



Pine Orchard Nursery School Handbook 2018-2019

Welcome

Welcome to Pine Orchard Nursery School (PONS). We hope your whole family will enjoy being part of the PONS community. This handbook has been written to describe our program and policies. Please study it and keep it as a reference, as it will answer many of your questions. Also, please feel free to talk with your child's teachers, the director, or the president of our parent board anytime you have questions, concerns, or suggestions. A board and staff directory appears in the back of this handbook.

History

Pine Orchard Nursery School was originally established in 1939 as a nursery school and kindergarten in the Pine Orchard section of Branford. The school continued to operate in Pine Orchard until 1980, when we purchased the building at 149 South Montowese Street where we are today. We still remain true to the original ideals of providing a quality education for preschoolers. PONS is an independent, non-profit, non-discriminatory, parent cooperative school.

Philosophy and Goals

Pine Orchard Nursery School is dedicated to encouraging the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of young children by providing developmentally appropriate programs for three to five year olds. We encourage a close relationship between school and family.

We believe that school should be a happy place. We want children to look forward to coming to school and to enjoy participating in our program. Our teachers strive to make each child's first school experience a positive one. Each child is considered as an individual as well as a member of the class. Children learn best when they are actively involved, and we work to create an environment that offers many opportunities for hands-on learning. Everyone is a learner – students, staff and parents – and together we create a community of learning.

Our goal is to provide a warm, nurturing, and safe environment in which each child can develop his or her individual personality, strengths, and skills, and learn to work and play with his or her peers. We encourage cooperation, communication, and respect for others. We want children to understand and appreciate their own success and applaud the achievements of their peers. We value diversity and accept children who meet the age requirements, without regard to race, creed, color, sex, or national origin. A child with a disability that can be reasonably accommodated is welcome in our school.

Program

Our program is child-centered and based on the belief that play is the best way for children to learn. The daily schedule includes a balance of teacher directed and child-initiated activities. Each day includes individual free choice time as well as group time. Our teachers encourage exploration and growth in an environment that is safe, stimulating, consistent, and nurturing. The classroom is organized with centers for creative art, writing, literature, science, block building, and dramatic play. Learning centers within the classroom give children the opportunity to explore, create, experiment, and learn at their own pace. Group times include music and movement, story-time, and our daily circle or meeting time. Problem solving and social interactions are stressed.

We promote the development of language skills and readiness for reading through stories, songs and dramatic play. We want our children to develop a respect for nature and a curiosity about the world around them. Children become familiar with mathematical reasoning through such hands-on activities as block building, counting, matching, graphing, and patterning. Letter and number recognition as well as other reading readiness activities and beginning writing skills are incorporated in a variety of activities.

Responsibilities of a Co-op Parent

Pine Orchard Nursery is a cooperative preschool. Parent participation is basic to the philosophy of the school. Joining a cooperative school means taking a share in the responsibilities of running the school. This sharing benefits the children, the parents, and the school. Parents are welcome in the school at all times.

Each family has several opportunities during the year to provide the snack for their child's class. Parents are invited to stay and participate in the class on any of their child's snack days during the school year.

Parents are always welcome to attend our monthly Board Meetings. Board members appreciate hearing many parents' opinions before voting on issues pertaining to the school.

An annual tradition at PONS, our Fall Festival is our biggest fundraiser each year. The event provides fun for the entire family. **Every family is responsible for participating in the festival effort.** The parent board schedules other fundraisers during the year. Please participate in those that interest you.

The basic maintenance of the building and grounds requires parent assistance. Major projects and routine on-going maintenance, such as lawn care and snow plowing, are contracted out; but parents are asked to help spruce up the school with fresh paint, cleaning, and yard-work at our spring and fall "Clean-Up/Fix-It Days." We can often use the help of parents for odd jobs throughout the year. We understand that parents face many demands on their time, and parents who are unable to participate in school

maintenance are welcome to make a financial donation to help defray the costs of hiring professional workers.

