

A 1
B C s and 2 3 s

Earlier Is Not Better

Many parents are concerned when their children aren't learning letters and numbers. They feel that ditto sheets and homework in preschool programs will prepare their children for elementary school.

We could give your children workbooks. We could make them memorize the alphabet. We could drill them. We could test them. But we know that if we do, your children are going to lose something very important.

Children who are rushed into reading and writing too soon miss important steps in learning and may suffer later on because they lack the foundation they need for using language. Children who are taught to read in preschool may be able to sound out and recognize words, but they may also have little understanding of what they are reading. If they haven't been given time to play, they won't have explored objects enough to know what words (like "hard, harder, hardest") mean. If they aren't allowed to string beads, button, dress up, cut, paste, pour, and draw, they won't develop the small muscle skills they need for writing.

Because math involves more than memorizing facts (like $2+2=4$), because it involves logical thinking, children shouldn't be pushed into paper and pencil arithmetic too soon. To acquire the foundation for logical thinking, children need many opportunities to count objects, sort them into piles, and add some to a pile and take some away. It is by playing games like these that they will learn to truly understand addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication. Without these concrete experiences, children may give correct answers but probably won't understand what they are doing and why.

Worst of all, if children are rushed into academic subjects too soon, they may lose their enthusiasm for learning and lose their sense of themselves as learners. If children are told what to learn and memorize by the teacher, they may become more passive and dependent learners, and be less excited about learning something new. Children who are given plenty of time to play, however, learn to ask their own questions and figure out their own answers. They are responsible for their own learning. They see themselves as explorers, discoverers, problem solvers, and inventors.

The Goals of Our Curriculum

The most important goal of our early childhood curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We're teaching them **how** to learn, not just in preschool, but all through their lives. We're allowing them to learn at their own pace and in the ways that are best for them. We're giving them good habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives.

Our curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development:

- **Social:** to help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of the group.
- **Emotional:** to help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life.
- **Cognitive:** to help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical:** to help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.