

OPEN

HOURS OF OPERATION: 6:00am- 6:00pm MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

SERVING AGES 6 weeks to 10 years

LETTER TO THE PARENTS: Thank You for choosing Prodigy Preparatory Academy as a partner in your child's care. To keep you informed of activities, notes of interest etc. we publish a newsletter periodically throughout the year, and post announcements on the "Parent Board" by the sign-in area and around the center. Please view these regularly as important center issues are addressed in them. We hope this handbook will serve our families with an overview of our programming and our policies and procedures in the months and years to come. Any additional questions can be directed to the office or the faculty at any time.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Our Purpose at Prodigy Preparatory is to provide a caring and safe environment concurrent an educational component for children in their parent's absence.

Our Mission: To give parents the opportunity to place their children in an educational environment as opposed to a typical childcare center. Prodigy Prep Academy will combine learning and recreation through an established individualistic curriculum to produce creative thinking, problem-solving abilities, and topic(language, math, and science, etc.) comprehension.

Our Curriculum: Is based upon the theory that the first five years of life are critical in terms of human development because it is at this time where there are "windows of opportunities" for learning. Or rather periods that a child will acquire, or not- unfortunately, certain abilities which are needed to function as an intelligent, emotionally secure, and well-rounded adult. Our curriculum will cater to the window period of each developmental stage of your child while reinforcing positive moral and ethical behavioral expectations needed for healthy societal contribution & adjustment.

Our Vision: Prodigy Preparatory Academy will produce children who will meet and/or exceed traditional intellectual standards(prodigies) and are primed for entrance into accelerated classes when graduated to elementary grades.

Our Values: We maintain the highest standard of professional and ethical conduct in our programs, striving for constant quality improvement of our facility, our staff, our programs, and curriculum. Prodigy Preparatory is dedicated to the promotion of human dignity, cultural sensitivity, collaborative relationships with the parents and the community, and inspiring excellence in their children.

FACULTY and STAFF

Our staff strives to provide quality care and educational services to enhance the physical and emotional growth of our children. Our teachers meet or exceed the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services requirements. Teachers are required to attend in-services and workshops to keep abreast of the latest early childhood developmental techniques and issues.

PPA's Food Service managers are certified in Food Service and Sanitation by the State of Illinois to assure quality. Additional education in early childhood nutrition aids them in following DCFS standards, while providing appealing menus.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission:

Enrollment in PPA will be based upon:

1. Completed enrollment form & Food Program application
2. Parent signature on all necessary forms
3. Bi-Annual Health Exam completed and signed by Physician
4. Availability of space in appropriate classroom
5. Payment of fees, according to written policy .i.e. Registration fees
6. Willingness of Parent or Guardian to be in "partnership" with the Center and Staff **Dismissal**

Dismissal will be based upon:

1. Repeated acts by parents/ children, considered to endanger the health/safety of others
2. The Centers program does not meet the individual needs of child and/or parent(s)
3. Demonstrated paucity of involvement by parent(s)/guardian
4. Failure to keep account current in accordance with written policy

Children exhibiting: Excessive, chronic biting, temper tantrums (hitting, kicking, spitting, scratching, throwing objects, pushing), and or inappropriate use of language, will lead to the following:

1. **first offense-** corrective action, parent notified by note, in person, or phone
2. **second offense-** corrective action, conference with parent(s)
3. **third offense-** suspension of child
4. **fourth offense-** dismissal of child

EXTREME CASES: At the discretion of the Administration/Owner, if the children fail to improve or parents fail to show interest or cooperation in solving the problem, under the above procedure, this process can be eliminated and care terminated without prior notice. At which time, the center will refund money due, if account has credit, to the primary parent.

REGISTRATION

A nonrefundable registration fee of \$50.00 per child is due upon application of enrollment for all new students. Child(ren) receive a Prodigy T-shirt, which is included in the registration fee.

A \$25.00 registration fee is due on June 1 st for all Crocodile & Tiger Summer Campers.

