

Green Acres School The Green Acres School Mission Statement

Green Acres is a coeducational, progressive school for grades pre-kindergarten through eight, dedicated to fostering the natural curiosity of students, engaging them actively in the joy of learning and facilitating problem solving. Based on an understanding of child development, Green Acres' program is cognitively, physically, and creatively challenging. Valuing acceptance of a variety of viewpoints, this community promotes socioeconomic and cultural diversity. An environment of trust, cooperation, and mutual respect encourages students to become increasingly independent thinkers and responsible contributors to an ever-changing, multicultural world.

An Intentional Model of Progressive Education

Green Acres, as a progressive school, places a high value on helping the whole child develop. The following are the elements within the Early Childhood Unit that reflect this philosophy.

Developing a Strong SENSE OF SELF

- **Encouraging self-regulation:** Children are allowed to discover their own physical rhythms and needs in the areas of dress, eating, toileting.
Example: Snack is treated as a choice – the children eat when they are hungry and as much as they feel they need.
- **Encouraging self-direction:** Teachers structure a program and organize materials, talks and activities which invite children to explore, plan and direct their own work.
Example: During Choice Time, children choose from a variety of open-ended activities: art, language and literacy, math, science, blocks, manipulative, and dramatic play.
- **Encouraging self-discipline:** As teachers set limits and help children solve social and emotional problems, their goal is that each child learn to express needs and feelings, listen to peers, and develop his/her own organization of inner controls and ability to be in charge of him/her-self.
Example: Children are invited to be problem solvers and to negotiate social situations using their words. Teachers model words for children to use in a respectful and peaceful way.
- **Encouraging relationships with peers:** The early childhood programs and schedules allow for a great deal of time for the children to interact with peers. Learning to appreciate and cooperate with one another, and to be able to follow as well as to lead, is the foundation for becoming a contributing member of a democratic society.
Example: In Pre-K there is a Kindness Jar where attention to the importance of acts of kindness between people is both drawn and reinforced. This teaches children how to be a friend and to be a kind member of a group. In all of ECU the children learn songs about taking care of each other and working collaboratively with each other.
- **Encouraging group participation:** Teachers help children in developmentally appropriate ways to feel comfortable and competent as participants in class activities.

Example: Children work in groups of varying sizes, where they have many opportunities to contribute their ideas and thoughts (e.g., Homecorner time in a small group and Group time in a large group).

- **Encouraging multiculturalism:** We respect, appreciate and celebrate our diversity based on differences and commonalities.

Example: The classrooms reflect an inclusive environment for all different people through books, stories, posters, songs, photographs, art materials, and multicultural figures to enhance play. Families are encouraged to come into class to share about what makes their family special and unique.

Encouraging THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING Skills

- Encouraging a **focus on the process rather than the product** when children work with materials and practice different skills.
Example: In the art room a variety of materials are provided for children to use in their own creative way, only limited by their imagination. Open ended art activities allow children to focus on the process and not the product.
- Encouraging **experimentation** as children explore the possibilities of their environment as well as their own abilities.
Example: While engaged in Fix It Shop the children use real tools to explore the inside components of non-working, electrical devices, such as VCRs and computer hard drives, as well as imagine their own inventions.
- Encouraging children to **ask questions and take risks** versus an emphasis on getting one right answer.
Example: Activities and songs during group time that ask open-ended questions, and encourage and value a myriad of creative answers.

Defining THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

- Balance the needs of children individually and the group as a whole
- Provide **appropriate challenge and support for each child** to grow academically and socially
- Plan a **program oriented toward the developmental needs of children:** a program full of opportunities to move, touch, talk and become personally involved in their whole school experience.
- Intentionally plan **experiential learning opportunities** that are informed by the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, involving all the senses. The philosophy of “Knowing in the Doing,” where learning is interactive and hands-on, is valued.
- Follow an **emergent curriculum** where teachers include the children’s ideas to determine themes and activities of the curriculum.
Example: When a Pre-K child traveled with his family to Korea, an airplane and travel theme emerged from the children’s interest in their classmate’s trip. Teachers brought out maps, airplane tickets, and travel brochures. Children created runways, landing lights,

cockpits, and passenger seats in the big block area. They also engaged in dramatic play taking on roles such as air traffic controllers and ticket takers.

