



Larisa's
Mini Scholars



2023-2024 Parent Handbook

Mission Statement

Larisa's Mini Scholars Preschool is committed to providing children with a high-quality education by encouraging each child to express themselves through language, art, music, and physical activity. With the emphasis on learning through play, they are building socialization and self-help skills that build up their self-esteem, which is needed in all areas of life.

My Philosophy

I believe the first years of a child's life are by far the most important, helping to lay the foundation for all intellectual and emotional development to follow. Through nurturing and individualized attention, I take great care to provide a warm, friendly, and fun environment for your child, while ensuring they receive the guidance and structure they need. I strive to nurture your child's ideas and imagination, acknowledge each child's individuality, and validate each personality. My goal is to provide a place where children know that they are accepted, loved, protected, and wanted; helping to instill in each child a strong sense of self-worth and purpose. My job is to make sure that each child has numerous positive experiences and interactions throughout the day. It is my hope that when the day is done, and children go home, they feel happy and proud of themselves; eager to share the happenings of their day with you.

Each and every day I feel privileged to have the opportunity to see the world through the eyes of a child, to join in their laughter, and to be included in their games. This is how I have chosen to spend my days. I am a very tolerant individual with an enormous amount of patience. Having two children of my own, I understand how difficult it is to leave your child in someone else's care. Because of this, I can appreciate the trust you must put in me on a daily basis. My goal is to build your trust by being professional, dependable, honest, and most importantly caring for your child the same way I would want my children to be cared for. I view my chosen profession as a career, not just a job.

I provide a daily routine that is flexible, yet structured, to ensure that children are comfortable with their surroundings and expectations. Children's interactions with one another are carefully watched, giving us an opportunity to help instill common values within each child. Through sensitivity and understanding I strive to teach each child in my care manners, kindness, and to be respectful toward others and their belongings. When a child displays inappropriate behavior toward others, he or she is encouraged to make amends through a sincere apology; all in a

sustained effort to help teach children the basic understanding of right from wrong.

I feel that good communication between a parent and provider is a very important part of any quality preschool program. Because of this, I am committed to creating a strong bond with you and your child, helping to ensure the best start to your child's life. My goal is that you feel completely confident and reassured when you leave your child in my care. Each child is different, unique, and special and will be treated as such. These carefree years are far too short. Therefore, I do not rush children through this fun filled times in their lives. Rather, each child is encouraged to develop and grown at their own pace. I understand that you are trusting me to care for, and teach your child, and I take this responsibility very seriously. I look forward to the opportunity to care for your child, while providing a positive influence in their life.

Experience

Before opening my preschool in 2015, I worked in two different licensed childcare centers which allowed me to work with every age group from six weeks to 12 years of age. I moved to Spokane Valley in January of 2014 and finished my Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education with honors at Spokane Falls Community College in June of 2014. I also obtained my Bachelor's Degree in Children's Studies in 2016 from WGU.

Qualifications

- Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor's Degree in Children's Studies
- Currently attending classes for my Bachelor's Degree in Business Management at WGU
- 337 Hours of STARS continued trainings
- Infant/Child/Adult CPR
 - Renewed every 6 months
- First Aid/AED
 - Renewed every 6 months
- Bloodborne pathogen training
 - Renewed every 12 months
- Food Handlers training
 - Renewed every 12 months

Continuing Education

As a teacher I am continuously working on improving and expanding on my existing knowledge in this field. I regularly attend virtual conferences and trainings that are focused around the 2.5 to 5-year-old age group. I also attend trainings and conferences that focus on the kindergarten level. This helps me better prepare my students for life in kindergarten once they graduate from my program.

2023-2024 School Year Class Options

Pre-K 1

Monday & Tuesday

9:15am - 12:00pm

\$275 per month

Students must be 3.5 years of age by September 1st to attend this class

Pre-K 2

Wednesday & Friday

9:15am - 12:00pm

\$275 per month

Students must be 3.5 years of age by September 1st to attend this class

Closed Holiday's/Vacations

We are closed on the following Holidays

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- President's Day
- 4th of July
- Thanksgiving Break
- Spring Break
- Christmas Break Monday, December 18 - Monday, January 1

Registration Fee: [There is a \\$25 non-refundable registration fee per child at the time of enrollment.](#) If you terminate your preschool services and are gone more than 90 days and wish to return, you must pay a \$25 re-application fee.

Snow Days/Late Start

We follow Central Valley School District in regard to snow days and late start during the winter months. If CVSD closes schools due to snow/ice, we are closed. If there is a closure or late start to announce, I will send that information by 7:30am as an alert on Brightwheel. This means you will receive a Brightwheel message and a text with this information. This information also gets posted on our Facebook page.

