



2012-13 Parent Packet **2012-13 Paquete Para Padres**



City of San Mateo Parks and Recreation Dept.
Building Blocks Preschool Programs

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Contact List

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<p>BUILDING BLOCKS SUPERVISOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Sherman 	<p>522-7475 asherman@cityofsanmateo.org</p>

Who to contact

- Questions regarding payment due dates, waitlists, registrations, financial assistance, etc., please contact the King Center at 522-7470.
- Specific questions about teaching philosophy, day-to-day activities, allergies, special needs, attendance, etc. please contact the lead teacher of your center listed above. All other inquiries, please contact Amy Sherman, Community Services Supervisor.

Teaching Philosophy, Curriculum, & Environment

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The Building Blocks Preschool Programs are dedicated to providing a safe environment for each child to grow emotionally, physically, socially, and intellectually, by following Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP). Briefly, DAP can be defined as those practices which are both **age appropriate** and **individually appropriate** for each child. It is important to understand that DAP is a **philosophy**, not a method. In our programs, each child is recognized and respected as an individual, and each is nurtured and cherished.

Building Blocks programs are Recreation based which embrace the theory that children learn through play. Teachers view themselves as facilitators. Teachers prepare the environment, offer age appropriate materials, and provide assistance so that children are able to explore their surroundings and make discoveries on their own. We do not believe in imposing academic pressure. Children develop at different rates and what one child may be able to do, another child may not be ready for. By following DAP, teachers are able to foster creative, positive, and self fulfilling attitudes, rather than creating anxiety or resistance toward school.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the Building Blocks Programs is designed to focus on the five main milestones of development which occur at the preschool level:

- ❖ Social
- ❖ Emotional
- ❖ Cognitive
- ❖ Sensory/Motor
- ❖ Self Regulation/Life Skills

We provide opportunities for children to participate in activities based on planned themes *and* the observable interests of the children. Our curriculum is incorporated through play, art, music, multicultural experiences, movement, using practical life skills, mathematics, science experiments, and cooking. Children are encouraged to use their own creativity in their work. Although planned and prepared by teachers, the curriculum becomes child-directed rather than teacher-directed by allowing for creative expression and imagination.

ENVIRONMENT

Each classroom in the program provides various learning centers. The dramatic play area (better known as dress up and kitchen area) offers children the opportunity for social role-playing. The building area (blocks) provides materials for children to better develop small and large muscle skills. The reading center promotes literacy by offering the opportunity for children to read to each other, with their teacher, or by themselves. The art area provides opportunities for self-expression and imagination. Sensory experiences (hands on play) provide opportunities to use all five senses in a way that is fun. Cognitive concepts regarding letters, numbers, colors, and shapes are all reinforced through the above activities.

RATIOS

Our programs are designed around the following teacher to student ratios:

Friends & Me: 1:5

Tiny Tots: 1:10

King PreK: 1:10

SV & LAKE PreK: 1:12

Parent Involvement: Tiny Tots and Pre-Kindergarten

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

The Tiny Tots and Pre-K programs success and strength are strongly influenced by the parents' involvement to their children's growth and learning experience at school. We ask parents to make the extra effort in supporting your child's classroom. Parents are asked to volunteer one to two times per month in their child's program. A sign-up sheet will be available on the sign in/out table in/near your child's classroom. On your special volunteer day, you will help the teachers supervise classroom activities, prepare and help with art projects, play games, prepare a snack, or help with whatever the day has in store for us. We welcome mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, close family friends, etc. However, the parent volunteer must be over 18 years of age. Since this is a special time for you to participate with your child, we ask that you to find alternative care for siblings. Your presence in our classroom helps reinforce the positive attitude we are building towards preschool. When adults volunteer, children feel a sense of pride knowing that their school experience is just as important to you as it is to them. This is a precious time in your child's life and a great opportunity for you to be involved in their first school experience in a special way.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally we will be taking field trips to local areas of interest. Parents are encouraged to assist with these trips by volunteering to be drivers and/or provide extra supervision. Siblings may not be able to attend some trips depending on the location. Teachers will notify you before hand. **One parent/adult chaperone must attend for each participant.** If the parent is unable to attend a field trip, it is the parent's responsibility to arrange alternative transportation and supervision.

GIFT GIVING

Gifts are never expected or even anticipated, however families wishing to express appreciation to their teachers are welcome to donate or purchase gifts that can be used in the classrooms. **Teachers are unable to accept personal gifts. If a teacher receives a gift that cannot be used for the classroom, it will be taken to a chosen charity for a donation.** Each program has its own wish list, please check with your teacher for more information.

