

Deer Park Handbook 2026-27

YOUR CHILD AND OUR SCHOOL

At Deer Park Teaching and Learning Center (DPTLC), we are dedicated to children and the fulfillment of their needs. By treating each child with love, respect and understanding, the teachers will promote these very qualities within the children. We offer an enriched environment that encourages the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of our children. We strive to stimulate each child's development of a positive self-image, a curiosity for learning, social skills, problem solving techniques, and a sense of fun and adventure, while recognizing and encouraging diversity in ability and interests.

Each child will be encouraged to enjoy learning with others through play. We believe that play is vital to a child's learning; it is the way each child organizes and makes sense of their world. Through play experiences children learn to build and maintain relationships; they learn to trust others, which enhances their emotional maturity. Both classes plan appropriate activities through weekly themes. Our program divides the children by age, with the two and three-year-old class in one room and the older three, four and five-year-old class in another, focusing more on prekindergarten skills. Each day your child will learn and grow in our engaging and enriching program!

DCFS LICENSING

Deer Park Teaching and Learning Center is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). We are also required to meet regulations of the Lake County Health Department, the State Fire Marshal, and local fire departments.

PARENT GROUP

The Deer Park Parent Group provides fundraising and support opportunities for the DPTLC program. This group is composed of parents of currently enrolled children. Participation is voluntary.

FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

It can be difficult for a child to separate from their parent(s), whether it is a new school experience or not. A parent(s) set an important example by showing their children that they approve of our center, our teachers, and the positive experience that we provide. When saying goodbye to your child, be kind but straightforward. Let your child know you are leaving and go! Set a limit and make it non-negotiable. Staying five more minutes repeatedly at the request of your child will make this transition more difficult. Please feel free to call or email to check on your child... any day and always!

DAILY ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Children must be signed in and out each day by their parent or guardian; also, the child's arrival and departure at the center must be acknowledged by a staff member. Drop-off and pick-ups are in Deer Park, areas in the high school, at the courtyard attached to Deer Park, or on the playground. You must send an authorization note on days when your child is to be picked by someone other than a parent/guardian or send an email in

advance. Only individuals authorized in writing will be able to pick up your child. This individual must present a valid ID. No individual (related or unrelated) under the age of eighteen will be permitted to pick up your child.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule is adjusted to accommodate the high school child development students when they teach in the center and is subject to change at the discretion of the Director.

AM SCHEDULE

7:00-8:15	Drop off/ breakfast/ free play
8:15-9:30	Preschool activities (small motor, art, sensory)
9:30-10	Clean up and circle time
10-10:30	Morning snack/Bathroom
10:30-11:30	Outdoor/ large motor activities
11:30-11:45	Circle time
11:45-12:15	Lunch

PM SCHEDULE: 2-3's

12:30-2:30	Nap/ rest time
2:30-3:45	Snack/ Free time activities
3:45-4:00	Circle time
4:00-4:40	Outdoor/ large motor activities
4:40-5:00	Free play/ pick up

PM SCHEDULE: older 3's,4,5's

12:00-1:00	Free play/ Prekindergarten activities
1:00-2:30	Nap/ rest time
2:30-3:45	Snack/ Prekindergarten activities
3:45-4:00	Circle time
4:00-4:40	Outdoor/ large motor activities
4:40-5:00	Free play/ pick up

D.H.S. CHILD DEVELOPMENT PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

All children participate in the Deerfield High School Child Development Preschool program; high school students enrolled in Child Development present theme-related activities that focus on pre-math, pre-science, pre-reading, social, and large and small motor skills under the supervision of the Child Development teacher and DPTLC staff. These experiences with our "high school friends" truly enhance our curriculum and provide a unique learning environment for our preschoolers and high schoolers alike.

CLOTHING

Please bring your child to the center in play clothes. School is fun and having fun often means getting dirty! Weather permitting (twenty-five degrees or above), we will play outside. It is important to dress your child appropriately for this experience. On your child's first day, please bring a change of clothing for the season. Children should be prepared with several changes of clothes, including socks and shoes if possible. **Please label all clothing, including outer garments.**

SUPPLIES FROM HOME

Required: Parent(s) must provide a blanket, travel-sized pillow, pillowcase, wipes and at least a one-week supply of diapers for their child, if needed. Blankets and pillowcases will be sent home weekly for washing.

At times we will have share days when the kids can bring special items from home to share, otherwise please leave toys at home! **Please label all of these items before bringing them to school.**

If your child currently uses a sippy cup and/or pacifier at home, we will support the transition of your child to a regular cup and help their needs as the year goes on.

*Please note that toy guns, war toys, or toys of destruction will not be allowed in the center.

