



Welcome to the Germantown "Little Clippers" PreKindergarten Program!
Here you will find some useful information about our early childhood program.

Our PreK Philosophy

Research from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and experience tell us that to be effective with young children, teaching practices need to be "developmentally appropriate". This means that teachers need to think first about the best way children of this age learn and then create an environment and experiences that are in tune with children's characteristics.

Early childhood (3-6 years old) is a time when children learn better through interactive experiences than through just listening to a teacher talk. Children learn an extraordinary amount through play and exploration. Our day is structured, yet flexible in response to children's abilities, which extends itself to opportunities for exploration, learning and purposeful play in a developmentally appropriate way. We believe that play is children's work in early childhood classrooms and that they must be active learners and participants.

Another component of developmentally appropriate practice is to make the program a welcoming place for every child. We gear our classroom environment and activities to our community and families. We are eager to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experience and current circumstances. With this knowledge we work in partnership to create a program that fits the children and families we serve.

Goals of our Curriculum

Our curriculum supports children in becoming enthusiastic learners. This means we encourage children to be active and creative explorers who are interested and confident to try out new ideas and to think about their own interests and thoughts. We do this through purposeful and intentional play and learning experiences which help children grow in the following areas of development:

- Cognitive: Children will have the opportunity to problem solve and use materials and their imagination. The environment supports asking questions, thinking logically by sorting, classifying, comparing, making patterns and counting.
- Language, Communication and Literacy: Children will have the opportunity and modeling from adults to use words to communicate with others, be listened to and to participate in conversations with others.
- Physical: Children will have the opportunity to increase their large muscle skills by running jumping, throwing and catching and small muscle skills by cutting, drawing, lacing and writing.



- Social/Emotional: Children will have the opportunity and modeling from adults to develop independence, self-confidence and self-control through communication, following rules and routines and developing peer- relationships as part of a group.
- Approaches to Learning: Children will have the opportunity to actively explore materials during their prekindergarten experience. Time in the daily schedule allows children to learn and investigate new things, to choose materials and to experiment with those materials.

The activities we plan for children, how we organize the environment, and plan the daily schedule, are designed to support the goals of our curriculum and give your child a strong foundation for future school success.

A Typical Day in PreK

Welcome/Arrival: Children are welcomed and unpack their things. Begin morning routine.

Circle Time: Everyone comes together to learn of the day's activities and make choices for center time.

Center Time: Children choose from activities in centers which include: dramatic play, math, puzzles and manipulatives, blocks, art, sand and water table, library, writing, music and movement and computers/iPads. Learning is child centered through play.

Clean Up: Children learn when it is time to stop an activity, follow directions, and put away toys and materials where they belong. This takes cooperation from the classroom community.

Specials: Children engage in either PE (Physical Education), Art, Music, Computer, or Library

Recess/Outdoor Time: Weather permitting, children in prekindergarten have an opportunity to go outdoors on a daily basis. During this time, children will have free time. While outdoors, children are encouraged to develop their large muscle skills through activities such as running, climbing and jumping. During inclement weather, PreK classes are able to use the elementary gym to engage in gross motor activities.

Story Time: Teachers read to children throughout the day, with a variety of materials: big books, poems, rhymes, and thematic literature. Reading and discussion of books enhances listening skills, comprehension, questions and conversation, and develops concepts about print and vocabulary.

Lunch (Snack is in the morning or afternoon depending on schedule): Children eat together in each PreK classroom while teachers encourage and engage in conversations with children and their peers. This is a wonderful time for language growth where children are able to express their thoughts and use appropriate conversational and other communication skills.

Rest Time: All children will have a cot to rest on. Teachers will play quiet music and rub children's backs in order to encourage sleep. Children who do not fall asleep will be



able to play quietly once most children are sleeping.

Learning/Play Centers: Each classroom is arranged in learning centers. Children have time daily to select a center and the materials within those centers to work with. Please see below for a list of the centers and what children will learn in each.

In the dramatic play center, children:

- develop self-confidence through role-playing
- act out familiar situations
- assume family roles
- develop oral language skills, muscle coordination and early readiness skills
- develop vocabulary through communicating and interacting with peers

In the math center, children:

- recognize, describe and name shapes
- begin to create patterns
- begin to sort objects and talk about how the grouping was done
- count objects using one-to-one correspondence
- compare numbers of objects
- begin to identify/name numerals

In the puzzles and manipulatives center, children:

- develop visual discrimination
- practice eye-hand coordination
- practice problem-solving skills
- develop oral language
- develop self-confidence

In the block center, children:

- develop eye-hand coordination
- explore spatial relationships
- compare sizes and shapes
- develop large and small muscle coordination
- cooperate, by working and planning together

In the art center, children:

- explore with a variety of materials
- creatively express themselves
- experiment with colors, shapes, sizes and textures
- develop eye-hand coordination and fine muscle control

In the sand and water table, children:

- make comparisons



- measure
- develop eye-hand coordination
- explore measurements and weights
- develop oral language

In the library center, children:

- learn to respect and care for books
- imagine events and situations
- make connections to their own lives and experiences
- develop oral language through story-telling, retelling and dictating stories
- develop an interest in words and books
- sequence events
- develop book-handling skills

In the writing center, children:

- develop oral language
- draw pictures to share stories and/or information
- practice writing letters, familiar names and words with a variety of materials (sand, markers, crayons, stamps)
- create pieces to express themselves (cards, posters...)

In the ABC center, children:

- begin to identify/name upper and lowercase letters
- begin to make connections between letters and the sounds they make
- rhyming
- phonemic awareness (ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds)
- begin to write letters and words

In the music and movement center, children:

- experiment with motor activities through dance
- develop muscular strength and coordination
- sing, play instruments and make up songs
- move to music
- learn an appreciation for different musical genres

In the computer/iPad center, children:

- develop eye-hand coordination
- practice skills
- research new information



Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

Germantown Elementary School uses Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). Our school mantra is "We are Kind, We are Respectful, We Persevere, We are GCS!" Our goal is to promote and aid in the development of your child's positive social emotional development. Through classroom activities, we support children in gaining respect for themselves and others. A successful positive behavioral support process occurs in a nurturing and supportive environment.

PreKindergarten teachers have been introduced to and use resources from the Pyramid Model (<http://www.nysecac.org/news-and-events/pyramid-model/>) (<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>)

The goal of the pyramid model is to promote children's success by:

- Creating an environment where EVERY child feels good about coming to school.
- Designing an environment that promotes child engagement and success.
- Focusing on teaching children what TO DO!
 - o Teach expectations and routines.
 - o Teach skills that children can use in place of challenging behaviors.

Clothing

In our active, hands-on environment, the children will be engaging in daily experiences with art, science and music and movement. They need to be free to paint, dance and run. Please put them in casual clothes that can get dirty in. The children will do best in comfortable, functional clothing and sturdy shoes/sneakers. Party shoes and sandals are discouraged, as they are not safe for active outdoor play. We go outside at least once every day. Your child should be equipped for changes in the weather. Sometimes a beautiful, warm morning can turn into a chilly afternoon.

Each child needs to have a complete change of clothes, clearly labeled with your child's name. Parents will need to replace clothing that is sent home, as well as make seasonal changes. All outerwear should be marked with the child's name.

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to email either PreK teacher at:

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Call/email our Principal:

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