

# Tam Preschool Newsletter: September 2024

## Celebrating 67 years in Mill Valley

Welcome to Tamalpais Preschool for the 2024-25 school year! We are looking forward to supporting your children and your family.

### **Parent Communication and Information:**

Teachers send notes home with information like minor scrapes or bumps, but we will call for anything significant. We also include milestone notes, reminders, and updated about your child's day. We know pick-up and drop-off times can be a difficult time to communicate with teachers, as they need to make sure children enter and exit the classroom safely. Here is how you can reach your child's teacher:

**Each class has their own email and phone to communicate with families. Teachers are in the classroom with the children, so please email questions ahead of time or schedule a time to meet. Call for last minute pick up changes or emergency. Teachers will check messages before pick up time.**

### **Garden Room: [garden@tamalpaispreschool.org](mailto:garden@tamalpaispreschool.org)**

**Class phone number: 415-388-4286**

Teachers: Michelle M (Mimi), Michelle S (Michie), with Corienne and Louise

### **Ocean Room: [ocean@tamalpaispreschool.org](mailto:ocean@tamalpaispreschool.org)**

**Class phone number: 415-388-4286**

Teachers: Monica, Jacky, and Sara

### **Creek Room: [creek@tamalpaispreschool.org](mailto:creek@tamalpaispreschool.org)**

**Class phone number: 415-388-9286**

Teachers: Leslie, Maria, Gris, with Christian and Amy as support

### **Aftercare: [creek@tamalpaispreschool.org](mailto:creek@tamalpaispreschool.org)**

**Class phone number: 415-388-9286**

Lead Teacher: Leslie

The Aftercare Team: Monica, Gina, Maria, Gris, Christian, Jacky, Sara, Louise, and Marcela

### **Director: [director@tamalpaispreschool.org](mailto:director@tamalpaispreschool.org)**

\*If you have general school questions or concerns contact Marcela by email. We can schedule a time to meet. I work in the classroom part time and check emails mid-morning or in the afternoon, my office time this year is from 10:00 to 11:00 am or from 2:00 to 3:00 pm. **Call the classroom phone number to reach your child's teacher if you have last minute pick-up updates.**

**Billing: For billing and Curacubby questions, please contact Rose Lofrano, our Chief Operating Officer. Her contact information is 415- 246-4941 and [rosesp1@yahoo.com](mailto:rosesp1@yahoo.com).**

\*With your Curacubby account, you can pay bills, look up payment or tax information in the "invoice tab", update your contact information in the "profile tab", keep track of your extended hours in the "attendance tab", as well as turn in forms, look up the contract, or the school calendar in the "forms tab".

As a reminder, your tuition deposit was received last spring and your first monthly tuition payment will be arriving by email on Sept 5th and every month through May 2025. Child care is paid in arrears and is added to your tuition invoice monthly.

New in Curacubby, please note: beginning Sept 1, there will be a **1.9% charge for paying by bank account** and a 3.9% charge to pay by credit card. This is the first time they have raised their rates in 7 years. Previously, paying by bank had no cost. We realize this can add up quickly - you have the option to pay by check also. You can mail it to our PO Box: PO Box 1012, Mill Valley, CA. 94942 or you can hand it to one of your teachers. Please be sure to put it in an envelope to help ensure it's safekeeping.

Finally, you will be receiving our Equipment & Enrichment Fee invoice shortly which helps provide for all of our fun specialists throughout the year (for example, yoga, music, recess games, insect lab, etc.) and new equipment/toys for the classrooms.

### **Class Curriculum:**

Our curriculum is age appropriate for each classroom. Teachers share curriculum information and photos from school on a regular basis using **Homeroom** to show families the weekly activities and give you a glimpse into your child's school life. We hope you enjoy the photos and talk about them with your child, as they help expand conversations and help children process what they learned in school.

### **Enrichment Activity**

\*Coach Allek, from Electivity Kids, will support our physical education curriculum this year. **He comes to our school every Wednesday, starting August 28. Please make sure children wear sneakers and comfortable clothes for running and climbing.**

\*Jamaroo, our music and movement specialist, comes every Monday, starting September 9, to our Creek and Ocean Classes. We have been working with Jamaroo for about 15 years and enjoy all the fun activities they provide for our younger groups.

