

GPS Preschool Parent Guide

**School Based Learning
Remote Learning
2020-2021 School Year**

Preschool is prepared!

As we plan for the start of the 2020-2021 school year we are all excited to see your child/children! The Preschool Staff has developed plans to provide positive learning experiences for both School Based Instruction and Remote Learning. We want to share that information with you so you can best prepare for the school year during these uncertain times.

We are committed to providing your child with the best possible preschool experience. Our youngest learners have been through a great deal in the last few months and their social/emotional well being is of the utmost importance to us and will be a focus throughout the school year!

The GPS preschool philosophy, mission statement and guiding principles will hold true for both School Based Learning and Remote Learning if required.

Philosophy & Mission Statement

In the Greenwich Public Schools Preschool Program each child's physical, emotional, social, cognitive and communicative individuality is respected throughout his/her stages of development. We recognize that each child develops at his or her own natural pace. In the GPS Preschool we nurture this natural progression of development and provide each child with opportunities for maximum growth at each developmental stage with a personalized learning approach.

Overview of the Program

The Greenwich Public Schools Integrated Preschool Program serves both youngsters with identified special needs and those who are typically developing. Using the project approach and personalized learning each child participates in instructional activities/experiences, which address the domains of communication, cognition, self-help, fine/gross motor and social emotional development.

The Guiding Principles and Curriculum of the Preschool Program

- Early Learning and development are multidimensional: the developmental domains of cognitive, personal and social, physical and creative expression aesthetic development are interrelated and integrated throughout the day.
- Young children are capable and competent.
- There are individual differences in rates of development among children.
- Children will exhibit a range of skills and competencies in any area of development.
- Knowledge of child growth and development and consistent expectations are essential to maximizing educational experiences for children and to developing and implementing programs.
- Families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children.
- Young children learn through active exploration of their environment through child-initiated and teacher-selected activities.

School Based Learning

**What will School Based
Learning look like for your
child?**

Environment

Daily Schedule

Guidelines

What you can do to help

Staggered Arrival and Dismissal by School

Hamilton Avenue

Arrival 8:15

Dismissal 1:15

Extended Day 2:30

New Lebanon School

Arrival 8:00

Dismissal 1:00

Extended Day 2:15

North Street School

Arrival 8:45

Dismissal 1:45

Old Greenwich

Arrival 8:45

Dismissal 1:45

New Students to the GPS Preschool:

Short visits will occur simultaneously with Kindergarten visitation.

9/8/2020.

New Lebanon 8:00 am

Hamilton Avenue 2:00 pm

North Street School 10:00 am

Old Greenwich 11:30

****Unfortunately due to safety restrictions parents are being requested to remain outside the building. Students will enter with staff.***

Environment

Classes will have up to 15 students and five adults (remaining under the CDC guidelines for 20)

- Tables and chairs to seat students in social distancing guidelines
- Specific seat , labeled (with your child's photo) for use by the same child daily (for snack, lunch, table activities)
- Colorful, washable spots for floor time activities
- Hula hoops and colorful tape to indicate learning/play time areas
- "Yuck Buckets" for all toys used to be washed at the end of the day
- Individual sensory boxes
- Individual art material boxes
- Individual bins for toys to be rotated daily after cleaning
- Individual buckets for bag lunch/snack to be kept
- Individual hooks/cubbies for a backpack
- Limited choice time/play areas open daily and rotated throughout the week.
- A calming area that includes a washable surface(vinyl bean bag chair/cube chair) and individual calming materials
- Visuals to show students where materials go, how to wash hands etc.

Environment

Classes will not have:

- Stuffed animals
- Pillows
- Dress up clothes/costumes
- Rest blankets
- Anything difficult to clean daily

While we may miss some of these materials from our classrooms, we are committed to providing a warm, friendly, safe environment for all of our students!

