

Little Cardinals  
Preschool &  
Early Learning  
Academy  
Parent Handbook



2024-2025

## **Purpose**

The LCP (Little Cardinals Preschool) program and the ELA (Early Learning Academy) program are located in the German Valley Grade School. These programs promote and challenge the emotional, social, physical and intellectual development of young children in a positive environment. The programs meet the needs of children and their families of varying abilities as well as diverse cultural, linguistic and economic backgrounds.

We provide active, hands-on experiences, which enhance growth according to each child's age and stage of development. Involvement with parents and families occurs in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation. Our goal is to better prepare students for a successful future.

## **Eligibility**

The programs serve preschool-age children and their families. Eligibility is determined after a child has participated in a preschool screening and a parent questionnaire has been completed. The results are reviewed by the Early Childhood Team and a placement recommendation is made. Children may qualify for one of two programs, either the free, Early Learning Academy, or the tuition-funded, Little Cardinals Preschool, program. All Little Cardinal Preschool students MUST be fully potty trained before the first day of school and must be 3 years of age on or before September 1 of the start of the school year.

## **Potty Trained**

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following.

1. Be able to tell an adult they have to go potty before they have to go.
2. Be able to pull down underwear and pants and get them back up without assistance.
3. Be able to wipe themselves after using the toilet.
4. Be able to wash and dry their hands.
5. Be able to remain dry during a 90 minute rest time.

More than one accident in a week, students will need to stay out of school for two weeks and must return potty trained.

## **Screening Information**

Children who are ages 2 ½ to 5 years MUST participate in preschool screenings. Screenings are done periodically throughout the school year. You must show two documents as proof residency at the screening, such as a utility bill, driver's license, etc. Please call German Valley Grade School, 815-362-2279, for the next available screening date.

## **Registration**

Parents must register their child by going to the district website at [www.fvdistrict221.org/](http://www.fvdistrict221.org/). Under the Quick Links menu, choose New Student enrollment and complete. You will then receive an email with your Skyward login information. After you receive this, you will be able to log into Skyward and complete your child's registration. All students must have a certified copy of their birth certificate issued from the courthouse, a current physical including up-to-date immunization records available at the time of registration.

## **Little Cardinals Preschool & Early Learning Academy Program Schedule**

The programs will follow the calendar of the Forrestville Valley School District regarding vacations, holidays, snow days, and emergency dismissals. Additional dates may be added for professional development and Early Learning Academy parent interaction days. Please check the Forrestville Valley School District's website at <http://www.fvdistrict221.org> for information about classroom activities, important dates, photos and additional information. Please notify your child's caregivers of any important dates.

### **Early Learning Academy**

The Early Learning Academy tuition-free classes are in session, 5-day per week Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 11:50 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. Early Learning Academy students may enroll in the LCP tuition program the other half of their school day pending review of students' needs and space availability.

### **Little Cardinals Preschool**

The Little Cardinals Preschool tuition program is offered as a full day preschool from 8:00 a.m. - 2:20 p.m. or as a morning session preschool from 8:00 -10:30 a.m. Little Cardinals Preschool attendance options are as follows:

- Monday, Wednesday, Friday full days.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays full days.
- Monday through Friday full or half days.

Early Learning Academy students may enroll in the LCP, tuition program the other half of their school day pending availability and that student needs can be met. Students must be fully potty trained. See *Potty Trained Section*.

### **Waiting List**

Once classes are filled to capacity, children will be placed on a waiting list. There is no fee to be on the waiting list. There is no guarantee that a position will become available, and students with the most needs will be served first. Our Little Cardinals capacity is 15 per class and Early Learning Academy is 20 per class.

### **Tuition and Fees**

There is no tuition or fees associated with Early Learning Academy.

Full Day and Morning Session **Little Cardinals Preschool:**

<b>PROGRAM OPTIONS</b>	<b>ANNUAL TUITION</b>	<b>MONTHLY TUITION</b>	<b>AVERAGE DAILY TUITION</b>	<b>REGISTRATION FEE</b>
5-Day Full Days	\$3,240	\$360	\$18.00	\$75
5-Day Mornings	\$2,700	\$300	\$15.00	\$75
3-Day Full Days	\$2,160	\$240	\$20.00	\$75
2-Day Full Days	\$1,440	\$160	\$20.00	\$75

Tuition is based on nine months, not days attended each month.

- \$75 fee is due at time of Registration. This fee is non-refundable.
- Monthly tuition payments are due by the 1st of each month beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> and ending April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Tuition is charged for each month the student is enrolled. Payments will be prorated accordingly if enrollment begins after the first day of school.

### **Payment Options**

1. Checks are to be made payable to Forrestville Valley School District, and may be sent to school with your child. A receipt will be returned with your child.
2. E~funds is also available. This allows you to pay by Credit Card as well as set up an automatic payment every month. Please contact the German Valley office for instructions.

