
SCHOOL FOR LITTLE CHILDREN

Parent Handbook 2016-17

OUR VISION

We believe every child deserves the opportunity to reach his or her potential and be successful in future experiences.

OUR MISSION

The mission of School for Little Children is to educate, nurture and inspire children and support families in that endeavor. We provide quality early education in a community that embraces individuality and diversity while promoting the social-emotional and cognitive development of students.

Educate.

Through the use of child-centered activities, we offer an approved curriculum based on current early learning standards criteria, which encourages the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of our students.

Nurture.

Working together, we provide a welcoming environment where meaningful relationships are formed and individuality is respected.

Inspire.

Recognizing the value of daily discovery, we create a learning environment where new skills are learned and taking pride in one's accomplishments is celebrated

CLASS SESSIONS

Monday Fun Days	Mondays	9:30-11:30 A.M.
Tuesday Tots	Tuesdays	9:30-11:30 A.M.
2 Day Twos	Tuesdays & Thursdays	9:30-11:45 A.M.
3 Day Threes AM	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	9:15-11:45 A.M.
4 Day Pre-K AM	Tuesday-Friday	9:15-12:00 P.M.
5 Day Pre-K (Orange Room)	Mondays (all year)	9:15-11:45 A.M.
	Tuesday-Friday (September only)	9:15-11:45 A.M.
	Tuesday-Friday (beg. Oct 1 st)	9:15-2:00 P.M.

SECURITY

Doors to the building are locked at all times. Parents should enter the preschool through the wooden door located between Walker Chapel and the main church entrance. During regular school hours, someone will be in the front office to buzz-in parents and visitors. To relieve congestion, additional parking is permitted along the north side of the building on Lake Street and **an attendant will be stationed at the Lake Street door from 9:10-9:30 A.M., Tuesday – Friday.** When school is not in session the only entrance to the building is through the church courtyard. Visitors must identify themselves to the attendant on duty.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL: All parents/caregivers must sign in when dropping their child off at school. Arrival times must also be recorded when signing in. Parents/caregivers should come into school to help children with coats, washing their hands and settling into an activity. Teachers are available to help with sign in procedures.

DEPARTURE: Parents/caregivers must sign out when picking up their child. Departure times must also be recorded when signing out. The names listed on your child's release form are the *only* people authorized to pick up your child. Parents/caregivers should come into the school and help their child with the preparation for going home.

PARKING LOT: A few friendly parking lot reminders.

- **Please do not park in the reserved spaces**, along the church building.
- Do not leave your car double parked or in an illegal spot.
- Do not leave infants unattended in the car, under any circumstance, while you are in the school.
- SLC's parking lot is a CELL FREE ZONE. Please refrain from using your cell phone.

SAFETY: Please do not allow children to run up and down the ramp leading to the lower level, and refrain from allowing them to climb on the stair railing or the retaining wall. Also, please keep in mind that people exiting the building through the lower level are not able to see small children standing by the door. Please do not allow children to climb the trees on the church/school property.

PICK-UP POLICY

If a parent is not able to pick up their child, SLC will release the child to another individual on the authorized pick-up list only. In the case of a special pick-up (such as a play date), parents may complete a Special Dismissal Form located outside each classroom. Anyone unknown to staff is required to provide a driver's license or other photo identification before the child is released.

If you know you are going to be late, we ask that you call the school at 847-864-3889. Your child will be taken to the front office until you or someone authorized to pick up your child arrives. If this happens repeatedly, the SLC administration reserves the right to impose a fine of \$1 per minute for every minute beyond dismissal.

In the unlikely event that a parent/caregiver fails to pick up a child and is unreachable, the SLC staff will make three efforts to contact the people on the child's Emergency Release Form. If we are unable to reach a parent, caregiver or authorized emergency contact person after a period of two hours beyond dismissal, SLC is required by law to contact outside authorities.

TUITION

Payments may be made on-line, via bank draft, by logging onto the SLC Parent Portal through a link on our homepage at www.slcevanston.org.

Payment can also be made by check payable to **School for Little Children** and mailed to:

School for Little Children
 1427 Chicago Avenue
 Evanston, IL 60201

Credit cards are not accepted.

