

*Truro Central School
Preschool
Family Handbook*



Truro Central School Preschool

**Office.....508 487 1558 x 200
Fax Number.....508-487-4289**

Class Times

**Regular Day...8:20 to 12:00
Extended Day...8:20 to 2:50**

School Calendar

**Every child will receive a school calendar
on the first day of school**

School Cancellations

**Same as for Truro Central School snow days. Listen to local TV stations WHDH,
WCVB & WBZ or radio stations WCOD 106.1 FM, WQRC 99.9 FM, WBZ 1030
AM, WKPE 104.7 FM, WOMR 91.9 FM, WCIB 101.9 for cancellations due to
inclement weather**

PRESCHOOL STAFF

**Lynne Ready.....Teacher
(readyl@truromass.org or 508-487-1558x228)**

**Eliza Harned.....Teacher Assistant
Helmi Heyliger.....Teacher Assistant
Alice Kelly.....Teacher Assistant
Lindsey O’Sullivan..... Teacher Assistant**

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATORS

**Lynne Ready.....Special Education Teacher
Katie Castano....Speech and Language Pathologist
Nancy Radosevic.....Occupational Therapist
Nancy Winslow.....School Counselor**

The following information is compiled to assist you in better understanding the policies and day-to-day operation of the Truro Central School Preschool Program. In order to fulfill our objectives, we encourage close communication between staff and families so that it is truly a partnership, with families involved in all aspects of the program. For additional information or assistance with preschool issues, please contact Brian Davis, principal, or Lynne Ready, teacher, 508-487-1558.

PHILOSOPHY

What should the preschool experience be? Since it is the child's first experience in a school setting, it should first and most importantly provide a pleasant, friendly atmosphere where the child feels comfortable and safe. A positive first experience in school will result in enthusiasm for later school experiences and for learning in general. A child, at the ages of three and four, is at one of the most significant periods in his or her life. These early years are crucial for the development of healthy personalities, sound bodies, and positive attitudes toward learning.

The Truro Central School Preschool Program is a developmentally appropriate educational program providing for each child's physical, social, emotional, cognitive and creative growth in a carefully prepared classroom environment, through the use of hands on activities, real life experiences and concrete learning materials. We embrace the philosophy of inclusion in that education is provided to students in a general education setting. Specific services are provided in accordance with Individual Education plans

Definition of Developmental Appropriateness

The concept of *developmental appropriateness* has two dimensions: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness.

1. Age appropriateness. Human development research indicates that there are universal, predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first 9 years of life. The predictable changes occur in all domains of development - physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by the program provides a framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

2. Individual appropriateness. Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style and family background. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child's thought and experiences with materials, ideas and people. These experiences should match the child's developing abilities, while also challenging the child's interest and understanding. (NAYEC, 1987)

CURRICULUM

The Truro Central School Preschool Program's education program follows the Massachusetts Department of Education Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences and Program Standards and is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Curriculum areas included in the program are: self-help skills, language development, sensory development, math and geometry, science and social studies, gross and fine motor development, art, music and movement. All of these activities are geared to the children's interests and abilities and are integrated into the daily classroom routine. Our curriculum and classroom routine are consistent with that of the rest of the Truro Central School and help facilitate a smooth entry into kindergarten.

Our classes are mixed age groupings and our program is child centered. Children are able to develop at their own rate and according to their own interests within a carefully prepared classroom environment. This environment is designed to foster concentration and cooperation and to aid in developing the child's self esteem. There is at least a teacher and two assistants in each classroom of up to 20 children. A Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Special Needs Teacher and a School Counselor, as well as all other resources of Truro Central School are available to the program.

Our program is evaluated annually. Families should expect to receive a survey during the school year as part of this evaluation process, as well as a summary of the results.

At the Truro Central School Preschool Program your child will:

- Be provided with a child-sized environment to help make success in his/her daily tasks possible.
- Learn to care for himself/herself and his/her environment in order to foster his/her independence.
- Be encouraged in this independence in every way - by teachers and peers.
- Have a chance to socialize with peers and adults in diverse situations.
- Have group experiences that develop cooperation, consideration and courtesy.
- Gain meaningful experience with science both in the classroom and outside.
- Learn about children of other lands and different cultures, through firsthand accounts whenever possible.
- Be encouraged to participate in a variety of activities and academic areas in order to develop as a balanced individual.
- Be allowed to pursue a special interest to its fullest.
- Be helped to express himself/herself both verbally and creatively through the arts.
- Have opportunities to choose his/her own work from a carefully prepared environment.
- Be encouraged to participate in daily classroom clean-up as well as to replace his/her own work in its proper place.

