Vermilion
Little Anchors Preschool
Parent Program Guide

2026-2027

Vermilion Local School District

Our Commitment:
The student is the focus of every decision we make

The Little Anchors Preschool Program Parent Guide is used with the Vermilion Elementary Student Handbook. The Program Parent Guide and Student Handbook together identify rules and regulations of the Little Anchors Preschool Program.

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STAFF DIRECTORY

Mr. Wes Weaver	Superintendent	440-204-1700
Mr. Justin Klingshirn	Treasurer	440-204-1700
Ms. Brooke Spafford	Preschool Director & School Psychologist	440-204-1703 ext.648
Mr. Matthew Malear	Elementary Principal	440-204-1703
Ms. Breanna Rebman	Elementary Assistant Principal	440-204-1703
Ms. Mia Bohr	Intervention Specialist	440-204-1703
Ms. Kristen Schon	Intervention Specialist	440-204-1703
Ms. Jacqueline Sergent	Intervention Specialist	440-204-1703

Vermilion Little Anchors Preschool
440-240-1703
1285 Douglas St.
Vermilion, Ohio 44089

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Preschool Parent:

On behalf of the Vermilion Board of Education and the entire Vermilion Local Schools staff, I want to welcome you and your child to Little Anchors Preschool! Entering preschool is your child's first educational milestone. While today is your child's first day of school, it is also Vermilion Local Schools first day of commitment to your child and your family, and that commitment is embodied in our vision: Every adult helping every child succeed today, tomorrow, and beyond. Helping every child succeed includes building caring and loving relationships with your child so that he or she is excited to return to school each and every day to spend time with his or her teachers and classmates.

As a parent, you have made an important, and very wise, choice to enroll your child in preschool. Educational research documents that there are few things parents can do that are more impactful for their child's growth and development, in addition to providing a loving and nurturing home environment, than ensuring they have a high-quality preschool experience.

Indeed, the research tells us that the following are the positive outcomes of early childhood education:

- Child care quality has a long-term effect on children's cognitive and socioemotional development through kindergarten and beyond;
- High-quality early childhood education reduces children's timidity and improves attentiveness;
- High-quality early learning programs aimed at children from low-income families help close the achievement gap, increasing IQ scores by up to 10 points;
- Preschool reduced the percentage of children repeating a grade by 15%;
- Preschool lowered the rate of special education placement by 10%;
- Early learning and care increases high school graduation rates by 14%;
- Early language skills, the foundation for reading ability and school readiness, are acquired and built during the first years of life. Children who are exposed to reading during the first years of life are much more likely to learn to read on schedule;
- When a young child enters kindergarten ready for school, there is an 82% chance that child will master basic skills by age 11, compared with a 45% chance for children who are not school ready
    - Source: https://www.ffyf.org/why-it-matters/school-readiness/

So, congratulations on making a great decision for your child and your family! We look forward to getting to know you and your child, having a wonderful relationship with your family, and sharing with you this wonderful beginning to your child's formal education. GO SAILORS!

Sincerely,
Wes Weaver

Superintendent, VLSD

Philosophy

The Little Anchors Preschool Program is committed to providing quality early childhood services to our student and families. We provide developmentally appropriate activities in a safe and nurturing environment. We are a child-centered program that is devoted to meeting each child's unique needs. Our focus is to develop foundational academic and healthy social/emotional skills while helping our families stay engaged in their child's learning.

Preschool children learn best through meaningful play. We strive to provide opportunities for child-directed play that is facilitated by our wonderful staff of teachers and teaching assistants. Our staff provides a variety of opportunities and experiences that help our students explore and grow.

We believe that our families are an integral part of a child's learning experiences. We strongly encourage parents to participate in their child's preschool program. Little Anchors will offer a variety of parent engagement activities with the hope of developing a collaborative approach to your child's education.

Preschool Goals

1. Provide opportunities for child-directed, meaningful play
2. Provide pre-academic, cognitive, & kindergarten readiness skills
3. Develop language and communication skills
4. Develop fine and gross motor skills
5. Develop social-emotional and adaptive behavior skills
6. Provide parent engagement & involvement activities

Vision Statement

Inspiring students to be leaders and life-long learners

Mission Statement

Every adult helping every child succeed today, tomorrow, and beyond!

Commitment Statement

The student is the focus of every decision we make

Values

Personalization
High Expectations
Innovation
Communication
Relationships

Little Anchors Preschool Program--Portrait of a Preschooler

When graduating from the Little Anchors Preschool Program, we aim to have our students kindergarten ready. We differentiate our instruction in order to provide the best support for all levels of learning. Based on program standards, the Early Learning Assessment, and fall kindergarten expectations, the following learning goals are set for students who graduate from our program:

Early Literacy

- **Rhyming**-Says a word that rhymes with a given word
- **Phonemic Awareness**-Identifies beginning letter sounds in some spoken words and the final sounds in some spoken words
- **Letter Recognition**-Identifies at least 10 uppercase and 5 lowercase letters
- **Letter Sounds**-Identifies and produces at least 3 letter sounds
- **Name Recognition**-Identifies own written first name as well as the letters in his/her name

Early Writing/Fine Motor Skills

- **Writing Grasp**-Uses an inconsistent, stable 3 finger grasp
- **Cutting**-Holds scissors correctly and cuts across paper (in half) in a fairly straight forward direction/away from his/her body
- **Writing**-Writes his/her first name

Early Mathematics

- **Rote Counting**-1-20
- **Counts 1:1 correspondence**-to 10
- **Identifying numbers**-1-5
- **Subitizing objects**-1-3 objects
- **Addition with manipulatives**-totals up to five
- **Subtraction with manipulatives**-totals up to five
- **Identifies a variety of shapes:** circle, square, triangle, rectangle, and hexagon

