



Nursery News

Spring 2017

we make a remarkable difference in the lives of children. we give them roots and wings.

A Note from the Director

It was a busy winter at RNSFC!

In addition to all the activity in our classrooms, children engaged in special school wide events. The Bake Sale was a huge success once again. Thank you to all the parents, caregivers and friends of our school who participated and purchase so generously. Donna Demetri Friedman, executive director of Riverdale Mental Health, came to a school sing to thank the children and collect the donation. Everyone here celebrated the 100th day of school with many activities and a 100-piece paper chain made together by staff and children. And, the children observed and petted a variety of animals when "The Nature of Things" visited.

Staff Professional Day generated lots of thought and discussion as staff learned more about "Proactive, adaptive, and reactive" methods of teaching. They also enjoyed meeting with many parents at this week's parent-teacher conferences.

The Parent Group, class parents and the RNSFC board has been quite busy, mainly gearing up for our annual Gala. Invitations should arrive in the mail soon but mark your calendars for what should be a fun -filled evening at The Picture House in Pelham on Thursday, May 11th. We hope that all of our families will join us, as well as help to make our journal and auctions a big success. You should be hearing from class parents soon.

We look forward to a busy spring filled with lots of learning and growth.

-Susan

Jumpstart Toddlers

The 2017 Spring Session of the RNSFC Jumpstart Toddlers is in full swing! The toddlers are completely at ease in the classroom and engage easily with the materials. They continue to begin the transition from parallel play to associative play. The toddlers seek out their peers, often using names to attempt to engage. Relationships are developing and it is warming to observe!

Children learn through playing, doing and exploring. Toddlers focus on what they see in front of them, what they are doing and the physical interactions within their immediate surroundings. These young scientists are constantly exploring different activities to experience their impact on the world around them. Through various mediums like sand, water and cornstarch, the children experiment with different sensory experiences. The toddlers pour, fill, dump, toss, touch and splash. They can really see how their actions impact the stimuli. Through trial and error, and then repetition, the toddlers learn how different things (and the world) work and the can develop mastery. Mastery leads to feelings of happiness and success, building confidence.

Our time together is structured through routines of free play, snack, circle time and gross motor time. During free play, the toddlers move through different areas of the classroom. The toddlers have begun to pursue their own interests in the classroom while also seeking out particular friends. Free play

continues to lay the foundation and groundwork for later arithmetic and literacy. Social skills continue to expand with the increase in associative play.

The art area fosters creativity through various modalities and sensory experiences. Painting with brushes, q-tips, rollers, cars and fingers provides the toddlers with a tremendous creative outlet as well as exploration of cause and effect. Fine motor activities include play dough, pegs, tools, shape sorters and puzzles. You can often find a number of children playing on the rug, pushing cars, building farms, constructing train tracks and creating with blocks.

Books and literacy are woven throughout our time together. During free play, toddlers often sit with their grown ups or teachers and read books. A highlight of snack is story time, where the children interact with the large books, often requesting old favorites. Currently in our book rotation are the old standbys of Pete the Cat, Hop on Pop, and Brown Bear, Bear Bear, What Do You See? During circle times, the toddlers sing songs with corresponding hand gestures. Songs that use the bells are a current hit! You can often hear the children say, "Bells!" as we get ready for circle time.

We always end the day with gross motor time. Whether inside during inclement weather or outside on the playground, the toddlers love to run, jump, scoot, climb, toss and explore. They are working their muscles and continuing to develop coordination and balance, all while having fun.

It has been absolutely wonderful getting to know the toddlers and their grownups, and watching the toddlers grow. We are honored to be a part of their first school experiences.

-Deborah and Marjan

Turning 2' s Class

The Turning Two's have moved seamlessly from the Jumpstart Toddler program into our drop-off class. Separation is the focus of our time together. This is a significant milestone and often one of the most challenging. We treat it with the kindness and sensitivity it deserves. The children are developing their relationships with the teachers, learning to trust the classroom adults. They are also developing relationships with their classmates, finding common interests and moving toward associative play.