- Meet new people with special skills and interests, such as playing musical instruments, crafts, driving an ambulance, dentistry, etc.
- Have a period of free outside play during clement weather.
- Learn to prepare nutritious foods and serve them to others.
- Serve himself/herself a healthy snack.
- Develop his/her senses to their fullest.
- Use his/her developing senses to reinforce his/her cognitive learning including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Participate in a variety of experiences and activities to stimulate language development.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The Preschool Program recognizes the importance of family involvement in the education of young children. Positive family relationships with a child's school help the child see and understand the value placed on learning. Continuous opportunities for the school, home, families and teachers to reinforce and support each other are planned and encouraged. The home/school relationship is most important so that the two environments in which your child lives in are in harmony.

Here are some ways to become involved:

- 1) **READ NOTICES.** This is the easiest possible way for you to keep informed and involved.
- 2) **VISIT THE CLASSROOM.** Some families have special skills they may want to share with the children. Other families may want to observe, join in our daily activities or help with a teacher planned project.
- 3) **Become an active participant in the COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL.**

CPC is our preschool family group which is open to families of children attending the Infant and Toddlers Playgroup and the preschool program. The focus of the CPC is on the specific needs of very young children and is an excellent opportunity to begin your involvement with your child at Truro Central School.

Family groups exist as support organizations to provide additional services and programs for our students. Through fund raising, they provide support for enrichment, field trips and other activities that are not generally covered by the school budget. Reorganization meetings are held in the fall of each school year. Families and staff are encouraged to join and actively participate. Leadership opportunities are available as a CPC officer, organizer of an event or fundraiser. Here are some ways to strengthen consistency between home and school:

- **Allow your child the necessary time to do things for him/herself - dress, pick up and put away toys, toilet, assist with other tasks.**
 - **Provide an environment conducive to his/her management - open shelves, hooks at his/her level, area that is his/her alone to maintain.**
 - **Provide consistent ground rules and discipline, completion of a task once started, putting away of toys, consideration, helpfulness and patience towards others.**
- **Attendance is important and its consistency should be handled as a fact of life.**
Prompt arrival allows the child to enter school confidently and comfortably.
 - **Any problems in this area should be discussed with the teachers as soon as detected.**
 - **If your child is crying, please remain until the teacher is free to be with your child.**
 - **Report all changes in the family structure and/or living situation.**
 - **Report all vacations that temporarily alter the family structure, whether or not the child participates.**

Here are some more ways to build a positive home/school relationship.

- **Personal belongings i.e. “Comfort toys” may be brought to school and left in cubbies. Special items that relate to school work may be brought to share with the class. If you are in doubt, please *ask the teacher* in advance.**
 - **Show and Tell routine will be explained in a future newsletter.**
 - **Books on loan from home are always welcome. Please label them with your child’s name and be responsible for their return.**
 - **Special snacks brought on your child’s birthday for sharing at group time helps make the day special but this is in no way mandatory.**
Be sure to notify a teacher of the date, if you plan to bring a snack.
 - **Please return unfamiliar items your child brings home. They are probably pieces of school equipment.**
- **Family involvement in their child’s progress is encouraged.**
- **Family orientation will be held before school starts in September and children will be invited to visit the classroom with their families before they begin attending school.**
- **Classroom visits may be arranged by appointment.**
- **Written reports will be sent home and conferences will be regularly scheduled during the year.**
- **Additional conferences may be arranged by appointment.**
- **Your participation in the classroom on special projects is welcomed. You may cook, do an art project, play a musical instrument, bring in special materials - whatever you feel comfortable doing. Please let the teacher know what you would like to do.**

At the Truro Central School Preschool your family will:

- Be invited to a variety of family programs and activities.
- Receive information about the program through newsletters, notices, bulletin board, written daily news, and conversation with the teacher at drop off and pick up time.
- Be welcome to share your talents and interests with the children.
- Be welcome to visit and/or help in the classroom, have an opportunity to meet other families.
- Receive written reports and participate in conferences about your child's progress.
- Be able to discuss your child with the teacher at anytime in person or by phone or by email. Contact Information is available at the school website www.truromass.org.

