

the little school
at
Kids 
Cottage

Drop-In Play & Learning Center

PARENT HANDBOOK

2016-2017

Preschool/Pre Kindergarten

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Who is a Pre-School child?

A preschool child is a very special person and one that you know! She/He is ready and anxious to learn in a school situation, yet she/he feels deeply about leaving, even for a few hours, the security of his/her home and family.

The classroom situation presents many new friends, ideas and ways to learn from others-both teacher and peers. The gentle blend of home and school lets our very special person experience a happy and successful year. This in turn prepares the child to encounter, with security and easy communication with others, the school years ahead.

Who are parents and teachers?

Our purpose at the little school at Kids Cottage is to share love and understanding with young children while helping them advance in their socio-emotional, intellectual, and physical development. We can achieve our goals only if you, as parents and friends, and we as teachers and friends, give our attention and emotion to each child. We look forward to sharing your child and a good friendship with each family.

Developmental and Educational Goals

The curriculum at the little school is designed around a weekly theme. Each theme is chosen to reflect the age and interest of the children in the program with special attention given to community events and involvement, multicultural customs and celebrations, and developmentally appropriate skills and topics. The curriculum emphasizes the whole child and includes activities in the following developmental areas: Language, Motor (gross motor and fine motor), Social, Emotional, and Cognitive. The lead teacher in each class will be responsible for implementing a developmentally appropriate curriculum given the age of the children in his/her class.

Registration and Tuition Fees 2016-2017

Registration: There is a fee of \$125.00 to register and enroll your child with the little school at Kids Cottage. This is payable at the time of registration. This fee is nonrefundable and not applicable to tuition.

Withdrawal: A 30 day written notice is required when withdrawing.

Refunds: After the 30 day withdrawal period, any advanced payments will be refunded.

Tuition Rates:

Pre-Wee Little Tues. & Fri. (2 day) 9:15am-11:30am	\$125 registration fee (nonrefundable) \$2,505/yr or 10 installments of \$250.50/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May
Pre-Wee and Wee Little, Mon., Wed., & Thurs. (3 day) 9:15am - 11:30am	\$125 registration fee (nonrefundable) \$3,450/yr or 10 installments of \$345.00/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May
Play Little (4 day) Mon.-Thurs. 9:15am-12:00pm	\$125 registration fee (nonrefundable) \$3,910/yr or 10 installments of \$391.00/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May
Pre-School (4 day) Mon. - Thurs. 9:30am-12:15pm	\$125 registration fee (nonrefundable) \$3,910/yr or 10 installments of \$391.00/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May
Pre-Kindergarten & 5 day Pre-School Mon.-Fri. 9:00am-12:00pm	\$125 registration fee (nonrefundable) \$4,375/yr or 10 installments of \$437.50/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May
Pre-K Enrichment Monday through Friday 12:00pm-3:00pm	\$1,790/yr or 10 installments of \$179.00/month Payments are due the first of each month August through May

Tuition payments are due according to the plan selected on the concurrence form. A late fee of 3% of the total due will be charged to the account if payment is not paid on the due date per the concurrence form. There will be a charge of \$40.00 for any returned checks. Any account sent to collections will incur a 35% interest charge which will be added to your account at the little school at Kids Cottage. As of August 1, 2016, the first month's tuition for all preschool classes will be nonrefundable. A little school at Kids Cottage withdrawal form must be submitted 30 days prior to a student's last day if your child will not complete the 2016-17 school year.

SPECIAL EVENTS/FIELD TRIP/VISITOR FEE: All children attending a 4 or 5 day Preschool/Pre-K program will be billed \$125.00 in September and \$125 in February. These fees help to cover the costs of field trips, outside experiences, guest presenters, etc. The Older Play Little class will incur a fee of \$75.00 due in September and \$75 due in February. These fees cover costs incurred. There is no field trip fee for the Wee Little, Pre-Wee and Younger Play Little classes.