- Build an **integrated curriculum**. When learning about a theme, all areas of the classroom are connected to the current theme.
Example: During a unit on Reptiles, the science area takes advantage of close inspection of classroom reptiles and has activities to learn about the characteristics of reptiles; the language area has books and opportunities to write about their experiences; a visiting expert presents an assembly on reptiles; art includes materials to design reptiles; and relevant songs are sung during group time.

It is in these three categories, helping the child develop a **SENSE OF SELF**, placing a priority on **THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING**, and **THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER**, Green Acres School expresses its commitment to progressive education in the Early Childhood Program.

The Pre-Kindergarten Curriculum

The Pre-K program at Green Acres is designed to match the developmental growth of 4 and 5 year old students. In keeping the “whole child” at the center of promoting growth both emotionally and academically, the following elements are cornerstones to our program:

- The program is "child-centered." Planning for the class includes keeping each child's unique needs and skills in mind.
- The Pre-K program is designed so that it continually attends to children’s development in four areas: social/emotional, academic, physical, and aesthetic. Problem solving skills are developed across all domains.
- The classroom environment is structured in such a way that all children are given common materials. Each child has many opportunities to select and direct his/her own work and to work in a personal and creative style. Additionally, the children learn to work cooperatively with each other in sharing supplies and learning to balance their needs and wants with those of others.
- Several times each day, the teachers plan experiences for the children which include small group special projects, whole class time (for songs, stories, discussions, games), and small groupings with specials teachers. The goal is for each child to develop an ability to work successfully in a variety of situations and to learn how to be an active participant in group settings.
- During much of the day, the teachers work with children on a one-to-one basis, responding to and stretching each child individually. Understanding where each child is developmentally allows teachers to foster the attainment of beginning skills in literacy and mathematics.
- The process of “integrated learning” is valued and promoted by the teaching staff. In other words, we recognize that the child is learning in many ways at the same time. For example, while interacting with peers and working with blocks, a child may be developing language skills, reading and writing skills, social negotiation skills, logical mathematical skills, visual patterning skills, and motor and manipulative skills.

- Although children learn in an integrated manner, we recognize and provide for specific skill development. Teachers often select materials and plan activities to challenge children in particular subject or curriculum areas. Throughout the year, times of the day and areas of the room will be devoted to particular themes, which are selected by both teachers and students. Examples of themes might include family, celebrations, seasons, ocean life, or transportation.
- Attention is paid to Aesthetic Development in all domains which allows the children to develop their artistic and creative talents.

What follows are the benchmark skills that the program develops in each Pre-K child:

Social/Emotional Development

Making Decisions

- Being able to select a task or an activity
- Beginning to engage in problem solving

Taking Care of Oneself

- Being able to care for oneself and one's belongings

Expressing Oneself

- Being able to express one's feelings verbally

Becoming Independent

- Being able to work alone
- Feeling confident about one's work

Developing Self-Control

- Being able to control one's impulses
- Being able to adjust one's own behavior to fit the dynamics of various groups and situations

Interacting with Adults

- Feeling comfortable with adults
- Being able to use adult support
- Being able to cooperate with adults
- Being able to participate successfully in teacher-directed group activities

Interacting with Peers

- Feeling comfortable with peers, one-on-one
- Feeling comfortable with peers in small groups
- Feeling comfortable with peers in larger groups
- Being able to participate in child-initiated group activities
- Being able to follow the ideas or examples of others
- Being able to take turns
- Being able to work through disagreements with peers

- Beginning to develop the understanding of group dynamics, mutual respect, and responsibility
- Beginning to develop an awareness of and respect for individual differences

Academic Development

Literacy Skills

Listening Skills

- Listening without interrupting
- Listening with sensitivity to others
- Listening for information/ multiple-step directions
- Ability to repeat information heard
- Demonstrating through actions an understanding of instructions
- Developing sound discrimination

Speaking Skills

- Expressing needs and solving problems
- Becoming comfortable speaking in a variety of settings
- Speaking with sensitivity to others