School Hours

Morning Session

Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday – Thursday – Friday

Mornings 9:00-12:00

Afternoon Session

Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday – Thursday

Afternoons 12:15-3:15

Full Day option

9:00-3:15

Optional Friday afternoon enrichment classes, e.g. art, Spanish, music, Yoga, are scheduled during the school year.

Arrival

Parents (or designated adult) must come into the school with their child. Always check in with a teacher and sign the sign-in sheet upon arrival. State regulations require that each child be signed in and out each day. Your child may need a few minutes to get settled and begin an activity before you leave, but we encourage you to leave quickly once you have said good-bye. Prolonged departures are difficult for children and parents. Some children like to go to the window to wave good-bye; others are happier if they are playing with their friends or busy with materials set out by the teachers. Our experienced teachers will help make this transition as easy possible for you and your child.

Please try to arrive as close to 9:00 or 12:15 as possible. The teachers need the time before class begins to set up the classroom. Children who arrive late may have difficulty joining an established group. If your child will be absent from class, please let the teachers know.

- **do not leave your car running in the parking area**
- **do not leave children unattended in your car**
- **be sure both gates are secured upon entering and leaving**
- **hold your child's hand in the parking area**
- **leave enough space between your car and the fence so that parents and children can walk in front of the cars in the parking area**

Dismissal

Be sure to latch the gates securely behind you when you arrive to pick up your child. If we are outside at dismissal time, children may be dismissed directly from the playground, but we ask you to check your mailbox and your child's cubby and sign your child out before leaving. Please do not leave siblings unattended on the playground or let your Pine Orchard Nursery School child enter the school without you. Always hold your child's hand when outside of the fenced-in play yard. Young children move quickly and do not fully comprehend the dangers of cars.

Written permission is required for anyone other than the parent to pick up a child at school. Please remind any person picking up your child to check in with a teacher and to sign the sign-out sheet. Anyone not known to the staff will be asked for a photo ID. A child will be released to either parent on request unless a custody order or restraining order is on file at the school.

Please be on time for pick-up at the end of your child's class. Children become anxious when their parents are late, and the teachers often have obligations to meet. Teachers need time to clean up after the morning class and set up for the afternoon children. Having the morning children leave on time helps ensure that the classroom will be ready for the next class. If you are unavoidably late, please call if possible so that we can reassure your child that you are on your way.

For the safety of every child, Connecticut state regulations require that child care centers institute a closing time plan to take effect when a child is not picked up at dismissal time. In accordance with state guidelines, our policy is as follows:

Late Pick-up Policy

If a child has not been picked up within fifteen minutes of our closing time, and we have not received a call notifying us of the delay, a teacher will attempt to call the child's parents. If neither parent can be reached, we will attempt to call the alternate people listed on the child's emergency card.

After one hour the police will be called if parents or alternate adults listed on the emergency card or *PONS Permission to Release* form cannot be reached. At that time the child may be released to the police. Two adults will remain with the child until he/she is picked up or released to the police.

School Closings/Delays

PONS will be closed if Branford Public Schools are closed due to weather conditions. Branford public school closings and early dismissals are announced on WTNH and on the district website at www.branford.k12.ct.us.

If Branford schools have a delayed opening, PONS will have a **one hour** delay. Morning classes will start at 10:00 and end at regular time (12:00). Afternoon classes will meet at regular time (12:15-3:15). Please note that a delayed opening may change to a cancellation if weather conditions worsen. Please continue to monitor. If adverse weather conditions require the early dismissal of Branford Public Schools, we will cancel our afternoon classes. If children are already at school, parents will be called.

Tuition

An annual tuition is set for the school year. Parents may pay that tuition in ten equal monthly installments. Payments are due on the first of each month beginning August 1 and ending May 1. The annual tuition will be prorated for children who enroll after school begins in September. Tuition adjustments will be made if you change your child's schedule by adding or dropping a session. No adjustments will be made for absences from a child's regularly scheduled classes.

Communication

Notices are frequently sent home by teachers and board members, please check your mailbox each day. Many notices will also be sent via email.

