

Statement of Philosophy

WE BELIEVE...

that each child is a unique individual. We value human diversity and encourage children to express and accept the differences among one another.

WE BELIEVE...

that it is important to provide a safe, secure and clean facility in which children and parents may feel comfortable. Our classroom is designed to provide an atmosphere of learning through the many choices and activities offered in a range of developmental levels.

WE BELIEVE...

in providing developmentally appropriate programs. Our teachers are dedicated in guiding children to become independent, curious, creative, responsible and self-directed learners.

WE BELIEVE...

in using positive methods of discipline, which focus, on the children's good behavior rather than on the bad. We believe setting age-appropriate limits and helping to direct children in making good choices concerning their own behavior.

WE BELIEVE...

that parents are the most important element in a child's education. We strive to keep open communication between our staff and parents at all times and encourage parent involvement in our program whenever possible.

Statement of Services, Purposes and Goals

Our philosophy is based on our belief that each child is a unique individual with special talents and needs. Activities are designed for children to progress at their own pace and for each child to feel successful in what they are doing. The first years of learning are the most important in developing a positive self-image. We offer activities that will nurture development in all areas of their lives and self-confidence that can last a lifetime.

The Great Escape Preschool offers a learning environment in which children are exposed to a variety of organized activities as well as creative playtime. Individual talents are encouraged to develop and grow. We support a healthy balance of learning opportunities that will create growth in all areas of learning - intellectual, creative, social, emotional, and physical. We believe in giving children the freedom of individual expression in their quest for identity and uniqueness in all learning situations.

Our goal is to help the children in our school become excited and independent learners. We hope to make learning an enjoyable experience in order to initiate a positive image associated with learning. Great Escape Preschool is a fun, safe place, where learning occurs naturally.

The Great Escape Preschool (GEPS), as a part of the Sokol Chicagoland Building Association, dba Elite Sports Complex, is a 501C3 non-profit organization.

The Great Escape Preschool carries liability insurance in accordance with DCFS requirements.

Licensed By: DCFS, Department Children Family Services

The Great Escape Preschool Staff

Co-Director and Instructor Mrs. Jennifer Collins has been a member of our Preschool staff since 2000. She earned her graduate degree in Elementary Education/Theater Arts from the University of Wyoming. Previously, Mrs. Collins was a classroom teacher in both Texas and Hinsdale School District 181. She taught in all curricular areas including art classes. She has had the opportunity to facilitate special needs students and run an elementary school's computer lab. Mrs. Collins has been involved in leading and directing youth theater programs for over twenty-five years. She has been a guest director at the Elmhurst Children's Theater. Mrs. Collins is certified in both CPR and First-Aid.

Co-Director and Instructor Mrs. Kashefa Merchant believes that children thrive when their ideas are the foundation of learning. She is passionate about helping young children reach their full potential by developing a curriculum based on their interests and ideas. She believes that the Reggio Emilia approach of long term studies help children expand their ideas and explore various components of learning. She has a background in Early Childhood Education. She was a Preschool Teacher with the UIC Children's Center for five years. She holds a Master's Degree in Instructional Leadership in Early Childhood Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago, is certified to teach Preschool through Third grade, and is CPR/First Aid certified. Her two children attended the Great Escape Preschool.

Ms. Kim Zawodniak teaches the Preschool Discovery class as well as serves as our substitute/assistant for all classrooms this year. Ms. Kim earned her Associates in Early Childhood development from The College of DuPage. She started working in Childcare in 1992. Ms. Kim has worked with 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Besides teaching Ms. Kim was also the Assistant Director at Children's World. She left Children's world in 2004 to raise her 2 children, who both went to The Great Escape Preschool! While raising her kids she watched other children at her home. Besides for teaching Ms. Kim also has been involved with Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and is currently a leader for her daughters Girl Scout Troop. Ms. Kim is CPR/First Aid certified. Ms. Kim is married and has 2 children, Ricky 14 and Becca 11. She is excited to get back into the classroom.