Dramatization

- Participating in social-dramatic play
- Acting out familiar stories

Developing Comprehension and Pre-reading skills

- Understanding the orientation of a book
 - Becoming familiar with the concept of left to right, top to bottom
 - Recognizing the role of author and illustrator
- Recalling and retelling events of a story
- Understanding a sequence of events within a story
- Making predictions
- Responding to questions of why and how
- Contrasting and comparing books and stories
- Exposing children to a variety of reading genres
- Engaging in reading books for pleasure

Developing Beginning Reading and Writing Skills

Writing:

- Experimenting with lines and curves to build letters
- Becoming familiar with the form of lowercase and uppercase letters
- Writing uppercase letters using the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum
- Experimenting with writing lowercase and uppercase letters
- Writing one's own name
- Writing the numerals 1-9 and zero

- Copying words from a model
- Using “invented” spelling
- Using writing tools to develop fine-motor strength and control
- Sharing written work with peers

Reading:

- Recognizing one’s own name and the names of classmates
- Recognizing simple words and labels
- Participating in rhyming activities
- Naming and recognizing colors
- Developing and expanding vocabulary
- Creating dictated books

Mathematical Skills

Shapes

- Learning and identifying the names of basic shapes
- Drawing basic shapes

Numeration/Counting

- Understanding and using 1:1 correspondence 1-10
- Recognizing written numbers 1-10
- Associating number names with collections of items
- Adding and subtracting through games and materials
- Understanding the concept of zero

Geometry

- Sorting items by attributes
- Patterns
 - Recognizing patterns
 - Reproducing patterns
 - Creating own patterns
- Spatial
 - Exploring and experimenting with materials
 - Copying geometric designs with a variety of materials
 - Creating own geometric designs

Developing Mathematical Concepts and Problem Solving Skills

- Becoming familiar with graphs and charts
- Creating class graphs
- Discussion of data shown on graph or chart
- Exposure to measurement through non-standard and standard units
- Experimenting with the concept of conservation
- Exploring, comparing, and evaluating the concepts of larger, smaller, same, and different
- Exposure to time, fractions, and money

- Demonstrating logical thinking
- Predicting
- Estimating

Physical Development

- Developing awareness of one's body in space
- Improving coordination and balance
- Developing spatial awareness
- Engaging in creative movement and expression of emotion through movement
- Building large and small motor skills

Aesthetic Development

- Developing self-realization through a variety of materials, media, and color
- Experimenting with color mixing: primary, secondary, and tertiary
- Developing an appreciation for individual differences by observing how classmates use materials in unique ways
- Developing a focus on process rather than product
- Developing a willingness to explore and experiment with the physical properties of materials
- Developing an ability and willingness to value one's own individual style

The Kindergarten Curriculum

The Kindergarten curriculum is designed to support growth in all areas of a child's development: social/emotional, academic, aesthetic, and physical. The Green Acres Kindergarten program encourages the growth of each child's curiosity, self-esteem, independence, and abilities at working well with others. The following statements are reflections about the Kindergarten program:

- The program is "child-centered." Planning for the class includes keeping each child's unique needs and skills in mind.
- The classroom environment is structured in such a way that all children are given common materials. Each child has many opportunities to select and direct her/his own work and to work in a personal and creative style.
- Throughout the day, the teachers work with children on a one-to-one basis, responding to and challenging each child individually.
- Each Kindergarten day includes many varied group experiences for the children. They meet as a Homecorner, a half-class, and a whole group. Special Subject teachers meet with the children in whole, half, or one-third class groups. Children develop an ability to work successfully in many different types of group situations.

- The Kindergarten program includes the study of several topics or themes over the period of the school year. Thematic topics may be selected by the children or the teachers. The goal is for the children to experience, as a group, an intensive, extensive study of a topic.