Notices will also be posted at school. Please take the time to scan the bulletin board regularly to keep informed of events and/or announcements.

Board meetings are held monthly at the school, usually on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm. All parents are welcome to attend.

Individual parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year, and at other times if requested. Staff is available to answer questions or discuss concerns throughout the school year, and communication on a regular basis is encouraged.

Snack Time

On most school days children will be asked to bring in a snack from home. We suggest simple and healthy snacks, and ask you not to send in peanut butter or snacks containing tree nuts or peanuts. We will always have water available for the children and will keep a supply of crackers on hand for any time that a child forgets to bring a snack. Please send your child's snack in a container labeled with your child's name. We suggest using a reusable ice pack for any food that should be kept cold, but we do have some space in the refrigerator if necessary.

In keeping with our co-op tradition, we will schedule approximately one day a week for a designated child to provide a snack to share with the class. A parent (or another adult family member) is invited to come and participate in class on their child's scheduled day. This program will be coordinated by the room parents. A master calendar will be posted at school and copies sent home to each family.

The snack should be brought in to school when your child arrives at the beginning of class. On your child's designated day, you are welcome to stay for the entire session or to return for any part of the day. Our daily schedule is flexible to accommodate the needs of the children and various weather conditions. Teachers cannot always let you know what time snack will be served. Please feel free to join us at any time.

Our state licensing regulations require that the snack include food and drink from at least two food groups. Milk or juice (100% juice, not sweetened juice drinks) each represent one food group. We are also required by the state to post our snack menus at least one week in advance. Please write your intended snack on the master calendar at school at least one week prior to your snack day.

Parents are also asked to provide cups, napkins, and other paper goods or utensils necessary to serve the snack. We find that 5-ounce cups are the easiest for the children to handle, especially when pouring their own drinks.

Please check with your child's teacher about any food allergies in your child's class, and do not give food to any child without checking with the teachers first. When sending in a snack to share, it is important to send it in the original container so that teachers can check the ingredients.

Parents of children with food allergies must supply a safe snack for their child. The snack must be labeled with the child's name.

Due to the increase in nut allergies among children, **PONS will remain a nut-free school. Peanuts, peanut butter, and any foods containing nuts or peanut products should not be brought to school.** We will

provide more details to parents in all of our classes on the requirements to keep our school safe for all children.

Snacks are an important part of a well balanced diet; young children actually need snacks between meals. It is our job to provide nutritious snacks. Nutrition is a significant factor in the growth, development, and overall functioning of a child. The development of healthy eating habits and food preferences can prevent disease and support a lifetime of good health. Research has shown that healthy eating helps children do well in school. As parents and teachers of young children, we can help our children by serving nutritious snacks at school. Please consider the fat and sugar content of snacks you are considering for school.

The snacks served at school should be nutritious and simple. Too many choices become confusing for the children.

A good snack

- looks good and tastes good.
- has nutritional value – whole grains, low fat dairy, fruit, etc.
- is enough to eat, but not too much. It is a snack, not a meal.
- is simple to serve and to eat.

Popular snacks include crackers, cheese, fruit (cut in small pieces), mini bagels, yogurt, small sandwiches (no peanut butter), muffins, and milk or juice. We always offer water at snack time as well. A snack your child enjoys will probably be enjoyed by the other children at school. Please consider the possible choking hazard of any snack you might provide. Popcorn, for example, is not recommended for young preschoolers, and grapes should be cut in half before serving. We will provide more snack guidelines and suggestions after school begins.

A child's school experience is enriched by interactions with children from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Snack time offers an opportunity for the children to try foods that are new to them. We invite you to share your family's favorite foods with your child's class.

Room parents have a list of the children's birthdays and will attempt to assign each family a snack day as close as possible to their child's birthday. Please remember that a birthday celebration does not have to include cupcakes. A whole grain muffin can hold a birthday candle. If you choose to send in cupcakes, please provide a healthy alternative, such as cut-up fruit or applesauce.

