

The Green Vale School

Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum: Program Outline

During the pre-kindergarten year, as in the nursery year, the children learn by doing. Understanding takes place from the interaction of the child's own experiences. Because of this mode of learning, there are mostly hands-on activities for children and few teacher lecture lessons. In the classroom the teacher is responsible for setting up work areas (blocks, manipulatives, water/sand, arts/crafts, cooking, etc.) where children can explore and discover on their own and with each other. Acting as a facilitator, the teacher circulates throughout the room interpreting and reinforcing concepts and developing skills as a child moves from one work area to another. All aspects of the child are considered important as the pre-kindergarten teacher carefully watches and encourages social and emotional growth as well as intellectual and physical growth. The following curriculum reflects this approach to our teaching of young children.

Social/Emotional

- Self-esteem and Self-confidence
 - Have appropriate expectations for children.
 - Provide physical environment that fosters success and independence.
 - Provide age-appropriate tasks that enable a child to be successful, e.g. art, blocks, etc.
 - Provide many open-ended and creative activities with no right or wrong outcomes, e.g. water table, clay, easel, artwork, block building.
 - Assist children in developing self-help skills, e.g. dressing in dramatic play area, putting on sneakers, etc.
 - Throughout the day recognize positive behavior and accomplishments.

- Safe, Secure Environment
 - Have equipment in good condition, child-size and child safe.
 - Have equipment that is easily accessible and have non-used materials out of child's sight.
 - Provide playground equipment that is sturdy, in good repair and appropriate size-wise.
 - Supervise children's play both inside and outside.
 - Set safety limits for equipment both inside and outside.
 - Teach children to take turns on equipment that requires one-at-a-time use.
 - Set structure for moving from one location to another due to our large campus, as well as for transitions in the classroom.

- Respect for Each Other and Property
 - Teach children to listen to each other throughout the day.
 - Validate the children's feelings.

- Give value to their achievements through verbal acknowledgment. Display their work.
 - Help children learn to empathize with each other. Encourage kindness towards each other.
 - Help children gain a sense of appreciation for their classmates and for their environment.
 - Have children only use each other's proper names and avoid name-calling.
- Self-Control
 - Offer activities within a short time span that the children can manage.
 - Give children words to deal with each other in a non-physical way.
 - Provide outlets for aggressive feelings, e.g. clay, woodworking, sports, etc.
 - Ensure that each child gets a turn at most activities.
 - Encourage self-respect through positive reinforcement and achievable goals.
- Express Feelings in Positive Ways
 - Help children learn to communicate verbally.
 - Show children ways of acceptable physical expression such as smile, hug, etc.
 - Role model appropriate language.
 - Read books in which children can identify with the character in the story and understand the resolution.
- Foster Independence
 - Encourage self-help skills, e.g. dressing, pouring and cleaning up.
 - Allow children to do simple errands such as taking the attendance slip to the office.
 - Provide opportunities for children to do tasks on their own, e.g. getting brushes for the easel.
 - Assign simple responsibilities through "Helpers of the Day".
- Cooperative Play
 - Design learning center for multiple participation.
 - Facilitate successful transitions through the use of small groups.
 - Encourage children to work together in creative activities and to expand the process, e.g. each individual child's building becomes part of the city.
 - Help children function in a group through teacher-directed activities, e.g. cooking, lotto games.
- Problem Solving, Decision Making and Negotiation
 - Act as a facilitator when disputes arise.
 - Use books, puppets, etc. to help children see how problems can be solved.
 - Involve children in solving their own difficulties using words.
 - Be a role model for the children.