The process includes:

- Introducing the topic or subject.
 - Identifying information or assumptions which children already have about a topic.
 - Exploring questions to be answered.
 - Using research and resources: other people, books, the library, trips, first-hand exploration and observation.
 - Creating and sharing visual records: constructions, pictures, and artifacts.
- The process of "integrated learning" is valued and promoted by the teaching staff. In other words, there is a recognition that the child is learning in many ways at the same time. For example, while interacting with peers and working with blocks, a child may be developing language skills, reading and writing skills, social negotiating skills, logical-mathematical skills, visual patterning skills, and/ or motor and manipulative skills.
 - Although children learn in an integrated manner, the program provides for specific skill development. Teachers select materials and plan activities to challenge children in particular subject or curriculum areas.

As they organize the Kindergarten program, teachers keep the following six areas of development in mind:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Knowledge of the Physical World
- Mathematics
- Language Arts: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing
- Development of Social Knowledge
- Physical Development

Language Arts: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing

The Literacy Program for Kindergarten at Green Acres involves the following components of development:

- Using oral language, developing new vocabulary, using appropriate language, speaking in sentences
- Listening skills - processing what is heard, following directions both individually and in groups
- Fostering an appreciation of stories and books: teachers reading aloud, children exploring and reading books on their own
- Heightening awareness of written words: pointing out titles, letters, words, sentences, punctuation
- Providing dictation by writing down a child's own language in signs and stories

Development of Reading and Literacy Skills:

- Developing handwriting skills including upper and lowercase letter formation using the *Handwriting Without Tears* curriculum.
- Encouraging children to write, using their developing abilities to spell words phonetically

(e.g. "invented spelling")

- Formally introducing basic sight words
- Dictating words, signs and stories
- Recognizing names, labels, signs,
- Working with rhyming words
- Focusing on beginning and ending sounds
- Work with short vowel sounds and letter blends
- Segmenting and blending words
- Introducing "Author's Chair" – sharing stories aloud created by the children
- Creating a print-rich learning environment
- Building an understanding of how a book works
- Surrounding students with quality literature
- Exposure to a variety of reading genres

Children grow through the stages of reading and writing at their own pace. Teachers assess children's growth and guide them through the progression of literacy skills throughout the year.

Development of Mathematical Reasoning

Children's increasing knowledge of the physical world leads them towards logical-mathematical reasoning which becomes more symbolic as they mature in their cognitive development.

In this area of mathematics, children are:

- Working on their understanding of numbers (e.g., counting games, dice)
- Discovering equivalents and making comparisons (e.g., balancing, parts to whole, "same" and "different," "bigger," "smaller," "more," "less," and playing games, block building, and using scales)
- Sorting, classifying, and working with patterns (e.g., using various art and small "manipulative" materials)
- Measuring (e.g., using blocks as a unit of measure in the building process, using self as a unit of measure ("Is the building as tall as I am?"), using Unifix cubes as smaller units of measure, working with art materials)

Note: As well as the examples of "key" materials that invite each kind of math work, children develop mathematical thinking throughout most of their work and play.

To strengthen children's development of a strong foundation in numbers, teachers introduce and work on the following mathematical skills:

- counting
- understanding and using one-to-one correspondence
- recognizing written numbers
- writing numbers
- understanding and writing number sentences and stories (addition and subtraction)
- working with time lines and calendars:
 - the days of the week
 - seasons and months
- making graphs
- estimating
- introduction to time, fractions, and money

Social/Emotional Development

Green Acres Kindergarten teachers work with children as they develop their ability to:

- Respect and care for others.
- Interact with children and adults.
- Solve problems, settle conflicts (adults are available for support and assistance as needed).

The goal is that children should feel that they have the power to make decisions, and can assume responsibility for their own actions.

- Express feelings appropriately.
- Control impulses.
- Share time and materials with others.
- Work independently or with others.
- Initiate projects.
- Care for personal, others', and school belongings.

This kind of program requires that teachers know where the child is developmentally. The teachers plan a classroom structure that encourages choices, cooperative projects, times to work with adults, and opportunities for dramatic play and role play. Teachers help the children to develop trust in one another, themselves and adults.

Development of Social Knowledge

Much of what is known about the world is transmitted from person-to-person or generation-to-generation. The whole area of cultural and societal traditions can only be learned from other people (unlike mathematical knowledge). However, each child acts upon this information in very individual ways. This personal process of working things through is consistent with the process the Kindergarten program supports in all areas of learning.

