



Kimball Area Early Childhood



Play & Learn Preschool & Enrichment Program Handbook

Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Program

Introduction

Welcome to our Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs! Preschool is such an exciting time in your child's life. It is an age of endless discovery and rapid growth. We are honored and thrilled you have chosen to share this time with us and become part of our learning community! We strive to instill in your child a love for learning, provide opportunities for enriching friendships, and foster learning through creative experiences. Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool Program and Enrichment Program are both 4 Star Parent Aware rated programs.

Mission Statement

Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment programs support parents in the education of the whole child by instilling a love for learning and providing an environment filled with opportunities for social and emotional development. The preschool program also provides students with units of instruction rich in language, mathematics, music, and movement, preparing students for a positive educational start.

Philosophy

The goal of Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs are to promote a love for learning in all students. We believe in the education of the child as a whole, by providing age appropriate learning through discovery exploration, play, movement and music, and literacy experiences. We strive to ensure a creative classroom environment and a variety of learning experiences to support your child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs seek to foster academic excellence through the use of research-based curriculum, innovative instructional practices, play based learning, and integration of technology.

Curriculum

Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs strive to center learning around children's interests and developmental needs. The preschool utilizes the Creative Curriculum and Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards as a framework for all lessons. The primary purpose of these Indicators is to provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations

for young children within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping children meet these expectations. The goals for children are to:

- Develop an intrinsic motivation for learning.
- Develop both socially and emotionally.
- Develop a healthy self-concept.
- Develop trust in adults and peers.
- Develop cognitive skills in areas such as language, literacy, mathematics, sciences, and social studies.

Assessment of Children

Parents will be provided the opportunity to meet with their child's preschool teacher two times during the school year. At this time, parents will be provided the opportunity to discuss their joys and concerns with the teacher. This will also be a time when their child's teacher can provide assessment information obtained through authentic assessment methods, such as: observations, photographs, anecdotal notes, checklists, and the child's work samples. All developmental areas of the child will be included in the child's assessment and will be coordinated with the Minnesota Early Learning Standards.

Class Schedules

Scheduled Preschool Classes/Hours:

- Monday, Wednesday & Friday 4 – 5 Year Old Preschool Class 8:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Tuesday & Thursday 4 – 5 Year Old Preschool Class 8:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Wednesday & Friday 4 – 5 Year Old Preschool Class 8:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Tuesday & Thursday 3 – 4 Year Old Preschool Class 8:00 – 10:45 a.m.
- Tuesday & Thursday 3 – 4 Year Old Preschool Class 12:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Scheduled Enrichment Class Hours:

- The Enrichment program operates from 8:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is available for students currently enrolled in Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool Program. Parents register and set a schedule for Enrichment attendance when they register for Preschool.
- Due to staffing requirements and class sizes, drop-in care is only available if pre-approved by the Early Childhood Coordinator, and will be billed at the additional flat rate of \$40.00 per/day.

Calendar & Class Sizes:

- Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs follow the Kimball School District calendar, observing the same holidays, vacation periods, non-student days, and weather-related cancellations.
- All classes observe a 10:1 student / teacher ratio.
- Preschool and Enrichment will begin operation and open classroom doors promptly at 8:00 a.m.. Children will be invited inside classrooms at 8:00 a.m., not earlier.
- Parents must pick up children within 5 minutes of the scheduled dismissal times for preschool and enrichment programs.

Eligibility

3 – 4 Year Old Class:

- 1.) Students must be 3 years old by September 1st of the current school year.
- 2.) Students must have independent bathroom skills and not be using training pants.
- 3.) Students must have current required vaccinations or exemption on file.

4 – 5 Year Old Class:

- 1.) Students must be 4 years old by September 1st of the current school year.
- 2.) Students must have independent bathroom skills and not be using training pants.
- 3.) Students must have current required vaccinations or exemption on file.

Preschool & Enrichment Staff

All Preschool teachers are licensed by the State of Minnesota Department of Education. They have a minimum of a 4-year degree in Early Childhood Education. Enrichment staff and support staff are experienced with children and receive on-going training.

Fees & Tuition

Registration Fee: A \$50.00 registration fee is required when registering for Preschool.

Preschool Monthly Tuition: Tuition for the Preschool program is based on a sliding fee scale, which is available from the Early Childhood Education staff. Payment is due on the 1st of the month, for the upcoming month.