Hours of Operation

Class Schedules:

2.5 year old program: Monday and Wednesday 9:15-11:15am
Tuesday and Thursday 11:30am-1:30pm
3-4 year old program: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:45-11:15am
Optional 3rd day - Literacy and Learning Fridays 8:45-11:15am
4-5 year old program: Monday/ Wednesday/Friday 8:45-11:15am
Optional 4th day – Smart Start Pre-K Day Thursday 8:45-11:15am
Optional 5th day – Smart Start Pre-K Day Tuesday 8:45-11:15am

Elite Sports Complex' Front Desk Hours:

Monday-Friday 8:30am-8:00pm, Saturday 8:30am-1:00pm

Preschool Calendar

The Great Escape Preschool operates follows the Downers Grove School District 58 in scheduling our preschool calendar and Holiday, with the exception of days corresponding to teacher in-service/training and conferences. Dates will be listed as soon as available. The School year runs September through May.

****In the event of extreme weather conditions The Great Escape Preschool follows the Downers Grove School District 58 for any school closings. Local television and radio stations will broadcast when District 58 is closed due to weather. Parents will be also notified via email.**

Fees due upon registration:

A *nonrefundable* deposit of \$100.00 is required to confirm your registration. This deposit will be applied first to the \$35.00 annual registration fee (which also gives you membership to Elite Sports Complex), with the remainder to then be applied to the last tuition payment due in May.

Tuition is paid in 9 equal monthly installments September through May. Please refer to the chart below for monthly tuition fees for each program. The monthly tuition reflects all Field Trip costs and a nutritious daily snack.

Class	Monthly Tuition Payment	Pay in Full before 9/15/18
2.5 year old Discovery Class M/W	\$165.00	\$1,410.00
3 year old Morning – 2 days	\$195.00	\$1,667.00
3's with optional Friday – 3 days	\$270.00	\$2,308.00
4-5 year old Morning – 3 days	\$270.00	\$2,308.00
4-5 year old Morning – 4 days	\$330.00	\$2,820.00
4-5 year old Morning – 5 days	\$370.00	\$3,163.00

Installment payments are due the 1st of each month from September to May. The full tuition amount may be paid in one lump sum upon registration or any time thereafter. For your convenience, you may keep your credit card information on file for automatic billing. **Payment of cash or checks must be made 1 month in advance.** Automatic payments will be set up before the Fall classes begin.

The Great Escape Preschool and Elite Sports Complex, Inc. management are confident that each installment payment will be received by the first week of each month. In the event that tuition remains unpaid by the 15th of each month, a \$15 late fee will apply. The Management does reserve the right to remove a child from the preschool if payments are not received by their due date. If there are extenuating circumstances in which payment cannot be made on time, consideration will be given by contacting the Office Manager.

Preschool Refund Policy:

Prorated refunds will be issued only if the Great Escape Preschool cancels the preschool program or a written physician's excuse is presented stating that your child must be withdrawn from the preschool program. A refund request must be made in person at the Elite Sports Complex, Inc. during our business hours.

Withdrawals for other reasons are not eligible for refund. Please see the withdrawal and disenrollment policies in the policies section of this handbook for more detail.

There will no be refunds for family vacations.

The \$35.00 annual membership fee and \$100.00 preschool deposit is non-refundable.

Great Escape Preschool Contact Information:

Address: 6360 BELMONT RD., DOWNERS GROVE IL 60516

Phone Number: 630-968-2699 (ext. 105 to GEPS voicemail)

Email: greatscapepreschool@yahoo.com

Admission, Enrollment, and Discharge Policies

The Great Escape Preschool advertises in the public media in order to make openings known to all. Children are admitted regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, or handicapping condition.

Children who are 2 and half years old up to kindergarten age are eligible to enroll in the preschool. Admission requirements and procedures are as follows:

- A child must be 2.5 years old by September 1 to be admitted into the Discovery class.
- A child must be 3 years old by September 1 to be admitted into the 3-year-old class.
- A child must be 4 years old by September 1 to be admitted into the 4-year-old class.
- All children must be toilet trained before attending classes at GEPS.

