



Spuyten Duyvil

P R E S C H O O L

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MONTHLY CALENDAR DATES ATTACHED TO THIS LETTER

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Violin Class begins Mon Sept 28, Wed Sept 30

Somos Artistas begins Tuesday, Oct 6

Fall Family Garden Work Day Sunday Oct 18

Raindate.... Sun Oct 5

Indigenous Peoples Day SCHOOL CLOSED Monday, Oct.12

Photo Day 1/2 Day School noon dismissal Election Day..... Tuesday Nov.3

4K Kindergarten Meeting on Zoom..... Thurs, Nov 12 6:30 pm

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

October events calendar attached to this Newsletter.

Sept 29, 2026

Dear Families,

So glad to report another low-key, smoothy transition back into the school year. A few bumps for a few kids; that is completely normal. The crying bursts don't necessarily follow a timeline that makes sense to the adults- like everything is fine for a week and then from nowhere on a random Tuesday there are tears. But the adult response needs to be consistent: You are fine, I will see you later, Have a good day. Then off the caregiver goes, the teacher calmly brings the child into the group and all is quiet and busy again.



All 3 Back to School nites were well attended. We were glad to be able to offer Pizza N' Play for childcare which hopefully was a help for families. It was also great fun for the kids. If anyone has other questions about our program or anything concerning their child's development, do not hesitate to contact your teachers or me. Family Conferences will be the week after Thanksgiving break but it isn't necessary to wait until then to consult with each other.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

All our favorite programs are back again- Chess, Movement with Mary, and Art Club with Grazia return in their regular weekly timeslots. Chess for 4K kids will start up next Monday, Oct 5 with a new instructor. We decided last year to only do Chess with the older kids. It was a stretch for some of the littles to sit and be that focused for even ½

hour. They were better served with the more familiar and leisurely open time in their classroom. Those kids are now in the 4's and ready for this higher level activity. Gabby, our new Chess instructor will be sending out summaries of the lessons each week which I will forward to the families so you can follow along with the kids.

Here is their link if you want to learn more about how the Chess program works.

<https://storytimechess.com/contact-us>.

Happily, all our staff have returned for another year. We are very proud of our very low staff turnover. Not only does that mean we maintain a very experienced staff, but our professional group has been able to grow together in our understanding of each other and how children learn and work within our classrooms.

EARLY/AFTERCARE

SDY+ is being used by most of our families and there are a lot of small group programs going on each day within the afterschool time. Winifer, Joselyn, Tiara, Crisel and Cathy keep the groups going all afternoon. Sophia Aquino joined the aftercare team on and off last year; she will be here most days now for another set



of eyes and hands to keep everyone safe. This way there is also a second teacher to join the small group classes to better support the kids' engagement..

Included in your child's afterschool time they all attend KinderGym on Fridays and Somos Artistas (Immersive Spanish Art Class) on Tuesdays. 4K kids have Drum Circle with Mary on Thursdays.

If you have not signed your child up to stay, I urge you to reconsider. We are incredibly lucky to be able to offer our kids this additional opportunity to explore and grow. Kids do not need to stay til 6 and not use the time every day but for children who are going to their old daycare or home with a parent or caregiver, we quickly see the benefits in the children's comfort in the larger groups when they take part.

PRIVATE AFTERSCHOOL SPECIALS-

Afterschool programming is free, except for these 2 classes. If you are interested still, let me know now and I can give you more details.

4K VIOLIN CLASS began this week. We can take a few more kids, but not after next week. The classes are tightly scaffolded so kids need to start at the beginning.

4K DANCE – Ted Pollen is back this year bringing his joint professions to our kids- Alvin Ailey dancer and elementary school teacher. He is officially retired from both as full-time work, but is all ours Wed afternoons. A few more kids could join if you have not responded yet.

There are fees for both classes. Please speak to me directly for details and financial aid.



DROP-OFF FRIDAY// TOWN MEETINGS: Now that we have a few weeks completed and all the kids are settled in with their routines we can start Drop off Fridays, at first though only for 4K. Every other Friday will be either Drop-off Friday where the adult is invited into Morning Meeting along with their child at drop-off, or, once a month, Town Meeting which brings together all 3 classes in one very close group in one of the classrooms to share stories, sing and have face to face time with our whole community. 4K Families are invited to join their child this coming Friday, Oct 2 for Morning Meeting at their regular drop-off time. In two weeks, Friday, Oct. 16, 4K will have Town Meeting.



LUNCH and SNACK:

- Early Drop-off Breakfast-Children may bring breakfast from home if they arrive before 8 am.
- The school supplies snack.- milk/water, cheese sticks, pretzels, fresh fruit, goldfish crackers. We are happy to accept snacks for the class from home- remember to send enough for the whole class- we can never get enough fresh fruit- grapes, bananas, seasonal berries, peaches.
- October Lunch Menu is attached to this letter. Your children are responsible for serving themselves, pouring their own drink, clearing their own place when done eating. Have them do this at home too- **THEY CAN!** Setting the table for the family is also as easy and very effective numeracy activity- they do it at school too.

FUNDRAISING:

- **School Store:** not much of a fundraiser, more of a school spirit kind of thing. We have t-shirts, hoodies, coffee mugs, tote bags- all with our unique little blue house logo- attached flyer with prices.
- **DOUBLE GOOD POPCORN** -We will do our annual pop-up shop in January. More info in a few months.