Parent Involvement: Friends & Me

PARENT SUPPORT

The Friends & Me program success and strength is strongly influenced by the parents commitment to their children's growth and learning experience at school. **We do NOT ask for parent volunteers in Friends & Me!** Our goal is to foster independence, socialization, and to ease separation anxiety through creative, positive, and self-fulfilling activities. You can support your Friends & Me program by showing your child that you are confident and comfortable with the staff and classroom. If children sense anxiety from a parent, the transition becomes more difficult. To ease separation anxiety, we ask that parents **do not stay inside or outside the classroom after you have said your good bye.** We also ask that you reassure your child that you will be returning when class is over rather than leaving without a good bye. If you arrive early for pick up, please wait in an area not visible to your child to avoid unnecessary stress during dismissal.

DIAPERING AND EXTRA CLOTHES

At Friends & Me we do not impose any toilet training pressure. We support diapering while in the process of encouraging your child to feel proud and competent in using the toilet and becoming more independent. Each day your child will need to bring with them a bag labeled with their name, a change of clothes, and enough fresh clean diapers and wipes **provided by parents.** Diapering will be provided by staff with respect to the child and hygiene. Each child needs an extra change of clothes because accidents are to be

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expected as they learn to use the toilet successfully. **A fee of \$5.00 (includes diapers and wipes) per diapering will be assessed if your child needs to be diapered and they have no supplies.**

Arrival and Departure

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Timely arrivals and departures cannot be overstressed. Children entering the classroom late can be a distraction. Children need to arrive on time in order to successfully transition into the daily routine. Parents are expected to pick their children up immediately at the conclusion of class. Parents will be charged a late pick up fee of \$1.00 per minute – there is no grace period for late pick ups.

NOTE: Pre-K and Tiny Tot parents, if it is not your day to volunteer we ask you to please take adult conversations outside which allows the children to begin with their daily routine. To ease separation anxiety, we also ask that parents **do not stay inside or outside the classroom after you have said your good bye**. It is important that you reassure your child that you will be returning when class is over rather than leaving without a good bye.

We would appreciate a phone call if you know you are going to be late. If we do not hear from you within 5 minutes of the class pickup time, we will start calling the list of authorized individuals on the release form to come pick up your child. If no one has come within 30 minutes, we will release your child to Children's Protective Services or the San Mateo Police Department.

SIGN OUTS AND RELEASING CHILDREN

For your child's protection, we request you personally sign each child IN and OUT of the program each day. A sign in/out sheet will be kept in the room or on the parent table. Please escort children into the room; **do not drop them off in the parking lot.** Only adults, 18 years or older, may come to pick up your child. Only those adults authorized by you **in writing** on your emergency form will be permitted to pick up your child. If someone other than a parent is picking up the child please have that person prepared to show ID. If someone comes to pick up your child who is not on your list we will not release your child. If you have special circumstances please inform your teacher ahead of time and provide any legal documents if necessary. It is your responsibility to keep your emergency information current.

Classroom Basics

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

Toys should remain at home unless they are appropriate for a show and tell day. Guns, swords, knives, and any other toys that provoke violent or aggressive play are inappropriate for school and will be turned away. Please label all items brought to school. Although every effort will be made to take proper care of toys, please be aware they can be lost or damaged at school.

CLOTHING:

Children should wear appropriate, comfortable, and easy to launder clothing for school. Closed toe shoes are strongly recommended (mandatory for Friends & Me). Please keep in mind that art projects can get messy and we would like to give our students the peace of mind that it is ok to indulge in their creativity. If your child comes home dirty, it is a good sign they had a great day at preschool! **Please be sure to label all sweaters and jackets!**

TOTE BAGS:

Each child in the program will receive one Building Blocks tote bag. We ask that your child bring his/her tote bag to school each day. This will be used for transporting their art projects and school correspondence home; no food or drinks please. Please remember to empty your child's entire blue bag each evening, as teachers will be filling bags daily with classroom letters and art projects. Since this bag is for your child to keep, please feel free to personalize it with decorations.

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VACATION AND ABSENCES:

If your child will be out of school for a substantial amount of time due to a vacation or illness, please let a teacher know when and if possible. If you know ahead of time that your child will be arriving late to class, please let a teacher know as well. Please be aware that refunds are not given for missed classes and cannot be made up in other classes. Tuition must be kept current in order to keep your spot.