Example In Summer Daily Schedule: Classes may reorder activities based on the school schedule for playground/outdoor play or mask breaks



Arrival/Morning Movers*

Table Time

Morning Meeting

Snack

Playground

Choice Time/Small Group

Lunch

Relaxation Stations

Good-Bye Circle

Hand washing:

- Between each activity/transition
- Before and after every meal
- Additionally as needed



Sinks are located in every classroom.

Movement Activities and Story Time: Embedded during each transition to support frequent handwashing and the time it takes for everyone to wash their hands thoroughly.

Morning Movers: Will occur outside as weather permits or within CDC guidelines in the gym as possible in elementary schools

Lunch/Snack may occur outside as weather permits to provide further space for students.

First unit of instruction

The Connecticut Early Learning Standards (CT.ELDS) provide core learning standards in the areas of social, motor, cognitive, and personal / creative expression. These learning and development standards inform the development of curriculum and units of instruction which provide our students with a wide range of learning experiences.

As we start the 2020/2021 school year, our first unit of instruction from the Greenwich Public Schools Preschool Curriculum will be:

All About Me: This unit lends itself to instruction on hygiene, social distancing, healthy habits and feelings with an emphasis on social and emotional development.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS: Will be taught at Morning Meeting through the Second Step curriculum following the district SEL plan for re-entry.

Guidelines

[Adapt, Advance Achieve: Connecticut's Guidance for Preschool in Public Schools](#)

*Our preschool classrooms are located on elementary school buildings where the expectation for all students, including preschool, will wear masks (unless specific medical accommodations are required and determined on an individual basis). This requirement is beyond the requirements of the OEC at this time.

[District Re-Entry Plan](#)

Added precautions during the pandemic:

Lunch Procedures will be consistent with the [districts re-entry plan](#). *All lunches and snacks sent from home must be sent in brown bags labeled with child name and if they are containing any foods that are allergy provoking. All items in the bag should be disposable and will not be returned home. Lunch and Snack will remain in classrooms as consistent with current preschool practice with the exception of a 6-foot requirement for social distancing. OEC and CDC guidelines will be followed. Parent permission for assistance with feeding will require a written document.*

THE PRESCHOOL WILL MIRROR [PROCEDURES RECOMMENDED BY THE OEC](#) FOR:

Toileting/Potty training/Feeding a child

Handwashing

Cleaning of toys

Added precautions during the pandemic continued:

Sensory “table” will remain closed. Individual sensory bins can be utilized during this time and disinfected between students.

Playdough or sensory materials will be utilized by individual students and disposed of daily.

Students and staff will require multiple sets of change of clothing on site. Both clean and soiled clothing will be stored in sealed containers.

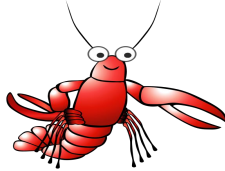
Art materials will be stored in separate bags or bins for each child.

Recess/Morning Movers will follow all safety guidelines in the re-entry plan with social distancing and cleaning of materials.

Clothing recommendations given social distancing: Given most children in this age group require assistance with fasteners (buttons, belts, zippers etc.) Please dress your children for as much independence as possible with options that do not require fasteners. (sweat pants, leggings, pull on shoes, t-shirts and over the head jackets)

What you can do to help...

- Practice social distancing:
 - [Click here](#) for a helpful strategy to teach preschool-age children about social distancing like a “lobster”!
 - [Social Distance Video](#)
- Practice wearing a mask:
 - [Wearing a mask](#)
 - [School Will Look a Little Different This Year](#) (A Story about wearing a mask and what students could expect)
 - [Resource: Masks & Gloves: A Printable Story](#)
 - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Helping Kids Get Used to Masks \(for Parents\) - Nemours](#)
 - [DR. DARRIA'S MASK-WEARING FOR KIDS GUIDE](#)
- Visuals for your practice at home:



[Bathroom Routine Visuals.pdf](#)
[Going to the Bathroom Book.pdf](#)
[Hand Washing Routine Book.pdf](#)
[Hand Washing Visual Routine .pdf](#)
[SeeingOtherPeopleWearingMasksStory.pdf](#)
[WearingAMaskStoryforChildren .pdf](#)
[Teacher Wearing Face Shield.pdf](#)

