

Southborough Village Preschool Newsletter

December 2023

Well, it's hard to believe it, but December is upon us! While these next few weeks can be busy and stressful for many grownups, we will be having a tremendous amount of fun with your little ones at SVP. There is nothing more magical than spending your days with preschoolers during the holiday season, and we certainly enjoy every minute of it! Below you will find some information about upcoming events and things to note at Southborough Village Preschool. Be sure to reach out to us if you have any questions at all. In the meantime, we hope these next few weeks are full of fun for you and your families, and that you are looking forward to ringing in the New Year in a few short weeks.

A Warm Wishes Thank You: Southborough Youth and Family Services would like to thank you all for your incredibly kind and generous donations to their Warm Wishes program. We are grateful to you all for supporting such an important community program. We still have a few tags left on our giving tree if you are interested in making a donation towards any of these items.

Health at SVP: As you know, we are already deep into illness season at SVP. Especially as we are heading into the holiday season, **we ask that you not send your child to school if he/she is sick.** While it is normal for young children to have several illnesses per year, as they are working to build up immunity, please pay attention to the following when deciding to send your child to school.

- If your child has **thrown up or had a fever**, he/she must stay home for at least 24 hours.
- If your child is on an **antibiotic**, he/she must be on it for at least 24 hours before returning.
- If your child is **coughing excessively, has a very runny nose, or is fatigued**, we ask that you keep him/her at home. It's not fun to be at school while sick and with low stamina.
- Please keep in mind that while your own child might not be at high risk for complications from an illness, there are surely other children/staff and/or their family members who might be **high risk or immunocompromised.**
- **If your child is staying home**, please call us or send a Procure message to let us know, and to keep us informed of his/her symptoms.
- If your child has a **highly contagious illness**, such as Influenza, Strep Throat, COVID, RSV, Conjunctivitis or Hand Foot Mouth, **PLEASE communicate that to the Directors.** We are required to notify families if there is a highly contagious illness reported in their child's classroom. We appreciate your help with this, it's critical for the health of our community.

Class Placement Letters Due: Registration for the 2024-2025 school year is well underway. We thank you all for your dedication to SVP and we look forward to another fun school year with your children! **Class Placement Letters went home a few weeks ago and are due back at this time.** We will be unable to hold spots after this week without a signed Class Placement Letter (and 10% deposit). Please remember that deposits become non-refundable once you have accepted a placement for next year. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's placement for next year, please reach out to us this week. Thank you for your attention to this matter, we do appreciate it!

Tuition Payment Due: If you are on the "two payment" or "four payment" tuition plan, please note that the next payment is due by January 3rd 2024. If you have any questions about your child's tuition, please reach out to Laura Eppen. Thank you!

Gingerbread Houses and Holiday Trees: One of our favorite traditions at SVP is the making of gingerbread houses and holiday trees. These adorable (totally nut-safe) holiday decorations will be made in class on December 4th and 5th. The kids are welcome to decorate their houses and trees in any way they see fit and we know you will absolutely love the final products. If you, or a special family member, are interested in coming in to help with this fun activity, please let your child's teacher know. The kids really enjoy having a special visit from a loved one. Don't worry if you can't attend for the whole event, feel free to just pop by for 15 minutes, you'll love it!

Parties at SVP: We will be celebrating the start of vacation with our classroom parties on Thursday, December 14th and Friday, December 15th. We will keep you posted on details, as the dates get closer. Your child's teacher will be in touch regarding party times and items needed, if you are interested. We thank you in advance for all donations.

Vacation is around the corner! As a reminder, the last day of school before the upcoming vacation is next Friday, December 15th. We will remain closed through New Year's and reopen on **Tuesday, January 2nd**. We wish you all very happy and healthy New Year!

Thoughts on Winter Gear: Yes, the cold weather is upon us! Going forth, you can assume we will still be going outside daily. If the temperature is above 20 degrees including wind chill, we do try to get the kids out for even a short playtime. The fresh air is so good for us all!