Admissions

Admission is on a first come basis with an overall goal of the best possible mix of race, religion, sex and economic status. We are not a special education facility. Our staff is trained to work with typically developing children. We might help a child who needs a friendly, flexible environment because she/he is above average or needs more time to master skills, but children with significant delays learn best in special education programs. If we discover during the school year that our program is not the best fit for a particular child, we will ask the parents to explore alternatives with us.

Preschool children will have a scheduled conference in the middle of the school year.

Preschool written progress reports will be sent home at the end of the year.

Conferences are always available upon request by the parent/guardian and/or teacher.

Your involvement will give you an understanding of your child's program, goals, and development. The staff of the little school at Kids Cottage will maintain close contact with you at home and we encourage you to contact the school if you have any questions.

You will receive a school newsletter and calendar each month. Please read thoroughly and mark important dates on your calendar!

Please be sure to give us your email address for weather cancellations, school updates, newsletters and other important information. In addition we will send emails and text messages to inform of any weather related delays and cancellations.

Snow Days will be made up during the school year with the exception of "state of emergency" days.

***The date of our Holiday Program may change due to the availability of the auditorium or inclement weather.**

Our Holiday vacation will be longer than the public schools because we feel young children need time to enjoy the excitement of the holidays with their families. We do offer extended care for any families in need during the extended holiday vacation.

Transportation Admission/Release Policy

The little school at Kids Cottage strives to provide a safe environment for all children. To ensure the safety of your child our school requires that:

- Parents provide the name of the person(s) able to pick up and transport his/her child. All names must be listed on the child's Emergency Card.
- Proper photo identification will be asked for upon the release of a child.
- No child may leave school with anyone other than his/her immediate family unless written parental permission is presented to the teacher/office. This is a very important protective measure.
- Eye contact must be made with the teacher when dropping off or picking up your child.

At all times, an adult must escort the child into the facility when dropping off and out of the facility when picking them up. Please do not drop them off at the front door.

If your child is to be released due to health concerns or emergency reasons, and you cannot be reached, other authorized persons on the emergency card will be contacted for immediate pick up.

Car pooling: Those parents in car pools need to establish good safety habits with the children involved. Considering younger siblings, **we suggest that there be no more than four (4) school children to a carpool.** This insures proper attention to each child. Be sure that the teacher and the office have the list of persons involved in the carpool. All children are to be brought to their classroom and to be picked up from their classroom at dismissal.

Please use appropriate car seat and seat belts. It is the law! Never leave children unattended in your car while dropping off or picking up! Please turn off your car before entering the building.

YELLOW CURB: This designated area in the front of the school is to remain open for special conditions. Please do not park in this area.

The Field Trip Experience



Field trips and visitors are a large part of the little school experience. Different classrooms will experience different trips depending on the age of the children. There are some trips that the children will experience every year; however, the age of the child, teacher, and classmates will change that experience so that it is a new one each time. The other benefit of doing the same trip again is that the children who are experiencing it for the second time gain self-confidence and pride when they can answer correctly the questions being asked by the presenter/teacher.

Our field trip experience goes something like this:

1st year-1st experience: Taking in the new environment, new faces, and new ideas. Exploring something new for the 1st time.

2nd year—2nd experience: Less nervous about the new experience, environment, familiar faces, similar ideas at an older age level (greater comprehension), joy and excitement in knowing what comes next! Predicting and anticipating the answers to question the presenter/teacher may ask.

Chaperones

For each field trip your class teacher will ask for a certain number of chaperones. A sign up will appear outside your classroom door or on the class parent board. We ask that any adult going on the field trip leave your cell phone in the car. We also ask that younger siblings do not attend field trips. Parents who are chaperoning a trip are required to drive separately as there is not always enough room on the school bus for extras. In addition, we require all children to ride the school bus with their class to and from all trips.

Just riding the school bus can be a new and exciting adventure. The thrill of traveling with a large group in one vehicle!

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

The little school at Kids Cottage (LSKC) strives to create and maintain a healthy and safe environment for all students.

There are a number of LSKC students who are severely allergic to nuts and other food items. For some students this is a life threatening situation.

For that reason we will be a “nut/allergy aware school”.

