



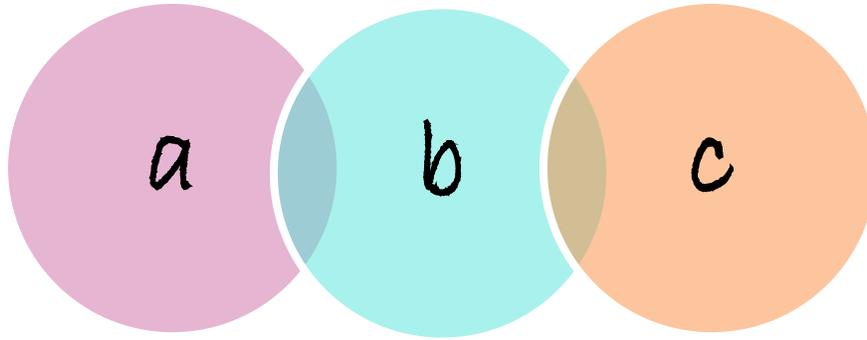
# Centerville City Schools Preschool Philosophy & High Scope Curriculum

Aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's  
Early Learning Content Standards

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CENTERVILLE PRESCHOOL .....

MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY _____	1-3
PROGRAM GOALS _____	4
CURRICULUM GOALS _____	5
A TYPICAL PRESCHOOL DAY _____	6
DISCOVERY TIME CENTERS _____	7



## MISSION STATEMENT

**We believe** that building a positive, supportive connection between home and preschool sets the foundation for, and influences, future success in school and in life. Through relationships between children and adults, and through interaction with materials, we will foster the development of the whole child by providing natural experiences, which are relevant to the child's world. We will accommodate and support individual differences as we strive to help each child become an observer, investigator, explorer, discoverer, problem-solver, and life-long learner.

## PHILOSOPHY

The first five years of a child's life set the foundation for, and influence, future success in school and in life. In the Centerville Preschool, we strive to provide a comprehensive preschool experience designed to enhance the child's social/self-help, communication, cognitive, and physical growth. Children's learning occurs in these domains in an interrelated and interdependent manner.

We believe that children with special needs should be integrated as much as possible with their typically developing peers. A child with a disability is always a child first. Children are much more "alike" than they are different. Therefore, the same learning principles apply to all preschoolers.

*"Every minute of every new and exciting day, I'm learning and growing in my own special way!"*

*Jean Feldman*

We have a Reggio Emilia inspired philosophy along with High Scope curriculum that both the teacher and children are co-constructors of knowledge. Observation, communication, and reflection are essential elements of our child-centered program. There is not a set of curricular activities or a map of specific topics to teach. The children, along with teacher, observe, reflect, and learn together through exploration and investigations of topics of interest. Topics may be generated by the teacher's careful observation of child interests, child-initiated questions, and/or a collaboration between

both the teacher and the child. Investigations or projects may be short or long in duration. The exchange of ideas between educators, children, and parents is also fundamental and welcomed.

Activities that are concrete, real and relevant to the child's life enhance cognitive development in children. Activities that are child-centered rather than teacher-directed are preferred. As children investigate, manipulate and experiment with materials through play, they learn to construct their own knowledge. Classroom staff guides, expands, and stimulates the children's thought processes.

An intriguing physical environment is designed to offer opportunities for both indoor and outdoor exploration, quiet and active play, self-selected or teacher selected play, and individual, small and large group activity. The environment in the Reggio philosophy is often considered the "third educator". The natural environment around us is very important. This environment will provide for intellectual stimulation, social and language development, and physical development. Above all, experiences are thought provoking and open-ended and fun!

Acquisition of all these skills and concepts will take place gradually and according to each individual child's continuum for growth. The process will be guided and encouraged, but not rushed or forced. Concepts are introduced, defined, extended and reinforced throughout the child's early childhood experience in ways that will enhance individual growth and promote self-esteem.

Documentation gives insight to the learning process. Cameras, video, dictation (children's words, comments, thoughts, conversations), journals, portfolios, documentation panels, work products, artwork, writing, and thought provoking questions/reflections for home in newsletters or emails assist the teacher and child in revisiting their experiences and learning. Documentation fosters teacher observation, reflection, and analysis/assessment.

A basic ingredient to future educational success is a positive self-image which is developed to great degree during this preschool period. Multi-cultural, non-biased experiences, as well as age and developmentally appropriate equipment and material are provided for children to develop their self-esteem while encouraging their acceptance of others. Classroom staff model behavior based on respect for others, which is then observed and emulated by children.

