

STUDENT HANDBOOK



**Great Bridge Preschool
and
Kindergarten
201 Stadium Drive
Chesapeake, Virginia 23322
(757) 482-9788
Website: mothersdayoutvb.com
Visit us on Facebook**

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201 Stadium Drive
Chesapeake, Virginia 23322
(757) 482-9788**

Director: Mary Sue Lee
Assistant Director: Janean Ferns
Administrative Assistant: John Knisely

HISTORY

There are currently three campuses located in the Virginia Beach and Chesapeake areas. The first school, Mothers Day Out Preschool & Kindergarten, began in 1979. It has been operating in the same location since then, successfully serving families with infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners. Because of the many requests from families driving their preschoolers from Great Neck to attend Mothers Day Out Preschool and Kindergarten, the second school opened in Great Neck in 1991.

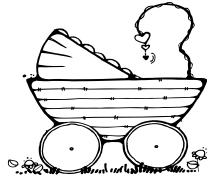
The requests for new schools continued as many families began to move to Chesapeake thus the Great Bridge School was opened in 1993. In 1992 kindergarten classes were added to the preschools to serve the demand for a high quality kindergarten education in our type of secure and caring environment. All three schools have been through building, health and fire inspections as part of the requirements for state licensing. The schools are all monitored by Virginia State Licensing Division and are fully licensed by the state.



PHILOSOPHY

The teachers and directors at these schools all firmly believe in a sound education in a safe and loving environment. We realize our children are still young and need to have fun and feel safe at school. School should be a positive and happy experience and lessons should be interesting. The curriculum used to teach the children is designed with emphasis on age appropriate lessons. Programs provide opportunities for children to practice self-control, taking turns and sharing. Learning is accomplished in a variety of ways that are designed to appeal and excite them. Our environment promotes time to build confidence and self-esteem, emotional maturity and academic success. We acknowledge the value of early childhood education and its importance in establishing a path to success. Exposure to preschool during the very early years helps a child's brain develop and the capacity for learning is immense. We feel that our program teaches core readiness and writing as well as critical early language, literacy, number, and math skills. The following programs are designed with this philosophy in mind.

PROGRAMS



Infants

Moms can enjoy a little time for themselves while their infants have an opportunity to make new friends and explore their world in a safe and loving environment. During our time together we are reading, playing, developing gross and fine motor skills, and going outside in a safe fenced in playground.



Toddlers

Toddlers socialize and play. They have boundless energy and like to explore their surroundings. There is time to sing and to listen to stories. Young children are constantly changing, growing, and learning. We help them build vocabulary, and encourage imagination. These children are able to run and climb in our fenced in playground. Our warm and sensitive teachers work to establish a learning environment that encourages self-confidence and positive interactions amongst the children. Children are encouraged to ask questions and to explore their curiosities.



Two Year Olds

Two year olds learn that it is fun, safe and exciting to have a place and time with friends while Mom is elsewhere. Two year olds are not required to be potty trained as we feel no child should be denied the wonderful experiences offered in our program. These children are in a rich learning environment that helps them expand their vocabularies, find appropriate ways to express their creativity, learn social skills and basic concepts during play, music, craft making (promoting crayon grasp, and drawing) and story time. Our curriculum uses hands-on activities, and child-friendly teaching strategies to help young children get ready for school. We believe that learning should be easy and fun--and that

all children have the capacity to achieve. Computer classes are offered for two year olds. This is a great year for growth so relax and enjoy watching your child take another step towards independence.



Three Year Olds Preschool

Three year olds continue to improve their social skills with additional emphasis on appropriate classroom behavior. Lessons on shapes, colors, numbers and the alphabet are presented through hands-on activities as well as through stories, music, craft making computer class, and playtime. These concepts become real and meaningful as children make the connection to their everyday world. Preschool is a time of growth--a time for your child to broaden his/her horizons, develop social skills and begin a love of learning. We keep the experience positive and fun. Our age appropriate curriculum recognizes the psychological development of children and is designed to stimulate your child's cognitive development through smaller activity-based centers. Children must be fully potty trained to attend the three year old program.



