



WELCOME TO THE PRESCHOOL ROOM

Ages 3-4 years



Welcome to the preschool classroom. This is an exciting time for your child. It is a big step to move from the toddler room to becoming an independent preschooler. What sets our three year olds apart is their new found ability to express themselves in words and they enjoy taking part in conversations. They love to explore the world with all their senses.

Our four year olds are a wonderful mix of independence; they love playing with others, and exploring the world with curiosity and imagination. For this reason, we create a learning environment that meets a range of children's developmental needs.

The classroom will incorporate a wide variety of materials and interest centers where children will be able to construct knowledge and learn through play. Utilizing the framework of the "Creative Curriculum", a researched based curriculum and Pennsylvania learning standards based on child development, the teachers will integrate the following content areas into daily learning:

Social Skills:

- *Making and expressing choices and plans
- *Taking care of one's own needs
- *Participating in group routines
- *Being sensitive to the feelings, interests, and needs of others
- *Expressing feelings in words and resolving conflicts

Math:

- *Comparing the number of things in two sets to determine "more", "fewer", and "same number"
- *Sorting objects by size, shape, and attributes of the objects
- *Arranging objects in a pattern and describing their relationship
- *Counting objects and numeral identification
- *Measuring and comparing

Language and Literacy:

- *Having fun with language, listening to stories, finger plays, poems, making up stories, and rhymes
- *Talking and listening
- *Writing in various ways: drawing, scribbling, copying letters and words
- *Hearing rhymes and sounds in words
- *Recognizing of the letters of the alphabet and one's name

Creative Expression:

- *Pretending and role playing

- *Moving to music and singing
- *Playing simple musical instruments
- *Making models out of clay, blocks, and other materials
- *Drawing and painting

Physical Development:

- *Using tools (scissors, markers, crayons, pencils) for cutting and writing
- *Coordinating eye-hand movement
- *Moving in different ways: running, jumping, hopping, skipping, marching, climbing, and balancing

Science

- *Learning about living things
- *Exploring the earth and environment
- *Exploring physical properties, simple machines, and magnets

Social Studies

- *Learning about themselves and their role in their family
- *Developing an understanding of past, present, and future
- *Learning about their neighborhood and community workers and their jobs

Healthy Habits

- *Understanding of healthy eating habits
- *Engaging in physical activities in the YMCA pool and gym
- *Understanding the rules for physical safety

Our day is a balance of child-directed/teacher-directed activities, active/quiet play, and small group/large group activities.

Center play involves:

- *Children making choices and decisions (our goal is to foster independence)
- *Individualize learning levels
- *Freedom to move around (young bodies need to move)
- *Number and word recognition (using pictures, words, and numbers—how many can be there?—or where do these toys and materials belong?)
- *Language exchange and problem solving between children
- *Active learning participation by children
- *Clean-up before moving to another activity

OUR DAILY SCHEDULE

- 6:15-8:00 Sign in and choice time
- 8:00-8:30 Free play inside or Outdoor play (if possible)
- 8:30 -9:00 Clean up play areas and hygiene
- 9:00-9:30 Hygiene and breakfast snack
- 9:30-10:00 Circle time, morning greetings, show & tell, stories, and songs
- 10:00-10:30 (WEDNESDAY) Gym Class
- 10:00-11:00 Centers and small group time—During this part of the day learning centers will be open and small group activities such as: cooking, science projects, art, and theme activities will be available. Your child may want to spend the whole time at one activity or choose to do them all.
- Our centers include:
- *Block & car
 - *Manipulative shelf (building toys)
 - *Dramatic play- theme area
 - *Musical instruments
 - *Art center/Easel
 - *Quiet area-books, puzzles, board games, computer
 - *Writing Center
 - *Water/sensory table
 - *Science and math center
 - *Gym fun or swim time (Friday)
- 11:30-11:45 Clean up time
- 11:45-12:15 Hygiene and Lunch
- 12:15-12:30 Clean up lunch, and journals
- 12:30-1:15 Outdoor play or indoor center play and bathroom time
- 1:15-1:30 Story time
- 1:30-3:30 Hygiene, nap, quiet rest time
- 3:30-4:00 Clean up sleep things, hygiene, bathroom time, and snack
- 4:00-5:00 Outdoor play or center play—children will be able to select from the following activities
- *Playdough
 - *Free art
 - *Sensory table
 - *Blocks
 - *Table games or manipulatives
- 5:00-6:00 Quiet activities or outside time

General Reminders

OUTSIDE PLAY

Outside play is a daily occurrence. Children enjoy the benefit of playing outdoors in all except extreme weather. We use the guidelines set by The American Pediatric Association for outdoor play. The children will not go outside if temperatures are below 15 degrees F wind chill or if the heat index is above 89 degrees F. During warm months playtime will be limited during hot midday sun (10:00am-2:00pm). Please make sure your child is dressed warmly for outdoor play during the winter months. Scarves, mittens, hoods or hats will keep them from getting chilled. During the warm summer months hats or visors to protect from the sun are advised. **For safety reasons active play requires sturdy shoes or sneakers. Your child should not come to the center in sandals or flip-flops. Parents will be asked to provide a safe play shoe before leaving their child at the center.** Families are encouraged to send sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher) to the center. **Parents must sign a permission slip for sunscreen application**, which will be kept in our classroom, and grants staff permission to apply the sunscreen during outdoor activities.

