

CLC

Children's Learning Centers

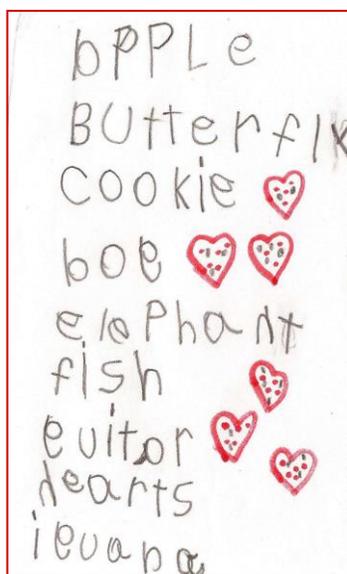
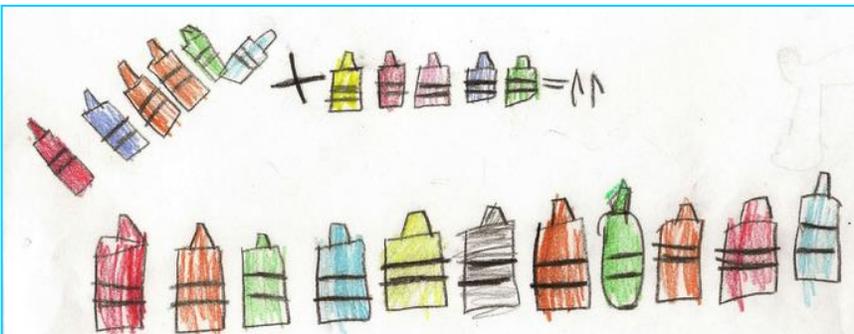
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK



Please refer to the CLC Family Handbook for more information.

WELCOME TO THE CLC PRESCHOOL PROGRAM!

Preschool children are growing and developing in many ways every day. The preschool program at CLC is designed to meet the needs of all children by providing many experiences for them to practice and build upon the skills they already have while incorporating new knowledge. Our primary goal is to provide access to the opportunities that promote school success as well as recognizing and supporting each child's individual differences.



WHAT TO EXPECT

MULTIAGE CLASSROOMS

At CLC, the preschool program utilizes multiage classrooms to serve children age three to five years old. Multiage education is the purposeful placing of children of different ages, (and abilities) in the same classroom. This practice assists the overall development of the child within a family-like community of learners. Using multi-age classrooms allows CLC to:

- Limit multiple caregivers and classroom transitions
- Create consistent personal relationships with the child and encourage healthy emotional attachments
- Increase opportunities for interactions between children and teachers
- Avoid separating children by age and developmental milestones
- Promote cognitive and social growth through heterogeneous grouping
- Increase the use of research-based developmentally appropriate instructional practices
- Support children's development of friendships and provide opportunities for children to play and learn from each other
- Improve overall children outcomes

Within a multiage classroom, children stay with the same teacher for more than one year and new and/or younger children join the class. Teachers plan lessons and activities according to developmental stages rather than chronological ages. A multiage classroom is a diverse environment where children are encouraged to do their best which can assist children in developing a positive self-concept that lays a foundation for life.

LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

A language immersion program is one in which the children spend all or a large portion of their day learning, in a natural way, a particular foreign language. The immersion approach to teaching a second language maximizes the time the children get to practice the language they are learning. Children in a language immersion program work toward fluency in the foreign language; the method of teaching revolves around conversations.

At CLC some of the children in the program are new to the foreign language, while others come from households where family members are bilingual or even multilingual; however, all young children are still in the process of acquiring language skills. Our program is designed to help the child easily transition into the language of the classroom by participating naturally in the language. They can use, practice and rehearse the foreign language in an emotionally supportive environment that stimulates all their senses.

As early childhood educators:

- *We support the building of a community of inclusion. We know that the young child's developmental needs are paramount; we want the language immersion process to be fun and to compliment the young child's development.*

- *We seek to utilize the unique window of opportunity for learning languages that young children possess by exposing the young child to the rhythm, sounds and culture of another language.*
- *We strive to foster an appreciation for a multilingual and multicultural nation by making natural connections through literature, actions, relationships, inquiries, opportunities, and repetition.*

Our methodology incorporates the CLC mission and the core values of early childhood education. We believe children develop at greater levels when activities include all learning domains; we know that children learn by doing, interacting and expressing.