If your child suffers from an allergy:

- A written allergy plan should be submitted to the office and your child’s lead teacher prior to the first day of school and must be reviewed with the lead teacher. This should be signed by your child’s physician.
- Children’s allergy plans will be easily accessible in the classroom for all those who come in contact with the child.
- A copy of the written allergy plan will also be kept in the main office.
- Parents of children with severe allergies should provide all necessary medications in case of a reaction (Benadryl, epipens, etc.). These medications **must** be left in the main office and a medication log **must** be completed.
- Additionally, we ask if your child has an identified severe allergy that you provide the snacks and treats for your child.
- We ask **all** parents to prepare lunches and snacks from foods that do not contain nuts.
- LSKC promotes the policy of “nut free” foods and materials used in the classroom.
- LSKC cannot guarantee that others outside of our control (i.e. parents, grandparents, babysitters, caregivers, etc.) will abide to our food allergy policy when preparing foods for the children.

A healthy snack will be provided in the morning and afternoon. A sample snack menu can be found in each classroom.

Health

Health Habits: The home and school together can help the child to develop worthwhile and lasting habits. Encourage your child to develop these habits by explaining the reasons for them and then give him/her the opportunity to practice them. She/He should learn to do these activities by him/herself as well as perform little chores around the home, even if not done perfectly.

Regular rest, good nutrition, healthy eating habits and a good morning start has a dramatic effect on your child's interest level and performance.

Sick Policy

After an elevated temperature of 100+ or above, a child may not return to school until a normal temperature has been held for twenty-four (24) hours without the aid of medication.

Communicable Diseases: Please notify the school if your child is absent because of a contagious disease. We can inform you concerning the required isolation periods and thus protect the other children.

Please do not send your child if she/he shows any of the following symptoms:

1. Sign of abnormal temperature
2. Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
3. Any other signs of illness, e.g. swollen glands, skin rashes etc.

Medication

Medication can only be given by staff members authorized in accordance with State Law and cannot be administered to a child without written permission from the child's parent. **All medication shall be in its original container, properly labeled, and authorized by the child's health care provider. All medications will be stored where they are inaccessible to children.**

Accident/Emergency

In the event of an accident, an Injury Report will be completed and signed by a staff member and filed. In case of an emergency, the center will call 911 and contact the parent/guardian. Information from the child's records will be used to obtain necessary emergency information. The little school at Kids Cottage will document all information pertinent to the emergency and a copy will be sent home and kept on file in the main office.

Positive Behavior Management

One of **our** goals is to develop a positive self-esteem in each child. The staff will use positive developmentally appropriate methods of behavior management to redirect a child when necessary. As a policy, we will intervene, redirect the behavior, and praise the new positive behavior. If it is a recurring behavior, we will counsel with the parent(s) and set up a behavior plan.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Each staff member at the little school at Kids Cottage will be given written information governing the reporting provision of the Delaware child abuse and neglect law(s) and regulations, center policies and procedures for reporting and documenting suspected abuse and neglect, and maintain on file written documentation of their receipt of this information.

The little school at Kids Cottage directors will not discourage, inhibit, penalize or otherwise impede any staff member from reporting any suspected or alleged incident of child abuse or neglect.

In the case of child abuse or neglect, that occurs at the little school at Kids Cottage, the staff will follow the policies and procedures:

Suspected abuse or neglect will immediately be reported to the directors who will report the incident as required by Law.

Any staff member alleged to have perpetrated an incident of child abuse or neglect shall not have direct contact with any child and will be reassigned to other duties that do not involve contact with children until the investigation of the incident has been completed.

the little school at Kids Cottage Experience

Phonics Program: We use the Phono-visual* method. It is primarily designed to help children distinguish initial consonant sounds. “This is not a method of teaching reading by itself. It is not presented as a substitute, nor does it presuppose the discarding of all sight reading. It is to be used as a supplemental tool, as parallel teaching in a developmental reading program.” At this level it is a readiness tool .

*Phono-visual Products, Inc.

Communication Skills: Teaching students to speak easily, freely and clearly is one of the most important phases in the language development of the children. This can be done by encouraging them to share their experiences (i.e. trips, pets, toys, etc.), by relating stories to the class, by conversations with the teachers and peers during classroom and play periods, and by acting out stories, which have been read to them. All of these activities will help children develop a background of useful knowledge.

