

Prairie Home Kids

After School

Handbook for Parents



Prairie Home School After-School Care
Located in the United Lutheran Church
409 Greenfield St.
Oak Park, Il. 60302
Owner/Director: Pam Van Natter
Phone:708-822-0078

**Prairie Home Kids After School
Parent Handbook
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Welcome to Prairie Home Kids After School

Mission Statement
Services

The Prairie Home Kids After School Staff is diligent and enthusiastic in our desire to provide quality care, academic assistance and restorative nurturing to school age children in our after-school facility. We support all children as they work to achieve “optimal intellectual growth”. Our programs are designed to nurture, encourage and inform social, emotional and intellectual growth and good health.

Prairie Home Kids After School will provide:

- ◆ Time and space to run, play, exercise, and grow
- ◆ A nutritious snack to reenergize them
- ◆ Homework tutoring and organizational assistance.
- ◆ Quiet, comfortable areas to complete homework
- ◆ Space and opportunity for children to relax and refresh
- ◆ A clean, safe, comfortable environment for school-age children

Our Goals:

We are committed to ensure every child and family safe, comfortable, enjoyable experiences during after-school hours. We will always extend unconditional positive regard to all children and will create a welcoming and protective environment.

Admission and Enrollment Policies

Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday 3 P.M.-6 P.M.

Wednesdays- 2 P.M.-6 P.M.

Institute days and local holidays-

8 A.M. to 6 P.M.



Prairie Home Kids After School Calendar



Prairie Home Kids After School offers equal opportunity enrollment for school-age children K through 5th grade on first come, first served basis. We do not discriminate regarding color, ethnicity, religion, family origin, family status or physical ability.

Parents desiring to enroll a child in the after-school care program must complete the enrollment application, personal information and health forms and applicable release forms along with a \$25 non-refundable application fee. When your child is admitted into the program, one month's advance tuition is required. Enrollment forms are available to download from our website: www.prairiehomekids.com

Prairie Home Kids After School will operate in accord with the District 97 school calendar. Our facility will close on all national holidays.

We will open for all District 97 institute days and Parent-Teacher Conference half-days.

Tuition Fees and Payment Policy

Program tuition is \$22 per day per child for all days.

Weekly cost \$110 per child.

Part-time enrollment is \$24 per day.

On institute days noted on the Hatch School we will be open from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M.

On conference days noted on the Hatch School calendar we will be open from 12 PM to 6 PM

Unless otherwise requested all invoices are electronically sent via email.

Tuition fees are invoiced in 4-week increments.

Invoices will be sent 2 weeks prior to due date.

Payments received more than 2 days late will be charge a \$30 fee applied to the next invoice.

The director will personally contact families whose account becomes 14 days late.

Services will be terminated for accounts more than 20 days past the due date.

Departure and Pick-Up Procedures

Children arriving from Hatch School:

1. Prairie Home Kids staff members will meet the children as a group at the school at dismissal time giving adequate time for children to assemble after dismissal. We will also make a return trip to the school to escort children involved in "Hatch After Hours" programs.
2. Before departing, every child who will be attending after school care will be accounted for and their names will be checked on the attendance register.
3. The children and the escort will proceed to the care facility at The United Lutheran Church at 409 Greenfield St., crossing Ridgeland Ave. at the traffic signal.
4. When children arrive inside the church, role will be called to account for all children.
5. The attendance register will be signed and dated by the Prairie Home School site manager
6. Parents should report absences via text to: Pam (708-822-0078) & Gabby (708-600-3929)

Departure and Pick-Up Procedures

Children arriving from other schools

1. Staff will meet the transporting vehicle at the Greenfield Avenue entrance to the United Lutheran Church and check the arriving child's name and note the time of arrival on the attendance register.
 2. The arriving child will be escorted into the church building and the attendance register will be filed in the attendance notebook.
 3. Prairie Home School will not provide transportation from schools other than Hatch Elementary. Individual transportation arrangements must be made by parents or guardian
1. No child will be dismissed to leave unless a Prairie Home School employee has made personal, visual contact with the adult picking up the child.
 2. Children will only be released to persons who have been authorized by parents or guardians to do so. If a pick-up by someone other than a person on the authorized list is necessary, then a call must be made to the center director by the parent or guardian.



Discipline Policy

At Prairie Home Kids we believe that discipline is a positive opportunity to help children learn and mature. It is part of an ongoing process through which children develop more effective social skills, self-monitoring, and problem management. We will maintain a safe and emotionally secure environment while at the same time assisting children to make good decisions and interact positively within the group. We will always operate in accordance with an attitude of Unconditional Positive Regard. We will accept and nurture all children as individuals, without prejudice or exclusion and yet maintain control through efficient organization, positive reinforcement and well-defined rules. We advocate a policy of POSITIVE DISCIPLINE to be administered through the following practices.

