

Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

At Spruce Street we believe "play" is the central path towards growth in Pre-Kindergarten children. Play is work. We believe in creating a cohesive, child-centered learning environment in which exploration, creativity, and knowledge acquisition is carried out authentically through the natural process of play.

When you ask me what I've done at school today,
And I say, "I just played."
Please don't misunderstand me.
For, you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful
in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
**Today, I am a child,
and my work is play.**

Daily Schedule

Arrival / Tabletop Centers

- To develop independent work skills.
- To encourage critical thinking skills.
- To help students transition to school each day, and to ease separation anxiety.
- To feel welcomed by familiar people and friends.

Transitions

- A 3-5 minute warning is given by ringing a chime.
- A visual timer is used for the children to understand how much time is left.
- When there is no more red or sand the bell is rung a second time and cleanup time is initiated.
- To put materials away where they belong and to encourage teamwork by helping others.

Circle Time

- To build community through shared and written information.
- To work on letter and sound recognition (ex: Monday starts with the letter "M").
- To utilize math in an authentic way (ex: calendar).

"Content Study" / Wonder of the Day

- To develop inquiry skills that promote higher order thinking and an increased depth of knowledge.

- Research skills – Observe, discuss, chart, list, label, develop/generate questions, write, visit, etc.
- Engage in field work and ongoing projects to demonstrate understanding of unit study.
- Critical thinking - built on prior knowledge.

Breakfast/Lunch (communal time in room 241)

- Social times were students communicate to each other and adults in a open forum.
- Fine motor skills are learned in the rituals of "eating" as in individuals among others.

Rest Time (communal in room 241)

- A time in the class, were students can rest or sleeping to get ready for the afternoon.
- Gross motor, self control and self regulation skills are learned during this relaxing time of the day,

Read Aloud

- To model reading behaviors.
- To develop listening skills and comprehension (rich text).
- Books that support/develop understanding of genres, authors, and subjects.
- To encourage critical thinking and use prior knowledge to make meaningful connections.
- Creates an environment full of questions and answers during group conversations which helps foster communication skills.

Centers

- To learn through developmental play.
- To explore learned concepts through pretend play, blocks, art, etc.
- To develop socially/emotionally through cooperative play, turn taking and problem solving.

Centers Options:

Wooden Block Center:

Focuses on math skills, concepts of shape and size, symmetry, planning skills, spatial awareness, social interaction, imagination, strength and coordination.

Art/Writing Center:

Develops hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, and can be incorporated in all aspects of the curriculum and within each center.

Imagination is fed through communication and expands on expression of ideas and emotions.

Pretend Play Center:

Builds oral language, decision-making skills, cooperation and problem solving skills, social skills, self-expression, imaginative thinking skills and role-playing skills.

Science / Exploration Center:

Investigating properties of water, sand, snow, mud, etc. building sensory awareness. Develops concepts of volume and measurement, an understanding of cause and effect, hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, problem solving skills, sharing and cooperation skills.

Math and Manipulative Center:

Develops math skills authentically (counting, adding, subtracting, etc.), problem solving skills, fine motor skills, logical reasoning, eye-hand coordination, spatial awareness, independence and self-help skills.

Classroom Library / Listening Center:

Fosters literacy skills, comprehension, print and book awareness, vocabulary, letter recognition, association between letters and sounds, listening skills, discover personal interests and develop a love for literature.

Pre-K Content Study Overview

September – October	Self: Who am I?
October – December	School: How do we learn with our senses?
January – April	How can we learn more about the things we like?
April – June	Interest: What can we learn about nature?

Communication

Communication folders go home and come back to school each day. Some days there will be nothing in the folder but it is important to check it daily. It is encouraged you send notes or inquiries through the folder. If you have specific questions about your child please write, "call me about _____" and we will call you as soon as possible so we can talk in greater detail about your child. While

we will have email communication with parents, we are unable to discuss academic progress or specific incidents via email. A phone call or meeting is best. Your child will have a mailbox to place his/her folder in each day. Our goal is to create a classroom routine that will allow your child to independently place any notes or forms in their teacher's mailbox, located alongside the children's mailboxes.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Throughout the course of the year, parents and teachers meet twice (November and March) to formally discuss individual children. Each conference will be approximately 8-10 minutes and pre-k reports will be distributed at this time. If you have a concern before or after the scheduled conference times, please send a letter to arrange a different meeting time.

Pre-K Progress Reports / Assessments

Pre-K uses the Work Sampling DOE system, which is aligned to the Common Core Standards. The Narrative summary report will be distributed two times throughout the school year (January and June). The overall goal is for your child to master a majority/all of the domains by the end of the school year. Not all the skills will be taught/assessed at once, as some skills are slowly introduced throughout the year.

Share/Show and Tell

Pre-K does not have a formal Share/Show and Tell but meaningful souvenirs, pictures, Vacation Book or other items directly related to our current content study or season is welcomed into the classroom. Please keep all toys/non-educational objects at home or in your child's book bag. We do have a which holds toys until dismissal time.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special days for all of the children. Families are invited into the classroom to read their child's favorite read aloud to the class which can include a dedication page/photo. Families can coordinate with their classroom teacher. Small individual sized snacks (cupcakes, cookies, etc.) are invited but need to be nut and peanut free. Please note that party initiations or goodie bags may not be distributed at school. Please refer to the Family Handbook.

Class Parents

Each class has a class parent in place. Class parents are an asset to our classroom community as they act as a liaison between the teachers and the parents. Class parents can also be a vehicle to express class wide concerns or confusions to the classroom teacher.

What can families do to help support their child?

- Make sure your child gets to school on time each day.
- Check your child's folder each day for notes and newsletters.
- Read with your child daily.
- Ask your child questions as you read with him/her (favorite part, how a character feels, make predictions about what might happen next, how the book relates to your child's own life experiences, etc.)
- Support your child in being independent by having him/her carrying out arrival routines (i.e. folder in mailbox, hang-up backpack, move picture from home to school, wash hands). It is important that children build their own independence and understand their responsibilities at school.
- Schedule "structured" play dates with peers. This allows the children the opportunity to use the problem solving skills they learned in pre-k and apply them outside of the classroom. It is natural to want to have a play date at the park but some should be structured as well. (Play at someone's house where the children can role play, problem solve, take turns, etc.)
- Please send in a note if there is an alternative pickup person or dismissal time, as well as if you know in advance your child will not be attending school.