Pre-K schedule for 1 hour late start: 10:15am-1:00pm

Pre-K schedule for 2 hour late start: No School

Tuition/Payment Procedures

Our 2023-2024 school year runs September - June. Tuition payments are due the 1st of each month beginning in September. All accounts are required to be setup for Auto-Pay via Brightwheel by August 20th. Rates are not adjusted for vacations or illnesses. All school breaks, holidays, a set number of covid days, and a set number of snow days are deducted from the overall tuition before it is broken down into monthly payments.

Pre-K 1: 10 monthly payments of \$275 beginning September 1st

Pre-K 2: 10 monthly payments of \$275 beginning September 1st

New family registration of \$25 is due at the time of registration.

Returning families do not pay a registration fee.

Military families do not pay a registration fee.

Trial Period/Termination

There is a two-week trial period for each family. Either party may terminate this agreement within this period, via phone, in person, or letter, with or without cause. **NO REFUNDS** will be given during this time. After the initial trial period, a two-week written notice with pay will be required to terminate care.

Larisa's Mini Scholars Preschool requires a two-week written notice prior to termination. At this time, the last two weeks payment will be due whether your child attends or not. I also reserve the right to terminate services immediately or at any time for, but not limited to:

1. Repeated failure to pay fees on time

2. Failure to comply with policies
3. Failure to attend regular hours as scheduled per signed contract
4. Lack of parental co-operation, communication, or respect for my business or my family
5. Any behavior exhibited in the classroom that poses a continuing risk to any other child (biting, hitting, kicking, or any other form of aggression)

I will work with you as much as possible, but ultimately, I cannot put my business, the other children in my care, or my family in a compromising situation.

Extra Clothing/Shoes

Here at Larisa's Mini Scholars Preschool, we love to spend time outside even when it is raining or snowing. Please bring a change of clothes on your child's first day of school that can remain at school in the event that your child needs them.

We are a play-based classroom, this means there is a good likelihood that we participate in messy activities, or experiments on any given day. We do our best to cover clothing during messy activities, but there are times when our preventative measures just aren't enough.

For children who are still in the potty-training phase, please bring two extra changes of clothes and an extra pair of shoes with socks in their backpack daily.

For children requiring diapers or pull-ups please bring at least one week's supply of diapers/pull-ups and wipes to be kept at the school for your child.

Daily Clothing/Attire

Children should arrive dressed for play. We like to have fun! Having fun involves outdoor play and lots of messy activities, so make sure your child is dressed appropriately. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate for outdoor play.

Parents, please keep in mind that we go outside every chance we get unless the weather is outside of the allowed temperatures. During the winter months, please ensure your child comes to school with a warm coat, hat, gloves and boots or warm tennis shoes. We will go outside even when it's snowing so long as the temperature is above 28 degrees. During the summer months make sure your child has breathable clothes on, and close toed shoes.

Please refrain from sending your child to school in dress up shoes.

Supplies

When you tour our facility with the intent to enroll, you will receive a supply list. These supplies must be brought to school with your child during their first week of class. These are basic supplies your child will use while attending classes.

Discipline

Here at Larisa's Mini Scholars Preschool, we do not use any forms of discipline. Instead, we redirect, and problem solve together. When a child does something they shouldn't be doing, we give them a chance to tell us what it is that they were doing that was not an appropriate classroom choice. If they cannot tell us what they had done, we will explain what it was and work together to come up with alternate ways to approach a similar situation next time. By doing this, we are promoting self-help, and problem-solving skills that they can use in a variety of situations in, and out of the classroom.

Security Features On-Site

We take the safety of our students very seriously here, so we have multiple security measures in place.

Recording Security Cameras - The entire perimeter of our home is monitored by 24/7 recording security cameras. We also have the same type of system in the classroom, we have these cameras so that if a child happens to trip and fall, which causes an injury, we can show parents exactly what happened in each situation. These videos are never accessed without permission by anyone other than the owner of the preschool.

Communication

Brightwheel is the app we use for all communications during your child's time in preschool here. Brightwheel will be setup for your family during the second week of August. Brightwheel is the system we will use to send photos and videos of your child's time in class also, so make sure you have it setup before school begins.

Preschool Parking

Families are welcome to park in our driveway or anywhere in front of our home or directly across from our home. We have a great working relationship with our neighbors, so I do ask that driveways and mailboxes are not blocked at any time. During the winter months, the driveway and space directly in front of our home will

be plowed before classes begin each day. Ice melt will be used on the driveway and walkway.

Arrival/Departure

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief, the longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is easiest. In my experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

Drop offs for each class can happen no earlier than **5 minutes before** your child's class is set to begin, anyone who arrives sooner than the designated time will be asked to wait before entering their child's class. Pick-ups must happen **within 5 minutes after** your child's class ends, pick up times must be followed accordingly so we can begin working through our daily cleaning checklists. Our gate opens at 9:10 for drop offs each morning.

Please be brief at pickup times as well. This is a time of testing, when two different authority figures are present (the parent and provider), children will test to see if the rules still apply during this time. I expect parents to back up my rules. Please refrain from being on your cell phone so that your child, and myself, will have your undivided attention during both drop off and pick up times.

My normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents or guardians, or someone else the parents have designated on the Authorized pick up and Emergency contact form. If someone other than the parent will be picking the child up, please notify me ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day if this person is on the list of approved people to pick up your child. If the person is **NOT** on the approved pick-up list, we **MUST** have written and signed consent from you with 12 hours' notice to allow that person to pick up your child. The person picking up your child will always need to bring photo ID if I have not yet met them.

Early Pick-ups

If you will be picking your child up early on any given day, please give the owner verbal or written notice. This helps me prepare my day accordingly to allow your child to get all of the important things done before they head home.

If you are not able to provide notice and you need to pick your child up early, head to the entryway gate and ring the doorbell. This will ring in our classroom to inform me that someone is here early, and I will open the gate to let you in. We do keep our gate closed during class times as an extra security measure to ensure no one has access to our classroom who is not permitted to be there.

Absences

In the event that your child will be absent from class, please notify the owner via our Brightwheel app. This helps me best prepare my daily activities and center rotations.

Illness Guidelines

Promoting good health and safety is our goal here. To prevent the spread of childhood diseases and illness, please do not bring your child to preschool if they are ill.

If your child comes down with a communicable disease you need to notify me immediately and in turn, I must notify other parents and the Spokane County Health Department. Children with a contagious illness will not be allowed in preschool until they are back to normal health and have a physician's note releasing them to return to preschool.

Larisa's Mini Scholars Preschool will send home any child who exhibits any of these following until pickup

1. Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher (needs to be fever free for 48 hours without medications before returning)
2. Diarrhea and vomiting.
3. Draining rash anywhere on the body - must be gone before returning.
4. Eye discharge - pink eye or from a cold - must be gone before returning.
5. Lice or nits - can return only after being free of them for 24 hours.
6. Communicable disease: chicken pox, measles, etc. must be gone before returning. A Doctor's note must be given to the owner of the preschool before returning to school.
7. Consistent complaints of ear, stomach, headaches, or other pain.
8. Any color of nasal discharge, it must be clear before returning to preschool unless it is a severe clear runny nose, then they need to remain at home until it becomes a mild runny nose - wiping it less than every 15 minutes or so.

9. Severe coughing - congested, with phlegm, gets red in the face, gags, throws up, or high-pitched whooping cough or croup sounds - must be mild before returning to preschool.

Medications

Before I can administer any prescription or non-prescription medications to your child you will need to do the following:

1. Keep them home for 24 hours after the first dose ~ for possible allergic reactions (when the medication has not been taken before).
2. Sign a medication authorization form.

All medications must be brought in the original container with the following information on the label: child's name, prescription name, doctors name, dosage, pharmacy name & phone number, instructions for administering, & dates the medication is to be used for.

Non-prescription medications may include, but are not limited to:

- Antihistamines
- Anti-itching ointments or lotions
- Diaper rash ointments or lotions
- Sunscreen

These must be sent in original containers. If any of them will be taken differently than indicated on the labels, I will need a note from a physician with instructions.

If your child will be on long term meds, or as needed medications like asthma inhalers, a note from your doctor will be required to put in our files. Medications that are not being used will be sent back home. Only asthma type medications can be kept here to be used when needed.

Take Home Folders

Take home folders are located in the parent connection center by the classroom entrance. Folders are organized alphabetically by first name for both classes. We will put all art, crafts, assignments, notes, newsletters, invoices, and important forms into these folders. Please make sure you are checking them daily.

Sunscreen Policies

Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen before bringing their child to class each day. If you are unable to apply sunscreen before class, please be sure a labeled bottle with a signed permission form is left with me in the classroom so that I can apply sunscreen to your child before we go outside when it's needed.

Influence of Drugs/Alcohol

If you or any other person appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of pick-up, you will be asked to have someone come get you and your child. If you refuse a ride and try to leave with your child, we will notify the police department and child protection services with all information required. No smoking or vaping will be allowed on or near the premises at any time. Anyone caught smoking anywhere on our premises will be fined for each occurrence.

Religious Activities

I do not practice religious activities in my school out of respect for parents who do not have similar religious beliefs. Religious beliefs are never discussed or pushed onto children under any circumstances.

Confidentiality

All the information you give me will be kept confidential and will only be released to authorized persons such as but not limited to: City licensor, police department, health and social services if ever required.

Personal Belongings

I prefer that children do not bring toys from home. Little ones often have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toy. Exceptions to this policy will be allowed only during show and tell days. This year since we do not have lunch together, please refrain from bringing backpacks with your child. The only things your child needs to bring to school with them each day is weather appropriate clothing.

Disclaimer

No child or their family will be discriminated against on the basis of Age, Race, Color, Sex, Creed, Handicap, National Origin or Ancestry.

Contact Information

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