



Spuyten Duyvil

P R E S C H O O L

3041 KINGSBRIDGE AVENUE

BRONX, NY 10463

TEL. 718 549 1525

FAX 718 884 0667

director.spuytenduyvil@gmail.com

IMPORTANT:

No school Tuesday, Feb. 1 Lunar New Year

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Mid-Winter Break/ Vacation Camp Mon, Feb. 21- Fri, Feb. 25

**** all children must show negative covid test to return to school Mon. Feb. 28**

Half Day Professional Development..... noon dismissal Tues. March 15

Check your school calendar for dates for the rest of the year.-

January 29, 2022

Dear Families,

Let's do business first- **COVID UPDATES –**

The past 2 weeks have been a testament to the flexibility and support Spuyten Duyvil families and staff. Following current Dept of Health guidelines, 2 different classes had to be closed due to exposure from student. Fortunately, no one was very sick and both classes are up running again. Many thanks go out to every family who rolled with the disruption, attended the zoom classes with their teachers, got yet another covid test for their child, and returned to us happy and healthy. can only hope that now infection cases from Omicron seem to have peaked, we won't have to take these steps again.

DOH and the Dept of Early Childhood have issued a revision of those guidelines, cutting quarantine time for exposed classmates testing negative from returning on the 8th day after exposure, to returning on 6th day. I am attaching the whole schedule. There is no scenario for what to do when your child is directly exposed outside of school (like a family member is positive). We are to use the same rules as exposure within the school.



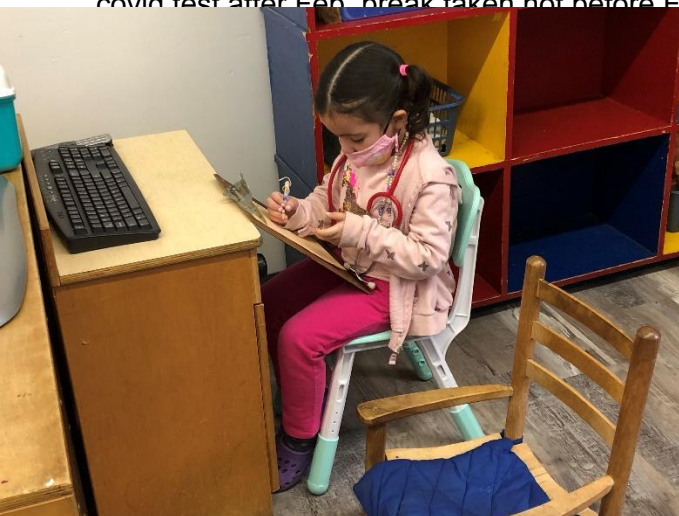
of
a
and

We

the

Mask mandates have also been in the news lately. No change on that policy for the foreseeable future from our end.

I know it is a continuing challenge, but this policy has served us well- all kids and staff must produce a negative covid test after Feb. break taken not before Feb. 24.



OTHER HEALTH NEWS:

We have had 2 staff laid low with the flu so I am doubly glad all our children had that vaccination. Ten days ago I broke my foot. With my knee scooter I am much more mobile and came in 2 days last week but the snow put a stop to that for the moment. Another stress on the staff to cover. They are an amazing group; I am so grateful to them for unfailingly stepping up to whatever needs to be done. Since most of my contact with families is now through email I have stayed up to date with most ups and downs. Some of the face-to-face situations may be a bit delayed. Please be patient.

PROGRAMMING:

We have decided to make a change in our **Friday music special**. We are still interested drumming in the school but the current arrangement was not working as we had expected so we are taking a break working with Baba for now. At our recent staff development afternoon, we worked with our speech and physical therapy service providers (Janett and Jess) on better understanding the work they do with many of our kids. Our focus this year has been on sensory integration- how it develops in young children, what it looks like for the child and the class

when the integration is not smooth. We are noticing this to be a growing situation, especially this year. No doubt the pandemic influences this behavioral situation as well. It was a very successful afternoon- we are continuing with this topic on our March date. Getting back to drumming- several years ago we brought in motor/neuro specialist Mary Cartales (Wed Hip Hop teacher also) on this same topic. Mary is going to come in on Fridays starting this week and work with all the classes on movement, rhythms, percussion, yoga, all activities that encourage sensory alignment. She is also a bucket of fun to be with!