We begin each day with a warm welcome into the classroom, accompanied by the working towards the independent task of hanging up their coats, totes and lunches. The children move into free play time, where they explore the many areas of the classroom. Tabletop activities focus on developing their fine motor skills while art inspires creativity. The sensory table enables them to experience different textures, pour, sift and spill while dress up engages them in dramatic play. The rug allows them to spread out with some favorite activities. In the art area, dot painting is a favorite and our budding artists are busy at work on their creations. They wear such proud looks on their faces after completing their pieces.

After free play, we move into circle time, where the children show their mastery of music and songs. They love to get up and dance and participate with hand gestures!

From circle time, we take a trip to the bathroom to wash hands. Then, we are ready for lunch! We sit around the table together, nurturing conversation and connections among the children, while fostering healthy and independent eating. The children also enjoy listening to and participating with different books during lunchtime. We often hear, "More books!"

We end the day with gross motor play. Whether outside on the playground or in the playroom, the children love to run, scoot, climb, throw, slide, chase and crawl. Shrieks of laughter are heard as the children chase each other, toss balls, shake the pom poms on the parachute, glide on riding toys or slide down slides.

It is simply amazing to watch your children grow and develop their own unique identities within the classroom. This semester has been truly wonderful and it is a privilege to work with your children.

-Deborah, Marjan and Michelle



The Two' s Classes

The children have matured so much this year and have taken complete ownership of our classroom and the school. In the classroom, the children love to help and we have formalized their participation at snack time with the job of snack helper. There is a chart in the classroom with everyone's name on it so the children know when it is their turn to pass out either the cups or bowls. When they have completed their turn, they put a sticker on the chart. This relatively simple task of helping at snack has taught the children so much. They are learning to recognize their name and the names of their classmates, they are learning shapes and colors as they pick a sticker to put on the chart, they are counting stickers to see who has a turn that day, they are learning the names of all the children in the class as they pass out the cups, and they are learning patience as they wait for their turn.

Snack is a very social time in our class and has increased our awareness of one another. At snack, we sing "Here We Are Together", and then see if we are all here or if anyone is absent. The children will ask where the absent child is and what they may be doing. Coco and Honey, our mice, often join us for snack. We put their tank on the table and share some of our snack with them. The children love this, and like to guess if the mice will come out of hiding to smell the food, and if they will like the treat. This year the mice have particularly enjoyed apple cores and wheat thin crackers, but they don't eat citrus fruit! Snack has also increased the self-sufficiency of the children as they practice pouring their own water, asking for more snack, and

cleaning up after themselves by throwing out their napkin and uneaten food and putting their cups and bowls in the basin.

We also enjoy discussing the books we read. Recently we read **Harry the Dirty Dog**. Harry does not like to take a bath. After we read the story, we went around the table and the children told us if they like to take a bath or, like Harry, they don't. They also told us if they take a bath or a shower and what toys they like to bathe with. Snack time is when the classroom comes together as a school family and we relax, share information, and enjoy each other's company.

Happy Birthday wishes to Colette and Ella who celebrated their third birthdays.

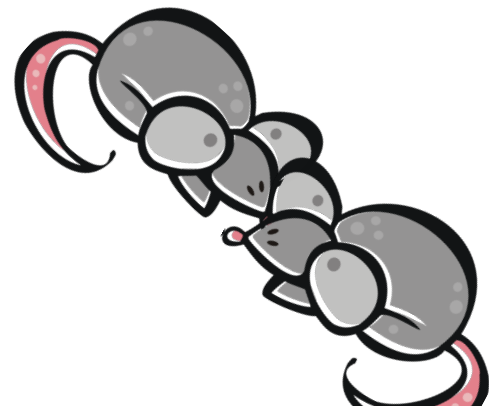
The two's artwork is being showcased in the main hallway of the school. Please stop by and look at their most recent collage creations, the children are so proud of their work.

We enjoyed conferencing with the Two's Parents and were happy to talk about your children's growth and time at school

The last day of school before spring break is Friday, April 7th and we will need homes for our beloved class pets; Coco and Honey, the mice, A, B and C, our water frogs, and Stone and Pebble, our hermit crabs. Please check with us or your class parent if you are interested in taking a pet home over the vacation.

Thank you again for all the delicious and healthy snacks you have been sending in.

