



Children's Center

Bridgewater State University September/October 2011

Dear Parents,

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the families attending the Children's Center this fall. As many of you already know, there have been a couple of changes that have taken place in our program over the past few weeks. First, Nancy Clark, the director of the center for the past 20 years, retired on September 9th. We are so grateful for the many contributions she has made to this program. We wish her much happiness in her future endeavors and adventures! We invite you to join us in celebrating her twenty years of service to this program at her retirement party on October 4th from 3 - 5 p.m. in the Children's Center Movement Room. Although Nancy has officially retired, we are pleased she will continue to

be a part of our program as a consultant over the next several months.

I am honored to be serving as the current director of the center and I am looking forward to working with all our families as we begin this new academic year. This program has been a big part of my life, as I have been teaching at the Children's Center since 1988. Along with being a lead teacher in both classrooms, I also served as acting director for two extended periods of time. This has made me quite familiar with the Center's program and philosophies.

Another change to our program is the appointment of Joanne Hogan to lead teacher in the Investigator classroom. Joanne first joined our center in March of 2001. She has served as a teacher in both the Investigator and Explorer classrooms since that time. Due to her new appointment, we currently have one last teacher position to fill in the Explorer classroom. Until this process is completed, I will be spending some of my time teaching in this room with Eileen and Nicole.

As the children begin their new school year, it is our goal to assist them with a smooth transition from home to classroom. We realize that separation from parents can sometimes be difficult for young children. One way this transition can be eased is by planning to stay a few extra

minutes at drop off as your child adjusts to his/her new teachers and classroom. You may also consider bringing a transitional object from home such as a favorite blanket, stuffed animal or family photo. We understand it can be difficult for parents to say goodbye as well. To help ease any anxiety on your part, we invite you to call the center at any time to inquire about your child's day. We also welcome you to come visit your child's classroom throughout the year whether it is to participate in a classroom activity or share a favorite family tradition or hobby with us. Parental involvement is strongly encouraged in our program. We value all your input, comments and suggestions.

As always, we thank you for entrusting your child's care with us. We are very excited to be a part of his/her growth and development over the upcoming year.

Sincerely,
Jane Doyon
Director

Dates to Remember

Tuesday, October 4

Retirement Party for Nancy Clark
Children's Center's Movement Room
3 - 5 p.m.

Thursday, October 6

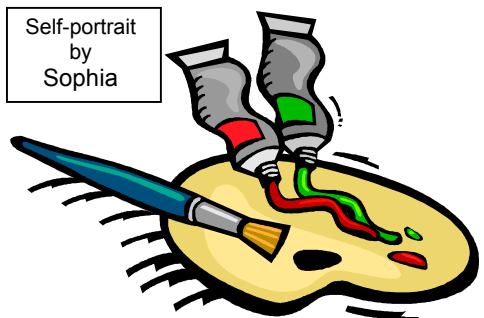
Jumpstart's "Read for the Record"

Monday, October 10

Children's Center closed for
Columbus Day
(no classes)

Friday, November 11

Children's Center closed for
Veterans' Day
(no classes)



Curriculum Notes - Investigator Group

by Joanne Hogan, lead teacher

Happy Birthday:

Sophia	September 13
Orson	October 3
Nicholas	October 5
Jed	October 13
Mya	October 17

We hope that all of our families had an enjoyable summer! The Investigator teachers are looking forward to an exciting new semester and wish to extend a warm welcome to our new families as well as to those who are returning for another school year.

Our monthly newsletter is only one way that we will reach out to communicate with you over the coming months. Please don't forget to take a look at our hallway bulletin board as we will use this to document the learning that is taking place in the classroom. Our white board will include details about large and small group activities and reminders that we may need to share. Our snack menu is posted both in the hallway and in the classroom and we have a "Meet the Teachers" bulletin board which will help you to recognize your child's teachers and teacher assistants.

We recently divided the children into small groups and this information will be posted under our white board. The children who will be five years old before September 1st of next year will begin "Pre-K" the week of September 26th. This is an opportunity for the teachers to work on kindergarten readiness skills in a smaller group setting. Some of the topics that we will be introducing will be

fine motor skills, letter and number recognition, counting, one-to-one correspondence, patterns, sight words, and social/self-help skills. Most importantly, we want the children to develop a love of learning and this is done by exposing them to concepts in a relaxed, hands-on, age appropriate environment. If you have any questions about "Pre-K" please see Joanne, Debbie, or Dan.