Illness Policy

Throughout the school year, it is expected that colds and minor illnesses will occur. In order to protect the health of students and teachers, we ask the following health guidelines be observed.

Children with the following symptoms **MUST** be kept at home:

- Fever of 100° or above
- Severe cough
- Rash from unknown source
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Other contagious disease (head lice, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.)

▪ **FEVER**

A child must be fever free for one full day, **24 HOURS**, before returning to school. For example, if a child has a fever on Monday, he or she may not return to school until Wednesday.

▪ **CLASSROOM ILLNESS PROCEDURE**

When a child becomes ill, or exhibits any of the above mentioned symptoms, a determination will be made whether the child requires exclusion from the program. If the child does require exclusion from the program, the parents will be contacted and expected to pick up their child immediately.

▪ **MEDICATIONS**

We do not administer any “over the counter” medications at any time. If your child has a prescribed medication that must be administered during our 2-3 hour classes, please speak to your lead teacher about your personal circumstance.

▪ **FIRST AID AT SCHOOL**

When a child receives a minor injury at school, appropriate first aid action will be taken. Please be aware that teachers are not permitted to use any medications or ointments to treat a child. If the injury is serious, parents will be notified immediately. In worst case scenario, 911 will be called first.

▪ **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES**

If your child contracts a contagious disease please notify your teacher immediately. It is the teachers’ responsibility to post exposure notices in order to help prevent outbreaks.

We understand that children’s illnesses may be inconvenient and frustrating but we ask for your cooperation in following the above guidelines. We want to keep our children and families as healthy as possible throughout the school year. Thank you in advance for your help.

Behavior Management

In order to insure a safe environment for all students, we have set the following guidelines concerning unsafe behavior. Unsafe behavior includes any type of behavior which creates a danger for any participant or adult in our programs.

UNSAFE BEHAVIOR

It is taken very seriously and will **NOT** be tolerated. It is our vision that our students engage in play that promotes healthy relationships and fosters friendships. Should an unsafe behavior occur the following guidelines will be followed:

- Step 1: Child and teacher discuss the dangers and consequences of unsafe behavior. The child is informed that if the unsafe behavior occurs a second time within the same day the child will be asked to sit down and “take a break.” Parents will be notified.
- Step 2: Teacher reinforces conversation regarding unsafe behavior. If the behavior is serious enough, the child’s parent is called and the child will go home for the remainder of the day, or be asked to remain home the following day.
- Step 3: (Continued behavior) Parents will meet with teacher and program director to discuss a behavior management plan. After one month of implementing the behavior management plan, teacher, parents, and program director will meet again to discuss progress. Dismissal from program may be possible if goals of the behavior management plan are not met.

VIOLENT AND AGGRESSIVE PLAY

Aggressive or violent play will **NOT** be tolerated. Superhero play (i.e. Power Rangers, Spiderman, Shooting games, etc.) will be strongly discouraged. Certain television shows and video games can be extremely impressive on a young mind. Unfortunately many times children will reenact character behavior that is inappropriate. At school we will promote using kind behavior and work on skills to ensure that we provide a safe and fun learning environment for all.

It is important to the Building Blocks program that parents and teachers continuously work together creating a partnership. Parents play the most important role in a child’s life. Positive reinforcement must be consistent between home and school to ensure that the children are successful in using their problem solving skills.

Snacks and Celebrations

SNACK

A nutritious snack will be provided daily for your child. A snack list will be posted at each center for you to review. If your child has any food allergies or food aversions, please notify the staff immediately in addition to listing it on your emergency form. NOTE: If one child has a nut allergy, we will not serve anything with nuts to the entire class. Our snack will consist of one serving of food from two different food groups. Our snacks are chosen with low sugar and salt content in mind. PLEASE, DO NOT SEND SNACKS FROM HOME.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We love celebrating with our students! However, if your child wants to bring in a special treat to share, we ask that you work closely with your teachers regarding any food that may be served. If your child would like to give out a goody bag at the end of class, please make sure it is not filled with candy. We have provided some suggestions of foods that would be appropriate for a birthday celebration at school.

✓ **We CAN accept:**

Fruit/Crackers/Homemade fruit breads or muffins/Cheese/Frozen juice bars/Fruit Yogurt/Bagels and cream cheese/Veggie sticks/Popcorn (served with a fruit or veggie)/Healthy cereal

✓ **We CANNOT accept:**

Cupcakes/Cakes/Cookies/Anything frosted/Ice cream bars/Candy/Fast food/artificially sweetened juices

HOLIDAY/CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

There will be many opportunities throughout the school year for classroom celebrations. We will occasionally make an exception and allow a modest amount of sugar be served. On most of these occasions, parents are invited to attend.

