

Lacey Township School District
Mill Pond Elementary School
Preschool Family Guide
2024 - 2025



1. Welcome Letter	2
2. Mission, Vision and Program Philosophy	3
3. Preschool Team	4
3. Program Policies	
a. Health Screening and Medical Policy	5 - 6
b. Health and Safe Environment Policy	6 - 7
c. Handwashing Procedures	7
d. Food Policy and Dietary Restrictions	7
e. USDA Guidelines for Food	8 - 11
f. Screen & Physical Activity Policies	12
g. Toilet Training Policy	13
h. Parent Involvement Policy	14
i. Attendance Policy	15
j. Behavior Policy and Agreement	16 - 17
4. The Creative Curriculum	
a. Schedule	18
b. Teaching Strategies GOLD Student Portfolio	19
5. Preschool Intervention Referral Team	
a. Early Screening Inventory Protocol and Policy	20 - 21
b. Early Screening Inventory Consent Form	22
6. Preschool Parent Handbook Receipt	23
7. Home Language Survey	24

Lacey Township School District

A Tradition Of Pride - A tradition Of Excellence

<u>District Administration</u>	<u>Board Of Education Members</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● William W. Zylinski, Acting Superintendent● Ms. Sharon Ormsbee, Business Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Harold “Skip” Peters, Jr., President● Kim Klaus, Vice President● Salvatore Armato, Board Member● Linda. A. Walker, Board Member● Jack Conaty, Board Member● Cheryl Armato, Board Member● Dan Bell, Board Member

Dear Preschool Families,

Welcome to the Mill Pond Preschool Program! We are excited for you and your child to join the Pond family.

This handbook is designed to ensure that our parents have a rewarding experience working with the staff in our program. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information regarding the program’s policies and procedures mandated by the State of New Jersey and the Lacey Township School District.

We strive to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate the transitions between home and school. Daily communication is vital. Our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children in a warm, safe and developmentally appropriate environment and to ensure that parents are valued and respected.

We encourage parents to use this handbook as a tool to follow the policies and procedures outlined. We welcome your comments, questions, concerns and suggestions about your child’s experience and the program.

Respectfully,

Joanie Donohue, Mill Pond Principal

Introduction

Mission

The mission of our Mill Pond Preschool Program is to serve the children and families by facilitating and sustaining collaboration while ensuring success for all children; to provide a model program responsive to the changing needs and diverse population; and to enable children to grow independently in a safe and learning environment.

Vision

The fundamental purpose of our Mill Pond Preschool Program is to ensure that all students receive a high quality education through engaging experiences with partnerships between school, home, and community stakeholders.

To introduce the beginning stages of the learning process to the children while intertwining and helping their developmental social and communication stepping stones to unfold. To provide a supportive and fun classroom environment. To help the children make new friends and discover new interests.

Program Philosophy

The Creative Curriculum provides the foundation for academic learning. It is the preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters and numbers. Children will experience growth and learning in their social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development, and families will feel supported and nurtured in their child rearing efforts.

Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum. Play is the work of young children. The philosophy behind our curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. Therefore, our curriculum surrounds learning through play.

Preschool Team

- **Mill Pond Principal & Preschool Administrator:** Joanie Donohue
- **District Supervisor of Special Education:** Mallory Krakovsky
- **Preschool Instructional Coach (PIC):** Stephanie Danziger
- **Preschool Instructional Coach (PIC):** Kristin Flemming
- **Community Parent Involvement Specialist/School Social Worker (CPIS):** Elizabeth Ewart
- **Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS)/ Guidance Counselor:**
Jamie Pravata
- **Preschool Intervention Referral Specialist (PIRS):** Linda Trapani
- **Preschool Intervention Referral Specialist (PIRS):** Gianna DePalma
- **Child Study Team Case Manager:** Emily Leary
- **Preschool Secretary:** April Knauer

Health Screening & Medical Documentation Policy

Health and Wellness

The goal of school health services is to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of our children. According to the “School Health Services Guidelines” developed by the New Jersey Department of Education in 2001, the health and intellectual development of children are inextricably related. Therefore, current immunizations help reduce absences due to illness; screening for vision and hearing problems remove potential obstacles to learning.