Pre-Reading Experience: The little school at Kids Cottage program is reading oriented. The children engage in a program that prepares them for reading as their teachers read to them from a book. They will see words on the chalkboard, they will browse at the library books, they will dictate their experiences to the teacher who prints them on large chart paper and later reads them to the children, they will participate in phonics with our phonics teachers who teach on a developmentally appropriate level. The language and/or learning experience approach (LEA) is often implemented in the classroom, along with inventive spelling (creative writing). Such a program develops an eagerness to learn to read on the part of the children when they reach developmental readiness.

Language: The little school at Kids Cottage introduces a second language to the Preschool children by teaching them the equivalent of some of the things they learn in their other classes. The goal is to foster an awareness of the fact that different people have different customs, ways of life and methods of expressing themselves. This will be accomplished primarily through games, songs, conversations and books.

Math: The goal of the Preschool math program is to provide a solid base for understanding numbers as well as recognizing their symbols. Numbers are made meaningful by counting and handling objects (not necessarily in order), visual aids, individual child participation in numbers games, measurements (metric), pictures, charts and tactile objects.

Music: The music program at the little school at Kids Cottage provides a “fun time” for the children to use their imagination while singing, dancing and playing musical games. The children gain an understanding and appreciation of music by learning high and low, loud and soft, fast and slow, etc. Rhythms are strongly emphasized throughout the school year. Preschoolers experiment with percussion and woodwind instruments. Music programs are prepared and enjoyed at the holiday time and in May at Dover Days.

An effective program requires that your child arrive on time each day. Regular attendance is necessary for the child to gain the greatest benefit from the program.

Developmental Curriculum

Preschoolers learn through movement and participation. They need explicit modeled instruction. They also need playful learning opportunities to explore and internalize new ideas. Young children are not ready to sit still and focus for long periods of time. They learn best when they move, manipulate objects, build, sing, draw, and participate in dramatic play. Preschoolers need instruction tailored to their different styles of learning.

Preschoolers will enter the classrooms with different and continually evolving abilities. They will not all be ready developmentally to learn the same skills at the same time.

To meet the needs of Pre-School/Pre-K children, a curriculum must be accessible at all points within this wide spectrum of needs and skills. It should invite participation, build a base of understanding and challenge children's thinking.

We teach our preschoolers to recognize his/her name, and write letters and numbers. We teach them how to listen for and say sounds. We also teach them important social skills. We teach these skills in developmental order by starting at the level that does not assume prior knowledge or competency. We enable children to excel by respecting their present level of development and building their skills.

The physical education/creative movement program at the little school at Kids Cottage provides an enjoyable experience as well as emotional release for each child. There are indications in research that suggests coordination development could be linked to intellectual performance.

Handwriting Without Tears

The Handwriting Without Tears curriculum prepares young learners for school using three programs: Readiness and Writing, Language and Literacy, and Numbers and Math. These programs complement and expand our existing Preschool and Pre-K programs.

TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD (TSG) ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

In recent years, research has offered new insight into the importance of early learning and its relationship to school and success in later life. Much of this evidence links children's early cognitive, language and social-emotional development to later developmental and school outcomes (Hair, Halle, Terry-Humen, Lavelle & Calkins, 2006). In response to this research, the little school began using the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment System (TSG) in the fall of 2015. This observation-based assessment system for children from birth through kindergarten is a resource that supports effective teaching and the natural development of children. TSG is an authentic ongoing assessment tool designed for use as part of your child's everyday learning experiences.