Social development can occur in the following settings:

- The classroom (e.g., taking turns, learning snack procedures and routines, participating in a group discussion or activity, sharing one's own ideas, listening, setting and keeping limits, following rules, learning guidelines for living)
- The playground (e.g., learning to be a leader as well as a follower, listening to others' ideas, working on conflict resolution, engaging in socio-dramatic play)
- The school as a community (e.g., taking trips to different parts of the school, meeting and working with other ages and with different adults, Friday assemblies)

The social curriculum is designed to nurture multicultural understanding and to build identity and community through books, music, exploration, and conversations.

Knowledge of the Physical World

Through the process of working with many materials, the children are encouraged to observe reactions, to experiment, to become competent and to be creative. By exploring the use of materials in this way, the children are involved actively in forming concepts and building a strong basis for beginning logical thinking. Some common examples of concepts are color, size, shape, weight, and properties of objects, such as permeability and buoyancy.

The teachers in this area of the curriculum encourage the children's initiative and spontaneous

interest. The importance of errors is not neglected, as an error corrected is often more instructive than an immediate success. Examples of physical-knowledge activities are:

- sand play
- cooking
- collage work
- mixing paints, or powder paint and water
- making pottery
- playing with ice and water
- aiming a ball down an inclined plane (by varying his/her actions, different results are produced)
- engaging in activities that encourage children to perform these actions on objects:
 - pulling, pushing, rolling, kicking, jumping, blowing, throwing, twirling, swinging (a pendulum), balancing, and dropping

Physical Development

Kindergarten children are gaining knowledge of their physical selves as they develop. This growth is closely related to the child's development of knowledge of the Physical World.

The School's indoor and outdoor environment provides material, space and equipment for: walking, crawling, running, hopping, jumping, skipping, balancing, pumping, swinging, climbing, cutting, buttoning, zipping, fitting small items together, hammering, sawing, using pencils and crayons, pasting, taping, stapling, painting, dressing and undressing, pushing and pulling, lifting and carrying, and pouring.

Milestones in Kindergarten physical development:

- Children usually have developed a preference for using their right or left hand.
- Children learn to discriminate and identify each of the 5 senses: taste, touch, sight, hearing, and smell.
- Children develop a sense of their own endurance and physical needs: dress (I am cold or too hot), toileting, eating patterns, realistic knowledge/assessment of own physical abilities.
- Children learn to pace themselves throughout the day -- balancing active and quiet movement.

Children develop specific physical skills (e.g., manipulation of balls, sticks, hoops, bean bags, etc.; gymnastics; movement in space). In the Physical Education Program, the children are challenged to problem solve as they organize and focus on their activity.

Green Acres School Pre-Kindergarten Creative Movement

2011-2012

Mary Sing
Teacher

Grouping:

Creative Movement is taught to Pre-Kindergarten students throughout the school year. The class is divided into two groups that each meet for 30 minutes one time each week.

In addition, Pre-Kindergarten students participate in Kaleidoscope class throughout the year. The class is divided into two groups that each meet for 30 minutes weekly taught by Mary Sing and Gwen Garfinkle, Extended Day Program Director. Kaleidoscope builds on the Creative Movement goals with an emphasis on integrating Pre-Kindergarten curriculum math goals.

Goals:

- Encourage creativity and spontaneity through safe, fun movement activities that are developed using the children's ideas
- Explore rhythms and songs of different cultures through movement and music
- Develop body awareness (self-awareness on physical level): body boundaries, what specific body parts can do individually and in combination with other body parts, including use of voice, and spatial awareness
- Develop body mechanics: explore different ways to move and to control one's movement, to stop and rest, and to move following a rhythmic beat
- Develop a familiarity with a basic movement vocabulary
- Experience cooperation with peers through group movement creations and working in partners and trios.
- Strengthen listening skills and social skills
- Integrate classroom themes into movement based activities

Format of Classes:

Opening Activities: Sessions begin with a familiar song or game to help focus the children. These opening activities bring the group together, smooth the transition to movement time, and help the children focus on the movement teacher.