Gross Motor Skills

- Throws a ball overhand
- Able to walk on tiptoes
- Hops on one foot

Social-Emotional/Adaptive Skills

- Expresses wants/needs/thoughts/ideas
- Identifies safe/unsafe behaviors in familiar situations and why
- Identifies and explains the reason behind emotions for themselves & others (I'm happy because ___. He's happy because ___.)
- Demonstrates kindness to others
- Can wait, take-turns, and share with others
- Seeks emotional support and security from familiar adults in challenging situations

- Can follow a three-step direction
- Can understand and follow a classroom routine
- Can understand and follows structure and a set of classroom/safety rules
- Complete personal care tasks (e.g., toileting needs)

Admission Procedures

Admission:
Little Anchors Preschool is located at Vermilion Elementary School and services students from ages 3-5. Students must be 3-years-old by August 1st, 2026 to enroll, and not age-eligible for kindergarten (unless identified as a student with a disability). General education students who are age-eligible for kindergarten are not eligible to enroll in the Little Anchors Preschool Program. Our program services "model peers," general education students, and students with disabilities. "Model peers" are defined as children without delays or disabilities who are integrated and participate along with the special needs students in the integrated preschool program. While benefiting from the preschool experience, these children provide peer interaction and socialization for the preschoolers with special needs. All children learn not only from adults, but also from watching and interacting with other children. Model peers must demonstrate age-appropriate cognitive, language, physical, social/emotional and independent living skills. A screener is completed prior to placement to assess these skill areas.

Participation in the program as a model peer and/or general education student is tuition-based. Students with disabilities do not pay tuition. The Policies and Procedures for the Education of Children with Disabilities allows preschool children with disabilities to attend the Little Anchors Preschool Program at no cost. The school district is responsible for determining a child's eligibility for special education services under these policies.

All families of must pay a non-refundable $50 application/supply fee upon enrollment.

Yearly tuition costs are as follows:

- **5 days: $2,250---$250/month September-May**
- **4 days: $1,800–$200/month September-May**

Monthly payments are due on the first day of the month from September through May.

A completed application and the application/supply fee must be received before a spot will be held for each student.

Open Enrollment:
School administrators carefully monitor each year's class sizes to maintain an appropriate student-teacher ratio. If it is determined that the district will not fill grade levels or specific classes, open enrollment will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applications for these openings will be accepted between May 1st and May 31st. The window will close after May 31st, but if it is determined that there is available space at particular grade levels, open enrollment will reopen for those particular grade levels on July 1st

until capacity at that grade level is full. **Preschool parents will be notified of acceptance no earlier than the third full week of August.**

Enrollment:
Enrollment is accepted for residents of Vermilion Local Schools who meet the eligibility requirements for a preschooler with disabilities. Eligibility is determined based on the Rules for the Education of Preschool Children with Disabilities (Chapter 3301.31). Enrollment for children not meeting the eligibility criteria as a student with a disability is available to Vermilion Local School District residents. Enrollment is available to staff of Vermilion Local Schools District (regardless of disability status).

Preschool spots have limited availability. A spot in the preschool is not secured until you have completed all steps listed below. Registration begins on/around March 1st and on/around March 15th for returning students.

Applying for enrollment:

1. Complete the 2025-2026 Little Anchors Preschool Application Form.
2026-2027 Little Anchors Preschool Application Form

2. All applications will be date and time-stamped. Applicants will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis, provided the child meets all eligibility requirements, including being at least three years old by August 1, 2026, and residing within the district.

3. After applying, Brooke Spafford, Preschool Director, will email families to inform them about their acceptance, denial, or waitlist status. If accepted, please visit the Vermilion Local Schools Enrollment & Registration webpage to complete enrollment
https://www.vermilionschools.org/EnrollmentRegistration.aspx

4. Once cleared to enroll, a deadline will be set by the preschool director to complete the student's Final Forms account and to turn in all completed paperwork by. Screenings for new preschool students will take place in August of 2026. Parents will be contacted to schedule a date/time.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Brooke Spafford, Preschool Director, at 440-204-1703 Ext—648 or via email at bspafford@vermilionschools.org.

Withdrawal
If you need to withdraw your tuition student, please call Preschool Director Brooke Spafford at 440-204-1703 ext. 648 to officially withdraw your child from the Little Anchors Preschool Program. You will need to also complete and sign a withdrawal form in collaboration with your child's classroom teacher. If we do not receive a call AND a signed withdraw form, you WILL be charged for each month the office is not notified.

If you need to withdraw your student with a disability who is on an IEP, please contact the Preschool Director: Brooke Spafford at 440-204-1703 ext. 648.

Non-Discrimination Statement
It is the policy of the Vermilion Local schools that educational activities, employment practices, programs and services are offered without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, handicap, age, place of residence or social or economic background. Please see the Vermilion Local Schools Policy Manual section 2260 for further information on the non-discrimination policy and complaint procedures or the policy can be provided upon request.

Missing Children
All registration documents listed above are required for any new student enrolling in Little Anchors Preschool Program. Any child determined to be missing as designated by the Missing Children's Act will be reported immediately to the Missing Children's Clearing House and the proper law enforcement agency.

Program Requirements
The program is guided by written policies of Vermilion Local Schools Board of Education which are consistent with the Rules for the Education of Preschool Children with Disabilities (Ohio revised Code Chapter 3301-31), Operating Standards for Ohio's Schools Serving Children with Disabilities (Chapter 3301-51), and Rules for Preschool Programs (Ohio Administrative Code 3301-37). Copies of the Rules and Standards are available in the building for your review. If you have any questions regarding these regulations, contact the Ohio Department of Children & Youth. The email is info@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov

Tuition and Billing

If your child has been identified as a student with a disability by the school and the team has determined that the child needs an IEP, the student is allowed to attend the Little Anchors Preschool tuition-free.

