



## **Welcome to the Turtle Tots Classroom**

Your child is ready to begin the transition process from the Busy Bees Class to the Turtle Tots Class. The Busy Bees Teachers and the Director have observed positive developmental changes in your child and we are confident that he or she will be successful in the next classroom. There is no tuition change from the Busy Bees classroom to the Turtle Tots classroom.

### **How will the transition process work?**

The transition process typically lasts for one week with the goal of having your child adjusted to his or her new teachers, setting, routines, schedules, and the ways things are done before beginning full days in the new class. This goal is achieved by having your child spend a portion of his or her day in the new setting. The children are dropped off in the Turtle Tots classroom and have breakfast there. Typically, the Tigers' teachers transition their older tots into their classroom between 9:30 am and 12:30 pm. The transitioning times are very flexible depending upon the needs of the children and the center. The main idea is that the children spend time each day in their new classroom to become acclimated to all aspects of the new environment.

The Turtle Tots teachers will bring your child to his or her new classroom around 9:30 am when things have calmed down from breakfast and small groups are beginning. All transitioning children are welcomed into the class and will spend a little time with all teachers to avoid the possibility of any child becoming too attached to just one teacher. The children are invited to participate in a small group activity, large group, outside time, and lunch. Around 12:30 pm, your child will be returned to his or her classroom.

### **A Brief Introduction to the Turtle Tots Classroom**

Once children are ready to transition from infancy to toddlerhood, they are invited to join our Turtle classroom. Children at this developmental level are showing interest in trying to do most things for themselves. They are becoming very competent walkers and some may even be able to run around at this point. They speak in short phrases and sentences and are becoming more social.

In our Turtles classroom, we are staffed one teacher for every five children and have set up an environment that provides for the children's constant mobility and safety. Meals are served to children seated at low tables who are learning to feed themselves with utensils and drink from an open cup. The children nap on a cot with soothing music playing at a low volume. Reports are provided to parents on a daily basis to inform them about diaper changes, menus of the day, and highlights of activities. Parents also have the opportunity to see their children during the day through the webcam that is installed in the classroom.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: What do I do if my child cries when I drop them off?**

**A:** As your child is becoming accustomed to his or her new environment, there will likely be times when your child may express that he or she wants to go back to visit the Busy Bees classroom. Please be mindful that prolonged “good-byes” can be difficult for a young child, but it is very important not to rush too quickly. You should allow your child time to realize that he or she is in a safe environment. The most important thing is to always remember to assure your child that you will return to pick him or her up. Since we have a very open classroom, your child will be able to see and hear his or her old teachers throughout the day. We will keep them engaged and the children love to visit with their teachers and friends at the gate that separates the two classrooms. Over time, your drop offs will become less upsetting for you and your child. We will work with you and your child to ease any anxieties. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to help during this time.

### **Q. What should I expect when first introducing a cup to my child?**

**A.** Learning to drink out of an open cup depends on a number of readiness factors, including muscle control, balance, coordination, and sensory needs. Not every child will have difficulty drinking from an open cup, but do not be concerned if yours does. Start practicing with an open cup when the child has developed head and trunk control for sitting. Also, look to see if your child has the ability to pick up and willingly release or give items. For instance, can your child pick up blocks and put them in a bucket? This is important. Maintaining grasp on a cup and putting it down on a table means they have the motor skills to coordinate this movement. Be patient and expect some spills. Your child will improve with practice and will gain self confidence in the process.

### **Q: Will my child start using the potty in the Turtle Tots classroom?**

**A:** Potty training begins when the child is able to recognize and indicate that she needs to use the potty. Your child may start to notice soiled diapers, and the teachers can help him or her to identify and become aware of his or her body and its functions. This process includes reading books about the potty and talking about the potty. The actual potty training process, when the children are able to communicate a need for using the restroom, occurs in the Bugs classroom.

### **Q: What are some developmental goals that the teachers will have for my child while he or she is in this classroom?**

**A:** The teachers of the Turtle Tots classroom work on supporting your child’s development in all areas (physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language & literacy, and temperament)

Each week, the teachers use a specific theme on which to focus their activities. The teachers select specific objectives for the children and observe and engage them in developmentally appropriate activities to support their development. Parent-teacher conferences are held bi-annually to discuss your child’s growth. If you ever desire to obtain information prior to the parent-teacher conference, please email the management team to set up a time to meet with your child’s teacher.

**Q: What are some developmental gains that you expect to observe in my child before transitioning him/her to the Giraffe's class?**

A: The teachers in this classroom focus on encouraging social interactions between the children and ensuring their continued healthy development. Each child's development is facilitated through multiple, short circle time activities with stories and songs as they learn to sit in a group. There are also other group and individual art, motor, and sensory activities provided throughout the week. The children are introduced to colors and shapes, and are provided language rich experiences to promote their ever-growing vocabulary.

By the time your child leaves this room, you may observe him/her:

- Using 2-3 word sentences
- Following simple multi-step directions
- Demonstrating ability to use one-to-one correspondence to count up to the number 2
- Able to rote count up to the number 5
- Able to recognize a few colors
- Beginning to show an awareness of the potty
- Ability to feed him/herself with a spoon

## **Welcome to the TURTLE TOTS Class**

Dear Parent(s),

Welcome to our class! We are glad to have your family with us. We trust that you will find our teachers warm and welcoming. Our room usually consists of 15 children; we are staffed one teacher for every five children, although we often have an extra teacher to give us a helping hand. The age group is from about 16 months to about 24 months. The teachers in this room are dedicated to their profession and work closely together to provide the best care for your children. The majority of the staff has been working with children for over five years and most are parents themselves.

