

STRATFORD PRESCHOOL
School Year 2021-2022

Enrollment Information for Parents

Stratford's philosophy is to view each child as an individual. For the past 50 years we have helped each child reach his/her full potential as a caring, giving and loving citizen of the world. The school's purpose is to promote development of the young child, ages three to six years, mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally, through the cooperative efforts of teachers, family members and others who are positioned to nurture, stimulate and encourage the child. Children must be three by September 1st and toilet trained to attend Stratford.

Children enrolled come from many different neighborhoods and a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. They are accepted, first-come: first-served. Prior to accepting an application, the administrator meets with the parents to outline Stratford's program, show them the classrooms and equipment and answer questions. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether the program being offered suits the parent's objectives for their child. Due to the current restrictions of Covid, these meetings may take place in person or via Zoom. Note that although the school operates in a church building, it is not related to the church and has no religious affiliation.

We are so excited to reopen at Wycliffe Presbyterian Church! Their newer educational wing is the perfect fit for our new class sizes. We believe that smaller class sizes allow for a more individualized program for each child. These individualized plans have always been the hallmark of our program, and ensure that every child is working one on one with their teacher every single day. That will be especially important this year as all of the children coming to us have had such different educational experiences due to Covid. We will accept a maximum of 10 children in each of our younger classes and 13 in each Kindergarten class. These are subject to change at the discretion of the Administrator. We will not offer before and aftercare this year.

Schedule: The school operates September through May, Monday-Friday, 9 A.M. to 2:30 P.M., except for federal holidays, the Friday after Thanksgiving, a break of approximately two weeks in mid-December and a week "Spring Break" the first full week of March. Three year old classes run from 9A.M. until noon. Four year old classes run 9 A.M. until noon, or 2:30 P.M. Junior and Senior Kindergarten run 9 A.M. until 2:30 P.M. All levels are five days a week. Classes are actually in session from 9:15 A.M. until 2:15 P.M. allowing time for drop off and pick up carpools. Each class will have posted the daily class schedule which varies per class. Feel free to contact the Director for specific information on any class.

Generally: First Hour: open classroom (teachers working individually with students)
Second Hour: snack, outside recess, resource classes
Third Hour: circle/story time First Dismissal
Fourth Hour: lunch/recess Second Dismissal
Fifth Hour: open classroom (teachers working individually with students)
Final Dismissal

Enrollment: To enroll a child, parents must complete an Application/Enrollment form provided by the school and make an initial tuition payment, as specified on the application form. This registration/tuition payment **is not the September payment**. Tuition is simply divided into ten payments and the initial payment is due with registration and the other nine may be paid monthly from September through May or paid by the semester or by the year. Additionally, the parents must provide a copy of the birth certificate, a completed School Entrance Physical Examination and Immunization Certification, signed by the child's physician. Children are not considered enrolled until we receive the completed application and registration payment.

Tuition: Tuition is specified on the Application/Enrollment form and is due by the 10th of each month or late fees will be added to the amount due. Tuition covers all costs of materials, snacks and supplies. Tuition is due even if the child is taken out for an extended trip or absence since the position in the classroom will be held until return.

Telephone: (757) 409-7319. This number is a direct line to the school. The voice mail feature picks up if the line is busy or no one is available. The voice mail is checked frequently, while school is in session, less frequently after hours.

Classrooms: Each class has one teacher and one aide who work with the children. Children attending Stratford are grouped in classes, according to age, primarily for social development. Interacting with others at their level of development, they form lasting friendships, based upon shared experiences. The child is allowed to move about within the classroom and select activities interesting to him, or her, individually. There is no lock-step learning. The teachers work individually with each child daily on alphabet, phonics, reading, and other language arts skills as well as working with each child on math related skills. One of the few group activities is show and tell, which gives each child in turn an audience to address and one in which to learn to listen. At recess the child may run and jump, climb and crawl through the equipment, play with balls and participate in organized games.

Stratford classrooms are "open". The children may stand or sit, work or play alone, in pairs or in small groups. Meanwhile, the teachers encourage meaningful use of educational materials and equipment, which are abundantly supplied. The key is to keep each child engaged in stimulating, instructive work. Sometimes, the activity is one-on-one, teacher and child. Other times, a one-on-one task attracts others, and a cluster develops; yet, each child is learning, individually. Thus, a range of abilities exists within a class, but no child is held back, or pushed ahead for the sake of a group norm. Often we have children learning individual letters of the alphabet, while others are beginning to read, or studying in a phonics workbook.

Spread throughout the year, each class studies various age appropriate themes: seasons of the year, weather, plants, insects, birds, animals, family, transportation, etc. The teachers incorporate art, music and educational materials into each thematic unit. For example: The three-year-olds study the farm, learn the names and habits of farm animals and common activities of farm life, learn that flour comes from wheat and is used

in the bread we eat. They churn milk to make butter, then spread it on crackers to enjoy. American and European farm sets and farm related puzzles and puppets are available for free play during this period.

Parents may help with in-school activities and reinforce learning at home by reviewing new vocabulary. In addition, the children are introduced to classical children's literature. They paint at easels, use stencils, water colors, tempera, chalk and even shoe polish to create beautiful masterpieces.

The administrator and director work with classroom teachers and with the children, individually, to ensure that each child's developmental needs are met. Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns with a teacher, or with the director, so that small matters, whether educational or administrative, may yield to minor adjustments, not grow into major problems. Success of the program---yours and ours---depends upon the faculty of well-educated, warm and loving teachers, who in cooperation with the parents are committed to giving each child the joy of learning and the foundational skills for a lifetime of achievement.

Our "open" classrooms permit children to move about and engage in interesting activities with age-appropriate materials, and our teachers' expectations are geared to the child's stage of development. Teachers model, guide and support the students in learning. The joy is watching each child blossom at his or her own rate.

If you have additional questions please call us. We would love to hear from you!