All families of must pay a non-refundable $50 application/supply fee upon enrollment.

Yearly tuition costs are as follows:

- **5 days: $2,250---$250/month September-May**
- **4 days: $1,800–$200/month September-May**

Monthly payments are due on the first day of the month from September through May.
Tuition is charged monthly whether or not the student is present. There will be no credit given for sick, vacation, or calamity days. Days missed may not be made up due to daily attendance limits imposed by licensing rules. If a child enrolls during the school year, tuition is due (in full) if they start on or prior to the 15th of that month. If a child enrolls during the school year, and the do not begin attending until after the 15th of the month, tuition (in full) is not due until the 1st of the following month.

Payments must be received by the 1st of each month. Cash, check, and/or payment through Brightwheel are the accepted forms of payment. Checks can be made out to: Vermilion Local Schools

Payments may be made through Brightwheel, given to the Vermilion Elementary Secretary, and/or mailed to the address listed below. Please do not give tuition payments to your child or your child's teacher.

Vermilion Elementary School
Little Anchors Preschool Program
Attn: Building Secretary
1285 Douglas St.
Vermilion, Ohio 44089

A late fee of $10 will be added to any monthly bill that is not paid in-full by the 15th of the month.

Additionally, if payment is not received by the 15th of each month your child's enrollment could be terminated and his spot given to the next child on the waiting list.

Scholarships 2026-2027: The district hopes to offer a limited number of preschool scholarships for those demonstrating economic need. If you or someone you know wishes to sponsor a scholarship, please contact the preschool director (440-204-1703 ext. 648) for additional information.

In order to be considered for any available scholarships, parents/guardians must submit a completed scholarship application, in addition to all the required supporting documentation.

Class Offerings, Hours of Operation, Attendance, & Emergency Closing Procedures

Little Anchors Preschool serves children ages 3-5 years old. Classrooms are designed to meet the needs of all children. The program offers three general education sessions and one integrated session. All preschool students receive a snack each day and all students have the opportunity to receive transportation.

Class Offerings

- **Seafarers ($2,250---$250/month September-May)---- Monday-Friday 8:40-11:15**
  - Integrated classroom (50/50 model): students ages 3-5
- **Starfish ($1,800–$200/month September-May)- Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri 12:40-3:15**
  - Integrated classroom (50/50 model): students ages 3-5
- **Sailors ($2,250---$250/month September-May)-----Monday-Friday 12:40-3:15**
  - Integrated classroom (50/50 model): students ages 3-5
- **Minnows($2,250---$250/month September-May)- Monday-Friday 8:40-11:15**
  - Integrated classroom (50/50 model): students ages 3-4 (must fall in the 3-4 age bracket)
- **Mariners ($2,250---$250/month September-May)----Monday-Friday 12:40-3:15**
  - Integrated classroom (50/50 model): students ages 4-5 (must fall in the 4-5 age bracket)

Hours of Operation

The Little Anchors Preschool will operate Monday through Friday following the Vermilion Local Schools calendar (located at the end of this program guide). Special preschool closure dates will also be listed/noted at the end of this program guide. The first day of preschool is August 26th and the last day regularly scheduled day of programming is tentatively set for May 20th (subject to change). The hours of operation are listed below:

DAYS	SEAFARERS	STARFISH	MINNOWS	MARINERS	SAILORS
MON	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	12:40-3:15
TUES	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	12:40-3:15
WED	8:40-11:15	—	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	12:40-3:15
THURS	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	12:40-3:15
FRI	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	8:40-11:15	12:40-3:15	12:40-3:15

Emergency Closing Procedures

Information concerning a DELAY or CLOSING due to inclement weather can be found at the places listed below. Please listen for an announcement of Vermilion Local Schools closed or delayed as Little Anchors Preschool Program follows the Vermilion Local Schools closing and delay schedule.

School Connects	Vermilion Schools Website	Vermilion Schools Facebook	Vermilion Schools Twitter
WKYC Channel 3	WUAB Channel 43	WJW Channel 8	WEWS Channel 5
WEOL 930 AM	WOIO Channel 19	WCPZ 102.7 FM	Ohio News Network

At times, it may become necessary to close the school during the day due to weather conditions, or school emergency. Vermilion Local Schools will contact parent/guardians via school connects at the phone number listed in PowerSchool. Please make every attempt to keep this number up to date. This information can also be obtained at any of the information sources listed above.

If Vermilion Local Schools announces a 2 hour delay the A.M. session of Little Anchors Preschool will be CLOSED. The P.M. session will remain open unless Vermilion Local Schools announces a full closure.

Attendance

Regular attendance in preschool is a primary component of a child's learning success. If your child must be absent, please contact Vermilion Elementary School at 440-204-1703 to report their absence. If no call is received the parent will receive an automated call informing them of their child's absence. Upon their day of return please send a note or any medical excusal forms obtained indicating the absence

Due to the importance of regular attendance at preschool, upon the 3rd consecutive day of absence the teacher will attempt to contact the parent to determine the reason for the absence and encourage the return of the child to school. If the child is a tuition paid child or on scholarship, and is absent for 10 cumulative days, on the 11th day, the school district may send a letter of intent to withdraw the child from the program

and their spot could be given to a family on the waiting list. You will be charged the full month's tuition for the month the 11th absence occurred.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Idling Vehicles

Vermilion Local Schools ask that cars are not left idling during pick-up and drop-off unless there is a need due to extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

Arrival

Morning class begins at 8:40 AM and afternoon class begins at 12:40 PM. Please arrive 5 minutes prior to your child's start time. Please remain with your child until met by a staff member.

Please avoid late arrivals so that class can begin in a timely manner. If your child arrives at a time other than the regularly scheduled time, the parent must accompany the child and report to the Vermilion Elementary School office to sign their child into school.