Four Year Olds Preschool & Pre-Kindergarten

Four year olds work on fine-tuning social and classroom behavior and delve into lessons on the alphabet, numbers, science and social studies. They are introduced to phonics and will enjoy learning alphabet skills and beginning phonics using worksheets and musical CDs. Children continue their learning through hands on materials, worksheets, games, music, computer and field trips. These children have a solid foundation for kindergarten. Four year olds attending our five-day Pre-K programs learn so much! By attending school five days per week the children have the opportunity to study the fundamentals in greater detail. In this program your child will develop the reading readiness skills that make learning to read easy, enjoyable and successful. We emphasize phonics, we take the mystery out of math and set up your children to love math by teaching counting, geometry and pattern concepts, measurement and time, math vocabulary, problem solving and math computations, science, social studies, music and computer. We will go on field trips and have in-house field trips. These children are extremely well prepared for kindergarten.



Kindergarten

Our kindergarten school day is from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Children entering our kindergarten with the fine preparation of one of our four year old programs or from another quality program can use what they already know and move forward. Our kindergarten puts a strong emphasis on phonics that in recent years has been phased out of the public schools. These children are instructed in a systematic phonics approach that gives children the skills to become strong readers. Reading, writing, math (including time, money and fractions), social studies, music and art provide extended opportunities. In February, we are able to introduce the First Grade book that follows our Kindergarten curriculum. So much can be accomplished because of our class size, longer hours and fine teachers.



FACILITIES & ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

1. The school has a playground designed especially for young children.
2. Fours, Pre-K and kindergartners may take field trips periodically during the year.
3. Fours, Pre-K and kindergartners might participate in a graduation program at the end of the school year.
4. The children will have a music class with the possibility of up to three music programs.
5. Summer Camp is held at each school. Camp schedules vary from school to school. Check to see which camp works best with your summer plans.



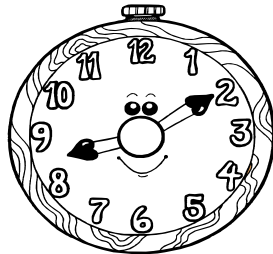
BUILDING ENTRANCE

During the COVID-19 pandemic parents are not allowed to enter the building without scheduling an appointment. Please call the office to make arrangements.



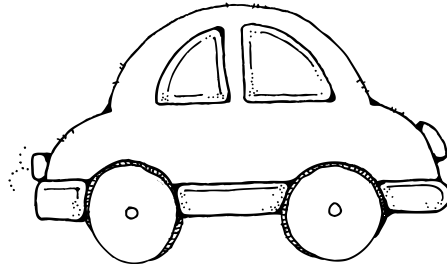
SUPPLIES

At some point during the year you will be asked to bring supplies. A sign-up sheet will or a supply list will go home with your child informing you when to bring in these items.



SCHOOL HOURS

Our school day begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m., with Kindergartners attending from 8:30 to 1:00 p.m. Late arrivals and departures are disruptive to the learning process. In fairness to the teachers, please be prompt in coming for your child. If you find that for some reason you are not able to be on time, please call the school office at 757-482-9788.



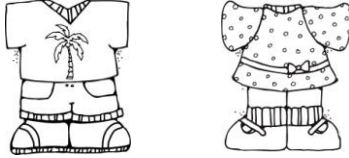
DROP OFF & PICK UP

Only persons authorized by the parent are allowed to pick up your child and proper identification is required. We realize children are nervous for their first day of school so please tell your child beforehand that he or she is going to be left at school and that you will be returning later. We have found that first day jitters are natural and our staff is experienced with this situation. Say good-bye and make a quick exit. It is very important to try and make your stay in the morning as brief as possible. Long good-byes make separation harder. Remember, your teacher's primary responsibility is to the children, so drop-off and pick-up are not appropriate times for conferences. If you need to talk in depth regarding some aspect of your child's development, please schedule some other time with the teacher so that you can have her full attention. We will call you if we need you to return to school. **Always keep your cell phone with you and on during school hours.**

Drop off and pick up will be conducted at your car. Two's and older will enter from stadium drive and proceed through the parking lot. Parents will proceed to the double doors that face Ashley Dr. A map of the school along with traffic flow will be provided in your welcome packet. Parents will be responsible for buckling and unbuckling of their child at the designated areas. When you arrive, please have your rear view mirror hanger in place, pull up to the unbuckling area to unbuckle your child and then proceed to the drop off area. When you arrive, your child should have their book bag and lunch box at their feet. Your child should be wearing their lanyard for identification.

