

La Mesa-Spring Valley School District



Preschool Program

PARENT HANDBOOK

Preschool Office
4811 Glen Street, Room 1
La Mesa, CA 91941

Preschool Parent Handbook

Welcome to the La Mesa-Spring Valley Schools Preschool Program!

Classroom Teacher Name _____

Preschool Room Number _____

Important Telephone Numbers

• School _____

• Classroom _____

Preschool Office (619) 771-6082

Preschools Locations:

Avondale Elementary

8401 Stansbury Street, SV 91977
#376600515

La Presa Elementary

519 La Presa Avenue, SV 91977
#376600177

Bancroft Elementary

8805 Tyler Street, SV 91977
#376700372

Maryland Avenue Elementary

5400 Maryland Avenue, LM 91942
#3706700136

Kempton Street Literacy

740 Kempton Street, SV 91977
#376701229

Rancho Elementary

8845 Noeline Avenue, SV 91977
#370806360

La Mesa Dale Elementary

4370 Parks Avenue, LM 91941
#376600883

Sweetwater Springs Elementary

10129 Austin Drive, SV 91977
#376700483

Open Door Policy

As stated in the Child Care Center Notice of Parents Rights (LIC 995):
Parents/Guardians have the right to enter and inspect the childcare center
without advance notice whenever children are in care.

The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education programs, activities and employment. The district prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnic group identification, ethnicity, age, religion, marital or parent status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

District policies and procedures regarding Uniform Complaint Procedures, discrimination, sexual harassment, and Title IX can be found on the District website at www.lmsvschools.org.

All questions related to discrimination, equity and Title IX can be directed to the District Compliance Officer: Director of Student Supports, 4750 Date Ave., La Mesa CA 91942. Phone 619-668-5700.

Table of Contents

Welcome / Philosophy	2
Admission Criteria	2
• Preschool Parent Rights	3
• Immunizations and Physical Examinations	3
• Emergency Information.....	3
Program Information	3
• School Year	3
• School Day	3
• Meals and Nutrition	4
• Classroom Celebrations, Holidays and Birthdays	4
Policies and Procedures	4
• Attendance.....	4
• Abandonment of Care.....	5
• Late Arrival / Late Pick-Up	5
• Sign In and Out Procedures.....	5
• Emergencies and Disasters.....	6
Health and Safety	7
• Toileting	7
• Illness.....	7
• Allergies / Medical Conditions.....	8
• Medication	8
• Parking and Traffic Control	8
• Visitors	8
• Clothing.....	8
• Mandated Reporting	8
• State Licensing	9
Student Support Services	9
• Family Support.....	9
• Dual Language Learners	9
Parent Involvement	9
• Parent / Family Volunteers.....	9
• Parent Advisory Committee	10
Education Program	10
• Preschool Learning Foundations	10
• Social and Emotional Learning	11
• Assessment	11
• Ways Parents Can Help at Home	12
Teacher Qualifications	12
Program and Funding Sources	12

Welcome to La Mesa-Spring Valley School District Preschool Program

Welcome / Philosophy

Welcome to the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District Preschool Program. This is an exciting time for your child as they learn new things, meet new friends, and the new wonders of the world begin to unfold.

We strive for excellence in our Preschool Program and believe that within a quality program, all children will succeed. Our goal is to provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences that support social, emotional, cognitive, language, literacy, self-help, and physical development for each and every child.

We create learning environments where children feel safe and cared for under the program expectations of:

- We are safe and healthy.
- We are respectful.
- We are friendly and kind.



The curriculum is based on the California Preschool Learning Foundations and organized thematically, with the developmental standards addressed through planned learning activities. Teachers provide a variety of activities to effectively guide learning. They balance teacher and child-initiated learning activities to accommodate a wide range of abilities and learning styles.

Raising and educating a young child is a partnership between the family, school, and the community. Communication is a vital part of our Preschool Program. You will receive monthly calendars, newsletters, flyers, and phone calls to inform you of activities and events. You are invited to discuss your child's development with your child's teacher. Our goal is to work together to help your child reach their full potential.