We would like our families to know that communication is important to us. We believe that children thrive more when there is communication and consistency between school and home. Therefore, we have an open classroom and welcome suggestions or questions.

In our class, we focus on building vocabulary, recognition, motor development, cognitive development, and physical development. We base our day on a routine and teach during play activities. Please see the attached documentation, which will provide you with some more specific information about our class. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Again, welcome to the Turtle Tots class and we hope you enjoy it!

The Turtle Tots Team

## Turtle Tot Daily Schedule

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 7:00 – 8:30am | Arrival / Free play / Handwashing / Breakfast   |
| 8:30 – 9:00am | Handwashing / Learning Centers                  |
| 9:00 – 9:30am | Diaper changes / Clean – Up/ Music and Movement |
| 9:30 – 9:45am | Circle Time                                     |
| 9:45 – 10:00  | Table Toys / Centers                            |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Handwashing / AM Snack                          |
| 10:30 – 11:15 | Outside / Gross motor                           |
| 11:15 – 11:45 | Diaper Changes / Music and Movement             |
| 11:45 – 12:00 | Storytime / Handwashing                         |
| 12:00 – 12:15 | Lunch   |
| 12:15 – 12:30 | Clean Up and Quiet time                         |
| 12:30 – 2:30  | Naptime   |
| 2:30 – 2:45   | Diaper change / Storytime                       |
| 2:45 – 3:15   | Handwashing / Snack time                        |
| 3:15 – 3:45   | Art / Prep for outside                          |
| 3:45 – 4:30   | Outside / Gross motor                           |
| 4:30 – 4:45   | Circle Time                                     |
| 4:45 – 5:15   | Handwashing and Snack                           |
| 5:15 – 5:45   | Diaper change / Learning Centers                |
| 5:30 – 6:30   | Free play / Departure                           |

# MUSIC for LIFE

Music for Life enhances a child's inherent ability to create, express and problem solve through music.



Music for Life was founded in 2004 to address the importance of music education in the development of children from Infants - School age. Study after study shows the undeniable correlation between music and higher brain function in mathematics, self-esteem, spatial and temporal reasoning, etc. Our curriculum specifically targets all aspects of these developmental keystones while teaching students all about music in a fun and age appropriate manner. We make it easy to get the developmental benefits of music by bringing Music for Life to you. Our teachers travel to over 30 schools in the greater Washington area.



Music for Life comes to Bright Start every Friday!



**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions about your child. Your answers will help us get to know you and your family a little better.

Q: What would you most like us to know about your child? Please include any special concerns we should know about as we care for your child.

A:

Q: How is your child comforted best?

A:

Q: Please provide any information that you can with regard to your child's eating and sleeping habits.

A:

Q: What does your child enjoy doing at home?

A:

Q: Does your child have any allergies (food, medication, seasonal, etc.)?

A:

Q: What do you most want your child to learn in our class?

A:

Q: How would you like to participate in the program?

A:

Q: Are there any special traditions, celebrations, stories or songs that are especially important to your family and your child?

A:

## **Bright Start Policy Reminders**

It is important that our parents are always mindful of some key policies and therefore ask that you review the ones below at this time.

### **Food Allergy Safe Policy:**

To protect all of the children at the Center, we do not allow homemade food to be served to children other than your own. In addition, all food brought to the center must comply with our food allergy policy, even if it will only be eaten by your own child. In accordance with our policy, food must be labeled "school-safe" or it must be on our approved list of snacks and treats. Specifically,

- Food labels that say "**May contain peanuts or tree nuts**" are **NOT OK**.
- Food labels that say "**Made on equipment that also processes peanuts or tree nuts**" are **NOT OK**.
- Food labels that say "**Made in a facility that also processes peanuts or tree nuts**" are **NOT OK**.

Our safe snack list is available on our website. Please print it and have it as a ready resource. If you are sending food in of any kind, you MUST give it to the lead teacher and she will check it. DO NOT put food in your child's cubby or leave in his or her backpack. DO NOT allow your child to come into school with partially-eaten food in his or her hand.

Also, it is very important that your child wash his or her hands immediately upon arrival. Not only is this a good step to help prevent the spread of germs, it helps to minimize the risk of cross contamination if your child has been in contact with foods that may be allergens for other children.

### **Illness Notifications**

If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, you must notify the office by phone call or email as soon as possible. It is not enough to notify the classroom via Brightwheel. We are required by our licensing regulations to post notices of such illnesses so that other parents are aware. In order to do this, we must have accurate and timely information from you. Also, please be mindful that your child must be fever free for at least 24 hours (without medication) before he or she can return to school. This helps to minimize spreading contagious illnesses.

### **Late Pick Ups**

Bright Start closes at 6:30 pm. An on-time pick-up means that you have exited the building with your child by 6:30 not running in the door at 6:30 or lingering in the classrooms or Center beyond 6:30.

Late pick-ups cause hardships for the staff that are not able to leave on time, and for the children, who have had a long day at school. While many parents believe that an occasional late pick-up is acceptable, one must remember that we have over 100 families enrolled. Late pick-ups are not acceptable, and Bright Start must enforce a strict policy to discourage such behavior. Accordingly, in addition to a late fee, if you (i) pick your child up **more than 15 minutes late** or (ii) if you have picked your child up late more than **one time in a calendar year** (even if late by less than 15 minutes), you will lose care for the day immediately following the respective late pick-up. Continuing issues with on time pickups will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Solutions will include adjusting the family's required pickup time to no later than 6:00 permanently or disenrollment.