ILLNESS

The following guidelines have been developed by DCFS and/or the Health Department to help prevent children from contracting or spreading infections. These guidelines include symptoms for Covid-19. If there is a case of Covid-19 at school, the families will be notified. We will be following protocol set by DCFS and the CSC realizing that they are subject to change. Children with any of these symptoms cannot attend the center:

- Temperature equal to or exceeding 101 degrees, if taken under the arm; one degree will be added to the reading.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Any suspicious continuous rash.
- Sore throat/strep throat
- Profuse nasal discharge. (Unless diagnosed as part of allergies)
- Croupy cough. (Unless diagnosed as part of allergies)
- Pink eye, including but not limited to discharge or glassy eyes.
- Developing illness, as demonstrated by a lack of interest in or inability to participate in typical activities.
- Any distress requiring one-on-one care, including unusual behavior.

If you keep your child home for any of the above symptoms, they must be symptom free for 24 hours. If they are sent home for one or any of the above symptoms, they may not return to school the following day. Please do not send your child to school after they have taken a dose of Tylenol/Motrin/fever reducer, as this may mask a fever or other symptoms of illness. If your child will be absent due to illness, please notify the center by calling (224) 632-3380. In order to help us track illnesses, please be prepared to report all symptoms (i.e. time and degree of fever, time of last dose of medication, etc.) Parent(s) will receive notification when their child comes into contact with a reportable, communicable disease as designated by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

MEDICATION

We will administer prescription medication to a child upon a parent's completion of a Medication Consent form, depending upon what the medication is. Prescription medication must be in the original container with a child-proof cap, dated with the physician's name, name of medication, dosage, storage instructions. Medications will be stored out of reach of children in the classroom or in the kitchen refrigerator (if needed).

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

In case of serious illness or injury requiring immediate care, the appropriate medical service will be contacted, including, but not limited to first aid care by a caregiver, the Deerfield High School on-site nurse, private physician, clinic, paramedic, or hospital.

PARENT VISITS/PARTICIPATION

Parents are a welcome addition to any activity in our program! Parent(s) can observe their child at any time through the observation windows into each classroom.

VOLUNTEERS

Deer Park welcomes volunteers once they have gone through a background check and completed other required DCFS documents.

BIRTHDAYS/ SPECIAL SNACKS

We encourage you to share your child's birthday with us at the center! Children with summer birthdays may wish to have a "half-year" celebration. On other important occasions, such as the birth of a new sibling, a child may wish to celebrate at school. DCFS requires all food brought in to be **store bought and in its original unopened package**. PLEASE NOTE: Packages cannot be opened to remove items (such as cupcakes from a large box) unless each item is individually sealed (such as granola bars or yogurt). If your child's birthday snack arrives at school with packaging opened, we will unfortunately not be able to serve it. Please take note of any classroom allergies by speaking with a teacher first before bringing the snack.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

No formal religious instruction or observance will be included in the curriculum. Crafts and activities may include traditional holiday topics, not of a religious nature. All community holidays will be recognized.

FOOD

DPTLC provides nutritionally balanced lunches catered by the Quest Food Service, two snacks, and an optional breakfast. The food is prepared under the supervision of a food server who is licensed by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Our menus meet or surpass the nutritional requirements set by DCFS and the Health Department.

TUITION

Tuition is paid monthly and is due on the 20th of each month. Our tuition is split evenly over 11 payment months, August to June. When your child is enrolled at Deer Park, 11 equal tuition payments are required whether or not your child is in attendance. Tuition payments will not be adjusted for vacation, sickness, holiday, or inclement weather.. Payment in full is due for all periods of absences. Payments to Township High School District 113 or Deer Park can be made in person or mailed to DPTLC, 1959 N. Waukegan Rd., Deerfield, IL 60015. A late payment fee of \$40.00 will be charged for tuition received after the due date. August tuition is due by July 20th and September tuition is due by August 20th, etc. Repeated late payment and/or failure to pay tuition or fees may result in dismissal from the program.

LATE PICK UP FEES

The following late fees will be charged after 5 p.m., according to the classroom clock:

First occurrence:	\$10 any time in the first 5 minutes and \$1 per minute thereafter
Second occurrence:	\$20 any time in the first 5 minutes and \$2 per minute thereafter

Third occurrence:	\$30 any time in the first 5 minutes and \$3 per minute thereafter
Fourth occurrence:	\$40 any time in the first 5 minutes and \$4 per minute thereafter

Repeated late pick up may result in dismissal from the program.

