



CITY OF CUPERTINO
RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES



Parent Handbook

CUPERTINO PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND CLASS STRUCTURE

This school year we are looking forward to guiding your child through the various stages of preschool development. In our preschool program we understand the importance of academics and play. We implement both of these cornerstones to create the ideal environment for your child.

The program covers a wide range of academic activities that prepare your child for kindergarten including:

- Activities that build oral language and vocabulary.
- Games that encourage visual memory and visual recognition.
- Singing songs, playing music, dancing, and listening to rhythms which enhance auditory development recollection.
- Introducing your child to a wide range of books and stories including rhyming stories, counting stories, and stories that encourage item classification.
- Developing your child's motor skills through a variety of activities and tactics to increase your child's hand-eye coordination. We practice holding scissors, crayons, pencils, and paint brushes among many other activities.
- Teaching your child how to trace, sort, cut along lines, and use eye droppers. We play with puzzles, play dough, sand, Legos, and much more.
- Participating in class discussions about nature and the environment, animals, the seasons, floating and sinking, hot and cold temperatures, and the weather.
- Opportunities for children to acquire pre-math skills through hands-on activities that are fun and meaningful.
- Social, physical, and language development – a child who has a greater command of language can communicate his/her needs more easily. Social development occurs as (s)he learns to cooperate with others. Physical activities are often disguised as play, but are designed to develop muscle coordination. Your child will gain self-confidence and increased independence as they gradually master these skills.

The Cupertino Preschool teachers understand that children learn best when they are allowed to freely experiment without fear of failure.

This is an exciting period of your child's life as (s)he grows and develops rapidly. We look forward to sharing this rewarding time with both you and your child!

Thank you,

Preschool Staff



TINY TOTS SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
15 minutes	Welcome & Warm Up
90 minutes	Free play and craft project including: creative play, manipulative activities, small motor skills (cutting, coloring, gluing, etc.)
30 minutes	Circle time which includes: calendar/weather, counting, movement, songs, daily/weekly themes, story, etc.
15 minutes	Snack time, birthday celebrations
25 minutes	Outside activities which include: preschool park/playground, theme activities
15 minutes	Second circle time which includes: sharing, story time, music, etc.

SUPER TOTS SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
15 minutes	Welcome & Warm Up Free play (Manipulatives, Pretend play, puzzles)
90 minutes	Work stations: Craft project focused on improving fine motor skills. Worksheet (includes alphabets, numbers, sequencing, matching, etc.)
20 minutes	Circle (calendar, reading a book, flannel board story)
15 minutes	Snack time, birthday celebrations
20-30 minutes	Outside activities which include: preschool/park playground, themed activities (hula hooping, parachute, etc.)
15 minutes	Circle time which includes: story time/felt board and music

PLEASE NOTE: This is just a sample of how the teachers divide up a basic day. It is important to know that this schedule is an approximation of the time spent and that each teacher and each class' activities may vary.

PREPARING YOURSELF FOR PRESCHOOL

Telephone Numbers

Recreation Office	408-777-3120
Quinlan Center Preschool Room	408-777-3108
Monta Vista Center Preschool Room	408-777-1302

First Week of Preschool

The first day of preschool can be harder for the parents than the children. Plan to hang around for 10-15 minutes on the first day. Get to know the classroom with your child and meet other children. Find an activity that they like in order to ease the transition. Once your child is engaged it is time for you to leave the classroom.

Your child's reaction will come from you. When you are ready to leave say an upbeat and quick goodbye, let them know they will have fun and you will be back to pick them up after school. Resist the urge to "rescue" your child. This is the most important part of the transition. DO NOT run back into the classroom if you hear your child crying. Once you have said goodbye, you need to leave the classroom happy, with no apprehension. Trust the teachers! You may be surprised how soon they will become comfortable and not even realize you are leaving.

