items are vegetables, fruits, crackers, cheese, etc. Please refer to the appendix for additional snack ideas. Water, cups, and napkins are provided. According to school guidelines, we cannot serve homemade snacks. Please leave items in the original package so the staff can check for allergens.

APPENDIX



Little Lions Healthy Snacks



**We do have children in our classes that have peanut allergies so please be mindful when choosing a snack to bring to preschool.

All snacks need to be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers.

Grain Foods

Animal Crackers

Bagels

Bread Sticks

Cereal/ Cereal Mixtures

Granola Bars

Cheese Crackers

English Muffins

French Bread

Graham Crackers

Oyster Crackers

Chex Mix

Baked Potato chips

Fig Bars

Rice Cakes

Crackers

Fruits and Vegetables

Apples

Applesauce

Canned Fruit Cups (in juice)

Dried Fruit

Fruit Juice/Frozen Fruit Bars

Celery Sticks

Broccoli or Cauliflower

Orange, Peach, or Pineapple
slices

Plum

Seedless Grapes

Strawberries

Tangerines

Cucumber

Dairy Foods/ Protein Foods

Cheese (Cubes, slices, string)

Frozen Yogurt

Ham or Turkey Deli

Salami

Beef sticks

String Cheese

Yogurt

Creative Curriculum Objectives for Development & Learning

Social-Emotional

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 - a. Manages feelings
 - b. Follows limits and expectations
 - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 - a. Forms relationships with adults
 - b. Responds to emotional cues
 - c. Interacts with peers
 - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 - b. Solves social problems

Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 - a. Uses fingers and hands
 - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
 - a. Comprehends language
 - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 - a. Uses and expanding expressive vocabulary
 - b. Speaks clearly
 - c. Uses conventional grammar
 - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
 - a. Engages in conversations
 - b. Uses social rules of language

Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 - a. Attends and engages
 - b. Persists
 - c. Solves problems
 - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
 - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 - a. Recognizes and recalls
 - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
 - a. Thinks symbolically
 - b. Engages in sociodramatic play

Literacy

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
 - a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 - c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
 - a. Identifies and names letters
 - b. Uses letter – sound knowledge
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
 - a. Uses and appreciates books
 - b. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
 - a. Interacts during read-alouds and book conversations
 - b. Uses emergent reading skills
 - c. Retells stories
19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
 - a. Writes names
 - b. Writes to convey meaning

Mathematics

20. Uses number concepts and operations
 - a. Counts
 - b. Quantifies
 - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
 - a. Understands spatial relationships
 - b. Understands shapes
22. Compares and measures
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

24. Uses scientific inquiry skills.
25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

The Arts

33. Explores the visual arts
34. Explores musical concepts and expression
35. Explores dance and movement concepts
36. Explores drama through actions and language

English Language Acquisitions

37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English