PROCEDURES

ENROLLMENT

- A. Truro children must be three years old (3) before September 1st of the entering year.
- B. Non-resident children who are three years old (3) before September 1st of the entering year, may be accepted, space permitting.
- C. Special needs students as mandated by Chapter 766 may enter at two years nine months at any time during the year.
- D. In order to qualify as a Truro resident you must physically reside in the Town of Truro as of September 1st of the entering year.
- E. Enrollment may be terminated by family choice or by the school for failure to meet tuition obligations. Termination by the school is handled on a case by case basis.
- F. Enrollment limits may be determined at the discretion of the administration and will be based on multiple factors including state and federal regulations, student needs, staffing and other criteria related to individual student needs which will be confidential.

WAITING LIST

Should more children apply than program standards allow, other factors will be taken into consideration, such as the following: isolation from companionship of peers; parental circumstance; bilingual family.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

Preschool screening is conducted in October. All students are screened in order to provide information to families and teachers and as part of the process of determining the program's eligibility for Title I funds.

REGISTRATION

Registration will take place in the Spring and enrolled children must re-register for the second year. A \$35.00 non-refundable registration fee is to be turned in at this time. In order to qualify as a Truro resident you must physically reside in the Town of Truro as of September 1st of the entering year. In order to register families must submit a registration form, \$35.00 registration fee and an enrollment request form. Please note that the registration fee is non-refundable except in the following instances: students who are not offered a slot, due to over enrollment; students who are not offered the days requested, choose not to attend and notify us by a stated deadline; students who are eligible for tuition vouchers; and students receiving special education services. Before your child attends school you must also submit a health form with evidence of lead screening and appropriate immunizations, a copy of the child's birth certificate and payment for the September tuition bill due on or before July 31 of the entering year.

TUITION

Tuition is \$15.00 per AM and \$8.00 per PM. A sliding fee scale based on federal reduced/free lunch guidelines is available for qualified individuals. In order to be eligible, the preschool application for reduced tuition must be completed. Applications are available in the office. Information about tuition vouchers are also available from the Cape Cod Children's Place (Call Karen Burns 1-508-240-3310 for criteria and applications.) and The Child Care Network of Cape Cod and Islands (Call 1-888-530-2430 for criteria and applications.).

Tuition is due on the first day of each month and must be paid on time. Payments should be made to the school office. Please enclose tuition payment in an envelope with your child's name on it. Tuition is charged for each day school is in session. There will be no refunds for absences. Please make checks out to the Truro Preschool Program. Upon termination of enrollment tuition is reimbursed on a prorated basis.

Extended absences for more than a month require non-refundable prepayment for the duration of the absence. Failure to prepay will be considered withdrawal of the student. The school reserves the right to offer the spot to another student.

HOURS OF OPERATION AND CALENDAR

The program follows the Truro Central School Calendar with some exceptions. The hours are 8:20 AM to 12:00 noon Monday through Friday. An extended day session is available Monday-Friday, 12:00-2:50 PM. A school calendar is available in September and families will be notified of exceptions prior to their occurrence.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of information is governed by state and federal laws as well as school district policy. Safeguarding confidentiality of student and family information is a priority of all our school and school district. All staff are trained in confidentiality annually and reminders are provided throughout the year. Volunteers are also provided with information relative to matters related to this issue.

Only School employees with a need to know shall have access to individual children's files which contain screening and assessment results. Sign out logs are maintained in all files requiring a signature and reason for access each time a student file is accessed. The use of screening and assessment information is used to document a child's baseline performance from which their individual instructional intervention shall be measured for its effectiveness. It is also used to determine if more in depth evaluation is needed to better coordinate the type, frequency and intensity of services that an individual child might require upon entering pre-school and kindergarten.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In the event of a conflict or dispute between a family member and staff member it is our expectation that every effort will be made to discuss and resolve the issue between the adults involved. If the issue remains unresolved following direct discussion between the adults involved, the building principal may be involved to mediate or to interpret policy. If the principal is requested to intervene both parties shall be present to discuss the issue and seek resolution. The focus of the principal's involvement in conflict resolution is to promote dialogue and understanding between the adults varying opinions and points of view.

