

Welcome to the Ludlow Elementary Preschool Program!

The Ludlow Elementary Preschool Program has been established by the Ludlow Elementary School Supervisory Union (RWSU) School Board, which oversees its policies and finances. The preschool has two classrooms; one at Ludlow Elementary School and one at Mount Holly Elementary School. These classes are taught by Vermont licensed Early Childhood Educators. The teachers are assisted by paraeducators who have extensive knowledge of early childhood development. During the school day other staff members may work with children who require specialized services such as speech/language, occupational or physical therapy and/or special education. In addition to these staff members, the school principal is on site to help coordinate various aspects of the program and to provide assistance when needed. Oversight of the preschool is provided by the RWSU Director of Support Services.

The Ludlow preschool class operates from 7:45 A.M. through 1:30 P.M. and the Mount Holly preschool class from 8:00 A.M. through 1:45 P.M. They each follow the regular school calendar.

Mission Statement

The Ludlow Elementary Preschool's mission is to provide a high quality early childhood program with universal access for all three and four year old children who reside in the towns of Ludlow, and who have reached their third birthday by September 1.

Philosophy

Our goal is to provide young children with the opportunity to explore their environment through a variety of play opportunities; to make this first school experience fun and exciting; and to work with parents and the community to instill a lifelong love for learning in our children.

Our preschool is based on the premise that children learn best through play; especially when that play is supported by highly qualified adults with knowledge of how young children develop and with an awareness of individual diversity. In our preschool program children are provided with

opportunities to play in a learning environment that addresses a child's developmental needs for:

- movement
- problem solving
- creativity
- cognitive development, and
- social interactions with adults and other children.

Children will be provided with opportunities to explore and apply new skills in natural contexts. Classroom curriculum will be based on children's individual interests, abilities, and cultural preferences. The preschool staff will work with all families to plan for each child's individual needs. Our goal is to provide a fully inclusive early childhood program for all children residing in our towns.

Typical Daily Schedule

During a typical day at the Ludlow Elementary School Preschool you will see happily engaged children exploring various learning activities and areas of individual interest. You will see an environment that is sometimes noisy and sometimes quiet. You will see children engaging in open-ended activities designed to allow them to make choices, to express feelings, and to develop their cognitive and creative abilities. You will see adults interacting with children in respectful and meaningful ways which foster their language skills and problem solving abilities.

Following is an example of how a typical day at Ludlow Elementary School Preschool is structured.

Ludlow

7:45	Arrival
7:45 - 8:00	Hand washing/Free Play
8:00 - 8:25	Snack
8:25 - 8:50	Specials (music/PE/library)
8:50 - 9:20	Circle/Group Activities
9:20 - 10:30	Centers / Special Activities / Creativity
10:30 - 11:15	Outdoor/Gross Motor Activities
11:15 - 12:00	Lunch
12:00 - 1:00	Rest/Quiet Time
1:00 - 1:30	Closing Activities/Dismissal

Upon Arrival:

It is important that children develop a good sense of school routines from the very beginning. Please help your child to understand that arrival at school is at the designated start time. Later arrivals can be disruptive both to your child's sense of routine and to scheduled class activities.

Each day when you bring your child to school, please sign him/her in. There will be a clipboard with a sign-in sheet near the door. Assist your child in storing his/her belongings and going to the sink for hand washing.

Licensing regulations require that each child wash his/her hands upon entering the classroom each day.

Upon Departure:

To ensure accurate attendance records, we also ask that each day before departing you sign your child out on the attendance sheet. **You must sign your child in and out daily.**

At registration we ask that each family complete a list of individuals who may pick up your child. It is extremely important to keep this paperwork current. We cannot release your child to anyone who is not on the authorization sheet. We cannot make any exceptions to this rule.

Children **must** be picked up promptly at the designated departure time. If there is an emergency which precludes this please call the preschool immediately.

What To Bring to School:

Each family should supply their child with a nap blanket. This should go home weekly to be washed.

What NOT to Bring to School:

Toys and materials at the Ludlow Elementary School Preschool have been chosen carefully for their educational value and durability. Parents are asked to ensure that their children **do not bring** toys from home. Items may be brought for "sharing time", but these items should be kept in a child's cubby. Any items brought for "sharing time" should be in line with

our policy that discourages violence and aggressive play, and should not include toy guns or weapons.

Outdoor Play

We play outdoors for long periods every day unless the weather is extremely cold or raining. Outdoor play is considered an important part of our program. Fresh air and gross motor activities are important to your child's health. Please be aware of the weather conditions and send your child with the appropriate outer-wear. This includes snow pants and boots throughout the winter and mud season.

Field Trips

Field trips are a great way to support young children's learning. Permission slips must be signed by each child's parent before any field trips requiring transportation. You will be given advance notice of, and asked for your help, in planning all field trips. Parents are often needed to accompany on most field trips.

Walking field trips are not subject to the above policies. We will notify parents any time we will not be on the preschool site.

