

PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

2019-2020

Rosslyn Academy

PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK 2019-2020

INTRODUCTION

I want to welcome you to Preschool at Rosslyn Academy. To assist you as a full partner in your child's education I have put together this handbook. Please read it and keep it handy. It will help answer questions as the year moves along.

ABOUT THE TEACHER

My name is Mel Kirkpatrick and I am an Elementary Certified teacher from Australia. I taught in Australia for several years before coming to Kenya in 1997 to teach at West Nairobi School. I then joined the teaching staff at Rosslyn Academy in 1999 for a couple of years before heading back to Australia. I returned to Kenya in 2003 and have been a part of the Rosslyn community since then as my husband is on the HS staff. I have spent the last number of years home schooling our daughter through her Elementary years and into Middle School, before returning to teaching in an official capacity. This is my second year as the preschool teacher and I am looking forward to getting to know your child.

Ms Mirriam Mahinda is the Teacher Assistant in the preschool class this year. She assisted me for 3 months last year during a maternity leave situation, and I am excited to have her back as my permanent assistant this year.

PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE 2019-2020 Morning Class

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|--------------------|
| Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities |
| Circle Time Focus Work Well Being | Forest Friday |
| RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS |
| SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | SNACK |
| Activities | Outdoor Activities | 10:10 - 10:45 PE | Activities | Reflection Time |
| 10:55 - 11:30 Music | Activities | 10:50 - 11:30 Library | 10:55 - 11:30 Science | |
| Reflection Time | Reflection Time | | Reflection Time | |

PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE 2019-2020 Afternoon Class

| MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|--------------------|
| Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities | Arrival Activities |
| Circle Time Focus Work Well Being | Forest Friday |
| RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS | RECESS |
| SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | SNACK | SNACK |
| Activities | Outdoor Activities | 2:05 - 2:45 PE | Activities | Reflection Time |
| 2:50 - 3:30 Music | Outdoor Activities | 2:45 - 3:30 Library | 2:50 - 3:30 Science | |
| Reflection Time | Reflection Time | | Reflection Time | |

CURRICULUM

The overarching concept in Preschool this year will be "God's Colourful World". This will be interwoven throughout the year as we look at ourselves, our community and the world at large. We will also be integrating life skills, as well as math and literacy skills through a study of various Fairytales - all designed to spark curiosity and wonder at the colourful world we live in.

Using a Reggio-inspired approach, everything we do is hands-on and play-based allowing the children to problem solve and think for themselves as they pursue answers to their questions. By fostering their curiosity, we guide them along their learning journey – each child setting their own pace.

The Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences Curriculum from Massachusetts will be used as a reference. These guidelines do not determine the preschool program, but are simply there as a guide.

If you are interested to know more about the specifics you can view the guidelines at:
http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/research_planning/guidelines4preschool.pdf

ABSENCES

If you know of a planned absence from school please let us know in advance. If your child is sick you can either send me an email or text, or contact the school via attendance@rosslynacademy.com or call the Elementary School Office on: **0727 646 602** or **0202635294**

SEPARATION ANXIETY

The first few weeks can be difficult for some students and families. It can be a big adjustment. It is not unusual for children to love school one day and then not want to go the next. I want you to know that we will do everything within our power to make your child feel safe, happy and loved.

Here are some tips for getting through the first few days:

Try to act confident yourself. If you seem anxious and unsure about leaving your child, your child will pick up on that and start wondering if there really is something to worry about!

Be consistent with good byes. We will greet your child and you can give kisses and say good-bye. We promise to welcome your child and help ease him/her into the classroom!

Make sure to say good-bye when you leave. Trying to "sneak out" when the child is busy and not looking sometimes makes the child panic a few minutes later, and may make separation even more difficult the next day.

Separation problems sometimes show up on the second or third day. Stay consistent with your good-bye routine, and make your reconnection at pick-up time especially long and attentive.

FAMILY PHOTOS

In the first week of Preschool and beyond, it is important that the children are able to begin making connections between their homes and Preschool. This helps to encourage each child to gain a sense of belonging within this new community and helps them to feel safe and settled. We kindly ask you to send in a family photo that we can display in the classroom, so that the children can be reassured by the familiar faces and feel more at home in this new space.

DROP OFF / PICK UP

For Preschool we require that you walk your child down to the Preschool classroom to drop them off. If your child arrives at school with a driver we kindly ask that the driver accompanies them to the classroom. If your child will be coming by bus, please inform us and we will organize to collect them. This helps us to keep everyone in the preschool safe and accounted for at all times around the campus. The same procedure will also occur when you come to collect your child at dismissal time. Please ensure that your child walks with you at all times and maintains a level of quiet as other classes may be going on around school.