Provided that the disagreement is not a matter of law, policy or procedure, opinions of both parties will be considered and the goal will focus on a compromise acceptable to both parties. In all matters pertaining to law, policy or procedure established mandates, requirements and guidelines shall prevail.

In all cases, parties may appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Schools.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY CLOSING

The Preschool Program will follow the Truro Central School procedures regarding snow days. The school system sends out notices of these of these procedures at the beginning of each Winter season. In the event of an emergency (power outages, hurricanes, heavy snow) requiring early dismissal, families will be called.

FIELD TRIPS

Community places of interest will be visited, such as farms, beaches, museums, galleries, post offices, etc. Families are informed of all field trips, the purpose explained, they are required to sign a permission slip before each trip. The permission slip provides the school with verification that families have been informed and approve the child's participation.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from the school is the responsibility of each parent. Transportation will be available for field trips and will include appropriate child restraint.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Optimal health for a child is important in meeting new experiences, such as attending school for the first time. If a child suffers from a health problem, it will have a direct bearing on the child's capacity for adjustment and ability to handle this new experience constructively. It is therefore important that a child receive adequate rest and nutrition and be free of illness. To insure optimal health the following policies have been adopted as part of the school health program:

- A. MEDICAL EXAMINATION. Every child's school record will include a complete medical record that must be turned in annually before the child starts the program. These forms are filled out by the child's school physician and are turned into the classroom teacher. Vision, hearing, height and weight should be recorded. Results of a lead screening must be recorded on this form.
- B. IMMUNIZATION. Proof of immunizations against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella is required prior to enrollment. According to state law exemption from immunization may only be granted if there is a medical exemption signed by a physician or a religious exemption signed by a parent. An exemption form is available from the school nurse.
- C. MEDICATIONS. Medications (both prescription and non-prescription) should not be taken during school hours if it is possible to achieve the medical regimen at home. Medications to be taken three times a day can be given before school, after school, and at bedtime. In cases where medications must be taken during school hours, please refer to the MEDICATION

POLICY in the “Notes from the Nurse’s Office”. In order to insure student safety, no child is allowed to carry medication on his/her person.

- D. ILLNESSES. Children who are ill or have a contagious disease are not allowed to attend school. Please do not send your child to school when symptoms of illness occur: fever over 100 F, vomiting, diarrhea, severe sore throat, severe coughing. If your child has experienced any of these symptoms within the last 24 hours, please keep them at home. Illnesses spread very rapidly in a school setting. Children who come to school and exhibit any of the above symptoms are isolated until a parent/guardian can be notified. Please notify the school nurse should your child contact any contagious disease (i.e. Measles, Chicken Pox, Whooping Cough, Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Fifth’s Disease, Conjunctivitis, Scabies, Impetigo).**

ABSENCES

If your child will be absent please telephone (508-487-1558 ext. 200 or 205) before 8:20 AM to leave a message. If we have not heard from you by 9:00 AM the nurse will call to verify the absence.

LIBRARY

Preschool students may borrow library books if accompanied by a parent. A family bookshelf is available in the library as well.

SNACK

Snacks will consist of a variety of healthy foods. Teachers keep a list of children’s food allergies and carefully monitor food choices. A healthy snack will be provided by the school with occasional donations requested to broaden our menu and/or provide ingredients for special cooking projects. (School policies - No peanuts or no commercial bakeries). We do not offer children these foods: hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, new peas, hard pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed.

EXTENDED DAY

Children staying for extended day should bring a non-perishable lunch packed in a lunch box labeled with their names. Lunches must follow USDA CACFP guidelines.

No candy, soda or glass containers, please. Extended day children should also bring a small blanket, pillow, and/or soft toy to rest with. These items should be brought home and washed weekly. Milk may be purchased for lunch for .25¢ daily. A refrigerator and microwave are available.