Program	Full Tuition	Semi-Annual	Monthly
Monday Fun Days OR Tuesday Tots	\$450 per session (2 sessions)		
Two Day 2s AM	\$2880.00	\$1440.00	\$320.00
Three Day 3s AM	\$3681.00	\$1840.50	\$409.00
Four Day Pre K AM (9:15-12:00)	\$4986.00	\$2493.00	\$554.00
Orange Pre K (9:15-11:45) Lunch program (11:45-2:00)	\$6993.00	\$3496.50	\$777.00

TUITION IS DUE:

Annual DueMay 1
 Semi-Annual Due May 1 & November 1
 Monthly Due May 1 through January 1

Since our operating expenses, e.g. teachers' salaries, equipment and supplies, are relatively fixed before school begins, there are no refunds given for time missed because of extended illness or vacations.

TUITION DELINQUENCY POLICY

Invoices are due on the 1st of each month. If payment is not received on the 1st of the month, a \$10 late fee will be assessed. Families with past due invoices may not enroll their children in additional programs at SLC such as Lunch & Learn, STEM, and Fun in the Sun.

If payment is not received by the 1st of the next month (30 days later) and the family has not made contact with the school to arrange a payment plan, another \$10 late fee will be assessed. If payment is 60 or more days past due and no contact has been initiated by the family, another \$10 late fee will be assessed and the child may be excluded from school until an acceptable payment plan is agreed upon. Once a payment plan is in place and partial payment has been made, the child may return to school.

SCHOLARSHIP

School for Little Children offers a limited number of partial tuition scholarships each year. Scholarship applications are available upon request and should be completed and returned by March 15th. Tax returns from the previous year must be attached. Financial support for the school's scholarship program comes from fundraising events and private donations.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND CURRICULUM

At School for Little Children, we believe that young children are natural learners and that their way of learning is through play. Philosophically, School for Little Children's curriculum is based on the following principles:

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY

Our curriculum activities are hands-on and child-centered. Teachers observe each child's unique needs and overall development, then work together to create curriculum plans that meet the individual and group needs. Socialization, fostering friendships, and the development of a confident sense of self are of primary importance.

Teachers create flexible and nurturing classroom environments that allow children to practice and master their new skills. Classrooms are set up to include different play areas such as language and literacy, science and math, blocks, games, and puzzles. Daily visits to local parks or large playrooms allow for running, climbing and riding.

TEACHERS FACILITATE LEARNING

The teachers at School for Little Children build trusting relationships with children and their families. Teachers use praise and encouragement as motivation for growth, learning, and self-control. They facilitate problem solving and conflict resolution. Patience, affection, supportive language, energy and creativity are the tools teachers use to provide a loving and caring setting.

WE CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

At School for Little Children we welcome and celebrate diversity, including diversity of race, culture, language, religion and ability. Culturally relevant, anti-bias concepts are incorporated into our curriculum at all age levels. Diversity is included in our curriculum through books, stories, dramatic play, music, the arts, and family involvement. Parents and family members are encouraged to participate in school life through volunteering, sharing a talent or skill, working on fundraising projects or special events, or sharing family traditions and culture.

PROGRAM OF INCLUSION

School for Little Children is committed to an inclusive program. We believe that every child should have the opportunity to develop into his/her full potential. Our goal is to foster respect for diversity while providing equal educational opportunities for all children. We view the individual needs of each child in relation to the larger, unique environment of family and community. Through parent collaboration with staff, the Director helps to identify and ensure that each child has the necessary means and widest array of support in order to be successful. The professional expertise of private consultants and School District 65's related services are also accessible to help us accomplish our goals.

DIVORCE AND SEPARATION

We recognize that many families are in transition and have experienced divorce or separation. In order to provide the best possible care for your child, we feel that it is vitally important that we be able to maintain good relations with all the significant adults in his/her life. If there is a change in information regarding the following, please contact the SLC office immediately:

- Custody arrangements
- Which parent to contact first for general questions and in an emergency
- Whether duplicate program information needs to be given to both parents
- Who is responsible for tuition payments
- Who will or will not be authorized to pick up the children
- Who the other significant adults are in the child's life

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SLC relies on the support of our families to help with community outreach, special events and fundraisers. To help bridge the gap between tuition income and the cost of running a quality preschool, we **suggest each and every family volunteers a minimum of 3 hours of time each year for these purposes.**

Additionally, each classroom welcomes volunteers! Some opportunities include:

- Read your child's favorite book
- Share special holiday traditions
- Take dictation during journal time
- Share a talent

COMMUNICATION

Our primary means of weekly communication is via an email called Thursday Thoughts. Please read this carefully so you will not miss important information or special events at school.

