



Riverdale Nursery School
and Family Center

Nursery News

Fall 2016

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

A Note from the Director

Busy, noisy, industrious, curious, energetic...just a few adjectives to describe our RNSFC students! It has been a pleasure to welcome back and reconnect with our returning families and to get to know those new to our School.

Children are settling in and our classrooms are buzzing with excited, delighted children. Teachers are introducing new materials and responding to children's interests as they get to know the students in their class. Lots of activities have been completed and lots more are ahead.

The Parent Group has also been quite active. Parent Group leaders and committees have helped with the New Parents Reception, the Welcome Gathering, and the Giftwrap fundraiser. We will soon enlist the help of our Outreach Committee for our Fall Giving Tree. Please watch for more information.

The Board of Trustees has also been busy with meetings, planning and helping with events. Many board members attended and helped with our Welcome Evening. This year we will be growing our Board and hope to invite parents to several special Board hosted events over the course of the school year.

Many thanks to the staff and faculty, parents and Board members for a

dynamic and productive beginning of the school year. Together, let's enjoy RNSFC's busy, noisy, industrious, curious, energetic kids.

-Susan

Jumpstart Toddlers

The 2016 Fall Session of the RNSFC Jumpstart Toddlers is now in full swing! The toddlers are exploring the classroom with the support and guidance of their grownups. They are actively engaged in all areas of the room, and learning about the materials available and getting to know each other.

As you know, 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. This means lots of filling, pouring (well, dumping), shaking, banging, trying on and touching. It is through this trial and error that they learn how objects work, move and can be manipulated. Toddlers also rely on the predictable activities they have mastered, which brings them feelings of joy and success. This group experiences the materials both individually and as a cohesive group. They are beginning to demonstrate interest in each other, searching, playing, creating and investigating.

Our time together is also structured through routines of free play, snack, circle time and gross motor time. Free play is always a favorite. The toddlers move through the different areas of the classroom. A popular stop is the sand table, where they dig, fill, pour, sift, shift, scoop and shovel. This actually lays the foundation for later mathematical concepts they will encounter such as conservation. 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. They paint, collage, draw and create, create, and create some more! Fine motor activities include play dough, Magformers, blocks and puzzles. You can often find a number of children playing on the rug, pushing cars, organizing farms and creating jumbo Legos.

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 and yell, "more books!" Pete the Cat is a class favorite and makes frequent appearances. During circle time, the toddlers are learning the songs, and beginning to sing and use hand gestures.

Jumpstart Toddlers

(Continued)

We 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 a true pleasure getting to know the toddlers and their grownups. We are honored to be a part of their first school experiences.

-Deborah and Marjan

Twos Classes

Our classroom is humming with activity. The children are quickly learning the routines of the day and where everything is kept in our room. They are extremely comfortable finding what they need on their own, or asking an adult for help. Our dramatic play area is a favorite. Most mornings the children are making smoothies and cooking with play dough. The play dough is fun to use because it is so versatile, and the physical sensation of manipulating the play dough is quite soothing. Taking care of our "babies", feeding, dressing, and comforting them, is another popular activity. Vehicles of all varieties are also much loved, driving them on the scenic rug, through paint for an art project, or working with the large construction vehicles in the sand box. But the most popular activity by far is the water table. So far we have had a car wash, washed babies and gone fishing for sea creatures with nets. Why do we continue to have the same toys available day after day?

This is purposely done. Repetition in play is very important for young children and serves many functions. It often provides a secure base from which to explore a new physical and social environment. I like cars, (play dough, sand). I'm comfortable playing with them in this new place without my grownup. Maybe after I've used them for a while, I'll feel comfortable trying something else. For young children something "new", even novel toys, is the unknown, and that can be scary. A sense of comfort comes with the predictability of repetition. They gain confidence in knowing what to expect and what is coming next. And each time they play they are expanding on what they have done before. Children thrive with the repetition of experiences. In this vein we will continue to include the toys that help the children feel at ease, and sing the songs and read the stories that soothe them and bring enjoyment.