2 Half Days / Week - \$175.00

2 Full Days / Week - \$350.00

3 Full Days / Week - \$450.00

Enrichment Program Monthly Tuition Fees:

2 Half Days / Week - \$150.00

1 Full Day/ Week - \$150.00

2 Full Days / Week - \$300.00

3 Full Days / Week - \$400.00

Drop-in Rate / Day - \$40.00

Tuition Payments: It is very important to make tuition payments on time. Payment plans, a sliding fee scale, and other options are available.. **If you need financial assistance, limited scholarships are available per state qualifications.**

Please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator (320) 398 - 7700 ext. 2802 for information. Enrichment is a separate program and payment is required to attend. We prefer credit card payment.

Tuition is non-refundable and no reductions in fees are given due to a child's absence or school scheduled days and weather related days off.

Dress Code

Please dress your child for play. Our focus is on creative play, not staying clean. Protective shirts will be used for certain activities; however, there is no guarantee your child will stay clean.

Children will have time outdoors when the temperature is above zero degrees. Please provide a warm, well-fitting coat (with working zipper), snow pants, boots, hat, and water-proof mittens for this time. If you need assistance in providing your child with warm winter outdoor gear, please let us know as we have resources to help families in need. Please label all coats, boots, hats, mittens, backpacks, etc. with your child's name.

Preschoolers will be encouraged to dress independently. This is a very important skill! In the fall and spring there are even more opportunities to be outside. If you would like your child to wear sunscreen or bug spray, please apply it before they arrive at school.

Snacks

There will be a \$35.00 snack fee to help cover the cost of morning & afternoon snacks provided in our Preschool. This fee will be charged on September 1st. Examples of healthy snacks we will offer are peanut-free crackers, fruit, go-gurts, or cheese sticks. If your child is enrolled in Enrichment, families will be asked to pay an additional \$35.00 snack fee for Enrichment.

Lunch

Students enrolled in Full Day Preschool or the Enrichment Program may choose school lunch from the cafeteria or bring a cold lunch from home. The School Cafeteria provides a nutritious meal that meets the USDA & MN Dept. of Human Services requirements.

Supply List

Students will be asked to bring supplies while attending the Preschool program. A supply list will be made available to parents in late summer. Along with those items, each child will need a regular-sized backpack that zips and has back straps. It needs to be large enough to fit a school folder and any school projects or books that are brought home, as well as winter gear. Mark your child's backpack with their name or initials. **Please make sure to check your child's backpack and folder daily!** We also recommend that your child bring a water bottle labeled with their name each day. The drinking fountains in the room require strong muscles our students have yet to develop, so having a water bottle makes things easier for your child.

Your child will need an extra set of clothing at school. This will help in case of a toileting accident, wet clothes from the water table, spilled snack, or an art activity. Please label all extra clothing and put them in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name and the days he/she attends school. Please include: pants, socks, shirt, and underwear. **Please bring these supplies to your child's orientation day.**

Arrival Procedure:

Morning Preschool and Enrichment begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students are welcomed into the classroom at this time, not earlier.

Parents / Guardians will be met by a staff member at the west door, Door #4. Students who participate in before school care with Cubs Club or ride the bus to school will be assisted in entering the Preschool and Enrichment classrooms by district staff. Students will also be assisted by staff when moving from the Preschool to Enrichment classrooms for their scheduled classes.

Morning Drop-Off: The Preschool classrooms are located in the back of the elementary school building. We invite you to park in the Community Education Building parking lot and walk your child to the West door, Door #4, of the elementary school.. This door is the closest to the classrooms and safely away from the drop-off / pick-up zone and busing areas. **Please do not park in front of the school building as this is a busing zone and it is unsafe to walk between the buses.**

Departure Procedure:

It is essential your child is dropped off and picked up on time. Children often worry when they are not picked up when class ends, along with the rest of their classmates. If you are going to be late, please call the Early Childhood office (320-398-7700 X 2802) to let us know so we can communicate this to your child.

Morning ½ Day Preschool concludes promptly at 10:45 a.m. The Preschool teacher and students will line up at the main door #1 by the flagpole for pick-up. You may park in the south parking lot and walk up to door #1 to pick-up your child. Students who attend the Enrichment Program will be brought into the Enrichment classroom to transition and prepare for lunch. Parents picking up from Preschool morning classes are expected to do so from 10:45 – 10:50 a.m.

Afternoon Preschool & Enrichment classes conclude promptly at 2:45 p.m. The Preschool teacher and students will line up at the West door #4 for pick-up. You may park in the Community Education Building parking lot and walk up to door #4 to pick up your child. Parents are expected to pick up students between 2:45 – 2:50 p.m., with the conclusion of the regular school day.