Departures

Morning class ends at 11:15 AM and afternoon classes end at 3:15 PM. Please meet your child in front of the school building, and they will be dismissed to you by a staff member.

Please avoid late pick-ups, as our staff have important instructional activities to prepare for the next day. If an emergency occurs and you are going to be late picking up your child, please contact the school immediately so that arrangements can be made. If there is a pattern of late pick-ups, a meeting will be scheduled with you to address the issue.

Parent Authorization

Parents are requested at the time of enrollment to create a list of those authorized to pick-up their child from school. Students will **NOT** be released to anyone not included on the authorization list without prior written and signed request from the parent or guardian.

Parent Roster Information

Parents/Guardians are asked annually to provide written approval to have their name, phone number, and child's name on a group / program roster. This roster will be furnished to all parents in the program. Parents may opt out of having any information included on the roster. Permission or refusal will be noted on the Preschool Parent Roster Statement form.

Parent Engagement

Little Anchors Preschool Program has adopted the Epstein Model (Joyce Epstein's six types of parent involvement). Our program has built activities that support the following types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Our goal is to promote parent involvement and to provide opportunities to model positive adult-child interactions.

Little Anchors Preschool Program welcomes families to become involved in their children's preschool experience as much as possible. There are many ways to be involved! Family involvement is a key component of the program. Families are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, a continuing goal is to build and maintain a relationship between families and staff. Field trip chaperones, cooking with children, reading a story, sharing your talents such as music, crafts, and gardening, are just a few ways parents can be part of the preschool classroom. The list is endless and you can be creative in how you are involved.

According to Preschool Licensing Rules, parents/ guardians of children enrolled in the program have unlimited access to the class during class hours for the purpose of evaluating the care provided by staff, observing the program in operation, or evaluating the premises. We ask that parents be careful not to disrupt the learning process of the students. If you are visiting outside of the pickup or drop off times, you must first report to and sign in at the school office.

Parents are also welcome to volunteer as part of the daily program as often as they like. Please speak with your child's teacher prior to the day you want to volunteer. Vermilion Board of Education asks that all volunteers who supervise or tutor students while not under the direct supervision of a teacher, complete a BCI fingerprint background check. Fingerprinting can be completed at 1250 Sanford St., Suite A. *Please note that building regulations/classroom visitation policies may fluctuate. There may be times where visitors are not permitted to reduce building visitors for safety and/or health reasons.

Program newsletters are sent home on a regular basis. The newsletter will highlight information about themes of study, snacks, important dates, and fun activities. Little Anchors Preschool may also send home educational resources to help your child's growth. If you would like to contribute to the newsletters, please let us know!

Parent meetings, information regarding educational workshops, book fairs, parties, and other special events may also be provided to families. Parents are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement to the daily schedule, curricular topics and activities. Families are also encouraged to share any special appropriate talents with the students (teach a skill, share a talent, etc.).

Field trips may also be scheduled by the preschool director. The students, their parents, and staff meet at a community site (farm, apple orchard, bowling, etc.) for learning and social activities. School will be closed on field trip days and parents are required to attend with their children.

Formal progress reports are sent home at least twice per school year to highlight your child's growth. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Formal and informal collaborative conferences will be held as needed. Please feel free to speak to any staff member at any time!

Daily Needs

Supply List

A preschool supply list will be released in early August. Please contact the director with any questions/concerns.

Clothing

Preschool experiences require many hands-on activities. While these are very meaningful to the children they may also become very messy. We ask that you please have your children wear clothes to school in which they are able to explore, play and even get dirty! Clothes should be easy to get into and out of for toileting purposes. You will be asked to provide an extra set of clothes that are seasonally appropriate in case any changes need to be made during the school day. All children's clothing should be marked with the student's name in permanent marker. Finally, we go outside frequently so please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

Our staff will encourage children to help themselves whenever they can. This gives them a sense of accomplishment and control over their environment. It would be helpful if parents select coats, pants, sweaters, Velcro closure shoes, etc. that the children can manipulate themselves. For children who are working on toilet training, easy clothing is a must.

If your child is not yet toilet trained, please send diapers and wet wipes with his/her name marked on the bag and container.

Possessions from home

If your child is having difficulty making the transition from home to the class, it may be helpful to bring a favorite item from home. It is very easy to lose a child's possession in a group setting. So once your child has adjusted, he/she will be encouraged to leave the item at home.

The teacher may utilize show/tell to promote a certain theme or improve student skills. You will be informed of the schedule so that you can choose your item beforehand.

Daily Communication

Clear and consistent home-school communication is an important piece of the foundation for student success. We share information and communicate families on an ongoing basis using one or more of the following methods: Brightwheel messaging/announcements/newsletters (parent communication application utilized by the district), phone calls, emails, newsletters, and/or in-person updates at pick-up/drop-off.

Community Resources

Vermilion Local Schools has a page on the website dedicated to support for parents and families. Please visit the link below for the most up-to-date community resources:

https://www.vermilionschools.org/HelpforParentsandStudents.aspx

Parent Feedback

We value parent input/feedback regarding specific student concerns/growth/development, in addition to program strengths/weaknesses/suggestions for improvement. We gather parent input/feedback using one or more of the following methods: completion of parent input forms on screener assessments, completion of the annual family needs assessment, collaborative completion of each child's individualized growth plan at both fall/spring conferences, completion of a mid-year parent surveys, and completion of end-of-the-year parent surveys. We ask that parents contribute to the child assessment process by gathering parent input on screening tools at the start of the school year and by incorporating their at-home observations into the individualized growth plan to set goals and learning targets for each student.

Field Trips

Field trips that enrich the preschool curriculum may be organized occasionally. Parental permission is required for individual field trip participation. On field trip days, there will be no school. Parents will be required to provide transportation to and from the field trip. Parents are required to stay with their children for these events and they are welcomed/encouraged to join in the outing.