Starting The School Year – Supply List Preschool- Please contact your child's teacher directly and the district will prepare a package of materials for your family

- **A painting smock (or an oversized shirt)**
- **A backpack sent daily to accommodate lunch , artwork and a two pocket folder for teacher notices (Lunches are not refrigerated or warmed)**
- **2-3 family photos**
- **2 rolls of paper towels**
- **2 boxes of tissues**
- **1 box of Crayons**
- **1 box of Markers**
- **2 glue sticks**
- **1 bottle of glue**
- **Child size scissors**
- **Antibacterial wipes**
- **If your child wears diapers/pull ups please provide:**
- **Pull ups/Diapers**
- **Wipes**
- **Rubber gloves for changing – medium non-latex**
- **Snack in a paper bag labeled with child name**
- **Lunch in a paper bag (separate from snack) labeled with child's name**
- **3-4 Changes of clothing labeled(in separate sealed ziplock bags) that will remain in your child's backpack**
- **An extra mask**
- **Two plastic pencil boxes**

On the first day of school:

Please expect:

- Staff may be wearing “scrubs” or casual clothes that can be easily changed when needed.
- All staff and students will be wearing masks
- All students will be dropped off outside the school as parents/caregivers will not be able to come into the buildings. If your child is in distress, please know that there will be an abundance of staff to support your child (and you) safely while following the expected guidelines. Specific drop off procedures for your school will be shared by your classroom teacher and building Administrator.
- Arrival and dismissal will be staggered from the elementary school. Please review drop off procedures sent by your Teacher.

Remote Learning
The Preschool is Prepared for a Positive
Experience if Required

What will Remote Learning look like for your child?

Setting up at home

Materials for you to consider

**How to access materials from
the district**

Establish a daily routine

Daily Schedule



Setting up at home:

Make a space for learning: Your child will achieve their best work in a quiet, comfortable, and dedicated space that is strictly devoted to learning. This space should be a different set-up than where they normally play games or watch television. It does not need to be fancy or a large area. The most important thing is that it is the same place, every day, to help establish a routine.

Use Visuals: We can provide you with visuals to designate your child's work/play space.

Gather materials: The next slide offers suggestions of things you may consider to include in this space.

Materials for you to consider having in the home for possible remote learning:

1. Crayons
2. Puzzles, lacing beads or boards
3. Glue (stick or squeeze bottle)
4. Scissor (child sized)
5. Books
6. Manipulatives to count (e.g. blocks, cereal, army men, dominoes)
7. Construction paper
8. White paper
9. Any type of Building Blocks/legos/bristle blocks/magna tiles
10. Paint brush (can be used with paint and with water on the paper) and paint (any type)
11. Empty water bottle (to be used for calming), fidget toys
12. Blanket/towel/yoga mat (for a calming space to be used during Mindfulness)
13. School iPad
14. Balls, hula hoop, scarves for dancing
15. Loose parts, towel rolls, cardboard boxes, buttons, bits of ribbon and string, bottle caps, "treasures" found in the home to build with and create art

What to do if you require assistance with materials in the home:

Please contact your child's teacher directly and the district will prepare a package of materials for your family to pick up at the Havemeyer Building 290 Greenwich Avenue.

This includes access to internet and a device for your child to participate in the digital learning.

Establish a daily routine

Routines: Daily routines and schedules will support your child during distance learning. Establishing routines provides predictability and a feeling of security that children need. When a child knows what is expected, they can focus on learning. You can build distance learning into your child's day. Routines can limit "Power Struggles" that often occur with children that may not have a secure, predictable routine to follow.

Use Visuals: We can provide you with a visual schedule to help support your child's daily routine. A visual schedule will provide your child with structure to go through each part of their distance learning day.

