



## Welcome to Early Preschool!

We would like to welcome you and thank you for joining the TNT Family! We are excited for the opportunity to get to know your child and partner with you in their character development journey!

This welcome letter will give you an outline of what to expect in our Early Preschool Class. This includes what supplies we would like you to bring to ensure your child's transition to this room is as seamless as possible. This is a very busy, yet fun learning environment and we are looking forward to building a strong relationship with each child and can't wait to help them on their individual journey through this developmental stage.

### What to Bring for your Child to be Successful in Early Preschool:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- At least one change of clothes including shoes and socks
- A blanket and stuffed animal if applicable
- Water bottle
- Rain Attire during Winter (Jackets, Boots, Hats, Bibs)

***Everything that you bring into the classroom must be labeled with your child's first and last name so we can be sure that your child's belongings get home to you. We do not guarantee safe return of any items. We have many children with the same clothing. Please help us by making these labels easy to read and locate. Please check lost and found for any missing items.***

***\*We have an ongoing fundraiser with Mabels Labels in order to provide our families quality labels and raise funds for our classrooms at the same time. If you are interested in using these labels please reach out to a member of our Admin Team.***

## **Expectations for Early Preschool**

Children enrolled in the Early Preschool class are expected to meet the following developmental milestones. These milestones ensure the classroom is successful and each student is able to get the most out of the program.

### **Students in this classroom have:**

- Begun the potty training process
- Begun learning to speak in 2-5 word sentences
- The ability to self-soothe without the use of a pacifier
- The ability to use utensils to feed oneself
- The ability to drink from a cup
- Begun to learn how to dress oneself

## **Daily Routine**

The Early Preschool routine is simple and predictable with as few transitions as possible. Daily activities include large group music and movement, meal times, outdoor play, napping, and indoor play.

## **Potty Training**

The Early Preschool program helps children begin the potty training process when they start to show interest and empowers them with the skills to take care of their basic needs. Our Early Childhood Educators work with the children to become comfortable with the bathroom by changing their diapers in the bathroom and encourage them to try going potty on the toilet. This is best accomplished with parent and teacher cooperation. The teachers only begin the potty training process when they notice an interest by the child as to not push them into something they are not comfortable with. Every child is different and goes through the potty training process on their own terms. During this process, teachers will ask you to bring in multiple changes of clothes including shoes and socks as accidents will more than likely happen.

## **Curriculum & Activities**

Early Preschoolers are given a wide variety of opportunities to explore their environment daily in a safe and attentive atmosphere. Activities enhance emotional literacy concepts, self-regulation methods, problem solving and conflict negotiation, as well as basic academic concepts found in the world around them and supported by the program environment.

### **Blankets and Napping**

A small blanket and/or “lovey” for your child is permitted. These items are expected to be labeled with your child's name. We receive many of the same items, staff will make every effort to keep track of these items but will not be held responsible if lost. Blankets must be smaller crib type blankets. We do not have storage to support larger bulky blankets. Blankets, sheets, and cots are washed weekly to maintain a safe, clean, sanitized sleeping environment.

Children in the Early Preschool classroom are expected to be on one nap a day. Children sleep on cots with a cot sheet and their blanket. We cannot force a child to sleep, however we provide every opportunity for your child to do so. Early Preschoolers are expected to be able to rest quietly on their cot, while not disturbing the rest of the other children in the room. Children who do not sleep are offered other quiet activities at their cot until the nap time is over. Children at this stage are also expected to be able to self-soothe their bodies to sleep independently, without being rocked to sleep. Every sleeping child is allowed to wake up on their own schedule and will not be intentionally woken up by a teacher in our program. This allows the child to get the rest their body requires in order to support their healthy growth and development and to be successful for the rest of the day.

### **Sippy Cups & Pacifiers**

Children in the Early Preschool program are expected to be drinking out of sippy cups or water bottles. You may send 1 water bottle or sippy cup for your child to drink water from during the day. Pacifiers are permitted, however it is strongly encouraged to begin weaning your child off pacifiers as soon as possible. This is in support of their oral development as well as their process in developing other self-soothing coping mechanisms during their emotional development. Pacifiers with attached lanyards are not permitted when napping.

### **Biting**

**Biting is extremely common during this age group and will happen.** We try our best everyday to avoid these situations, but they do occur. Biting can be an emotional issue and while we know that this behavior can be typical at this stage of development, it is our goal to take proactive measures to create an environment that promotes self-regulation in alternative ways. Biting amongst toddlers typically happen for the following reasons:

1. Lack of Language skills- children at these ages are still learning to talk and a majority of the time do not have the words to express themselves.