Nursery and Toddler parents are allowed to drop off at the classroom door but must enter from the double doors that face stadium drive.

We recognize that safety in the classroom is only part of our responsibility; we also want the children to arrive and depart safely. Drop-off and pick-up are busy times in the parking lot and pose an additional challenge for maintaining the safety and welfare of the students. Please drive slowly and remember the speed limit in the neighborhood is 25 m.p.h.



CLOTHING

All removable clothing must be labeled with the child's name. Each child still in diapers should bring daily: a labeled diaper bag with a change of clothes, socks, labeled diapers, and a plastic bag. **ALL** children need to bring an old set of clothes and a plastic bag in their backpacks daily, in case of an accident. We have noticed that sandals, crocs and flip-flops are hard to wear on our playground mulch. The mulch gets between the toes, foot and shoe. This becomes uncomfortable and sometimes hurts their tender feet. ***Please have your child wear shoes and socks.*** Please do not send children in sandals, boots, or flip-flops since these pose a hazard on the playground. All backpacks/bags and lunchboxes must have child's name clearly labeled on the **outside near the top**.



LUNCH

Each day please send a packed lunchbox with a self-contained, non-spill drink. **DO NOT** send open-mouthed thermoses, Capri Suns, carbonated drinks or Juice Boxes. Include 2 napkins, one to serve as a place mat and a wet-wipe for cleanup. Please remember that lunch items such as yogurt and pudding are messy. If your child has trouble eating these, please do not send them. Please send in a spoon if needed and label all containers that you wish to be sent home. Remember, the teacher must help clean up your child as well as all of the other children in the classroom.



BIRTHDAYS

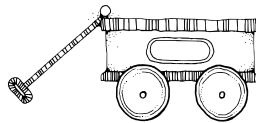
We are happy to celebrate birthdays because they are so special; however, please make sure to coordinate any celebration activities with your child's teacher. For children with summer birthdays, check with the teachers, some celebrate ½ birthdays and some celebrate "unbirthdays". Party invitations may be sent home through the school **only** if the entire class is invited. Birthday parties are typically a big social event in a child's life. If you are not inviting the entire class please mail the invitations directly the invited families. A class roster will be available for you to edit at open house. If you do not wish to be included in the class roster please let the teacher know.



REGISTRATION, GENERAL INFO, MEDICAL FORMS

In order to be enrolled, students must have completed:

- ✓ A Registration Form and paid the registration fee. The registration fee is refundable **ONLY** if you move from the area before the school year begins.
- ✓ A GENERAL INFORMATION form **completely filled out (names, complete addresses and phone numbers)** and with a current photograph attached. Please notify the office of any changes that occur during the school year: i.e. phone number, cell number or work number. All students, new and returning, need to complete and return this form to school on (child's open house) **or** before the first day of school. No child will be admitted without this form.
- ✓ The VIRGINIA STATE MEDICAL form must be returned by the end of September or 30 days after enrollment. If your child was enrolled with us last year, it is not necessary to fill out a new VA State Medical form **unless** your child will be attending as a kindergartner then a new form is required. Two year olds must give the office an up to date shot record as shots are given.