Students who are absent for three (3) or more consecutive weeks (including summer vacation) will be required to pay the full registration fee and submit a continuation of enrollment form.

PAYMENT OF FEES

Weekly Tuition All fees are payable on Friday for the upcoming week. Tuition may be dropped in the mailbox located by the front sign-in desk or in the office. Tuition must be kept current. Tuition is considered past due at 9:30am Monday. A delinquent account will result in suspension of services until the account is brought to date. A \$5.00 per day late fee will be assessed for all late payments. Staffing is determined by scheduled enrollment. Therefore, no fees will be refunded for days absent.

SUBSIDY PROGRAMS

Subsidy Co-payments are accepted monthly and due on the first of every month. A \$5.00 per day late fee will be charged to delinquent accounts.

An approval letter from the subsidy department is due upon registration. Without prior approval tuition must be paid in cash until approval status is confirmed from the subsidy department. Upon confirmation, Prodigy will inform parent to cease weekly payment and refund tuition paid in cash less subsidy monthly co-payment after payment is received from subsidy department.

Complete copies of subsidy applications and redeterminations must be turned in to administration for record purposes. Applications and redeterminations should be copied, turned into office & mailed at least 2-3 weeks prior to registration/renewal in order to obtain approval confirmation in sufficient time and avoid subsidy cancellation,

Failure to follow the above procedure will result in required cash out-of-pocket weekly tuition payments from the parent until approval is confirmed by the subsidy department.

LATE FEES/NSF FEES PPA closes **promptly** at 6pm. Children not picked up by that time will be on "overtime". The Late Fee charge is \$1 per MINUTE per child and must be paid in CASH to the TEACHER on duty at that time. LATE FEES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITH TUITION PAYMENT. IF LATE PAYMENT IS NOT RECEIVED BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS ON THE FRIDAY OF THE WEEK THAT THE FEE IS INCURRED, CHILD WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO CENTER ON FOLLOWING MONDAY.

NSF checks will result in your account being charged \$25 dollars for each occurrence. If two or more payments result in NSF checks, you will be required to pay by cash or money order only.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Illness/Vacation/Schedule Change/Holiday Tuition

There is no charge for a consecutive full weeks (Monday-Friday) absence due to illness, with the required doctor's reentry form. After one week of approved illness, additional full weeks' absences will be discounted at 50% of tuition rate. There will be no credit for partial weeks.

One consecutive week of vacation each academic year & one consecutive week during summer camp period without charge is allowed for year-round students when prior notice of at least two weeks(in writing) is received by the office. If more than one week is to be taken during each period, half a normal week's tuition will be required to hold your child's place. Hold tuition is non-refundable. Vacation allowances can not be rolled over to the next academic year.

No vacation, without charge, is allowed for children who attend summer camp only.

During the period of summer camp, if your child will not be attending PPA, half a normal week's tuition will be required to hold your child's place for the school year. Hold tuition is non-refundable

Switching scheduled days (Pre-Prep Program) is permitted on a **space available** basis. Please call the office, for any change in schedule, whether temporary or permanent. A \$10 administrative fee will be assessed for each occurrence.

No other adjustments of tuition are available.

Conferences & Teacher Availability

Conferences for parents and teachers lead to a better understanding between home and school. A conference with parents is scheduled at the request of parents, teacher, or Administration as necessary

*** Prodigy welcomes and encourages parent involvement and communication. Please feel free to visit our center at anytime. However, in order to avoid disruption of curriculum programs and for the safety of the children, teachers will not be available to conference with parents via phone or in person except between naptime hours 12:15pm - 2:15pm daily, pm pick up, and at scheduled parent/teacher conference meetings. Administration is available at all times in case of emergency.**