The Director will meet with the parents or guardians of a child with special needs at the time of enrollment. A planning session will be held with the child's parents or guardians, health and/or education specialists, and the Director and classroom staff to plan an *Individualized Plan for Child with Special Needs*. The same committee will meet quarterly to reevaluate the child's progress.

Classes are filled on a first-come/first-serve basis for the three-year-old program. Children enrolled in the three-year-old program will have priority for enrollment (for a time period to be determined by management) in the 4/5-year program for the following year. When a class is filled, the child's name will be put on a waiting list. Wait listed children will be contacted in order to fill any vacancies as they occur.

In instances where a child is having difficulties adapting to the preschool atmosphere, a meeting will be held with the parent(s), teacher, director, and professional (if necessary) to determine what the best interest is of the particular child, and how it relates to the other children in the preschool.

Parents must provide sufficient information concerning their child to enable the staff of The Great Escape Preschool to make decisions and act on behalf of the child with regard to his or her life while at the facility.

Documents that must be completed include:

- Admission Data and Enrollment Agreement
- Certified Copy of child's birth certificate (in compliance with DCFS 401.250, The Missing Children Records Act.)
- Report of health examination dated no earlier than 6 months prior to enrollment. The report must include:
 - Tuberculin test results
 - Indication that your child has received the following immunizations required by the Illinois Department of Public Health: poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, diphtheria, mumps, Pertussis, tetanus, and haemophilus influenza B. * A parent may request that immunizations, physical examinations, and/or medical treatment be waived on religious grounds. A request for such waiver must be in writing.
- Signed Consent-Release Form
- Signed statement regarding having read the parent handbook
- Signed DCFS licensing standards form
- Parent Volunteer Sheet
- Child Personal Information Sheet

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

Written notice of withdrawal must be submitted to the Director two weeks in advance. No refunds will be given unless medical documentation is provided.

DISENROLLMENT POLICY:

On rare occasions, the child's or family's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for the child. We will work with each family to avoid disenrollment.

The following are some examples of behavior that could result in disenrollment:

Actions of the child:

- Unable to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time, to extent of being disruptive to the learning environment
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children, including excessive biting
- Ongoing uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts

Actions of the Parent:

- Failure to abide by GEPS policies or requirements as obligated by licensing agencies
- Non-payment of tuition
- Acting in a verbally or physically abusive or intimidating manner to staff, children or other parents

In the event a situation arises that may warrant disenrollment, a meeting will be scheduled with all applicable parties, including GEPS and Elite Sports Complex management. In the event that behavior or condition is not or cannot be rectified in a reasonable amount of time, written notice of disenrollment will be given.

The Great Escape Preschool Policies

DRESS

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and gym shoes. Please refrain from sending children in sandals or flip flops. Daily activities include active and messy play, and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. The child's name should be placed on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all proper possessions and clothes. An extra set of clothing in a plastic bag should accompany the child each day in their school bag.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

Children will be assigned a "cubby" and hook. Children will be provided with a Great Escape book bag which they should use each day, in lieu of their own back pack or book bag. Replacement or additional bags are available for \$5.00.

Unless specific instructions are given to bring a special toy or other item from home, we ask that your child not come to school with personal belongings. We have plenty of toys here and it solves the problem of losing or breaking favorite items. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. Children will be asked to bring a "Show and Tell" during certain times of the year.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURE:

The classroom door will be open 5 minutes prior to class starting time. Earlier arrivals may wait in the Elite Sports Complex lobby. Parents or Caregivers are asked to walk the children into the classroom. The doors to the classroom will be locked 15 minutes after arrival time. For dismissal (3 and 4yr old programs only), we will bring your child to your car. Please form a line in the parking lot at the scheduled time 11:15am. Enter from Belmont Ave. and exit at 64th Street. If you wish to come in to talk with the teacher, please park and feel free to do so. Parents and caregivers in the 2.5 year old Discovery program MUST pick up and drop off inside the classroom. Your promptness at arrival and departure time will be greatly appreciated.