Students who are bused or attend Cubs Club will be walked to the bus or Cubs Club by district staff.

****Please Note:** The Elementary School uses the driveway loop on the East side of the elementary school for drop-off and pick-up for students in grades K-5. **For safety reasons this door #8 is NOT permitted to be used by Preschool families for drop-off and pick-up.** Students attending Preschool or the Enrichment program need to be supervised as they enter the building and are led to the classroom by their parents or guardian.

Separation Anxiety

Children sometimes have difficulty separating upon arrival. This is typical behavior which, over time, should decrease as children become more secure in their new environment. Here are some guidelines to make separation easier for your child:

- Allow adequate time in the morning for arrival.
- Talk to your child to prepare them for school.
- Try not to make your child feel rushed at arrival, as this can make children feel anxious.
- Always say “good-bye”, and let your child know you will be returning. Leaving without saying good-bye can make separations more difficult. A child will fear the unexpected departure and try to keep an eye on his/her parent, preventing them from engaging with the teacher or other children. It increases separation anxiety instead of helping diminish it.
- If you are still having difficulty, teachers are close by to help your child when you leave. Usually, children calm down and begin playing soon after you leave.

Transportation

Busing MAY be an option at 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. for **4 year old** Preschoolers IF there is an **existing stop** at the home AND there is room on the bus. Mid-day busing is **ONLY** available to those students who qualify for special education services. ALL students (**except special education students**) *younger than 4 years old* need adult transportation to and from school.

Please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator prior to August 1st to arrange for busing for the upcoming school year at (320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2802.

Weather Related Closings / Early Dismissals

The Preschool and Enrichment programs follow the Kimball Public Schools (ISD 739) related to all weather-related closings and early dismissals.

- If **school is closed early or canceled** you will need alternative care, as the **Enrichment and Preschool program will be closed.**
- If school is running 2 hours late, there will be NO AM 3's Preschool class. All-Day Preschool classes, PM 3's Preschool class and the Enrichment program will open at the same time as the Elementary School (10:00 a.m.).

School Closings Information:

Kimball Area Public Schools announces late starts and closing in the following places:

- The Kimball Schools Web App – Available for free from Google Play or the Apple Store.
- The Kimball School Website: www.kimball.k12.mn.us
- TV: WCCO-Channel 4, KSTP – Channel 5, KARE – Channel 11
- Radio AM: WCCO – 830, WJON - 1240, KDU - 1260, KFLD – 1410, KNSI - 1450
- Radio FM: KYRS – 94.1, WWJO – 98.1, KZPK – 98.9, KCLD -104.7, KKJR 107.1

Preschool Orientation:

The school year will begin with *Preschool Orientation Conferences* for children and parents/guardians. This is a specifically scheduled time for your child and their classmates to explore the classroom, meet the teacher, and learn about the upcoming school year.

Preschool orientation is also helpful for your child to become comfortable in the classroom and with teaching staff, to help reduce first day jitters. During your scheduled orientation time we hope you will also have the opportunity to visit the Enrichment room and meet the Enrichment staff if you are enrolled in the Enrichment program.

Preschool Orientation Schedule for the 2023-2024 School Year is as follows:

Registered Class

Orientation Date / Time

Monday/Wed/Friday's All Day Class. Monday, August 28th (times listed in welcome letter)

Wednesday/Friday's All Day Class. Monday, August 28th (times listed in welcome letter)

Tuesday/Thursday's All Day Class Tuesday, August 29th (times listed in welcome letter)

Tuesday/Thursday's AM Class. Tuesday, August 29th (times listed in welcome letter)

Tuesday/Thursday's PM Class. Tuesday, August 29th (times listed in welcome letter)

* Attending your orientation time with your child also meets one of the parent involvement requirements for Preschool.

Parent Involvement:

Parents are an integral part of the educational process. We highly value parent involvement and we would love to provide multiple opportunities for parents to engage in their child's education. Kimball's Preschool and Enrichment program has an open door policy and welcomes parents to visit their children and participate in their day.

From the MN Department of Education website: *It is a priority of School Readiness to involve parents in their child's learning and education. Research has shown that early childhood programs that involve parents and children working together are more effective than programs that only focus on the child.* Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool includes 2 state required mandatory parent involvement components.

1.) **Preschool Orientation** (Day Requirement)

This event occurs during the day and will involve learning about your child's preschool experience. Your child and you will spend time in the classroom together. Children will gain familiarity with the classroom and teaching staff while parents learn about their child's preschool experience, including curriculum, schedules, and home to school learning connections.