As you know, we work hard to keep our classrooms as healthy as possible, and while we do have HEPA air filters running at all times in the classroom, we also keep a few windows open a very small amount, in all classrooms, to allow for better ventilation, as the research indicates that this can make a considerable difference in mitigating the spread of germs. Because of this, the classrooms can be on the cool side. Bulky, long sleeved sweaters can make frequent hand washing, painting and eating difficult, but VESTS are a wonderful way to keep your child warm in the classroom. You may want to consider having your child wear a vest in the classroom, we have many children who do that now and it seems to work wonderfully. Either a fleece, or thin, puffy vest (or whatever you have) will work nicely and allow those hands and arms to be freed up for activities throughout the day! This is simply a suggestion, and in no way required. Just a thought we wanted to pass along!

We wanted to share some thoughts on what we have found works best for a daily "winter gear routine" at SVP. Thank you!

- Please find a **small "snow bag"** to send all of your child's snow gear in every day. This bag will hang on your child's coat hook in the hallway, so please don't send any oversized or wide, stiff bags. **The re-usable, soft grocery bags are the perfect size for us, as we need to fit many bags side by side on the hooks. Consider a bag that is approximately 12" wide, 6" deep and 15" high.** We will hang a sample bag by the front door if you are looking for ideas as to what style of bag will work for us. Please clearly label the bag on the outside.
- **Be sure to LABEL ALL ITEMS (even boots).** This is tremendously helpful for us, as many children have the same items and may not recognize what you have sent in.
- **We ask that you send your child to school wearing mittens, not gloves,** unless he/she is able to put the gloves on independently.
- **Please do not send scarves to school, or the hats with the very long sides.** They pose a safety hazard on the playground, as they can catch on equipment or while running/jumping.
- Please include **slippers** (or sneakers) in your child's snow bag every day through the winter.

- **Try to take some time over the next week or two to help your child practice putting on his/her own coat, mittens, hat, boots, etc., when you are heading outside.** This not only helps them understand the process, but it also familiarizes them with their own gear, as young children aren't always sure which items they brought to school each day. We will practice and assist with this at school, but practice at home is so helpful. Thank you!

*Note: If we remain snow free and above freezing for the next two weeks, you can wait until January to start sending in snow pants. We do however, suggest you start the practice of sending in a "snow bag" with a hat, mittens and slippers in it every day.

Winter Weather School Cancellation & Delay Policy for SVP

We ask that you take a few moments to read through our Winter Weather School Cancellation and Delay Policy. Southborough Village Preschool's main objective during winter weather is to ensure the safety of our staff members, students and their families. Please let us know if you have any question at all.

School Closing: If the Southborough Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, Southborough Village Preschool will always be closed as well. While we will make an effort to email you in the case of a closing, there is always the chance that, due to power outages, this will not be possible. We strongly recommend that you rely on the news/radio/websites for information regarding school closings. If Southborough Public Schools are closed, Southborough Village Preschool will also be closed.

Delayed Opening: If Southborough Public Schools announce a weather related delay, then Southborough Village Preschool will also have a weather related delay. If there is a 2-hour delay, all morning classes at the Preschool will be cancelled, PM classes will most likely be held, and Full Day classes will begin at 11:00 AM. In the case of a delay, Full-Day students will still eat lunch at school.

Early Drop-Off: In the case of a 2-hour delay, we will make every attempt to be open by 10:30 AM, if you are in need of early Drop-off (Full Day students only - this is not available for PM classes). However, we ask that you call the office that morning to be certain that we are indeed able to open at 10:30 AM, as there is always a chance that our parking lot and sidewalks will still be in the process of being cleared.

Early Release: We reserve the right of judgment to close Southborough Village Preschool early due to poor weather conditions. In this case, parents and caregivers will be notified as quickly as possible.

Note: Don't forget that, while school may not be cancelled, you can always feel comfortable making the decision to keep your child at home, whenever the driving conditions are of concern to you.

Important Dates to Note in December:

- **Monday/Tuesday, December 4th and 5th:** Gingerbread Houses and Holiday Trees
- **Thursday/Friday, December 14th and 15th:** Classroom Parties
- **Friday, December 15th:** Last Day of Classes before Winter Vacation
- **Tuesday, January 2nd:** School Re-opens. Happy New Year!

Happy Holidays to you all!

Gretchen, Laura and the Entire Staff at Southborough Village Preschool