For safety reasons, children must never be left without direct transfer to a teacher; therefore, children must always be brought directly to the classroom.

The parent or person designated on the child's admission data form will be the only people to whom we can release a child. Identification may be required for safety reasons.

Children must be signed in and out each day.

Pick-Up Policy:

- Parents and caregivers in the 2.5 year old Discovery program MUST pick up and sign out inside the classroom.
- Children will be dismissed only to their parent, regular carpool or specific individuals who are indicated on their enrollment form.
- If someone else will be picking up your child, you must notify the teachers in writing and the person picking up your child must present a photo ID.
- Please pick up your child or carpool on time. When parents are late, children often become very worried. Please make every attempt to call so that we can reassure your child.
- Fees for late pick-up:
 - After the first occurrence, we will charge a late fee of \$10.00 for the first 15 minutes, which begins at class ending time. The fee will continue to multiply with each new 15-minute period of time.

If your child is not picked up within 10 minutes of dismissal time we will attempt to call your home and cell phone at least 2 times each. If we are unable to reach you, we will attempt to reach emergency contacts provided by the parents at least 4 times each. It is important that we have up-to-date emergency phone numbers at all times. If your child has not been picked up within 2 hours of dismissal time we will contact outside authorities. It is the responsibility of the Great Escape Preschool School staff to provide for the child's protection and well-being until the parent, emergency contact or outside authorities arrive. The staff will hold the parent, and not the child, responsible for the situation and will discuss it with the parent only.

FOODS

Snacks are furnished by the preschool mid-morning and mid-afternoon (if applicable). Snacks are used as part of the curriculum, and as an experience in tasting. All provided snacks will exemplify and encourage healthy eating habits. A written DCFS approved snack list will be posted in the preschool room.

Please state any food allergies or food your child may not eat on your registration form. GEPS maintains a peanut and tree nut free classroom. All instructors are food handler certified.

RELIGION

A formal religious program or instruction is not offered. However, respect for all beliefs is inherent in our philosophy.

MEDICATIONS:

Medications/ointments of any kind will not be dispensed to the children enrolled at The Great Escape Preschool without a doctor's prescription. Please let the Director know of any special circumstances.

HEALTH SCREENINGS:

Prior to attendance, your child is required (by DCFS guidelines) to have a physical examination within the last six months, and to be up to date on immunizations. In accordance with the Illinois Department of Health, GEPS shall provide the opportunity for hearing and vision screening annually.

ILLNESS:

In order to protect the health of all children at GEPS, please keep your sick child at home. The following are indications that require your child stay home from school, or may be sent home from school if symptoms appear during the school day.

- Fever of over 101 (must be fever free without medication for 24 hours)
- Unusual lethargy or difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea (symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Vomiting (symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school)
- Rash with a fever or behavior change
- Conjunctivitis or Impetigo until 24 hours after starting treatment
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after starting treatment and fever free for 24 hours
- Head lice or scabies, until morning after first treatment
- Chicken pox, until at least six days after rash onset; blisters must be crusted.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you or your designated emergency contact will be notified immediately so that you take your child home. Please notify us promptly if your child is diagnosed with a contagious/communicable illness.

Plan for Obtaining Emergency Medical Care Or Treatment of Illnesses and Accidents

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE (accidents, life threatening illnesses)

1. Call 911
2. Call parents of child
3. Follow instructions of medical person and parents
4. If parents cannot be reached, and a waiver has been signed rejecting medical care on religious grounds, then contact the certified practitioner listed on the child's admission data form

SICKNESSES AND ILLNESSES (non-life threatening)

1. Place child on a cot away from other children in the room to prevent the spread of germs
2. Call parents of child
3. If parents cannot be reached, call a designated person on the child's admission data form to come pick up the child

NEAREST MEDICAL FACILITY

Good Samaritan Hospital
3815 Highland Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515
630-275-5900 -- main number

FIRE DEPARTMENT:	911	NON-EMERGENCIES:	630-434-5980
POLICE DEPARTMENT:	911	NON-EMERGENCIES:	630-434-5600
POISON CONTROL CENTER:	CENTRAL DUPAGE HOSPITAL		630-260-2600

COMMUNICATION

Parents are informed of the activities of the preschool through periodic newsletters and emails.

