

# Piedmont Recreation Department

## Hillside Playschool 2024/2025 Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the Hillside Playschool Program?**

At Hillside Playschool, we love teaching children and treasure their curiosity, imagination, hugs, and laughter!

Hillside Playschool is a play-based preschool program that emphasizes learning through active engagement with the environment, both indoors and outdoors. With an emergent curriculum, children follow their interests and learn at their own pace with short and long-term activities. Most of all, at Hillside Playschool we have lots and lots of fun!

Our classroom has areas to work on process art, make music, create with loose parts, build with blocks, work with playdough, explore the sensory table, read books, and “cook” and dress up in the dramatic play area. We love to work on floor puzzles and learn simple board games. We love to dance and learn simple yoga and breathing exercises. We also love to use our five senses working on weekly cooking projects.

All these various areas give children the opportunity to flex their early math/problem-solving, literacy, and critical thinking skills through play!

We try to spend as much time outdoors as possible. Children at Hillside Playschool should be prepared to be outside in all kinds of weather: sunny, cold, and rainy. We play daily in our dedicated outdoor space at the Piedmont Recreation Department, as well as visit Piedmont Park looking for bugs and birds, learn about the different trees, explore the creek, and run, jump, and climb in the playground area. Being outside in the fresh air promotes healthy bodies and minds!

We strive to support self-confidence and independence while encouraging empathy and positive social skills. We emphasize kindness and respect for each other and the world around us.

### **How old must my child be to attend Hillside Playschool?**

Children eligible for Hillside Playschool are 3 & 4 years of age. They must be 3 years old BY August 1 or turn 5 years old AFTER December 31, 2024.

### **Where is Hillside Playschool located?**

Due to the Piedmont Community Pool construction schedule, Hillside Playschool meets at 801 Magnolia’s East Wing, located at 801 Magnolia Avenue (the East Wing Entrance is mid-block on Bonita Avenue across the street from the Corey Reich Tennis Courts).

### **What are the dates and times of Hillside Playschool during the 2024/2025 School Year?**

Hillside Playschool meets four days a week, Monday–Thursday, from 9:00 am–1:00 pm. Opportunities for a Friday Fun Day may be announced (watch this space)!

### **What is the duration of the Hillside Playschool program?**

Hillside Playschool is a two-year program that runs from August to May of the following calendar year. Children currently enrolled in their first year of Hillside Playschool, and who are age-appropriate, are guaranteed their class spot the following school year. Families must participate in the annual registration

process, but will receive priority enrollment. Please Note: Second-year enrollment is only guaranteed for the same child; it cannot be transferred to siblings, family members, etc.

Opportunities for summer programming may be available and announced closer to the summer season.

### **What is the class ratio and maximum enrollment at Hillside Playschool?**

There is an approximate 5:1 student-to-teacher ratio. During the lottery phase of registration, within each class, we prefer to balance the number of boys and girls in attendance. Max enrollment is 14 students.

### **How much is the tuition at Hillside Playschool?**

Based on an hourly rate, tuition is calculated for all preschool programs from a child's start date to the end of the school year and broken down into flat-rate monthly payments (holiday breaks are calculated into the school year tuition).

Fees are collected monthly, typically on the 5th of each month. There is a marginal difference between resident and non-resident rates. A typical monthly payment is \$1109.00 for residents and \$1139.00 for non-residents. Your first payment will be due at the time of lottery enrollment, subsequent payments are made October–May of the following year.

**Please Note:** Because Preschool enrollment takes place before the City's annual budget process begins, please be aware that the hourly rates for Preschool may increase in the next fiscal year. Your first month's tuition will be honored, however, subsequent payments may be adjusted to reflect a higher rate.

### **I heard PRD registers via Lottery. What is it and how does it work?**

To provide equitable opportunities for enrollment, PRD has designed a lottery system to select participants for each program.

The preschool lotteries consist of two registration date ranges: Piedmont residents will first have access to the online registration and following the first resident deadline (see dates below), online registration will then open to all families. A second deadline and lottery will take place for non-residents, one-week later. While Piedmont residents do receive priority registration, historically spaces are available for non-residents following the resident lottery.

As children are selected from the lottery, program rosters will be created. Once a program is full, any remaining children in the lottery will continue to be randomly selected and the school year waitlist will be formed.

Following the lottery, families can continue to add to the waitlist. As no additional lotteries will take place, entries will be called from the waitlist in timestamp order.

### **When can I register and when is the deadline for the 2024/2025 school year?**

**Piedmont Residents** can register their child(ren) for the 2024/2025 school year beginning Monday, January 22nd at 8:00 am via [Community Pass](#). The Piedmont Resident registration **DEADLINE is Friday, February 2, 2024, at 4:00 pm**. Proof of residency may be required at the time of registration. Use of grandparents or other Piedmont residences is not permitted.

**Non-Residents** will be able to register their child(ren) beginning Monday, February 5th at 8:00 am via [Community Pass](#). Non-Resident registration **DEADLINE is Friday, February 9, 2024, at 4:00 pm**.

