

**WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA SCHOOLS
EARLY CHILDHOOD PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS
PARENT HANDBOOK
2020-2021**



WHERE BEARS BEGIN

Serving children ages birth to five and their families

District #624 MISSION STATEMENT

Leading minds to learning
Hearts to compassion
Lives to community service

EARLY CHILDHOOD PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Normandy Park Early Childhood Education Center

2482 County Road F East
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

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|---|------------------------|--------------|
| General Information | 651-653-3100 | |
| Fax | 651-653-3155 | |
| Early Childhood Special Education Supervisor: | Angela Drange | 651-653-3102 |
| Early Childhood Education Supervisor: | Darcy Rodriguez | 651-653-3101 |
| Early Childhood Program Specialist: | Angie Lundblad | 651-653-3118 |
| Program Support/Billing: | | 651-653-3100 |
| Administrative Assistant: | Michelle Igo | 651-653-3105 |
| Child Study Secretary/Health Assistant: | Deb Tacheny | 651-653-3106 |
| Nurse: | Cathy Foster | 651-653-3103 |
| Psychologist: | Aleta Schulte | 651-653-3104 |
| Psychologist: | Amy Galyon | 651-653-3136 |
| School Readiness/Screening Information: | Darcy Rodriguez | 651-653-3101 |
| Screening Appointments | | 651-653-3100 |

Preschool Sites:

Normandy Park Education Center – NP

2482 County Road F East
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Main Office.....651-653-3100

Birch Lake Elementary

1616 Birch Lake Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Main Office.....651-653-2776

Hugo Elementary School

14895 Francesca Ave
Hugo, MN 5508
Main Office.....651-653-2798

Willow Lane Elementary

3375 Willow Ave
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
Main Office.....651-773-6710

Tamarack Nature Center

5287 Otter Lake Road
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
E.C. Main Office...651-653-3100

Vadnais Heights Elementary

3645 Centerville Road
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127
Main Office.....651-653-2858

North Oaks East Recreation Building

5 Mink Lane
North Oaks, MN 55127
E.C. Main Office...651-653-3100

Normandy Park Early Childhood Education Center Office Hours: Mon. – Fri., 7:30am – 4:00pm

WELCOME

White Bear Lake Area Preschool Program

A Place to Learn and Grow

White Bear Lake Area Preschool provides a safe and nurturing environment for a child's first school experience away from home. Age appropriate activities provide a variety of meaningful "hands-on" learning experiences in the areas of reading and math readiness, science and social studies, art and sensory, music, and dramatic play. It is the belief of the White Bear Lake Early Childhood Education staff that parents are a child's first and most important teacher.

Registration and Admission Requirements

White Bear Lake Area Preschool participants must be three (3) years old by September 1st and use the toilet independently before attending the White Bear Lake Area Preschool program. A non-refundable \$55 registration fee is due at time of registration. Completed registration forms are required before a student starts class.

Absences

Please call or email your child's teacher directly when your child is going to be absent or late for class. The staff directory can be found on-line at www.isd624.org. You may also call the main office (651-653-3100) and ask to be transferred to your child's classroom or leave a message.

Acceptance of Gifts

The White Bear Lake Area School District recognizes that students, parents/guardians, and others want to show appreciation to school district employees or to a particular school or classroom. The policy of the school district, however, is to discourage gift-giving to employees, schools/classrooms and school board members, and to encourage donors instead to write letters and notes of appreciation or to give small tokens of gratitude. Any gifts accepted more than nominal value (\$5.00) shall become property of the District.

Accidents

In most cases, early childhood staff will call the parents/guardians of a child who is injured or ill before we would call 911. It is very important that you furnish us with accurate phone numbers where you can be reached during the school day. Emergency forms are required as part of the enrollment process. This form will be kept with the child's teacher and on file in the Health Office. Please let us know if there are any changes to contact or emergency numbers as the year progresses. If we cannot reach you and we feel your child's life is in danger, we will not hesitate to call 911. Any cost due to emergency care from 911 calls becomes the responsibility of the parent.

Arrival and Departure

White Bear Lake Area Preschool programs responsibility begins once your child has been escorted into the classroom by the parent/guardian. Under no circumstances should your child find his or her own way into the building and classroom. Teachers are busy preparing for your

student; therefore, doors will be opened no earlier than 5 minutes prior to class. Families are welcome to play on the playground while they wait.

Due to Covid we are limiting the number of people entering the buildings. Families will drop off and pick up outside the classroom and only students will enter the classroom/building whenever possible.

Normandy Park- Drop Off- Families will bring their child to the color coded outside classroom door to drop their child off. You will wait outside for the teacher to open the door. Families will receive their child's door color at Open House.

Pick up- Families will get information at Open House about Pick Up Procedures.