VACATION CAMP:

February is Science Discovery Camp with Alda. Batteries, volcanoes, bubbling brews- what else could a kid want? Only SDP kids and staff involved. See attached flyer for info and rates. Flexibility in days attending but let me know as soon as

you can. We can take as many as want to attend but it helps to be able to plan in advance with accurate numbers. Alda has been overseeing this for 3 years and everyone has loved the work. The April break will be Arts Camp.

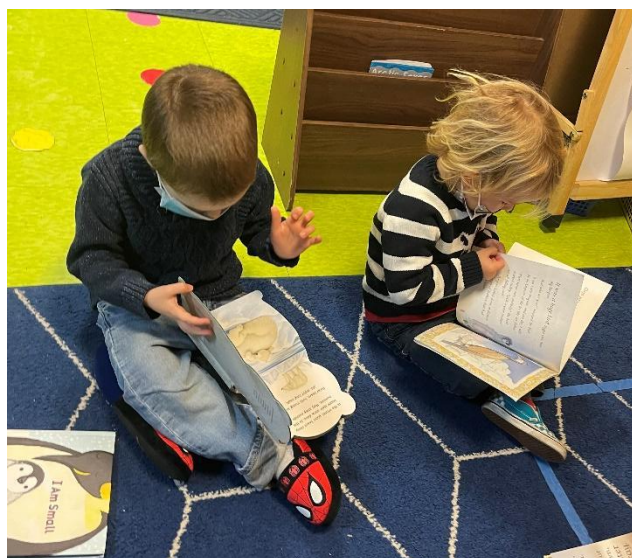
URBAN EXPLORERS:

As our class model is changing with the complete transition to only 3K and 4K next year, we are continually looking for ways to expand our programming and outreach in philosophically appropriate ways. That is what led to Urban Explorers, a part time private program for pre-preschoolers- that is children who will be eligible for 3K in Sept. Just word of mouth has half filled the seats- 20 morning sessions over 10 weeks March thru May. Flyer attached. Please spread the word to friends and family (or your own younger sibs). Attending children are then considered current students which gives them priority placement in the DOE lottery going forward.

SUMMER CAMP:

We rent our space to Hannah Saunders who was our nature educator before Chelsea and still works on site with us planning our outdoor space. She runs her own Second Nature Outdoor Summer Camp here for 6 weeks. Many of our families have attended over the past few years. Several of SDP staff work with her also. It is a natural continuation of the work they are doing with Chelsea all year. Hannah has agreed to extend the early bird rates thru March 9 for our families. She does fill up so if you are interested, do not delay. You can search her site or use this link:

<https://sites.google.com/nyu.edu/secondnature/home>



Planning for Sept: 4K families should have already applied through the DOE lottery for Kindergarten. The lottery for the 3's to apply for 4K next Sept has not opened yet. All current students will be accepted into SDP if that is their choice. I won't let you miss the dates, so don't worry.

The lottery for admission into next year's 3K should come up soon too. Siblings are not automatically accepted anymore so you must let me know in advance if you have another child you would like to join us next year. We will no longer be offering any part time, private nursery program; it will be all 5 days, 9-3. There will still be private before and after care just like now.

THIS AND THAT:

COMPOST – still being collected from us every Monday so keep those food scraps coming. The 2 trash bins for collection are just inside the lower gate.

TAX TIME – Many of you generously donated to our November fundraiser. Let me know if you want a tax letter for this contribution or for childcare for 2021.

FEB. MENU – attached.



WINTER DRESS – Remember that we are committed to giving the kids active outdoor play as much as possible. There were several indoor days last week but don't

assume the kids won't go out and please dress them properly. They must be wearing hats, scarves and mittens. We have extras but it is not an endless supply. Gloves and mittens will go missing (I think they collect with the missing dryer socks!). Buy cheap ones and buy extras. If rainboots are worn to school be sure there are sneakers on hand as well. If the rain lets up the children go out and it is not safe to run or climb in loose rainboots. To play in the snow they should have snowpants and high boots. Again, we do have extra snowpants but not in the larger sizes (please donate outgrown size 5 and up if you can).

****** When your child needs to borrow school clothes for any reason please, please wash and return them. I had to buy sweatpants as we had no more pants in a variety of sizes as they have not been returned when used for bathroom accidents. Be sure your child has adequate and weather appropriate change of clothes on hand also.