The Lacey Township Mill Pond Preschool Oral Health policy includes promoting healthy food and drink options, restricting food and drink options that are known to lead to tooth decay. Dental screenings will be offered once per school year. Information on community resources will be provided to families as needed. Preschool support staff are available to provide further assistance.

School Nurse Health Screening

Nurses who work with preschool children and their families provide the following services:

- Conduct health screenings (vision, hearing, height, and weight) at the beginning of the school year;
- Monitor and follow up on individual child health records;
- Document and communicate with staff and parents about allergies or other health issues;
- Assist parents in locating appropriate medical and health resources, as needed;
- Provide health-related training to staff, parents and/or children;
- Dental screenings will be offered once per school year.

Parents must provide the school nurse with the child’s immunizations records and physical form. *Failure to complete this requirement on time and accurately will place your child on the program’s waiting list.*

Flu shot receipt

After Dec. 30, the parent will be required to provide flu shot records within 15 days. *Failure to complete this requirement on time and accurately will place your child on the program’s waiting list.*

If you wish for your child to be exempt, you must submit a letter of exemption due to medical or religious reasons.

Healthy and Safe Environment Policy

Personal Belongings/ Nap Time Requirements

1. Labeled Book Bag

The items listed below are required for your child to have. It is best to keep these materials in a special place at home to ensure that they are easy to find and returned to school each day.

- Book bag (large enough to hold a folder).
- A folder will be provided.

2. Change of Clothes

Please send a change of clothes and underwear in a small Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name. If your child wears pull-ups, diapers, and/or uses wipes, it is your responsibility to provide and label them. They will only be used for your child. Please remember to replace the change of clothes each time your child needs them.

3. Nap Time

Please send in a crib/cot sheet and blanket. One small item for comfort (stuffed animal) may be sent in as well. Items need to arrive with your child the first day of the week and will be sent home the last day of the week for washing. Please note, the nap materials including the comfort item will remain at school for the entire week.

Safety Procedure

Parents must abide by the following school district guidelines:

- A child must be dropped off and picked up by an adult on time.
- Drop off and pick up locations will be provided to parents at orientation.
- Parents must fill out an emergency and custody form at the beginning of the school year and indicate the name of the person(s) in charge of pickup and drop-off. If any information changes throughout the year, the parents must fill out a new updated form each time.

Hand-Washing Procedure

Please teach this proper hand-washing procedure at home.

Hands should be washed upon arrival, after outside play, after toileting/diapering, after engaging in messy play activities, after coming into contact with bodily fluids, before meals and sometimes after meals if finger foods were served.

These are the steps for proper hand-washing:

1. Moisten hands with warm water and use liquid soap. (No antibacterial soaps)
2. Rub hands together for at least 20 seconds
(Sing the verse of “Row, Row, Row, Your Boat” 2 times).
3. Rinse hands free of soap under running water.
4. Dry hands with a clean, disposable towel or air dry with a blower.
5. Turn off water faucet with a paper towel and throw away the used paper towel into a hands-free trash container.

Food Policy and Dietary Restrictions Procedures

Healthy Menus/Allergies or Dietary Restrictions

Preschool menus follow the guidelines of “Best Practices for Healthy Eating by Nemour Health and Prevention Services” Handbook. Families’ dietary restrictions due to religious beliefs, personal beliefs, cultural customs, and health issues are respected.

Students will be eating in the classroom and/or outside eating areas

Teachers will sanitize and disinfect tables before serving food.

Information regarding food allergies/ dietary restrictions

Please present in writing to the child’s teacher by the 1st day of school. Staff will make sure to make the appropriate substitutions.

USDA Guidelines for Food

When packing lunch for your children, please take into account the following requirements as per the Department of Education. Information attached to the end of this document.

The following items are not allowed in our preschool classrooms as breakfast or lunch replacement: candy, sodas, fast food restaurant meal

USDA Guidelines for Food








United States Department of Agriculture

Serving School Meals to Preschoolers

Preschool meals served through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (NSLP and SBP) are designed to meet the nutritional needs of young children. Children receive meals that follow the preschool meal pattern if they are a student in the preschool grade level. There are two age groups under the preschool meal pattern: children 1 through 2 years old (1-2 years), and children 3 through 5 years old (3-5 years). Types of milk and minimum serving sizes for some food components are different for the two age groups. By following the preschool meal pattern, your school can help young children eat the types and amounts of foods that best support their growth and development.