Hugo Elementary School –The school will do a carline drop-off/pick-up this year by the main entrance. You will be given a color coded sign with your child's name that you can put in your car window and your child will be escorted from your car, and brought to you at the end of the day. If you are dropping off late please park in the church parking lot and call your teacher directly at #651-653-2804 to arrange a meeting spot.

Tamarack Nature Preschool School- The school will do a carline drop-off/ pick up this year. You will be given a sign with your child's name that you can put in your car window and your child will be escorted from your car, and brought to you at the end of the day.*Late arrivals will need to contact their classroom teacher directly.*

North Oaks Preschool- Caregivers will escort their child to the front door of the build and one of the teachers will be there to receive them. At pick up, families will come to the front door and children will be released to them.

Willow, Birch & Vadnais Elementary Sites-You will be notified by your teacher about Drop Off and Pick Up procedures.

Any family arriving late will check in at the main office and a staff member will escort them to their classroom.

Children will be released only to parents and authorized persons listed on your child's emergency form. If someone different is picking up your child from preschool, you must inform the classroom teacher with a written notice. In the event a child is not picked up at the end of class, staff will attempt to contact the parents or guardians by phone. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, persons listed on the emergency form will be contacted to assume temporary responsibility of your child. A \$5.00 late fee will be charged for every 10 minutes or portion there-of that the child has not been picked up.

Billing and Payments

The White Bear Lake Area Preschool is supported by user fees; therefore, it is imperative that all fees are paid on time. Families with delinquent accounts are subject to removal from the program. For billing questions, call 651-653-3100.

Tuition is due the 1st of each month, September – May. A late payment fee of \$15.00 will be assessed for tuition that is paid later than the first of the month. Families with consistent late payments or tuition non-payment may result in termination from the program. For payment options see page 9 under tuition options.

If a distance learning model is implemented teaching and learning will be done online. Because our teachers will continue to teach, ***programs will not be refunded***. Community Education programs are fee-for-service programs, and we are not receiving the emergency money that is bound for k-12. Preschool families always have the option to drop their contract. If you choose to drop your spot, that spot will not be retained. When programming moves back to in person learning you would need to reapply to the program and there will be no guarantee that they will be assigned to the same teacher or the same time of day.

Calendars

The White Bear Lake District 624 School Calendar contains general information pertaining to school holidays, conferences, activities, etc. The Early Childhood Programs calendar is sent to all families who are enrolled in a class and can also be found online at <https://earlychildhood.isd624.org/families/calendar>.

Child Abuse Reporting

State law requires that all school employees report physical and sexual child abuse and neglect to the local county social services or the Sheriff's department. Documentation of all suspicions and conversations related to the circumstances of the suspected abuse will be kept. Any substantiated abuse will be reported.

Curriculum

The curriculum used in all White Bear Lake Area Preschool classes is called The Creative Curriculum for Preschool. This curriculum is based on five fundamental principles.

1. Social-Emotional competence is a significant factor in school success
2. Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning
3. The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions
4. Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning
5. Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning

There are six units of study lasting approximately five weeks each throughout the year.

1. Beginning the Year
2. Clothes That We Wear
3. Buildings
4. Balls
5. Trees
6. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

In addition to Creative Curriculum, White Bear Lake Early Childhood uses Conscious Discipline which is an innovative social-emotional learning and classroom management program. Conscious Discipline teaches children self regulation skills for everyday life.

Concepts:

1. Feelings

2. Emotions
3. Calming Strategies

Dress/Belongings

Be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the day. The children play hard and need durable clothes. Children should wear tennis shoes every day for indoor or outdoor gym play. Your child's clothing and personal belongings should be marked clearly since there is a chance the items will be misplaced or worn home by another child. We ask that you not send toys with your child to the program. The program has a variety of age-appropriate toys for the children to play with. In the event your child does bring a toy to class, they will be asked to store it in their backpack until the end of class.

Face Coverings/Masks

Per MDE/MDH guidelines, staff are required to wear masks in the classroom. They can remove them when they are outside, but only when they can maintain 6 feet of distance between themselves and another person. It is recommended that children 2-5 years old wear masks, **but it is not required**. Parents can send a mask with their child, and each child will be provided with a school mask to use if they want. We will periodically practice or model mask wearing throughout the day at different times.

Cleaning Procedures

Staff will sanitize hard surfaces twice per day (based on health & safety guides [Fall Return 2020](#) guide page 15). This will happen at the end of the morning session, and at the end of the PM section. We will work to limit sharing of items within the classroom and will clean and disinfect toys and classroom materials throughout the day.

Early Childhood Screening – Screen at Three

Early Childhood Screening is required by the State of Minnesota for all children prior to entering kindergarten. White Bear Lake Area School District provides this screening at no charge.