******Now you and your child are ready to go!******

Preschool Remote Learning Schedule

Time	Activity	Areas of Learning Related to theCTELDS	Examples
15 min 8:30	Morning Meeting/ Opening SEL Activity Google Meets	Cognition, Social Emotional Development, Creative arts	Asking and answering questions, learning routines, building attention, engaging in learning activities with peers, turn taking, learning emotions, making a choice for a song
15 min 8:45	Morning Movers Google Meets	Physical Development and Health, Cognition, creative Arts	Gross motor skills: hopping on one foot, dancing, balancing.... Singing songs and following directions in the group for movement, responding to turn taking
20 min 9:00	Snack Google Meets	Physical Development and health, Communication, math and language/literacy	Learning to eat with a spoon or fork, pouring juice, cleaning up table, asking and answering questions. Building vocabulary, counting food items, comparing snacks of our friends, who has more or less crackers
40 min 9:20-10:20	Choice time Play with caretaker Google Classroom/See <u>Saw</u>	Cognition/Language and Literacy/Math/Science/Social Studies/Physical Development	Teacher will provide examples and activities that align with the current unit in curriculum and <u>CTELDS</u>
20 min 9:20-10:20	Story time/Writing - Small Groups (Teacher will rotate groups and provide parents with Choice time play activities to support learning for those groups not meeting during this time)Google Meets	Cognition and Language and Literacy	Recalling facts of the story, building attention skills, language comprehension and vocabulary, demonstrating book concepts turning pages, drawing, emerging writing
20 min 10:20	Table Time Google Meets	Cognition and language and literacy,Physical Development and health, Communication, math	Building with blocks, creating puzzles, answering and asking questions, counting toys, problem solving, fine motor development, sorting and classifying, identifying shapes/colors, vocabulary development

*Choice Time and
Story Time Occur
Simultaneously*

Small Group
and Shared
Reading Occur
Simultaneously

20 min 10:40	Process Art Google Meets	Cognition/Language and Literacy/Fine Motor/Math/Science	Building and creating with loose parts, drawing, painting, playdough, measuring, cutting, writing, problem solving, investigating materials, observing, making predictions
30 Min 11:00	Lunch with caretaker		*teacher may provide special education services during this time or take lunch/planning
40 min 11:30	Outdoor play/ Recess with caretaker		*teacher may provide special education services during this time or take lunch/planning
20 min 12:10-1:10	Small Group Instruction on Preschool Curriculum units (Teacher will rotate groups and provide parents with Shared reading activities to support learning for those groups not meeting during this time) Google Meets	Cognition/Language and Literacy/Math/Science and Social Studies	Teacher will develop lessons to support children's learning of unit concepts
40 min 12:10-1:10	Shared Reading with caretaker Google Classroom/See Saw	Cognition/Language and Literacy/Math/Science and Social Studies	Teacher will provide parents with both digital books and activities
20 Min 1:10-1:30	Mindfulness/ Closing Meeting Google Meets	Cognition, Social Emotional Development, Creative arts	Asking and answering questions, learning routines, building attention, engaging in learning activities with peers, turn taking, learning emotions, making a choice for a song, Self regulation
45 min 1:30-2:15 Ham Ave and New Lebanon Extended Day Students only	Media/PE/Music/Art Google Meets	Cognition, Social Emotional Learning, Physical Development and Health, Creative Arts, Communication	Following directions, problem solving how to play a game, self regulation, gross and fine motor skills, choice making, singing and remembering lyrics and sounds, turn taking, communication with peers and adults

**1:30-2:30 *teacher may provide special education services during this time or take lunch/planning

Early Elementary Schedule (Kindergarten – 2 nd Grade)					
MINS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
15	Morning Meeting Opening SEL Activity				
30	Language Arts Mini lesson				
60	Language Arts small group instruction/independent task				
30	Break/snack				
45	Art	Music	PE	Media	PE
15	Math Mini-lesson				
45	Math small group instruction/independent task				
60	Lunch/Recess/Break (off Video)				
30	Science Lesson				
15	Interactive Read Aloud				
15	Closing SEL Activity				

