

Pre-K Handbook



Hilltop School
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Welcome to Hilltop School's Pre-K Program

At Hilltop School, we are committed to providing a high-quality Pre-K experience that fosters a love of learning and prepares children for future academic success. Our program is designed for children who will be 4 years old on or before October 15. With small class sizes and individualized attention, we create a warm, welcoming environment where children's interests, physical needs, and emotional development are nurtured.

Our Approach to Learning

Our hands-on, play-based curriculum aligned with the Maine Early Learning and Development Standards and incorporates cross-referenced indicators from the State of Maine's Common Core Standards. This ensures that our students develop the essential skills needed for a smooth transition to kindergarten.

Pre-K Learning Goals

Early Language and Literacy

- Identifies parts of a book.
- Understands that print carries a message and pretends to read.
- Uses left-to-right, top-to-bottom progression when reading.
- Asks questions about unknown words and phrases.
- Recognizes different text structures such as stories, poems, and songs.
- Answers questions and retells a story in sequence using storybook language and pictures.
- Recognizes common sight words and beginning sounds of some words.
- Produces rhyming words and begins to manipulate phonemes in simple words.
- Identifies upper and lowercase letters of the alphabet.
- Engages in discussions following agreed-upon rules.
- Describes familiar people, places, and events, providing additional details.
- Generates words with similar meanings (e.g., happy/sad, angry/mad).

Writing

- Recognizes and writes first name, capitalizing the first letter.
- Begins to recognize punctuation marks (., !, ?).
- Writes letters representing sounds and spells simple words phonetically.
- Organizes print in two-dimensional space and relates writing to speech.
- Practices letter formation and learns to write appropriately for different situations.
- Uses drawing, dictation, and writing to express opinions, provide information, and tell stories.

Mathematics

- Uses manipulatives to represent mathematical concepts.
- Sorts, counts, and matches objects in daily activities.
- Rote counts to 20 and beyond with increasing accuracy.
- Recognizes and names numerals 0-10 and connects numbers to quantities.
- Counts using 1:1 correspondence and writes number symbols 0-10.
- Sorts, classifies, and describes shapes and objects.
- Understands relative positions (e.g., up, down, beside, over).
- Recognizes, creates, and extends simple patterns.
- Understands basic time concepts (yesterday, today, tomorrow).
- Represents data with simple charts and graphs.
- Uses non-standard units to measure objects and identify differences.

Science

- Explores concepts in physical, earth, and life sciences.
- Differentiates between living and non-living things.
- Observes, experiments, and discovers relationships and patterns.
- Identifies problems, makes predictions, and tests hypotheses.
- Documents observations and changes.

Social Studies

- Participates in developing classroom rules and making decisions.
- Differentiates between needs and wants.
- Understands simple maps, globes, and geographic tools.
- Recognizes how environmental changes affect people, animals, and plants.
- Differentiates between past, present, and future.
- Develops awareness of self as part of a family, group, community, and culture.
- Learns about different cultures, languages, and traditions, incorporating sign language.

Social and Emotional Development

- Takes on new tasks and improves skills with practice.
- Expresses emotions appropriately and follows classroom rules and routines.
- Shares materials, takes turns, and cooperates in group activities.
- Develops self-regulation, empathy, and the ability to compromise.
- Builds friendships and participates in conflict resolution.

Creative Arts

- Creates drawings, paintings, and other art projects with increasing detail and creativity.
- Uses art materials safely and explores different artistic mediums.
- Participates in group movement activities and recognizes musical elements such as tempo and rhythm.
- Uses music and instruments to experiment with melodies and patterns.

Gross Motor Development

- Develops coordination, balance, and locomotive skills (hopping, jumping, running, sliding, galloping).
- Manipulates balls and playground equipment with control.
- Demonstrates teamwork in physical activities and games.

Comprehensive Learning Experience

Our Pre-K program integrates music, movement, visual arts, and drama to provide a well-rounded educational experience. Children learn through an interdisciplinary and constructivist approach, meaning they build new knowledge by connecting it to what they already know. We recognize that every child develops at their own pace, so our curriculum is flexible to meet children where they are while challenging them to grow.

Fostering Independence & Readiness for Kindergarten

To support Kindergarten readiness, we focus on building self-awareness, independence, responsibility, self-esteem, leadership, and self-help skills. These foundational skills ensure that children enter Kindergarten with confidence and a strong sense of self.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or would like more information about our program, please feel free to reach out:

 **Phone:** 207-945-3705

 **Email:** tgarrow@bangorhilltopschoo.com

We look forward to partnering with you in your child's early education journey!

Tracy Garrow
Executive Director, Hilltop School