No Refund Policy: For field trips that require pre-payment for participation (e.g., bowling alley), there will be NO REFUNDS if your child/family cannot attend after submitting the payment.

Daily Program Schedule

The Little Anchors Preschool Program offers meaningful play-based learning. "Playful learning" is a learning context in which children learn content while playing together, with teacher guidance, and/or in a structured game. We believe in a child-centered, child-directed approach to early childhood learning. Teachers work to develop a balance of quiet time and active play. The focus is on meeting a child's intellectual, physical, social & emotional needs through indoor and outdoor activities. The daily schedule is set up to allow ample time for children to participate in a variety of learning activities and centers, with play incorporated into every learning experience. Students will interact and work collaboratively with others while developing age-appropriate social skills. They will explore a variety of topics to spark curiosity and ignite a passion for learning.

Learning Center Time

Children are free to choose a learning center activity such as dramatic play centers, arts & crafts, reading/writing center, fine motor center, and building center. The teachers use this time to work with individual children on skill development or with small groups of children on a particular activity. Center activities are changed frequently and are often developed based on the skills being learned during the week. Children are offered new challenges, thought-provoking questions, and encouraged to try new things. They are asked to rotate through several centers during center time so they learn skills in a variety of areas.

Whole group & Small Group Time (carpet/circle time)

Children join their teacher for story time that includes movement and or musical activities. These activities promote social skill development, fine & gross motor development, and lots of fun. The teachers use this time to present activities that are developmentally appropriate for children in the group. The activities are developed based on a theme of the week/month and include concepts in literacy, math, and language.

Indoor & Outdoor Motor Activities

Teacher work to develop lessons that help students better develop fine and gross motor skills. These activities can include fine motor activities such as play dough, puzzles, writing, art activities and sewing. Gross motor activities could include dancing, jumping, hopping, playing outside, rolling/throwing a ball.

Snack Time

This is an important part of your child's day as it provides a wonderful snack during their time at preschool, some basic knowledge in good nutrition and allows students a time to develop social/emotional skills. Students are provided a snack, but they are welcome to bring in their own.

No child is forced to prepare or consume any snack. If your child has special dietary needs or food allergies, please notify us in writing.

Meal Preparation and Nutritional Guidelines for Snack

VLS preschool follows the guidelines for meal preparation and nutritional requirements written within the Ohio Revised Code 5101:2-12-22: https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-5180-37-09

Preschool Curriculum

The Vermilion Little Sailors Preschool Program will be using The Creative Curriculum. It is, "…a **comprehensive**, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills." It provides background, strategies, and teaching approaches in how children develop and learn, what children learn, and an explanation of the family and teacher's roles. There is a focus on the social/emotional skills children need in order to help them succeed. It provides guidance for addressing content in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology. It provides teachers with instruction strategies and includes activities at all ability levels.

The teacher will use this curriculum along with additional supports to provide early learning opportunities for your child. (S)he will work to personalize instruction and provide supports and modifications to meet the needs of all learners. The combination of curriculum activities and teaching strategies align with all of the Ohio Department of Children & Youth Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool children.

You are your child's most important teacher! We look forward to working collaboratively with you to help your child grow developmentally and build independence. We encourage you to help your child build daily routines and follow home and school expectations. Some activities that you can do at home that will help your child develop include: picking up their toys, communicating their needs and wants in an appropriate way and following a bedtime routine. By expecting your child to be as independent as possible, we can all do our part to prepare him/her for kindergarten and beyond.

You can also contribute to the assessment of your child's development and learning in the school setting. We will be sending home developmentally appropriate activities throughout the year that you can do with your child at home to help strengthen their skills. You can assist the teacher with reports of at-home progress and contribute to their Individualized Growth Plan at conferences to help set and assess child-specific goals.

Ohio Early Learning & Development Standards and Assessments

The preschool curriculum aligns with the Early Learning and Development Standards. The Early Learning and Development Standards identify essential concepts and skills for young children. These standards serve as a guide for expectations as children complete their preschool experiences.

The Little Anchors Preschool Program participates in Ohio mandated assessments of all enrolled preschoolers. We assess all enrolled children using formal and informal methods on an on-going basis to inform program practices and to deliver tiered instruction through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Teachers assess students in a variety of ways, which may include the following:

- DIAL-4 – The DIAL-4 is an individually administered developmental assessment tool designed to identify young children in need of interventions and/or further assessment. New students are administered the DIAL-4 by appointment prior to the start of school.

- PELI-The Preschool Early Learning Indicators is an individually administered literacy assessment for children 3-5 years old that measures alphabet knowledge, vocabulary and oral language, phonological awareness, and listening comprehension. The PELI benchmark is administered in the fall, winter, and spring. The assessment is designed to identify children who are experiencing difficulties acquiring these skills with intent to provide the instructional support needed to improve future reading outcomes. Progress monitoring may be implemented throughout the school year as needed.

-Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment- Teaching Strategies GOLD is an observational assessment system for early childhood education, spanning from birth through kindergarten. It focuses on 38 research-based objectives that predict school success and align with various early learning standards. Instead of formal testing, it emphasizes ongoing, authentic observations of children's learning during everyday activities. This data informs individualized instruction, supports family partnerships, and helps evaluate programs.The assessment is used twice a year. Teachers will be able to share a report with families that

explains their findings and provide suggestions on activities families can do at home to continue to support children's growth and development.

- Ages & Stages—Students' developmental growth are monitored through a questionnaire completed by parents once per school year (used in lieu of the DIAL-4 for returning students).

- Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO)— The Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Form (ECOSF) is used by preschool special education teachers to rate every preschool child with a disability using a 7-point scale to document the child's progress in the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, (including early language, communication and early literacy), positive emotional skills (including social relationships) and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

- Developmental Screenings- Per licensing requirements, the program ensures that all children receive a comprehensive developmental screening that is valid and reliable within 60 business days of entry into the program and annually thereafter. Necessary referrals are completed within 90 days of identification of need, and the results are formally communicated with families. Referrals may include classroom monitoring and follow-up screening and/or referral to determine special education eligibility.