Staff Involvement:

1. Communicate to children using positive statements to encourage self-monitoring and cooperative effort.
2. Encourage and assist children to use their own words and solutions to resolve interpersonal conflicts.
3. Communicate with children by getting down to their eye level and talking to them in a calm quiet manner about behavioral guidelines and targets.
4. Frequently acknowledge accomplishments and positive behavior.
5. Consistently model acceptable behavior.
6. Clearly establish limits and guidelines.
7. Clearly explain behavioral expectations and rules.

Student involvement:

1. Know and understand rules and expectations.
2. Model good behavior and fair play to others.
3. Respect for staff and fellow students.
4. Respect for property and facilities
5. Children will be given reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts.

Parental Involvement:

1. Parents will be informed of center's discipline policy via distribution of printed copies.
2. Director will notify parents verbally if a child exhibits a pattern of unacceptable behavior.
3. The director may request a formal conference with the parents to establish a plan of action.
4. If necessary the parent may be asked to pick up the child from the center and/or remove the child for the next scheduled day.

Prohibited Practices

In accordance with DCFS rules, the following behaviors are prohibited in all childcare settings:

1. Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;
2. Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or use of the bathroom;
3. Abusive or profane language;
4. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and
5. Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.

Behavior Resolution:

When disciplinary action is required to resolve a conflict or restore decorum.

1. Limits and consequences shall be clear and understandable to the child, consistently enforced and explained to the child before and as part of any disciplinary action.
2. Discipline shall be developmentally appropriate and logically related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences.
3. A brief separation time, with adult supervision will be implemented to allow a child time to regain emotional control and rethink their commitment to cooperative behavior and self-control.
4. Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one minute per year of age.
5. Afterward, the child and a staff member will have a conversation regarding behavioral expectations.
6. Parents will be informed when disciplinary action is taken.

Discipline documentation/distribution policy:

1. This Policy shall be distributed to parents and staff.
2. Caregivers shall have ongoing communication between home and after school care regarding all aspects of the care of the children.
3. Caregivers shall document any history of recurring discipline problems and subsequent formal parent conferences in the child's record.
4. In cases of recurring or severe misbehavior, parents will be contacted so that we may work things out together and develop a plan of action. Clinical behavior management plans may be developed to meet the needs of a particular child if developed with the parent and a professional clinician. This must be documented in the child's file. All staff working with the child shall receive training on the implementation of the plan. We hope that such intervention will resolve the issue. We will regularly update parents and guardians on the child's progress.
5. Unresolved discipline problems are such that a child poses potential for harm to him or herself or to other children. Prairie Home Kids will first endeavor to resolve the discipline issue through parent/staff conferences and the establishment of a "plan of action" to correct the issue. Continued violation of rules or behavior contrary to the aims of Prairie Home School can, at the director's discretion and in accord with DCFS regulations, result in the termination of the after-school care contract.

DCFS states that:

"Any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of care offered by the facility, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged from the facility."

And further requires that:

In all instances, when a facility decides that it is in the best interest of the child to terminate enrollment, the child's and parents' needs shall be considered by planning with the parents to meet the child's needs when he or she leaves the facility, including referrals to other agencies or facilities.



Activities and Schedules

Prairie Home Kids will provide your children a refreshing snack and time to relax. Afterward, our staff will engage children in organized, purposeful play and exercise, interesting and enjoyable leisure activities and guided homework preparation.

Daily Schedule Outline

Schedule may vary from day to day

3-3:45 → Gathering and Check-in at Hatch. Whenever possible supervised free play at Hatch playground will be permitted.

3:45-4:15 → Return to church, toileting, handwashing and snack.

4:15-5:00 → Homework and quiet reading or art:
Main Room and Library

Children will have time to complete homework assignments and participate in a variety of leisure activities. Staff will be available to assist with homework. When homework is complete, board games, puzzles, books and art & craft supplies will be available. Electronic games are not allowed.

5:00-5:30 → Quiet Free Play, board games, building activity, Legos, Kapla blocks, puzzles, art or crafts. :

5:30-6:00 → Clean-up and prepare for departure.

Time to put materials away, gather belongings together and get ready to go home.

Children are expected to treat the PHKAS environment with respect. Each child is expected to participate in cleaning up and putting away toys and materials.

PHKAS is a screen-free environment with the exception given to necessary homework and reading material on Kindle or kindle-like applications.

Additional Activities

Children will also have opportunities to engage in a variety of special activities including drama presentations, talent show, art and craft show, Hatch Movie Night and spelling bee. Regular participation in religious teaching and conversation will be available to children who are interested and whose parents approve.



