



February 2020

Saturday, February 8

Berrybrook Admissions Open House

10 am - 12 pm

February 17 - 21

Vacation week

Wednesday, February 26

Board meeting 7:00 pm

Notes from the Head of School

Have you ever stopped to kneel down on your floor, and look up to see what the world looks like from a child's view? Think about it - as adults, the average height is roughly 67 inches where the average height for a 4 year old is just a little over 3 feet. That's a huge difference to a child! As silly as it sounds, when I switch from my beloved clogs that I wear almost every day to a flat shoe, the two inch difference throws me off - I feel much, much shorter! So to a child, that difference in perspective from their world to how an adult views the world is huge. That's why you will see that often, a Berrybrook teacher will bend down to a child's level when speaking to them - one of the main reasons being that a child doesn't feel threatened or inferior when speaking with the adult. It's also to help reinforce how important eye contact is while talking, and it is easier to be achieved when at similar levels.

You also probably have noticed how 'literal' children are this age. I remember when my boys were young and I was trying to get them to pose for our family Christmas card. They were laying on their bellies in front of the Christmas tree and I thought it would be cute for them to lean in and have their noses lightly touching each other with the glowing lights in the background. I said to them, "Okay, now touch noses!" and without missing a beat they both took their pointer fingers and jabbed their brother's nose. Both of them. At the exact same time. It's not like one saw what the other was doing and followed suit. Nope, they both interpreted the message in the literal sense and of course that shot made the family Christmas card. Each December I display the cards from prior years and

each year I chuckle with my husband when I put that framed card on the shelf and each time I look at him and say, "Literal much?" which is now one of our many family jokes.

This is also one of the reasons why I know to take a pause when one of my children would tell me a story about a peer. Occasionally one of them in the younger years would come home and say, "Sally hit me" or something along those lines. Upon some careful questioning it would be determined that Sally in fact did not hit my child, but she accidentally 'flew' a Lego creation near my child, which "hit" my child's creation - so in my child's eyes Sally hit him. We may hear these comments on car rides almost daily, and as parents it can be hurtful to hear as we are immediately going into PPM: Parent Protect Mode. How many times have we gone from 0 - 60 in response to a story our child has told us? A particular hurtful story to hear from your child is that, "Johnny isn't my friend anymore". As a parent you go right to the extreme thinking that your child now has no friends in class, how can that happen, and will they ever have friends again?? In reality, it could just mean that Johnny didn't want to paint at the easel today when your child wanted to, and Johnny played somewhere else that day. For a child, that means they are no longer friends because they are so literal. Chances are your child will report that they are best friends the very next day when they both choose the swings together. The Berrybrook teachers live this every day, and it's a sign of growth in managing the ins and outs of friendships, which will serve children throughout their whole lives.

February is the month of love and hearts, but our children are working through the nuances of friends, friendship boundaries, and more every day. If a friend chooses to spend time with another classmate one day, does that mean they no longer want to be friends with them? What does "love" mean to a preschooler? Can I love my mom the same as I love chocolate, or the slide? I love all those, but in the same way? As an adult we probably wish we had the same level of problems that children have, correct? Bills, family dynamics, and other adult issues have nothing on sandbox play and painting, am I right? But again, a child's perspective shows us that their issues are just as important as our adult issues and we need to respect that. It's a fine line between not dismissing our child's concerns and focusing too much on them. It's another life lesson for both adults and children that will help everyone in many different aspects of our daily lives and we are all learning and working on it each and every day.

~ Mrs. Watts

Teacher's Notes

The Nook

At first glance, the Nook looks like any other outdoor play area with a group of happy children running and playing like children always do. But there is so much more going on. It's the perfect place to extend Berrybrook's philosophy of child-centered learning. It's a place where children have control over the activities they choose, the amount of time they'd like to spend in an area, and the freedom to create and observe. Our mindset behind Berrybrook's outdoor classroom is anything you can do indoors you can do outdoors.

On our way to the Nook today, a little girl in our class commented that her cheeks were feeling cold. Once we reached the Nook, her thoughts turned to other things as she and her friends ran quickly to the xylophones where they took turns playing music and dancing on the stage. Some children enjoyed climbing on tree stumps, some stacked stones and branches, and others watched the brook flow wondering what animals lived in the water and where they go when it gets cold.

Instead of having circle time on our carpeted classroom floor, we sit on cut logs taking in all that nature has to offer. We listen for birds, smell leaves and flowers, play games, and once spring arrives, water plants as they start to wake from winter. We dig with large shovels, fill our wheelbarrows, paint on the outdoor easel, color with chalk, and run. We do lots of running! You also might find books, magnifying glasses, building blocks, and yummy snacks.

This wide open space gives children lots of opportunities for big muscle movements, fine motor practice, social play, and open ended exploring. The Nook is open year-round and we encourage families to visit and connect with nature.

~ Mrs. Rosen

Mrs. Rosen teaches in the Beginners and 3 Day Room 1 classes



Valentine's Day Celebration

All of our classes will be celebrating Valentine's Day by delivering cards and enjoying a special Berrybrook snack.

We ask that the children bring a valentine for each classmate. Please remember, because we have children with food allergies, valentines should not include candy.

ALL CANDY SHOULD REMAIN AT HOME



2 and 3 Day Classes

Duxbury Post Office Field Trip 56 Depot Street

Remember to save the date, and meet your teachers there at 9 a.m.

2 Day: Friday, February 7

3 Day Room 3: Tuesday, February 11

3 Day Room 1: Wednesday, February 12



Snow Cancellation Reminder

Colder weather is here.....