Warm-up Activities: The warm-up activities allow for vigorous, high-energy release within a structured framework. These activities are opportunities to explore a wide range of movements and body actions. General objectives are to loosen the muscles, to stimulate the brain, to move with other children safely without collision, and to feel one's personal creativity.

Movement and Body Awareness: These activities concentrate on the development of body skills. General objectives are to explore new movements, to recognize body parts, to explore movement with whole body or isolated parts, and to explore shapes one's body can make. Activities also include body expression and rhythm.

Group Theme: This part of the session incorporates ideas and themes from the children. Movement structures are created to bring the ideas to "life." The themes may be based on the classroom focus at that time, or perhaps something completely different. In this way, the creative movement sessions balance connection with the classroom themes with an opportunity for new imaginative material to emerge. Books, costumes (created by children when possible), and other props may be used to enhance this creative process.

Closing Activities: These activities help the children re-focus on their own bodies and practice relaxing and resting. A brief review of the session's events and a reference to the upcoming activities in the classroom help smooth the transition back to the classroom.

Green Acres School Kindergarten Creative Movement

2011-2012

Mary Sing
Teacher

Grouping:

Creative Movement is taught to the Kindergarten class from September until June. The creative movement class is divided into three groups which each meet for 30 minutes twice a week.

Goals:

- Encourage creativity and spontaneity through safe, fun movement activities that are developed using the children's ideas
- Explore rhythms and songs of different cultures through movement and music
- Develop body awareness (self-awareness on physical level): body boundaries, what specific body parts can do individually and in combination with other body parts, including use of voice, and spatial awareness
- Develop body mechanics: explore movement range from vigorous action to resting, coordinate movement with verbal direction, and experience personal focus of strength and energy
- Explore different roles in group participation: individuals, partners, groups, and leader
- Incorporate concept of caring and trust through movement activities, such as showing gentleness in movement
- Strengthen listening skills and social skills.
- Integrate classroom themes into movement based activities.

Format of Classes:

Opening Activities: Sessions begin with a song or greeting to help focus the children. These opening activities recognize each child individually, bring the group together, smooth the transition to movement time, and help the children focus on the teacher.

Warm-up Activities: The warm-up activities allow for vigorous, high-energy release within a structured framework. These activities are opportunities to explore a wide range of movements and body actions. General objectives are to loosen the muscles, to stimulate the brain, to move with other children safely without collision, and to feel one's personal creativity.

Movement and Body Awareness: These activities concentrate on the development of body skills. General objectives are to explore new movements, explore shapes one's body can make, recognize body parts, and explore movement with whole body or isolated parts. The class also includes body expression and rhythm.

Group Theme: This part of the session incorporates ideas and themes from the children. Movement structures are created to bring the ideas to "life." The themes may be based on the classroom focus at that time, or perhaps something completely different. In this way, the creative movement sessions balance connection with the classroom themes with an opportunity for new imaginative material to emerge. Books, costumes (created by children when possible), and other props may be used to enhance this creative process.

Closing Activities: These activities help the children re-focus on their own bodies and practice relaxing and resting. A brief review of the session's events and a reference to the upcoming activities in the classroom help smooth the transition back to the classroom.

Green Acres School Kindergarten Art

2010-2011

Elena Patino
Art Teacher

Grouping: Each student comes to art once each week with one-third of the class.

Format of Classes:

- The students gather together on the floor where a question or an idea is posed to them (*e.g.*, What happens to leaves in the fall?). During the discussion that follows, ideas are gathered to feed into art projects (*e.g.*, using the colors of fall leaves to study warm colors). The children watch a demonstration of the materials they are going to use through pictures and examples so that they are able to learn techniques and experiment with artist materials (*e.g.*, using watercolors to explore warm colors). The process of exploration is an essential component as the children use the materials to express their ideas and learning experiences. Often children will complete several explorations in a series as they work to see how materials blend together. Children also have the opportunity to go back to previous explorations to further their understanding. Dialogue with classroom teachers allows the art studio to be an extension of classroom investigations.