Parent conferences are held in the Fall and in the Spring. Conferences provide the opportunity for teachers and parents to discuss each child's accomplishments. Parents may request additional conferences at any time.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

In the event of extreme weather conditions GEPS follows Downers Grove School District 58 for any school closings. Local television and radio stations will broadcast when District 58 is closed due to weather. Parents will be also notified via email.

SAFETY PROCEDURES:

Each month GEPS conducts safety drills in case of an emergency (i.e.: fire). Severe weather drills are conducted in the spring and fall.

PEST CONTROL

Pursuant to the Structural Pest Control Act [225 ILCS 235], Elite Sports Complex has developed an Integrated Pest Management program (IPM). Prevention through effective sanitation and maintenance is key. We will rely as much as possible on non-toxic or natural remedies if required. If pesticide application is deemed necessary by the IPM coordinator, parents and staff will be notified in writing at least 2 business days and no more than 30 days prior to the application. The full IPM policy/plan is posted in the Preschool Office.

TRIPS OR OUTINGS:

Field trips are carefully planned for your children. The trips provide firsthand experiences to help the children learn about their world in which they live, have a group experience, have fun, and become more aware of the things around them through observation. Each child must be accompanied by an adult and parents must provide their student's transportation.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are open to the particular child's teacher, the Director, and authorized employee of the licensing agency, or the child's parent or legal guardian ONLY. Records on your child will not be released to anyone else without you requesting so in writing.

DISCIPLINE

At The Great Escape Preschool, we seek to build a child's self-esteem by helping them develop self-control and responsibility for their actions. Expected behavior is based on the developmental level of each child. The following guidelines are designed for the safety and protection of all children, to help children learn:

- Acceptable social behavior
- Positive techniques to solve their own problems
- Intrinsic motivation to solve future conflicts on their own as they arise

Instructors will help each child learn self-control and self-discipline by:

- Encouraging children to use language to resolve conflicts whenever possible
- Redirecting children to alternate activities as necessary
- Modeling positive behavior
- Refraining from using developmentally inappropriate language or discipline with children

At no time will GEPS staff use physical or negative punishment to discipline a child.



A daily lesson plan and schedule that incorporates the planned learning activities is implemented each day.

A typical day includes:

- **Arrival:** Children enter the classroom, hang up their coats and backpacks, wash hands and get ready for the day.
- **Circle/Meeting:** Everyone comes together to share and hear about the day's activities. The theme is also introduced during this time as well as participation with the calendar, weather, and literary concepts. Each child is then directed toward a learning center.
- **Center Time:** Children choose from activities in the centers, which include dramatic play, blocks, art, sensory table/science, math, literacy/writing, library and computers. Learning is child-centered through play facilitated by the Early Childhood Team.
- **Clean Up:** Children learn when it's time to stop an activity, put away toys and materials, and learn to cooperate with others.
- **Snack Time:** Snack time encourages communication between the children, self-help skills and good manners. A nutritious snack is provided by the preschool to promote and encourage healthy eating habits.
- **Exercise:** Teachers will lead children in planned, supervised physical activities in our gymnastics and/or large gym facility. Children also learn self-control by following rules and safety guidelines.
- **Small Group Activities:** Teachers will spend individual time with children working on specific lessons for that day's plan that may include; literacy, mathematical, or science related activities.
- **Story Times:** Teachers read to children in both large and small groups. Reading enhances listening skills and memory, stimulates thought-provoking questions and helps children discuss the differences between the world we live in and the fantasy worlds we read about.
- **Dismissal:** Children are encouraged to dress and collect their belongings independently.

Our schedule is flexible in order to meet the needs of the children on a particular day. At times, the children may need to be outside to expel excess energy, or we may become involved in an inside activity and need more time to complete it. Special guests or activities may require a change in schedule.