Preschool Meal Pattern

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	1-2 years	3-5 years	1-2 years	3-5 years
 Milk	½ cup (4 oz.)	¾ cup (6 oz.)	½ cup (4 oz.)	¾ cup (6 oz.)
 Fruits	¼ cup	½ cup	⅓ cup	¼ cup
 Vegetables			⅓ cup <i>Optional: A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit at lunch.</i>	¼ cup
 Grains	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.	½ oz. eq.
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<i>Optional: Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to 3 times per week at breakfast. Minimum serving size for both age groups is ½ oz. eq.</i>		1 oz. eq.	1½ oz. eq.

Serving sizes are minimums.
Operators may offer larger portions.
Oz. = Ounces; Oz. eq. = Ounce equivalent.









Differences Between the Preschool and the Kindergarten Through 5th Grade (K-5) Meal Patterns at Breakfast

	Preschool	Grades K-5
 Milk	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: ½ cup (4 oz.) required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: ¾ cup (6 oz.) required daily.</p> <p>Types: ✓ For 1 year olds: Unflavored whole milk only. ✓ For 2-5 year olds: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk only.*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not required to offer different options of fluid milk. 	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 cup (8 oz.) required daily (5 cups required weekly).</p> <p>Types: ✓ Unflavored or flavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must offer at least two different options of fluid milk (e.g., low-fat and fat-free milk). • If offering flavored milk, must also offer unflavored milk.
 Fruits	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: ¼ cup of fruits, vegetables, or a combination of both required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: ½ cup of fruits, vegetables, or a combination of both required daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May serve fruits, vegetables, or combination of both to meet the combined vegetables/fruit component. • No vegetable subgroup requirements. • May serve 100% juice once per day. If juice is served at breakfast, it cannot be served at lunch. 	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 cup of fruit required daily (5 cups required weekly).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only fruits are required at breakfast. • Vegetables may replace fruits (see "Vegetables" below). • 100% juice can be offered to meet up to half the amount of fruit or vegetable offerings in a week (no daily limit).
 Vegetables		<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ Optional at breakfast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetables may be offered in place of fruit. Starchy vegetables can be served at any time during the week, provided at least 2 cups of vegetables from the following subgroups are offered during that same week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dark Green • Red/Orange • Beans and Peas (Legumes) • Other. • 100% juice can be offered to meet up to half the amount of fruit or vegetable offerings in a week (no daily limit).
 Grains	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 and 3-5 year olds: ½ oz. eq. required daily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the grain components offered during the day must be whole grain-rich. • Enriched grains may be served at breakfast if whole grain-rich items are served at lunch. 	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 oz. eq. required daily (7-10 oz. eq. required weekly).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least half the grains offered each week must be whole grain-rich.
 Meats/Meat Alternates	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ Optional at breakfast. ✓ For 1-2 and 3-5 year olds: Can serve ½ oz. eq. in place of grains up to 3 times per week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When substituting the meat/meat alternate at breakfast, it must be substituted for the entire grains component. May not count a combination of grains and meats/meat alternates toward the grains component. 	<p>Minimum Serving Size: ✓ Optional at breakfast.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can substitute 1 oz. eq. meats/meat alternates for 1 oz. eq. grains after 1 oz. eq. minimum grains requirement is offered (permitted daily). • Grains and meats/meat alternates can be combined and count toward the grains component in a reimbursable breakfast.
 Grain-Based Desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not credit toward the grains component. • Sweet crackers (e.g., graham and animal crackers) are allowable and count toward the grains component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can serve grain-based desserts denoted by superscript 4 or 5 in Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs** at breakfast for some or all days in a week. • Examples of allowable grain-based desserts at breakfast include sweet crackers, doughnuts, cereal bars, sweet rolls, and toaster pastries. • Items listed in Exhibit A with a superscript 3, such as cookies, cake, dessert pies, and cobbler, do not contribute toward grain requirements at breakfast. • Average daily calories for a 5-day school week must meet minimum and maximum values.