CLOTHING

- A. We think of our classroom as a workshop for children.
1. We engage in many activities (clay, painting, cooking, digging) that are made more enjoyable if children are dressed appropriately. Loose fitting washable clothing that does not hamper gross motor movement will enable your child to function comfortably in any school situation. Sturdy rubber soled shoes will make our walks and outside play less precarious. Flip flops, clogs or high heels are not appropriate.
 2. Since we play outside every day that is not extremely wet, it is important for children to be adequately protected from the weather. *Labeled* outdoor clothing that the children can operate themselves increases their independence and self-esteem.
- B. A complete change of clothing (including socks and shoes) in a plastic bag must be brought to school and left in the child's cubbie. These clothes must be clearly *labeled* and periodically checked for size.
- C. Preschool students should carry a bag or backpack each day for projects, notes, etc.

OTHER SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

In addition to this handbook, all families will receive a copy of the Truro Central School handbook. That handbook outlines additional general school procedures, points of information and specific policies. "Notes from the Health Office" contains additional information on school wide policies and procedures that pertain to the preschool as well. A complete text of school policies are available in the principal's office. They may be reviewed upon request, in the office.

Truro Central School Preschool
Tentative, Flexible Daily Schedule

Morning Program

8:20 Arrival

Please bring children to the playground or meeting rug, depending on the weather at this time. Children should put their belongings in their cubbies and say goodbye to families before beginning the day's activities.

8:30 Morning Meeting

At this special time, children gather together to greet each other, share news, and discuss our plan for the day. A new classroom material, activity or special project may be demonstrated to the group. We will also sing songs, recite poems and do finger plays.

8:50 Work Time

This time will be a balance between small group and individual activities; and between teacher directed and child selected activities. Children may select activities from any area in the room: dramatic play; construction; art; language arts, math, and science; and music and movement. Concurrently, teachers may give small group or individual lessons in these areas, supervise a special project, guide children's play or observe their activities and learning.

10:30 Clean Up, Snack and Book Time

Children share responsibility for keeping our classroom clean and in order. Then they share a healthy snack, either family style or independently at the snack table. Afterwards, they choose a book and enjoy quiet reading.

11:15 Closing Meeting

The group gathers to hear a story from a variety of types of children's literature. Gross motor activities such as ball play, dancing, and Simon Says will be part of this meeting as well.

11:35 Playground Time

Please send children dressed to play outside every day. This is an important opportunity for motor, language and social development and we will go outside whenever weather permits. Playing in the snow and even a little rain can be delightful if everyone is properly dressed. At times, special activities and projects will be planned for the playground.

12:00 Departure

Please pick up children on the playground or the meeting rug, depending on the weather. Be sure to sign out, take a copy of Preschool News, and gather belongings from the cubby and notices from your mail pocket.

Extended Day

12:00 Lunch

Children eat their lunch that they brought from home in the classroom. Milk may be purchased in the mornings for \$.25.

12:50 Rest

After cleaning up their lunch, children settle down on their mats for a rest or nap. A small blanket, pillow and soft toy from home help make this time cozy and relaxing.

1:45 Activity Time

Children will choose activities inside and/or outside.

2:35 Clean Up

2:50 Departure

Please pick up children on the playground or meeting rug.

*Each child has a right:
To affection, love and understanding...
To adequate nutrition...
To learn to be a useful member of society,
and to develop individual abilities...
To be brought up in a spirit of peace and
universal sisterhood and brotherhood.*

From the UNITED NATIONS “Rights of the Child”

TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNING SCHOOL

1. Do treat going to school as part of a normal course of events, something that is expected.
2. Don't make the beginning of school a topic of daily conversation during the summer, or before your child enters the program.
3. Don't allow other children to frighten or tease with tales about teachers, etc.
4. Do answer all questions the child asks about school honestly. For example:
Number of days he/she will attend
Length of time away from home
How he/she will get to and from school
5. Don't give the impression that there is a choice about whether or not to attend school. If the child says he/she will not go to school, calmly and reassuringly let the child know you understand his/her discomfort but are confident that he/she can handle it with the teacher's support.
6. Do communicate to the child that you appreciate the effort he/she is making to do what is being asked.
7. Do make transportation plans clear to the child.
8. Don't try to force a child to be positive about going to school. Encourage him/her to express his/her feelings.
9. Do create a normal routine atmosphere at home the first few days.
10. Sending the child to school is, or can be, anxiety provoking for parents. Don't assume the child's anxiety is all his/hers.

Preschool Handbook Review (required)

I, _____, have reviewed the preschool handbook with my student (s) and understand the information presented.

Parent _____

Date _____

Student _____

Date _____