Parents are provided with a schedule of themes so they can discuss and reinforce ideas and concepts at home.

Each program is designed to plan and implement activities that are deemed appropriate for that program. Teachers will provide newsletters to promote communication from home to school.

Planned Learning Activities

The Great Escape Preschool provides preschool aged children with classroom activities that focus on total development, including communication, cognitive, physical, and social-emotional skills. As learning is driven by natural curiosity, children construct knowledge from hands-on, thought provoking experiences that challenge them to think.

- Language Development
 - Phonemic awareness
 - Letters/Sounds
 - Name recognition
 - Reading Readiness
 - Learning with music
- Science/Sensory
 - Exploring how things look, feel, work, smell and sound
 - Recognizing shapes
- Math
 - Classification, visual discrimination
 - Number awareness
 - Learning telephone numbers and addresses
 - Patterns and graphing
- Computer
 - Exposure to basic Pre-School Programs
 - Working on problem Solving
 - Hand to Eye Coordination
- Art
 - Art Activities
 - Work with colors shapes and textures
 - Creativity
- Fine Motor
 - Blocks, puzzles, drawing, cutting, tracing, printing names
- Gross Motor
 - Creative movement and physical activities in the Kids Gym and Large Gym
 - Exposure to basic gymnastic equipment
 - Activities including: parachute, creative dance, music games and more
- Social
 - Sharing and taking turns
 - Problem Solving

STAR OF THE WEEK

Each week a “star of the week” will be assigned. Each class will celebrate “star of the week” in their own way.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Ice Cream Social

Fall Festival

Thanksgiving Feast

Winter Program

Spring Fling

Earth Day

Pajama Day

Dad's Night

Mom's Night

Grandparent's Day

Seasonal parties

Graduation

End of Year Picnic

Special guests often include: Dentist, Firefighter, and Librarian

FIELD TRIPS

Fall Farm Trip

Spring Cultural Event

Animal Experience

The GREAT ESCAPE PRESCHOOL

Student Expectations

Since children learn and grow at different paces, these expectations are used as a general age appropriate guideline for development. Small group and personalized instruction and attention enable our teaching staff to assist or challenge students according to their comprehension and aptitude throughout the school year.

3-YEAR-OLD CLASS



TRANSITION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

TO RECOGNIZE FIRST NAME

TO TRACE FIRST NAME

MATCHING SOME LETTERS

TO RECOGNIZE THE ALPHABET

INTRODUCTION TO CLASSIFICATION

ONE-TO-ONE COORESPONDENCE UP TO AT LEAST 10

INTRODCUTION TO PATTERNS

SEQUENCING

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

INTODUCTION TO GRAPHING

TO COUNT TO 15

TO LEARN BASIC COLORS

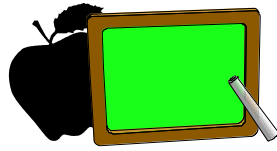
TO RECOGNIZE SIMPLE SHAPES

TO SHARE AND TAKE TURNS

TO ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS

TO MASTER VARIOUS GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

4-YEAR-OLD CLASS



TO RECOGNIZE FULL NAME

TO KNOW AGE AND BIRTHDAY

TO LEARN ADDRESS

TO RECOGNIZE UPPER AND LOWERCASE ALPHABET LETTERS

TO COUNT TO 30

TO PRINT NAME

TO PRINT SOME RECOGNIZABLE LETTERS

TO LEARN BEGINNING SOUNDS OF LETTERS

PHONEMIC AWARENESS

SIMPLE-COMPLEX PATTERNS

VISUAL DISCRIMINATION

CLASSIFICATION

GRAPHING

SEQUENCING

ONE-TO-ONE COORESPONDENCE UP TO 20

RECOGNITION OF NUMBERS 1-10

TO KNOW PARENTS NAME

TO MASTER VARIOUS GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

TO MASTER THE PENCIL GRIP

WORKING TOGETHER AS A GROUP