

Haverford Township Recreation Department

# Little Explorers



**Where we play, build, explore and have fun!**

**Recreation Preschool**

**For ages 3-5 9-12:30pm**

**Extended Day 12:30-2:30pm**

**Monday-Friday at**

**Community Recreation Environmental Center**

Haverford Township Recreation Department

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The Little Explorers philosophy is rooted in progressive education. We honor preschoolers' natural love for exploration and play by providing a learning environment that inspires them to engage with the world. Our instructional methods embrace creativity, encourage imagination and socialization.

## Program Overview

*The Little Explorers program allows children the freedom to play, explore and discover while providing structure and support for individual growth. We provide developmentally appropriate activities and academic opportunities for each child based on their abilities and interests.*

**Our daily routines allow for distinct learning. Below is an example of a typical day.**



- **Inside play/Centers** (free choice activities with peers, teacher directed table top activities)
- **Group clean up**
- **Morning Meeting** (greeting friends, reading stories, discussing daily themes)
- **Snack**
- **Outside Play/Gross Motor Activities**
- **Lunch**
- **Pack Up/Say Goodbye**
- **Specials:** Science, Gym, Music

The Little Explorers program maintains an excellent child to teacher ratio, currently we average 5:1 in our classes. We have blocks, dress-ups, and our play kitchen set to nurture preschoolers' imaginations. We use playdough, painting, and drawing on our chalk board to develop fine motor skills. Your child will have the opportunity to explore our hiking trails, as well as take advantage of our natural environmental playground. Our program strives to support all stages of development and to cherish each child's ability to make meaningful connections with new friends, teachers and the world around them.



The Little Explorers program approaches academic readiness by fostering a child's love for learning. Our instructional methods inspire children to engage with other children and the world around them through the process of play. The classroom encourages children to value the process of exploring and experimenting with raw materials, not just the final product. The children learn to: ask questions, take a guess, predict outcomes, and look for patterns. The skills acquired during this program provide the strong foundation for future academic success.

Not every child comes to our classroom in the same place developmentally. For this reason our academic process is based on the differentiated instruction model. We cater to each child as an individual.



# Policy Information

## Arrival and Dismissal Car line – Please drive slowly in our parking lot.

- Arrival Please pull your car up to the sidewalk. A teacher will greet your child, help them out of the car and walk them to the classroom.
- Dismissal: A teacher will walk your child to the car, please pull into the parking lot if you need to assist your child with buckling up.
- It would be helpful if you placed your child on the driver side of the vehicle.
- Pick up is promptly at 12:30pm. Please contact us if you will be late.



## We love to play outside

- Sneakers (or equivalent) are best for our program
- Always assume we will be going outside.** Please send your child with appropriate outdoor attire every day.
- We play outside on snowy days. If there is snow on the ground, please pack snow boots, pants, and appropriate attire for playing in the snow.
- We love puddles! It is strongly recommended that all children have rainboots for rainy/wet days.

## We love to get messy

- We encourage you to send your child wearing clothes in which you are comfortable with them getting messy. The children have many opportunities to get hands on experience with the materials inside as well as outside the classroom.
- Please provide an extra set of clothes to remain in our classroom. **Place them in a large ziploc bag with their name on it and we can store them easily.**

## Snack

- We provide a healthy snack for all the children. If your child has dietary restrictions or allergies, please speak with your teacher to make arrangements.

## Lunch

- All children will need to bring their lunch. We encourage you to provide a healthy, simple lunch and drink in a reusable lunch bag/box. Unfortunately, we are not able to refrigerate or heat food. Also, we will not permit the children to share food.

## Food Allergy Policy

- Please be advised, if need be, we will notify parents of food restrictions for our lunch and snack programs.

## Special Needs Policy

- People of all abilities are welcome in our programs. With your help we will do all we can to meet your child's needs.

## Illness ~ Email your teacher or call and leave a message at the CREC.

- Please keep your child home if they experience any of these symptoms within 24 hours of school: a fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, severe cold symptoms (coughing, continuous runny nose etc...)

## Extended Day 12:30-2:30pm

Our extended day option is a valuable time to offer more detailed activities based on individual interests, delve deeper into on going projects/ themes from the morning, nurture budding relationships and focus on academics. This includes: story time, teacher directed activities, time in the gym, dance studio or outdoor activities. The fee for Extended Day is \$15 per day. You may pay online or send in \$15 the day(s) you plan to attend.



# Staff Bios



## **Kirsten Taylor – Director**

Kirsten came to the Recreation Department in the Summer of 2009 as a camp counselor. Upon her graduation in 2011 from West Chester University (with a degree in Health and Physical Education) she was hired as the assistant teacher for Little Explorers and then became the Lead Teacher in 2014. Starting in 2015, she became the Director of Little Explorers. Kirsten has been involved with the Summer Playground Program for the past 9 years and is the Program Coordinator for the Recreation Department. Outside of work she is an avid sports lover – especially for the Philadelphia Eagles and Sixers! She is passionate regarding physical fitness, coaching field hockey, playing softball, and adores her dog Lulu.



## **Julien Denny – Assistant Director/Lead Teacher**

Julien became the lead teacher for Little Explorers in 2015. She is a graduate from Eastern University with a degree in Early Childhood and Special Education. In 2009, Julien began working for the Recreation Department as a camp counselor for a variety of summer and sports programs such as Small Fry Soccer, Tiny Tykes, Summer Explorers, Hilltop Tot Lot and Pippi Longstocking. For the past 6 years, Julien has been the site leader at Coopertown Tot Lot, developing themed crafts and mini lesson each week. Three years ago she was hired as an assistant teacher for the Little Explorers. During that year, she gained quality classroom experience and found her niche in preschool. Outside of Little Explorers Julien enjoys music, singing, baking, and playing Ultimate Frisbee. Julien is currently a part-time student in a Masters of Education in Reading Program.



## **Sarah McCafferty –Lead Teacher**

Sarah has always known she wanted to be a teacher and graduated from McGill University with a Bachelors of Education. She started her teaching career at the Gladwyne Montessori School and has worked with students of all ages as both a classroom teacher and a museum educator over the past 15 years. She is passionate believer in the importance of nature and play-based education to foster creative, independent, life-long learners. As a teacher and a parent, I believe that the pre-school classroom is more than a learning environment, it is a community where children put into practice the important skills of cooperation and appreciation of differences. Sarah has two daughters: Lena is a graduate of Little Explorers and Marion is a current student. As a parent, Sarah has long admired the Little Explorers program and staff and is now excited and honored to be joining the team!