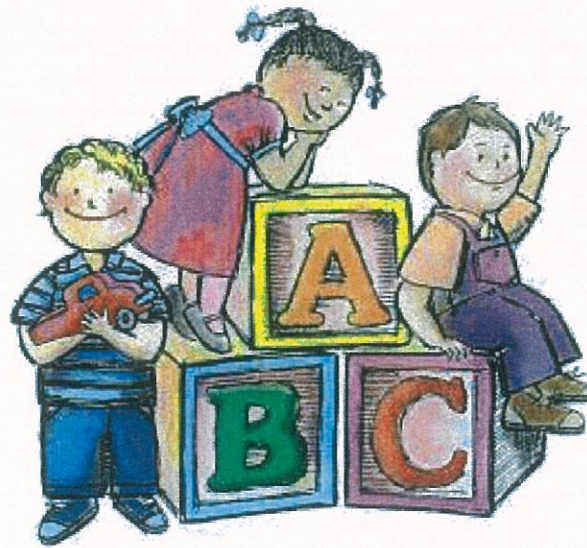


Hilltop School Preschool Handbook



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(207) 945-3705

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218 Ohio Street
Bangor, Maine 04401

Dear Families,

Thank you for considering Hilltop School Preschool program for your child's early care and education. I would like to take a few minutes to share our philosophy and the principles our program is built on. We are proud of our commitment to providing a developmentally appropriate program based on best practice. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have. I can be reached at (207) 945-3705 or by e-mail at hilltopschooled@gmail.com.

Our program is built on the philosophy of psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who maintained that at three, four, or five a child's ability to play creatively with other children was a better gauge of his/her future academic success than any other indicator including vocabulary, counting skills, or knowledge of the alphabet. Children can be taught to recite facts but a child shows learning readiness when they can focus, listen, absorb information, and learn in a formal setting where new information is delivered through direct instruction. To successfully function in school and beyond, children need to learn more than a set of facts and skills. They need to master a set of mental skills or tools of the mind. Our classroom environments are designed to provide a variety of opportunities for children to see, hear, touch and connect with their surroundings. It is through these sensory experiences that children master the basics of learning readiness. The characteristics of learning readiness are developed rather than taught and only through numerous concrete interactions with the world. When children master skills through play they exhibit higher language skills, greater empathy and cooperation, better problem solving strategies and longer attention spans.

- When I play in the art area I learn...to control the small muscles of my hand, the concepts of shape, size, color, and location, how colors mix to form new colors, eye hand coordination, to exercise my imagination and creativity.
- When I play in the block area I learn... concepts of shape, size, length, and location (relative to learning to read and do mathematics) to

create and repeat patterns (a math skill), to cooperate with others, to express my ideas, to exercise my imagination and creativity.

- When I scribble and draw I learn...to hold a pencil or other drawing implement and to control the pressure, eye hand coordination, concepts of color, shape, size, and location; to express myself with words.
- When I examine objects at the science table I learn...new vocabulary, concepts of color, weight, size, etc. to group objects into categories and observe likenesses and differences, to appreciate nature and develop a sense of wonder.
- When I play letter games I learn...to recognize upper and lowercase letters, to associate letters with the sounds they make, to recognize my name and certain words, one to one correspondence.
- When I play with water I learn...to distinguish between things that float and sink, to observe changes as water takes different forms in different containers, about different temperatures, about wet, dry, and evaporation, concepts on empty and full, volume, and weight.
- When I play with puzzles I learn...the relationship of parts to a whole, concepts of shape, size, location and color, problem solving, about negative and positive space, seeing something against its background (math and reading concept), sorting.
- When I sing songs I learn...the principles of music and rhythm, memory skills, sequencing, auditory discrimination skills, differences in sound (necessary for learning to read).
- When I play outdoors I learn... self-confidence as I develop new skills, physical strength, coordination and balance of large muscles, concepts of speed, direction and location, to use my energy in constructive ways.
- When I play math games I learn...relationship of parts to a whole, concepts of shape, size, color, and location, one to one correspondence, to make and repeat patterns, left to right progression, concepts of addition, symmetry, shape, order, design, eye hand coordination.

Our preschool program enhances preschoolers' confidence by providing activities to help children become problem solvers and lifelong learners.