EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
Birth–Preschool

Parent Aware Rated Program
Highest Possible Rating



The Launching Pad Preschool

A Reggio-Inspired Approach to Early Childhood Education

AGES 3-5
HALF DAYS
ALL-DAY

- Inviting classrooms, rich with opportunities
- A large motor room
- A child-sized playground to share with kindergarten
- Weekly scheduled visits to the school library

THE REGGIO-INSPIRED APPROACH

The Reggio approach to education is one that stresses the "hundred languages of children" (giving children a large variety of ways to express their learning), projects, a child-centered curriculum, documenting children's learning, and teachers as researchers. Reggio Emilia is a city in northern Italy and the home of what many experts consider the best program in the world for young children ages birth to six.



Creative Curriculum

Our curriculum is research-based and aligned with MN Early Learning Standards, the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs). The curriculum is emergent, drawing on the children's interests and ideas, and exploring them through in-depth investigations. We use project-based and inquiry-based learning. There is an emphasis on using authentic art experiences across the curriculum. Teachers document children's learning daily, using it to "make learning visible," and to reflect on children's interests and progress.

Our setting encourages deep and complex thinking.

This fosters the tendency in children to be curious, to wonder, to investigate and to question/study/analyze so they can think critically. This is true preparation for life long learning. "Academics" are very much embedded within our daily work. They are found in both the ordinary moments of our day and in the project work that we may do.

We help children to learn in integrated ways. What do we mean by this? If you teach a child the letter M, you have taken it away from its context, and dis-integrated it. If, on the other hand, the children learn to write the names of the people they know, then the letter M will arise as part of classmate Mary's name and become associated with all that is liked about her.

This approach challenges children to learn how to learn, rather than just recite and write the ABC's, numerals, etc. Children are taken to a deeper level of thinking where they see how the ABC's are connected to a broader and deeper system that supports language and the written symbolic language. They understand how it connects to communicating with one another. Children who have only learned to memorize and rote learn names of colors and shapes, the ABC's and numbers, do not have the benefit of meaningful learning they can apply in the real world.

About Our Staff

Teachers are licensed and are required to attend workshops, conferences, and other in-service training opportunities to keep abreast of the best ways to enhance children's learning. Assistants are parents and have experience working with young children.

The first teacher is the child.

Children learn from themselves and their peers. Children have a natural ability to be independent, intelligent, kind, and creative. Children have the right to make choices, create, discover, explore and invent.

The second teacher is the adult.

Teachers and parents encourage the child's natural pattern of learning and are partners in researching what methods best support children's knowledge growth.

The third teacher is the environment.

The environment is beautiful, inviting, and complements children's search for knowledge.







Project-Based Learning

stresses individual and small-group investigation of topics that are of interest to the children and deemed worthy of investigation by the teacher. Students study a particular topic through direct investigation and they create books, songs, plays, games, models, and constructions to show what they've learned. Teachers integrate basic skills acquisition (reading, writing, math, science) with the project work.

Inquiry-Based Learning

emphasizes thinking and problem solving and is a natural progression for students as they move into the primary grades. Inquiry learning helps students develop the rational powers of:

- recalling and imagining
- classifying and generalizing
- comparing and evaluating
- analyzing and synthesizing
- deducing and inferring

Authentic Art

is the opposite of the type of cookie-cutter craft projects that often litter bulletin boards, where all the creations look alike. Children at the Launching Pad Preschool have the chance to explore with materials and processes, and they have the support of a knowledgeable teacher to help them acquire new skills and techniques. Authentic art is more beautiful and expressive than cookie-cutter crafts because it is as individual as the child who creates it. Each creation is unique and wonderful - no two ever look alike! Children may mix their own colors for painting, explore clay using artists' tools, build wooden sculptures and decorate them with an assortment of materials. They experience the satisfaction of knowing that each masterpiece is celebrated for its uniqueness.

CLASS OFFERINGS

We offer preschool classes for children, ages three through five.
All classes are taught by licensed MN teachers.
Tuition assistance/scholarships available to qualified students.

Classes are offered both half days and all day:

HALF DAY: 2, 3 or 5 days per week (8:05-10:45 am & 12:15-2:55 pm)
ALL-DAY: 2, 3 or 5 days per week (8:05 am –2:55 pm)

Register: online at https://rockford.ce.eleyo.com/
or pick up a registration form from our office.

Busing: Available if on a regular route and space permits.

Galaxy Kids Program, a school age care program, also located in the Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School, may have slots available for child care services before and/or after preschool classes. Their phone # is 477-7555.

We welcome all children regardless of race, religion, gender, culture or socioeconomic level.

Parent Aware Rated Program
★★★★
Highest Possible Rating

Launching Pad Preschool is a 4-star Parent Aware rated program. The highest rating offered, this reflects our commitment to high quality programming using research-based best practices, while preparing children for success in kindergarten and beyond. To learn more, visit www.parentawareratings.org.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Launching Pad Preschool programs provide an outstanding and unique public preschool experience. Our learning environment is bright, warm and safe. Children learn and play together in an atmosphere that is rich in opportunities to explore. They are encouraged to problem solve and try new ways to do "old" things in accepting, secure surroundings where they do not experience a fear of failure. The caring and highly trained staff constantly interacts with the children, engaging them in conversations about their work and encouraging them to reach beyond their current abilities. The entire program is designed to be engaging and fun so children don't just learn, they love to learn!

Building a Community for Life-Long Learning
Rockford Area Schools
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Rockford School District #883 Early Childhood Programs

763-477-7500
www.rockford.k12.mn.us > Community Ed > EC Programs
Tiffany Reinhard, Program Coordinator

LOCATION

Our Early Childhood center is located in the
Rockford Elementary Arts Magnet School
7650 County Road 50, Rockford, MN 55373