2.) **Literacy Night** (Evening Requirement) – tentatively scheduled for April (date TBA)

This is a special night for children and their families to explore literature together. There will be a variety of activities for students and their families, including reading together, cooking together, and engaging in activities that actively explore literature.

3.) **Preschool Conferences:**

Individual parent/teacher conferences are planned and offered to all parents in the fall and late winter. Either teachers or parents may request conferences at any time there is a need, and an appointment will be made.

Optional Volunteer Opportunities:

When planning to volunteer, it is important to understand the staff to student ratio requirements and the impact of bringing other children along during volunteer time. The staff/child ratio for Preschoolers under the MN Dept. of Education (MDE) rule is 1:10 with the maximum group size being 20 students. Only qualified district staff can count toward meeting the staff portion of the ratio. Unfortunately, volunteers do not count as “staff”, but any other children brought into the classroom along with the volunteer are counted as “students”. As a result, children brought along with volunteers negatively impact our student to staff ratio and may cause a violation of MDE rule. *Therefore, volunteers are encouraged not to bring additional children along during their volunteer time.* **All visitors are required to sign in the Elementary Office and obtain a visitor badge.**

4.) **Mystery Reader**

If you are unable to attend a required parent involvement event or would like to participate in your child’s classroom in another way, we encourage you to take part in our mystery reader program. You simply sign up with your child’s classroom teacher for a time to come to class and read a story. You and the teacher work together to find a book that will be appropriate for the class. We do not tell students when a family member is coming to read; we simply announce we will have a “Mystery” reader. The suspense and the surprise is part of the fun! This is a great way for our students to hear a variety of reading styles.

5.) **Classroom Volunteer**

You are always welcome to volunteer in the classroom. We love to have parents participate in our program! Please be sure to talk with your child’s classroom teacher before you volunteer. This way he/she can find ways for you to contribute to the classroom and ensure it doesn’t interfere with your child’s independence. We do ask that you wait until after the first month of school to volunteer, to help children learn the school routine and adjust to separation.

Background Check Notice:

Safety of our students is our top priority. In order to ensure the safety of students, the district conducts background checks on all employees and volunteers who work with students. If you wish to volunteer in the classroom or for a field trip, you will be required to complete a background check. Please contact your child's teacher or the Early Childhood Coordinator to complete the paperwork for a background check. * *Please allow 2 days to conduct the background check.*

Health & Safety of Children

Immunization Records: Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs require a child's immunization records or signed notarized statement of parental objections to immunization be submitted **within 30 days of admission into the program.**

Illness: *Please continue to conduct personal health screenings on your child each day prior to coming to school.*

For the protection of all children, a child **must be kept home** if they show any of the following symptoms:

- If your child has a **fever of 100 degrees** or more they need to stay home for 24 hours **after** their temperature has returned to normal, without fever reducing medication (such as Tylenol or other medications).
- If your child has an unexplained rash, excessive nasal discharge, or discharge from eyes or ears.
- If your child has **vomited or has diarrhea**, he/she must stay home until **24 hours after** the last episode.
- If your child has head lice, they cannot return to preschool until they have been treated and are free of eggs and lice.
- If your child has an infectious disease they must stay home until they are no longer contagious.

Teacher Determined: If the classroom teacher or coordinator determines that a child is unable to participate in the daily activities, the parent will be called to pick up the child from the classroom in order to promote health and safety for all students and staff members.

Communicable Diseases

When a child is in our care and has been medically diagnosed with a reportable communicable disease, we will notify the appropriate health authorities and follow their recommendations to provide information to parents of all exposed children. The school will notify parents of exposed children on the same day or within 24 hours of confirmed diagnosis.

When a child becomes ill at Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool or Enrichment Programs, the child's parents or guardians will be notified and they will be isolated from other children, under the supervision of a teacher, school nurse, or administrative staff.

Notifying Staff of Child Illness/ Absences

Please report any illnesses to the preschool staff immediately. You can call the school at 320-398-7700 (ext. 2802). Please also email the Preschool & Enrichment staff directly. This helps us ensure the safety and know the whereabouts of all students.

Please note: If your child is on an Early Learning Scholarship, please be aware State regulations require regular attendance. If your child misses 10 consecutive days or a total of 20 school days, they may lose their scholarship funding.

Care of Ill or Injured Children

If your child becomes ill or injured while at school they will be isolated from other children under the supervision of a teacher, school nurse, or administrative staff. You or your designated emergency contact will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. Until you arrive, your child will be monitored and provided comfort.