-Mary-Ellen, Gina, Leslie and Michelle



Lori's 3s Class

The New Year brought lots of new and exciting activities to the 3's class! The class voted for a new theme for our dramatic play area. It was very interesting to hear all of the ideas the children had. Ultimately, they chose to turn the area into a post office. The children got busy painting counters, signs, and various types of mailboxes. We filled baskets with writing materials, envelopes, stickers, and postal stamps. The children created their own mailbags to accompany postal worker hats and jackets. We even had a big blue mailbox and mail sorting stand. The children loved writing letters to each other, their teachers, and even friends from other classes. Of course, the best part was our trip to the Riverdale Post Office. You could feel the children's excitement as we walked up the hill and they saw the American flag waving in the air and the picture of the eagle on the mailbox outside. Each child took pride in buying a stamp and mailing a letter home to his/her family. We also enjoyed watching how the postal worker weighs and prepares packages to be mailed. We think firefighters will be our next theme, so come check out our fire station in the next few weeks.

Special events are always exciting at RNS. Our class had so much fun at the Bake Sale! From designing aprons and baking goodies to learning to buy and sell items, the children embraced the hard work of the bake sale and reaped the rewards in the end with delicious treats to eat. Our class really enjoyed celebrating the 100th day of school as well. We created structures and collages using 100 pieces and helped to make a school wide paper chain with 100 links. Our paper chain was as long as the hallway! The children were so interested in counting, we decided to make a class counting book. Each child picked a numeral and then counted that number of items. We took photos and created Count With Me. Look for it in your child's tote bag over the next few weeks. The class has also been busy with counting games, number matching puzzles, and abacuses. The class favorite is Dinosaur Squeeze. A teacher thinks of a mystery number. The children narrow down the number using mathematical problem solving skills, a number line and two dinosaur pictures. When the number guessed is too big one dinosaur moves on the number line. If the number is too small, the other dinosaur

moves until the mystery number is "squeezed" in between the dinosaurs.

After this last snowstorm, we are looking forward to warmer weather and our "out of hibernation" party. Our stuffed animals have been hibernating in their cave all winter. On the first day of spring we will wake them up and have a picnic with them!

We sadly say goodbye to Kristen as she prepares to have her baby. We have all enjoyed working and playing with her and wish her well.

-Lori, Nancy, Leslie, Gina, Sheba and Nataly

Paola's Class

We kept busy during the long winter months as the class decided to learn about animals that live in extreme winter weather. We decided to investigate in depth the Arctic and Antarctic regions. We read many books, had many discussions, played games, looked at charts and role-played in the dramatic area. We touched upon the many different species of animals living in that region such as; penguins, whales, birds, arctic foxes, puffins, polar bears, reindeer, arctic hares and many more. We discussed the animal's habitat and the reasons why these animals survive in these regions. We made an igloo using hollow blocks and the children took on the role of being Inuits. They took care of the babies, went hunting for food and built a fire to stay warm. Other times the children pretended to be penguins or polar bears just playing in the snow. The class explored with ice, played with snow, did ice paintings, Arctic drawings, and a blubber experiment.

Each child has now had a turn to change the dramatic area into the theme of his/her choice. The last few changes were: doctor's office, hospital, ophthalmologist office, police station and house. It was a great experience for the class to take part in the many transformations of the dramatic area.

We have started a new unit on Mapping! The class is learning about where they live, their address and where the school is located. We learned the difference between a map and a globe. We have a

map of the United States in our class and the children are very curious about the states shown on the map. They are always telling us the states they have visited. Once the weather is better, we will take several walks to better help them understand "location". We will walk up to 238th Street and on Waldo Avenue. We will observe the businesses in these locations, as well as become aware of street names.

The block area continues to be a favorite in our class. The buildings seem to be getting taller and more sophisticated. Children have figured out how to connect structures together by building bridges. Most of all we see a lot of teamwork, shared ideas, building sturdy and using many of the accessories to enhance their structures.

We are just about done with our Alphabet Show and Share and we will be putting a book together soon. The class is enjoying learning the sounds of the letters as well as air writing the letters.

