

# **CHUM Preschool – 3 Year Old Curriculum**

Our preschool curriculum provides a balanced framework for guiding 3-year-old preschoolers through a joyful year of early learning and growth. The focus is on developing listening and speaking skills, early literacy and math readiness, social-emotional development, creativity, and independence through play-based, hands-on experiences. Instruction is rooted in stories, songs, and exploratory activities across all learning centers. Children begin to build a foundation for pre-reading and early math skills while strengthening fine and gross motor coordination. Parent communication and regular observation of developmental milestones ensure families remain active partners in the learning process.

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## **Language Arts**

### **Letters & Letter Sounds**

Children are introduced to the alphabet through playful exposure and a program called Heggerty. The focus is on recognition of letters and sounds.

- Exposure to uppercase letters (recognition through Heggerty, books, puzzles, and songs)
- Beginning sounds introduced in a playful way (name hunts, games, etc.)
- Blending sounds together to make words
- Search and find activities (“Find something that starts with B!”)

### **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Program**

The Heggerty program provides simple, short daily routines to build listening and letter sound awareness. Lessons are playful and movement-based.

- Recognizing rhymes and repeating them
- Listening for beginning sounds in familiar words
- Clapping syllables in names and words
- Blending of sounds to make words (ex: “sun”)
- Rhyming words
- Developing listening skills through fun routines (5–7 minutes daily)

## Writing

Writing skills develop through playful exploration and meaningful practice. Children draw, scribble, and begin forming letters, learning that their writing carries meaning. Through daily activities and name practice, they build confidence, fine-motor strength, and an excitement for expressing ideas with print.

- Learning to recognize name
- Beginning name writing (uppercase for first letter, lowercase for the rest)
- Tracing lines, letters, and pictures
- Learning proper pencil grip

## Related Literature & Daily Stories

Daily read-alouds build attention, imagination, and language.

- Seasonal picture books
- Classic preschool books (*Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Goodnight Moon, Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*)
- Theme-based literature (animals, family, friendship, transportation)
- Nursery rhymes revamped into our own to create positivity
- Nonfiction books with real-life photos (farm animals, community helpers, life cycles of animals)

## Vocabulary

Vocabulary development is central to communication and comprehension. Words are introduced through stories, hands-on activities, and daily conversations, giving children meaningful language they can use in context.

- Positional words (over, under, above, below, in front, behind, etc.)
- Descriptive words (big, little, smooth, rough, etc.)
- Expressive words (emotions, actions, etc.)
- Oral language modeled during read-alouds and routines

## Rhyming

Rhyming develops phonological awareness, a key predictor of reading success. Daily rhymes, songs, and activities strengthen listening and word recognition skills. It is introduced through songs, playful repetition, and our Heggerty program.

- Singing nursery rhymes and finger plays
- Simple rhyming games ("cat-hat, dog-log")
- Rhyming picture books

## Discussion Topics & Conversations

Circle time is short and interactive for 3-year-olds.

- Daily weather and calendar
- Feelings and “how are you?” check-ins
- Sharing news about their weekend
- Question of the day
- Show & Tell for practicing speaking in front of peers

## Songs

Songs are used daily to support language, memory, rhythm, and fluency. Music engages children in joyful learning, while also helping them remember concepts and vocabulary tied to themes and routines. Singing also fosters community and self-expression.

- Themed songs related to different topics (fall leaves, community helpers, animals, friendship)
- Seasonal songs (holiday, winter, spring, summer)
- Transition songs for routines (clean-up, lining up, greeting/goodbye)
- Finger plays with motions (*Itsy Bitsy Spider*, *Wheels on the Bus*)
- Songs with movement for gross motor practice (action songs, finger plays, freeze dance)
- Repetitive chants for listening and rhyming

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## Math

### Mathematical Concepts

Math instruction weaves together numbers, patterns, and problem-solving in playful ways. Children build logical thinking skills by sorting, classifying, comparing, and exploring real-world math experiences. Number concepts are explored through concrete, hands-on experiences. Children learn to count, recognize, and write numbers while developing an understanding of quantity and operations. Math for 3-year-olds focuses on exposure to early concepts.

- Shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, star, heart)
- Comparing sizes (big/little, tall/short)
- Identify colors
- Learning 8 shapes
- Sorting objects by color or size

- Number recognition 1-10
- Counting to 20 (with exposure to higher numbers through songs)
- One-to-one correspondence using manipulatives

## **Calendar time**

Calendar routines help children understand time, sequence, and special events. They provide consistency while reinforcing number order, days of the week, and months of the year.

- Days of the week through songs
- Months of the year
- Counting
- Patterns

## **Patterns**

Patterns help children build early math reasoning and recognition skills. They are introduced in visual, auditory, and kinesthetic ways so children can see, hear, and feel sequences.

- AB patterns with colors and shapes
- Extending simple color/shape sequences
- Using movement for patterns (clap, stomp, clap)

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## **Gross Motor Skill Development**

Gross motor activities build strength, coordination, and confidence. Children practice large body movements daily through indoor and outdoor play, music, and games.