Comparison of Preschool and Early Elementary Schedules

Preschool (5 hour day)	Early Elementary (6.5 hour day)
2 hours 30 minute live online teaching	2 hours 45 minute online teaching 30 minutes online break snack with students
80 minutes independent learning with caretaker and activities/lesson provided by teacher	70 minutes independent learning with caretaker and activities/lessons provided by teacher
70 minutes lunch/recess/outdoor play	60 minutes lunch/recess
Teacher lunch/planning 60 min	Teacher lunch/planning 60 min

First unit of instruction:

The Connecticut Early Learning Standards (CT.ELDS) provide core learning standards in the areas of social, motor, cognitive, and personal / creative expression. These learning and development standards inform the development of curriculum and units of instruction which provide our students with a wide range of learning experiences.

As we start the 2020/2021 school year, our first unit of instruction from the Greenwich PUblic School Curriculum will be:

All About Me: This unit lends itself to instruction on hygiene, social distancing, healthy habits and feelings with an emphasis on social and emotional development.

Family Engagement, Special Education and Resources

Family Engagement During both School Based Learning and Remote Learning:

You can expect:

- Communication from the district weekly
- Communication from your child's classroom teacher weekly
- Strategies and activities to support your child's learning at home
- Parent chats/support groups/materials monthly

If your child has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP):

After accounting for staff and student requests for remote learning the following general guidelines would be followed across levels

Cohorts:

- The “cohort” is the group of students who will remain together throughout the day as much as possible. At the preschool level, the cohort is the classroom, at the elementary level, the cohort is the grade and at the middle school level, the cohort is the team. At the high school, the cohort is the primary location of special education services (Academic Lab, Wellness, Windrose or ‘home bases’ in Folsom and Sheldon). Parents will be notified if their children will receive services outside of the cohort.

Instruction:

- Students will be provided with special education services within the classroom when appropriate.
- Any changes that need to be made to the services described in the pre-pandemic IEP, will be documented in a separate service plan document and shared with the parents (ex: 2x30 minute small group instruction may be changed to 1x50 minute small group). The pre-pandemic IEP will not be changed to reflect changes related to hybrid or remote learning, the only changes that could be made would be related to a change in the student’s current levels of performance.

Materials:

- Students will be provided with disposable paper supports. Any materials that are not disposable will be stored for the individual student in separate containers or cleaned between uses by multiple students.

Transportation will be provided as per your child’s IEP Please contact the transportation department with any questions. Link to [Transportation](#)

If your child has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP):

Related Services:

- Speech therapists will serve only preschool students in the building.
- Occupational and Physical Therapies will observe social distancing.* Gloves and gowns will be worn if there is any contact and parents will be informed of the extent of the contact.
- Small group sessions will contain only students from the cohort and will follow appropriate social distance including the possible use of sneeze guards. Parents will be notified of any cross-cohort group sessions.
- PPEs will be changed between student sessions.
- To the maximum extent possible, therapists will travel to students/cohorts, to limit contacts with people and materials.
- Sessions may be longer and less frequent to minimize travel across building and between schools.
- Any changes that need to be made to the services described in the pre-pandemic IEP, will be documented in a separate service plan document and shared with the parents – (ex: 2x30 minute small group instruction may be changed to 1x50 minute small group)

Meetings and Evaluations

- All scheduled PPT meetings will be held remotely unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- Evaluations (initial and triannual) will continue as long as face-to-face interactions are permitted. All safety precautions will be taken including sneeze guards and fresh PPEs after every student.

Instruction:

- Students who require individual direct instruction, service will be provided within the classroom.*

Clothing and Toys:

- Clothing worn should be easy for the student to manage (limited buttons, zippers and ties) to minimize adult physical contact.
- All toys or instructional items that have possibly been near a student's mouth will be placed in a separate container and cleaned at the end of the day.

Resources:

[LINK TO CT.ELDS](#)

[Emergency Resources](#)

[Preschool Handbook](#)

[Distance Learning](#) (GPS Website link Click Parent and Community Resources for assistance with Google Classroom or See Saw.)

[Distance Learning: Special Education](#)

[District Re-entry Plan](#) (Link to Re-entry documents)