Admission Criteria

The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District offers part-day preschool opportunities to three and four-year-old children in both State Preschool and SmartSteps fee-based programs. Programs are licensed through the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing and adhere to all quality standards required by the California Department of Education, Early Education Division.

State Preschool admission is based on eligibility criteria established by the State Department of Education (EC 8210; 5 CCR 17746). Children are enrolled on the basis of priority established and monitored by the State of California. Priority is given to three and four-year-old children identified as abused, neglected, or at risk of being abused or neglected. Eligible children are served without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability (5 CCR 4900). The preschool program refrains from religious worship or instruction.

Preschool Parent Rights

Parents will be given a Notice of Action form upon State Preschool enrollment certification and for any change thereafter. If a parent does not agree with the action stated on the Notice of Action, an appeal process is available. The appeal process is explained on the back side of the Notice of Action.

Immunizations and Physical Examinations

At the time of enrollment, all children are required to have up-to-date immunizations (SB 277) that include:

- 4 DTP
- 3 Polio
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 1 HIB (on or after child's first birthday)
- 1 Varicella
- 1 MMR (on or after child's first birthday)

A current (within the year) written medical assessment must be completed by a licensed physician prior to or within 30 calendar days of enrollment in the preschool program. This assessment must include a tuberculosis risk assessment or if the physician deems necessary a result of a test for tuberculosis. This is required by the State Department of Education. The appropriate form to be filled out by the child's physician is provided at enrollment. For your convenience, the Preschool office will furnish you a list of providers of physical examinations under the CHDP (Child Health and Disability Prevention Program).

Emergency Information

Student records must be accurate and up-to-date. All family records and information are confidential and are kept in a secure location. Your cooperation in filling out the health and emergency cards at the beginning of the school year and updating them as needed will help us to keep our records up to date and ensure the safety of your child. It is extremely important that we have your current address and phone number in case we need to reach you regarding your child.

Please inform teachers and staff of any changes or special conditions regarding phone numbers, address, custody arrangements, emergency numbers, babysitters, health conditions, or legal actions (i.e., restraining orders), etc. We cannot prevent any parent from removing his or her child from the preschool if a court order is not on file. If there is a court order restricting a parent from visiting or picking up their child, then a copy of the court order must be provided to the preschool office, which will be placed into the child's confidential file.

Program Information



School Year

The Preschool Program follows the calendar established by the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District.

School Day

All programs are three-hours per day. State Preschool is provided five days a week, Monday through Friday.

Meals and Nutrition

The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District provides free meals for all enrolled children at no cost to families. Meals are provided through the school District's Child Nutrition Program and meets the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for America. If your child has any food allergies, please inform the classroom teacher and/or the preschool office.

Preschool staff will encourage children to serve themselves under supervision. They will observe and support children's eating habits and hunger/fullness cues. Nutrition education will be offered to children that include hands-on activities based on the children's developmental stage. Menus will be posted at the beginning of every month and are available to view on the district website, lmsvsd.org. The website also includes additional child nutrition information.

Classroom Celebrations, Holidays, and Birthdays

Celebrations are an important part of our preschool community. Teachers work with parents to plan classroom events that help to develop friendships. Students are introduced to the sights and sounds of the seasons and have seasonal celebrations for Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer.

Teachers rely on parents to assist in the planning of these events. For the safety of all children, there is a strict policy regarding the food served at these events. All food items to be consumed by students **MUST** be store bought and packaged, with an ingredients list. All foods served to students are to be of high nutritional value. No homemade items or candy may be served.

For birthday celebrations, our program suggests you bring a non-food treat for all children (stickers, pencil) or donate a book to the class.

We want to be sensitive to you and your child's culture and home values. Please notify the teacher whether or not you celebrate holidays or activities that make you or your child feel uncomfortable. The teacher can make adjustments to include all children.