EMERGENCY PLAN

In the event of an emergency, the staff will implement the necessary safety procedures. The director will consult with the building safety team (Head of Security, principal, assistant principals, and building manager) in the event of a weather, security, or other emergency. The safety of all Deer Park children is our priority. During a crisis, your child will remain safe with a staff member until you arrive. When all the children are safe and secure, parents will be contacted when appropriate. All parents will be enrolled in the high school Emergency Contact System which will distribute emergency information as needed. Staff working in the building may assist with phone calls home. **Please help us to promptly notify you by updating your Emergency Contact form when any information changes.** Emergency school closings are dictated by District 113's decision whether or not to close. If Deerfield High School closes due to weather or other emergency, Deer Park will also be closed. We do not offer refunds or make up days when we have an emergency closing. The following additional safety procedures are required by DCFS:

- Fire evacuation drills are performed monthly.
- Tornado drills are performed twice a year.
- Lock down drills are performed once a month.
- The Red Door is always locked. Key code is given to Deer Park parents.

COMMUNITION

Tuition notices, newsletters, illness notices and other parent reminders will be issued electronically. You may email the center director at kschmidt@dist113.org. Teachers will email parents as well. We use the app Lillio to communicate daily happenings with the children. Parents will receive an email inviting them to join the app when they become a Deer Park parent. Notes to parents will also be sent through the app.

DISCIPLINE

Our primary purpose is to ensure the safety of our children. The goal is to create an environment which allows each child to develop self-control and to assume responsibility for their own behavior. We:

- anticipate and minimize situations which may result in discipline problems.
- communicate behavioral expectations in age-appropriate language.
- acknowledge positive behavior on an ongoing basis.
- redirect negative behavior and give children alternatives and choices.
- set appropriate limits in a calm and respectful manner so that children are never humiliated.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING CONCERNS FROM PARENTS

We value daily communication between parents and DPTLC staff. Should a concern arise, please observe the following procedures. If the problem is not resolved at the initial step, parents should proceed to the next step.

STEP 1 The parent addresses their concern directly with the teacher.

STEP 2 The parent, teacher, and center director meet to discuss the issue.

STEP 3 The parent and center director meet to discuss the issue and to determine the next course of action.

DISMISSAL

There may be occasions when the school program is not able to meet the specific needs of a child or parent. Circumstances that would necessitate dismissal include:

- Behavior which endangers the health and safety of other children or themselves.
- Repeated late payment and/or failure to pay tuition or fees.
- Parent(s)' refusal to adhere to school policy.
- A child who is not ready to enter a group situation at the present time.
- Any other situation in which your child's attendance in our program is not in their best interest.

Dismissals with two weeks' notice will be at the discretion of the Director.

PESTICIDE POLICY

Deerfield High School has a long tradition of maintaining a safe and clean environment for its students and staff. Our facility is regulated and visited frequently by the State of Illinois Regional Office of Education and the Lake County Board of Health. At certain times during the year pesticides are applied as part of the maintenance of our physical education and athletic fields. On occasion, spot applications of pesticides are performed inside the building, such as in the case of a bee's nest or a minor ant problem. Regular spraying is not part of the procedure. Applicators are state certified, and all applications are made during unoccupied times, either late evening or early morning. Anyone wishing to receive written notification of any pesticide application should contact the DHS Building Manager at (224) 632- 3031.

**DEER PARK TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER
2026-27 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

HOURS OF OPERATION

Deer Park is open from 7:00 am-5:00 pm Monday through Friday. **We will open on Monday, August 10th, 2026 and close on June 4th, 2027.**

The center will be closed on all the following days:

September 7	Labor Day
September 21	Yom Kippur
October 12	Columbus Day
November 3	Election Day
November 11	Veteran's Day (staff in-service)
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Break
December 21-January 1	Winter Break- resume on 1/4/27
January 18	Martin Luther King's Birthday
February 15	Presidents' Day
March 1	Pulaski Day
March 23-27	Spring Break-(resume on 3/30/37)
May 31	Memorial Day
June 4	Last day of school

By signing below, you agree to abide by our Deer Park Teaching and Learning Center policies and procedures as outlined in this parent handbook. We believe that parent involvement is a critical component of any successful childcare program. Thank you for your ongoing cooperation, service, and ideas.

I HAVE READ THE ATTACHED DEER PARK TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER PARENT HANDBOOK AND ACCEPT THIS AGREEMENT WITH ALL OF THE FOLLOWING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS DEFINED:

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| Your Child and our School | Birthdays/ Special Snacks |
| DCFS Licensing | Religious Observances |
| Parent Group | Food |
| First Week of School | Tuition |
| Daily Arrival and Departure Procedures | Late Fees |
| Daily Schedule | Waiting List |
| D.H.S. Child Development Preschool Program | Emergency Plan |
| Clothing | Email |
| Supplies from Home | Discipline |
| Illness | Procedures for Handling Concerns from Parents |
| Medication | Dismissal |
| Emergency Medical Care | Pesticide Policy |
| Parent Visits/Participation | |
| Volunteers | |
| Review of calendar dates | |

_____ PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
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_____ PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
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