Bullying

Bullying behavior is a concern for parents, educators and caregivers. In the Prairie Home School after school program the following practices will be established to prevent bullying and encourage cooperative interaction.

1. Children will be actively involved in developing anti-bullying policies and standards of acceptable behavior.
2. Staff will closely supervise children in all areas and will intervene immediately if bullying behavior is observed.
3. Staff will counsel children involved to reinforce behavioral guidelines.
4. Staff will report bullying behavior to parents.
5. Children will be informed of bullying policies regularly reminded.
6. Children will be frequently praised for good conduct and encouraged to interact cooperatively with others.

Communication

Communication is a vital component in all childcare situations. Your children are our most important responsibility. We always encourage open and forthright communication with the children and their parents. Please feel confident to contact the director when you have any questions or concerns about your child or our policies and operations. We also will communicate with parents or guardians regarding issues of discipline, illness, accomplishment, schedule changes and upcoming activities. Email and text messages will comprise our primary modes of communication. To report your child's absence or schedule change please text Pam and Gabby at (708-822-0078 and 708-600-3929) An e-mail list-serve will be developed to facilitate regular program updates and information.

Field Trips

At this time, Prairie Home Kids After School does not have approved transportation for field trips or excursions away from the center. On occasion, we may travel to a park or activity that is in walking distance of the United Lutheran Church. When such activities are planned, parents will be notified in advance.

Personal Belongings

Each child will have space available to store outerwear and personal belongings such as their backpack and school supplies. Each child's coat and belongings should be clearly labeled with his or her name. Prairie Home School cannot be held responsible for lost, damaged or stolen materials and we ask that electronics and personal toys not be brought to after-school care. We will have telephone communication available in case a child needs to contact parents; children's cellular phones will not be necessary.

Insurance Coverage

In accordance with DCFS regulations public liability insurance is provided in the amount of \$300,000 per occurrence.

Personal Information

All personal information is kept strictly confidential and secure. Personal information will be released only to parents or legal guardians or their designated representative.

Provision for Emergency Medical Care

For minor injuries: Prairie Home Kids Sfter School staff is trained in first aid and CPR. In the event of a minor injury, the staff will administer basic first aid and will notify parents as soon as possible.

Injuries Requiring Medical Attention:

For injuries that require medical attention: The staff will call parents as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached we will call the emergency medical contact that you recorded on the Authorization for Release and Emergency Medical Treatment Form. The director will continue to try to contact you. If you are not immediately reachable and the staff feels that medical attention is imperative, they will contact your child's physician, and the center director or a teacher will accompany your child to a local hospital. An ambulance will be called to transport your child. The cost of any emergency medical treatment and related If transportation for the child will be your responsibility.

Illness: The health and safety of each child is of paramount importance to Prairie Home School. If your child has been too ill to attend school, then he or she should not be brought to after-school care. In consideration of other families, we do not permit sick children to use the center. If your child becomes ill after arrival at PHKAF, we will contact you. We will keep your child comfortable in a quiet area until you can arrive to take your child home. The Prairie Home Kids will follow DCFS Health and Hygiene requirements as they are provided in the most recent regulations. Please refer to the following information regarding illness and medical conditions.

Illness and Medical Conditions

Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists, in which case exclusion from the day care center is required:

- A) Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;
- B) Illness that calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- C) Fever of 100 degrees or with behavior change or symptoms of illness;
- D) Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness;
- E) Diarrhea;
- F) Vomiting 2 or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- G) Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious;
- H) Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable;
- I) Purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- J) Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- K) Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- L) Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
- M) Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
- N) Chicken pox (varicella), until at least 6 days after onset of rash;
- O) Whooping cough (pertussis), until 5 days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;
- P) Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Q) Measles, until 4 days after disappearance of the rash; or
- R) Symptoms that may be indicative of one of the serious, communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690).

Prairie Home Kids After School

Pam Van Natter: Prairie Home Kids Director and Program Manager

Ms. VanNatter is an experienced teacher and childcare provider. Ms. VanNatter owns and operates Prairie Home Kids, a home-based, early education center for children 6 months to 5 years. Ms. Van Natter brings a great deal of knowledge and enthusiasm along with a love for kids and learning to the Prairie Home Kids after-school program. Mrs. VanNatter has lived in Oak Park since 1998 and her son, Rees is a ninth grader at Oak Park-RiverForest High school.

Pam Van Natter
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708-822-0078
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Prairie Home Kids After School Acknowledgement of Receipt of Parent Handbook and
Guidance and Discipline Policies.

I, _____

acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook and guidance and discipline policies. I understand if I have any questions regarding the policies and procedures of Prairie Home Kids After School I may contact the director.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Director's Signature _____

Date _____