Suggestions for Parent Volunteers

We encourage parent participation at PONS and welcome parent volunteers. We invite you to come in and share your special talents or interests. Many

parents use their child's assigned snack days to participate actively in the classroom. A few suggestions follow:

In the project room:

- Sit with the children at the art or manipulative table and enjoy their work. Offer help with scissors or glue if needed, but be sure to let each child do his/her own work.
- Help children write their names on their papers, using the class list for correct spelling.
- Replace paper at the paint easel and write names on the paper.
- Help children as needed to wash hands after painting and before playing in the water table.

In the front room:

- Enjoy the children's play and join in where appropriate.
- Join the children at the science center and encourage their curiosity and exploration.
- Read books with small groups of children in the reading corner.

At snack time:

- Assist children with hand washing before snack.
- Be sure to set a good example and wash your hands as well, especially before preparing or serving snack.
- Help prepare, serve, and clean up the snack. Tables need to be washed and the floor needs to be swept after snack.
- Sit at the table and enjoy snack with the children. Your child will enjoy having you sit next to him/her.

The teachers have arranged the room and prepared the classroom environment with specific learning opportunities in mind. Please check with the teachers before taking out additional materials or adding places at an activity center. Some activities are purposely limited to a small number of children. You can help encourage others to find another activity and wait their turn.

Children should be encouraged to put toys and materials away before moving on to another activity or taking out additional toys.

You are welcome to bring in a favorite book to read or an activity to do with the children. Please discuss your ideas with the teachers before planning a special project or activity for your snack day.

Feel free to use your day in the classroom as an opportunity to talk with the teachers about your child's progress, but do not discuss other children or their behavior with anyone.

This is a special day for you and your child. Do not worry if your child does not want to share your attention. We ask you to assist the teachers as needed, but most importantly HAVE FUN with the children, especially your own child.

Clothing

PONS dress code: Dress to get dirty!! Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that will not inhibit free play or use of materials. Messy art and creative activities are planned every day and your child will want to participate. School paint is washable, but we cannot guarantee that it will not stain, and we still haven't found a smock that will cover the children's clothes completely. We appreciate clothing that is uncomplicated and easy for your child to manage. Independence in the bathroom and when dressing to go outside is a great confidence booster.

Please have your child wear shoes that are appropriate for running and climbing. It can be dangerous on the playground without proper footwear. We suggest rubber-soled shoes for indoor and outdoor play. Shoes that fasten are much better than slip-ons. **Children should not wear flip-flops or crocs on the playground.** If your child wears boots to school, please remember shoes or slippers for inside play.

We go outside everyday, weather permitting. Remember to send your child with hat, mittens (better than gloves), snow pants, and boots during cold winter months. Please label all clothing with your child's name. We often end the school year with a collection of unclaimed sweaters and jackets!

Be sure there are no drawstrings around the hood or neck of any clothing, especially jackets and sweatshirts your child might wear on the playground.

We have a few changes of clothing for "emergencies". If your child goes home from school in a school outfit, please wash the clothing and return it to PONS. Some children are reluctant to wear clothes that are not theirs. You are welcome to send a change of clothes in a backpack each day or to provide us with extra clothes for your child to keep at school. We are not equipped or licensed to change diapers, and children should not wear diapers to school.

Children's Cubbies

A cubby is provided for each child and is marked with the child's name. Please check the cubby for your child's artwork or any items to go home. It is important to keep the cubbies cleared for other children who might share the cubby during another class. Each family has its own mailbox on the wall to the right of the entrance door.

Parties and Invitations

If your child is having a party away from school, please mail the invitations. Teachers will be happy to supply you with an up-to-date class list. Please discourage your child from discussing an upcoming party at school. Children's feelings are easily hurt, and such conversations can be very difficult for a child who is not invited.

Possessions from Home

Sometimes children need a special possession from home to help them adjust to school. A favorite blanket, stuffed animal or a photo can provide an important link between home and school.