Arrival

For your child's safety, parents are required to escort their child into the building, by the doubled doors and into their designated classroom after entering your ID code into the attendance computer at the reception area. **NO DROP OFF IN FRONT OF THE CENTER.FOR SAFETY, CHILDREN SHOULD NOT HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCK CODE TO DOOR OR ID CODE TO SIGN IN.** The teacher should be informed of any medication, required changes in the child's pick-up time, etc. A calm, firm "Good-Bye" and reassurance of your return, after settling your child in the classroom is recommended for your child's adjustment. In order for your child to benefit most from our curriculum and to eliminate disruption of programs in progress, children must arrive by 9am no later than 9:30am. Children who arrive later than 9:30am will not be permitted entrance to the morning session. They will be able to return and participate in our afternoon session at 2:15pm after naptime is completed. Normal tuition rate of the scheduled day still apply. * Staffing is determined by scheduled enrollment. Children must attend on their scheduled days according to their enrollment record. If there is a need to change (switch) those days, it is the responsibility of the primary parent to request that change, if space is available, with Administration.

Departure Only persons who are authorized on the parent consent of release record, by the primary parent, will be able to pick up a child in their parent's/guardian's absence. A current state picture I. D will be required upon release of the child. To avoid costly billing, please make sure enter your I.D. code into the attendance computer and retrieve your child by 6:00pm. Please collect all of your child's papers, art projects, etc. from the classroom. Note: No child will be released to any person other than the responsible parent/guardian on the account without proper identification. If there is to be a change in the person that normally picks up your child or any change in schedule, it is your responsibility to record those changes, prior to that day, on your consent of release form on file in the office. An Administrative fee of \$10 will be assessed for each occurrence. We will not except changes in the form of a phone call. All changes must be in writing by primary parent. The attendance system is an essential part of state licensing, programs, and billing issues. Attendance reports are generated daily for record purposes. Failure to enter ID (sign child in) upon arrival & departure causes administration to manually restructure data in the attendance computer & will result in a fee of \$1.00 per occurrence

Naptime Our naptime is from 12:15-2:15pm daily. According to the State of Illinois each child at our center during that time must rest for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes. After resting a child may engage in quiet activities for the remainder of the time. Cots and sheets are provided and are washed and sanitized weekly. Toys are sanitized daily and washed weekly.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Food Service

We furnish a morning breakfast (9am & 7:30 for school agers during academic year), a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack (2:30pm) to our full day students at (1 1:30am). Half-day preschool students receive am snack only. A short prayer of thanks will be said before meals.

PPA participates in a Food Program sponsored by the Illinois Department of Education. As a participant we are required to produce applications from all families upon registration and a renewal application from all families in June/July.

Prodigy will celebrate your child's birthday- if you request special events, and holidays. Parents who desire should bring commercially made cake, cup cakes, and candy from a store or bakery in properly wrapped & labeled containers, marked with the child's name. Absolutely no home made food, glass or glass-line thermos bottles are allowed.

It is the parent's responsibility to supplement or replace say foods that may be on our menu that must be restricted due to allergies, other medical or religious reasons. Written documentation is required. **No other exceptions with food supplements may be made.** Please consult with your child's teacher or the Director, in advance.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Simple, washable clothing is the best for your child's daily activities at school. Dressed appropriately, our children participate more comfortably in playground activities and messy art projects. We ask that each child is provided with a labeled change of clothing to be left at the center.

For your child's safety and comfort at play, sturdy gymshoes are required. Sandals, jelly shoes, flipflops, or slide-ins are not permitted.

If your child is here through naptime, please bring a small blanket from home. It is to be labeled and taken home each Friday for laundering and returned to the center for the following week,

PLEASE, NO PILLOWS.

Please do not send your child with toys, stuffed animals, and/or expensive clothes, as we will not be responsible if they are lost/broken or stained while at the center. We ask that you label anything that you bring to school.

Discipline

Discipline is usually thought of as "punishment". It actually comes from a Latin word meaning "teaching". Our staff teaches and guides the children, channeling their activities toward SELFCARE, SELF-DIRECTION, SELF-CONTROL, and SELF-ESTEEM.

