



**FRANKFORT**

*Park District*

**Prairie Care  
Parent Handbook**

Grand Prairie Elementary School

10480 Nebraska St.

Frankfort, IL 60423

815-464-2887 or 815-464-5579

[kmorrison@frankfortparks.org](mailto:kmorrison@frankfortparks.org)

Tax ID# 36-2673904

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## **PURPOSE**

Prairie Care is a License Exempt program which meets the requirements held by DCFS of having License Exemption status. The goal of Prairie Care is to provide a safe, recreational based program for children whose parents or guardians find it necessary to work or to further their education. The program is coordinated by qualified staff who strive to develop a warm constructive relationship with the children. Prairie Care provides a creative and stimulating environment in which children can learn, grow and thrive at their own developmental pace. Please note: The Park District is required by state statute (70 ILCS 1205/8-23) to obtain criminal conviction information concerning all applicants and shall perform a criminal background check for applicants for all positions. Pursuant to statute, any conviction of offenses enumerated in subsection (c) of said statute shall automatically disqualify the applicant from consideration for working for the Park District. Any other conviction(s) shall not automatically disqualify the applicant from consideration, but rather, the conviction(s) will be considered in relationship to the specific job.

## **PROCEDURES AND PROGRAMMING**

All Prairie Care Participants must complete a Prairie Care Packet, which contains important information such as emergency contacts, waivers, etc. Packets must be turned in prior to starting Prairie Care. All files will be stored in a secure file. All forms will be retained and destroyed in accordance the Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205). Information regarding participants is to be used only for purposes related to the program and will be confidential not to be shared with other participants without permission.

The Frankfort Park District reserves the right to change any procedures and programming related to the Prairie Care program.

## **DATES AND HOURS**

Regular hours of the program will be from 6:30 AM until school begins and then from the end of school until 6:30 PM. Check your contract sheets for special services on half days of school. **ALL BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS WILL FOLLOW THE SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY ON SNOW DAYS..... CLOSED.**

## **LOCATION**

Prairie Care will be held at Grand Prairie School. Students from Chelsea School will be bussed to and from their school to Grand Prairie School. Our main room for drop-off and pick-up will be the lunchroom.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

Children must be accompanied by an adult when arriving or departing from the program. A "Sign In" book will be placed out in the morning and a "Sign Out" book will be placed out in the afternoon. An adult is required to sign the children in and out of the program. If someone other than a parent will be picking up your child, please make sure they are listed on your registration form. A form of identification will be required (driver's license or state ID) to verify their identification. Your child will not be released to another adult without your consent. **All participants must provide an emergency authorized pick up person in order to register for the Prairie Care program.**

## **FEES, PAYMENTS AND PENALTIES**

A separate registration form for each child attending Prairie Care must be filled out at the time of services requested. A monthly calendar has been provided for your convenience. On the calendar, please mark the days your child will be attending Prairie Care. **Payments will be due on the third Wednesday of each month prior to the month of requested service.** Your payment will reserve your spot for the whole month. **Bi-monthly payments are an option, but you must complete the monthly schedule. Late registration will not be accepted. There is no pro rating of fees due to non-attendance.** Discounts are available for District 157C employees. Please see current registration forms for more detailed payment information. **Failure to make payments will result in a possible suspension or permanent dismissal from Prairie Care.**

Any add-on days to your registration calendar will need the approval of Prairie Care Staff. Add-ons to the monthly calendar will incur a **\$25 surcharge per transaction plus the regular fee,** based on availability. Approved add-ons should be made the week prior and *never during the same week.*

You may drop off your registration calendar with payment to the Frankfort Park District at 140 Oak Street or at the Prairie Care site. There is also an after-hours locked drop box located at the 140 Oak Street address. Cash and credit cards will be handled only at the Frankfort Park District business office at 140 Oak Street. **Emailed registrations are only accepted through [registration@frankfortparks.org](mailto:registration@frankfortparks.org).** Fillable forms are available on our website under the tab *Programs and Registration Information > Prairie Care.* Once you have completed the fillable form, save it and email it to [registration@frankfortparks.org](mailto:registration@frankfortparks.org). **Photographs of registration forms WILL NOT be accepted; only PDF's. Staff should be provided a credit card on file for emailed registration calendar forms.** Parents are encouraged to keep a set schedule for the sake of the staffing schedules and your child's safety.