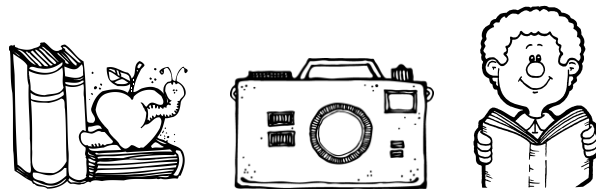


COME & PLAY -- STAY & PLAY

Come & Play hours are 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Cost is \$10.00 **cash** and the child must be dropped off between 8:00 and 8:30. Parents will drop their child off with the Come & Play Coordinator at the bell tower entrance. Stay & Play hours are 1:00 p.m. to either 3, 4, or 5 p.m. VA. State law requires that any child attending school longer than four hours lay down for a rest time. Children that do not fall asleep after 30 minutes are allowed to get up and play. Cost is \$10.00 **cash** with pick-up at 3:00 p.m. \$15.00 **cash** with pick-up at 4:00 p.m. and \$20.00 **cash** with pick-up at 5:00 p.m. When you use Stay & Play please pack an extra snack bag that is labeled "Stay & Play" with your child's name written on the outside along with a snack, napkin, and a non-spill drink. Children two and under should pack and label a blanket and a crib sheet in their backpack. Parents are responsible for signing up on the weekly sign up sheet by the Friday of the preceding week. Since staff will be hired, there will be no refunds if you do not use a day you signed up for.

TUITION--LATE TUITION

Tuition is an annual fee. The actual number of days attended by your child will vary from month to month. For your convenience, the tuition expenses have been divided into NINE EQUAL MONTHLY PAYMENTS that are due the **first** of the month. **Make sure that you pay tuition during the first week of each month.** (There will be a late fee of \$20.00 if paid after the 5th of the month). However, checks may be postdated to the fifteenth. Since the school's expenses are fixed and class enrollment is limited, the entire month's tuition is due regardless of illness, vacation, or holidays. Checks that are returned for non-sufficient funds need to be replaced with cash **plus** the \$25.00 bank fee. Tuition must be paid in cash for the remaining months if two checks are returned for non-sufficient funds. All tuition payments should be placed in the clear folder, which will be affixed to your child's daily folder. This folder will be handed out with your welcome packet.



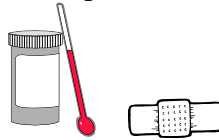
FUND RAISERS

Throughout the school year, there will be many opportunities for you to support the Preschool. Your tuition dollars go toward our day-to-day operating expenses. For improvements in the playground, the teachers' resource library or larger equipment in the classrooms, we must rely on dollars received from fundraisers. We participate only in fundraisers that we feel are of high quality, well organized, and represent products and/or services we would be interested in as parents ourselves. We appreciate your willingness to help us in these efforts. School Pictures (group and individual), Scholastic Book Fairs, Original Art Works and Labels for Box Tops are the school's only means of making additional money to buy the "extras" that make our preschool special. Pictures and Book Fairs are scheduled twice each year. Thank you for your participation and school spirit! Our profits from the fundraisers have helped in keeping tuition lower, purchasing computers and upgrading the playground.



FIELD TRIPS

Each child ***must*** have a signed permission slip from the parents to attend. Teachers will ask parents to drive and chaperone the children. Drivers need to provide proof of insurance and a driver's license. **No siblings are allowed.** If your child will not be attending that morning ***please*** notify the school so that the trip will not be delayed. If you elect not to have your child participate in the scheduled field trip, no alternate care arrangements will be offered at the Preschool. Your child will simply be counted absent that day. The school does not provide transportation.



GENERAL ILLNESS & MEDICATION

In fairness to everyone, please do not send ill children to school. If your child is running a temperature (100 F), has a serious cough, has vomiting or diarrhea, a green nasal discharge, a communicable disease (chicken pox –return to school one week after last lesion erupts), or pink eye, please keep your child at home. Your child may return to school to school when they are fever free without the aid of medicine for 24 hours. If your child has started antibiotics-ensure that child has taken the medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. If your child has vomited or experienced diarrhea in the last 24 hours then you need to keep your child home. If your child has an unexplained rash it is important for him or her to stay home. If a child arrives with *or* develops these symptoms after arriving at school you will be called to pick up your child. Arrangements must be made to pick up your child immediately after the signs or symptoms are noticed. **Please keep your cell phone on during school hours.** If you desire that diaper ointment be applied to your child, you must provide written authorization and note of any known adverse reactions. The diaper ointment must be in the original container and labeled with child's name. The school does not apply insect repellent or sunscreen. Please put sunscreen on before dressing your child. The only medication the school will administer will be an antihistamine, Epi-pens and inhalers. Check for expiration date. We will not accept any expired medication. We require that a doctor's form, with instructions, be included with the medicine package. This form (available from school office) must state that is for the duration of the entire school year. Medication must be in the original package, from the pharmacy, which includes the prescription label. The school will only administer medications that have a written doctor's form, complete with written instructions. This form must be included with the original package from the pharmacy, which includes the prescription label. **Teachers cannot accept medications or the**