Following the lottery deadlines, families will continue to have opportunities to add to the program waitlist. As no additional lotteries will take place, vacancies will be filled from the waitlist, in timestamp order.

## IMPORTANT NOTES:

- The registration portal will not be viewable to the public until their designated registration time.
- All children are automatically WAITLISTED upon registration, enrollment from the lottery will be processed, by PRD staff, from this list.
- Should a resident add their child to a preschool waitlist between the two lottery deadlines, they will be contacted and enrolled, pending space availability prior to non-resident enrollment.

## How do I register for the 2024/2025 school year?

Registration is processed through PRD's [Community Pass](#) website. *This step is required for all families to be entered into the preschool lottery and considered for enrollment.*

Before registration, please complete all 3 steps to prepare for your child's preschool registration (account creation, add family members, add payment method). Click [HERE](#) to learn how to create a [Community Pass](#) Account and/or log in.

At the time of registration, all registrants are automatically placed on a "waitlist". Please only add your child to a preschool list that you are willing to accept. During the lottery, if your child is selected, PRD will accept your registration request and enroll your child into the designated preschool program.

If you have submitted for multiple and are selected for more than one program, PRD staff will contact families to confirm program preference (72 hour deadline from invitation). After which time, and at the discretion of PRD, my child will be assigned to one preschool program, and sent an enrollment confirmation.

After the lottery period, as spaces become available, families will be contacted, in timestamp order, via email, to fill vacancies.

## Preschool Registration Process

- Select your child(ren) from your family account, choose your desired preschool program(s), and follow prompts to complete your transaction. You will not be charged for this transaction.
- Families are required to store a credit card in their Community Pass account prior to the lottery deadline. Failure to do so may delay or prevent enrollment into a preschool program.
- Following lottery deadlines, families will be notified, via email, regarding your enrollment status, typically 3 to 5 business days following the deadline. Your child will only be enrolled into and charged for ONE program.
- If your child is enrolled in a preschool program, a first month's tuition is due and will be processed. The first month's tuition is refundable (less \$50 processing fee) up to 14 days following the confirmed enrollment transaction date. Requests must be made, in writing, to [prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov](mailto:prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov). **After 14 days, payment is NON-REFUNDABLE.**
- Families that remain on the waitlist following the lottery will also be notified, via email.

## I'm already enrolled in a PRD Preschool program. Do I need to re-register this next year?

In some cases, yes. If your child is enrolled in their first year of Hillside Playschool and/or Skipping Stones, are age-eligible, and received a priority invite for a second year, will receive priority enrollment (but are required to participate in the enrollment process). All other families will need to re-register/waitlist for the next school year (i.e. Tiddlywinks → Hillside Playschool or Skipping Stones or HP/SS → Pre-K).

## I'm already on a PRD waitlist. Do I need to re-register this year?

To provide new opportunities for families to register during a new school year, PRD renews their waitlists during each open preschool registration period. If your child is on a waitlist for a previous school year, you will need to re-register/waitlist for the next school year.

### **Do incoming siblings receive priority?**

As preschool enrollment is lottery-based, and provides equitable opportunities for all families, sibling priority is not offered.

### **Do you accept friend requests?**

As enrollment is a lottery-based system, we cannot take friend requests.

### **I'm Enrolled! When will I receive my Preschool Welcome Packet and School Year Info?**

Preschool packets for the 2024/2025 school year will be sent, via email, late May 2024. Families will be required to complete and submit program forms by August 1, which can include: Parent Handbook Agreement Form, Participant Intake Form, Walking Permission Form, Immunization Records, Medication Consent and Epi-Pen Plan (if applicable), Getting to Know You Form (Tiddlywinks).

### **Must my child be toilet-trained?**

Children who attend Skipping Stones **MUST BE fully toilet-trained, and use the toilet independently**, prior to the first day of attendance. Pull-Ups and/or other toilet-training clothing items and devices are not permissible.

Upon receiving PRD's preschool welcome packet, if your child is not yet toilet-trained and using the toilet independently, please contact [prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov](mailto:prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov) immediately to discuss enrollment options and considerations.

### **What steps is PRD taking to ensure safety during ongoing concerns of COVID-19 and other health-related illnesses?**

The health and safety of our participants is a partnership between staff, families, school, and your medical provider. PRD Staff will continue with developed safety protocols which may include daily health screenings, maximizing the use of outdoor classroom space, and the use of indoor air purifiers. Families are expected to observe their child(ren) each morning for any signs of illness. Please note that some illnesses require isolation to ensure the ill child's protection, and to protect the other children, families, and staff. If you are unsure if your child should attend class, please reach out to your program director with questions or concerns.

### **Who do I contact PRD if I have additional questions?**

Staff can be reached anytime via email or phone at [prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov](mailto:prdpreschools@piedmont.ca.gov) or (510) 420-3070 during office hours, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm (excluding City holidays).