Routines In Our School Community

We are off to a fabulous start in the Green Room. The children have been busy becoming acquainted with new spaces, new teachers and new friends. Each morning or afternoon, our friends walk into the Children’s School, find their lockers and their outerwear and hang their backpacks. Then the friends wash their hands and look for their attendance photograph to hang on the “I Am Here” attendance board with their name. During free choice the friends then choose a puzzle in the Puzzle Room, build with blocks in the Green Room, explore what is in the sand table or some other independent activity during free choice time. At 9:00 or 1:00, circle time begins and the friends make their way with their teacher to their group circle. During circle, some friends have their jobs. The children really enjoy being the calendar helper, the weather helper, and the number helper. These jobs which are rotated weekly so every friend has an opportunity, to lead a part of the circle.

At the start of the school year, circle time was a great time to discuss rules and expectations with the friends as they learn about becoming part of the Children’s School community. After circle, it is activity time. This is a wonderful time to play group games, such as Bingo, Chutes and Ladders, or Candyland. Activity time is also a time used for science experiments, cooking lessons, and theme-related projects.

Snack time is next. In the Green Room, we serve our snack family style. This gives the children opportunities to pass the plate of snack and count a specific number of items such as crackers while socializing. The friends have also been learning to pour their own drinks from a small pitcher into their glass. When snack is done, everyone cleans his or her own place.

After snack, the children pack their backpacks, put on their jackets and head to the playground for outside activities. When the whistle blows, the children know it is time to either go home or transition into the extended program and that the next school day we get to do the whole routine over again!
Friendship and Community

At the Children’s School, our school year is separated into theme-related units. During each theme, the teachers change the classroom materials and plan activities in the centers and at circle time. Here are some of the favorite activities that made the Friendship and Community theme so meaningful at the start of school.

All About Me Book

Each friend worked on and presented an All about Me book. The book allows each child to think about and illustrate the important things in their lives. The book asks the friends to draw a self-portrait, a picture of their family, and draw and tell about some of their favorite things. Once completed, the children had the opportunity to share their drawings with their friends at circle time or activity time.

Family Graph and Family Collage

First each child had to think about how many people are in his or her family. After that each child then collected that many people shaped papers to and draw family members. The friends then added their decorated family members to a strip of colored paper. The friends used these strips to build a graph to compare the number of family members from one family to another. The family collage pages began at home. The friends worked on this project with their family by selecting photographs to include in their collage. This year our whole school theme is WATER, so we asked that some form of a water picture be included.

Community

Our Dramatic Play Center and Block Center was the stage for the children to pretend to be various community workers. The first week of school, the Dramatic Play Center was a home set up for housekeeping. The following week the dramatic play center became a flower shop, with flowers to arrange, a cash register, and telephones to answer for taking orders. The next play center experience was in a post office, and we then made a grocery store. These experiences helped friends learn how to work together in a community. The focus centered on our whole school, home, and neighborhood.
Mirror, mirror, these friends are drawing self-portraits to hang in their lockers! Pictures in lockers change monthly to represent a new season or theme.

What is a Friend? Rules of Friendship
You may have heard your child talk about “Mango Monkey” a puppet that we have used at circle time. Mango Monkey helps to teach our young students that we are all friends at school and that we can learn and play together. The teachers began with talking about and using pictures of how we can be kind to one another at school. We talked about three Friendship Rules: ”1. Use kind words such as: Please, Hello, Thank You 2. Keep your hands and feet in your own space. 3. Everyone can be a friend and play.” The teachers asked the children in their circle groups, “What do you think a friend is?” All the children had thoughtful ideas to contribute to the discussion. The Green Room teachers will continue this theme throughout the year by using different puppets in scenarios to help the children learn how to react in social situations.

Work At The Learning Centers
THE DISCOVERY AREA is where the Red, Blue and Green Room classes interact while exploring many exciting activities. The sand and water tables continue to be favorites. Our magnet, light, and science tables create opportunities for problem solving, cooperation and collaboration. The children have also been painting and exploring various art materials at the table and easel. THE WOODWORKING CENTER is part of the Discovery Area. We have introduced the children to working with hammers and nails, as well as hand drills. Puzzles, pegs, and beads are favorites in the Purple Room and on tables. The children have enjoyed group games such as Uno, Alphabet Adventure, Alphabet Bingo, and Strawberries In A Basket.
The MESSAGE FROM ME gives the children opportunities to learn to use a programmed camera to take photographs, chose one, and send a recorded message to a family member in their community. The children are becoming independent using this new technology for communication. We recently opened the COMPUTER CENTER, introducing simple games and websites that complement the curriculum. The children have shown great interest in items at the SCIENCE CENTER with our classroom fish, worms, and caterpillar. Our weekly pet helper’s responsibility is to feed the fish and give milkweed leaves to our growing caterpillar to eat so it could become a chrysalis. We await its metamorphosis into a butterfly. Some friends were interested in learning how to handle the worms gently, how to prepare the food they eat and how to collect the castings for use as garden fertilizer. We have also enjoyed reading and looking at books in our LIBRARY. All of these activities are helping our children develop valuable math, science, language, and social skills.

Gym With Ms. McMichael
During the month of September, the focus in the gym was BALANCE AND CONTROL. Gym class begins with warm up exercises such as walking, jogging, stretching, shoulder rolls, arm circles, toes and heels and hamstring stretching. Next the children learned beginning balancing skills using a balance beam, bean bag exercises and small hoops to balance on all parts of our bodies.

The Carnegie Library In Our Community
Debbie Peiorie from the Carnegie Library helped to support our theme by visiting the Green Room with fun songs, fingerplays, and stories about being a friend in a community! The children learned several new vocabulary words from the books she read, such as “crony,” “soiree,” and “harvest moon.” We look forward to her monthly visits!
We Thank You

Many thanks to Kana Koll, (Nana’s mom), Ateev Mehrotra, (Naveen’s father) Gigi (Collin’s grandmother) and Georgia an 8 year old (Savanna’s friend) for reading to the Green Room friends. Donna Perovich (Lexi’s grandmother) provided us with a caterpillar and milkweed leaves from her garden. Jim Bird (Mrs. Bird’s husband) set up our fish tank and provided us with fish in the aquarium.

More Activities From September

- Cutting Practice
- Train Table
- Tricycle Riding
- Drilling holes at woodworking
- Mud Play
- Sand Play
- Cutting Practice