Policies and Procedures

Attendance

Regular attendance by a child enrolled in the Preschool Program is crucial for successful learning from preschool forward. When children miss school or arrive late, they miss opportunities to gain early learning skills, build relationships, and develop good habits. It is the parent's responsibility to bring their child to school and pick him/her up on time, every day.

While children are expected to maintain regular attendance, please do not send your child to school if they are sick. If your child will be absent, please inform your child's teacher or call the Preschool office (619-771-6082). When your child returns to school after an absence, the parent or guardian must complete and sign an Absence Notification stating the reason for the absence.

Types of Absences

- Excused Absences:**
- Child or parent illness
 - Child or parent medical appointment
 - Court order visitation if court order documentation is on file with the Early Childhood Education Office
 - Quarantine of the child or parent
 - Family Emergency (limited to 3 days per school year)
Family emergency may include death in the family, attendance at a funeral for an immediate family member, car accident, or an emergency situation
-

- Best Interest of the Child (limited to 10 days per school year):**
- Personal
 - Vacation
 - Special day with parent
 - Religious observation
 - Transportation problems
 - Severe weather conditions / natural disaster
-

- Unexcused Absences:**
- Not on the excused absence list
 - Not a family emergency or best interest day
 - Child did not feel like coming to school
 - Parent or child overslept
-

Abandonment of Care

Failure to communicate absences with the classroom teacher or the Early Childhood Education Office will be considered an abandonment of care and a child may be disenrolled from the program. After 7 consecutive unverified absences, the program will attempt to contact the family. If the program has not heard from the family for 30 consecutive calendar days, a notice of action to disenroll may be sent.

Late Arrival / Late Pick-Up

It is very important to bring your child to school on time. Preschool is the foundation of life-long learning. When children arrive late, they have missed out on many opportunities. Other students are impacted because of the interruption to the teacher and class. Anyone arriving at school five or more minutes late is considered tardy and will need to check in at the school office.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the child is picked up on time at dismissal. This provides important reassurance for your child. We are not able to provide additional supervision for extended care. Repeated instances of late pick-up may be the grounds for a child welfare services report. Please be considerate of our teaching staff.



Sign In and Out Procedures

For safety purposes, licensing requires that all children must be brought into the classroom by a parent/guardian or authorized adult. The child must be signed in and out DAILY by the adult with a full legible signature. No one under the age of 18 will be allowed to sign your child in and out.

Only designated adults on the emergency card will be permitted to pick up a child. If you are sending another adult not listed on the emergency card to pick up your child, you must send a note (in advance) signed by you, authorizing the release of your child to the person named, or you may call the classroom and give the name of the person picking up your child. Adults, other than custodial parents, will be asked to show a picture identification for pick up. Please inform the person picking your child up that he/she must be prepared to provide proper picture identification.

If anyone other than the student's custodial parent is picking up a child prior to the end of the school day, BOTH of the following conditions must be met:

- The person picking up the student must be listed as an emergency contact on the emergency card.
- The custodial parent must deliver a signed, dated letter notifying the office as to which emergency contact will be picking up the student and the date and time of that pick-up.

When signing your child in or out, parents/guardians are encouraged to check for messages in the child's mailbox and to take notice of important information that is posted by the teacher.

Emergencies and Disasters

In case of a disaster, staff is responsible for keeping your child safe and protected. All children are instructed on what to do in case of an emergency. Drills for fire, earthquake, disaster, and exiting the classroom to a safe location are practiced regularly.

In case of an emergency or natural disaster:

- No child will be allowed to leave with another person, not even a relative or babysitter, unless we have written permission from the parent or that person is listed on the child's emergency form. Adults must provide photo identification.
- Children will be guided to the safest location for protection. If the building is not safe to re-enter, the class will move to a safer place.
- Make sure the adults you list as emergency contacts know that we will call them in case of an emergency if we are unable to locate you.
- All parents or authorized adults, who are coming to pick up children, must sign them out at the 'Family Reunion' location, which will be set up in an emergency.
- It is very important to keep your child's emergency contact information up to date. If your phone number or your emergency contacts change, please advise your teacher immediately.