EXTRA CLOTHES

Please send two sets of weather appropriate clothes (shirt, underwear, pants, socks) in a plastic shoebox labeled with your child's name. We will use these clothes if your child needs to change during the day due to a spill or bathroom accident. We will send written reminders to replace clothes or when the season changes.

LUNCH

Lunch is a nourishing social time. The children are asked to stay seated while they eat. We encourage proper use of utensils and we help those still learning. **When meals are sent from home, food should be cut in manageable pieces for ease of eating. Please write your child's name and date on all perishable food items. Place all perishable food items in the classroom refrigerator. Please make sure that all food packed for your child can be re-heated within 45 seconds. We do not accept tv dinners or meals that take longer than 45 seconds in the microwave.**

HOT LUNCH

If your child would like to participate in our hot lunch program that is offered on Friday's, please fill out the lunch forms given out each week. The cost of lunch is \$2.50 per child. Please return the lunch form and money to the payment box by the Thursday before. On Friday's we have pizza, purchased from Sal's Pizza-Randa. Your child will enjoy a slice of pizza, a garlic knot, and a drink.

NAP ITEMS

Naptime provides a time to relax and recharge. Nap supplies should include a small travel pillow, a crib sheet (to cover the mat), a blanket, and a stuffed animal. **Please make sure to label ALL nap supplies with your child's name.** For health reasons, we must store sleep items in such a way that there is no contact between bed linens. A tote bag or backpack is a MUST for sanitary storage of sleep items. **Friday all sleep items should be taken home and washed, then brought back on Monday.**

ACCIDENTS AND MEDICATIONS

Accidents happen. Toddler's balance and walking skills are just developing. If your child gets hurt, we will record the injury on an accident form. You will be notified at pick-up time if the injury is minor and will be asked to sign the accident report. We call parents immediately if the injury is more serious.

Sometimes toddlers go through a horrifying stage of biting, which is a major problem for the group. Biting is not something to blame on the children, parents, or caregivers. Biting is the act of an individual not yet equipped to be fully social. There is no blame but our program will accept responsibility for providing a safe setting and make the program work for all children. We will always notify the family of the bitten child and also the family of the biter and communicate our plan of action to control biting in the program. (See attachment)

Please refer to our parent handbook for our medication and health policy. One medication policy that is often misunderstood deals with over-the-counter medications (Tylenol, diaper ointment, oral gel, etc...). **We will need a note from your physician to administer these medications.** The note must contain instructions for dose, time, duration of use, and be signed by the health provider. Your physician may fax a note to 215-536-2943. When your child is taking a medication during the time at the center, you will also be asked to sign a medication log and we will keep the physician's note with the medication log.

FAMILY MAILBOXES

Each child has a family mailbox/cubby in our classroom. Please check it daily for family messages or newsletters. Each child will also have a clipboard and daily log sheet. We will record how your child eats, their diapering/potty times, and a daily observation of their participation in classroom activities. If you need to write a note to the head teacher, you may do so on the back of the daily log sheet. Your child's artwork and special projects will be placed in their cubby. We also post reminders and our daily activities on our classroom whiteboard located on/by the classroom door.

Parent communication is important! Please feel free to call during naptime (1:00-3:30) at 215-536-8409. The staff will welcome your interest and will be able to let you know how your child is doing.

FAMILY PHOTO

It is important for a child to feel they belong in a new classroom. If you could send a family photo that we could keep in the classroom, it will be a reminder to your child that you will not be far away and will return at the end of your work day. Seeing family faces in our classroom will help with the transition from home to school.

SWIM DAY (Friday)

Your child should bring his/her swimsuit and towel labeled with the child's name, in a plastic bag or backpack. Children with shoulder length hair must have it in a braided ponytail. If your child's hair needs to be braided, please send them to school with a braid and ready to swim. This will allow our staff more time to help the children dress for swimming.

Parents are always welcome to come and play and visit our classroom. We invite parents to help as afternoon story readers, or share in a family event in our classroom. The center will also host some family events through out the year. This is a great chance to meet your child's friends and other families, as well as socialize with our staff.

Thank you for selecting the YMCA Child Care Program. We are a participant in the Keystone STARS quality initiative with a four star rating as well as NAEYC accreditation. Professional development is key. Each year our staff works to enhance their professional skills and competencies in support of children's learning and development.

We are happy to have you and your child with us. We will try to make your child's days active and happy ones!

Welcome to the Preschool Classroom!

The Preschool Staff