

Preschool Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Enrollment/General Info:

Every child is welcome to attend Lotus Heart Preschool regardless of race, color, gender, religious background or ethnic/national origin.

Prior to enrollment we ask that prospective families come and visit our school. (Please call or email to set up an appointment.)

Before the first day of attendance all enrollment forms must be completed, and the non-refundable registration fee of \$85 paid. This fee, in addition to ensuring your child's place in the school, is used for school costs such as liability insurance and classroom supplies.

When registration is completed, your child is officially a student at Lotus Heart Preschool!

Hours of Operation:

School hours are Monday – Friday, 9am - 1pm.

We have part time classes 2 or 3 days/week and full time 5 days/week. The school year will operate September through May. Exact start/end dates will vary slightly year to year and will be announced as soon as possible.

We usually offer a summer schedule/summer camp, which will be available in the spring, usually by mid April and will vary from year to year.

Summer hours will be the same as the school year 9am-1pm.

Normal School Closures:

Lotus Heart Preschool follows the Portland Public School system calendar for holidays. This means that we will be closed for national holidays that fall on a Monday, Veteran's day, Thanksgiving weekend (Wed-Fri), as well as winter and spring breaks. Please see the school district calendar for specific yearly dates. www.pps.net

Tuition:

Registration Fee (non-refundable): \$85

Monthly Rates: 5 days \$775,

3 days \$480, 2 days \$345.

Tuition is due by the 5th of each month.

Please write a check to the school name. Cash, and Zelle payments also accepted. Contact me for other arrangements. Late fee of \$10 assessed after the 5th, \$20 after the 10th unless prior arrangements are made.(please contact me if you need this)

Returned checks will be assessed a \$20 fee.

If your child is enrolled in the middle of the month your bill will be prorated into a daily rate for that month.

Tuition cannot be prorated or refunded for absences due to illness/child being on vacation/weather closures, etc.

PPS inclement weather closures will not be prorated or refunded. School holiday and break closures are included in tuition and are not prorated.

Tuition will be credited for school closure due to teacher illness/predetermined absence.

Withdrawal:

Please give advance notice of 30 days if you choose to withdraw your child from our program at any time prior to the end of the calendar school year.

Any tuition paid is non-refundable.

Arrival and Departure Procedures:

Our school day begins at 9:00am, and our school door will open at 9:00am, no early drop offs please.

Drop off and pick up are on the porch outside the classroom and cubbies are on the porch as well. You are welcome to say goodbye to your child on the porch or walk them inside after putting items in cubbies and removing shoes.

If you will be late or your child is not attending for the day, please call and let us know as soon as possible. You can send a quick text to my cell phone as well. 541-214-9505. You are welcome to text or email the

evening beforehand if your child becomes ill and you know they will not attend the following day.

When picking up your child, please remember that school ends at 1:00pm.

A late fee may be assessed if you are late picking up your child at the rate of \$1 per minute, beginning at 1:15pm.

If you are behind schedule, please call and let me know as soon as possible.

If someone other than yourself or a person on your registration form with permission to pick up will be picking up the child, you must communicate ahead of time and the person must have his or her state issued ID. I CANNOT release a child to a different person without permission and ID (If I have not previously met them) regardless if it is a family member or not.

Throughout the year as parents become acquainted, it is common for a parent to ask another parent to pick up their child if running late or meeting at the park etc.

This is fine as long as I receive a text/call that this will be happening and prior approval from you, or that person is on your pick up list. I cannot release a child to another school parent on the fly unless I have that direct communication and permission from you. Thank you for understanding!

If a person who is not on your pick-up list will be coming, please add them to your list prior to them picking up your child and remind them to bring ID.

When ready to drop off:

Cubbies will be outside on the porch, please put away belongings, take off shoes and then I will check in with you and your child. You may drop off at the porch (most common) or you may also walk your child inside and say goodbye as they get started on something or greet friends. Drop off and pick up are busy times, thank you for your patience!