Morning Class:

Drop off time 8:20 – 8:30 am

Pick up time 11:25 am

Friday pick up time 11 am

Afternoon Class:

Drop off time 12:20 – 12:30 pm Friday drop off time 12 noon

Pick up time 3:25 pm Friday pick up time 2:25 pm

*Please note that at drop-off time I need to be fully present for the children. I will have a place for you to note anything I need to be aware of for that day, such as collecting your child early for an appointment.

If you have concerns or questions that require time and privacy, please make an appointment, so that I can give you my full attention.

LEARNING CAN GET MESSY

In Preschool we learn through hands-on activities and lots of play, both of which are often messy and mucky. With this in mind please do not send your child to school in clothing that you'd like to keep pristine. Comfortable clothes that you don't mind getting dirty is the appropriate attire for this class.

Also, please send in a spare change of clothes (including spare underwear) that can remain at Preschool in case of emergencies. These clothes should be in a labelled bag.

SHOES

At Preschool we change in and out of shoes many times a day. PLEASE send your child in shoes that they can confidently manage on their own. This means they should be able to put them on in less than one minute, with no assistance. Easy inside shoes (ie: slippers) are also useful for use inside the classroom, especially during rainy seasons, although bare feet/socks are fine too.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are a very important event to a Preschooler. Our birthdays mark the day we came into this life. It is a day that the Preschool classroom acknowledges your child in a special way.

Please let me know which day you would like us to celebrate your child's birthday, so that I can mark it on the calendar. This is especially relevant if your child's birthday falls during a weekend, or vacation times.

SPECIAL CLASSES

Each week the children will attend 3 specialist classes outside of the Preschool classroom.

Music - Monday

Teacher: Mrs Slaughter suzannes@rosslynacademy.com

PE - Wednesday

Teacher: Mrs Mureithi carolinem@rosslynacademy.com

For PE class all children need to wear appropriate clothing ie, shorts/trousers, running shoes and a hat. They will also need to carry a water bottle.

Science - Thursday

Teacher: Mrs Slaughter suzannes@rosslynacademy.com

Library - Wednesday

Teacher: Mrs Slaughter suzannes@rosslynacademy.com

For library all children need to bring a large library bag. A cotton bag with straps or a handle is ideal. The children will be able to check out 3 books each week and return them into a library basket outside our classroom each Wednesday.

If you have questions about Music, Science, PE or Library, please feel free to contact the respective teacher.

SWIMMING

Teacher: Ms Kanyali Ilako KanyaliI@rosslynacademy.com

Swimming will begin in September and run until Christmas holidays. Swimming will replace PE during this period. More information about this will come soon.

FOSTERING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

The first rule in the Preschool classroom is SAFETY. I tell the children that I have a promise to keep them safe – including emotional safety. I am committed to keeping the classroom a place where children feel secure. Daily I review the classroom procedures and rules and we practice what it looks like when we are doing the right thing.

My classroom management tool is KANGAS our Preschool kangaroo, and her joey, JO-JO. Kangas' job is to help keep us safe – just like she keeps her joey safe.

These are the five life skills we will emphasise in our classroom:

- *Be Careful
- *Be Helpful
- *Be Respectful
- *Be Responsible
- *Be Patient

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents and families are our greatest resource for the classroom. It is such a thrill to the child whose family members are helping her/his classroom with special projects. Throughout the year I welcome volunteers to help with a variety of activities.

- *Sewing projects
- *Donating needed items
- *Reading to the children as a Mystery Reader
- *Assisting with forest explorations
- *Celebrating your home culture
- *Classroom cooking

I would also welcome incorporating any gifts/talents/skills that you wish to share with us. So, let me know if you play an instrument, or would like to demonstrate woodworking skills, or cooking skills, or leatherwork..... Don't be limited by my paltry list – let me know how you would like to be involved in fostering a love of learning in your child and his/her classmates.

I also recognize that many of you are not able to make yourselves available during the school day. If that is the case, but you would like to help with needs that can be worked on outside of school hours, then also get in touch with me.

PRESCHOOL BLOG

I have set up a Preschool Blog which I update every week outlining the things we did during school, as well as letting you know events that are coming up. A gallery of photos of our week will also be posted from which you are welcome to drag and drop photos of your child into your own files. Please make sure the email address I have for you is accurate, so that you can receive the initial invite to join the blog.

I look forward to our year together!