- Health Screenings- We want to stress the importance of health screenings for your child. It is recommended by the Ohio Department of Children and Youth that students receive comprehensive health screenings in the following areas: vision, dental health, height, weight, hearing, and blood lead and hemoglobin levels. Students should contact their local health department and/or family doctor to schedule a wellness check. Additional information on local providers can be found in the Vermilion Community Resource Guide located on the district website under the parents tab.

https://www.vermilionschools.org/Downloads/Vermilion%20Finalized%20Resource%20Guide%202.pdf

Transition Planning

Early childhood staff believe communication and knowledge are crucial components in successful transitions for children, parents, and staff. Activities provided to support children and their parents which might include, but are not limited to:

- Opportunities for parents and children to visit potential preschool classrooms during a school day, classroom visits prior to the start of school
- Written information regarding registration and screening dates
- Various classroom activities for all/new students
- Transition Resources shared with parents/families
- Books and videos related to starting school
- Visiting the elementary cafeteria, exploring a school bus, visiting with school personnel

Information about registration and screening will also be shared with the community through the use of media such as press releases and flyers. Sending and receiving staff shall communicate to determine the student information which shall be shared after receipt of any required parental request.

The program ensures that children who are age-eligible are provided with the information necessary to enroll their child in kindergarten upon leaving the early childhood program unless another placement has been determined based on parental choice.

Discipline Policy

The preschool staff, at Little Anchors Preschool, work to help our students become gradually more independent, self-reliant, confident, and responsible for their behaviors. Teachers use a variety of techniques to teach these behaviors. The least restrictive, least intrusive, and most effective choices shall always be implemented first and foremost. Teachers may use modeling of appropriate behavior, positive reinforcement, natural and logical consequences, redirection, and "time out." Teachers encourage children to express their feelings in an acceptable way. The teachers address student behaviors on an individual basis.

The goal of discipline is to help each child build his/her own self-control, and ultimately, direct his/her own behavior. Staff members recognize the important role self-esteem plays in the process and strive to enhance each child's feelings of self-worth. A well-planned and supervised classroom will prevent many behaviors. Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports help each child develop the skills they need to successfully manage their emotions and behavior in a variety of settings. Clear and responsible rules are established for each child's safety. These rules are discussed and reviewed periodically with all children and shared with parents.

Problem-solving techniques are encouraged in the classroom during which time the staff often act as facilitators, helping young children express feelings and generate solutions, as well as, redirecting a child's interest/frustrations to another activity. Additional guidance will be provided through directing the child away from the problem situation, talking with the child about the situation, and praising the child for appropriate behavior.

The classroom discipline policy shall be conducted and supervised by the certified staff in each classroom and shall apply to all persons on the premises. No employee is, at any time, to commit an act of physical or emotional abuse against any student in the program (defined below).

"Physical Abuse" includes shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling of arms, hair, or ears; requiring children to remain inactive for long periods of time.

"Psychological Abuse" includes shaming, name calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, and frightening children; ostracism, withholding affection, seclusion.

“Coercion” includes rough handling (shoving, pulling, pushing, grasping); physical restraint (forcing children to sit, lie, or stay), physically forcing a child to perform an action (eating, cleaning up).

“Disruptive or unsafe behavior” is any behavior that interferes with a child’s cognitive, social, or emotional development; is harmful to the child, other children, or adults; and puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure.

Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, sleep, or for toileting accidents. Any and all abusive or dehumanizing actions are prohibited: allowing one student to discipline another student; physical abuse or other inappropriate physical actions including striking, shaking, shoving, spanking procedures; any psychological or verbal abuse including threats of inappropriate consequences, ridiculing, or using abusive or demeaning communication which causes student to feel devalued; placing child unattended in a room; and/or denial of the opportunity to have meals, complete elimination of meals, or denial of rest.

Physical restraints or seclusion will not be used unless there is an imminent threat to the safety of the child or others. As needed, a functional behavior assessment may be completed and a behavior intervention plan may be developed with parental input.

A preschool staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their discipline. The center’s actual methods of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as described below. Based off the Ohio Department of Children & Youth Preschool Licensing Rules and Vermilion Local School policies staff follow the guidelines listed below:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as, but not limited to, punching, pinching, shaking, spanking, or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to another child
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box, or a similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use, and food shall not be used as a reward for behavior
- Separation, when used as discipline, shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child’s age and developmental ability, and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted, and well-ventilated space.
- The center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Safety of Children

Vermilion Local Schools works diligently to ensure the safety of all children attending the Little Anchors Preschool Program. Preschool staff members, non-teaching staff, and volunteers follow all licensure and rule requirements. The following safety procedures are in effect at all times:

- Active supervision is the focused, intentional, and continual observation of young children by educators. Program staff ensure children of all ages are exploring learning environments in a safe manner. No child will be left alone or unsupervised at any time. Preschoolers are primarily supervised by sight and sound, with brief periods where they may be supervised by sound only (as developmentally appropriate).
- ODE Preschool Rules per the Ohio Revised Code Section 3301.56 for staff/student ratios are in effect and maintained at all times, including: during all hours of operation, in learning environments and other indoor settings, in outdoor learning environments, and during field trips.
- A telephone is located in the classroom and is available for use in the event of an emergency.
- Fire and other emergency drills are held in conjunction with the Vermilion Elementary School schedule and the school staff and children practice threatening weather drills. A record of these drills is kept in the school's office and is available upon request.
- School safety and crisis plans, including evacuation routes and procedures are posted/located in each classroom
- In the event of a non-serious accident (superficial cuts, scrapes, bruises), staff will administer first aid if necessary.
- When an accident or injury occurs, staff will complete an injury report form. A copy of the form will be given to the parent and a copy will remain on file at the school for at least one year. The program shall maintain a log of injury reports.
- In accordance with Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, all Vermilion School staff are required to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate county Department of Human Services. At least one preschool staff member is required to have completed a child abuse prevention and recognition course.
- All staff members are aware of the safety rules for both indoor and outdoor activities and the class and playground areas are surveyed continuously for possible safety hazards.
- All preschool staff members are trained in first aid, pediatric CPR, child abuse prevention and recognition, and recognition of communicable diseases. A first aid kit is always on site. If a child has a serious accident or becomes injured while at the preschool, a staff member will administer first aid, while another staff member contacts the local rescue squad and the child's parents. Remaining staff will care for the other children. If the parents cannot be reached, only the people listed as emergency contacts on the child's Emergency Transportation Authorization form will be notified. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital, if necessary.
- Preschool staff members shall have a medical statement as required upon employment/assignment to preschool. Updates are recommended, but not required.
- Preschool staff members, non-teaching staff, and volunteers follow all licensure and rule requirements.
- Only staff members who have completed the appropriate training and meet preschool licensing requirements may be left alone with children.

- Volunteers and other service providers (not counted in-ratio) must always be supervised by a licensed/credentialed staff member with the appropriate training.
- Preschool teachers and other preschool staff, as appropriate, shall be aware of pertinent child background information to assure safety.

Parent Complaints

Resolving parent questions and complaints in a timely manner is a priority for our preschool staff. Please let us know when you have an issue by contacting us by phone, email, through Brightwheel, and/or by scheduling a meeting to discuss your concerns. To efficiently resolve complaints, parents should take the following steps:

- First, discuss the concern or complaint with the preschool staff
- If you have not received a satisfactory response from the preschool staff, schedule a meeting with the Director of Little Anchors Preschool, Brooke Spafford.
- Continuing concerns can be brought to the Pupil Services Director, Karen Blackburn or the Vermilion Local Schools Superintendent, David Hile.
- Ohio Department of Education offers a preschool Ombudsman service for all preschool issues. Please see the following website for dispute resolution and additional details: https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Dispute-Resolution

Health

Health & Safety procedures follow the Administrative Code—Preschool Program Rules 3301-37-07, 3301-37-11, & 3301-37-12.

All children must have immunizations required for their age. Parents will provide information regarding emergency medical and dental care, emergency transportation, and the names of persons who have permission to pick up your child. Anyone picking up a child other than the child's parents must provide picture ID before the child will be released.

Our teachers and educational aides are trained in first aid, recognition of child abuse, hand-washing procedures, and symptoms of communicable disease. Children will be observed daily.

Management of Communicable Disease

The staff of Little Anchors Preschool are trained and certified in first aid and in recognizing the signs and symptoms of communicable diseases. Every teacher has access to the "Communicable Disease Chart for Schools and Child-Care Centers" to help them recognize illnesses. Parents will be provided a copy of this chart upon request. Please note that Covid-19 is considered a communicable disease.

Staff is very conscientious about the importance of hand washing and disinfecting procedures to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Children are also taught good hand washing procedures and are reminded to wash their hands on a regular basis.

As a child arrives, a staff member greets the child and observes them for possible signs and symptoms of illness. The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

1. The program shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

2. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent/guardian:
    - Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a twenty-four-hour period)
    - Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
    - Difficult or rapid breathing
    - Yellowish skin or eyes
    - Conjunctivitis
    - Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit taken by the auxiliary method when in combination with other signs of illness
    - Untreated infected skin patch(es)
    - Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool
    - Stiff neck
    - Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
    - Vomiting

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated from other children and the parents contacted. Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the school nurse and the parent/guardian. The child while isolated, shall be carefully watched for symptoms listed above as well as the following:

- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- ·Elevated temperature
- Vomiting

Care and Removal of a Sick Child

A child isolated due to suspected illness or communicable disease shall be:

- Cared for in a room or portion of a room not being used in the preschool program
- Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised
- Made comfortable and provided with a cot. All linens and blankets used by the ill child have been laundered before use. After use the cots will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Observed carefully for worsening condition

- Discharged to parent/guardian or designated person assigned by the parent/guardian as soon as practically possible.

If your child becomes ill while at school and/or exhibits any of the symptoms listed above you will be immediately contacted to come and pick up your child. If you cannot be reached only the people listed as emergency contacts on your child's Emergency Medical form will be notified to come pick up the child. Your child **WILL NOT** be readmitted until symptoms are no longer present. In some cases of illness, a written note from a physician may be required.

Children must be FREE from diarrhea, vomiting, and fever for 24 hours before they will be readmitted to school.

A child with minor cold symptoms or a child in the final stages of recovery from an illness may attend if the child has seen a physician and has been diagnosed as non-contagious and/or is on medication. The child shall be carefully observed for signs and symptoms of a worsening condition. Should any of the symptoms listed above occur, you will be notified immediately and asked to pick up your child.

In the event your child is exposed to another child with a communicable disease, you will be notified in writing that (s)he has been exposed to a contagious disease and provided information so that you are aware of the symptoms. If necessary, any under immunized children will be excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease to which they are susceptible occurs in the program.

Medications

Any child needing medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during school time must have a Vermilion Schools medication form completed and signed by the **parent** and **physician**. Only medication with the following information will be administered:

- Medication must be in the original prescription bottle appropriately labeled by the pharmacy
- Medication must be labeled with the date of the prescription
- Medication must contain the child's name
- Medication must contain the exact dosage to be given

Medication will be transported to school by parents and kept in a safe/locked location at the school (out of the reach of children). **Medication cannot be transported in the child's book bag.**

A parent/guardian wishing to discontinue the administration of medication at school must send a signed note to the school requesting that medication be stopped.