Difficult drop offs:

(especially at the beginning of the year)

Some preschoolers have not yet been in a school setting, and all will have varying social experiences out of the house or in care. Some of them will be overjoyed and ready to play, and others will be apprehensive and shy or scared, or just not ready to say goodbye to you. If you need to take extra time with your child at the porch, in the front yard, over at the park, or in your car, that is just fine. You know your child best, please do whatever you need to make them feel comfortable and have a great day. Establishing a routine of how many minutes you will stay or what will happen first/next/last can be really helpful. I am okay with being handed a crying child after you have said your goodbyes and agreed upon time limit. Typically they will cry less than one minute and will be given love and comfort while upset. If your child is unable to settle and continues to cry or be unreasonably upset I will contact you. I will also try to contact you with a quick text to let you know they have recovered and are on to play. I know how hard it can be to leave your child when they are crying or not wanting you to go.

Pick up: I will dismiss children to you at the door one by one at the end of the day. Alternately we may be outside on the porch waiting for you if we have just returned from the park.

***I encourage you to introduce yourself and get to know each other, hang out with your kids at the park after school and have play dates outside of school. Lotus Heart strives to create community, I hope for families to connect and make friendships with one another!**

****During drop off/pick up, please be mindful that the school is the children's space, and keep any conversations child appropriate. (politics, covid, news, drama, etc, can all be unsettling or confusing to children and are adult topics and unique to each family, thanks!)**

Clothing:

As the weather turns, please dress your child in warm layers and send rain gear. Mornings can be cold, afternoons can be hot, and rain can come at any time.

Snacks & Meals:

At this time, all food will come from home. We will eat together in the middle of our day around 11am. Please send a lunch box with 4-5 healthy growing foods, high in protein and low in sugar. Nutrient dense foods to sustain a kid's high level of activity are best. Some examples are: sandwiches, trail mix, cheese, nuts, tortilla wraps, sushi rolls, pasta, granola, fruits, and vegetables. Please do not send yogurt tubes, they are difficult for kids to open and usually a mess with little actually getting eaten.

Please do not send candy, cookies, brownies or other treats in lunches. Please also do not send holiday candy in lunches.(Halloween, Valentines etc) It is only 11 am after all, kids without feel left out, and we just don't need sugar during our school morning. Thanks for understanding.

Usually parents get great ideas from each other for packing lunches, feel free to ask each other! I cannot refrigerate lunches, please send an ice pack if needed. I cannot heat up lunches, warm up and send in a thermos if needed.

We will on occasion have a school snack together such as popcorn or a group baked bread/muffin and will often make herbal tea in the mornings. Birthday snacks such as fruit or crackers may happen as well.*

***Please remember to advise of food allergy or preference such as gluten/dairy free, nuts, eggs, vegan, etc on your child's paperwork**

Please send a water bottle from home daily. Make a habit of adding the water bottle to the lunch box if that helps with remembering. With all of our outside time, it is crucial your child has a water bottle at school each day. (If you need to leave a clean empty one in the cubby- go for it!)

I will advise via email if there are any nut or other serious allergies to be aware of.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Soup Day:

Soup day has been canceled the past few years due to Covid regulations in our limited classroom space. I would like to reinstate it if it seems like a good idea and there is interest and will keep you posted via email.

Here is the description if we start it up again this school year:

Once a month the class participates in Soup Day. We ask that each child bring a vegetable to share and add to our pot of soup. We will chop and prep together, turn our room into a restaurant of sorts, and invite parents to eat with us at 12:35pm. Please send your child with a full lunch as usual on soup days, we will eat early and finish the day with our soup. Dates will be sent out for the year with the calendar and reminders sent out the week before. Dates will alternate between a TuTh and MWF so all kids get a chance to participate.

Yoga Day:

Leslie Wilda, of Yoga Playgrounds joins us 2 times a month for a 45-minute guided yoga class.

www.yogaplaygrounds.net. We will also be practicing yoga on our own as part of circle time.

Special Visitors:

Depending on an individual child's needs, there may be other teaching professionals such as speech, occupational, physical, or play therapists, and educational assistants, or observers in the classroom. They are licensed professionals usually contracted with an individual family rather than with the school and have their background checks and certifications to be in the classroom.

Holiday/Birthday Celebrations:

Part of our curriculum focuses on the seasons and the cycles of the earth. In fall, we will emphasize autumn and harvest time rather than Halloween. For winter, we will focus on themes such as hibernation and the weather and changes of the season rather than Christmas or other holidays. We will talk about these holidays and how they relate to the children's lives and cultures and give them respect, but we won't celebrate

them in class per-say. You are welcome to share the holidays your family celebrates and there is no taboo talking about holidays as they are exciting times the kids love to talk about and share with each other.