Health and Safety

Parents can help to develop good health habits by:

- Sending child to school clean and groomed.
- Reminding child to wash hands before and after meals and after using the toilet.
- Reminding child to brush teeth regularly.
- Establish good sleeping habits.
- Establish healthy eating habits.

Toileting

Please dress your child in clothing he/she can manipulate on their own. Please practice belts, hooks, zippers, etc. with your child. Please note that in most classrooms, the bathrooms are located outside the classroom. Helping children develop an awareness of when they need to go to the bathroom will help support them in toileting independently.



The preschool staff will handle some toileting accidents. Please send a change of clothing for the occasional accidents labeled with your child's name. If your child has an accident, the staff will use the extra clothing to keep your child comfortable and send the soiled clothing home. Please be prompt in sending new clothing. If your child has a bowel movement accident, the parent or emergency contact person may be called on to assist and change the child.

Illness

A child should be able to participate meaningfully in school activities and staff should be able to provide appropriate care without compromising the health and safety of other children. A wellness assessment will be completed upon arrival for every child. The teacher will determine if a child is ill or contagious per community care licensing guidelines (CR 101226.1). A child who is ill or contagious cannot be accepted in the classroom to ensure good health for everyone.

If your child has a fever or displays other symptoms of illness while at school, a child will be referred to the school health office who will notify you of next steps. A child must be free of a fever without medication before returning to school and remain at home until free of diarrhea. Children who vomit during the night or in the morning should stay at home until free of symptoms. For questions, please work with your school health office.

Please keep a child home if they are unable to function or show evidence of:

1. Cold - persistent coughing, fever, or other symptoms
2. Fever - until fever free
3. Vomiting - until vomiting has not occurred
4. Diarrhea and/or upset stomach - until child is symptom free
5. Contagious disease including, but not limited to: measles, mumps, chicken pox, rashes, impetigo, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice, and scabies
6. Green or yellow discharge from nose and eyes or any discharge from ears

Since we share with you the responsibility of protecting the health of the children, we ask you to inform us if your child has been exposed to or has a communicable disease.

Allergies / Medical Conditions

All diagnosed allergies and medical conditions must be documented in child's file and each staff person responsible for supervising the child must be notified. It is the parent / guardian's responsibility to inform the staff at the time of enrollment of any and all known (potentially harmful) allergies or medical conditions (asthma, diabetes, seizures).

Medication

Parents are encouraged to arrange necessary medication doses before and after school. If medication is required during school, parents and a physician must complete specific forms. Please contact the teacher, who will direct you to the school health technician, if your child needs medication during the school day.

Medication can be administered only when medication is in the original prescription container and accompanied by the district form (filled out by the prescribing physician and signed by the parent). This includes over the counter medication.

Parking and Traffic Control

Parking and traffic control are a considerable safety concern. All parents must park in designated parking spaces. Adults must hold children's hands at all times as they walk their children from the parking lot and to and from school. Always use a car seat. It is illegal to leave a child unattended in a vehicle for any period of time or to park in a handicapped parking space without a disabled person's placard displayed. Parking is not permitted in the bus zone or in the handicapped spaces without a placard.

Visitors

Any visitor to the classroom must follow the school site procedures. Visitors must register at the school office. To ensure minimum interruption of the class, the visit should first be arranged with the teacher. If a conference is desired, an appointment should be made with the teacher before or after school.

Clothing

Play clothes are appropriate for everyday dress. Preschool includes activities that require clothing to be washable, comfortable, able to withstand occasional paint stains, and appropriate for physical activity. Preschool activities are often 'messy' and it is an important part of the child's development. Mark all coats, sweaters, and jackets with your child's name. For safety reasons, strapless back or open toe shoes may not be worn.



