

St. Mark Preschool Beachball Press



June 29, 2020

Dear St. Mark Parents,
Please reserve Wednesday, July 15th, at 7:00p.m. for our first Town Hall meeting. If this time is inconvenient, it will be taped so you can watch it at your leisure. It will be a time for us to talk and for me to gather and answer initial questions. If I don't have the answer, I will find out and get back to you. The following week I will Zoom with each class.

I want to clarify questions regarding the August 3rd start date. I wrote that there were "three extra weeks of care" because the 2020-2021 school year had been scheduled to begin on August 24th. You are welcome to have your child start on either August 3rd or August 24th - please let me know by next Friday, July 10th so we can prepare for your child.

If you are starting your child on August 24th, there is no need to worry that you will lose your child's spot at SMP. Also, the Aug. 2020 tuition will be prorated to reflect the Aug. 24th start date, as SMP has a history of prorating August tuition. The 11 remaining tuition payments will be in equal installments.

Here's a quick glance at some of the things I've been working on during my first three weeks at SMP:

-Meeting Pastor Cindy and the Parent Advisory Committee. They have worked tirelessly to get me trained in the core things I need to know to get us up and running. I am very grateful for their help.

-Met with the Safety Committee to update all Emergency Procedures and Covid-19 practices. I was fortunate to be here while Cottage Hospital's preschool was renting the building. I watched and learned how to implement Covid-19 safety procedures.

-Spoke with Christian Patterson, our licensing representative. He has

been supportive and helpful directing me through the requirements.

-Identified Santa Barbara County requirements for reopening.

-Attending the Director's Collaborative that Taundra Pitchford leads. The meetings are a *brilliant* way for me to learn how other preschools are navigating these times and ask questions.

-Organizing our first staff meeting. We met for 2 hours and shared information about past challenges and new methodologies for moving forward. *What lovely and dedicated women you have teaching your youngsters.*

-Getting familiar with the registration packet and waiting lists...

-Writing to you.

-The office has a fresh coat of paint and all cabinets and most binders have been organized.

-Made dozens of lists to keep me organized!

HANDS = HOME AND SCHOOL

Play is foundational for bonding



relationships and fostering acceptance. It's one of the ways we learn to trust each other and where we learn the rules of the game. Play increases creativity and resilience.

They will have distinct interactions, behaviors, and connections with each other. Play is what helps them adapt and what joins them together.

Inventiveness is often the result of adding unique elements into play. There are many ways to play:

quietly, imaginatively, being curious, and a sense of wonder that helps them discover new understandings. Curiosity is what drives discovery. It is where surprising connections are formed and built on.

Play is essential for young children's capacities to flourish.

SMP'S COVID-19 PRACTICES

The COVID-19 information is a "living document" about practices we plan to implement. As data changes, I will update it. ☺

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP TIME

There will be staggered drop off times for parents who work and parents who need care.

-7:45am-8:15am drop-off available for working parents and

-8:30am-9:00am drop-off for parents who need childcare

We will have 2 drop off methods. One option will be to utilize the "U" shaped driveway for an "in and out" drop off. The other will be a "park and walk your child to class" drop off.

ENTERING THE PRESCHOOL

The steps and hallway to classrooms will have signs and 6' social distancing indicators to show you what to do.

Pastor Cindy and I will be available to greet and walk children back to their classrooms.

Once it is you and your child's turn to go into class, their teacher will ask you a number of questions, take children's temperatures and visually assess their wellness. This will take time and practice...and then we will get into a rhythm. If your child has separation anxiety, we will all do our best to console and redirect them. Often, a child who experiences separation anxiety with one parent is absolutely fine if the other parent does the drop off. You could also try

having another relative, close friend or grandparent give it a try for a few days - Linger is a natural response, but it makes leaving more intense for the child. Staying patient and consistent, and gently but firmly setting limits is helpful.

the list to contribute, it would be greatly appreciated. Thanks a lot!

Have a sunny week! Michele

Before entering the classrooms, all children will use hand sanitizer. Parents' will not be able to enter classrooms, "Have a fun day, we love you" will need to be said at the door for now.

General Information

Each class will have 10 or less children.

The Toddler and Pre-K class will be divided into two.

Playground time will be staggered so groups are separated. While the weather is pleasant, we will be utilizing outdoor curriculum more. We are creating several outside play options so more than one group can be outside at a time.

Naptime will be in your child's classroom. Cots will be wiped down daily. All used surfaces will be wiped down daily. Each time a child uses the bathroom all used surfaces will be wiped down.

The teachers and Maricela and her brother will be cleaning daily. Big Green cleaning service will professionally clean the entire school on Fridays. This includes dusting, wiping down surfaces, and cleaning the carpet.

TREASURES

We have had some very thoughtful donations dropped off in the hallway. For now, we cannot accept stuffed animals, toys, or books partially due to Covid-19 (we are not allowed to have any stuffed animals) and partially because as a staff we are cleaning and updating classrooms and sheds. Soon, each teacher will create a list of classroom needs. If you'd like to choose something on