

Dear families,

Welcome to the Preschool room! My name is Jessica Titcomb and my wonderful assistant is Brooke Wright. We are thrilled to have your children in our classroom next year.

Introduction

Mrs. Titcomb

I held my first job in early childhood education fifteen years ago when I was a college student studying Sociology and Psychology as well as Religious Studies at Saint Vincent College in Pennsylvania. After graduating from school, I had no idea what I wanted to do, so I did the only sensible thing: flew down to Georgia and started hiking the 2,175 mile long Appalachian Trail! Eventually, I ended up in Connecticut, where I met my husband Nolan, and the two of us then settled in Vermont in 2009, where we live with our 4 kids, 2 cats, and dog. Here, I received my M.Ed in Early Childhood Education at Champlain College. Later down the road, I received a Montessori teaching Diploma in ages 3-6, attended the Sustainability Leadership Academy, and was trained in a behavior program, Education with Insight.

Mrs. Wright

It's hard for me to believe that this will be my 14th year teaching at BJAMS! For 12 of those years I was here part time as the vocal music teacher. I love being a music teacher so luckily I continue to teach private lessons and sing all day long with Pre-K 3! I am a native Vermonter and after some wanderings, my husband and I settled in Lamoille county. We have 7 children and no pets.

Before the school year starts

We will also have our Pre-K Social on August 16th, from 4-5pm

First week

For the first week of school, we would like your child to transition into the classroom. The schedule will look like this:

Day 1: Half of the students attend with a 12:30 dismissal

Day 2: The other half of the students attend with a 12:30 dismissal

Day 3: All students attend with a 12:30 dismissal

Day 4: All student will attend with a 2:45-3:00 dismissal

I will attach our "Flow of Day" schedule and a short list of requested items at the end of this letter, as well.

School Day

Our school day will begin at 8:00 am, but you are welcome to drop off as early as 7:45. I will stand at the door to greet the student and parent, shake hands and help the student find their cubby so that they can take off and put away their shoes and coat. They can then change into indoor shoes and begin an activity set up at the table, art table, or reading nook. Mrs. Wright will be playing with students or reading with them.

Morning routine for Preschool students will be signing in, putting away backpacks, taking perishable food items out of their lunch box and putting it in the refrigerator, signing up for hot or cold lunch, washing hands, and then choosing their morning activity.

Bathroom

Please let me know if your child is currently still having accidents, and if you would prefer they be in a pull up at nap time. I will have a changing mat if there are accidents to help them clean up, but it is of course desirable that they are using the toilet by themselves. We will work together on this, and you have our support!

Messy/ Outdoor Play

School can be a great place to jump in puddles or to play with slime. I will always have your child in a smock or apron if they are engaging in messy activities. We will go outside everyday. I believe there is no such thing as bad weather, only poor clothing choices! Please check the forecast to make sure your child has everything they need. I will not allow your child to be uncomfortable, and so I will have extras. Please feel free to donate any boots, hats, mittens, or coats to get that collection started.

Snack

Please pack a nutritious morning snack. We will have a community afternoon snack for post nap, and I will have a sign up sheet for that. This is a great way to introduce new foods to your child, as many families eat different foods from one another.

Please send in a leak proof water bottle to stay at school as well.

Nap

Please bring a fitted sheet and blanket for your child. An all one nap mat is great too. On Fridays, your child's linens will be in the case. Please wash all of it over the weekend and bring them back in on Monday.

Celebrations

Childhood is such a fun time to celebrate any occasion! And thus, we will highlight all major holidays. We celebrate birthdays by singing a song called "The Earth Goes around the Sun" and showing photos of the child, each year of their life. I will supply a fun snack, and we will send home homemade gifts and cards.

End of Day

When the day ends, students will be packed and prepared to leave the classroom. Please help maintain a peaceful environment. Sharing personal information about your child during pick up is no ideal, and so I will let you know the highlights of their day. If there was an issue I'd like to discuss with you, I will let you know that I'd like to have that talk, but not at pick up time.

Communication

Please let me know your preferred way of intaking information- email, Zoom, phone, in person. Everyday I will let you know relevant information- how long they napped, if they ate well or not, and if they had any peculiar bathroom experiences. It is my goal to also be able to share anecdotal information with you each day regarding activities your child enjoyed, books they read, friends they played with. I will utilize an app called Homeroom to send you pictures throughout the day of your child's experiences in school. I will check my email each morning before the school day starts and again at 5 pm to answer any questions or concerns that may have been written about that day. My email address is jtitcomb@bjams.org

See the following pages for the Flow of the Day and supply requests.

Flow of Day

Our Daily Schedule and Routine Planning

7:45 a.m.

We open the door to greet the students as they arrive. One teacher stands at the door to greet the student and parent, shake hands and help the student find their cubby so that they can take off and put away their shoes and coat. The other teacher sits at our tables and greets the students one by one with a smile and introduces the daily provocation. Students are also welcome to go to the art corner or the reading nook until our day begins.

8:30 We will clean up to go outside

9:15 We come inside for our morning ceremony. We will wash hands, put away our gear, and sit on the rug. Morning ceremony is a short time to discuss who the helper is going to be for the day, discuss the day of the week, and what our plan for the day is.

9:30 We will have our morning snack

10:15 a.m.

False Fatigue Occurs.....around this time in the morning, the noise level tends to escalate and there are usually several “wanderers”. This restlessness was noted by Maria Montessori when she observed classrooms and she referred to it as “False Fatigue”. At one time, I used to feel very anxious and uneasy when this occurred as I felt like I was doing something wrong, but I now know it is a phenomenon very typical of this environment and it is important to remain calm and continue with the classroom work cycle. As long as I remain calm, the restlessness subsides and the children settle back into their work until 11:45 a.m., when the music is turned on to signal clean up time. This is a time of day where we will likely go outside, but whether our time is spent indoors or outdoors, children will have the opportunity to play freely with thoughtful classroom set up, carefully picked out materials, and teachers scaffolding meaningful experiences.

11:45 a.m.

The special helper pushes ‘play’ on our CD player to signal that it is time to clean up. The music is a soft, instrumental CD which is a great reminder to clean up in a calm, peaceful manner. Once the students tidy their work, we all sit down for circle time. We then have a quick circle, reflect on the morning, play some sort of a transition game and they are sent one by one to the washroom to wash their hands for lunch. Eating lunch is the perfect opportunity to reinforce the importance of grace, courtesy and good manners in the preschool classroom. It is such a special time of day!

12:15 p.m.

Usually by this time, the students have finished eating, tidied the floor and tables, placed their lunch bags back in their cubbies and have washed up. Each child is encouraged to use the restroom and settle in for a nap.

1:00 p.m.

Once every student is settled on their mat, the teachers will rub or pat their back until they are sleeping. Please tell me if your child does not currently nap.

2:30-2:45 p.m. Students will begin to wake up and have snack. There will be activities set up in the classroom. If everyone is awake by 2:30, we will go outside for the last half hour of the day, especially during warm weather.

2:45 p.m.

Dismissal

Supplies request for the classroom:

- Extra set of clothing, including underwear, socks. Please include one school uniform and one extra pair of pants and shirt in case we go through more than one in a day.
- Leak proof water bottle
- Bag or backpack
- Sneakers as well as indoor shoes
- Packed lunch or money for lunch
- 1 box of tissues
- 1 box of Clorox wipes