Mandated Reporting

Each staff member is obligated by law to report to the Department of Social Services any injury to any child that requires medical treatment of any unusual incidents or student absence, which threatens the physical or emotional health or safety of any child. They are also required by law to report any suspected physical or psychological abuse of any child. All such suspected abuse will be reported to Child Protective Services without notification of the parents. The Department of Social Services has the authority to interview children or staff without prior consent. The Department of Social Services has the authority to inspect, audit, and copy child or child care center records upon demand during normal business hours (101200(b)(1)(c)(1)).

State Licensing

The La Mesa-Spring Valley State Preschool Program is licensed by the State of California and will comply with the regulations of the Community Care Licensing Division. The Community Care Licensing Division, California Department of Education's Early Education Division and the State Fire Marshal will conduct periodic inspections to ensure the program meets or exceeds the standards.

If you wish to inquire into our license:

Community Care Licensing Division
7575 Metropolitan Drive, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92108-4402
(619) 767-2200



Student Support Services

The La Mesa-Spring Valley Preschool Program strives to support families as we work together to prepare children for TK, kindergarten, and lifelong learning. As part of our comprehensive program, we would like you to be aware of some specific supports and resources that we provide to enhance your child's success in school.

Program supports available to ALL students include daily health checks by staff, dental screening, hearing, and vision screening provided by health personnel; whole class and small group instruction for language enrichment and social skills provided by the teacher and/or school personnel. A variety of parent educational sessions are offered including behavior management, developing language skills, safety, and parenting skills. Please talk with your child's teacher if you would like to hear presenters in those or other areas of interest during the school year.

Family Support

At times, families may encounter circumstances that affect their ability to support their child. Upon admission to the Preschool Program, every family is given a list of community agencies and service organizations that may assist in areas such as accessing health services or insurance, child care, parent education, family or child counseling, homelessness, etc. Should additional support or information be needed, families are encouraged to reach out to the classroom teacher, preschool office, school counselor or social worker, or district counselor for additional information on how to find support or resources through the school district or community.

Dual Language Learners

All parents are required at the time of enrollment to complete a Family Language Instrument to determine if a child is a Dual Language Learner. If determined that a child is a Dual Language Learner, a Family Language and Interest Interview is conducted at the time of enrollment.

While all preschool children are learning English, children who are identified Dual Language Learners will be assessed in class for their English Language proficiency. Additional information will be shared at parent-teacher conferences. La Mesa-Spring Valley School District offers resources for families. Please let your child's teacher or the preschool office know if you would like additional information on Dual Language.

Parent Involvement

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Parent involvement is an essential part of the Preschool Program. Active involvement promotes a closer relationship with young children, and interactions between teacher and parent are likely to produce the greatest benefit for the child.

In addition to attending parent orientation, parent-teacher conferences, communicating with your child's teacher, and attending back to school night and open house, there are many ways families can participate in the program:

- Working in the classroom, assisting the teacher
- Volunteer to help prepare classroom materials at school or at home
- Join the school Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- Attend school functions
- Be a part of the Preschool or/or District Parent Advisory Committee
- Attend parent educational meetings
- Attend TK/Kindergarten enrollment and transition meeting/s
- Volunteer to be the Room Parent



Parent / Family Volunteers.

In order to volunteer, you will need to complete district volunteer forms, have an updated tuberculosis test or a clearance from a physician, and provide evidence of immunization against influenza, pertussis, and measles. Volunteers must be over age 18. Sorry, no siblings or other children are allowed during class time. Teachers will contact each parent/guardian to arrange a convenient time for your participation.

Preschool (PAC) and District (DPAC) Parent Advisory Committee

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) acts in an advisory capacity for services to families and children. There is a preschool PAC and a district committee (DPAC). The Preschool PAC meets several times a year to learn about offerings within preschool and the district and provide feedback on the preschool program, parent education, and program plans.

The District PAC meets several times a year to learn about district offerings and programs and provide feedback on the district initiatives and plans. Parents can serve on the Preschool and / or District Advisory Committees.