Physical Development

- Spatial Awareness
 - Play games, e.g. “Duck, Duck, Goose”.
 - Implement strategies in the classroom; such as have children find a space for story time, take equipment from the playground shed, stand in line, etc.
- Large Muscle Development
 - Have children use playground equipment (climbing, swinging, balancing, etc.)
 - Provide blocks (inside and outside) for carrying, building, balancing, putting away, etc.
- Small Muscle Development
 - Provide crayons, scissors, brushes, manipulative games, etc.
 - Offer cooking and sand/water activities for stirring, measuring, pouring.
- Rules of Safety
 - Give guidelines for correct use of classroom equipment, e.g. scissors, hammers, and so forth.
 - Encourage children to care for each other.
 - Study fire safety.
- Health Routines
 - Teach good sanitary habits, e.g. wash hands often, use tissues, toilet properly, etc.
- Sensory Experiences
 - Help children develop an understanding of themselves and the world around them, e.g. seeing different colored leaves in nature, smelling their cooking projects, feeling textures in art, etc.
- Eye / Hand Coordination
 - Have children play with blocks, paint at the easels, use manipulatives, work with wood, etc.
- Right / Left Orientation
 - Instruct children in correct use of stairs, proper use of clothing (mittens, shoes, etc.)
 - Determine which is the child’s dominant hand and then support and encourage child in the use of that hand.
- Confidence in Physical Ability to Take Risks
 - Give children simple achievable activities that progress to more difficult and complicated tasks, e.g. balancing on a straight line to balancing on a raised beam.

- Directionality
 - Use phrases such as “in front of”, “behind”, “next to”, etc.
- Self-Help Skills
 - Provide opportunities to practice newly established self-help skills such as putting on sneakers, taking off sweater, buttoning jacket, etc.
- Good Nutritional Habits
 - Have nutritious snacks.
 - Provide guidelines for birthday snacks at school.
 - Help children focus on good nutrition through a unit on food.
- A Healthy Body
 - Create dramatic play areas (hospitals, veterinarian office, etc.) for roleplaying.
 - Arrange visits from health care professionals, e.g. dentist, school nurse, etc.

Language Arts/Reading Readiness

- Enjoyment and Care of Books
 - Teach proper care, handling and knowledge of books.
 - Read well selected literature each day, e.g. poems, fairy tales, stories.
 - Use supplementary materials such as flannel boards, tape recorders, filmstrips and videos.
 - Have children dramatize stories, e.g. Humpty Dumpty.
 - Take weekly trip to library, have children choose a book and be responsible for returning it.
 - Have children rhyme.
- Directionality
 - Learn left to right, top to bottom, front to back.
 - Sing songs, e.g. Hokey Pokey, etc.
 - Encourage correct use of stairs, e.g. “right hand on the railing”.
 - Provide opportunities to make and handle books.
 - Show how to put sneakers on the “right” foot and the “left” foot.
- Sequencing
 - Use sequence puzzles.
 - Provide cooking and science experiences (“What did we do first?”).
 - Chart experiences of trips and retell stories.
 - Begin calendar experiences (seasons, months, days).
 - Practice patterning.

- Listening Habits
 - Have children focus attention at story and discussion times, music, library, science, table time.
 - Have children learn to sit, attend and contribute in appropriate sequence.

- Comprehension
 - Ask factual and open-ended questions.
 - Have children draw pictures of experience or story.
 - Provide opportunities for retelling of story or experience.

- Auditory Memory (Hearing and Remembering)
 - Give singular and multi-phrased directions, e.g. “Throw your cup away, push your chair in and sit for story time”.
 - Teach nursery rhymes, finger plays and words to songs.

- Auditory Perceptions (Hearing the Differences in Sounds)
 - Play music, soft and loud, with instruments and audio equipment.
 - Expose children to a unit on sound, e.g. sounds in the classroom, in nature, in the home, etc.
 - Help children recognize the beginning sound in their own and their classmates’ names.
 - Provide opportunities for children to listen to their voices on a tape recorder.
 - Phonological and phonemic awareness, e.g. listening for letter sounds.

- Eye-Hand Coordination
 - Make available for use: Legos, Tinker Toys, and other construction games, puzzles, paints, scissors, crayons, markers, woodworking.
 - Show child how to copy his/her own name on chalkboard and then on paper.
 - Introduce children to early computer skills.

- Increasing Visual Ability
 - Show pictures and ask open ended and specific questions.
 - Use a variety of games to enhance visual ability.