* Unflavored whole milk and unflavored reduced-fat (2%) milk may be served to children between the ages of 24 and 25 months to help with the transition from whole milk to fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

** Available at: <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>.

Differences Between Preschool and K-5 Meal Patterns at Lunch

	Preschool	Grades K-5
 Milk	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: ½ cup (4 oz.) required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: ¾ cup (6 oz.) required daily. Types: ✓ For 1 year olds: Unflavored whole milk only. ✓ For 2-5 year olds: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk only.* • Not required to offer different options of fluid milk.	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 cup (8 oz.) required daily (5 cups required weekly). Types: ✓ Unflavored or flavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk. • Must offer at least two different options of fluid milk (e.g., low-fat and fat-free milk). • If offering flavored milk, must also offer unflavored milk.
 Fruits	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: ½ cup required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: ¾ cup required daily. • A second, different vegetable may be served in place of fruit. • May serve 100% juice once per day. If juice is served at breakfast, it cannot be served at lunch.	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ ½ cup required daily (2½ cups required weekly). • A second vegetable cannot be offered in place of fruit. • 100% juice can be offered to meet up to half the amount of fruit or vegetable offerings in a week (no daily limit).
 Vegetables	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: ½ cup required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: ¾ cup required daily. • No vegetable subgroup requirements. • A second, different vegetable can be served in place of fruit. • May serve 100% juice once per day. If juice is served at breakfast, it cannot be served at lunch.	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ ¾ cup required daily (3¾ cups required weekly). • Weekly vegetable subgroup requirements: • Dark green: ½ cup • Red/Orange: ¾ cup • Beans and Peas (Legumes): ½ cup • Starchy: ½ cup • Other: ½ cup. • 100% juice can be offered to meet up to half the amount of fruit or vegetable offerings in a week (no daily limit).
 Grains	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 and 3-5 year olds: ½ oz. eq. required daily. • One of the grain components must be whole grain-rich every day. • Enriched grains may be served at lunch if whole grain-rich items are served at breakfast.	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 oz. eq. required daily (8-9 oz. eq. required weekly). • At least half the grains offered each week must be whole grain-rich.
 Meats/Meat Alternates	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ For 1-2 year olds: 1 oz. eq. required daily. ✓ For 3-5 year olds: 1½ oz. eq. required daily.	Minimum Serving Size: ✓ 1 oz. eq. required daily (8-10 oz. eq. required weekly).
 Grain-Based Desserts	• May not credit toward the grains component. • Sweet crackers (e.g. graham and animal crackers) are allowable and can count toward the grains component (with no weekly limit).	• May credit up to 2 oz. eq. of grain-based desserts (denoted by superscript 3, 4 or 5 in Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs**) toward the grains component each week. • Sweet crackers count toward the weekly limit for crediting no more than 2 oz. eq. of grain-based desserts toward the grains component each week.
Additional Considerations About the Preschool and K-5 Meal Patterns		
Sugar Limits	• Cereals: 6 grams (g) or less per dry oz. • Yogurt: 23 grams (g) or less per 6 oz.	• No sugar limits on specific foods; average daily calories for a 5-day school week must meet minimum and maximum values.
Fat Limits	• No deep-fat frying onsite (including at central kitchens).	• Deep-fat frying onsite is allowed, but average percent of calories from saturated fat must be <10% of total calories. Food products and ingredients must contain zero grams of trans fats (less than 0.5 g) per serving.
Sodium	• No limit on sodium.	• Weekly limits on sodium.
Offer Versus Serve (OVS)	• Only allowed when preschool students are co-mingled with older children (see page 4 for more information on co-mingling). • Students must select at least three food items; one item must be at least a ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetables.	• Allowed. • Students must select at least three food items; one item must be at least a ½ cup of fruits and/or vegetables.
Family Style Meal Service	• Students must select at least a ¼ cup of vegetables, fruit, or both if offered the preschool meal pattern. • If students are co-mingled and being offered the K-5 meal pattern, each student must select at least a ½ cup of vegetables, fruits, or both. • Minimum serving size of each item or component must be offered to each student over the course of the meal.	• Students must select at least a ½ cup of vegetables, fruits, or both. • Minimum serving size of each item or component must be offered to each student over the course of the meal.