TEACHING STAFF – CHILD RATIOS

CLC preschool classrooms are limited in group size to 22 children; each classroom has two fulltime teaching staff and multiple part-time student staff that help maintain developmentally appropriate teaching staff-child ratios of 1:10. Whether a teacher works alone with a group of children or the teaching team works together with a group of children, the environment is designed to support children’s positive learning and development across all areas.

PROMOTING INDEPENDENCE & SELF-REGULATION

Teaching staff coach and support children as they are learning to manage daily routines. Children are provided varied opportunities that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, tooth brushing, hand washing, and toileting. Teaching staff support children to:

- Persist when frustrated
- Use language to communicate needs
- Gain control of physical impulses
- Learn turn taking
- Play cooperatively with other children
- Express negative emotions in ways that do not harm others or themselves
- Learn about self and others

CURRICULUM GOALS

The early years in a child’s life set the tone for future learning. Our goal at CLC is to stay current on research in child development so that we are able to build a foundation for each child that lasts a lifetime. As participants in the *Texas School Ready* program, CLC preschool classrooms follow the *Frog Street* curriculum- a comprehensive, research-based program that integrates instruction across developmental domains and early learning disciplines.

The cornerstones of the program are:

- An extensive integration of theme, disciplines, and domains
- Social and Emotional development includes Dr. Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline®
- Differentiated instruction
- Equity of English and Spanish materials and instruction
- Joyful approach to learning

CLC's curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age level based upon NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) and AdvancED guidelines. Our classrooms are set up to create an environment that is rich with learning opportunities, safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate. The following goals are incorporated into every classroom:

- Developing safe and healthy habits in young children
- Fostering positive self-esteem
- Providing opportunities for creative expression
- Supporting the development of social skills
- Stimulating cognitive problem-solving skills
- Strengthening communication skills necessary for listening, reading, writing, and speaking
- Enhancing fine motor and gross motor skills
- Assessing the individual needs of each child

CURRICULUM DOMAINS

The Preschool program uses the revised Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP-3) as one assessment tool. It is designed to provide the teacher of the young child with a simple criterion-referenced tool for systematic assessment of the child's existing skills. This instrument is a valuable guide for observation of typically developing children as well as young children with disabilities. It is broken down into the following seven domains:

1. The Gross Motor area examines the child's development in large muscle coordination, strength, and stamina. This section involves postural reactions, balance, and ambulation. Skills with play equipment and physical activities such as hopping, skipping, running, and jumping are included.

2. The Fine Motor domain focuses on skills in eye-hand coordination that involve reaching, grasping, and manipulating objects. A sequence of fine sensor motor behaviors using cubes, scissors, clay, puzzles, and toys are included.

3. Pre-Writing- Written language constitutes a basic form of communication in our society. For this reason, writing skills are a primary focus of the child's early schooling. These behaviors address the stages of grasping writing instruments, the role of finger and easel painting, and a hierarchy of pre-writing skills for appropriate developmental levels.

4. The Cognitive area addresses intellectual functions such as reasoning, problem solving, and knowledge. The specific skills that are included in this section are basic prerequisites to academic functioning such as numbers, colors, shapes, money, and measurements. Concepts of similarities/differences, size, position, weight, and textures are also assigned to the cognitive section.

5. Language- This domain examines the child's ability to perform the following functions of language: reporting, questioning, predicting, and relating information; following and giving directions; describing actions, sources of actions, and functions; and expressing needs, feelings, and preferences. This area includes items, which address both expressive and receptive aspects of language development.

6. The Self-Help area examines the child's ability to cope independently and responsibly with the skills of daily living. This area includes items that involve: feeding, dressing, toileting, bathing, and grooming.

7. The Personal-Social component of the LAP-3 focuses on the child's responsiveness to his social environment. This area of development not only reflects the child's perception and knowledge of his personal life but it examines interpersonal behaviors such as cooperation, ability to relate to a group, sensitivity to others, and helpfulness.

LEARNING CENTERS

We accomplish curriculum goals by providing learning centers to practice mastered skills and encourage emerging ones. Some of these centers include:

Language & Listening Center: Although the children use language in all areas of the classroom, the Language and Listening Center is a focal point for introducing a variety of experiences involving talking, listening, questioning, labeling and other pre- reading behaviors.

