



Friends School Haverford Preschool Curriculum

Language Arts

Preschool children are engaged in a variety of pre-literacy experiences. Listening, speaking, pre-writing and pre-reading skills are developing at an individual pace. Children's participation in informal (dramatic play, cooperative play, lunch and snack times) and formal speaking (circle times), fine motor activities (art media, manipulatives) to support the developing fine muscles that will be used for writing, and a daily exposure to children's literature (pictures, poetry, nursery rhymes, music) are the groundwork for literacy.

Math

Through play, the child discovers mathematical concepts. Through concrete experiences with blocks, linking toys, and counting objects, the meaning of number and number relationships develop.

Math materials include food, blocks, paint pots and brushes, music, sand, clay, pegs, colored cubes, beads, and puzzles. The child begins to count by rote and many begin to understand one-to-one correspondence. Setting the snack table with chairs and napkins to match the number of children each day is a practical application of one-to-one correspondence. Patterns in the environment are pointed out as children become more aware of the order that exists in the world. Sets and subsets are used throughout the day as children group according to those who are wearing shoes, those who are wearing white shoes, those who are wearing white shoes with laces, and so on. Endless opportunities exist for classification, making comparisons, and using ordinal numbers. Spatial relationships are tested as we discover how many children can fit inside a cardboard box, who can step over a block structure, and how many children can play comfortably in the sand box, as well as a myriad of other opportunities. Geometric forms begin to have meaning as the child works with wood blocks, clay, and dough. Volume and area are experienced as children work with materials such as sand and water. Measurement may occur through the classical means of measuring with measuring cups, spoons, and balance scale, as well as through more inventive and meaningful ways of using body parts as yardsticks. Weight is measured by a child's own limits to carry objects.

Quakerism

Community – Preschoolers learn that cooperation, taking turns, and peaceful problem solving are necessary when you are part of a community.

Meeting for Worship – Preschoolers attend Meeting for Worship on Grandfriend’s Day, Holiday Meeting for Worship, and the final Meeting of the year.

That of God in everyone: We are all friends to each other, look for ways to promote each other’s goodness; we use “put ups” not “put downs”; we use the language of cooperation, not competition “we made it!” rather than “I beat you.”

Simplicity – Non-commercial toys; selecting toys and equipment constructed from natural materials when possible; making hand-crafted gifts to give to children and families, simple celebrations.

Stewardship – Conservation of resources (paper, careful handling of toys, water, preserving sand in the sand box); observing, respecting, protecting plant and animal life;

Service – collecting winter outerwear for children living in local shelters sponsored by the Community Action Agency of Delaware County

Social Studies

Social Studies in Preschool is based on the developing world view of the preschooler, including seeing himself as part of a group, making decisions based on the needs of the group, learning about the school community, service to others and the environment, and being exposed to diversity as it is defined in FSH’s diversity statement.

Art

Throughout the year, children have daily access to a wide range of art media and tools including modeling material, tempera paints and water colors, cutting and pasting, rubbings, crayons, chalk, and markers. Exploration of materials and the creative process are valued over product. Occasionally, children will engage in teacher-directed crafts where following directions and careful handling of materials is introduced and child interpretation of the project is encouraged. Early in the year, parents receive the following statement to help support preschool artists.

“Regarding initial responses to children's art, some comments/questions will open the door for the child to talk about a picture and the feelings or experience it represents. Other comments/questions may prematurely end a child's reflections. Rather than asking, "What is it?" which can dishearten a young artist, classroom teachers invite the child to "tell me more about your picture", a non-judgmental and open-ended question. Teachers avoid evaluative comments. It is not important that the adult "loves your picture" or that "it is beautiful!" Indeed, a child may intentionally scribble as an outlet

for frustration, or sad or angry feelings. Judging the work can sidetrack a child from using art as a personal, creative, and expressive process to one that is focused on pleasing the adult. Sometimes it feels good "just to scribble!"

As children are working at School you might hear a teacher comment, "I see you have started with red paint." "Is that your favorite color?", "It looks like you have made a new color; what colors did you use to make that new color?"; or, "What can I get for you to help your work? More paper, more paint, more time?"

Music

The goal of preschool music classes is to experience a variety of music, work on music competency skills [the ability to sing in tune and move independently to the beat of music], build a repertoire of music and musical sounds, and to help in cognitive, motor, emotional, and social development.

Physical Education: Gross Motor Play

Year-round, each day, Preschool children engage their bodies, develop strength and coordination, and explore new abilities through the use of a variety of equipment in all the age-appropriate settings the school can offer. Preschoolers use the Greenhouse playground, gym, and the enclosed oval of the driveway for riding wheeled toys.

Science

Preschool science is based on a hands-on approach to learning about themselves and the world around them. Themes are based on the change of seasons, the five senses, life cycles, and observations of the child's immediate environment, and stewardship.

Spanish

At the beginning of the program students recognize Spanish as a language that is different from their own. Students meet for Spanish once a week for 20 minutes. Simple vocabulary is introduced (numbers, colors, clothing, family, seasons, feelings).

Technology

Each day digital pictures are taken in preschool. At the end of the day the pictures are posted on a webpage for parents and children to view. The pictures serve as conversation starters as well as a way of communicating what the child is working on at school.

The preschool teacher created a preschool classroom webpage in 1999. Daily pictures are posted and an archive of all pictures taken throughout the year is maintained. Links to important announcements and information are updated as needed (birthdays, food

allergies, educational articles, Parent/Teacher Conference schedule). Using MusicTimeDeluxe software, classroom songs are posted with lyrics for families to access. Weekly newsletters are posted and archived on the website. Newsletters are distributed via email to preschool families.

The Internet is a wonderful resource as questions arise during the morning. The teachers can search for images, background information, and song lyrics as the need arises.

The preschool has acquired a CCTV (Rainbow or Rainbow Pro). This technology allows items (coins, snow, flowers, ants, toys, illustration, hands, sugar, etc.) to be magnified for close viewing. It is an invaluable tool for a young child to learn about their natural world by enhancing the visual experience.

At this time the preschool children do not operate the classroom computers. There are two computers in the classroom for teacher use only. A growing body of research is raising questions about the educational value of computer use for young children, especially preschoolers. The Alliance for Childhood, a nonprofit advocacy group whose membership includes education professor Jane Healey, author of **Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children's Minds – And what We Can Do About It** (Touchstone Books, 1999), has published a position paper on technology literacy. The paper addresses the use of technology at the elementary school level, the goals and objectives for technology literacy, and the best age for introducing computers to children.

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