medication forms. These must be taken to the school office. *Please help us to eliminate needless outbreaks of contagious viruses by keeping sick children at home, by not allowing **sick siblings** to accompany you into the building, and by not giving children over the counter medications to mask symptoms.*

Effective July 1, 2008, the Code of Virginia requires child care facilities to report outbreaks of diseases that are more than normally expected. The health department is a partner in protecting the health of the community.



PROGRESS REPORTS & CONFERENCES

Students in the four year old and Kindergarten classes will receive progress reports two-three times a year; one mid- year (about January) and the other near the end of the school year. These reports are meant to keep you apprised of your child's progress with respect to what children customarily are able to do in that age group. Conferences are scheduled to coincide with the mid-year progress report. If you have any concerns at any other time, please contact the teacher to schedule a conference. Conferences will be held either over the phone or virtually. Kindergartners will receive a report card three times a year. These report cards are to apprise you of your child's progress, strengths and areas that need more attention. Conferences will be scheduled during the regular school hours.



GRADUATION

Four year olds and kindergartners participate in a graduation ceremony at the end of May. In order to participate in the graduation ceremony, each student will receive a cap and gown to be worn during the ceremony. Four year olds wear light blue and kindergartners wear red. Caps and gowns will be distributed to the students in early May.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

If you wish to participate in the school's accident insurance program please see your child's teacher.



QUESTIONS OR CONCERN

In the event of an emergency, or if you have any concerns with school policies or programs, please talk to the school's director or assistant director. The director/assistant director is the person to help solve any concerns or situations, not your friends in the hallways or on the playground. It is through mutual communication, cooperation and working together that all concerns can be resolved. If you have a personnel question concerning your child please do not discuss this with your teacher at the door during drop off or pickup. We would prefer a private meeting, out of earshot of others. Teacher's phone numbers will be on the monthly calendar. Please feel free to visit or talk with us at any time. As stated by the Code of Virginia, 63.2-1813, custodial parents have a right to visit the school at any time. We take pictures of our children throughout the school year. If you do not want your child's picture to appear on our website or facebook, please notify us in writing.



DISCIPLINE & DISMISSAL

It is our primary goal to give all our students a safe, reassuring, yet consistent environment in which to play and learn. Children are most comfortable when they clearly understand what is expected of them. Each teacher will communicate the classroom rules and expectations to the children clearly and reinforce them often. Positive reinforcement will be used regularly to boost the children's self esteem and to elicit cooperation. We will also use redirection to remove the child from any situation that precipitates unacceptable behavior. Positive, acceptable behavior is encouraged at all times. If the teacher determines that a child's behavior is unacceptable, the child will be placed in a "time out" chair in the classroom for a period of no longer than 3-5 minutes. The teacher will then discuss the behavior and encourage the child to behave in a more acceptable way in the future. If behavior becomes a continual problem we will request a conference with the parents and enlist them in helping the child to improve

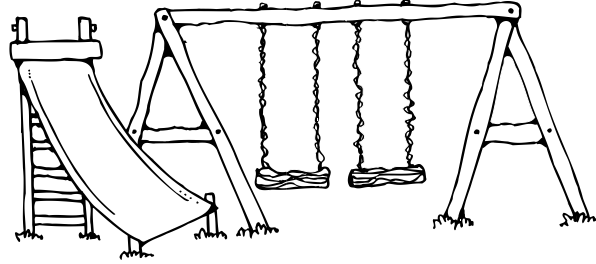
classroom behavior. If we are unable to see improvement in a child's behavior, and that child continues to be a serious disruption, the child may be dismissed from the school. The school will give parents one (1) week written notice **whenever** possible. If a child is extremely aggressive or dangerous to other children (biting, scratching, hitting, pinching, cursing or throwing of toys or furniture) it may be necessary to remove the child on shorter notice. The preschool staff is to report suspected child abuse as is required by 63.1-248.3 of the Code of Virginia to the proper authorities.