Please check your child's folder daily in the file box outside his/her classroom for additional information.

Please notify the office if your child will be absent.

Help us and your child by informing the teachers of special family circumstances or health changes during the year: births, deaths, allergies, hearing problems, etc.

HEALTH

24 HOUR WELLNESS POLICY:

- Children with flu or cold type symptoms (runny nose, fever, nausea or diarrhea) must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- The Director, in consultation with teachers, reserves the right to decide that a child is not well enough to be in the classroom. Parents will be contacted if a child shows signs of illness.

DCFS REQUIRES:

- A complete medical examination report dated within 6 months prior to the start of school must be on file with the school before a child can attend.
- Vaccinations and a TB test are required unless a doctor indicates it is not necessary by submitting a separate signed note.
- A lead screening (blood test) is mandated for all children because we are located in a high risk area.
- A certified birth certificate for all children, that will be copied for SLC files.
- All children must wash their hands with soap and water upon entering the classroom each day.
- Please notify the SLC office if your child contracts a contagious disease (such as chicken pox or strep throat). Notices will be distributed to inform the parents in your child's classroom.
- In the event of a head lice outbreak, SLC reserves the right to check for head lice. If head lice is suspected, parents will be contacted to take the child home. Children may return to school once they have been treated and are free of nits.

EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE PLAN

If your child has serious or life threatening food allergies or asthma, you must submit a Food Allergy or Asthma Action Plan.

If the doctor indicates the allergy or asthma is life threatening, or could result in serious illness, the parent is responsible for:

- Monitoring the child's asthma and/or allergies during special school events, such as the fall family event, holiday parties, etc.
- Keeping necessary medications current, e.g., two Epi pens with a 6-month expiration period and/or inhaler.
- Attaching an allergen-notification sticker to the interior of the child's lunch box; the sticker lists the foods to which the child is severely allergic.
- Providing two small photos of your child.
- Providing written doctor authorization for the child to return to school within 24 hours of being hospitalized due to an allergy episode or asthma attack.
- Informing the school of any changes.

If the parent does not return a Food Allergy or Asthma Action Plan the school assumes that the allergy or asthma is not serious or life-threatening.

MEDICATION POLICY

SLC staff members are only authorized to administer Prescription **OR** over-the-counter medication (like Tylenol or Motrin) to the children if the following guidelines are fully met:

- The parent completes and signs a medication consent form, which is valid for the duration specified.
- The medication is given directly to the office staff for safe storage at school. Storage arrangements must comply with DCFS regulations.
- Both prescription and non-prescription medication will only be accepted in its original container.

Prescription medication must be labeled with the original prescription label, including the child's first and last name, current date and dosage) and is accompanied by a signed doctor's note stating the reason why the child is taking the medication along with the length of time the child needs to take the medication.

Non-prescription medication must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

- Any topical product can only be applied with the written permission of the parents or legal guardian.

PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

Our goal when placing children is to provide an environment that encourages the development of new relationships with adults and other children. We will consider appropriate chronological and developmental age plus boy/girl ratio. Based on our knowledge of your child and the school, we will place your child where we feel he or she will best grow and learn.

CHILD GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE POLICY

Caring adults set limits in the classroom and maintain a calm consistent approach to guiding children's behavior. This kind of approach enables teachers to create an environment that reduces discipline problems by focusing on helping children to learn, to respect themselves and to respect the rights of others. School for Little Children personnel will not use physical punishment or verbal abuse.

Praise and positive reinforcement of good behavior is used consistently with all children as a way to build children's self-esteem and encourage self-control. Experienced teachers recognize the possibility of potential behavior problems before they occur, and redirect the child's behavior before it becomes unacceptable.

There are times when children's behavior results in a logical consequence. This helps them to learn the cause-effect relationship of their action. Staff encourage children to problem solve independently as much as possible. If staff intervention is needed, staff members mediate or facilitate.