To celebrate your child's birthday we will sing to them during lunch time and encourage them to choose a special activity or game for us to play together during circle time. It will automatically be their turn to blow out our lunch candle as well. Families may send a snack to share for their birthday- please opt for fruit or a no/low sugar cracker/muffin/etc option rather than a sweet treat or candy. Please do not send juice boxes. Alternately stickers or tattoos or bubbles are fun ways to share as well. Bringing something for one's birthday is not required.

Outdoors/Park/Garden:

It is part of our curriculum to take time outdoors every day. During normal weather in all seasons we will visit Pendleton Park grounds daily. We will also visit the Vermont Hills Community Garden adjacent to the park

behind Vermont Hills Church weekly during the fall and spring growing season.

In extreme winter weather we will still have time under our covered porch for some fresh air.

Inclement Weather: PPS will make the call about school being open or closed if there is snow or freezing rain. They usually do so the night before or by 6:00am. I will let you know asap if there is a closure or delay. News and school district websites should also have closure information.

Parent/Teacher Communication:

I strive to keep constant lines of communication open to discuss your child and their life at school.

I will be available at the end of each day to talk briefly with parents about their child's day.

If a parent or teacher needs a longer conversation, we will set up a time for a phone call, longer meeting, or communicate by email. I am available by text as well.

At anytime if you have questions or concerns, please feel free to call or email and I will respond as soon as possible.

What to bring/wear:

Please dress your child in play clothes. We will paint, garden, experiment, and participate in several activities that may get on a child's clothes. Our paint is generally washable, but for peace of mind, please send them in clothes that can get messy. We have art aprons, but they don't always do the job!

Each child will have a cubby and we ask that you have 1-2 complete changes of clothes for them. Keep in mind we will go outside every day. Warm layers, rain gear including rain pants, boots, gloves, and hats are essential. When you hear the weather will be hot, please still send a sweater or hoodie etc. It is often cold in the mornings at the park and doesn't warm up by the time we go out. We will have picnics on warm fall and spring days, but it is still often breezy and cool under the trees.

Please label all of your child's clothes.

Toilet Training:

Children must be toilet trained and comfortable using the toilet. Please bring an extra change of clothes in case of an occasional accident. If accidents are frequent, the teacher will request a conference with the parent to address the situation. Children train in their own time and this process is greatly respected and cannot be rushed. Lotus Heart simply does not have the facility available to change diapers or care for regular accidents.

Discipline and Guidance:

At Lotus Heart Preschool, we practice positive guidance and discipline. We strive to ask children what they can do rather than what they cannot. Children will be encouraged to communicate with each other and resolve their conflicts with one another. Using our “6 step conflict resolution guide” I will assist children in finding out what the problem is and how it can be resolved. We will use turn taking, trading, timers,

patience, and communication to solve our disagreements. Children are intelligent and creative and can usually find effective solutions to their problems with little adult intervention, however I will always be on hand to help facilitate kind communication and problem solving between children.

We strive to create a positive atmosphere where children can be their unique selves. Teacher guidance will assist children in positively expressing their frustrations, showing respect for others, kind manners, and developing self-control. Our motto is that our classroom is a family and we care for one another above all else: A friend is always more important than a toy or object, and hurting the feelings of another hurts your own heart. In this way we work to create a tight knit, supportive group of friends that build each other up and help one another be their best, caring self, and in this way, one friendship at a time, we build a better world for all of us!

Children will be redirected from inappropriate behaviors and clear consistent classroom rules will be in place. If such redirection is not working, the child

will be asked to help the teacher in a task or asked to “take some space” on the reading couch to look at a book and re-focus. This is not the typical “time-out” scenario or punitive, just a momentary chance to reconnect or calm down.

If a child’s behavior is extreme and consistently disruptive or becomes unsafe for themselves or others, the parent will be contacted and the child may be asked to go home early.

A parent/teacher conference will be scheduled to discuss the behavior and together we will create an action plan. If the behavior continues without resolution or if any conduct results in seriously harming a child or adult, Lotus Heart Preschool reserves the right to terminate enrollment for that child immediately.