The state requires all licensed preschools to notify parents of the following actions or threats that are forbidden:

1. Physical punishment, striking a child, roughly handling or shaking a child, restricting movement through binding or tying, forcing a child to assume an uncomfortable position, or exercise as punishment;
2. Enclosure in a small confined space or any space that the child cannot freely exit himself; however, this does not apply to the use of equipment such as cribs, play yards, high chairs, and safety gates when used with children preschool age or younger for their intended purpose;
3. Punishment by another child;
4. Separation from the group so that the child is away from the hearing and vision of a staff member;
5. Withholding or forcing of food or rest;
6. Verbal remarks which are demeaning to the child;
7. Punishment for toileting accidents; and
8. Punishment by applying unpleasant or harmful substances.

PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCIES

In the event of a hurricane or tornado the children will leave their classrooms and move to a hallway that is secure from flying glass or other flying debris. In the event of an emergency such as, but not limited to a natural disaster, chemical spills, intruder, or terrorism, the children will be removed to Great Bridge Middle School. The children will be taken inside the building or outside. Parents will be called to pick up their children in the event of either emergency. **Again, please keep your cell phones on at all times that your children are in school.** Emergency evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures/maps will be posted in the school office.



PLAYGROUND

Families are not allowed to use the playground before or after school.



MOVING FROM AREA

One month advance notice, with documentation must be given to the preschool in the event you move from the area. This contract is for a school year September 2023 –May 2024.



BAD WEATHER CLOSINGS & DELAYED OPENINGS

In the event the public schools reopen before winter and there is inclement weather, the Preschool generally follows the lead of the Chesapeake Public School system. In most cases, this means the Preschool is closed when the Public Schools are. However, in some rare instances, the Public School system may have to close due to road conditions and bus transportation concerns in other areas of the city. In these rare instances, the Preschool may choose to open. We will post updates regarding our closure status on our Facebook page and notify parents via a phone call, email, or reminder message. Your child's teacher will discuss their preferred method of notification at Open House. If the Public School is delayed in opening, we still open **ONE HOUR LATE** (10:30 a.m.). Listen to local news for Public School closings. There will be **NO COME & PLAY** on days that we open late. (The teachers are at home with their public school age children who will be going into school later than usual.) If the weather is questionable when you bring your child, make certain we have a number where you can be reached in case we must close early. **Please leave your cell phone on during school hours.**



SCHOOL-YEAR SCHEDULE & HOLIDAYS

Classes begin in September and end in May. Holidays, vacations and other school closings *generally* follow the schedule of the local public school system. It is the intention of Great Bridge Preschool and Kindergarten to observe the Chesapeake School Board Public Schools Calendar while in session. In the event that an emergency arises that makes it necessary to close the school and the public schools have returned to in classroom learning, parents should watch the local news for the public school closings or late start up. If the public schools are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic we will make a decision whether to be open or not. We will post updates regarding our closure status on our Facebook page and notify parents via a phone call, email, or reminder message. At the end of this handbook you will find a copy of our school closings for this year.

2023 - 2024 SCHOOL CLOSING & HOLIDAYS

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| Sep. 11 | First Day of School |
| Nov. 7 | Teacher workday |
| Nov. 10 | Veterans Day |
| Nov. 22-24 | Thanksgiving Holidays |
| Dec. 20 – Jan. 1 | Christmas holidays (last day is Dec 19, return Jan 2, 2024) |
| Jan. 15 | Martin Luther King Holiday |
| Jan. 26 | Teacher workday |
| Jan. 29 | Teacher workday |
| Feb. 19 | Presidents' Day |
| Mar. 29 - 5 | Spring Break (last day Mar. 28, return Apr. 8) |
| May 25 | Last day of school (School closes at 1:00 for all students) |