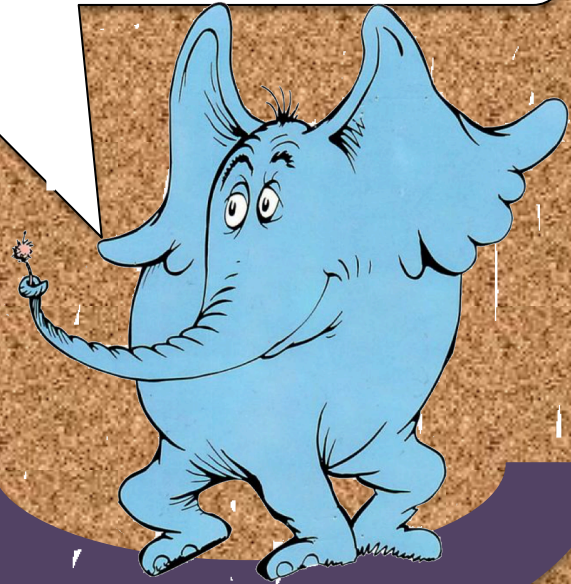
We look forward to the remainder of the school year, to learn, play and explore together.

- Paola, Sara, Amanda, Jen, Selma and Irina



SCHOOL NEWS

watch for Gala invitations and book the babysitter for Thursday, May 11th!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

APRIL

- April 10 through April 18-spring vacation
- April 19-Return to school
- April 22-HAPPY EARTH DAY!

MAY

- May 11-GALA and AUCTION!
- May 29-Memorial Day-school closed
- June
- June 5 and June 6-No Lunchkins
- June 5-Last day of classes for MWF classes
- June 6-Last day of classes for T-Th and 5 Day classes
- June 7-End of Year Picnic
- June 19-summer camp begins



RNSFC Summer Program

Spring is here and before long, it will be summer. Have you made plans for your children yet?

RNSFC Summer Program enrollment is underway. Mix and match weeks according to your vacation schedule. Register soon and take advantage of the tuition discount. And, buy those raffle gala tickets for a chance to win a tuition free week of camp. We hope you will join us for a fun-filled, exciting summer.

RNSFC Jumpstart Toddler Program Summer 2014



A remarkable summer toddler program designed for toddlers by educators who know toddlers.

Ask about
our swim
program!

6 weeks
June 20th to July 27th
9:00 to 11:00
Tuesdays & Thursdays
Ages 12 months through 2 years

*Toddlers must be accompanied by their significant adult.

Unique Summer Features

- * Pre & Post Summer Program Conferences
- * Weekly Themes & Special Events
- * Extended Outdoor Time & Water Play
- * Enrichment Meet-Ups at Offsite Venues



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Weekly Themes

- Week 1: Ocean Explorers
- Week 2: Animal Lovers
- Week 3: Junior Scientists
- Week 4: Backyard Builders
- Week 5: Little Chefs
- Week 6: Rock The Playground

Special Events

- Pre-Summer Program Conferences 6/15
- Red White & Blue Day 6/29
- Family Visiting Day 7/18 + 7/20
- Summer Sing-Along 7/27
- Post-Summer Program Conferences 7/28
- *NO CLASS on JULY 4th

Our Commitment to the Outdoors

Research proves that children who spend regular time outdoors are healthier, happier and grow up with a love of the environment. Throughout the summer, toddlers engage in an extensive roster of outdoor activities. Outdoor highlights, Include:

- I. Wading Pools, Water Sprinklers & Water Tables
- II. Playground Time
- III. Organic Gardening
- IV. Sand Exploration
- V. Dramatic Play
- VI. Large Scale Outdoor Art Projects
- VII. Gross Motor Play

More tons of fun in the sun



The Parent Group

Dear Parents,

Spring is finally here! This season is probably our busiest at RNS. Be on the lookout for information about the annual Gala. This year we hope to continue the tradition of raising money for our school during a fun night out.

In order to make the Gala a success, we need your participation. All parents are encouraged to contribute to a class ad for the annual journal. In addition, please purchase an ad of your own to help us raise as much money as possible. Grandparents and other extended family are also encouraged to purchase ads! You can include pictures, a note thanking your child's teachers, or anything else creative!

We are also asking for help with our online auction. Please think about ways you might be able to contribute and do not forget to tell your friends and family.

Information on the spring giving tree will follow soon.

The Parent Group