Meal Service When Preschoolers and Students in Older Grades Are Served Meals Together

Sometimes, schools must serve meals to a variety of grades at the same time. This is usually due to operational constraints, such as time and space. This practice is called "co-mingling."

Co-mingling occurs when:

- Preschool students and students from older grade groups (such as kindergarten through 5th grade, kindergarten through 8th grade, or kindergarten through 12th grade) are served meals in the same place at the same time;
- It's hard to tell the preschool students from older students; and
- It would be operationally difficult to serve different foods or different amounts of foods during the combined meal service.

When the above conditions are met, schools may offer the meal pattern of the older grades, such as kindergarten through 5th grade (K-5), to preschool students.

Four Reasons To Avoid Co-Mingled Meal Service

1. Serving preschoolers separately from older students may allow for closer supervision of the younger children, thereby allowing staff to better assist students with food packaging and monitor mealtime behaviors that may increase the risk of choking.
2. A separate family style meal service allows preschool children to serve themselves, which can help children develop independence and build self-confidence.
3. Younger children may feel distracted or overwhelmed by older children, which may affect the amount that they eat within the provided mealtime.
4. The preschool meal pattern provides the amounts and types of foods at meals that most younger children need for healthy growth and development.



How Schools Can Avoid Co-Mingled Meal Service

- Serve "Breakfast in the Classroom" or "Grab & Go Breakfast" (look for shelf-stable options and easy-to-prepare items, and use mobile service carts and/or thermal bags for easy transport).
- Stagger meal service times for both preschoolers and older students.
- Only offer food items that meet meal patterns for preschool and older students, such as unflavored milk, creditable grain items, cereals and yogurts that meet sugar limits, and a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Try It Out! Use the information in this worksheet to answer the questions below.

- a. Tommy is a 4½ year old who attends kindergarten at your school. Should you offer Tommy the preschool meal pattern or the K-5 meal pattern?
- b. Amy is a preschooler who eats with kindergarten and first grade students at breakfast. At lunch, her preschool class eats in the cafeteria an hour before the older students.
1) What meal pattern should you serve Amy at breakfast? 2) What meal pattern should you serve Amy at lunch?
- c. Mr. Smith's 3-year-old preschool class eats lunch in his classroom every day. For lunch today, you want to serve fat-free chocolate milk, applesauce, roasted squash, and a turkey sandwich on whole grain-rich bread. Does this meal meet the preschool meal pattern? Why or why not?

Answer Key
a. You must offer Tommy the K-5 meal pattern. Meals are offered based on the grade level, not age, of the child.
b. 1) At breakfast, you may offer Amy the preschool or K-5 meal pattern. 2) At lunch, Amy must be offered the preschool meal pattern.
c. This lunch does not meet the preschool meal pattern. Flavored fat-free milk is only allowed for students in grades K-5, or for preschool students who are co-mingled with the older students and served the meal pattern for older students.

Screen Time and Physical Activity Policy

Screen Time Policy

As children get older, too much screen time can get in the way of reading, doing homework, playing with friends, and spending time with family, and can also increase their risk for being overweight or obese.

The American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations on Screen Time:

- Children under 2 should have no screen time.
- Children age 3-5 should not exceed 2 hours of screen time per day.

Physical Activity

Children should exercise at least two hours per day indoors or outdoors. In our program, students have 60 minutes of outdoor time to engage in rigorous gross motor activities. Gross motor is a mandatory component of the curriculum. Any exclusion from gross motor requires a doctor's note. Please dress your child accordingly for the weather.

Tips for Parents....

- Limit TV viewing, smart phone and video game use.
- Track screen time with a scheduling sheet.
- Avoid watching TV while eating.

Toilet Training Policy

Our mission is to help and assist parents and children as they transition into the school community. As we work to ensure that your child has a safe and fun learning experience in Preschool this school year, it is crucial to inform teachers of any changes regarding newly acquired allergies, any sickness, and/or toilet-training progress. Please let this letter serve as a reminder of the following preschool procedures and policies:

1. It is the parent's responsibility to make teachers aware of the child's toilet training progress and of the techniques done at home as well as providing teachers with a change of clothes, pull ups and wipes.
2. Everything you send for your child must be labeled with their names in a ziplock bag.
3. If you are transitioning your child from wearing pull-ups to underwear, we encourage you to send in writing what techniques you are trying at home so we can provide the necessary support within the school day.