Goals:

- To informally introduce students to the elements of art: color, line, shape, form, and the principles of design (harmony, emphasis-balance, unity – economy, variation, contrast) through the exploration of different materials and techniques.
- To provide opportunities for students to familiarize themselves with materials and techniques
- To explore ways to visually represent thinking and learning experiences while enhancing and encouraging craftsmanship.

Green Acres School Early Childhood Library
2011-2012

Ruth Phang

Librarian

Grouping: Students meet in small groups once a week for 30-minute classes

Goals:

- Encourage the love of books and reading and to present the library as a beckoning, comfortable place.
- Develop listening skills and the ability to take turns.
- Expose children to a variety of types and genres of literature and subjects, including books that reflect different cultures (personal development, folk tales, seasonal topics, curriculum-related topics).
- Promote discussions of books and/or book related topics.

Activities:

- Children listen to picture books, poetry, or storytelling.
- Props are sometimes used such as puppets or flannel board to enhance the telling of stories.
- Listening time is often followed by related craft projects, games, dramatic activities, or a variety of creative choices.

Parents are encouraged to read joyfully to their children on a daily basis.

Green Acres School Pre-Kindergarten Physical Education

2011-2012

Matt Marchildon
Teacher

Grouping: Pre-Kindergarten meets as a whole class 3 times for 30-minutes

Goals:

The goals of the PE program are to create a lifelong desire to develop the whole person physically, socially, and emotionally. This program is integral in developing the students' education as it pertains to the total fitness, growth, and overall development of the individual. Teachers provide a wide variety of varying opportunities to enhance the social development of a student through the participation of the child in physical activities. The program instills a sense of importance in promoting fitness, wellness, and an overall healthy attitude towards exercise and the benefits it provides. Most importantly the Physical Education department promotes respect for the uniqueness and differences of self and others through a wide variety of games and activities.

Students develop a sense of rules, skills, and strategies associated with the physical education activities in which they participate. Students will work on developing their sportsmanship and team-building skills in class. There is an intentional, developmentally appropriate progression of motor skill development through activities that engage the children in active participation. Teachers work to make the classroom a safe environment in order for the students to have the confidence to take risks and improve themselves athletically, socially, and emotionally.

A major focus of the Pre-Kindergarten Program is to enhance students' knowledge of body awareness (body part identification and various ways to use the parts of the body), spatial awareness (up, down, forward, backward, sideways, and in relationship to equipment that is used in class), motor control, loco-motive skills, non-loco-motive skills, and manipulative skills (such as throwing, collecting, kicking). The children practice skipping, galloping, and running at various speeds. Students work on developing balance, coordination, and upper body strength. The class learns how to work cooperatively within a large group. Activities such as movement exploration, freeze dance, and gymnastics are used to reach the goals for the year. Having fun during class time and building self-confidence are also important goals.

Concepts

- How to play variations of games with classmates, moving from very simple to more complex movement patterns
- Bodies need exercise to stay healthy and strong

Objectives

- For children to become aware of their body in space
- For children to gain confidence to experiment and express themselves physically in a creative way
- For children to begin to connect physical activity to personal enjoyment, self-expression and social interaction
- For the children to begin to work cooperatively

Green Acres School Kindergarten Physical Education **2011-2012**

Matt Marchildon
Teacher

Grouping: Kindergarten meets as a whole class 3 times each week for 30-minutes

Goals:

The goals of the PE program are to create a lifelong desire to develop the whole person physically, socially, and emotionally. This program is integral in developing the students' education as it pertains to the total fitness, growth, and overall development of the individual. Teachers provide a wide variety of varying opportunities to enhance the social development of a student through the participation of the child in physical activities. The program instills a sense of importance in promoting fitness, wellness, and an overall healthy attitude towards exercise and the benefits it provides. Most importantly the Physical Education department promotes respect for the uniqueness and differences of self and others through a wide variety of games and activities.

Students develop a sense of rules, skills, and strategies associated with the physical education activities in which they participate. Students will work on developing their sportsmanship and team-building skills in class. There is an intentional, developmentally appropriate progression of motor skill development through activities that engage the children in active participation. Teachers work to make the classroom a safe environment in order for the students to have the confidence to take risks and improve themselves athletically, socially, and emotionally.