3 reasons to screen at age 3

- ☐ Screening can ensure school readiness.
- ☐ If health or developmental concerns are identified, educational services are available immediately.
- ☐ It is fun for children and provides caregivers with valuable information regarding child development.

Register on-line at www.whitebear.ce.feepay.com or call 651-653-3100 with your child's name, date of birth, your name and phone number.

Early Childhood Screenings are held at Normandy Park Education Center, 2482 County Road F East, White Bear Lake, MN 55110.

Emergency Procedures

An accident report form will be completed and given to the parent by the staff person administering or handling an accident or emergency.

In the event of a serious accident needing medical attention staff will:

- Administer the necessary first aid and/or CPR.

- Call 911 using the local rescue squad. Children will be taken to the parents' choice of emergency medical care, if possible. If not possible, children will be taken to St. John's Hospital, 1575 Beam Avenue in Maplewood.
- Parents will be notified by phone.

In the event of a dental emergency, staff will notify the parents by phone.

It is very important to keep the Normandy Park Early Childhood Education Center office updated with any new phone numbers and/or emergency contact information.

Home Visits

Home visits are offered to families with children birth to age five (not yet in kindergarten). A licensed Early Childhood Family Educator will share information about community resources and talk about how children grow and develop, and how your child learns. Please call Tami at 651-653-3159 to schedule your home visit.

Illness

Please call your child's teacher if your child will not be attending class for any reason. When a child becomes sick during class time, the parent will be called at the phone numbers provided on the emergency form. The child who becomes sick will be brought to the health office and evaluated to determine if they need to go to the covid care room to wait for pick up. Families must pick up their child within 30 minutes of being contacted.

Refer to the "[*Is My Child Well Enough to Go to School?*](#)", [health prescreening \(pg. 19\)](#), and [exclusionary guidelines sheets](#), (which will be available at your child's open house) for specific information to help make a decision about when a student should stay home or attend school. Please notify your child's teacher if your child has symptoms that are indicative of COVID-19 and you will be guided through the exclusionary process by our building response teams.

Immunization Record and Emergency Contact Information

An immunization record form and emergency contact information and media release form must be on file prior to the start of class. These forms were part of your online preschool registration. Please make sure these forms have your most current contact information. Parents have the ability to make changes to their emergency contact information up to the start of school by logging into their Fee Pay account at www.whitebear.ce.feepay.com. If changes need to be made after the start of school, please call the main office at 651-653-3100 for any updates or changes. Parents/Guardians are responsible for keeping the information on the emergency card and immunization record up-to-date. *If these forms are not on file prior to the start of your child's preschool class, your child will be excluded from the program.*

Late Pick-Up Policy

All parents/guardians are expected to pick up children when class ends. Any child being picked up after the class ending time will be charged \$5.00 for every 10 minutes late or portion there-of. If parents/guardians are unable to pick up their child by class ending time, please contact the Normandy Park Early Childhood Education Center at 651-653-3100 so the preschool

staff is aware that you will be late. (A late fee will be assessed). Parents/guardians should arrange for a friend or relative to pick-up a child in the event of an emergency. A late fee notice will be given to the parent/guardian and a late fee will be charged. Consistently being late for pick up may result in a termination from the program.

Medication

If your child has a medical condition please let the school nurse know so a plan can be implemented.

Outdoor Activities

If your child is well enough to be at class, they shall participate in all activities, including outdoors. Staff/child ratios prevent us from providing a staff member to stay indoors with your child. Children should come to class with appropriate clothing (coats, snow pants, boots, hats, tennis shoes, etc.) for outdoor activities. Children will go outdoors unless it is raining, the actual temperature is below zero, or wind chill is 0 degrees.

Parent Aware

White Bear Lake Area Schools Preschool program is a highly rated Minnesota Human Services Four-Star Rated Parent Aware Program.

Parent Aware is a tool that helps families find the quality care and education their children need to succeed in school and life. Parent Aware is a search partner that works side-by-side with families, offering free tools and resources to help them make informed choices about high quality care and education opportunities.

Parent Aware Star Ratings: One-to-Four Star Ratings allow families to easily identify child care and early education programs using research-based practices to prepare children for kindergarten. Programs who volunteer to be rated are going above and beyond health and safety requirements and have:

- Volunteered for extra, in-depth training.
- Devoted themselves to strong, caring relationships with each child.
- Adopted the latest approaches to keeping children's learning on track.
- Committed to daily activities and routines that help children learn.

For more information, please visit www.parentaware.org

Parking Lot Safety

Pay Attention:

- ☐ Make sure your child remains with you at all times. This sounds simple, but as parents, we all know how easy it is to become distracted, and within seconds, our child is out of reach. Therefore, whenever you enter a parking lot, it is imperative to put away your cell phone, shopping list, or whatever it is that may take your eyes off of your child, even for a minute.