What to Wear

We will be getting "messy" from time to time. We love to use paints, water, finger-paints, shaving cream, glue, sand, and glitter. Please keep this in mind when dressing your child for school. Dress children in durable, washable play clothes. For footwear, please dress your child's feet in shoes that are comfortable and safe. Please be aware of the weather conditions and send your child with appropriate outer-wear.

Please send your child to school with an extra set of clothes in a plastic bag; including socks and underpants. Sometimes we get a little messy outside or at the water table and dry clothes are more comfortable. It is also helpful to have the extra clothes in case of a toileting accident. Please label all items with your child's name. These clothes will be left at school.

Curriculum

Our program will use the following guidelines when planning classroom curriculum:

- **Vermont Early Learning Standards:** *Guiding the Development and Learning of Children Entering Kindergarten*
- **Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities**
- **The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 4th Edition**

The daily curriculum will cover the eight child development domains outlined in the **Vermont Early Learning Standards**. These include:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and emotional Development
- Language, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Creative Expression
- Physical Development and Health

Our curriculum incorporates developmentally appropriate practices. Items which are relevant and specific to children and their families are included in the daily curriculum. The primary goal of the curriculum is to promote social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth in a warm nurturing environment, which lets each and every child know he/she is a special, worthwhile person.

The classrooms contain a wide variety of materials and equipment which make learning exciting. They have been selected to promote intellectual curiosity, a love of music and art, the expression of feelings through dramatic play and stories, and the development of fine and gross motor skills. Our classrooms will be divided into interest areas including, but not limited to, blocks, discovery, manipulative materials such as games and toys, sensory such as sand and water, dramatic play, library, music and movement, creative arts and outdoor investigations.

Child Screening and Assessment

Within three months of your child's enrollment in the LES preschool program, your child will receive, with your signed permission, a developmental screening. This will include speech, vision, hearing and general child development areas (fine and gross motor, cognitive). The screenings will be conducted by the school nurse, Essential Early Educator and the Speech and Language Pathologist.

Throughout the school year your child's teacher will monitor your child's developmental progress using the *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum*. This will be completed by staff three times a year. Your child's progress will be shared with you during scheduled school-wide parent teacher conferences. For families who cannot attend the parent teacher conference days, you will receive a written summary of your child's progress.

Parents will be asked to complete a child questionnaire prior to preschool enrollment. Families will also be asked to complete parent surveys and child interest inventories to share information about your child with staff in order to assist in classroom planning.

For children entering the program on an Individual Education Plan (IEP), all staff will receive a copy of the plan. There will be scheduled meetings with parents, and IEPs will be implemented in the preschool setting.

Guidance and Discipline*

- Staff's expectations of children's social behavior will be appropriate to each child's level of development. Guidance will be designed to meet the individual needs of each child.
- Staff will use positive methods of guidance and discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation (for example, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems, reinforcing and praising appropriate behavior and encouraging children to express their feelings and ideas instead of solving problems with force).

- Derogatory or humiliating remarks made by staff in presence of children or families are prohibited.
- No employee, volunteer or parent shall use any form of inappropriate discipline or corporal punishment such as, but not limited to:
 - hitting, shaking, biting, pinching;
 - restricting a child's movements through binding, tying, or use of any other mechanical restraint;
 - withholding food, water, or toilet use;
 - confining a child in an enclosed or darkened area, such as a closet or a locked room; or
 - inflicting mental or emotional punishment such as humiliating, shaming, threatening, or frightening a child.

*Guidelines from the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations

Rules, expectations and limits are applied consistently and explained clearly. Discipline is approached with a solid understanding of a child's developmental abilities and needs and with sensitivity towards each child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Children are helped to regulate their own behavior through modeling, predictability, and the use of language.

Family Support

From time to time the Ludlow Elementary School Preschool and staff will sponsor discussions on child development, parenting tips, and other issues affecting families and children. We want you to attend and be an active part of your child's school, and we want to be a support for you and all families.

Class Placement Policy

Classroom assignments are made based on a number of factors. They include, but are not limited to, prior placement, age, gender, and openings. Parental input is considered; however, final assignments are made by program administration in consultation with classroom teachers. These placements are final.

Parents As Volunteers

Parents are an integral part of the Ludlow Elementary Preschool Program. We count on you to let us know all about your child. You are an important piece in helping us make your child's time at preschool a successful and happy time. By working together, we create a positive, supportive learning environment for your child.

We believe that it is important for you to be a part of your child's preschool community. There will be many opportunities throughout the year for you to assist us in the preschool. Some of the ways you can be involved include:

1. Attending field trips
2. Assisting with the 4-Winds Science Program
3. Attending Parent Meetings
4. Attending Parent Workshops
5. Volunteering in the classroom
6. Sharing a favorite family custom
7. Sharing a favorite story
8. Sharing your profession, hobby or talent
9. Participating in Parent/Teacher Conferences
10. Assisting with after-school projects
 - a. Setting up equipment
 - b. Helping with fund raising
 - c. Preparing materials
 - d. Collecting reusable recycled classroom materials (plastic containers for drums, foil paper, newspaper, toilet and paper towel rolls...ask your teacher for a complete list)

Each year, the preschool program will conduct a self assessment. As a vital piece of this process, we will ask all families to complete a parent/family survey. Results of these efforts will be shared with you at the last parent meeting.