Students have a responsibility to behave in an appropriate manner. Parents will be informed if their child is having any difficulty. Please keep us informed of any changes at home that may affect your child's behavior at school. Our staff makes every effort to work with parents to resolve the situation in a positive manner. Aggressive physical and verbal behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Teachers will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Teachers will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable. Discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action.

Permissible Methods of Discipline:

For acts of aggression & fighting (i.e., biting, hitting, etc.)

1. Redirection to different activity and/or separation of the children involved.
2. Immediate comfort for the individual who was injured.
3. Care of any injuries sustained of serious nature.
4. Corrective action for the aggressor.
5. If injuries, incident report filled out for the parents of both children involved.
6. Review of adequacy of teacher supervision & appropriateness of facility activities & administrative corrective action if there is a reoccurrence.

Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others and then only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation. In instances where the child is exhibiting a tantrum, the child will be placed in open space so that he/she will not hurt themselves, others, or equipment.

"Rest time" will be used selectively for children over 18 months of age who are disturbing others or at risk of harming themselves. The period of "Rest time" will be one minute for each year of the child's age or just long enough to enable the child to regain control of himself/herself. Use of "Rest time" will be adapted to the developmental level and the usefulness of "Rest time" for the particular child. During "Rest time" the teacher or administration will visually observe the child.

Prohibited Practices

1. Corporal of any type of physical punishment (i.e., hitting, spanking, shaking, etc.)
2. Withdrawal or threat of withdrawal of food, rest, or bathroom opportunities.
3. Abusive, profane, or derogatory language including yelling and belittle.
4. Any form of private/public humiliation including threats of punishment.
5. Any form of emotional abuse, including rejecting, ignoring, isolating, or corrupting a child

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT ISSUES

The administrators and staff are mandated by State of Illinois law to report child abuse and neglect. All observations or suspicions of child abuse and neglect will be immediately reported to the child protective services agency and police no matter where the abuse might have occurred. Administration will call to report suspected abuse or neglect. Within 48 hours of a phone report, the director will file a written report to the child protective services agency.

"Chronic & habitual late pick-ups is a form of abuse/neglect. Prodigy will report excessive tardiness to police and child protective services agency.

***Failure to be available for emergency calls from center and to pick up an ill child from the center within the hour of center contact also warrants as an issue that requires report to the designated agencies. Please make sure your contact numbers, and emergency contacts, are current and up to date to avoid complications of child abuse & neglect reports.

Holiday Closings

PPA will be closed on the following days:

Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day and Friday after
Christmas Day
New Year's Day
Memorial Day
July 4TH

PPA will close at 12pm on Christmas and New Year's Eve unless otherwise announced. We will also close bi-annually for center cleaning, sanitation, & painting. Dates will be announced at least one (1) month prior. Again, full tuition rates apply.

Adhering to these few policies assures the continuation of the quality childcare clients have always received at PRODIGY PREPARATORY ACADEMY.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Statement of Concern

The children's health and safety is of great importance to us at PPA. Students are casually observed on a daily basis for injury, or illness as they enter the classroom. If a questionable situation arises, further screening will be done by Administration or an R.N. We reserve the right to send a child home or temporarily restrict services to any child in the program due to illness or injury. Parents are required to bring children to school bathed and in clean clothing, for the child's well-being and self-esteem.

Illness

A child having any of the symptoms listed below will be isolated, and the parents, or the listed emergency contact if parent not available, called to arrange pick-up for their child.

1. Fever of 100 degrees or higher
2. Rash (other than diaper or heat)
3. Diarrhea
4. Vomiting
5. Suspicion of any communicable disease
6. Any sign of infection-green/yellow discharge from eyes, nose, or mouth

The Illinois State Board of Health requires that a child **must** remain at home for 24 hours before he/she can return to school. This rule protects everyone... you, your child, the other students, and our staff from being exposed needlessly. Parents must provide a current list of phone numbers for themselves and their emergency contacts.

Injuries

If your child becomes injured, first aid will be administered by our qualified staff. In case of extreme emergency, paramedics will be called and the child will be transported to the nearest emergency facility. You will be called immediately. Your signed emergency medical release will aid your child in receiving prompt medical attention. A staff member will stay with your child until a parent arrives. All medical expenses are the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the injured child.