Our Enrichment and Equipment fund pays for these wonderful school activities. Your contribution makes that possible. Thank you so much for your support! More specialists will be scheduled soon.

### **Fall Conferences:**

Conferences are an opportunity to talk individually with your child's classroom Lead Teacher. They last about 20 minutes, and we meet in the Fall and the Spring. The Fall conference focuses on providing us with insight about your child to help us set individual goals for the year, as well as to give families an update about their child's school life. Each class will be sending conference information soon. This year, we plan to meet in person.

### **Parking:**

**Families can only park in preschool and pre-k assigned spots. We are NEVER allowed to park in church assigned parking spots (located across from the sanctuary and the church office), or the red zones in front of the church.** If you are doing a quick drop off and pick up, you can park in the unmarked spots if one is free, but you cannot linger on an unmarked spot.

**Children and families are walking in the parking lot, so please drive slowly and carefully. The road next to the creek leading to the back parking lot becomes a one way street once passing Fellowship Hall.** Cars in the small back parking lot, next to the Ocean Room and the Preschool Office, must exit to Camino Alto.

**Dropping off your child at school:** School starts at 9:00 am (Morning Care is available from 8:00 to 9:00 am). **A Teacher will be at the door in each of the classrooms from 9:00 to 9:10 am to help you with drop-off and for a quick check in.** Classroom activities start around 9:10 am. Please make sure to be on time for drop-off, so your child transitions easier and doesn't miss out on morning activities. **The classroom doors will close around 9:10 am. to keep everyone inside safe.** At that time, teachers must also step away from the front door, as they need to help supervise the students in the classroom and start the morning routine, so please be on time for drop off.

**\*The Garden Room** entrance is located behind Fellowship Hall, near the new wooden outdoor worship stage. Class starts at 9:00 am, but Morning Drop off is available in the Garden Room starting at 8:00 am.

**\*The Ocean Room** entrance is located under the car awning facing the creek, in the back of the church complex. Class starts at 9:00 am, but Morning Drop off is available in the Ocean Room starting at 8:00 am.

**\*The Creek Room** entrance is marked as Room #3, located in the church office courtyard, near the front area of the church complex. **The Creek Room classroom opens at 9:00 am. Morning Care for the Creek Room is available in the Ocean Room area starting at 8:00 am.** Just before morning drop off at 9:00 am, Creek Room students attending morning care will be walked from the Ocean Room to the Creek Room by their teachers.

When dropping off your child, walk to their designated classroom door to be greeted by the teachers for a quick door drop off. **Please make sure everyone who is dropping off or picking up your child has been added to the pick-up list and knows how to use our digital sign-in system.** I'm attaching instructions on how to use the system in Curacubby. **A pre-activated digit code and a designated phone number is required to use the system (an iPad will be available at school to help with the process if needed).**

Starting school is a big step for you and your child. There may be tears, but teachers will always be near to hold and comfort your child. Even if your child has been at our school before, your child will likely be in a new class with new teachers. **Please let us know how we can support you.**

**Tears are normal, especially at the beginning of the year. If you linger and hesitate by the door, your child will feel it and be nervous. Stay calm and strong to help your child. A quick drop offs tend to work best, as the longer their transition becomes, the longer it takes to calm them down.** Teachers will comfort your child and create bonds that will help with future transitions. We will give you a call if your child is not engaging at school, and will create an individual plan to transition if needed. We like to try a simple goodbye at the door on the first day of school because children often surprise us and rise to the occasion. Please do not linger around the school area after dropping off, or after picking up your child, as it can be distracting for the class.

#### **Pick-Up Time:**

**The regular school day ends at 1:00 p.m. The doors will open and children will be ready for pick up from 12:50 to 1:05 p.m.** A teacher will greet parents at the door and will call children to the entrance for pick up. **Students can only be released to those individuals designated by parents/guardians. If someone else is picking-up your child, you need to inform the school ahead of time. Email a day in advance, or call the classroom teacher and leave a message for them before 12:00 pm.** People picking-up will need to show ID if a teacher does not recognize him/her. The school will only release students to people over 18 years old.