Dramatic Play Center: The Dramatic Play Center provides a safe setting for children to role-play, express feelings, dramatize stories and try out social behaviors observed in adults. Much of what takes place in this center requires children to share materials and roles. Deciding who will play the part of "Baby Bear" and who will cook the dinner becomes an important lesson in negotiating with others.

Manipulative & Math Center: The purpose of the Manipulative and Math Center is to provide many opportunities for children to count, sort, explore and group objects. As the children investigate concrete materials, they begin to understand the more abstract concept of numbers, shapes and relationships.

Block Center: The Block Center allows children to build imaginative structures using blocks and miniature real life objects. In the process, the children role-play and interact socially with their peers. Building with blocks also fosters a wide range of growth in large and small motor skills, plus allows for experimenting with balance, recognition of simple number concepts, and classifying by shape, size and color.

Science & Nature Center: The Science and Nature Center provides opportunities for children to experience the world around them. In this area they discover how things function, perform simple experiments and sharpen thinking skills.

Writing & Art Center: The Writing and Art Center provides many opportunities for the children to be creative, develop fine motor skills and build self-confidence. In addition, language development occurs through the discussion of their experiences, projects and writing.

Reading Center: The Reading Center is a book area arranged with comfortable seating. This center provides children a quiet and cozy setting for exploring the printed word and examining delightful illustrations. By providing this area, we hope to build enthusiasm for books, develop prediction skills and increase attention spans.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:10	Teacher Preparation
8:10-8:30	Morning Activities
8:30-8:35	Cognitive Transition
8:35-8:50	Morning Snack
8:50-9:05	Cognitive Transition/Restroom break
9:05-9:20	Circle Time
9:20-9:25	Cognitive Transition
9:25-10:25	Centers
10:25-10:30	Cognitive Transition
10:30-10:45	Circle Time/Read Aloud
10:45-10:50	Cognitive Transition
10:50-11:35	Outdoor Time
11:35-11:50	Cognitive Transition/Restroom break
11:50-12:20	Lunch
12:20-12:35	Cognitive Transition/Restroom break
12:35-2:35	Naptime
2:35-2:45	Restroom Break
2:45-3:00	Afternoon Snack
3:00-3:15	Circle Time/Read Aloud
3:15-3:30	Cognitive Transition
3:30-4:30	Centers
4:30-4:35	Cognitive Transition
4:35-5:05	Outdoor Time
5:05-5:20	Cognitive Transition/Restroom Break
5:20-5:40	Table Activities
5:40-6:00	Review the Day/Prepare for Home

SCHOOL READINESS

In March 2012, the Texas Early Learning Council adopted the following definition of school readiness: School readiness is the state of early development that enables an individual child to engage in and benefit from kindergarten learning experiences. Children are "ready" for school when families, schools, and communities work together to ensure their developmentally-appropriate, age-level success across a variety of domains, including:

- Health
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy - Reading
- Emergent Literacy - Writing
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts (Creativity)
- Physical Development
- Technology

Children's development is influenced by interactions among a complex set of factors including biology, individual traits, family and community relationships, and culture. Since children develop at an individual rate and holistically in response to their environments, they enter school with varied levels of readiness. <https://earlylearningtexas.org/school-readiness.aspx>

CONFERENCES

All families are invited to participate in teacher conferences in the fall and spring semester. These conferences will be held during school hours and at a time that is convenient for both the family and the teacher. Occasionally a teacher may request a conference when there are special concerns in the classroom. We ask that parents respect this request with prompt attention.

VISION & HEARING SCREENING

As part of Health and Safety Code, the Vision and Hearing Screening Program requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial, or denominational school or in a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) licensed child care center and licensed child care home in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria, must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. The requirements for vision and hearing screening apply each year for children enrolled in any licensed child care center and licensed child care home or school program at the ages or grades listed below:

Who Must Be Screened	When Screening Must Be Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-years-old by September 1 • Kindergartners • Any other first-time entrants (4 years* through 12th grade) 	Within 120 days of admission

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Texas Department of State Health Services
 Vision and Hearing Screening
 PO Box 149347, MC 1818, Austin, Texas 78714-9347
 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756-3199
 Phone: 512-776-7420 or toll free 1-800-252-8023, extension 7420
 Email: vhssprogram@dshs.texas.gov