Medication and emergency medication procedures will follow all rules and guidelines as listed in The Administrative Code 3313.7110 & 313.713.

Toileting

We will work cooperatively with parents/guardians to accomplish toilet training consistently between home and school. This is a critical component for your child's success. We ask parents to please keep their child in diapers, training pants, or pull-ups to help with the training process. All toilet training supplies such as diapers, pull-ups, and wipes must be supplied by the family. Accidents happen frequently when young children are learning to use the potty, please remember to send your child a change of clothes labeled with their name in case of an accident. Classroom toileting procedures will follow all rules and guidelines as listed in The Administrative Code Preschool Program Rules 3301-37-12.

Parental Release

On occasion, student names, pictures, and achievements, may be published in newspapers, programs, school websites, and other forms of publications. Permission forms permitting the release of this information must be returned to the appropriate staff member.

When you are taking pictures or video of your child at school, be aware that not all parents/guardians have granted permission for the release of their child's image. Please be sensitive to the rights and expectation of privacy of your child's classmates when displaying the images on social networking sites and other public venues.

Recording-Video/Audio

In order to protect the privacy rights of students and staff, electronic video and/or audio recordings of preschool activities are not permitted unless permission has been granted by the Preschool Director. Permission will be in the form of a signed authorized statement. Any distribution or posting of an approved recording is prohibited in order to protect the privacy rights of Vermilion Local School District students and staff.

FERPA-Confidentiality Policy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the student's home district receives a request for access.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
   - Vermilion Local Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without consent, unless the parent has submitted a written refusal prior to the printing of the directory or September 30.
   - Directory information may include the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, and dates of attendance.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Vermilion Local Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U. S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

Healthchek Services for Children Younger than Age 21

Healthchek is Ohio's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) Program. It is a service package for babies, kids, and young adults younger than age 21 who are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid.

The purpose of Healthchek is to discover and treat health problems early. If a potential health problem is found, further diagnosis and treatment are covered by Medicaid.

Healthchek covers ten check-ups in the first two years of life and annual check-ups thereafter and offers a comprehensive physical examination that includes:

- medical history
- complete unclothed exam (with parent approval)
- developmental screening (to assess if child's physical and mental abilities are age appropriate)
- vision screening
- dental screening
- hearing assessment
- immunization assessment (making sure child receives them on time)
- lead screening; and
- other services or screenings as needed

If your children are enrolled on Ohio Medicaid, Healthchek services are available to them. If you are younger than age 21 and are also enrolled, you can receive Healthchek services, too.

For more information:

Read the Healthchek and Pregnancy Related Services Information Sheet: English (Instructions), en Español or Somali

Read “Frequently Asked Questions”
http://medicaid.ohio.gov/Portals/0/For%20Ohioans/Programs/HealthchekFAQ.pdf

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA),
Part C Assessments and Screenings

How do I get started? Contact your local County Board

In Ohio, the County Board is the primary contact for an individual and their family. The County Board serves two primary functions:

Determining Eligibility: Your County Board will work with you to determine eligibility for services. Eligibility criteria varies by age.

- Ages 0-2: the eligibility report completed by or for Help Me Grow is used to determine eligibility.
- Ages 3-5: Each County Board sets eligibility requirements, which may include the evaluation completed by or for the school district for preschool special education
- Ages 6+: Standard assessment tools are used to measures an individual's current functional abilities in life activity areas – mobility, self-care, self-direction, capacity for independent living, learning, and receptive and expressive language skills – for ages 16 and older, the tool also measures economic self-sufficiency. To be eligible for services, an individual must show substantial functional limitations in at least three of these areas. The tools used are the Children's Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (COEDI) for children ages 6-15, and the Ohio Eligibility Determination Instrument (OEDI) for individuals ages 16 and older. If you'd like to learn more about these tools, you can review these documents used to administer the assessments.

Service Coordination: Once you are eligible for services, your County Board will link you to needed services and supports. A Services and Support Administrator (SSA) will work with you to develop an Individual Service Plan that outlines what types of supports are needed.

When to contact your local County Board

Contact your local County Board:

- If your child is diagnosed with a developmental disability, or you suspect your child may have a developmental disability.
- If additional support is needed to achieve your/your child's goals.
- If you are moving to a new community and are receiving services, and want to continue receiving services once you move.

Case Management (Service and Support Administration - SSA)

Case management is a process to link individuals and families to needed services and supports provided by local county boards of DODD. It may include any or all of the following supports:

- Information, referral and linkage
- Eligibility determination and assessment
- Individual Service Plan development and revision
- Assistance in provider selection and accessing services
- Coordination and monitoring of services
- Quality assurance of services provided to individuals and families
- Crisis intervention

PRESCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS (Subject to change)

Little Anchors Preschool Program will follow Vermilion Local Schools district calendar for the school schedules/closures. **Additionally, the following dates/sessions are closed:**

Field Trips

- October: TBD
- November: 11/11/2026–Firestation Field Trip 9:30 (AM sessions) & 1:30 (PM sessions)
- December: None
- January: TBD
- February: 2/17/2027–Bowling Field Trip 1:00-3:00 ($10 per participant)
- March: 3/24/2027–D & R Playland 1:00-3:00 ($16 per participant)
- April: TBD
- May: None

November 4th: Preschool Teacher Work Day (NO SCHOOL)

April 14th: Preschool Teacher Work Day (NO SCHOOL)

April 22nd & 23rd: Preschool Staff Conference (NO SCHOOL)

April 28th:: Transition Meetings (NO SCHOOL)

PRESCHOOL END-OF-THE-YEAR CALENDAR (Subject to change)

May 20th: Last Day of Preschool

May 21st: Preschool Field Day

May 25th: Preschool Graduation