The focus of the Kindergarten program is to increase each child's knowledge in the areas of body awareness, spatial awareness, motor control, locomotive and manipulative skills. The class will be working cooperatively on learning new skills. Soccer will be the main sport of focus in the fall. The main goal is for all students to feel comfortable and confident in their own abilities. Having fun during class time and building self-confidence are also important goals.

Concepts:

- Body awareness, focusing on understanding what each body part can do and how to efficiently use movement
- Spatial awareness which focuses on knowing where an individual is in relation to others and objects
- Motor control development through an understanding of appropriate times to use certain movements and ways to control force and speed, as it applies to objects
- Use of movement exploration and guided problem solving to achieve goals
- Fair play when participating in team sports

Objectives:

- For the children to work cooperatively
- For the children to continue to learn about their bodies and how to relate to others and to objects spatially
- Increase in peripheral vision
- For children to gain confidence to experiment and express themselves physically in a creative way
- For children to begin to connect physical activity to personal enjoyment, self-expression and social interaction

Green Acres School Pre-Kindergarten Science
2011-2012

Sean Smith
Science Teacher

Grouping: Each student comes to science twice per week.

Format of Classes:

Pre-Kindergarten students investigate the world of science during two different types of classroom structures: Explorations and group activities. During group activities, students will explore their five senses through nature walks and other outdoor activities. Students also participate in an exploration time where they choose from a list of activities and make discover at their own pace.

Goals:

- Provide opportunities to learn information from observations of the natural world and other materials in the classroom
- Ask, evaluate, and decide when working with class activities
- Stand up for themselves and listen to others with understanding
- Make observations
- Look for solutions to problems
- Develop exploratory skills

Examples of Pre-Kindergarten Exploration Activities:

- mammals
- insects
- chemistry
- straw structures
- reptiles
- magnets
- sifting
- weaving
- gears
- balls and ramps
- gyroscopes
- Legos
- marble coasters
- magnetic structures
- three dimensional structures
- People Puzzle
- tubular structures
- wooden building materials
- bones
- shells

Green Acres School Kindergarten Science
2011-2012

Sean Smith
Science Teacher

Grouping: Each student comes to science class twice a week.

Format of Classes:

Kindergarten students investigate the world of science during explorations and group activities. Once each week the students have explorations and the other science time generally students will explore the five senses and the natural world. A large part of the science program for Kindergarten students is to learn how to investigate problems and discover why things work the way they do. The goal is for them to begin to discover how science can explain everyday parts of their world. The students have the opportunity to investigate topics (*e.g.* taste testing, determining liquids and solids) through tactile experiences that incorporate all the senses.

Goals:

- Encourage students to question actively and problem solve during investigations, further the development of their critical thinking skills
- Enable students to gain experience with a variety of scientific tools
- Provide opportunities to practice various ways of recording and interpreting their observations
- Practice making observations where they can learn about the natural world and other materials of the classroom
- Look for solutions to problems
- Develop exploratory skills
- Learn the beginning basics of conducting an experiment
- Work well both cooperatively and independently; stand up for themselves and listen to others with understanding
- Develop persistence and the ability to sustain focus
- Develop a respect for the environment

Examples of Exploration Activities:

mammals	Lego
insects	marble coasters
chemistry	magnetic structures
sink or float	People Puzzle
reptiles	tubular structures
magnets	balls and ramps
sifting	gears
weaving	tubular structures
wooden building materials	shells
bones	

Green Acres School Pre-K and Kindergarten Alphabet Soup
2011-2012

Gwen Garfinkle
Alphabet Soup Teacher

Grouping: Pre-K and Kindergarten meet once weekly in small groups for 30 minutes.

Format of Class:

Through stories, poetry, creative dramatics, physical exploration, group games, group discussions, art, singing, and listening to music, Pre-K and Kindergarten students examine themes through many lenses. Topics such as friendship, family, and school life will be explored from different angles and points of view. Examples of class activities include:

- Express through drama the contents of a story
- Use of the body to form the letters of the alphabet
- Turn a poem into a song using a familiar tune

You can't get enough of that Alphabet Soup!