Contact Info:

Teacher: Brynn Anderson

Address: 5406 SW Iowa St. Portland, OR 97221

Phone: 503-452-6148 (school office phone)

Cell: 541-214-9505 (please use this private cell number to communicate about anything during the school day as I will not have a chance to check the school voicemail)

Email: teacher@lotusheartpreschool.com

Website: www.lotusheartpreschool.com

Illness Policy next page:

Illness Policy:

Please keep your child at home if they have any of the following:

- Fever above 99 degrees**
- Constant runny nose of any color**
- Constant or fluid cough**
- Diarrhea**
- Vomiting**
- Yellow, green, or crusted discharge from eyes or ears**
- Head lice or nits**
- Skin rashes**
- Open wounds with blood and/or pus**

***Your child must be free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea symptoms for a minimum 48 hours before returning to school. Other listed symptoms are case by case**

depending on how the child is feeling and when the issue is resolved. If in doubt, please keep them home and err on the side of caution. This policy is for everyone so that we maintain a healthy classroom space. Please feel free to check in with Teacher Brynn as well if you are unsure if your child is well enough to attend.

***If your child has an illness that requires antibiotics such as strep throat, your child must have had the medication for a minimum of 48 total hours prior to returning to school. If they don't feel well even after this time period, please keep them home. Diarrhea as a side effect of antibiotics still needs to be treated as infectious and the child must stay home.**

***As with illness, children must stay home for 48 hours after any vaccines to monitor for fever and/or side effects. This was a new CDC rule put in place in 2021 during Covid as vaccine reactions can mimic illness with symptoms such as fever, rash etc. I have recently not been able to verify if the rule continues to be in place, but it makes sense and so I have decided to keep it for the time being.**

Please schedule shots accordingly in order to miss the least amount of school. If fever or other symptoms appear, keep your child home until 48 hours after fever resolves and other symptoms are not a concern (even if this happens after the initial 48 hr period).

<https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html> is the reporting website if your child has a side effect/complication after vaccination.

Immunization forms and/or exemptions are due no later than December each year, please let me know if you need help with any of it.

For head lice, your child must be NIT-FREE before returning to school. Please wash all clothes, cloth items, toys and car seats.

If your child is acting lethargic, unusual, unreasonably upset, or just “not themselves”, please keep them at home as this behavior is often a precursor to illness.

At school we will practice effective hand washing, covering coughs & sneezes, and nose wiping. Children will be asked to wash hands upon arrival each day,

choosing their own hand towel for the day. They will also wash hands before and after eating, toileting, and wiping nose or putting hands in mouth.

I will notify all families in the event of a major illness in the school. (Strep, Hand/foot/mouth, chicken pox, etc)

You will be notified to pick up your child as soon as possible if they become sick during school hours or if their nose is continually running or they are constantly coughing, unable to cover, wipe, and fluids are spreading on surfaces

You will be asked to take your child home if they appear to be too ill to be at school or have a fever upon arrival. They will need to remain home for 48 hours before returning.

Medications:

Medications can be administered to a child only by the teacher or parent. The parent of a child that needs medication during school must fill out an authorization

form and provide medication in its original container with instructions for use.

Emergencies/Accidents:

If a child requires medical treatment, 911 will be called and parents will be immediately contacted. If necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest or preferred hospital. If the parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called while we will continue to try and reach you.

Lesser accidents that do not require medical treatment will be logged in an accident report and treated with first-aid at school.

Parents will be notified of any accident that occurs with their child at school.

Lotus Heart Preschool is First-Aid and CPR certified.

Teacher Illness

In the event that the teacher is ill, a qualified substitute will be called to teach the class for the day.

If a suitable substitute is not available the preschool will be closed for the day(s).

Covid Specific Regulations and Protocols:

If a child or teacher has an illness with fever, new cough, or shortness of breath, they should not come to school.

Oregon Health Authority no longer has any Covid protocols or requirements for schools. Please refer to the regular illness policy for symptom guidelines.

Congratulations, you made it to the very end of this loooong handbook!

Please scroll to the next page for a signature and print it out (signature page only) and return with your other paperwork, thanks!!

Please feel free to ask questions if anything is unclear.

Thank you!

Teacher Brynn

I have read and understand the parent handbook which includes tuition requirements, day to day operations, emergencies, and illness policy for Lotus Heart Preschool.

Signed name and date: _____