

WILLET EARLY CHILDHOOD
CENTER

LITTLE MUSTANGS PRESCHOOL
ACADEMY

STUDENT HANDBOOK

BLUE PAGES

2018-2019



NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES • JAMES R. SAVAGE EDUCATIONAL CENTER

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DAVID L. THOMSON, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

ALEXANDER WYETH, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum,
Instruction & Assessment

September, 2018

Dear Families,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Norwood Public Schools for the 2018- 2019 school year. The mission of the Norwood Public Schools is to seek academic excellence for all children in an environment which is safe, nurturing, and supportive, to inspire in them an enduring love for learning, and prepare them to contribute as citizens of a diverse community. This handbook is provided to make certain that each student and their family has full knowledge and access to the rules, expectations, and day-to-day procedures to ensure success in the Norwood Public Schools. Thus, it is imperative that you review this document together and should you find any questions or concerns, please be sure to contact the administration at your student's school.

As you know each school year is an exciting opportunity to learn and develop as individuals. Central to this effort is good communication between the home and school that creates a partnership focused on an enjoyable and productive learning environment. We look forward to working together to ensure a successful school year.

Sincerely,

David L. Thomson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



WILLETT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Norwood Public Schools

100 Westover Parkway

Norwood, MA 02062

Telephone: (781) 440-5902

September 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the Willett Early Childhood Center and Little Mustangs Preschool Academy! The Willett Early Childhood Center at 100 Westover Parkway houses all the Kindergarten classrooms for the Norwood Public Schools. The Little Mustangs Preschool Academy (LMPA) located at the Savage Center at 275 Prospect St houses the Integrated Preschool Program for the Norwood Public Schools. We look forward to an exciting year filled with discovery and learning.

This handbook has been prepared to answer some of your questions about the Willett and LMPA. The handbook also contains information about the policies of the Norwood Public Schools, and the rights and responsibilities for students, parents, and guardians. The blue pages in the middle are specific to the Willett and LMPA, and should be of particular interest to you. Please take the time to read it thoroughly, and keep it handy for reference throughout this school year.

In addition to the information in the handbook, you will find more about the Norwood Public Schools and the Willett /LMPA when you visit our webpage:

<http://www.norwood.k12.ma.us>.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Robbins

Carolyn Robbins, Principal

crobbins@norwood.k12.ma.us

**WILLETT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER/
LITTLE MUSTANGS PRESCHOOL ACADEMY**

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Willett Early Childhood Center is to maximize the potential for all students to:

- Experience a safe, friendly and cooperative educational environment as a naturalistic setting for learning experiences.
- Experience developmentally appropriate programs that respect individual differences helping each child to reach his/her potential.
- Acquire intellectual and social skills in an age appropriate environment.
- Develop a positive self-concept in an environment that promotes and accepts the individual child.
- Understand, accept and respect the cultural and intellectual differences of a diverse society by example provided by staff.
- Explore technology in an age appropriate environment.

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Named after the Norwood benefactor, George F. Willett, this school originally opened in 1968 to accommodate students in grade kindergarten through grade 5. In June of 1981 it closed, due to dwindling enrollments, and re-opened as the Willett Administration Building for the Norwood Public Schools. One wing of the building remained in use for students of the Norwood Integrated Preschool Program, as well for students enrolled in the collaborative classrooms of The Education Cooperative.

As a result of the Quality Full-Day Kindergarten Grant, the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education, and town appropriations, the building is now known as The Willett Early Childhood Center. It consists of thirteen kindergarten classrooms. The building includes a library, a multi-purpose cafeteria, a gymnasium, a nurse's office, principal's office, and various other offices and conference areas.

The Integrated Preschool Program moved from the Willett Early Childhood Center to the newly-named Little Mustangs Preschool Academy at the Savage Center in the winter of 2018. It is a state regulated program for children with Individualized Educational Plans and peer role models. The ratio of children without special needs to those with special education needs is 8:7, as mandated by the Department of Early Education and Care. The maximum number of children per class is 15. Peer role models are selected through a lottery process. Applications are available in early November for the next school year and an Open House is held during the second week of November for parents interested in viewing the classrooms. In order to be part of the lottery process, children must be 3 years of age by August 31st of the coming school year. They must reside in Norwood, demonstrate strong language skills, and be toilet trained. There is no transportation for preschool students without special needs.

PRESCHOOL PAYMENT POLICY

Families are responsible to make payments for preschool tuition. Tuition may be paid by check, money order, or cash. Check should be made out to "Town of Norwood". Families are notified of monthly payments via an invoice in their child's backpack on the first of every month.