- Exercise through video and song
- Running, jumping, hopping, marching, and galloping
- Obstacle courses
- Throwing and rolling large balls
- Dancing and movement songs
- Playground climbing and sliding
- Practice coordination, balance, and body awareness

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## Fine Motor Skill Development

Fine motor skills prepare children for writing, self-care, and other precise tasks. Daily activities strengthen finger muscles, hand-eye coordination, and dexterity.

- Playdough rolling, pinching, squeezing
- Stringing large beads and lacing boards
- Beginner scissor practice
- Building with small blocks
- Drawing, tracing, coloring, and name-writing
- Puzzles with simple pieces
- Tearing paper and other materials
- Peeling the backing off of stickers
- Painting with brushes, sponges, and fingers
- Gluing and pasting

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## Social Sciences

Social sciences introduce children to community, culture, and relationships. They learn about themselves, others, and the larger world through storytelling, role-play, and real-life examples.

- Learning first/last name
- Recognizing family members and roles
- Community helpers and their roles (firefighter, nurse, police officer)
- Classroom citizenship: rules, routines, and kindness
- Learning about emotions, friendship, and empathy
- Holidays and traditions at a preschool level

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## Science

Hands-on science builds curiosity and problem-solving. Activities are designed to let children observe, question, and experiment with the world around them.

- Sink/float experiments with everyday objects
- Weather charts and exploring rain/snow
- Understanding changes in weather/seasons
- Using senses to explore textures, sounds, smells, tastes, and looks
- Simple temperature play (ice melting, warm vs cold water)
- Animals in Winter (bears, squirrels, birds)

- Growing plants from seeds and observing changes
- Exploring insects and animals with pictures, stories, and nature walks
- Caring for the environment (clean-up, recycling basics)
- Life cycles (butterflies, chickens, frogs)
- Simple recipes
- Hands-on exploration and curiosity

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## Health & Safety

Health and safety are taught daily through routines and intentional lessons. Children learn how to care for their bodies, stay safe in their environment, and build lifelong healthy habits.

- Classroom and playground safety rules
- Handwashing and hygiene routines
- Heart health and eating nutritious foods
- Importance of sleep and exercise
- Covering coughs and sneezes
- Teeth health
- Fire drills and emergency preparedness
- Stranger safety and personal boundaries
- Mr. Yuk – teaching children to recognize poison symbols and stay away from harmful substances

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## Nutrition

Nutrition education introduces children to healthy eating habits and food choices. Lessons are interactive and often tied to snacks, celebrations, or seasonal themes.

- Learning about food groups (fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, dairy)
- Discussions about healthy vs “sometimes” foods
- How to eat healthy and exercise to maintain a healthy heart

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## Problem-Solving & Concepts

Preschoolers learn foundational concepts that prepare them for higher-level thinking and problem-solving. These ideas are introduced through stories, manipulatives, and everyday experiences.

- Same/different games
- Sorting by color/shape
- Matching objects
- Spot the difference games
- Sequencing 2–3 steps (first/next/last)
- Exploring cause and effect through play (blocks falling, pouring water)

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## Expressive Arts

Expressive arts encourage creativity, imagination, and self-expression across music, movement, and visual art. Children explore many forms of artistic expression.

- Music: simple songs, rhythm sticks, scarves, bells
- Drama: puppets, role-play, storytelling, acting out nursery rhymes
- Visual Arts: coloring, painting, drawing, sculpting with clay/playdough
- Dance/Movement: freeze dance, yoga, marching songs, yoga
- Finger plays – classic rhymes with hand motions to build memory, rhythm, and coordination
- Painting – using brushes, sponges, fingers, and other tools to explore color and texture with tempura paint and water colors
- Opportunities for class performances (Circus themed)

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## Free Play

Free play allows children to explore interests, build friendships, and develop independence. This unstructured time encourages imagination, cooperation, and problem-solving while supporting social-emotional growth.

- Indoor play with dolls, cars, blocks, puppets, and puzzles
- Outdoor free play with balls, bikes, chalk, and playground equipment
- Opportunities for building, pretending, and experimenting
- Teachers observe play to guide social interactions and extend learning naturally



## Small Group Learning

Small group learning provides targeted instruction and individualized support. Working in smaller groups allows teachers to differentiate instruction, observe skills more closely, and encourage peer collaboration.

- Simple letter/number matching and games
- Counting games with manipulatives
- Exploring textures, nature items, or sensory bins
- Role-play and cooperative games for social skills
- Playing games that involve following directions

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## Lesson Plans and Daily Schedule

Lesson plans provide a structured daily rhythm while allowing flexibility for children's interests and needs. Plans include literacy, math, science, art, and movement woven into playful experiences.

- **Morning Meeting** – greeting, calendar, weather song
- **Circle Time** – songs, short story, theme discussion, finger plays
- **Heggerty** - letters, sounds, blending, phonemic awareness
- **Gross Motor** - music & movement through fun exercises and movements
- **Small/Whole Group** – fine motor, early math, craft, or literacy games
- **Free Play** – art, dramatic play, blocks, sensory, literacy, playground
- **Closing Time** – goodbye song

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## Parent Communication

Ongoing communication with parents creates a strong home-school connection. Families are kept informed and provided with tools to support learning at home.

- Monthly newsletters with reminders and upcoming events
- Daily notes or updates on Remind app
- Photos and informal updates when possible on Remind app
- End of year progress report

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