For late pick up, a \$25.00 fee will be charged for the first 15 minutes you are late after 6:30 pm. After the 15 minutes, one dollar for every minute thereafter will be charged. We will set our clocks by the school district clocks. The school district asks that after 8:00 am or prior to 3:30 pm, no cars be in the bus loop. You may use the parent parking lot or the main parking lot.

## **SHOES**

Prairie Care will follow the school district's policy concerning non - marking shoes only in the gym. Children not wearing the proper shoes will not be allowed to play in the gym. Removing their shoes and running in their stocking feet will not be allowed.

## **ABSENCES**

It is the Parent's responsibility to report absences to Prairie Care. It is not the school district's responsibility to take messages for Prairie Care. Call before 8:30 am at 815-641-2458. You may leave a message on the answering machine. There is no pro rating of fees due to non-attendance.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

We recommend that personal belongings such as toys, handheld games, phones, sports equipment, etc. not be brought to Prairie Care, unless Prairie Care has arranged a special day for items, such as *Thursday Electronics Day*. If these special scheduled days become problematic, changes will be made. The staff/Frankfort Park District will not be held responsible for the children's personal belongings.

**ALL CHILDREN MUST BE TOILET TRAINED AND BE ABLE TO INDEPENDANTLY USE BATHROOM FACILITIES. PRAIRIE CARE STAFF WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ASSIST PARTICIPANTS IN BATHROOMS. CHILDREN MAY NOT WEAR PULL -UPS. IF A CHILD HAS A TOILETING ACCIDENT, A PARENT WILL BE CALLED TO PICK UP THEIR CHILD IMMEDIATELY.**

## **EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND HEALTH POLICY**

Prairie Care will always try to provide a safe environment for your children, but occasionally children are hurt or injured. In the event of such an occurrence, Prairie Care will follow the procedure below:

- A. A call will be made to inform you of the situation. If you cannot be reached, we will call the emergency numbers that you have provided.
- B. Medical paramedics will be called to handle any serious accidents.
- C. If your child needs medical care, we accompany them to the nearest facility.
- D. You must meet us at the medical facility as soon as possible.

If your child is ill or has a fever (100.4°F or above), please do not bring them to Prairie Care. Please do not send a participant who has any of the following: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, runny nose, pink eye, etc. If we are made aware of a contagious disease that was brought to Prairie Care, such as COVID-19, chicken pox, strep throat, lice, or pink eye, we will notify you as soon as possible and we will respect your confidentiality in reporting the illness. Please keep in mind, a signed doctor's note will be required for a participant to return to Prairie Care if they were out due to a contagious disease/illness.

If a child becomes ill during Prairie Care, a parent will be notified and asked to pick up the child immediately. If a parent is unavailable, the emergency contact will be called. **Children who are not feeling well during Prairie Care will be quarantined in a designated area and must be picked up from Prairie Care immediately. Parents should be available to pick up their child in a timely manner (20 – 30 minutes). Continued failure to pick up on a timely manner will result in discharge from the program.**

## **BEHAVIOR REQUIREMENTS**

Discipline is carried out in a way to help your children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own behavior. It is kind and gentle, yet firm. It is based on four overall rules:

- A. A child may not disturb or hurt others, verbally or physically.
- B. A child may not damage equipment.
- C. A child may not place himself/herself in dangerous situations.
- D. A child needs to listen and respect staff.

## **REMEDY PROCEDURES**

Staff will redirect the uncooperative child to another activity or redirect the entire activity into a more wholesome direction. Staff will encourage children to work out their own solutions. Staff will help children to understand one another's actions.

Staff will attempt to correct improper language. Sometimes we say, "talk nicely". Excessive swearing, etc. will be addressed to both the parents and the child. Continued problems may result in dismissal for the day of the program.

One of our most recurring and disruptive problems has been name-calling and verbal abuse between children. If this occurs children are given a verbal warning, followed by a time out separation, and lastly, if the problem persists the child could be suspended from the program.

Discipline is the responsibility of the staff as well as the parents. If there is an assessment of the child's pattern of unacceptable behavior the entire staff shall be made aware of it and cooperate in carrying out the specific plan developed for the child.

If there is concern, the Recreation Supervisor may consult the school to gain some insight on daily concerns as well as consult with the parents.