It is our policy to cancel classes whenever Duxbury Public Schools are closed due to weather emergencies. Families should watch Channel 7, WHDH for a school cancellation at Berrybrook. Every attempt at notification will be made through email messages, text messages, phone calls via OneCallNow; and/or social media.

****In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a one hour delay, Berrybrook will have the usual 9 am arrival time.****

*****In the event Duxbury Public Schools require a two hour delay, the AM session, as well as Lunch Bunch, will be cancelled.*****

Beyond a formal cancellation, we urge parents to use their best judgment about driving young children to school in inclement weather.

Parents Association Notes

Winter is in full swing and we are all surviving the typical New England winter weather pattern. We have broken from some of the frigid weather and enjoyed some milder temperatures which have provided the students the opportunity to play outdoors and explore the Berrybrook Nook.

Enrichment

Yoga is officially underway for the entire school. It is amazing to see the smiles on the younger students when they see Miss Kim in the big room and learn that she is there to teach them. The Beginners and the 2 and 3 Day students are just beginning their yoga journey, but the 4 and 5 Day students are now proficient at many yoga poses. The older students will continue to learn how yoga is beneficial to their bodies. Make sure to ask your child about their yoga experience. Some upcoming enrichment activities include our annual visits from the dental hygienist and Soule Homestead.

Family Fun Fridays

A fun time was had by those who took part in the Mix It Up Kitchen activity at the end of January. Delicious treats were made and enjoyed by all. Be on the lookout for the next Family Fun Friday coming in March.

As always, thank you to those who have already paid their BPA dues! If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! We ask for a \$30 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Envelopes are available at the BPA table for contributions. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation! Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. You can email us at berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com.

Thanks,
Diana Stewart and Jess Bisceglia Co-Presidents

From The Board of Directors

Sunsets with a view: reflections on the 4-day program

Before the sunsets crept up to well before suppertime, I was already appreciating the unhurried pick up time with my son, a student in Berrybrook's 4-day program. Finding parking was easy. Picking out my son among his friends had never been a challenge- he's always been a head taller than his peers. It was easier now still.

The clangs of the cowbell bounced off the building as I approached the picnic table, my toddler's hand steady in mine. She loved picking up her brother from school. She had napped while her big brother was away with his friends, and now she was ready to play again. We soon fell into a rhythm of staying late - no rushing home for lunch - and playing for an hour or two.

In the mornings the three of us enjoyed some of my favorite times. We took walks and bike rides with our dog. My son built with his legos. We visited the library, sometimes for a special preschooler program. We all went grocery shopping. We ate our lunch together. And then my son was off to school!

For my daughter, this was the perfect time to cuddle with me (if she hadn't fallen asleep on the drive home.) Once she was napping, I would fix myself an early afternoon cup of tea and tackle some project, be it laundry, paying bills, cracking open a novel I'd grabbed at the library, or all of the above.

Not every day was perfect-- some mornings I just couldn't wait for school to start so I could have a little time to myself! Even if the morning didn't end on a harmonious note, by the time we picked up my son, we were all happier and glad to see each other again.

When my daughter was old enough to join the 4-day program, at first I felt conflicted. My son was in elementary school 5 days a week... wouldn't I prefer the extra day? Would it be better preparation for Kindergarten? My son had made the transition beautifully, but could it have been even better?

Despite expressing my preference for the 5-day program, my daughter was placed in 4-day. At the time I was a bit deflated. In retrospect, I wouldn't have had it any other way.

My daughter and I once again had our mornings together, this time one-on-one. We visited my mother and my aunts-- she played in the garden while we gabbed over coffee. She and I gathered stones on the beach. We played at the library playground. She loved to help me at the grocery store.

I remember her scolding me if I ever brought her late to school-- she didn't want to miss a minute! Then I had two hours to myself before I would pick up my son from his nearby elementary school, stay and play on the playground there, then head over to

pick up sister at Berrybrook. I tried to always bring a snack, and I became a master at quick dinners, because I loved to linger into the evening, letting the kids play in the beautiful spaces of this very special school.

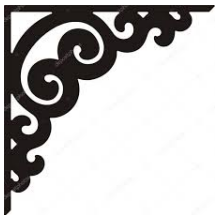
Whenever someone tells me their child is in the 4-day program, I tell them, "You're going to love it!" Berrybrook afternoons were a wonderful experience for our family. Though the rhythm seems unusual at first, it really worked for my children the years they were the big kids at preschool.

I remember my daughter asking for a friend from her 3-day class who was in the 5-day program. I told her the friend went to Berrybrook in the mornings. She wrinkled her brow and looked stern, then asked, "With the *little* kids?"

Whichever program your child ends up in, you're in a wonderful place. Enjoy your Berrybrook years!

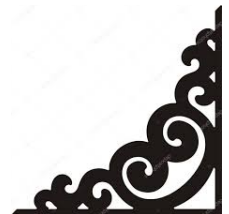
Michelle Hatfield

Board of Directors



.....FYI.....

***Berrybrook artwork is being featured at the
Duxbury Free Library during the month of February.
The display is comprised of several classes.
So if your family happens to visit the library, be sure to
check it out!***





The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program
*is offered during June and July on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and
Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00.*

*Children must be 4 by September 1st, (or a Berrybrook Beginner!) to
register.*

We also welcome children up to 7 years of age.

*All current families will receive complete information about
the program and registration process during the week of
February 24, 2020.*

AND

Berrybrook Admissions
Open House

Saturday, February 8th
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Spread the word