We look forward to working with you this year and welcome any input you may have to make our program the best it can be!

Confidentiality

The privacy of each and every child and his/her family is treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality. Discussion of children and families is limited to those with a need to know. The only persons permitted to see a child's record will be the parent or legal guardian, school employees, and state licensing and Department of Education personnel. Information will not be given to others without parent or guardian consent. Parents or legal guardians have the right of full access to a child's records, the facility, and staff, by appointment.

Child Abuse Policy

While in our care, we provide each child with a safe and nurturing environment. We look out for both their physical and emotional safety. To fully protect your child, Vermont State Law requires the staff of Ludlow Elementary School Preschool to report any suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child. The safety of all parties (children, staff, and parents) will be respected during this process. The safety and protection of the children will take precedence if a conflict arises. **The child's safety will always come first.**

Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Ludlow Elementary School Preschool does not discriminate against any person or group on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, gender, age, handicapping condition and/or disability, or sexual orientation.

Tobacco Prohibition

The use of tobacco on school grounds is prohibited by state law. This ban extends to any student, employee, or visitor to the school, and applies at all times, whether or not school is in session. It is, furthermore, prohibited at any school sponsored activities.

Emergencies/Early Dismissals

We will be following the same procedures as the Ludlow Elementary School. Parents will be notified by phone in either of these instances.

Snow Days

Each family will be notified in the morning via the school phone tree. School cancellations are also reported on both the radio and local television news channel.

Grievance Procedure

- 1) For classroom concerns, talk to your child's teacher. For issues requiring more discussion, make an appointment for a parent-teacher conference at a mutually agreeable time.
- 2) If the issue is not resolved after talking with your child's teacher you may bring the matter to the Program Director.
- 3) If further discussion is required call the Principal.

Please keep in mind that most concerns or misunderstandings are resolved by bringing them up as soon as possible with your child's teacher

Health Policies

Immunizations and Physical Examinations:

Upon enrollment each child must have on file a record completed by his/her physician documenting physical examination and current immunizations. Parents or guardians may sign a waiver form for medical or religious exemptions.

If your child becomes ill during the school day you will be contacted to take your child home immediately. The Ludlow Elementary School Preschool must have on file the names of two or more people in the area who can pick up your child and assume temporary care in the event you can't be reached.

Food:

If your child will be eating a snack or lunch brought from home, please remember to:

- Label all food items with your child's name and the date.
- Put food needing refrigeration in the classroom refrigerator.
- Pack a healthy and well balanced meal.

When serving food, please keep in mind items that can be a choking hazard to young children. We cannot serve children younger than four years of age the following:

- whole or round sliced hot dogs
- whole grapes
- nuts
- popcorn
- raw peas
- hard pretzels
- spoonful of peanut butter
- chunks of meat or raw carrots larger than can be swallowed whole

If you wish to share a snack with the preschool classroom, we ask that you please bring in a healthy snack. Some great snacks are:

- *Whole fruit that we can cut up at school
- *Fresh vegetables and dip
- *cheese and crackers

Dispensing Medication:

If your child requires medication it may be administered by the school nurse, or designee, upon written orders from a physician, and upon written request of a student's parent or guardian. The physician's orders must detail the name of the drug, dosage, time interval the medication is to be taken, diagnosis and reason for giving.

The medication must be brought to school in a container labeled by the pharmacy or physician. The medication may be administered by the nurse or be delegated to a staff member who has full knowledge about performing the procedure.

Non-prescription medication must be accompanied by a written request from the child's parent or guardian. The request must contain assurances

that the child has suffered no previous ill effects from the use of the medication.

Please advise the staff if you have given any medication to your child before school. Many medications can cause unusual behavior or symptoms that teachers should be aware of. If your child will be absent from school please call the school to inform them.

The following policy guidelines for illnesses and health conditions are taken directly from Vermont Licensing Regulations and are followed by the Ludlow Elementary School Preschool. **Please review and keep them handy in the event you need to decide to send or not send your child to school on any given day.**

Sunscreen/Bug Repellent

If you would like sunscreen or bug repellent put on your child, you must provide the sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher), or bug repellent. They must be brought to school in the original containers and labeled with your child's name. A permission slip must be signed giving permission for the application of these products.

Welcome!

We are excited that you chose to be involved in the Ludlow Elementary School Preschool Program. We want to welcome you to our program and invite you to visit the classroom whenever you can.

We are going to have a great year working and playing together!

Staff

Preschool Teaching Staff: Lora Miele and Beth Oldenburg

Essential Early Education Teacher: Shawn Dubois

LES Pricipal: Karen Trimboli

LES School Nurse: Pam Plumb