

## From the Principal's Office:

First let me wish you all a “Happy New Year”! All of us at Chesterbrook Academy are looking very forward to the New Year as we start out the year with some new faces in a few of our classrooms. We welcome new families and even some new staff. Many exciting activities are planned as well, so please check out the activity calendar on the lobby board as well as your child’s classroom for specific activities/events.

You should be receiving weekly emails from the office with numerous updates and reminders. If you are not receiving our emails please let me know as soon as possible.

January is also a time for us to gain valuable feedback about our school. Beginning in the first two weeks of the month, a link to a Parent Survey will come to your email from our marketing department. Please take a few moments to complete this survey, as the results assist me in knowing what our families like and dislike; and in turn allow us to continue to grow in a positive direction.

Lastly, thank you for all of the wonderful Holiday treats last month, all of our families are truly amazing!

Happy New Year!

Laura Hughes, Acting Principal

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## January Events:

- January 1- Happy New Year! School Closed
- January 14<sup>th</sup>- Makin’ Music Winter Session Begins
- January 15<sup>th</sup>- Pajama Day! Everyone is invited to wear their favorite pajamas to school for this special event!
- January 23<sup>rd</sup>- Open House

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## For Parents:

\*Please sign your child in and out each day in the binder in the reception area of our lobby.

\*Check your email regularly for emails from the office.

\*Please return all necessary paperwork that needs updated for your child's file in a timely manner *(please understand that our preschool is governed by the Department of Human Services and there is certain paperwork that needs updated on a bi-yearly and yearly basis to ensure state licensing polices are being followed. If we do not follow them we risk losing our license and risk not having a preschool for your child to attend.)*

\* Please be sure to check your child's cubby for important communication and forms each and every day as well.

\*Please remember that medications cannot be stored in classrooms. If your child is required to take a medication while at school you will need to sign a Medication Consent form/log (located in the labeled binder in the reception area). Please note that medication logs are only valid for ONE week. Please leave medicines in the office or medicine cabinet in the kitchen. According to state licensing regulations, medication of any kind cannot be stored in a child's cubby, bag or in any area of the classroom.

**Our next Open House for new families is on Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>** from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.. We welcome our current families to refer and let co-workers, friends, and family know about this Open House. For any new family that enrolls with us as of this week and starts by February 8<sup>th</sup>, could qualify for a \$500.00 scholarship.

**Update on winter weather procedures:** Although the temperatures and weather have been mild so far this winter, the snow and ice will be coming eventually. In preparation of this I wanted to remind families to please check a few places for any correspondence from the school concerning two hours delays, early closings or complete closures. Families can check 6abc for closing/delayed opening information. Be sure to look for "Chesterbrook Academy Preschool,

Chadds Ford” in the listings! Families will also receive an email blast from our school in the early morning hours alerting of any changes made to the school’s operating schedule; as well as alerts on our school website [www.chaddsford.chesterbrookacademy.com](http://www.chaddsford.chesterbrookacademy.com) If the preschool should close early while children are at our school, all of the above would occur as well as phone calls would be made to parents on that specific day. Please do not call the school to inquire about openings/delays/closings, as we are unable to field a large volume of calls at one time.

**Reminder of our sick policy;** if your child was sent home ill, he or she may not return for 24 hours, and may not exhibit any symptoms they had the previous day. (Fever, vomiting, diarrhea) Your child must be fever-free for that amount of time without medication. Please refer to your Parent Handbook for this documentation. We also ask that you help us by communicating if your child has been ill or has a communicable illness so that we can take measures to alert other families.

With the exception of our infant population, children at Chesterbrook Academy will be involved in physical fitness activities, both indoors and outdoors as an important part of our curriculum. If a parent believes that his/her child is not well enough to participate, he/she will probably be more comfortable at home. The school is not equipped to accommodate the needs of a sick child; therefore a doctor’s note is required in order for a child to be excluded from outdoor play under normal weather conditions.

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From the Education Department

## **The Value of Visual Art Activities for Your Preschooler**

Visual art experiences help children develop skills such as critical thinking, self-expression, problem-solving, communication and collaboration. Our teachers focus on process-based art education, in which the experience of creating art is valued over the end product.

In our classrooms, teachers integrate art into many aspects of our Links to Learning curriculum. After reading a book about polar bears, teachers might ask students to create their own polar bears using sponges, paint, markers and paper. They encourage students to talk about their art, providing a great

opportunity to learn new vocabulary, particularly words related to colors, shapes, textures, and emotions.

Our students are also exposed to and inspired by famous artwork. In order to cultivate that fascination, we discuss famous artists and art works and ask students to create replicas of well-known paintings and sculptures. For example, after learning about Michelangelo's painting on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, teachers mimic the activity in the classroom. They tape paper underneath tables, and students practice painting a masterpiece while lying down.

Below are visual art activities you and your child can do at home, as well as recommended reading.

### **At Home:**

- Provide your child with finger paint, a large piece of paper and a smock. Let him create a masterpiece. Talk about how the paint feels and what colors and shapes he creates on the paper.
- Start a journal with your child. Have him draw a picture of something that happened during the day. Avoid giving direction. Instead of saying "Draw a picture of your teacher and classmates," encourage him to experiment using different colored markers or crayons. If age appropriate, ask your child to write a few words to describe the picture.
- Give your child a piece of paper and a box of crayons or markers. Show him how to use the materials to make dots, lines and swirls on the paper. Let him take over and have fun. Encourage conversation about your child's art by saying, "Tell me about what you made" or "I see you used a lot of blue in your picture. Why did you choose that color?"
- Ask your child to decorate a sign for his bedroom door using various art materials. Have him write his name on the sign.

### **Recommended Reading:**

- *The Dot* by Peter Reynolds
- *Beautiful Oops* by Barney Saltzberg
- *Art* by Patrick McDonnell
- *Not a Box* by Antoinette Portis
- *Mix It Up* by Herve Tullet

It is wonderful to share the joy that children naturally take in using art materials. Giving children extra opportunities to connect art to the world around them, contributes to happiness and future success in elementary school and beyond.

- Lauren Starnes, PhD – Director of Early Childhood Education