As many of you are aware, we take a project approach to learning and our curriculum expands on and relates to the interests of the children. During the week of September 12-18, the temperature dropped and as a result, we had a few unexpected visitors in our classroom. The first of which was a seven legged spider (missing a leg due to an unfortunate accident!) and the children found him fascinating. This led to a discussion about bug parts, how many legs a spider has, and a comparison between spiders and ants. We looked at the bugs that are preserved in plastic in our science area and counted their legs. Later in the week, we discovered a Praying Mantis on the playground fence and created a terrarium so that we could observe him. The children learned that he hangs upside down to catch his prey and eats lots of crickets! Speaking of crickets, some of these creatures discovered a small hole in the bottom of the classroom door and have been visiting us on a daily basis! We look forward to following this new interest to see where this bug unit will lead us. Keep an eye on the hallway bulletin board for updates.

Notes:

- Our music teacher, Dr. Sarah McQuarrie, will be returning to the Children's Center again this year. Dr. McQuarrie will join us on Monday afternoons at 3pm for music, movement, and instrumental activities. We look forward to singing with her again!
- Parental involvement is always encouraged, so please let us know if you would like to read a book to the children, share a hobby or family tradition, or spotlight a special talent.
- Please label all of your child's personal belongings (especially bedding and stuffed animals). Things do get mixed up when they aren't labeled.
- The weather has been unpredictable lately. Please have a sweater or light jacket in your child's cubby.
- We cannot have any peanuts or tree nut products in the classroom due to children's allergies. Please read the labels on the products that you send in carefully. Peanut and tree nut products found in lunch boxes will be sent home. Please understand that we are trying our best to protect those children with food allergies from contact with these foods. Thank you!

The Investigator teachers are looking forward to a fun filled year with your children!

Investigators

Daily Schedule

7:30 - 8:45	Arrival/Bathroom Routine/Choice of Activities
8:45 - 9:40	Snack/Interest Centers
9:40 - 9:45	Clean Up Time
9:45 - 10:00	Greeting Time/Large Group
10:00 - 11:00	Outside Time/Movement Room
11:00 - 11:20	Small Groups
11:20 - 11:40	Interest Centers
11:40 - 11:45	Clean Up Time
11:45 - 12:00	Story/Pre-K Group
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30	A.M. Session Ends
12:30 - 1:45	Rest Time/Quiet toys (12:30-12:45 Bathroom/Stories)
1:45 - 2:00	Bathroom
2:00 - 3:00	Outside Time/Movement Room
3:00 - 3:15	Group
3:15 - 4:00	Snack/Afternoon Activity
4:00 - 5:00	Choice of Interest Centers
5:00 - 5:30	Teacher Planned Activity



Curriculum Notes – Explorer Group

by L. Eileen Estudante, lead teacher

Happy Birthday:

Aiden & Nathan	September 1
Aiden F.	September 9
Ryan	September 20
Jacob	September 26
Puqi	October 1
Neave	October 7
Tyler	October 31

A new school year has begun and we are excited for the changes it has in store for us! We want to extend a warm welcome to your child whether they are returning to us after the summer break or beginning their first semester here as an Explorer. Nicole and I are your child's teachers and we will soon be having the addition of another full-time teacher to our team!

In the beginning of the year, customarily we begin our "group time" as one large class. Once we have our third teacher in place, we will be dividing the children into three small consistent groups. Until the new teacher is assigned to our classroom, Jane will be assisting us in teaching our small groups. Each group will be paired with a teacher to lead them in story, activity or discussion. Separating into three small groups of children will allow us to enrich your child's learning experience as well as better accommodate their learning styles.