Any late tuition will result in a fee of \$15.00 if payment is not received by tenth of the month. After thirty days, the child may be excluded from attendance until the account is brought up to date.

### **Transportation**

**Early Learning Academy:** Transportation is provided to and from school for the 5-day Early Learning Academy program. There is no fee for transportation. Children participating in the Little Cardinals Preschool program for the all day option will be responsible for transportation to or from the LCP session.

**Little Cardinal Preschool:** Shuttle transportation **ONLY** will be provided to and from Forreston Grade School and German Valley Grade School. This is included in the cost of tuition. However, please note there is **NO TRANSPORTATION** option for your child to be picked up and dropped off **at home** for Little Cardinal Preschool.

In order to make the bus ride safe for all students, we ask that you keep these rules in mind.

- Be consistent with pick up and drop off plans.
- Be ready to board the bus when it arrives.
- No food or drink on the bus for any reason.
- No toys on the bus unless it is your child's Show & Tell day. All toys should remain in their backpacks.

***An adult must be visible to the bus driver before he/she can let any student off the bus.***

School staff will walk students to and from the bus each day.

If your child is **NOT** going to be riding the bus for any reason please contact the German Valley Grade School (815-362-2279) as soon as possible, so the bus driver may be notified.

### **Building Policy**

In order to keep our building the safest place for your child, all doors will be locked. If you are visiting the school you must sign in at the office.

## **Snack**

Each day the children receive a snack and milk. Please notify the classroom teacher if there are any food allergies or restrictions. Early Learning Academy snacks are provided by the program. Little Cardinals Preschool snacks are provided by parent donation.

## **Health Policy**

***If your child has been sick within the past 24 hours, (this includes a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea) they should be kept home.*** Children must be fever free, without medication for twenty-four hours before returning to school. If your child is exposed to a communicable disease in school you will be notified as required. Please notify staff if your child has been exposed outside of school. Should a child become sick at school parents will be notified. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency numbers you provided at registration will be used. If your child is sick and will not be at school please call German Valley Grade School so that staff may be informed.

## **Dress Code**

Please make sure that your child is dressed in comfortable play clothes and tennis shoes. Weather permitting we will be outside each day. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather. Remember to send your child to school each day with their backpack and folder. This is for your child to bring items to school as well as getting papers home.

Each child should have a complete change of clothes at school in case of any spills or accidents. This should include: short sleeve shirt, shorts, socks, underwear, long sleeve shirt and pants. Please put these items in a large resealable or plastic grocery bag with their name on it. **If your child is part of the ELA program and is not potty trained**, please send a package of diapers/pull-ups and wipes to be kept at school.

## **Classroom Rules**

- Be a good listener and follow directions.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Walk inside the school.
- Use an inside voice when inside.
- Be kind to others.
- Clean-up after yourself.

## **Discipline Policy**

1. Speak to the child and explain why the behavior is not acceptable and help the child find better ways to solve problem situations in an appropriate manner.
2. Take a break or redirect the child from a problem situation or activity to another.
3. The teacher will ask for the parent's help in talking to the child to reinforce school rules.
4. Occasionally a conference will be set up with parents and school staff to develop a plan to improve behavior.

## **Kindergarten Transition**

Students turning five by or on September 1<sup>st</sup> are age appropriate for Kindergarten. The following are in place for a smooth transition for students, parents and teachers.

- ELA student's progress is tracked throughout their preschool years using the Illinois Early Learning & Development Standards <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Early-Learning-Standards.aspx> and the Teaching Strategies Gold online portfolio.
- LCP student's progress is tracked using the Early Childhood Basic Skills Checklist twice per year.
- End of the year performance levels will be provided to the kindergarten teacher to assist in planning future instruction.
- Students visit the kindergarten classrooms and get to know the teachers.
- Families are invited to set up a visit with a kindergarten teacher.

## **General Information**

- Student placement recommendations will be made by the Early Childhood Team based on the student's needs.
- Class sizes are limited.
- The staff will file accident reports when students are injured and parents will be notified.
- Adults bringing a child to school must wait for a teacher before leaving.
- Conferences can be scheduled when district conferences are held or at your request.
- Other services may be available for children who qualify.

## **Contact Information**

German Valley Grade School: 815-362-2279

Heather Politsch, Director of Early Learning: [hpolitsch@fvdistrict221.org](mailto:hpolitsch@fvdistrict221.org)

Little Cardinals Preschool, Kerrie Peterson: [kpeterson@fvdistrict221.org](mailto:kpeterson@fvdistrict221.org)

Little Cardinals Preschool, Raquel Quenzer: [rquenzer@fvdistrict221.org](mailto:rquenzer@fvdistrict221.org)

Early Learning Academy, Amanda Korf: [akorf@fvdistrict221.org](mailto:akorf@fvdistrict221.org)