Please do not have your child bring other toys from home. Too often we see these items causing conflict among the children and sometimes becoming lost or broken. With recent toy recalls and safety concerns it becomes more important for us to enforce this policy. We will have special days during the year when children are invited to bring something in for "show and tell". Play guns, weapons, and other toys that encourage aggressive play are not welcome in our school, where we are trying to build cooperation and concern for one another. Three other items we ask you to leave at home are gum, candy, and money.

Health Policy

We are concerned about the health of every child in our program. To keep all the children as healthy as possible, we ask you to keep your child at home if your child has any of the following conditions:

- an oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher. The child should remain at home until he has been without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
- vomiting within the last 24 hours
- diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- signs of conjunctivitis (pink-eye) including inflammation or discharge
- runny nose that is yellow or green in color and not allergy related
- persistent or severe cough that has not been evaluated by a physician
- an open rash with discharge, skin eruptions, or severe skin irritations
- head lice or nits
- contagious illness or infection which is not being treated with antibiotics.

A child with a contagious condition that is being treated with antibiotics may return to school after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment. A child with head lice or nits may return to school after treatment with a note signed by a physician, nurse, APRN, or P.A.

A child should not come to school if he or she is not well enough to participate in both indoor and outdoor activities or with a condition that compromises the health or safety of others. When children return to school before they are fully well, the other children and teachers are exposed to contagious diseases at close range. If your child is not feeling well, please have him/her rest at home until feeling better.

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm running water is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Children and adults at school should wash their hands before preparing or eating snack, and after toileting, coughing, sneezing, and wiping noses. Please help us teach the children this simple health habit by setting a good example and encouraging hand washing at home and at school. Covering a sneeze or a cough with one's arm rather than sneezing or coughing into the air or into one's hand also helps lessen the spread of disease.

Our health policy may be changed or amended during the school year following new recommendations by public health officials.

Discipline

At PONS, we view discipline not as a means of punishing a child who has acted inappropriately, but as a means of working with a child to develop internal control of his/her behavior. Positive discipline or guidance teaches children how to maintain control of their own actions, and how to solve problems peacefully when conflict occurs. Our goal is to help the children to become independent and responsible. Children need time and maturity to develop behavioral control. It is our responsibility to nurture, support, and assist all of the children and to help them find constructive ways to express their feelings and needs.

When setting limits, it is important to let the children know what is expected, why certain behaviors are unacceptable, and what might be an appropriate alternative. We set clear limits that encourage children to develop self-control, self-discipline, and positive self-esteem.

Rules are logical and discussed with the children. Positive reminders are used as much as possible: telling the children what we want them to do, e.g. "remember to walk" rather than "don't run".

Redirecting a child to a different area or activity can sometimes eliminate a potential problem or conflict.

Separation of children may become necessary in the case of two or more children having extreme difficulty playing together without conflict. If unacceptable behavior persists, a child may gently but firmly be removed from the situation and redirected to another area, or kept close to a teacher until that child seems ready to return to play. A child who needs to be removed from the area will be given a quiet time to calm down, gain control of himself, and consider alternate behavior.

A child is never isolated or left alone. A child is spoken to firmly, never harshly. Teachers will never use abusive, neglectful, physical, corporal, humiliating, or frightening treatment or punishment. Physical restraint is

used only when necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or others.

Any on-going or serious situations will be discussed with the parents to ensure a cooperative approach. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns with your child's teachers.

State Regulations

An up-to-date immunization record and recent physical exam are required for each child at enrollment. A new physical examination is required yearly. A child may not attend any classes until a current health form is on file at the school. State regulations now require our preschool children to receive an annual influenza (flu) vaccine.

Staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. A complete copy of our policy regarding child abuse or neglect is available in the school office.

Any person who volunteers or works in the classroom more than twelve times during the year is required to submit the following:

- a statement of good health signed by a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or a physician assistant;
- a written report of a negative tuberculin test completed within the past twelve months;
- completed state and federal fingerprint cards to be submitted to the Connecticut Department of Public Health for a criminal records check;
- permission to submit name, address, social security number and date of birth to the state health department for a background check.