Tuition payments are due on the fifteenth of each month.

Late payments:

**Families must notify the principal in writing or by a phone call when a payment will be late.*

***Two months past due- principal will call and make an arrangement with the family*

****Three months past due- student may not attend until payment is in full.*

The Full Day Kindergarten at the Willett provides free full day kindergarten classes 9:00am-2:30pm Monday – Friday to all Norwood kindergarten students.

BUS TAGS

All kindergarten students receive a colored, plastic bus tag at the start of the school year. These tags identify the children as Willett students and must be attached to the child's back pack, regardless of whether he/she rides the bus. Please do not obscure the tags with stickers or other materials as the information written on them provides guidance to teachers and bus drivers.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Preschool:

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Morning Session | 8:30-11:00 |
| Afternoon Session | 12:00-2:30 |
| Extended Program | 8:30-1:30 |

Kindergarten:

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| School begins | 9:00 |
| First lunch | 11:25 |
| Second lunch | 12:00 |
| Third lunch | 12:35 |
| Dismissal | 2:30 |

Recess time will vary according to classroom schedules. We make every effort to spend part of each day outside. Please make certain that your child dresses appropriately for the weather. Hats and even mittens are sometimes necessary in early fall or late spring.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Willett Early Childhood Center (Kindergarten)

100 Westover Parkway

Parents/caregivers who drive students to school, or pick them up at dismissal, **MUST** use extreme caution when entering school grounds. Please pay attention to signage. You must not park in marked fire lanes.

Arrival

Kindergarten bus students are escorted into the building through Door #1. Students arriving by car will immediately turn right upon entering the Willett property. The school will be on your left. Cars will stay in a single file line and continue to the orange cones in the back of the building. The principal or designated staff member will be outside Door #4 each morning beginning at 8:45. (Students should not arrive at school before this time, as there is no supervision available) Students will disembark from the driver's side of the vehicle at any point between the two cones. Once your child has exited the car, please continue on the road behind the school and exit by the ball field side of the parking lot. All cars will take a right out of the road and make a loop around the ball field lot and out the main lot. Drop-off for kindergarten is between 8:45 and 9:00 am. If you are arriving after 9:00 am, please park in a spot and walk your child up to Door # 1 and sign in at the office.

If it is necessary to walk your kindergarten student to the front door prior to 9:00, please follow the above procedure, but continue through the car line, park in the ball field lot and walk with your student to Door #1 in the front of the building. After the first few weeks of school, we encourage parents to follow the above drop-off procedure and keep walk-ups to a minimum.

The back road is used only between 8:45 and 9:00am, it is closed and inaccessible after that time.

Dismissal

At the end of the day, bus students are escorted to the gym or cafeteria where they are accounted for and prepared for boarding buses as they arrive at Door #1. If you are picking up your student in a car you must park in the lot adjacent to the ball field and walk to the door your child's classroom is assigned to for pick-ups/walkers. If you plan to walk to the school and walk your child home, you should walk directly to your child's classroom pick-up/walker door. You will be informed of your child's classroom dismissal door on or before the first day of school. Please note: Kindergarten students are not allowed to walk home from school unless they are accompanied by an authorized adult.

If there are any changes in your child's daily routine, such as early dismissal or getting picked up at school by someone other than a parent/guardian, a note signed by the parent/guardian, must be sent to the child's teacher informing us of that change.

Little Mustangs Preschool Academy (Preschool)

275 Prospect St

Preschool students are met by teachers at door #24 and #23 of the Savage Center. You should park on the right side of the traffic circle in a parking spot. Escort your child using one of the designated walkways to their assigned door and wait for the teacher or paraprofessional aide to retrieve your student. Return to your car and **PROCEED WITH EXTREME CAUTION AND ALERTNESS** as you exit through the traffic circle. At dismissal time, park in the same lot and walk to your student's assigned door where your student will be handed off by the preschool teacher or paraprofessional aide. You will be informed of your door assignment before the first day of school.

If there are any changes in your child's daily routine, such as early dismissal or getting picked up at school by someone other than a parent/guardian, a note signed by the parent/guardian, must be sent to the child's teacher informing us of that change.

EXTENDED DAY

Arrangements have been made with the Norwood Extended Day program to offer Before School care, at the Willett, beginning at 7:45 A.M. At the end of the kindergarten day, transportation will be provided to take those students who have enrolled in the after-school Extended Day program to the James R. Savage Educational Center, 275 Prospect Street.