We are here to support our parents. Any information given to teachers regarding your child must be in writing and dated so we can keep all information in your child's file in order to update progress.

Parental Involvement

District-Wide Parental Involvement Events

Preschool Orientation: September 3rd, 2024

Back to School Night: September 12th, 2024

Parent Conferences: Preschool Teachers will have the opportunity to meet and provide parents information regarding Early Childhood Education assessments and students' progress towards meeting learning goals in person meetings.

Family Workshops: Sessions are focused on health-related and educational topics. Workshops will run monthly beginning in September 2024 for the duration of the academic year.

End of Study Celebrations: Focuses on what the children have learned throughout the study.

Communication: Digital communication is provided by the teachers and Mrs. Donohue.

- Upcoming school events and meetings.
- District related-information.
- Information regarding the curriculum.
- Upcoming community events for families.
- Home-school connections.
- Diversity/multicultural activities.

Parental Involvement Commitment

I want my child to succeed. Therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- Believe that my child can learn.
- Show respect and support for my child, the staff, and the school.
- See that my child attends school regularly and on time.
- Support the school in its effort to maintain acceptable behaviors.
- Make sure that my child gets enough sleep each night.
- Attend Preschool Orientation and Back to School.
- Attend at least **ONE** parental involvement workshop or activity.
- Join the teacher's communication app TSG (Teaching Strategies GOLD) to receive classroom information.

Attendance Policy

Lacey Township School District is committed to continuously improving student achievement and encourages all students to attend school on a regular basis. The process of education requires instruction that is based on skill building, class participation, learning experiences, and study. Attendance is an essential component of a student's academic success and chronic absences can have a negative impact on a student's achievement. The State of NJ defines a chronically absent student as one who is not present for ten percent (10%) of the school year for any reason, including absences due to medical circumstances.

There are two types of absences recognized by the State of NJ, State-Excused Absences and Unexcused Absences. The State of NJ recognizes only the following types of State-Excused Absences 1) Religious Observances/Holidays 2) Bring Your Child To Work Day 3) participation in observance of Veteran's' Day or Board of Elections membership activities 4) closure of busing district leaving students without transportation to receiving district or 5) any other rule issued by the Department of Education Commissioner. The State of NJ considers every other absence, which is not due to one of the reasons above, to be an unexcused absence. The Absecon School District divides Unexcused Absences into two categories.

- **Verified-Unexcused Absences:** Absences for reasons such as illness, doctor's appointment, court dates, etc. Require proper documentation within 10 days in order to be considered a Verified-Unexcused Absence (e.g. doctor's note, note from parent, etc.).
- **Unverified-Unexcused Absences:** All other absences (e.g. vacation, etc.) and any other absence that lacks supporting documentation within 10 days.

Attendance Protocol

Consecutive Absenteeism:

1. Teacher will make a phone call and document contact for a student who is absent 3 consecutive days with no contact.
2. Teacher will email our CPIS (Community Parent Involvement Specialist) for a student who is absent 5 consecutive days with no contact, our CPIS will then reach out to the parent and document contact.
3. Our CPIS will contact the Preschool Administrator if no contact is met and a home visit will be conducted within the 7th consecutive day of unverified absence.

Chronic Absenteeism:

1. Parents/guardians will receive a letter and contact from the Preschool Team.
2. If attendance does not improve, parents/guardians will be scheduled for a formal meeting with the Preschool Team.

Behavior Policy and Agreement

“Be Safe, Be Kind, Take Care Of Our Things”

The Preschool Program follows the District School Policy and Procedures Protocol as follows:

1. **Informational Daily Contact and Documentation:** For less serious classroom behavior issues (disrespect for others, interfering with the learning of others, being unsafe) the classroom teacher would apply normal classroom management strategies. Parents/ caregivers may receive a written notification penned within the communication log or TSG (Teaching Strategies GOLD), receive a phone call or be asked to come in for a conference (no later than 24 hours).
2. **Formal Behavior Contact and Documentation:** When a classroom teacher has concerns regarding issues or ongoing/serious classroom behavior issues relating to a student (physical contact or defiance); the classroom teacher will share problems with their Preschool Administrator and Preschool Support Team, contact the parents and have a formal meeting to determine Social Emotional Positive Behavior Supports to prevent challenging behaviors. Teachers will continue to inform parents/guardians of a student's progress using a communication log (Class Dojo/Remind/TSG).
3. **PIRT Process:** For ongoing classroom behavior concerns or serious classroom behavior issues (physical contact with staff and other classmates), the classroom teacher should discuss the problems with their Preschool Administrator and PIRT (Preschool Intervention Referral Team). A meeting will be scheduled with the Preschool Administrator and PIRT to provide support for both families and teachers in creating the child's SAP (Student Action Plan). Parents/guardians will be provided written notification informing them of meeting time and date.

Behavior Policy and Agreement

It is important that each student and faculty member have a safe environment where they are free to learn. In order to sustain that environment, it is imperative to have well-established criteria for student behavior. Students need to know that they are held accountable for their actions. We strive to keep students and their families informed about the policies and procedures that promote a positive educational experience.

Our objectives are fair and without delay, consistently enforce our rules. The following information may be helpful to you:

- Students must show respect for other students and staff.
- Students must respect school and classroom property.
- Students must keep the classroom safe by resolving conflicts in a positive, non-violent manner.

In order to help your child better understand our school's expectations, we (Teacher and parent), agree to follow the following plan:

Teacher	Parent
List things teacher will be responsible for: 1. Follow through with classroom strategies. 2. Provide daily/weekly updates to the parents, as needed. 3. Update Student Action Plan (SAP) weekly with PIRT members.	List things parents will be responsible for: 1. Reinforce rules above at home. 2. Provide daily/weekly updates to the teacher, as needed. 3. Document and monitor child's behavior at home.

I have read the Mill Pond Preschool Program Disciplinary Policy. I will discuss the behavior expectations for the Preschool program with my child and agree to comply with the discipline policies and procedures of the Mill Pond Elementary School Preschool Program.

Creative Curriculum/Schedule

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool

Our supportive curriculum offers developmentally appropriate support for active learning and promoting children's progress in all areas. This research-based and research-proven curriculum has a variety of resources that will assist every early childhood program in creating a high-quality learning environment. Through utilizing discovery and exploration as a way of learning, The Creative Curriculum for Preschool enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills.

Sample Schedule

The daily schedule establishes the consistency that helps young children predict the sequence of events and thus to feel more secure and more in control of events. In addition, a schedule helps children begin to understand time concepts as they anticipate what comes first in the day, second, next, and last (The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 6th Edition, Vol. 1, Pg.77).

Components of Day	Time
Morning Routine/Breakfast	25 min.
Large Group	20 min.
Choice Time	65 min.
Gross Motor	35 min.
Small Group/Limited Choice	20-45 min.
Read Aloud	10-15 min.
Lunch	30 min.
Nap	60 min.
Read Aloud	10-15 min.
Gross Motor	25 min.
Snack	15 min.
Closing Large Group	10 min.
Dismissal	10 - 15 min.

Teaching Strategies GOLD Student Portfolio

Teaching Strategies Student Portfolio Documentation

Teachers will upload pictures and anecdotal notes to monitor student growth over time.

Teachers will utilize students' individualized information to design lesson plans to target groups based on their readiness levels.

Students' information will be used to create summary and aggregated data reports per building, per classroom and district-wide.

Teaching Strategies GOLD Development and Learning Reports

For the Fall Benchmark period, parents will meet during parent-teacher conferences to receive the first student development and learning report. (teachers keep signed original, parents keep a copy). For the Winter benchmark, teachers will send home the student development and learning report; and for the Spring benchmark, parents will receive the final student development and learning report in June.

Teaching Strategies GOLD Individual Student Report

This report is kept in each child's student portfolio at the end of each benchmark period.

ESI-3 Protocol and Policy

What is ESI-3?

The Early Screening Inventory (ESI-3) is an individually administered screening instrument. The screening is completed by the teacher within the first 45 days of school (no sooner than 15 school days) for children ages 3 through 5 years of age and takes approximately 15-20 minutes to administer.

What is the purpose of the ESI-3?