Our classroom pets have been a wonderful source of comfort, fun, excitement, and investigation. The children enjoy giving Cocoa and Honey, our mice, a treat to eat. They also like to see if the mice like some of the things they eat for snack. It turns out your children love apples and cheese and so do Cocoa and Honey! The children enjoy watching Cocoa run on the wheel, and looking for Honey, who prefers to hide in the hut. We have named our hermit crabs Stone and Pebble, after the rocky appearance of their shells. The children squeal with anticipation when we take them out. We put them on a tray and the children spray them with water. This gets the crabs moving and scurrying about. After we put them back in their tank they often climb up to the top of it hang upside down! Feeding our frogs, A, B and C is an activity the children request every time they

come to school. Leaving the classroom to get the food from the refrigerator is as much fun as actually feeding them the blood worms.

The children are enjoying the playground and becoming quite proficient on the large climber. They also enjoy the baby strollers and large sand box. Many of the children like to climb on the bench to observe the subway trains as they roll by. It's hard to believe, but the cooler weather will soon be upon us. We like to go outside every day, even if only for a few minutes. So when the wind starts to blow, please send in hats and mittens. And please label all the clothing your children wear to school.

Happy birthday wishes to Cami who celebrated her second birthday in September just before school began.

Happy birthday wishes to Samir who will celebrate his second birthday at the end of October.

Thank you to Myla, Jennifer and Sean for donating the book Ten Little Ladybugs to our class.

Thank you to all the parents who have already brought in snack. The children have enjoyed the fruits, vegetables and cheese you have supplied.

-Mary-Ellen, Gina, Leslie, Michelle

Lori's Class

The school year has started off wonderfully! Each morning, we are greeted by happy and enthusiastic students who are eager to begin their day. We begin with a short open play-time in our designated cubby rooms. Soon after arrival, we meet together for our morning meeting. This is one of the children's favorite times of day. The children are quickly learning how to turn over their attendance cards and find their meeting spots. We talk about the day's activities and upcoming exciting events. The morning meeting job helpers are

Lori's Class (continued)

always excited to practice counting the kids, pick a song to sing, describe the weather, or share some important news with us. We often review the job chart as well because the children are extremely serious about completing their classroom duties. Ringing the bell, setting up for snack and choosing the songs are among the most coveted jobs so far.

We really enjoy using both classrooms during our open playtime. The children are able to choose from a wide variety of activities and peer groups each day. There is always something exciting happening! The children have labeled room 1 as the block room, as creations in the block corner often stretch across the whole room and onto the tables as well. The loft provides a great quiet space for a pair of children to play or to work with a teacher one-on-one. Our "big room" frequently becomes the spot for extravagant dramatic play scenarios and whole group art projects.

As the weather has gotten cooler, our class has been looking for signs of fall. We began by exploring nature items on our Noticing Table. We spent many mornings observing and discussing the various properties of acorns, pumpkins, leaves, and gourds. Many children were interested in opening up our sugar pumpkins and enjoyed pulling out the messy, gooey pulp. We also removed, counted, weighed, and cooked the pumpkin seeds we found inside. The children's favorite activity was a Nature Scavenger Hunt on the playground. Each child had a clipboard with a checklist and happily ran around outside gathering items. Back in the classroom, we sorted our items and will be using them for several art projects in the coming weeks. Feel free to let your children bring in a few "fall finds."

If children find fallen leaves, acorns, pinecones, etc. on their way to school they can bring them in to share with the class and add to our Noticing Table.

We are so thrilled with the children's transition into our class. We are pleased to see new friendships emerging every day. We are looking forward to an exciting school year.

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

Paola's Class

The children in our class have all adjusted well to new faces, new spaces, and new routines and the room is humming with activity. The dramatic area is one of the favorite places for our children to pretend to have tea parties, take food orders from each other, and to have picnics. Our dress ups are many and varied and inspire much creative play. The art table is another popular area. Whether it is painting, gluing, collaging, q-tip painting or just cutting and using markers, the children love getting messy and creating masterpieces.

We have been busy with special activities. We have started to celebrate the fall season and we have begun discussing all the changes that occur during the season. We've also been enjoying the quintessential fall fruit-apples. We created graphs titled, "What is your favorite apple?" and "What is your favorite way to eat an apple?" After noting their choices, the children made observations from the graph and learned new comparative concepts like "more than", "less than" and "equal to". We have been listening to stories about apples, observed the inside of an apple and also baked with our apples. The class's first baking activity was applesauce cookies. The children were glad to be able to help with the measuring, pouring and mixing.