CHESS- Lessons are going extremely well. I will send home a letter from McKenna, our Chess@3 instructor, with your child next week inviting you to an upcoming free online chess lesson. The original date was planned for last week but with all the interruptions I wasn't able to get the notice out in time. She will plan another time and I will let you know well in advance. Meanwhile you can check out the Chess@3 site if you want to know more about this unique program your children enjoy every Wednesday.

BATHROOM SUPPORT- Yes, you read that correctly! More specifically, how to properly use toilet paper. Right before Dec. break we had a complete shut down of all toilets in the building. Emergency service pulled out an ungodly mash of toilet paper clogging the main drain to the outside sewer. Luckily, we only had to dig up a bit of the Annex floor to get to that trap; if it had wiggled itself any further, we would have had to dig up our front entrance. So now we give the kids a few sheets of paper as they go into the stalls rather than let them have a confetti party in their privacy. Please help by working with your child on not only what is the appropriate amount of tissue to use, but also how to be more accurate in reaching behind themselves to do a thorough cleaning. The second part is easier to do at home and equally important.



SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUBS: The supply delays of the past few months seem to have cleared up. There are new book selections available monthly. Remember we get bonus points for every dollar spent and the books are an excellent literacy support for your budding reader.

www.scholastic.com/parentordering activation code LH6ZW

A last recommendation- nothing in it for the school, just a neighborly share from a fellow Inwood resident. My husband and I have been enjoying weekly deliveries from fresh baked bread from William at **Inwood Bread**. I get a

weekly email telling me what the offering is (this week I got a sourdough with hazelnuts and dried figs!). He delivers to

Inwood on Friday nights and Wash. Hgts on Sundays. I pay by Venmo, generally \$6- \$9 a loaf. I can't tell you what a delight it is to come home Friday nights to my fresh bread hanging on my doorknob- although generally my husband has gotten there first and already pulled off an end to taste. The vastness of the city and the craziness of the days falls away; I feel like I am in a tiny grid town with my own local baker looking out for me. Check it

While late pick up families have already met her, I want to give an official, heart-felt welcome to Tiara Sullivan who joined us at the beginning of Tiara is an experience care-giver for young children. I hope she felt at with us as quickly as we have taken to her. Welcome Tiara to the SDP

Sincerely,

Judi

ARTICLES OF THE MONTH-

Let Kids Take Their Masks Off After the Omicron Surge by Michelle Goldberg, NY Times Jan. 28, 2022

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/opinion/masks-covid-children.html>

Nothing taking too much brain power this time; 2 recent articles that just made sense when thinking about all of you. First is an op-ed from this past week raising some consciousness again about the effect of masks on young children. Last year we did not have our kids wearing masks as it was not a requirement. We felt very strongly about just what Michelle Goldberg points out in her piece. This year, of course, we went with the rules and we are definitely seeing the effects on many kids' communication too.

How Play-Doh Helped Save Me From My Despair in Grad School by Jenny Qi, NY Times Magazine, Dec. 28, 2021

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/28/magazine/play-doh.html>

Yes, good old playdough, a staple in our classes. Strong curriculum piece for small motor development, imaginative play, social language. It is also has strong sensory effects being so smooth, malleable, forgiving. Our teachers make it from scratch almost weekly. Here is the recipe. You will find yourself happily sitting with your child playing with the clay. Store it in a sealed container or zip lock. When it dries out, throw it out and start over. Great for a snowed-in weekend activity.



off the out.

Jan. home family!

How to make playdough

Playdough ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup salt
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)
- Food coloring, optional (you can also use liquid watercolors)
- Quart sized bags

Stir together the flour, salt and cream of tartar in a large pot. Next add the water and oil. If you're only making one color, add in the color now as well. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Continue stirring until the dough has thickened and begins to form into a ball. Remove from heat and then place inside a gallon sized bag or onto wax paper. Allow to cool slightly and then knead until smooth. If you're adding colors after, divide the dough into balls (for how many colors you want) and then add the dough into the quart sized bags. Start with about 5 drops of color (my favorite brands are listed above) and add more to brighten it. Knead the dough, while inside the bag so it doesn't stain your hands. Once it's all mixed together you're ready to PLAY.