Discipline and guidance shall be developmentally related to a child's act and may include firm positive statements, redirection of behaviors or removal from the group as a means of helping a child gain self control. Discipline shall be the responsibility of adults who have an ongoing relationship with the children. Teachers will dialogue with parents and care givers, sharing information and work together in a collaborative partnership.

DCFS State Licensing Standards require schools to have a written policy for the termination of a child's enrollment because of disciplinary issues. School for Little Children's policy is one of inclusion. We will make every effort to work with families to ensure the most appropriate placement.

CONFERENCES / ASSESSMENT / CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers continually observe each child's unique needs and overall development. Verbal & written information from these observations are shared during conferences in November and March, but a parent may request an informal conference at anytime during the school year.

Parents receive a copy of their child's Reporting Document at the fall and spring conferences and a duplicate copy is kept with the child's current classroom teachers in a secured location. Information related to assessment and/or your child's development will not be shared with outside professionals without your written consent. At the conclusion of the school year, assessments are transferred to the child's file in the SLC office. Files are kept locked and access is restricted to SLC staff members and teachers. Per licensing requirements, child files are stored in a secured environment for a period of five years and then destroyed.

TOYS

Please encourage your child to leave their toys at home. They can be lost, and it is hard to share special treasures. However, if your child needs a toy for security for a period of time, talk to his/her teacher.

SNACKS

SLC serves a snack every day the children attend school. Per our DCFS licensing requirements, we must offer two of these food components; fruit, vegetables, dairy, grains. On a rotating basis, families are asked to bring in a fruit, vegetable OR cheese option for the entire class. SLC will provide the accompanying grain and serve water to drink. All fresh foods need to be washed and prepared here at the school.

BIRTHDAYS

Parents may provide special paper products or a small favor to celebrate the occasion. **Due to allergies and state licensing requirements we cannot accept home-cooked or special food items.**

CLOTHING

Please bring a tote bag or backpack every day to carry an extra set of clothes and diapers and wipes, if needed. Children should come dressed in simple play clothes so they feel comfortable, and you do not have to worry about paint, glue or other spills. In cold weather, be sure your child is dressed for outdoor play. Teachers will use discretion in winter months. Please help your child learn to recognize his/her own clothing and other items brought to school. **Please label all removable clothing:** hats, coats, sweaters, scarves, boots, and each mitten.

FIELD TRIPS

As part of our regular program, trips are planned within walking distance of the school. Permission for walking field trips is given by signing the Release Form.

PESTICIDE POLICY

A pesticide policy is available for your review in the preschool office. Chemical pesticides are not applied in the SLC classrooms. If this practice changes for any reason, we will notify parents 48 hours prior to chemical use.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS @ SLC

LUNCH & LEARN

Lunch & Learn is an optional extension of the morning and afternoon classes for children attending 3s and Pre K classes. Lunch & Learn begins October 1st.

Foods with nuts or nut products may not be served at SLC and may not be included in lunches brought from home.

Please note: we are unable to provide make-up days for missed Lunch & Learn days.

FUN IN THE SUN

BEACH CAMP

School for Little Children offers an outdoor summer program for children ages three to five with preschool experience. The program, which meets at the lakefront at Burnham Park and at the Lee Street Beach, includes daily beach time, outdoor activities (nature, crafts, songs and stories), and opportunities to meet new friends and play games. In case of inclement weather, the program is held at School for Little Children.

ON-SITE @ SLC

Fun in the Sun at School for Little Children is for children exiting our 2-year old program. Children participate in an enrichment series, art projects, songs and stories, creative play and building projects in SLC classrooms. There is also outdoor play.

MONDAY FUN DAYS/TUESDAY TOTS

Monday Fun Days/Tuesday Tots is a program designed for children ages 18-28 months with a parent or caregiver. Introduce your child to a preschool setting without saying goodbye! This class is a wonderful opportunity to meet other young families, and time to engage in pretend play, art, building, gross motor play time, music instruction and more.

STEM

Our STEM program offers classes to children attending our 3's and Pre K classes. This class offers hands-on, play-based activities related to science, math, technology and engineering. The curriculum is designed to introduce foundational science and math concepts that will prepare children for a lifetime of STEM learning.