**Children not picked up after 1:05p.m. will be transferred to the Aftercare program.** If your child does not have an afternoon reservation, parents and people in the emergency list will be contacted for pick up. **Children get nervous if they get picked up late, so please let the classroom teachers know if you think you may run late, so we can comfort your child.**

Make sure people who pick up your child on a regular basis are listed in your child's pick-up list at school (on The Emergency Form). They also need to know how to use the digital sign-in system, and be listed in Curacubby to have their own pick up pin. **People on your pick-up list should know they may be called to pick up your child if there is an emergency and we cannot reach you. Authorized people picking up your child need to be 18 years or older, and teachers will ask for an ID if they don't recognize the person picking up.**

### **Extended Care Hours:**

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. (\$12.00) One hour block only

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (\$24.00) Two hour blocks only - Full

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (\$26.00) Two hour blocks only - Full

### **Morning Care:**

**Morning Care reservations are not required.** You can drop off your child in their classroom an hour early, starting at 8:00 am. **Creek Room students will have morning care in the Ocean Room.** Children entering the classroom before 9:00 am will be charged for the Morning Care block. You can check your extended care use in the "Attendance" tab in Curacubby.

### **Aftercare:**

**Afternoon reservations are required, and our afternoon program is full.** You can ask to be added to the waitlist. Due to the large number of afternoon students, only permanent reservations will be allowed this year, we are not able to accommodate drop-in spots. **If a family is signed up for aftercare, but is not using the spot, we may need to cancel their reservation to allow an accurate count for the group and possibly open a spot for someone else.**

**Aftercare is held in the Ocean Room.** Teachers will take all students scheduled to attend aftercare to their designated rest or nap areas. Parents will pick up their child at the designated time from the Ocean Room door, facing the creek.

**\*Aftercare pick-up at 3:00 or 5:00 pm will happen in the Ocean Room entrance, facing the creek.**

**It is extremely important for you to pick up your child on time, at 1:00, 3:00, or 5:00 pm depending on your reservation.** A prompt pick-up helps us keep the program running smoothly, as teachers have limited time to be at the door. **If a child is continuously picked up late, we may need to revoke their afternoon spot, as it disrupts the program.**

**Teachers are working long hours to be able to accommodate the late 5:00 pm pick up. Please make sure you pick up your child by 5:00 pm to allow teachers to go home on time.**

### **What to bring to school and things to keep in mind:**

1. Bring a nutritious lunch (**nut-free**). The school will provide snacks. If your child needs special food due to allergies or sensitivities, please tell a teacher to help support your child's needs.
2. A small zip-lock bag with extra clothes to keep in their cubby. Please mark the bag with your child's name.
3. Children have toilet reminders several times a day as part of our "potty times" at school. Teachers will help all children with their toileting needs. Children need to wear pants that are easy to pull down for toilet use. Let us know if your child is still using diapers or pull-ups and bring some to school for your child.

4. Please apply sunblock every morning, and bring a hat with your child's name on it to school.
5. Children need to wear comfortable running shoes (No flip-flops, crocks, or shoes that may be too big and slip off). Keep in mind we have sand and tanbark in the playground and they can get into sandals or shoes without a strong sole.
6. The clothes children wear to school should be clothed meant to get messy, easy to pull up or down in the bathroom (leggings or sweat pants are best), and comfortable to use in the playground for climbing and running.
7. Let a teacher know if your child needs a special medication to be administered at school on a regular basis or in an emergency. There are forms needed for medication, so please contact us to get one.
8. **Label ALL your child's belongings** (clothing items, lunch box, food containers, backpack, nap bags, hats, etc.)
9. **Double check your list of approved people who are allowed to pick up your child from school, listed in the *Emergency Form*. Make sure to let us know if someone else is picking up your child on a particular day (you can let teachers know at the door during morning drop off or email teachers the day before)**. We check ID for anyone new picking up. Make sure the person picking-up or dropping-off knows how to use the digital attendance system and has the code needed to sign your child in and out of school (you create the pick-up code in Curacubby). I'm attaching the pick up/drop off code instructions. I can help families create the code during the meet and greet (just make sure to bring your phone, so I can help).
10. Toys from home should not come to school, as they get broken, lost, and create sharing conflicts in the classroom. If your child needs a transitional object to help him/her at school, please check with a teacher.
11. If your child is staying in aftercare, please bring a nap/rest-time kit like this one from Amazon:  
[https://www.amazon.com/Baby-Boom-Nap-Mat-Set/dp/B07CDZVX6K/ref=sr\\_1\\_13?crid=2P6LYIX09AMXX&keywords=child+sleeping+bag&qid=1688964532&sprefix=child+sleeping+bag%2Caps%2C164&sr=8-13](https://www.amazon.com/Baby-Boom-Nap-Mat-Set/dp/B07CDZVX6K/ref=sr_1_13?crid=2P6LYIX09AMXX&keywords=child+sleeping+bag&qid=1688964532&sprefix=child+sleeping+bag%2Caps%2C164&sr=8-13)