Education Program

Preschool Learning Foundations

The individualized instruction, ongoing observations and child assessments are based on the California Preschool Learning Foundations. The development of early literacy skills is a critical component of the curriculum. Oral language is enhanced through vocabulary development and a variety of activities to develop listening and speaking. In addition, children are provided experiences in print, phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge and writing. Math and science skills are enhanced by direct hands-on activities, and supported by language and literacy to develop understanding. The Preschool Program focuses on enhancing a child's total development through play and

intentionally designed learning activities. This includes not only academics, but also readiness skills in language, motor development, social skills and behavior. Parent involvement is an essential piece of a child's readiness and success in school. Regular information is sent home with the child so parents know what skills are currently being worked on and can reinforce them at home.

Social and Emotional Learning

As we build the educational foundation for our youngest learners, social and emotional development is at the core of everything we do. The social and emotional curriculum is designed to support children in understanding who they are and how to interact with others. In preschool, children will be taught friendship skills, emotional literacy, managing emotions, problem solving, and conflict resolution.

By utilizing strategies from the Teaching Pyramid Framework, all preschool teachers practice a positive approach to discipline. We encourage and help children to work out problems constructively. We develop in each child respect for self, others, and the environment under the program-wide expectations:

- We are safe and healthy.
- We are respectful.
- We are friendly and kind.

We are interested in working with our parents in fostering self-discipline in our students. We teach the child to control their own behavior and understand the consequences of behaviors.

Assessment

Parents complete Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) at parent orientation. Questionnaires are scored by teachers and results are shared with parents. If any areas of need are noted, activities are provided for parents.

Every child is evaluated twice a year using the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP-2015). A summary of the child's progress is documented and results are shared with parents at parent-teacher conferences. The fall conference reviews an initial observation of the child's preschool readiness skills. The spring conference reviews age appropriate progress.

Using parent feedback obtained through questionnaires and conferences, assessment data from the DRDP, and classroom observations, teachers create individualized activities for children and monitor progress. Teachers will share strategies they are using in class and suggestions to support continued learning at home during parent-teacher conferences.

The Preschool Program conducts a Desired Results for Children and Families, designed by the California Department of Education, to evaluate the program and to track the efforts and social-emotional development of your child. The program is required to conduct an annual self-assessment to determine successes and next steps. As part of the self-evaluation, a parent survey is conducted to evaluate the program. Based on the self-assessment and parent surveys, program goals are created.



Ways Parents Can Help at Home

Parents ask for ways in which they can help their preschool child at home.

Here are some ideas:

1. Show your child that you think preschool is valuable for him/her by volunteering and attending parent engagement activities.
2. Acknowledge positive behavior when you observe it.
3. Read a story to him/her and ask comprehension questions.
4. Ask your child about his/her day at preschool.
5. Ask your child to teach you a song or game learned at preschool.
6. Teach your child a song or game you learned as a child.
7. Display artwork that is brought home.
8. Let your child help with simple household chores.
9. Practice positive table manners at family meals.
10. Visit places in the community such as libraries, parks, and museums.
11. HAVE FUN together – laugh, play, and enjoy one another!



Teacher Qualifications

All teachers hold appropriate permits, required by the state of California. Every teacher in the State Preschool Program holds an Associate's degree (AA/AS) in Early Childhood Education, OR a Master Teacher Permit that requires a minimum of 24 units of Early Childhood courses and 16 General Education units OR a Site-Supervisor Child Development Permit. All preschool staff are District employees, have been fingerprinted, had a comprehensive background check conducted by the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and The Child Abuse Central Index (CACI), a Tuberculosis (TB) clearance and have all required immunizations. All staff is CPR and First Aid certified every 2 years to remain current on all lifesaving procedures.

Programs and Funding Sources

The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District provides families in the community with educational opportunities for preschool-aged children. These part-day preschool classes are offered 5 days a week at some elementary school sites. The District receives funding to operate preschools from several sources:

- The California Department of Education funds the State Preschool Programs for children ages 3 and 4 years who qualify for services.
- The San Diego County Office of Education's Quality Preschool Initiative (SDQPI) Program subsidizes the Preschool Program.