Once in the oven, we filled the school with a delicious aroma. We also opened up our class pumpkin. The children helped take out all the seeds inside the pumpkin and then they wanted to eat them. We put salt on half of the seeds and cinnamon & sugar on the other half. Then we baked them! They were delicious! The children also had the opportunity to plant some of the seeds.

We are trying something new in the dramatic area. Every child will get a chance to offer an idea to transform the dramatic area, for a week. Last week the dramatic area was a supermarket. The kids made a sign, wrote out menus for food, brought in boxes to sell and took out the cash registers. They had a great time being workers and customers. This week the area is now a restaurant!

The class is very interested in science experiments. We have already explored with baking soda and vinegar to make eruptions, made Oobleck with cornstarch and water to explore whether it is a liquid or solid, and made Gak with Borax and glue to make a slimy, gooey consistency. Our class will continue to observe and make predictions during these science discovery times.

The class continues to enjoy the outdoors so please dress your child for the weather and the changes. Snack continues to be a social time where everyone gets to chat with his or her peers. Many thanks to all the families that have already sent in healthy snacks. The children have been treated to a variety of fruits and vegetables, hummus, cheese and crackers. All in all, the children have settled into the class with great ease. We look forward to an exciting year ahead!

-Paola, Sara, Amanda, Jenn, Selma & Irina

School News

DATES TO REMEMBER

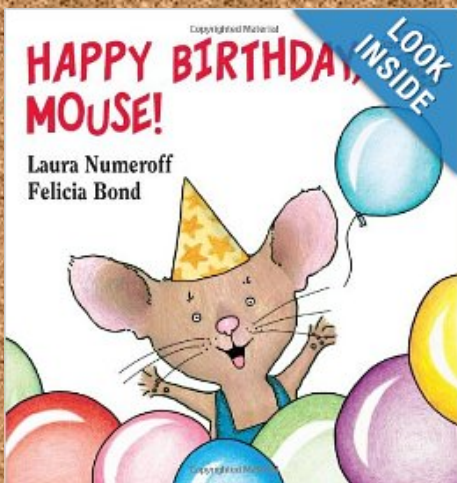
November

- November 1st
Paola's evening conferences
- November 3 and November 9
Lori's Evening conferences
- November 23 through November 25
school closed for Thanksgiving

Enrichment Program

Signup for great electives!

- Young Architects
- Young Meteorologists
- Young Writers
- Young Chefs
- Young Color Masters



A School Tradition! Donate one of the books from the class book wishlist to our library in honor of your child's birthday. We will put your child's name and birthdate in the book on our "DONATED BY card."

A GREAT WAY TO HELP US CONTINUE TO GROW OUR LIBRARY!

*Cocktails and
Conversation*

*Save the date:
November 10, 2016
Watch for your e-vite!*

Many thanks to Atyia
Washington, Erica
Langer and
Anna Laghezza for a
great job with the gift
wrap fundraiser!

Watch for
information
about our
fall
Giving Tree.





The Parent Group



The Parent Group has enjoyed welcoming all of our families to a new school year. We were so happy that many of you could attend the Family Picnic on Sunday September 28. It was a wonderful way to start the school year. We truly enjoyed catching up with old friends and meeting new families.

In the upcoming months Parent Group will help organize several events and fundraisers to help our school and community. Currently we are running our annual gift wrap sale. Please remember to complete and return your order by November 4th. As an option for completing your order, please consider using Genevieve's website. We have the goal of 100% participation. In early November we will begin our first Giving Tree. This will be a great opportunity to work with our children and help our community. Please look out for reminder emails as the year progresses.

If you are interested in helping out at RNS please let us know. We welcome your involvement and ideas. We have several committees which include; Hammer and Paint, Community Partnership, Event Fundraiser, Yearbook and of course, Refreshment Committee. We would also like to thank the families who have paid their annual dues (\$50) to the parent group. These funds help us put together events that can enrich our school and children.

Thank you again for your support. We are looking forward to an exciting school year.

Anna, Atyia, and Erica

