



Your Child's First Weeks at Preschool

Dear Mom and Dad and Guardians,

We would like to welcome you and your child to our Preschool Family. We are interested in your child's total development. Our preschool programs are designed to promote confidence, creativity and self-esteem. Our teachers are professionals and trained in Early Childhood Education and Development. They understand that your child learns best through play, in a positive, safe and healthy environment. Like you, we want your child to enjoy their childhood – to live, to learn and to laugh each day.

Open communication is important to us. We must work together so your child can receive the kind of early learning experience they need and deserve. Keeping this in mind, we would like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with you.

If your child is new to preschool, or if this is a new school for your child, expect a period of adjustment. Some children cry on their first day, while others experience a delayed reaction two or three days later. You can make the adjustment easier by reassuring your child that they will be picked up soon. Be positive. Talk about the fun things they will be doing. They can read your body language, interpret your facial expressions and feel your anxiety.

- Children may be more shy and clingy
- May tire more easily
- May not talk about school much
- May not talk with teacher or others at first
- May cry or throw a temper tantrum

These are all signs of anxiety and stress in a new situation / environment and will disappear as your child adjusts to a new daily routine. These are all very common, especially if your child has not been away from you or other family members much.

When you bring your child to school, you will wait in line to sign your child in. Remember, don't arrive too early. Settle your child in with a smile, a cheerful kiss

goodbye and a reassuring word of encouragement. Our experienced staff will handle it from there. Do not linger near doorway.

Some ways to help your child with this are:

- Allow for ample time to “wake up” and get ready for school- not rushing.
- Eat a nourishing breakfast.
- Allow for a relaxed home routine prior to coming to school.
- Do not focus too much about their “crying or fussiness” before school. That too can foster anxiety.
- Give your child your full attention (no digital items or cell phones to distract them or you) when standing in the hall before school starts- don’t arrive too early, 5 minutes is plenty.
- Tell them it is okay to just stand and watch. Observation is one way of participation and taking in information.
- Do not pressure your child to “say something” or “not to cry” – it is okay to be quiet or cry – self-expression.
- Do not “bribe” your child with toys or candy, this sends the wrong message.

Rather, say something like “when I pick you up in a little while, you can tell me about your fun day over lunch / snack, I can’t wait to hear all about it.”

- When picking up your child, be sure to acknowledge their accomplishment of staying in class and meeting new friends, trying something new, etc.
- When you pick up - ask about specific questions, “what was the story about that your teacher read”, “what letter you are practicing / writing, let’s see if we can find that letter here”, “tell me your friend’s names”. Avoid yes / no questions.
- Check their backpack for notes, pictures, etc. once you get home. Don’t do it in the hall. They are in a hurry to get home. It’s a more relaxed time too.

If you feel your child’s adjustment period is too difficult, we will gladly discuss it with you to see how we can make it easier. Communication is very important. We are interested in your feedback. Please feel free to discuss any concerns with myself and / or your child’s teacher(s).

Remember, the more relaxed you are (guardians and grandparent / babysitter too), the more your child will be comfortable and adjust quickly. There are not many promises I can make in the world, however, I can promise that the tears do stop, given time and they will love school.

Our goal is to provide a healthy, nurturing, learning environment for all the children in our program. We ask that you help us achieve our goal by abiding by our policies.

Be sure to check your emails regularly, as we send weekly updates, calendars, newsletters, etc. from the school. Take the time to look at the parent board which has the lesson plans your child’s teacher created.

Also, be sure to review postings in the entry foyer, easel as well as the exit foyer bulletin board for other information.

Dressing for play. Appropriate clothing should be worn so that your child feels free to get messy, temperature / weather related and most importantly, ability to undress and dress themselves to utilize the washroom alone. "Teachable moments" are giving your child the opportunity to do things for themselves: putting on own coat, zipping, tying shoes, etc.

Proper shoes are important for children who often times stumble easily. All children are required to wear closed-toed shoes at all times. We prefer them to wear gym shoes, as they have the best grip to the ground and do not easily fly off their feet when running. In the winter months, bring their boots for outdoor play but they should have comfortable shoes inside the classroom.

Please do not bring food into the building or leave it in your child's backpack. Our school is "Nut Sensitive", so absolutely no nut products should be eaten at home prior to attending also, if so, please make sure your child's hands and face are thoroughly washed of the "nut oils".

We have a "well center" policy, which means if your child is ill, please keep them home. All parents should screen their child prior to coming to school for any illness symptoms. Any temperature over 100.0 should remain home. If your child has had a temperature or other illness, they must remain out of school for a minimum of 24 hours symptom free without medication (ie. Tylenol, Motrin, cough medicine, etc). We also ask that you notify our school no later than 8:15 A.M. if your child will not be attending for that day. In order to attend, a child must be able to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play or gym. Please email or call the school with all absences, even if not sick.

In closing, please keep us informed of anything in your child's life that may affect their behavior. We want to do all we can to make your child's experience with us happy, confident and comfortable! Feel free to contact the school at any time to speak with the teachers or myself. Thank you for choosing us!

Sincerely,

Karen Maxwell

Bartlett Park District Preschool Coordinator

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