Comments, Complaints, and Suggestions

Your comments and suggestions are appreciated at any time. Please feel free to speak with the teachers or a member of the parent board about any concerns or suggestions you may have. You may also leave a note in the president's (~~Anne Frohlich~~) mailbox or in the director's mailbox mounted to the right of the tuition box in the project room.

Most problems can be resolved with clear and open communication. If a problem does arise, parents should take the following steps:

1. Discuss the situation with the child's teacher.
2. Discuss the situation with the school director.
3. Discuss the situation with the board president.

PONS is licensed by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. If a problem is not resolved within the school, you may contact them at 1-800-282-6063. Their complaint procedure is posted on the school bulletin board.

Emergency Procedures

The safety of the children is always our first priority at PONS. Each child must have an emergency card on file with phone numbers where parents can be reached as well as the names and numbers of alternate people to call if parents cannot be reached in an emergency. **Parents are required to keep the school informed of any changes of address, phone numbers and/or emergency contact individuals.**

- Please remember to check your child's emergency card during the year to keep it current.
- When you sign your child in for the day please let the teachers know if someone else will be picking up your child or if teachers should use an alternate phone number to reach you that day.

Medical Emergencies

Our three teachers are all certified in first aid and CPR. In case of a medical emergency, a qualified adult will attempt first aid as needed. Parents will be called and an attempt will be made to consult with the child's doctor if appropriate. If we are unable to contact parents, we will call adults listed on the child's emergency card. In an extreme emergency, emergency medical services (911) will be called. The child would then be transported by ambulance to the hospital if necessary.

If a child becomes ill at school, the parents will be called. The child will rest quietly under the supervision of one of the teachers until a parent or designated adult arrives to pick the child up.

Weather Emergencies

PONS will be closed if Branford Public Schools are closed due to weather conditions. Closings and delayed openings will be announced on radio and television. If adverse weather conditions require the early dismissal of Branford Public Schools, we will cancel our afternoon classes. If children are already at school, parents will be called. See page four for more details on closings and delays.

In the event of severe storm warnings parents will be called to pick their children up at school if travel is still safe. When there is not enough time for safe travel, children and teachers will remain at school until parents can safely pick up their children. If high winds are a threat to the security of the building, teachers and children will gather in the project room near the interior cinder block wall and away from windows.

State mandated adult-to-child ratios will be maintained at all times, and two staff members will remain until all children have been picked up.

Evacuation of the School in the Event of Fire or Other Emergency

Teachers (and parents) will direct the children to the appropriate exit. Our primary exit is the door that opens on to the playground.

- If that exit is not safe, children should exit through the front door that faces South Montowese Street (route 146).
- Teachers will take a quick head count as children are exiting the building. The attendance book will be taken on the way out.
- All children, teachers, and parents will meet by the slide/climber in the far corner of the playground, where teachers will take attendance.
- We will remain there until it is safe to return to the building.

Evacuation of the Premises

In the event that the school premises must be evacuated, teachers and parent volunteers will walk the children down Block Island Road to the Town of Branford's Water Pollution Control Plant at 75 Block Island Road.

In the event that the Water Pollution Control Plant is inaccessible or it appears that we will have to remain at a shelter for an extended period of time, teachers and volunteer parents will walk or transport the children by the most expedient means to the Indian Neck School at 12 Melrose Avenue.

Parents will be notified as soon as we are secure. Teachers will remain with the children until they have been picked up by their parents or a designated driver.

Learning in Preschool

Young children learn best when they are actively involved and can use all their senses to explore and learn. They learn by being active participants in the classroom. Learning requires interaction, observation, and active explorations of real objects and relationships in the environment. Each day consists of a balance of teacher directed and child-initiated activities. Through play children are free to question, experiment, and try out possibilities. They learn to use their imagination and gain self-confidence. Giving children the opportunity to make choices during the day helps them develop independence, and they are more likely to become enthusiastic learners. Our classrooms are built around learning centers, each of which is designed with particular learning objectives in mind. The following describes the learning that takes place in each of our classroom centers and throughout the day.