Communications

Parent-Teacher Conferences: At any time throughout the school year you are welcome to discuss your child's progress—please feel free to make an appointment with the teachers. The best time for an extended conversation is at the end of the teacher's workday.

Shutterfly Group Communication: We communicate with you on a regular basis using Shutterfly. We will send an invitation to your email to join our preschool group. This group will be used to post pictures, field trip information, general reminders, and more.

Parent Information Board: Each location has a parent information board to help parents stay current on classroom activities and upcoming events. The board contains information upcoming events, field trips, weekly themes, important notices, and more.

Session Theme Sheet: You will receive a flyer at the beginning of each session that will inform you of our weekly themes. If you have any skills or talent that could help us make any of the weekly topics more exciting for the children, we would welcome your participation.

Signing-In/Out

We require that you sign your child in and out every day. Please be sure your child's emergency card is up to date and lists all the people who are authorized to pick up your child. Remember to take your child to the bathroom before dropping her/him off in the classroom. We welcome parents to socialize with one another, but we ask that you drop your child off and continue your visit outside the classroom so that teachers can prepare and/or begin class time. As a courtesy to the instructors and your children, please do not drop off your child early or pick them up late.

Parking

Parking for drop-off and pick-up varies per site. Always remain aware of children in the area and drive slowly and safely with no distractions.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR PRESCHOOL

Read Books

Before beginning preschool, take some time to prepare your child for this milestone. Read books to your children that include typical preschool activities as well as those dealing with separation anxiety. Actively ask your child how the characters might be feeling throughout the book. Let the child read them over and over – this is how children process new ideas and work through their feelings. Attached is a list of helpful books for transitioning into preschool.

Role play!

Play through the scenario of dropping off your child, saying goodbye and saying hello to the teacher. Then move on to some of the activities your child may participate in while at preschool.

Prep your child for the day's routine. Spend a couple days going through the schedule of preschool, talk about how fun it will be and what they might be doing. Sometimes the second day of preschool is harder than the first. If you are consistent, supportive, and positive, your child will adjust to the change. Your child is in good hands; the teachers are used to this situation and will help your child feel comfortable. This will also help the child bond to the teachers and their new surroundings.

What to Wear

It is also important that your child wears appropriate clothing. Your child should be able to get their clothes on and off in the bathroom. Keep in mind that your child may get messy at preschool through daily hands-on activities and projects. They will get dirty! Please send them in clothes that can get dirty. For safety reasons, **shoes must have backings – no flip-flops, crocs, or slip-ons**. Velcro fasteners are best.

Toilet Training

Children must be potty trained by the first day of class. They need to be able to manage their clothes, wipe themselves, and wash their hands. Please let us know if there are any special words they use for these functions. We ask that you bring an extra change of clothes that we can keep in the classroom labeled with your child's name, we will use it in case of an accident.

Going to the Bathroom and Hand Washing

Families, staff and children are required to wash their hands upon arrival to school each day. We also ask that you take your child to the bathroom prior to the start of class, this helps the child be more comfortable are ready to begin class.

Sunscreen

We recommend that parents apply sunscreen daily as children spend a portion of their school day outdoors. If parents want staff to apply sunscreen before outdoor play, parents must provide sunscreen and signed written permission to apply sunscreen.

Sharing

Sharing time encourages verbal communication and improves listening skills and the children enjoy it very much. They may bring one toy or item from home to talk about during circle time. Teachers will announce the sharing days for each class. Please do not bring toys to school other than on sharing days. Weapons of any kind are not allowed at preschool.

SNACK PROGRAM

The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department's preschool program promotes a nutritious snack program. Parents are required to provide a nutritional snack for the entire class (up to 24 children) 1-2 times each session. Sign-up in classrooms.

Tasty & Nutritious Snack Suggestions

Try choosing ONE item from each group for a yummy snack the children are sure to enjoy!