The ESI-3 helps to identify children who may need to be further evaluated to determine if they have a possible learning concern that may place them at risk.

What does the ESI-3 measure?

The instrument surveys the child's ability to acquire skills rather than their current skill and performance level.

Visual-Motor/Adaptive (block building, drawing and copying forms) Language and Cognition (verbal expression and memory) Gross Motor (jumping, hopping and other physical coordination tasks).

How is the ESI-3 scored?

To determine a child's screening level, chronological age is first calculated. Based on these results the appropriate ESI-3 version is administered.

The ESI-3 contains 25 items. For each item, a child can receive a score ranging between 0-3 points. Subscales are not scored; only the total score is used when interpreting results.

The ESI-3 yields three scores: Refer, Rescreen and OK. These scores are interpreted differently, depending on the age group.

Screening Process:

- Determine child's home language (Home Language Survey) *NOTE: This screening **must** be administered in the child's home language. Contact your Preschool Coordinator if a translator is needed or there is a question regarding a child's home language.
- Notify parents of screening. (*Parent notification and consent collected at time of registration*).
- Calculate the child's chronological age.
- Find your location and prepare your materials. Invite the child to play some games together; follow the script on the score sheet.
- Use the score sheet as the child responds to each item by circling the correct number of points, "Pass", "Fail" or "Refuse" indicators.
- Teachers update the ESI-3 spreadsheet with correct information (date of entry, home language, birth date, etc.).
- Teachers screen children using the correct ESI-3 Form.
- Teachers will rescreen children using the correct ESI-3 Form, as needed.
- Teachers send ESI-3 results to parents as soon as the screening is completed. PIRT coaches will hold meetings with parents/guardians of children who scored "*Refer*" or "*Double Rescreen*".

Parent/Guardian ESI-3 Consent Form:

Dear Parents,

We are excited that you and your child are participating in our preschool program this school year. In the beginning of the year, our program conducts a screening on all children for possible developmental and instructional concerns. Every child in the program will be screened within 45 days of enrollment. Lacey Township School District uses the Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-3) as it is a screening tool. This developmental screening is designed to identify children who might be at risk of having possible learning difficulties or delays. The ESI-3 looks at children by quickly sampling their skills across areas of language, reasoning, gross motor, fine motor and social development. With nothing indicated, a signature is consenting to all three.

Please return signed consent to your child's teacher:

Check ALL 3

- ☐ Yes, I have received the ESI-3 Screening Policy.
- ☐ Yes, I give consent for my child to be screened using the ESI-3.
- ☐ Yes, I give consent for my child to be observed by a PIRT member, if necessary.

OR

- ☐ No, I do not give consent for my child to be screened using the ESI-3 and decline help.

Parent/Legal Guardian (Print)

Child's Name

Parent Signature

Date

Teacher's Name

Home language my child speaks & understands: _____

Preschool Parent Handbook Receipt

The Preschool Parent Handbook was established to increase the sharing of responsibilities between home and school and to ensure that every preschool student receives a high quality education. This Preschool Parent Handbook is a component of the school-level parental involvement policy and was developed jointly with the Mill Pond Elementary Preschool Team.

The Preschool Parent Handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the Mill Pond Elementary School Preschool Program. An understanding of and adherence to the policies and procedures will ensure positive parent-school relations and that the children's needs are being adequately met. Therefore, the Preschool Program requires that all parents and/or guardians of children enrolled, read, sign, and return the statement that follows.

1. I have read the Preschool Parent Handbook.
2. I will adhere to the policies and procedures explained in this handbook.
 - Health and Wellness and Screenings
 - Flu Shot Policy
 - Hand Washing
 - Toilet Training
 - Parental Involvement
 - Behavior & PIRT

I understand that the policies and procedures in this handbook are communicated to me in any fashion are subject to interpretation, review and change by the Mill Pond Elementary Preschool Team.

Parent/ Guardian (Print)

Child's Name

Parent/ Guardian Signature

Date

Home Language Survey

Parent/Guardian; First and Last Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Please complete the following survey:

1. What language does your child speak fluently at home?
2. What is the dominant language spoken at home by adults?
3. How often do you read to your child in your native language?
4. How often do you read to your child in English?

Parent Signature

Date