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Building Blocks Calendar 2012-2013

2012

August 30	Open House (recommended)
September 4	Classes Begin
September 5	New Parent Orientation (recommended)
October 29	No School-Staff Development
November 10	No Saturday classes/program
November 12	Holiday - Veteran's Day
November 22	Holiday - Thanksgiving
November 23	Holiday - Day after Thanks.
November 24	No Saturday classes/program
December 20	End of Fall Quarter
Dec 21 – Jan 4	Winter break – no classes

2013

January 7	Classes Resume
January 19	No Saturday classes/program
January 21	Holiday - Dr. MLK Jr.
February 15	No School-Staff Development
February 16	No Saturday classes/program
February 18	Holiday - President's Day
March 30	Eggstravaganza
April 1-5	Spring Break
May 25	No Saturday class es/program
May 27	Holiday - Memorial Day
June 5 & 6	Pre-K Graduations
June 5	Last day of TT/PreK classes
June 8	Last day of all other classes

2012-13 Tuition Schedule: Pre-Kindergarten & Tiny Tots

<u>Program</u>	<u>Annual Fee Resident/Non-resident</u>	<u>Installment Plan</u>
Pre-Kindergarten	\$3050/\$3300	\$305/\$330
Tiny Tots 2-Day	\$1210/\$1460	\$121/146
Tiny Tots 3-Day	\$1840/\$2090	\$184/\$209

These programs run from September 4, 2012–June 7, 2013. **You may choose to pay your annual tuition in full or elect to pay in TEN installments starting on August 15th and ending on May 15th, 2013.**

Additional Fee:

A **\$50.00** registration processing fee is due at the time of registration. This fee can be refunded if you withdraw on or before July 20th, 2012. **The registration processing fee will no longer be refundable after July 20th for any reason.**

The annual costs reflect all school days without holidays, vacation days, and teacher work days.

- If paying with installment – payments are always due on the **15th** calendar day of each month and will be considered **“late”** after this due date. Payments received after the **20th** calendar day of each month will be charged a **\$25 late payment** fee per child and per class registered. Children will not be allowed to attend class beginning the **25th** calendar day of each month until payment is made. If payment is not received on or before the **30th** calendar day of each month your child will be withdrawn from the program(s) registered.

MID-SESSION ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION FEES

- Mid-Session Enrollment is based on space availability. If your child begins the program any day between the 1-15th of the month the full installment is due at the time of registration, plus the \$50.00 registration fee. If your child begins the program any day between the 16-31st of the month, 50% of the installment is due at registration, plus the \$50.00 registration fee. *We do not accept registration in our Pre-Kindergarten classes after January 31st.* All other programs, including Tiny Tots, have open enrollment throughout the year.
- Financial assistance is available to City of San Mateo residents – please contact any of our recreation centers to obtain an application and information on enrollment eligibility.
- Your installment payments may be paid on-line at www.erecreg.com, or automatically through our

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auto-credit card billing program, or by mail or in person at the Beresford or King Centers. Payments are not accepted by the teachers or in your child's classroom.

WITHDRAWALS

Withdrawals must be **submitted in writing to Amy Sherman, Program Supervisor (asherman@cityofsanmateo.org) by the 5th of the month.**

Please also remember:

- Withdrawals are effective at of the end of the month if you have made your request by the 5th, otherwise they will be effective at the end of the following month.
- If you are paying in installments, this is a reminder that there are **NO REFUNDS**. Once a payment has been made, you have paid for the following month.
- *If you have paid your annual tuition in full, you will receive a partial refund based on your withdrawal and final attendance date.*
- Your \$50 registration processing fee is NON-REFUNDABLE after July 20th, 2012.

Installment Withdrawal EXAMPLE 1:

If you give written notification on or before August 5th, we will withdraw your child from the program with no payment due on August 15th. Your child will not attend our program which starts on September 4th. No refunds will be given.

Installment Withdrawal EXAMPLE 2:

If you wish to withdraw your child from the program **after** August 5th, the first installment due on August 15th will remain due. Your child will be eligible to continue attending the program until September 30th, and no payment will be due on September 15th based on your child's final day of attendance.