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Cut fresh fruit (no seeds please)	Whole grain cereals	100% Apple Juice
Cut Vegetables	Whole grain crackers	100% Orange Juice
Applesauce (unsweetened)	Rice cakes	100% Grape Juice
Dried fruit	Popcorn	Low-fat Milk
100% Juice popsicles	Whole grain granola bars	Chocolate Milk
Edamame	Pretzels	Lemonade
Low-fat yogurt		
Low-fat cheese		

Birthdays in Preschool
Cakes, cupcakes, ice cream, etc. are ok on special occasions such as Birthdays!

Please check with the teachers if you would like to bring something that is not listed.
Please be aware of what is in the ingredients (i.e. hydrogenated oils are not good).

Please do not send any packages of food that have already been opened. Containers and packages should be sealed and unopened. Please reserve cupcakes and cookies for birthday celebrations. There will be cups, napkins, plates, and plastic silverware available in the classroom. You are welcome to send along themed paper products for birthday celebrations if you wish.

Please write any food allergies or dietary restrictions on your child's emergency card

The teachers will inform individual classes if there is a severe food allergy that will require adjustments in snack offerings. For example, if a student has a peanut allergy, the teachers may ask all parents to **not** bring any snacks containing peanut products. We appreciate your cooperation.

FIELD TRIP INFORMATION

Field trips are an important component of the preschool program. Off-site excursions enhance the quality of the program by exposing the children to new things and locations. Some of our trips are supervised only by the preschool staff while others require the assistance of parent helpers.

If you are asked to assist with a field trip, please keep the following in mind:

1. When attending a field trip as a parent volunteer, please keep in mind that your role is to assist with the supervision and safety of all the students, not just your own.
2. The teachers are counting on **you**. Please arrive promptly and plan your schedule so you are available to help for the entire trip.
3. Please do not bring siblings on the trip. Your attention needs to be focused on supervising the preschool participants.
4. The teachers will give you direction on your duties for that day. Please keep the teachers informed if you have any questions or problems.
5. Never leave the children unattended. If you need to take a child to the restroom, please inform one of the staff or other parent volunteers so they know where you are at all times.
6. Limit socializing with other parents and staff. Your attention should be on all the children in your group to ensure proper supervision.
7. Please don't use your cell phone while on class field trips. The safety of the children is in your hands. If you need to use your phone due to an emergency, please let the teachers know prior to doing so.
8. When walking to and from a destination, there should always be an adult at the front and rear of the line. Additional staff/volunteers should space themselves out throughout the line. Children should be paired up with a buddy.
9. Regular head counts should occur throughout the duration of the field trip. Count the children prior to departing school, once arriving at your destination, every 1-2 hours during your trip, once departing the trip location, and once arriving back at school.
10. Have fun on the trip! The field trips are usually enjoyable and provide fond memories for our parent helpers. Thank you for volunteering to help—we appreciate our parent helpers!

LUNCH BUNCH PROGRAM

Additional Option after Preschool

The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department has created a Lunch Bunch Program with the goal of provided more flexibility for parents and their schedules.

Below are some of the benefits of enrolling your child in the Lunch Bunch Program:

- Reinforcement of preschool content such as additional outdoor/indoor playing time, crafts, storytelling and more.
- Your child will make stronger connections with friends and teachers, strengthen their English skills, and will learn to express their feelings and needs even more!
- Lunch Bunch will also help prepare your child for the future by getting them accustomed to longer days without nap time. Most importantly, Lunch Bunch is FUN!
- Flexible Schedule, you can sign up for one or two days of lunch bunch. Tuesdays and Thursdays available for Tiny Tots. Mondays and Wednesdays available for Super Tots.
- Your child would stay in the classroom until 2pm. Lunch is not provided
- If you register after the start of the program, we will prorate the fee for days missed but you have to register in person at the Quinlan Center.
- Lunch Bunch is not scheduled on Field Trip days unless otherwise mentioned.
- Lunch Bunch is non-refundable. You are welcome to try out the class by purchasing a Lunch Bunch Pass at the Quinlan Center.
- The pass is a little more expensive than the class but it allows you to try out the class without committing for the full session (\$15 for residents and \$17 for non-residents)
- The Lunch Bunch Pass is non-refundable but it is redeemable until the end of the preschool year. The pass is non-transferable, you are not able to give the pass to another family.
- Lunch Bunch available for preschool students only. You may register online at www.reg4rec.org or in person at the Quinlan Community Center office.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

