

## The Preschool at North Phoenix – Weekday Transition Plan

### Transitioning from Home to Weekday Preschool:

We encourage all parents to bring their children to the tour that is given to all prospective families of the Weekday Preschool before they register their children. We encourage the children to interact with the other children in the classroom, the teacher, and/or activities that are going on in the classroom at the time.

Once a child is enrolled, we encourage his/her parents to help with the transition into the classroom in the following ways:

- We include Child Information and Child Expectations sheets in the registration packet for the parents to fill out and turn in before the child's first day of school.
  - A copy of this information is given to the lead teacher. Parents provide information about the child's fears and favorite toy or activity; this helps the teacher to have a conversation with the child upon drop-off. "Your mommy told me that your favorite thing to do is play with dolls. Let's go over to our dramatic play area so that you can see that dolls that you can play with when you are at preschool." This helps the teachers to build a positive relationship with the child and ultimately with the family.
  - Children are also assured that their parents will be back to pick them up. We encourage parents to begin a drop off routine that is done each day. Teachers and parents work together to bridge that drop off time.
- Some parents come to us with a little bit of anxiety about leaving their children, we offer families the option of easing their children into the program. They can start their children out with ½ days and then move towards full days as an option.
- Parents are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to help with the transition i.e.: a blanket they can sleep with (older children), a soft toy or a small photo album with a few pictures of their family. The item can stay with children as long as they need it for soothing. Once the children discard the item, it is placed in their cubby until or unless they need it again.
- Daily communication with families is extremely important to help with transition. This communication is done through daily face-to-face conversations and daily info-grams that report to families how their basic needs were met for the day; how much they ate and how long they slept. We also tell families what their child enjoyed during the day and any comments such as whether they need to bring in diapers or a clean set of clothes, etc.
- Teachers are encouraged to use social stories with children who may have a difficult time transitioning to preschool.

### Transitioning from one activity to another

- While we try to keep transitions to a minimum in the classroom, we know that the children will transition from one activity to another a few times throughout the day. Lead teachers plan transition activities in their lesson plans each week to use during these transition times. Some transition activities include singing songs, repeating rhymes, marching to music, etc. Our teachers are also given many resources to pull new transition activities from including mighty minutes and transition books that are found in our teacher resource area.

### Transitioning to new classrooms

- In order to facilitate easier transitions to new classrooms each year, teachers are given the opportunity to promote with their current children. In addition, child portfolios follow children

to provide information to the child's new teacher. Typically, children stay with their teacher for 12 months.

- Before children move to new classrooms, teachers are encouraged to visit the children of their upcoming class or call them on the phone.
- Before the new school year begins, we mail a letter to the parents informing them of their children's new classroom and new teachers. We remind them of the open house that occurs on the Thursday before the new school year begins.
- We have an Open House event before school begins where children will get to see their new classroom and meet their new teacher. This also allows parents to get to know one another as well and begin to create community with one another. Many times the teachers will do activities that get them involved in learning a little bit about their room like a scavenger hunt or teachers will take pictures of each family and that will be hung in the classroom on the first day of school.
- If a child needs to move up during the school year to a new classroom because of development, we also follow these steps:
  - 2 weeks before the move, the child begins to visit the new classroom with his current teacher. They will stay in the classroom to play for 30 to 60 minutes each day. This helps them to get to know the new teacher and the new children.
  - A letter is sent home to the parents two weeks before the move so that they know whom the new teacher will be and if there is anything different that they need to know about the new classroom. Schedule, shoes, food, etc...

#### **Transitioning from Weekday Preschool to Kindergarten**

- Beginning in January, the pre-Kindergarten teachers plan in their lessons, activities that help transition children into Kindergarten. These activities include:
  - Making a K-W-L chart (what we know, what we want to know, what we have learned)
  - We invite our Kindergarten teacher and students to visit with the pre-Kindergarteners to answer any questions they might have about Kindergarten.
  - For those children continuing in our Kindergarten, we have a Kindergarten Information night that includes visiting the Kindergarten class with their parents. Children can explore their soon to be new environment.
  - Children read books with the teacher about going to Kindergarten, "Welcome to Kindergarten" by Anne Rockwell and "Will I Have a Friend?" by Miriam Cohen are some of the books we encourage to be read.
  - We also find out what schools our children are going to attend and we ask the principals of those schools to come read to our children once during the month of March.

#### **Exiting the Weekday Preschool**

- We encourage parents to give us a two-week notice so we can help prepare their children for their new adventure. This gives us a chance to update their portfolio, which we send with the family on the child's last day. The portfolio includes a letter that explains what it is so that the next teacher/school can use it if they would like.
- Other activities include a "Good-Bye" book made by the teachers, which may include pictures of the child at school and/or pictures drawn by children in the classroom.