As we move forward into the fall and our curriculum planning, we will be continuing the educational philosophy we have been implementing the last few years, which encourages the children to work on projects and

studies which arise from the interests or ideas brought about by children, teachers, parents or events taking place within our world that the children wish to explore. This approach is well known and supported in the early childhood community and is commonly known as the "Project Approach" a/k/a Reggio Approach derived in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

In this teaching philosophy, the children propel the direction of the project and the teachers serve as supportive learning facilitators. As such, the teachers will be assisting the children in fact finding and document the learning progress of the given study with photos and captions of what is being said by the children. This gathering of information will be posted in various locations of our classroom. In this way, we will be sharing important insight into the learning process via step-by-step documentation. It will also allow the children to investigate a subject at their leisure and help foster their love for learning. In addition to our "project" during the day, at small group we will still be engaging in stories, fingerplays, songs and other fun learning activities. The project will be driven by the children and will not be restricted in what is learned or in the time given to explore it.

Once we are finished with our outdoor time at 11:45, one of the teachers will be taking those children who will be entering Kindergarten next year into our movement room. Those children will be engaging in teacher directed lessons that will reinforce their growing academic and social skills. We will

call this group "Pre-K A." To avoid jealousy and feelings of being left out, we have decided to call the remaining group "Pre-K B." They will be remaining in the classroom and doing similar but not as complex activities or possibly a story or movement activity.

In our continued efforts to be in communication with parents, there is a "dry/erase" board present in our hallway which will have our subject of study on it along with the art project for the day and any important announcements for parents. To the left of the large board, you will notice three smaller ones. These will be used by your teachers to communicate what has taken place in your child's small group.

We also have two separate bulletin board displays in the hall. The first one holds our snack menu and any other pertinent information for parents. The second one introduces our current teachers and teacher assistants. Also, be sure to periodically check your parent mailbox for any announcements or changes that may be in the future.

We welcome and encourage parents to spend time in our classroom so please let us know if you would like to read a story or share a hobby! We strive to improve our communication with parents. Please don't hesitate to speak to or email us or to even put an anonymous note into the Explorer suggestion box. We look forward to a fun and exciting fall semester with your child!

Explorers

Daily Schedule

7:30 - 8:45	Choice of Interest Centers and Early Morning Art
7:30 - 9:15	Bathroom
8:30 - 9:15	Snack and Choice of Interest Centers
9:15 - 9:30	Clean up snack and Interest Centers (children gather in group area to prepare for outside)
9:30 - 10:00	Outside/Movement Room Activities
10:00 - 10:15	Small Group Time
10:15 - 11:00	Art Activity and Choice of Interest Centers
11:00 - 11:45	Outside/Movement Room Activities
11:45 - 12:00	Story Time/PreK group
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch/Bathroom
12:30	A.M. Session Ends
12:30 - 1:45	Rest/Quiet toys
1:45 - 2:00	Bathroom
2:00 - 3:00	Outside/Movement Room Activities
3:00 - 3:15	Group Time with Combined Explorers and Investigators
3:15 - 4:00	Teacher Planned Art Activity/Snack
4:00 - 5:00	Choice of Interest Centers
5:00 - 5:30	Teacher Planned Activity



Tribute Gift Information

Hello parents! As you likely know already, Nancy Clark is retiring from Bridgewater after twenty wildly successful years as our Children's Center director. As a parent of a proud Center "alumnus," I am so grateful for Nancy's leadership that built the program that helped our family so much during such a crucial time in my son's education.

As a way to honor Nancy's contributions to the Center, we have established a fund with the BSU Foundation as a "Tribute Gift" to the Center in Nancy's honor from the families she has helped so much. Through your donation to this fund, we can honor Nancy in a way that means the world to her – the advancement of the Children's Center program.

I hope you will consider a donation. Your donation can help these outstanding teachers to bring even more innovation to this fantastic educational program. There are two ways to donate:

- Go to bridgew.edu/give and choose "Annual Fund." Then click the "donate" button. There will be a check box to indicate that the donation is in honor of someone. In the text box provided simply write Nancy's name and that it is for the Children's Center.
- If donating by check, please make the check to "BSU Foundation" and in the memo write "Children's Center / Honor of Nancy Clark." The address to send the check is: BSU Foundation, P.O. Box 42, Bridgewater, MA 02324 (or for those on campus, send/deliver to attn: Betsy Dubuque at the Davis Alumni Center – either way is fine).

Even the smallest donation will help when paired with other parents and supporters. I hope you will choose to make your contribution AND to tell a friend or fellow parent about this great opportunity. For more information, please contact me via e-mail at cindy.kane@bridgew.edu

Thanks for your consideration!

Cindy Kane

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