2. Overstimulation- children often can get overstimulated due to sounds, sights, or even activity level. This in return can cause a child to bite.
3. Experimentation- children learn through their senses, including putting things in their mouths. They are curious about the world around them and how things interact with one another.
4. Lack of Stimulation- on the other side of overstimulation, is lack of stimulation. Children need a certain amount of stimulation to enrich their minds and hold their interests. If children are not provided with appropriate activities or activity time, they may get bored and thus turn to biting.
5. Teething- during this age, children are teething. Teething usually is calmed by the release of pressure on their gums or by chewing on something. When we notice that children are showing symptoms of teething, teethers are provided.

**We use the following proactive strategies to prevent biting to the best of our ability:**

1. Provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum
2. Teachers are responsive to children's individual communication patterns and needs
3. Using Sign Language to improve communication
4. Knowing individual children well and reading emotional cues
5. Supporting children to work through conflicts with various strategies
6. Teachers being physically close to children when they may experience frustration to help "talk them through" the interaction

We work together to control these factors in order to decrease the amount of biting situations occurring in the rooms. It is important to understand that although frustrating, it is completely normal for this age group.

**When it becomes a pattern for a child to bite:**

1. We will observe this child in play to determine what, if any "triggers" can be determined and find strategies to alleviate the occurrence of biting.
2. We will work to develop an action plan to support that child through dialogue with parents/guardians.
3. Action plans may include strategies such as shadowing, smaller group sizes, changes to the classroom environment, providing teethers, etc.

**When it becomes a pattern for a child to be bitten:**

1. We will give children signs/words to help them empower themselves, as we don't want children to feel helpless or without a voice.
1. Sharing action plans that we have developed with families.
2. Keeping the lines of communication open between home and school.

**Notifying Parents of a Bite:** When a bite occurs, we do the best we possibly can to communicate the bite to both the family of the student who was bitten and the family of the student who did the biting. On occasion, a bite can slip through the cracks. If this happens, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can make sure the appropriate steps are taken to document this.

### **Language Development**

During 2-3 years of age, children are increasingly learning more words and developing their communication skills. Throughout this year, children should be able to name a variety of objects they see or are pointed to. They also should be developing the skill to listen to simple directions and eventually be able to listen and complete more complex tasks dictated to them. It is important during this age to support their language development by reading, describing situations and what they see, as well as initiating questions and sparking conversations.

### **Supporting Social Emotional Development**

Early Preschoolers are developing their self-regulation skills. Self-regulation is the process of children learning to handle stress as well as the ability to calm themselves down when experiencing big emotions. It is our job as educators and parents to teach children about their emotions and what to do when they are getting too big. Some ways to help support the social-emotional development and self-regulation skills of children at this age are as follows:

- Using phrases such as "I see you are feeling (a certain emotion ie. angry), how can I help you?", or "I see you are sad (or other emotion) do you need a hug?".
- When you see your child(ren) expressing an emotion, always describe the emotion to them so they can learn to put words to what they are feeling.
- Utilizing a calm area or space where your child(ren) can go to.
- Giving your child(ren) a stuffed animal or blanket to help them calm their emotions/body.

All of the above are tools that the teachers in Early Preschool utilize in order to help develop the self-regulation skills of your children.

Some calming techniques teachers utilize are:

- Having the child look at their hand and trace their fingers
- Holding gently onto the child's hands and having them take deep breaths
- Giving the child a hug while encouraging them to take deep breaths
- Giving the child sensory bottles that allow them a moment to center themselves

### **Appropriate Clothing**

Because children are naturally curious and children learn by exploring their environments through their senses, it is important to remember that they will get messy! Please be sure to dress your child in weather appropriate clothing that you do not mind getting dirty. We of course will always change your child if it is necessary to clean their clothes before leaving for the day.

In the Early Preschool class, we also start to work on self-help skills and independence which means we will be having the children begin to do things for themselves. This means that the children will be putting on and taking off their own shoes to go outside! Please be sure to have your child wear shoes that they can put on and take off by themselves or with little assistance. These skills are so crucial to your child's development so if possible, we also ask that you support their development by having them do this at home as well. This may mean that your child will put their shoes on the wrong feet, but that is okay!