“Discipline is helping children develop self-control. Discipline is setting limits and correcting misbehavior. Discipline also is encouraging children, guiding them, helping them feel confident about themselves, and teaching them how to think for themselves.”

It is our intent to make our preschool classrooms pleasant, friendly, and happy places that all of our participants look forward to attending. Our teachers focus on reinforcing positive behavior and helping children feel pleasant about the choices they make, which in turn motivates them to further polish the behavior that brings them rewards. Positive reinforcement and praise results in the production of both short-term and long-term benefits as it can enable children to learn habits that will be beneficial and fruitful throughout their lives. When a child’s conduct is unsafe or negatively impacts the experience of another participant, it is important for a staff person to intervene and redirect the child. Many times a warm and friendly reminder to the child such as: “Please remember to walk in the classroom” is enough to change the behavior. Other times re-directing the child from the current activity and giving him/her some quiet time away from the group is more effective.

The Preschool staff will re-direct your child’s behavior in a warm, yet firm manner. If a child continues to misbehave, the parent may be notified by phone or will be informed at the end of the class when the child is picked up from preschool. The Preschool staff is trained in the development and behavior of preschool aged children and understands that developing social skills in a group setting is an ongoing learning process.

The teachers and program supervisor will work with you to improve/change your child’s behavior. In extreme cases, a child may be removed from the Preschool program if their behavior is having a negative impact to other participants or to the program.

SICK/ABSENT POLICY

The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department has established a sick/absent policy for the Preschool program. Children should not attend preschool when they are not in good health, thus exposing both the other children and the teachers to contagious symptoms/illnesses.

In general, children should stay home if they have a fever of 100°F or above and they should not return for at least 24 hours after the last fever (without taking Tylenol or Ibuprofen). Additionally, a child should stay home if they are unable to comfortably participate, or if teachers determine that they cannot care for the child without compromising their ability to care for the health and safety of the other children in the group.

The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department realizes that symptoms may occur during class time. In such a case, the teacher will notify you, the parent, and you will need to pick up your child promptly.

The following list includes, but is not limited to, the symptoms/illnesses of concern. **Contagious items are in bold print listed below.** It is imperative that parents notify the teachers of a contagious illness so that an exposure notice may be distributed to the other children in the class.

Fever	Head Lice
Yellow or green nasal discharge	Salmonella
Diarrhea	Strep Throat
Upset stomach	Poison Oak
Bronchitis	Measles
Excessive cough	Pink Eye
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	Fifth Disease
Chicken Pox	Roseola (Sixth disease)
Mumps	Amebiasis
Scabies	Shigella

WE DO NOT OFFER MAKE-UP CLASSES OR REFUNDS FOR ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department has established a late policy for the Preschool program. This policy is intended to encourage parents to pick up their children on time. It is imperative that your child is picked up promptly at the conclusion of the daily program.

Parent will be charged \$1.00 for every minute late. Payment will need to be made at the Recreation & Community Services office before the child may return to class. A preschool participant may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the supervisor if the parents continue to be late picking up their child from preschool.

Telephone Numbers

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The Cupertino Recreation & Community Services Department realizes that emergencies may occur that will prevent you from picking up your child promptly. However, we ask that you contact the teachers in these situations and send a family member or friend to pick up your child. **Please remember that we will not release your child to anyone that is not listed on the Participant/Emergency Information card.** If you have any questions regarding this policy please contact Marilu Mejia at 777-3124. Your cooperation and continued support regarding this matter are greatly appreciated.