- Awareness of Printed Word to Spoken Word
 - Have children dictate their own words for stories, paintings, and experience charts.
 - Display children’s names and label children’s work and objects around the room.
 - Encourage children to label work with initial letter sounds.
 - Introduce the letters of the alphabet, e.g. sound/name, relationship.

- Visual Discrimination (Likenesses and Differences)
 - Work with matching games (dominoes, etc.), shapes, colors, shades, upper and lower case letters.

- Decentration (Noticing More Than One Aspect of a Given Object)
 - Help children see different aspects of blocks (width, size, color, etc.)
 - Encourage children to use descriptive language.
 - Become familiar with classmates' names as sight words, initial sounds and segmenting.

- Visual Perception and Memory (Seeing and Remembering)
 - Review the names of shapes.
 - Introduce the names of capital letters and then the lower case for those who are ready.
 - Use beginning letter and number games and the computer.

Mathematics

- Measurement of Time
 - Divide the daily schedule into blocks of time, e.g. work period, story time, snack time, etc.
 - Introduce past, present, future and important events through the use of a calendar, songs and stories.
 - Use vocabulary and songs incorporating the concept of time.
 - Introduce informal use of the clock to help a child wait for a turn at an activity or other events.
 - Provide opportunities to explore time properties of sand and water, e.g. dry sand pours faster than damp sand.
 - Record the passage of time through use of timers.

- Shapes
 - Review known shapes, introduce new shapes, and reinforce knowledge of same.
 - Provide blocks to build concepts of measurement, comparison, equivalency, etc.
 - Shapes are further explored at the light table through transparency and other mediums.

- Numerals
 - Expose children to number symbols through daily activities.
 - Provide opportunities for continued use of numbers in the room, e.g. light table, songs, stories, one-to-one correspondence for snack, etc.
 - Use computer software games.

- **Measurements**
 - Provide opportunities for children to learn about volume, weight, length, width and temperature through meaningful experiences with water, sand, cooking, thermometers, rulers, etc.
- **Classification and Sorting**
 - Set up work areas that give children opportunities to classify and sort, e.g. blocks, housekeeping, etc.
 - Introduce units of study, e.g. colors, shapes, seasons, animals, etc.
- **Patterning**
 - Recognizing and creating patterns.

Social Studies

- **Modes of Transportations**
 - Introduce children to various ways people travel and ways to move products, e.g. trucks, airplanes, trains, boats, etc.
- **Introduction of Child to Their World**
 - Have children become aware of themselves in their immediate environment and in the world around them, e.g. classroom, school, Long Island, state, country and world.
- **Customs and Traditions**
 - Teach children about national holidays through music, art, food, etc
 - Have children become aware of cultural diversity.
- **Food and Nutrition**
 - Teach children about food; where it comes from and how it is prepared, through trips to a vegetable farm, supermarket, and bakery; incorporate units on food and cooking experiences throughout the year.
 - Help children establish good eating habits.
 - Address diverse food concerns.

Science

- **Seasons**
 - Provide seasonal experiences relating to plants, animals, wind, weather, temperature changes, etc.
 - Teach environmental awareness.
 - Use of the outdoors in our curriculum, e.g. planting, recycling.

- Physical Laws
 - Design learning centers for hands-on experiences, e.g. gravity, magnets, objects that sink and float, etc.
 - Set up opportunities to discover about light and shadow, wind and air.

- Animal Responsibility
 - Teach about various animal groups and their attributes, e.g. fish, mammals, birds, etc.
 - Teach about the proper care of animals in the classroom.

- The Five Senses
 - Curriculum is geared to learning through the five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.

Arts, Crafts & Music

- Creative Expression
 - Provide different media for self-expression, which encourages process oriented and open ended projects, e.g. paint, clay, etc.
 - Set up centers for children to have easy access to materials.
 - Implement artistic projects that are success oriented.
 - Stimulate musical activities with songs, instruments and movement.
 - Read stories that are easily adaptable for dramatic play.
 - Design centers to facilitate dramatization.