**Ms. Ashley’s Pre-K 3 Classroom: 2014-2015**

**The 2014-2015 School Year**

This upcoming year is going to be a great one! Our year is organized around various themes and with each of these themes there will be lots of unique learning experiences planned for the children. The curriculum we are following includes plenty of art, drama, games, and opportunities for play. These activities are all engaging and developmentally appropriate for the students. Our classroom also features various centers or areas where children can engage in different types of play. These centers include: the meeting area; a building center; a reading corner; a dramatic play center; a puzzles and fine motor skills center; a math center; an English language arts center; and a creative arts center. The Pre-K 3 program will also include some field trips. These practical, real-life experiences create vivid memories and make learning meaningful to children.

**The Pre-K 3 School Day**

Our school day in Pre-K 3 balances whole group learning times, small group working times, and free play times. Active and inactive activities are balanced throughout the day to keep students engaged.

In the morning our day starts off with ‘free-choice’ at any of our centers. There is always an arts and crafts table at this time as well. After we clean-up, the class participates in morning circle time; during morning circle we sing songs, read the morning message, do our calendar routine, and discuss our monthly theme. Morning circle time is followed by snack where students eat together in the gazebo. Students then have some time to play outside on the playground. Recess time is a major learning time. Students have the opportunity to engage with many different children, and create their own play. Recess is extremely important for children to learn social skills such as: taking turns; recovering from mistakes; trying out something new; language development and much more. After recess the students come together for language arts. We sing songs, recite poems and chants, read stories, and often work with letters and their sounds. Most days, English language arts are followed by library or P.E. Students then return to the classroom for math. We meet in the meeting area for a whole-group lesson and then split into different groups. One teacher reviews a concept from the main lesson, and the other plays alongside the children with the math materials. The groups then switch stations so that everyone has a chance to follow-up on the main lesson and play. Math is followed by lunch and another recess. After recess, students come to the meeting area for a story related to our theme. We usually proceed to some theme related work and play at the centers. Next, all of preschool meets in the gazebo for shared-center time. Students interact with all of the preschool students and can choose from any of the 5 centers set-up by one of the teachers. This time is a prime learning time as the children learn from their peers, and have plenty of interactions to practice language and social skills. After center time, students get their afternoon snack and have one last outdoor playtime. We close the day with a story and our goodbye song.

**Classroom Rules**

The rules in our classroom are simple: looking eyes, listening ears, helping hands and caring hearts. In general when students are not meeting these expectations they will hear a gentle reminder that focuses on what the child should be doing instead (ex: ``remember, when we are reading a story we should have listening ears``). For aggressive behavior, students will get an age-appropriate time-out. This is a time for them to reflect on their behavior. When time-out is over, we discuss the problem and what we need to make things right. Time out is not fun for anyone but sometimes it is necessary to establish limits.

**Morning drop off and pick up time**

Classroom doors open at 7:50 am. Being on time helps your child adapt and settle in to the school day easily. If your child has a hard time adapting in the morning, feel free to stay 5 minutes or so, but keep in mind that it is often easier to drop your child off and leave.

At the end of the day students should be picked up between 2:55 and 3:00 pm.

**Communication**

Teachers are at school every day until 3:30 pm. Please feel free to ask me any questions about your child`s day at that time. However, if you need to discuss a matter that requires privacy, or more time, please set up an appointment to do so. In addition to that please check our class website and blog. There you will find our monthly newsletters, photos, some daily happenings, and important dates. You can email me with any questions or concerns. The Pre-K 3 bulletin board will have some important information as well. Student work goes home every Friday in folders. Please return the folders on Monday.

**Parent Volunteers**

Throughout the year there are times when we need your help☺. If you would like to be a guest reader at the end of the day, or join our class on a field trip or event, please contact me. We would love to have you join us!

**Other**

*Reading Bag Program*— Each student will have his or her own reading bag. Every Thursday they will bring a classroom book home in their bag to read. Please fill out the form and read the book with your child. You can talk about what is happening in the pictures, discuss characters and setting, find letters, and make predictions. Most importantly, have fun with your child ☺

**Water**

Each child has his or her own cup for drinking water in the class. You may also send a water bottle with your child if you prefer.

**How you can help your child…**

**\***Read to them daily and let them see you read

\*Limit television and screen time

\*Play classical music at home such as Bach and Mozart; studies show that listening to this type of music builds neural networks in the brains

\*Involve your child with things you are doing around the home, or outside of the home; these real-life interactions help your child make sense of the world around them

Thank you in advance for all of your support and cooperation! It is already turning out to be a fantastic school year☺.