Please be aware that there is a fee for both of these programs. Parents must enroll their child in advance by contacting Sylvia Delaney at (781) 440-5902.

ABSENCES

The attendance of children will be checked each morning, at the beginning of the day. The cooperation of parents is needed in order to accomplish this practice. If your child will be absent from school, please do one of the following:

1. Call the school absence line before 9:00A.M. leaving your child's name, teacher, date and reason for absence.
Willett Early Childhood Center: **781-762-6805**
Little Mustangs Preschool Academy: **781-440-5802**
2. If you have access to a computer, email the secretary.
Willett: Diane Horton (dhorton@norwood.k12.ma.us)
LMPA: Sherry Sullivan (ssullivan@norwood.k12.ma.us)

If the parent or guardian has not notified the school by 9:00 A.M., the school will try to reach you by using the numbers recorded on the emergency card.

HEALTH DISMISSALS

Please remember that the nurse's office is small and a constant center of activity. Therefore we are unable to properly care for sick/injured children over long periods of time.

Children who become ill/injured during the school day will be dismissed from school to their parents, someone designated on their emergency card or someone designated by the parent who has given the school nurse a direct communication. In cases of acute emergencies, the child will be transported by ambulance to Norwood Hospital immediately.

Children who are ill/injured will not be sent back to class if the school nurse determines that it is not in their best interest or the best interest of the other children in the classroom.

If at the end of the school day, the nurse cannot reach a parent or designee, the student will be sent home the way they are normally expected to go. The exception to this would be if the school nurse determines that the child is too injured or too ill to leave the school unaccompanied by a parent or designee.

SNACKS/BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

In accordance with the Norwood Public School's Wellness Policy, The Willett Early Childhood Center/LMPA is a healthy choice environment. We encourage children to bring healthy food choices to school for snack and lunch.

Birthday celebrations in classrooms cannot include food in accordance with the state mandated Law Relative to School Nutrition. The uses of non-food celebrations/recognition for birthdays are encouraged. Please consult with the classroom teacher.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the year, professional development days are scheduled to allow teachers to participate in educational workshops. On the Professional Development half days, kindergarten is dismissed at 12:00. There are no afternoon preschool classes on Professional Development Days. The extended day preschool class dismisses at 11:00 with all morning session preschool classes. Lunch will be served before dismissal. There is **no school** on the full Professional Development Days.

SAFETY CONCERNS

In the interest of student safety, children may not bring umbrellas to the Willett Early Childhood Center or LMPA, as they can cause unintentional injury to other students. Children may not wear flip-flops to school. Shoes, sneakers, and sandals with straps are appropriate footwear for preschool and kindergarten students. Willett/LMPA students may not bring bicycles, roller blades, roller skates, skateboards, hover boards or scooters to school.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Willett PTO is composed of parents and teachers working together for the purpose of enriching our children's educational experience. Parent organizations traditionally plan, organize and present a number of events during the school year. Parent organizations raise money to help pay for transportation for school field trips, cultural arts presentations, library books, software, playground equipment and supplies for family events through various fundraising events. Our PTO helps provide parent volunteers to work in our school as room parents, lunchroom, and playground and library helpers. A commitment to this group will require one evening each month. Meetings are generally held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, at 7pm in the school cafeteria.

All parents are welcome to attend these meetings.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are one way to learn more about how your child is progressing in school. In addition, the parent can provide the teacher with insight and information regarding the child's abilities and personality.

Afternoon and evening conferences are scheduled once a year in preschool and twice a year in kindergarten. Your child will bring home notices regarding dates and times.

Individual conferences may be requested and are generally held after school. Please request an appointment time either by note or telephone.

TECHNOLOGY

Each kindergarten classroom has 2 PC's, one printer, and access to a number of networked educational programs. Several classrooms also have Teacher Media Workstations. These consist of a laptop and an in-focus projector, and are used by the teacher for classroom presentations.

Ladibug document cameras are available to project and enlarge print material for lesson enhancement and easier viewing by students. All kindergarten classrooms have four iPad2s for student use in center-based and individual work. All teachers at the Willett have an iPad2 for data collection, app research, and other learning activities. Smart boards are utilized in all kindergarten classrooms. The school library, nurse, secretary, preschool, and principal all have PC's and printers. All staff has access to e-mail and (filtered) internet.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Willett School Council is made up of parents and teachers who meet once a month. This group works with the principal to create the annual School Improvement Plan