COMMUNICATION:

Family Handbook: We have a very complete Family Handbook which is on our website and attached here. Let me know if you would like a hard copy. .

School Directory will go home to every family shortly so that families can easily reach out to each other for playdates and other community interests. If you do NOT want your contact info included you should have indicated this on the permission form you turned in at the beginning of the year.

Contact Teachers – Every class has their own email account to reach their own families or for you to direct questions to them. They do not check it during school hours so do not use that to let us know of same day pick-up

changes. Use the school phone or my email for that. You can also use your class Bloomz account. Just be sure to use the private mode when writing to your teacher.

Margaret & Chassity 4K- class 2S mv.upk.sdp@gmail.com	Alda & Michelle 4K- class 2N amupksdp@gmail.com
Martha, Brenda & Colleen 3K Nursery Nursery.sdp@gmail.com	Judith, Director Director.spuytenduyvil@gmail.com
Michelle Byron Outdoor Educator Kinderfarm.sdp@gmail.com	Cathy Matos Admin. Assistant Cathy.spuytenduyvil@gmail.com

Class weekly Newsletters. Teachers use Bloomz to send weekly updates and pictures of the kids. I send my monthly newsletter like this through email and use Bloomz for shorter notices and reminders. If there are other parents/guardians that should be receiving these emails please be sure I have that contact info.

PARKING:

There is no dedicated school parking but there are a few spots in front of the school under the School Only sign. No one is quite sure how that got there and who it covers. If you do park there for a brief time, I have Courtesy Cards from the school to let traffic officers know you will be right back. This is not a guarantee but tickets are rare. Be sure to leave your blinkers on and do NOT park in front of the church. That is much more likely to generate a ticket.

SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB – SCHOOL CODE LH6ZW

Everyone who went to grade school must know about Scholastic Books. That is the company that did the Book Fairs in the schools along with the flyers that used to go home monthly.. The books are a wide range of subjects, lots of them high quality literature by established authors. This is also a great way to find out about new authors. Think Mo Willems and all the Pigeon and Elephant books as a great example. Many of the hundreds of books we have in our classrooms and our shared libraries came as freebees or at these low prices.

I no longer send home the monthly flyers and families can order anytime- I will always leave the latest ones on the large sharing bulleting board downstairs so you can take a look. But there are many, many more categories on the Scholastic site. Be sure to use our school code when ordering. There is nothing stronger to encourage eager readers than the gift of a shiny new book-

SAVE THE DATE--- FALL FAMILY GARDEN DAY OCT 18

Kids have been harvesting tomatoes, apples and mini cucumbers. But as fall kicks in, the dying plants need to come out and the farm and garden tucked in for winter. That takes extra hands. It is also nice to meet new families. Join this whole school event- parents donate lunch and baked goods, work on garden maintenance, kids play in backyard- see attached flyer

TIDBITS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Please remember to close all gates coming in and out of the property.
- We make a big deal about arriving on time. If Morning Meeting in your class has begun, the door will be closed with a sign asking you to wait with your child til the door opens. Do NOT leave your child on their own, even if school adults are around.
- There have been some updates to our school calendar- latest version is attached.
- As the weather starts to change, SDY+ Aftercare children may be indoors, often in the upstairs classrooms. Come on up, sign your child out and then open the door. Please do not let your child run across the room to you or leave with you without one of the teachers calling your child over. Otherwise we may not know he has been picked up and go looking for him.



ARTICLE OF THE MONTH-

I usually add an article on either a progressive educational practice, a parenting perspective I think might be helpful, something relevant to young children, preK, etc. from the news The first few weeks of school at any grade are always a roller coaster or realignment. This short passage is directed to the preschool teachers, but it is just as sound as a reminder to the parents, the reminder that these young years are fleeting. Put down your phone when your child is present, take the iPad away. Go for a walk, read a book, watch her playing in the bath. You will be glad you did.

Sincerely,



ExchangeEveryDay

Your free source of early childhood inspiration and news.

9/13/2024

Purpose in Unsettled Beginnings

Because children grow up we think a child's purpose is to grow up. But a child's purpose is to be a child.
– Tom Stoppard, Czech-born British playwright and screenwriter

My office is upstairs above the entrance foyer for a large child care centre. These early days of the school year are particularly loud as families return and greet one another with stories of summer adventures. Other families are new, and some babies are letting us know this change in their lives will take some getting used to. Kleenex abound for children and adults.

I hear educators tenderly reassuring parents and soothing children. I hear parents asking questions and seeking reassurance.

It is all so tender.

And sometimes we are in a rush to get through this settling in period. We want things to get to our idea of "normal" so we can get on with the curriculum and regular programming.

I am awed by the immense work that building trust is as we navigate these days together. THIS is the work, the work of allowing a child to figure out a whole new world. The work of allowing parents to gain confidence in their decision to choose us. The work of holding children close, giving them language for their jumble of emotions, helping them to make connections to others.

What is at stake if we rush them? What do we miss if don't tune our days to the rhythms of new children? Here's to leaning into Tom's call to understand and support a child's purpose - to be a child - a unique child from a unique family who we have the privilege to live life alongside for these all too brief but critically important years of childhood.

Wishing you all JOY in these chaotic and tender days of beginnings and hope.

Nicky Byres leads a multi-site non-profit child care organisation in Richmond, BC, Canada