Medication

Prescription medications will only be administered with written parental and written physician instructions from the child's licensed health care provider. A medication form will also need to be present in the child's file. For medications which are to be given long term, we will need an Individual Child Care plan signed by the parent and the child's licensed health care provider. The school nurse handles all medication storage and administration. You can contact the school nurse to obtain a copy of the appropriate paperwork to have on file for medication administrations or procedures regarding a child's medical condition.

Please note: **NO over the counter medication** (*cough medicine, cough drops, Tylenol, etc.*) will be administered by school staff, unless required by a physician and accompanied by a physician's order, with parent signature. Do not send these items with your child (including cough drops) as they will not be allowed to consume the items.

Fire, Tornado, and Lockdown Drills

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are conducted in the Preschool classrooms in accordance with the Elementary schedule.

No Cell Phones Please

We ask that you please turn off your cell phone when participating in your child's Preschool class and activities. This is a special time to spend focusing on your child.

Field Trips

As part of the Preschool curriculum, children will have the opportunity to participate in field trips outside of the classroom. A field trip permission form indicating the purpose and destination of the field trip will be sent home with each child prior to the field trip. Parents are required to sign this form giving their child permission to participate in the field trip. Staff members will take along emergency information of each child (including phone numbers to contact parents), any necessary student medications, and a first aid kit.

Photographs & Publicity

Photographs of children participating in Preschool and the Enrichment Program may occasionally appear on the program's website, Facebook page, in the newspaper, magazines, brochures, and other public materials. If you do not want your child photographed, you are required to complete the student media section on your emergency form.

No Pets, Please

Because classrooms are used by many children during the week, allergies to pets can pose problems in another class. To keep all children safe, we ask families not to bring pets into the building for show and tell or any other reason.

Birthday / Celebrations / Holidays:

Occasionally when students celebrate their birthdays or other special occasions they want to bring a special snack to school to share. If you choose to provide something for a celebration, please be mindful of the District's Wellness Policy and ensure what you send is aligned with the snack guidelines. The district wellness policy handout is available from your classroom teacher or the Early Childhood Coordinator.

Behavior Guidance

Kimball Area Play and Learn Preschool & Enrichment Programs know each child is unique. We strive to understand the exceptional development of each child and guide their learning process in a safe and positive manner. The core of our program focuses on developing positive and effective student learning experiences and assisting students in building strong community relationships. We believe in guiding children by focusing their attention on various learning experiences and encouraging them to problem solve and work together. We encourage students to be independent, responsible, see the logical consequence of their actions, and be able to regulate their emotions and feelings appropriately.

The teachers at Kimball Area Play and Learn Preschool & Enrichment Programs will model appropriate behavior and communication to help children learn what is expected of them. Occasionally, it may be necessary for a child to experience temporary loss of privilege or activity as a consequence of misbehavior. Our intent is to provide all students with a positive and safe learning environment in which children and teachers, as well as equipment, materials, and the property of others are equally respected.

Persistent Challenging Behavior

Persistent challenging behavior is a behavior that requires an increase of teacher time/assistance and does not change. The teacher will document the behavior and responses to it in order to develop a plan to address the behavior with the family and coordinator. Consultations with other teachers or professionals may be needed to ensure a positive outcome for everyone.

Kimball Area Early Childhood Staff

Kimball Area Play & Learn Preschool and Enrichment Programs are staffed by licensed early childhood educators and experienced and trained teacher assistants and paraprofessionals. The program is supervised by the Early Childhood Coordinator and Community Education Director.

Superintendent

Erik Widvey: erik.widvey@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 77700 ext. 1322

Community Education Director

Celest Stang: celest.stang@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 7700 ext. 1112

Early Childhood Coordinator

Kate Simon: kate.simon@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2802

Preschool Teacher

Elizabeth Mayer: elizabeth.mayer@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2702

Preschool Teacher

Jenny Power: jenny.power@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2703

Enrichment Program

Alicia Fenske: alicia.fenske@kimball.k12.mn.us

(320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2702

Preschool Handbook Acknowledgement

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Preschool Class Section: _____

Please be sure that you have read and understand ALL policies. If you have any questions please contact the Early Childhood Coordinator at (320) 398 – 7700 ext. 2802 or via email: kate.simon@kimball.k12.mn.us.

Please sign this page acknowledging you understand the policies in this handbook and you agree to follow them. Return this page to the Early Childhood Staff at Preschool Orientation.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____