Medications

If your child must receive medication while in our care, the State of Illinois requires that:

1. It must be a personal prescription, filled by a pharmacist
2. Over-the-counter, i.e. rash lotions, decongestants, non-aspirin fever reducers, must be accompanied with doctor's documentation.
3. It must be in its original container, with the child's name, date & direction for use
4. A parent medical consent form must be filled out daily and given to the teacher
5. Medications are to be placed in proper, labeled containers in our kitchen

Emergency Procedures

Fire drills as well as tornado drills are held on a regular basis to familiarize the children with our alarm system and exiting procedures. We are inspected regularly by state and local fire officials.

PPA is also a member of the Emergency Closing Center System. In case some type of emergency arises that would cause the closing of the school, it will be announced on the following radio and television stations:

RADIO	AM	WMAQ 67	FM	US 99	
		WBBM 78		B 96	00
		WGN 720			
TELEVISION		Channel 32			

IF YOU ARE UNSURE IF THE CENTER IS CLOSED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER, PLEASE CALL CENTER BEFORE ARRIVING.

OUR CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS

Each classroom consists of age-appropriate learning centers including Dramatic Play, Art, Fine and Large Motor, Math/Science and Language Arts. Students are encouraged to explore and utilize each of these areas daily. Lesson plans are based upon themes and are always available in the classroom. Activities and projects related to the theme are planned in order to reinforce the lessons offered. Parents are encouraged to look them over so you can share in and continue reinforcement of the lessons on a daily basis. Through cooking, art and learning proper hygiene and talking care of their personal belongings, children gain a sense of accomplishment and self-worth,

Outside activities are scheduled regularly, weather permitting, in our fenced playground. Field Trips are occasionally planned off school grounds to places of interest. A sign-up sheet is posted for each trip, with the amount of admission/bus fee, if any. Parents are always welcome.

Pre-Prep

This program is designed for children whose parents do not need full day care but desire social and educational interaction for them. Pre-Prep is on Monday through Friday, or Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00am-12:00pm each week. Children receive breakfast, lunch and full benefit from the structured curriculum offered in each classroom. Scheduled fieldtrip days may extend hours of care in applicable classes.

Full Day

For those parents needing extended care, this program includes breakfast, lunch, and pm snack. Children are provided with cot and sheet for naptime. Children receive full benefit from the structured learning times throughout the day.

School-Age

Children, Kindergarten through age 10 are provided with a specially designed curriculum, in a semi-structured classroom setting before and after their elementary school hours. Transportation is provided to and from the area schools. Please check in the office for a current list of schools that we serve. Children attend throughout the school year, during their elementary vacations, teacher in-services, etc. This program includes applicable AM/PM meals. **Parents are required to call to report absences to Prodigy so that transportation arrangements can be made. Failure to do so will result in fines to cover cost of unnecessary travel.**

Summer Camp

Our Summer Camp Program is a mixture of learning and exploring which includes trips to nature center, zoo, parks for games and picnics, splash parties, and special craft projects that makes summer "Learning and Fun combined". Children enrolled in any of our programs are welcomed to attend. **School Pictures** Class and individual pictures are taken once a year. These are usually pre-paid packages and are, of course, optional, **Fieldtrips/ Center Events** Prodigy schedules fieldtrips throughout the year. Due to safety precautions trips are limited during the winter season. Scheduled fieldtrips require permission slips in order for children to attend. If a child can not attend the trip for any reason, children will not be admitted to the center until their class returns from their outing due to staff coverage. We also provide center events such as guest speakers, magic shows, fun fairs, Santa Workshop, etc. Occasionally classes may walk to a park in the immediate area **which** does not require a separate permission slip. **Holiday/Summer Programs** Each Year in December **all pre-school and kindergarten** classes present a musical program for **family and** friends. At the end of Summer Camp the Crocodiles also have a program.