Prairie Care has developed a program of written warnings for inappropriate behavior. The child will receive a written warning for inappropriate behavior (hitting, foul language, etc.) This will be signed by the child, parent and the staff member. On the third warning, after discussing it with you and your child, your child will be given an immediate one-day suspension from Prairie Care. Recurring problems could result in a permanent dismissal from Prairie Care.

**If inappropriate behavior becomes severe, the program's practice of written warnings may not be used and a suspension or discharge may occur immediately.**

## **DISCHARGE POLICY**

A child may be discharged from Prairie Care if any of the conditions outlined above arise. Discharge is the last alternative but will be implemented if the problem poses immediate danger to the welfare of the participants and/or is a detriment to the quality of the program operation.

1. **Verification of falsified admission records or incomplete forms.**
2. **Participant's actions cause endangerment to the safety of self and/or the other participants and staff of the program and newly established behavior management techniques fail. This includes inappropriate behavior, action or language.**
3. **Repeat violations of the transportation arrangements for the child, i.e. no phone call to the program when the child will not be in attendance.**
4. **Repeat violations of payment policies and due dates.**
5. **Repeat violations of the late pick up by the parents of the after care (6:30pm) pick up time.**
6. **The childcare needs of the participants are incompatible.**
7. **Any additional violations or concerns deemed unacceptable by the Prairie Care Staff.**

## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication efforts will be implemented through a variety of ways. Letters or emails from the Recreation Supervisor will be sent home, as important information needs to be addressed.

Talking to the staff on a daily basis is another means of communication. If you have any concerns please call the Recreation Supervisor, Kristen Morrison at 464-2887 or 464-5579. You may also reach me at [kmorrison@frankfortparks.org](mailto:kmorrison@frankfortparks.org)

## **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones will not be permitted at Prairie Care. If they are bringing phones to or from school, they should be keep them in their backpack at all times during Prairie Care. If a cell phone is seen outside of their backpack, it will be taken away until the end of the day. If the child needs to contact the parent in an emergency or vice versa, they may use the Prairie Care phone. The Prairie Care cell phone number is 815-641-2458. If the child cannot adhere to the phone or technology rules, they will be dismissed from the program.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

The Park District strictly prohibits and does not tolerate weapons at any Park District facility, on any Park District property, or at any Park District-sponsored event.

Weapons include visible and concealed weapons, including those for which the owner has necessary permits. Weapons can include firearms, knives with a blade longer than three (3) inches, explosive materials or any other objects that could be used to harass, intimidate, or injure another individual, employee, manager, or supervisor.

## **ADA**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, The Frankfort Park District and The School District 157 C will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate children with disabilities. Parents are encouraged to provide any related information to assist Prairie Care in providing a quality service to the child. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the park district of any medical, physical and/or mental condition that may require special consideration. Confidentiality will be respected.

## **INCLUSION SUPPORT**

Inclusion support is designed to provide the least restrictive environment while providing the maximum opportunity to participate in park district programs with reasonable accommodations. Prairie Care will work with staff from Lincolnway Special Recreation Association to make every effort to provide participants with disabilities with reasonable accommodations. Should your child be in need of inclusion services, it is your responsibility to complete the appropriate forms provided by the park district, so a request can be made to review and process the participant's inclusion needs. This process may take up to two weeks. Lincolnway Special Recreation Association will make contact with the parent/guardian after a review is complete and decisions have been made on the best course of action concerning your child's needs.



# Prairie Care Phone System

Prairie Care currently has two phones:

- **Office Phone # - 815-464-2887**  
You may leave a message on the office phone answering machine. The office is closed between 8:30 am – 2:30 pm.
  
- **Prairie Care Cell Phone # 815-641-2458**

The Prairie Care Cell phone is used not only as a phone, but also as an alert system. This phone is your way into the building. When the staff members hear this phone ring, they will come to the door and open it for you or buzz you into the building for drop off and pick up. You may come into the Prairie Care location where you will sign your child in/out. *Please do not ring the Grand Prairie office bell for admittance to Prairie Care.*

We encourage you to enter both numbers into your contact list on your cell phone. Both numbers will be posted on the front door for your convenience.

Please contact Prairie Care or park district office staff if you have questions about the current phone system.

Thank you!



**Prairie Care Handbook Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook outlining the policies of the Prairie Care Program and it meets with my approval.

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Signature

Date