Highlights of the TSG program include:

- Exciting, Innovative, Comprehensive
- Developmentally appropriate, ongoing, observation-based
- Available online and in print
- Helps teachers focus on what matters most for school readiness
- Aligns with the expected outcomes identified in the state's early learning standards
- Focuses on nine key areas of development and learning: Social-Emotional, Language, Physical, Cognitive, Literacy, Science and Technology, Social Studies, Arts, Mathematics
- Supports the needs of English-language learners



Afternoon Little (Extended Care/EC)

Afternoon little is a service offered both before and after school hours to children who are enrolled in a little school at Kids Cottage Preschool or Pre-K class. The Afternoon Little program is a planned program that enhances the curriculum from the school day in a less structured environment. It includes a time for lunch, rest, stories, afternoon snack, crafts, cooking, outdoor play and indoor free play. This service is also available to school aged siblings before and after their school day. Ask about our After School Club for school age children.

Hours

7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Saturday

(one Saturday a month for movie night from 5:30pm - 10:00 p.m.)

Please See calendar on our website for dates

Full Time Rates

Registration fee: \$45 (per family)

\$85.00/week Enrichment

\$145.00/week 5-day class

\$160.00/week 4-day preschool

\$175/week 3 day class

\$8.00 per hour for children enrolled in the afternoon little program

\$5.00 per hour for each additional child in the same family.

\$10.00 per hour for children not enrolled in the afternoon little program.

***Note: Children enrolled in the 2 day preschool class are not eligible for our full time Afternoon Little Program.**

Camp Little/School-Age Camp

During the summer months we have a day camp at the little school at Kids Cottage. This program offers outdoor experiences, visitors, water play, crafts, music, games, etc. All of our camps run in weekly sessions from mid-June through mid-August. Children may attend half day (9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.) or full day camps for one or more sessions depending on the child's interests and the needs of the family. Further information will be available in March.

General information about the little school at Kids Cottage can be found on our website at www.thelittleschool.us

OTHER HAPPENINGS

After School Club

The little school at Kids Cottage offers an After School Club for children ages 5-12. The program provides snack, homework help and indoor and outdoor free play. Transportation will be provided by Capital School District for children attending Booker T. Washington, North Dover, Fairview, William Henry Middle School and Central Middle School. Upon request, the area private and charter schools will also drop off and pick up at the little school. These schools include St. Anne's, Holy Cross, Academy of Dover, Campus Community and Providence Creek. A non-refundable \$50 registration fee is required per child to enroll in this program. Weekly and hourly rates are available. For more information please contact the little school at 734-3040.

Drop-In Childcare

The little school at Kids Cottage offers a drop-in childcare program for children ages 2-12. Children may be dropped off at the parent's convenience for an hourly fee. Qualified staff are available to monitor and play with the children. The center offers a multipurpose room filled with indoor play equipment. Children will enjoy dressing up in our children's theater or making a craft in one of our classrooms. There is also an outdoor playground equipped with swings, sand, shaded areas and much more. The hourly rate is \$10/hour for the first child and \$5/hour for each additional child in the same family. Ask the front desk for available hours.

PK Play

The little school at Kids Cottage provides an atmosphere for parents and their children to spend a few hours together. Children and their parents are welcome to play on our indoor and outdoor playgrounds, dress up in our costumes and more. Parents are responsible for their children during PK play and must supervise their children at all times. Ask at the front desk for PK play rates and available times.

Birthday Parties

The little school at Kids Cottage is the place for birthday parties! In our upstairs multi-purpose room we provide a private area for your child's party. At the heart of the facility is a large indoor playground, tree fort and dress up area. In addition, there is an outdoor playground equipped with swings, sand, play equipment and more. All birthday party dates and time are scheduled for Saturdays throughout the year.

LSKC Monthly Classes

The little school at Kids Cottage offers monthly classes full of fun and excitement. The monthly schedule may include but is not limited to dance, art, golf, music, cross fit for kids, yoga, karate, science and more. Ask at the front desk about our upcoming classes. Most classes meet once a week for six (6) to eight (8) weeks during the afternoons.

Movie Night

The little school at Kids Cottage offers "Movie Night" for children ages 3-12 years of age on the second Saturday Night of every month from 5:30pm-10:00pm. The movie will be listed in the monthly calendars so parents can plan ahead! Movie nights include a movie, snack, crafts and time to play on the playground (indoor and/or outdoor depending on the weather). Children can bring a bag dinner to eat before the movie. Check at the front desk for RSVP sign up.