Installment Withdrawal EXAMPLE 3:

If you have made a payment on September 15th and you decide to remove your child from the program on September 30th, you will not receive a refund for either your August 15th payment or your September 15th payment. Your child will be eligible to attend the program until October 31st. In this scenario, you will NOT be required to make an October 15th payment, which would apply to November's attendance.

Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten Readiness Evaluation

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND

In the Building Blocks Pre-Kindergarten program it is our goal to expose our students to healthy social experiences while teaching them the necessary skills to help prepare them for a successful future in school. The Building Blocks Pre-Kindergarten students will be evaluated twice during the school year. This evaluation will provide feedback on skills attained and skills needed to ensure kindergarten readiness. The City of San Mateo will use a form closely adapted from the Kindergarten Assessment model produced by The Peninsula Partnership for Children, Youth and Families and the Santa Clara County Partnership for School Readiness.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

- Evaluation and observation process will begin during the fall.
- Lead Teachers will collect information on each participant.
- First evaluation will be completed before the Winter Break.
- Second evaluation will be completed by June 1.
- An evaluation will be done through observations made in the classroom.
- All programs will use the same universal evaluation form.
- Parents will receive a copy of results after each evaluation period.
- Teachers will keep original copy for two years.
- Teachers will schedule one parent conference per year.
- Parent-Teacher conference must be complete by February 1.
- The Building Blocks Kindergarten Readiness Evaluation model will be evaluated at the conclusion of the school year in June.
- Parents and teachers will participate in programs evaluation process.
- Kindergarten readiness skills may change and Lead Teachers will take responsibility in staying current with trends.
- Evaluation/Observation format will remain the same but skills may change as needed.



**BUILDING BLOCKS PARENT/GUARDIAN
INFORMATION PACKET
ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I, _____, the parent/s of _____,
Parent/legal guardian first and last name *child's first and last name*

have read and understand the Parent Information Packet and agree to abide by the policies and procedures. I also understand that my \$50 registration fee is non-refundable after July 20th and I agree to the withdrawal/refund policy stated in this packet.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Please cut and return this form to your child's teacher

City of San Mateo, Building Blocks Preschool Programs - Pre-Kindergarten Assessment 2012/13

Child's Name: _____ Teacher's Name: _____ Evaluation: #1 #2

Center: _____ Date: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Proficient: Demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior consistently and competently

In Progress: Demonstrates skill, knowledge, or behavior occasionally and somewhat competently; has room for improvement/needs minor assistance

Beginning: Child is just beginning to demonstrate skill, knowledge, or behavior; needs significant or frequent assistance

Not Yet: Child does not demonstrate skill, knowledge, or behavior yet; cannot perform without assistance

This assessment is adapted from the California Department of Education's Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1.

	<i>How would you rate this child's competency in terms of the following skills, knowledge, and behaviors:</i>	Not Yet 1	Beginning 2	In Progress 3	Proficient 4	Don't Know/Not Observed	Comments
Self Care	1. Performs basic self-help and self-care tasks						
Motor Skills	2. Small motor skills						
	3. Large motor skills/general coordination (kicking balls, running climbing)						
Self-Regulation	4. Pays attention						
	5. Controls impulses						
	6. Follows directions – one or two step sequence						
	7. Plays cooperatively with peers						
Social Expression	8. Participates positively and cooperatively in groups						
	9. Problem solving skills with peers						
	10. Engages in pretend play						
	11. Appropriate interactions with teachers						
Kindergarten Academics	12. Uses age appropriate grammar to express needs						
	13. Shows curiosity for learning – takes initiative in making new discoveries						
	14. Writes first name correctly						
	15. Recognizes letters of the alphabet (may be caps, lowercase or combination)	0-5 letters	6-12 letters	13-19 letters	20-26 letters		
	16. Can count ten objects correctly	0-2 objects	3-5 objects	6-8 objects	9-10 objects		
	17. Number recognition in order to twenty	0-2	3-5	6-8	9-10		
	18. Recognizes primary colors	0-1 colors	2-4 colors	5-7 colors	8 colors		
	19. Recognizes primary shapes	0-1 shapes	2-3 shapes	4-5 shapes	6-8 shapes		
	20. Pencil grip						
	21. Scissor use						
22. Speech is understandable							
23. Engages with books at circle or independently							
24. Self recognition ("This is Me" journal)							
25. Recognizes own name or common words in print							
26. Recognizes and produces words with similar initial sounds (phonemic awareness)			12				