*"The pleasure of learning and knowing, and of understanding, is one of the most important and basic feelings that every child expects from the experiences he confronts alone, with other children or with adults. It is a crucial feeling which must be reinforced so that the pleasure survives even when reality may prove that learning, knowing and understanding involve difficulty and effort"*

Loris Malaguzzi (founder of the Reggio Emilia Approach)

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## PROGRAM GOALS

- Develop a positive self-concept and attitude toward learning in each child.
- Develop relationships of mutual trust and respect with adults and peers.
- Develop an increased awareness, tolerance and acceptance of individual differences.
- Incorporate individual needs and viewpoints in an integrated, culturally sensitive environment.
- Encourage each child to care for their own personal needs.
- Improve each child's ability to express and comprehend thoughts, ideas, needs and feelings in order to communicate effectively with others.
- Encourage the child's innate sense of curiosity and construction of knowledge.
- Encourage the child's development of critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Strengthen each child's acquisition of gross and fine motor skills.

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## CURRICULUM GOALS

### **Language Arts**

The children will gain skills necessary for the development of listening, comprehension, oral and written language that promotes life-long literacy.

### **Cognitive/General Knowledge**

The children will become problem-solvers and plan multiple solutions, working collaboratively with others.

### **Social-Emotional Development**

The children will recognize emotions, develop self-regulatory skills, and develop reciprocal play and conversation skills, in order to demonstrate socially competent behaviors.

### **Math**

The children will become problem-solvers and mathematical thinkers by making connections between mathematical concepts that relate to the world around them.

### **Science**

The children will investigate and interact with concrete objects in order to develop an understanding of scientific concepts.

### **Social Studies**

The children will learn how people live, work, get along with each other and solve problems.

### **Physical Well-Being and Motor Development**

The children will develop motor skills necessary for movement as well as life-long healthy habits for self-care.

### **Art/Music/Physical Education**

The children will gain an appreciation for art and music, and develop motor skills necessary for creative expression and movement.

## A TYPICAL PRESCHOOL DAY

Our space consists of 3 to 4 main classrooms with a commons area in the same "Neighborhood". A typical day usually includes the following:

### **Arrival**

Typically, when the children arrive, they make simple choices in the room to work until all of their friends arrive.

### **Greeting**

The children sit together at the easel to do opening activities that their individual teacher has planned (ex. say hello to each other, sing a song(s), talk about the events of the day/schedule, interactive reading, shared reading, interactive writing, shared writing/news, story)

### **Choice Time/Centers**

The children make choices to work with specific materials in the room and/or work in small groups or individually with the teacher.

### **Snack**

The children have snack together in their room. Staff promotes manners, social conversation, and communication skills during snack.

### **Gross Motor**

We go outside to the playground for movement and exercise (weather permitting). If the weather isn't cooperating, we move and exercise to music on CD's, sometimes use the gym when it is vacant, utilize the commons area for activities, etc.

### **Circle Time**

Specific activity for the children to target certain skills or content. (May involve project-work, interactive reading, shared reading, interactive writing, shared writing).

### **Art**

Community space, kitchen and art room are also available for "art" oriented activities or other activities like cooking or project work.

### **Music**

We sing and dance together to reinforce content, explore rhythms, move with a purpose, and have fun.

### **Closing**

The children gather with their class to end the day with a small activity, reflection of the day, and/or song.

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## DISCOVERY TIME CENTERS

\*While at the writing center, children experience pre- writing and writing activities that are designed to build literacy and fine motor skills. Children are encouraged to draw, scribble and to use inventive spelling to convey a message or story.

\*Children create, interact and build, using language and problem-solving skills in the block area.

\*The dramatic play area allows children to explore a variety of family, social and community roles; language opportunities; social situations; and different play scenarios in an engaging manner.

\*The math and science center invites children to experience number concepts, spatial awareness and geometric activities, patterning and logic, problem-solving, social games and turn-taking, and observation/analytical opportunities.

\*The art and sensory area includes various art experiences and materials, hands-on tactile activities, and other opportunities to create, explore, and discover.

\*Reading and Listening centers offer children a chance to experience literature. We encourage individual and "buddy reading." Children learn to turn pages one at a time, from the front to back of the book, and to tell stories to go with the pictures.

\*Puzzles and Games offer children the opportunity to take turns, problem-solve and to use positive social interaction skills.