**Toilet Training:** We are happy to partner with families to fully accomplish toilet training, but training must start at home. **Please check in with teachers regarding toilet training goals for your child, or if your child is wearing diapers.** Review our toilet policy attached. Bring diapers to school and we will provide the wipes. Teachers will monitor the bathrooms and support children as needed. **Please avoid putting on complicated clothing on your child, sweatpants and elastic waistbands work best at school.** If you have not started toilet training, we recommend waiting to do so until after your child has acclimated to school. Check with the teacher.

**Health Reminder:**

\*We ask that you keep your child home if he or she is not feeling well. **If your child looks to be under the weather when he or she wakes up, please give your child a day at home to rest and make sure he/she is well, as symptoms can worsen as the day goes on.** If children come to school sick, not only will they spread germs, but your child will not enjoy their day at school feeling sick and recover may take longer without proper rest.

\*If your child suffers from allergies, please inform the teacher. **Even with allergies, children may not be at school with severely runny nose or cough, as it can bring discomfort to the child.** When allergies are acting up, and are not under control, children are just not well enough to participate in school activities.

**\*If a child starts to show illness symptoms at school, a teacher will isolate with the child away from the rest of the group and contact the family for pick up.** Parents must be able to be at the school right away or have someone on their emergency list who can come pick up a sick child within a short time frame. We will clean and sanitize the areas where the child has been playing. **Children who are sent home with a suspected symptom must check with the director to make sure the illness is not contagious.**

**\*We follow a 24-hour health policy.** If your child is home sick, or was sent home due to illness, your child needs to be symptom-free and/or on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before he or she is able to return to school. This guideline helps ensure everyone is healthy at school and exposure is kept at a minimum. Expect more restrictions if there is exposure to COVID-19, as we will follow the Health Department guidelines. We are already getting alerts about covid exposures, so please help us keep everyone safe at school. Thank you for helping to keep our school community healthy!!

**Lice are back in the area!! Students must be lice and nit free to attend our preschool.** Unlike elementary schools who allow children to attend with nits, preschool students work and play in close contact, so they must be both nit and lice free. We will alert families if we have cases in the classroom.

### **School Closures:**

Our goal is to keep everyone safe at school and to remain open to support our school community. We really appreciate you trusting us with your child and family's health. We take that responsibility very seriously. We will close our school when the children and teacher's safety is at risk.

**\*We have to close on dangerously high smoky days (around 150 AQI), as it is a health risk for our children and teachers.**

Please watch for the AQI in AirNow.gov: <https://www.airnow.gov>. **We plan to close when the AQI is around 150.** Families will receive an email in the morning, before school starts, when the air is expected to be high. We wait until the morning to make the class because air quality can change in just a few hours and sometimes it is much better in the mornings. **We are only closing when the air is unhealthy for everyone, but please note that 101 to 150 AQI is not healthy for sensitive groups, and that includes children and people with respiratory illnesses.** Parents can choose to keep children home anytime they feel like it is best for their child, just let us know your child will not be at school. We have air purifiers for all our classrooms, which will be used daily to help with smoky days and germ exposure. We appreciate your support. We know it is hard to keep your child home if you are working.

**Dates Coming Up: Please check out the attached social calendar**

**\*Back to School Party!** Saturday, 8/24, from 4-6pm

**\*Parent Coffees:** Monday and Tuesday, 8/26-8/27 at 9am (after drop off)

**\*First Day of School:** Monday, August 26

**\*Labor Day (No School):** Monday, September 2

**We are looking forward to a great year together! Marcela and the Tam Teachers**