

children first preschool, located at Stone Mill Depot in Hockessin, is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), is fully licensed by the State of Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families and has been awarded a 5 Star Level with the Delaware Stars for Early Success quality rating program. Our facility includes a play yard, two large classrooms, a music/multipurpose room and a room that houses family resources and a Children's Lending Library. **children first** is a developmental preschool with a philosophy that "**children learn through play.**" Curriculum is carefully planned to offer children a wide variety of opportunities to create, imagine, construct and investigate. Children pursue independent, self-initiated activities as well as activities that foster positive peer interactions and promote cooperation. Within our comfortable and safe atmosphere, children are encouraged to express themselves artistically and verbally.

children first's outdoor play area, located between a grand old train engine and a beautiful pond, is a large fenced playground with age appropriate play equipment including a sandbox, a domed climber, swings, a slide, a raised platform with climbing wall, balance beam and riding, pushing and pulling toys designed for active play.



Our spacious classrooms are arranged in centers so that children can freely explore the wide variety of learning materials and activities that are available in each interest area. Children move around the classroom at their own pace. The Pre I class plays in one of our classrooms and the Pre II and Pre K classes share the second classroom. This mixed-age grouping is most beneficial to children learning through our Developmental Curriculum.

Classroom Centers include: Language, Dramatic Play, Music/Listening, Library, Blocks, Messy Table, Art, Easel, Diorama, Manipulatives, Workbench, Practical Life, Puzzles, Workjobs, Science, Math, Writing and Snack.

Learning Time, "Free Play", is at least 90 minutes long so that children have time to explore one center in depth or investigate several areas before clean up.

Discipline is consistent and carried out in a positive manner. Our goal is to promote problem solving, communication and compassion. Teachers make a conscious effort to speak to children in positive ways and to treat children with respect.

All children who attend **children first preschool** on Wednesday participate in **The Music School of Delaware's** Early Childhood Kindermusik Outreach Program. The small group classes are held in our **Music/Multipurpose Room**.

Special activities that enhance our curriculum include: Star of the Week, field trips, nature walks, resource guests, Week of the Young Child, hands-on science experiments, cooking, International Feast, community outreach projects and family picnics. **children first preschool** also hosts student teachers from the University of Delaware, Delaware Technical and Community College and Wilmington College.

Family involvement enhances the quality of early care and education at **children first preschool**. Because each family brings a unique cultural perspective to our school community, we encourage family participation and promote open communication. Parents may spend a morning in the classroom with their child, read to their child's class at Story Time and accompany their child on field trips. Families are kept informed during the school year by classroom bulletin board announcements, newsletters and parent/teacher conferences. Each family receives a Family Handbook that details school policies on health, safety and security issues, curriculum, a calendar for the year and a school directory. **children first** is fortunate to have an active Parent Association that supports, sponsors and plans events for children, families and staff.

children first's low teacher/child ratio provides ample opportunities for individual attention and supervision. Our staffing maintains at least a 1 to 6 adult to child ratio for Pre I and at least a 1 to 7 ratio for Pre II and Pre K.

children first preschool directors are also classroom teachers. All teachers are qualified, degreed professionals who continue their early care and education training and career development through classes, workshops, lectures and conferences. **children first preschool** directors and teachers are credentialed by the Delaware Department of Education and are members of:

National Association for the Education of Young Children
Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children
Nursery-Kindergarten Association of Delaware



5 Star Level

Recognized by Delaware Governor Markel
for achieving 5 Star Level
November 27, 2012 and December 5, 2013

Governor's Award for Excellence in
Early Care and Education – First Place
October 18, 2001 and September 22, 2005

Enrollment

Our school year is September through May. Enrollment for the fall begins in January and is open to all children who are two years of age by October 31, three years of age by August 31 and four years of age by August 31 of the current school year. Applications are also accepted throughout the year if spaces become available. Open House Tours, when prospective families meet with the directors and tour the school, are held in the fall and spring. Families should call and schedule a tour prior to the application process.

Programs

Preschool I (Pre I) Children must be two years old by October 31

(Mon. Tues. Wed.) (Wed. Thurs. Fri.) (Mon. Tues.) (Thurs. Fri.) or (5 Days)

Hours: 9:00 am to 12:15 pm daily

Preschool II (Pre II) Children must be three years old by August 31

(Mon. Tues. Wed.) (Wed. Thurs. Fri.) or (5 Days)

Hours: 9:00 am to 12:30 pm (M T Th F) and 9:00 am to 12:00 noon (Wed.)

PreKindergarten (Pre K) Children must be four years old by August 31

(Mon. Tues. Wed.) (Wed. Thurs. Fri.) or (5 Days)

Hours: 8:45 am to 12:30 pm daily

Early Care is available at 8:30 am.

Extended Day is available until 2:30 or 3:00 pm.

Daily Schedule

Greeting/Story Time

Circle Time/Introduce the Day

Snack (school provides)

Free Play

Outside/Gross Motor Play

Small Group/Creative Movement

Lunch (parents provide)

Extended Day (optional)

children first preschool is fully licensed by the State of DE Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families. Children and staff are welcome regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin or disabilities.

children first preschool philosophy

Children learn through play. They are encouraged to be independent and to develop skills that foster a positive self-image. Hands-on activities with age appropriate goals are available in classroom centers. Each child is unique and is encouraged to work in his or her own way to develop to full potential. Our goal is to foster a love of learning in a caring atmosphere.



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