



## Welcome to Preschool 3!

JULY 2022

The Preschool 3 experience begins with a focus on the home to school transition. This transition takes place in a gentle, thoughtful manner. We want children to feel safe and secure as they begin their school lives.

As they separate from families and caregivers, a slow phase-in process helps students manage the feelings that arise when leaving home and adapting to a new environment. We warmly welcome students and their families, and provide a safe, cozy classroom with appealing materials to explore. As students become comfortable in their school setting, they become responsible for eating, resting, and toileting on their own.

Through generous amounts of open-ended play, students learn to listen, express themselves, manage strong feelings, develop patience, develop self-control, and learn how to ask for help. They begin to experience the joys and challenges of social interactions. Teachers support them as they acquire the social skills of cooperating, sharing, and taking turns. Using the skills described above, they learn to navigate social interactions, and friendships bloom.

We talk with students frequently and at length about their pretend play, their artistic creations, their outdoor games, and just their everyday activities. These conversations foster expressive language and encourage vocabulary development. We introduce a large variety of books and listen carefully for sounds in words and rhyming sounds and words. Literacy skills are developed and nurtured as teachers - often with students - write their names, label cubbies, placements and create books.

Opportunities abound to practice numeracy and number sense are embedded in the daily routines and play experiences in our classroom. Students develop an understanding of size, shape, weight, and volume and early math vocabulary.

The entire classroom is a studio environment inviting students to create! They explore and express themselves with a wide variety of materials. These include tempera paint, watercolors, crayons, colored pencils, different kinds of paper and cardboard, tape, glue, scissors, fabric, wood, clay, and materials from nature. Highly individualized pieces of art, towards which they feel a strong sense of ownership are honored with careful discussion and display.

Essential to preschool is the experience of play! Children represent their experiences and construct knowledge through play. They learn to collaborate with peers, and their play gets more complex as the year progresses. We spend as much time outdoors as possible, in a variety of play spaces. This active play develops gross motor coordination. We often use the large Imagination Playground blocks and the tricycles, as well as buckets and shovels for collecting natural specimens and "treasures." We support children's curiosity about and observations of the natural world, and we use their interest to direct the curriculum.