Children are Learning All Day

Block Center

- basic science concepts, such as balance, size, shape, weight
- math concepts, such as larger, smaller, measuring, counting, problem solving
- social skills – cooperation, sharing, negotiating
- physical development – strengthen hand and finger muscles, improve eye-hand coordination

Dramatic Play Area

- role playing and self-expression
- making friends and exchanging ideas
- cooperating, sharing, negotiating
- developing small motor skills and self-help skills with zippers, buttons, etc.

Science/Math Center

- observation techniques
- sorting and classifying
- weighing and measuring
- recognizing similarities and differences
- exploring nature
- making predictions
- problem solving
- testing and experimenting

Clean-up Time

- sorting and classifying (math/science skills)
- cooperation, teamwork

Outdoor Activities

- develop large motor skills and coordination
- develop social skills through group games – cooperative play, taking turns, negotiating
- develop imagination and creativity during free play with others
- improve eye-hand coordination throwing and catching balls, playing with hoops
- sharpen observation skills and learn about nature

Snack Time

- social skills – manners
- develop small motor skills, eye-hand coordination while pouring drinks
- improve language skills through conversation

Story Time - the most important time for developing reading skills

- develop a love of books and reading
- remember a sequence
- learn concept of author and illustrator

- begin to recognize letter-sound association
- make predictions – (teacher asks, “What do you think will happen next?”)
- increase vocabulary

Music Time

- hear and repeat rhythms
- extend memory
- active songs and dances develop motor skills, ability to follow directions
- improve listening skills

Art Table

- develop imagination, creativity, self-expression
- strengthen muscles used in writing
- see cause and effect while experimenting with different media (science)
- explore concepts of color, size, shape, and pattern

Writing/Creativity Center

- develop small motor skills through writing and cutting
- practice writing letters
- As children gather materials together for a project of their choosing, they learn decision-making skills, how to implement ideas, and follow through on a task.

Manipulative Table

- Playing with play dough strengthens small motor skills and develops creativity and imagination.
- Blocks, pegs, and small building toys help develop early math concepts, such as size relationships and patterns.
- develop visual/spatial awareness

Sensory (water) Table

- develop social and language skills while playing with others
- develop eye-hand coordination and concepts of quantity while pouring
- develop science skills of observing, measuring, comparing, and predicting

Meeting/Circle Time

- learn to be part of a group and respect others
- improve listening and language skills
- learn to take turns
- formal introduction to letters, numbers, and counting
- expand knowledge through discussion of a variety of topics

PONS Goals and Objectives for Children
adapted from
Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework

Personal and Social Development

Children will:

- exhibit curiosity, creativity, self-direction and persistence in learning situations
- demonstrate awareness of their own feelings and the feelings of others
- participate in group activities
- exhibit self-control
- interact appropriately with peers and familiar adults
- develop age-appropriate strategies for resolving conflict
- recognize similarities and appreciate differences in people
- choose a variety of foods and practice good manners at snack time

Physical Development

Children will:

- engage in a variety of gross-motor activities to develop control, balance, strength, and coordination
- use a variety of materials that promote eye-hand coordination and small-muscle development
- demonstrate spatial awareness
- practice basic hygiene and self-help skills

Cognitive Development

Children will:

- demonstrate the ability to think, reason, question, and remember
- engage in problem solving
- express wonder, ask questions, and seek answers
- communicate their experiences, ideas and feelings by speaking
- listen with understanding to directions, conversations, and stories
- exhibit interest in reading
- use different forms of writing such as drawing, letter-like forms, and conventional writing

Creative Expression/Aesthetic Development

Children will:

- use different art forms as a vehicle for creative expression and representation
- experiment with a variety of art materials
- engage in musical and creative movement activities
- develop an appreciation for the arts
- represent fantasy and real-life experiences through pretend play