Use a Stroller:

- ☐ According to preventinjury.org, toddlers sustain the highest number of pedestrian injuries. This is due to their small size and limited experience. It is unrealistic to assume that your toddler will perfectly comply with your rules all of the time. Even the most well behaved youngster may forget himself and suddenly sprint off. If you cannot keep

a firm grip on your child's hand while in a parking lot, play it safe and buckle him into a stroller.

Teach your children

- Do not assume your child understands the dangers lurking in a parking lot. Because it seems so clear to you, it is easy to overestimate your child's knowledge. KidsandCars.org suggests teaching your child that even though they can see a vehicle; the driver may not see them. Thousands of children are seriously injured or die yearly because a driver simply didn't see them while backing up. You also need to teach your child the dangers of running off, due to the unlikely event that they will be abducted or, more likely, get lost. While we do not want to frighten our kids unnecessarily, we also do not want them to be unaware. Talk to your child in an age-appropriate way about the importance of sticking close to you.

Watch for Other People's Children

- Although you may always keep a close eye on your youngster in parking lots, don't assume everyone else does the same. Before getting into your vehicle, KidsandCars.org recommends walking around and behind the vehicle, prior to moving. Also, keep a careful eye out for children as you back out and maneuver through the parking lot.

School Closing

For school closings, early dismissals and late starts, call the School Closing Hotline at (651) 407-7540 or watch/listen for information on these media outlets:

- [KARE-TV 11](#)
- [KMSP-TV 9](#)
- [KSTP-TV 5](#)
- [WCCO-TV 4](#)
- [WCCO-AM 830](#)

If winter weather is so severe that schools need to close, parents will also be alerted in three ways as a decision is made:

- A School Messenger phone message and email will be sent to all parents.
- A message will be posted on the homepage of www.isd624.org
- Messages will be posted on the District's Facebook and Twitter pages.

We know that closing schools can be disruptive. Student and staff safety are our primary concern. Ultimately, the decision to send children to school remains with families. The District supports those decisions that are made for the safety and health of students.

Smoke Free Environment

White Bear Lake Area Schools is smoke free. Smoking is not permitted in the building or on school grounds. This includes the playground and the parking lot.

Snacks and meals

Meals: Children attending School Readiness Plus programs in the morning will be offered a school breakfast as a part of the program. Children at North Oaks Preschool will need to bring lunch from home everyday.

Snacks: All White Bear Lake Area Schools in the district are introducing school meal and snack standards meant to reduce calories and increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables. In keeping with the district's philosophy of healthier eating, we encourage water rather than juice at snack time. **Please send a labeled water bottle for your child to use during snack.** Due to health regulations, we ask that snacks be store bought. We also ask that snacks be nut free as we are a nut free school. **(If your child has a food allergy, please let us know).** Your child's teacher will provide instructions about how they will handle snacks this year. Some teachers are asking you to provide an individual snack this year, while others will organize snack on a classroom level.

Below are ideas for healthy snacks:

- Baby carrots-plain or with dip
- Bananas
- Washed fruit (apples, grapes, berries)
- Oranges
- Applesauce or other fruit cups
- Rice cakes
- String cheese
- Jell-O/pudding cups
- Yogurt
- Mini bagels and cream cheese
- Granola bars
- Dried fruit/raisins
- Pretzels
- Whole grain crackers

Birthdays

We will celebrate your child's birthday on or near their birthday by singing and allowing them to wear a birthday crown. If your child's birthday does not fall on a school day or their snack day, you are welcome to send a special healthy birthday treat. As a result of increased allergies and health issues, please do not send frosted cupcakes, cakes, cookies, donuts or candy.

Transportation

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their children.

A child should never be left alone in a vehicle while dropping off another child. It is never safe to leave a child unattended in a vehicle.

Tuition

Tuition is due the 1st of each month, September – May.

Online Payment Options: www.whitebear.ce.feepay.com. We have an online payment system for those wishing to pay by credit card or by a checking/savings account. Our online system will keep all account numbers private and secure.

Pay with a check: Make checks payable to ISD 624 and return in-person or mail to:
Normandy Park Early Childhood Education Center
2482 County Road F E
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

Pay by phone: Please call 651-653-3100 to make payments.

~~**Note:** No reductions are made for a personal vacation, illness or inclement weather.

Volunteer Opportunities

Early Childhood Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

PTA is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.

The White Bear Lake Area Schools Early Childhood PTA meets once a month at Normandy Park Education Center. Free child care is available. Call the Early Childhood office at 651-653-3100 for more information about how you may get involved and join the PTA.

Withdrawal from Program

In the event of a withdrawal from White Bear Lake Area Preschool, a two-week notice is required. If withdrawal occurs mid-month, tuition will be assessed and due based on the dates the student attended.