### **Outdoor Play/Rain Attire**

**We are an all weather school!** There are many benefits to children playing outdoors. Please reference the accompanying article outlining the benefits of rainy day play. We do ask that all families provide rainy day attire so that their child is able to experience and benefit from these activities. We have several suggestions for rainy day clothing options and we would be happy to help point our families in the right direction. It is important for our families to understand that all of our classrooms participate in rainy day play. By enrolling your child in our program you understand that your child will be participating in rainy day play and it is the

parents responsibility to provide the attire you would like your child to wear during these activities.

### **Developmental Assessments**

Early Childhood Assessments are important in identifying critical information regarding the development of your child. Assessments are the process of observing specific behaviors, reviewing the information gathered and creating a learning environment that meets the needs of the children based on the information gathered. This process is a crucial part of a high-quality Early Childhood Program. Assessments can identify various areas in which your child excels and where they could need some more guidance. Assessments can:

- Provide a record of growth in all developmental areas: cognitive, physical/motor, language, social-emotional, and approaches to learning.
- Identify children who may need additional support and determine if there is a need for intervention or support services.
- Help educators plan individualized instruction for a child or for a group of children that are at the same stage of development.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses within a program and information on how well the program meets the goals and needs of the children.
- Provide a common ground between educators and parents or families to use in collaborating on a strategy to support their child.

At TNT, we utilize the ASQ Assessment Tool to accurately assess your child during their time in the program. The teachers may assess your child multiple times a year depending on their individual needs.

### **Brightwheel**

We pride ourselves on offering a very high level of communication between parents and teachers. By enrolling in our program, each family is committing to downloading and monitoring their child's Brightwheel account. Brightwheel is an all inclusive app that allows for parents and teachers to communicate instantly. It is the digital version of your child's daily report. Your digital feed will include updates on activities, food, skills learned, daily accomplishments, progress reports and so much more!



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## **Parents Code of Conduct and Communication Requirements**

We greatly respect each of our families and their roles as parents to our students. We strongly believe it is each family's right and responsibility to choose what they believe is best for their children. Please understand that this encompasses a wide variety of beliefs and we do our best to provide an environment where each family is given the space and respect to make their choices. By choosing to enroll your child in our program, you understand that you are entering into a partnership with us and respect the role we have in your child's life. With this in mind, we pledge to speak and communicate to our families with **grace and understanding**. Likewise, we ask that our families also communicate to us with **grace and understanding**. We understand that certain situations surrounding your children can be frustrating. Please remember that we are on your team and only want the best for all of our students. **With this being said, it is completely unacceptable for parents/guardians to yell or curse at us or our team. If this is occurring we will ask you to leave the center immediately and terminate the relationship.** Please communicate any concerns to our team and us with grace and understanding. We are happy to work with our families to make sure each of our students are thriving. We are constantly making adjustments and improvements to our programs. We are not perfect and do not claim to be. We are our own biggest critics and are constantly looking for ways to improve and how to implement them.

## **Injuries/Incident Reports**

We implement a risk and play-based character development curriculum in addition to encouraging and aiding the development of major milestones. Injuries are a natural part of learning and building independence. When an injury occurs, we do our best to report every injury to parents either via Brightwheel or a physical form. If there are any injuries that happen above the shoulders, we call home and write a physical Incident Report. Depending on the severity of other bodily injuries, we will call home when necessary. We will not call home for minor scrapes, cuts and bruises. We also try our best to update injuries on each child's Brightwheel profile. This usually includes a description and photo of the injury. On occasion, children have slipped or tripped and quickly continued playing without showing signs of discomfort or pain. If your child goes home with an injury that was not reported/documented, please let us know so we can document it and make sure it is handled appropriately.





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## **Dangerous Behaviors/Separation**

It is our responsibility to ensure the safety of all children who enter our classrooms. While we do our best to redirect challenging behaviors, there are situations where a child may need a more individualized approach to tackling their challenging behavior. If a child is struggling with challenging behaviors for a prolonged period of time without making progress, we are committed to working with each family to find additional resources needed to help that child. Some of those may include a different program that can offer individualized care. **We are not an individualized care based center. We are not offering one on one care to any individual child for a prolonged period of time.** We reserve the right to dismiss any student from our program at any time in order to maintain the safety and quality of our program. We ask that all students treat other students and teachers with respect. We are all on the same team working towards accomplishing the same goal (having the most FUN possible and Learning!).