December 1, 2015

From the Principal’s Office

December is here already. How is that possible? We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that you are ready for winter’s arrival and all the fun and excitement surrounding this season. We have several fun events planned this season, most importantly our annual Holiday Show. The children in our Toddlers through Kindergarten classes are busy rehearsing special performance pieces that are sure to entertain you. We hope you can join us for the Holiday Show on Thursday, December 17th. The performances will take place in our Kindergarten room and will start promptly at 4:00 p.m. Make sure your cameras are ready!

We are also collecting donations for the Unionville Chadds Ford School Districts’ coat drive through December 17th and will be collecting donations for our Hat/Mitten Tree through December 31st.

Thank you for your continued support,

Laura Hughes

Acting Principal

December Events

* 17th Holiday Show at 4:00 p.m.
* 17th Coat Drive items are due today!
* 24th-Closed at 3:00pm for Christmas Eve
* 25th-Closed for Christmas Day
* 31st Mitten and Hat tree donations are due by today!

Coming Up:

* Happy New Year! School Closed on 1/1/2016

For Parents:

* Please remember that only one vacation credit is given per year (July to June). Families must be with us for six months before taking advantage of the credit.
* When is Chesterbrook Academy Closed?: Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year’s Day, President’s Day, Memorial Day and 4th of July. We will also close early on Christmas Eve 3:00 pm.
* Parent Referral Program: Have you heard about our Parent Referral program? If you refer a family and are mentioned on their application, we will credit you for the referral. New families who enroll part time reward you $100 off of one week of tuition and families who enroll full time reward you a FREE WEEK OF TUITION.
* Withdraw Policy- In order to withdraw your child from school, four weeks ’written notice must be given (per the tuition policy). If you are withdrawing for any period beyond 3 weeks, your spot may be secured by paying the registration fee ($80). If the registration fee is not paid prior to your child’s withdraw, your child’s spot is not guaranteed upon your return. **All** withdraws must be made in writing.
* Vacation Credits- Families are allotted one week’s worth of vacation credit per fiscal year (July 1-June 30). This credit is used for a Monday-Friday week when your child will not be in the building. Your family must be enrolled for 6 consecutive months prior to being eligible for the vacation credit. Please remember: Two weeks notice must given in order to take advantage of this credit. Vacation credit/request forms are located on the table in the reception area of our lobby.
* Sign In and Out-Please remember to sign your child/ren in and out every day.

Wellness Policy- According to the parent handbook we will send children home for the following reasons. We also reserve the right to send a child home for any signs of communicable diseases:

* Fever 100.5 or higher
* Vomiting
* Diarrhea (reoccurring)
* Cough/Sore Throat
* Fussy, cranky, excessive crying
* Head lice
* Unknown rash

A child must be free of symptoms (fever-free without medication as well) for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Exploring Holiday Traditions from Around the World**

The holiday season is here, providing a wealth of opportunities to enrich the children’s understanding of diverse cultures and traditions around the world. In addition, our students will share their own traditions with others.

Below are age appropriate activities that we use in the classroom, as well as activities for you and your child to do at home.

**BEGINNERS (ages 2-3):**

**In the classroom:** As they near the age of two, children begin to recognize the sights and sounds of holidays celebrated by their family.Parents visit our classrooms to share holiday traditions, including unique books, songs and activities.

**At home:** Gather family photos and point out traditions, such as unwrapping presents, eating holiday dinner at grandma’s house, and making a snowman. Encourage your child to talk about what he sees in the photos.

**Recommended reading:** *Children Around the World Celebrate Christmas* by Christine Tangvald, *Happy Hanukkah, Corduroy* by Don Freeman, *My First Kwanzaa* by Karen Katz

**INTERMEDIATES (ages 3-4):**

**In the classroom:** Children sing holiday songs from around the world and are introduced to holiday symbols that they may see in their communities, such as Christmas trees or Hanukkah menorahs.

**At home:** Take a drive with your child or bring him to various holiday festivals in your community. Encourage him to look for and identify holiday decorations.

**Recommended reading:** *Christmas Around the World* by Calliope Glass, *Hanukkah Hop* by Erica Silverman, *Li’l Rabbit’s Kwanzaa* by Donna Washington

**PRE-K/PRE-K2 (ages 4-5)**

**In the classroom:** After learning about holiday traditions around the world, our older preschoolers identify countries on a globe. For example, they might learn about Diwali, the festival of lights, and then find India on the globe. They might make tamales, a dish often served on Christmas, and then find Mexico on the globe.

**At home:** Ask your child to help you prepare your family’s favorite holiday foods. Talk about the long-standing traditions in which these foods are rooted. For instance, you might explain, “I used to bake cookies for the holidays with my mom. Now we can start baking cookies together!”

**Recommended reading:** *Children Just Like Me: Celebrations* by Anabel Kindersley, *Light the Lights: A Story about Celebrating Hanukkah and Christmas* by Margaret Moorman, *The Story of Kwanzaa* by Mary Washington

Exposing children to various holiday traditions helps them build strong social skills, establish a sense of self, and respect the differences of others as they transition into elementary school and beyond.

- Lauren Starnes, PhD – Director of Early Childhood Education