Learning Objectives In-Depth

Social and Emotional Development

Children learn to safely express their feelings and recognize a broad range of emotions in others, so that they can effectively articulate their needs and seek support. Educators model non-violent communication and help children facilitate their own conflict resolution. Dolls and puppets are used to model and reflect social and emotional interactions that the children can relate to and discuss without being directly involved in the situation. Group Reflection meetings occur daily and provide children time to share their thoughts and feelings with others while also listening to and respecting others' emotions and ideas.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

> ***Self-awareness:*** *identification of personal needs and feelings, management and regulation of emotions, positive identity development, self-esteem and self respect, independence, comfort with routines and transitions, flexibility, adaptability and resilience, healthy goal-setting and risk-taking*
>
> ***Relationships:*** *respect and recognition of others' feelings, empathy, non-violent conflict resolution (negotiation, compromise, self-reflection), cooperation and collaboration with peers and adults*

Literacy

Children experience meaningful reading and writing of various texts in independent, large and small group contexts. Read alouds and oral stories are repeated to build children's competence in prediction, ability to make connections with prior experiences, to notice elements of a story, and to encourage interest in story writing and retelling. The Children's Sign-in sheet enables children to explore mark-making and the meaning of print in a way that's purposeful and part of their everyday routine.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

> ***Emergent Reading:*** *vocabulary development, print awareness, knowledge of functions and concepts of print, use of picture clues, elements of a story, narrative structure, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, letter recognition and letter-sound correspondence, comprehension and reading fluency*
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> ***Emergent Writing:*** *mark-making, handwriting, dictation and description, inventive and phonetic spelling, upper and lower case letters, basic grammar and punctuation*

Mathematics

Children have access to many different kinds of materials and practical-use situations that develop mathematics and logical reasoning. Children learn and compare abstract concepts

of quantity by using their senses to gather information from concrete objects. The physical manipulation of objects stimulates children to visualize and manipulate quantities in their head. During outdoor play, children collect natural materials, such as acorns and sticks. They are excited to sort and count them to find out if they'll have enough to use in their mud pie.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

***Number Sense and Operations*:** number recognition, sequencing, 1:1 correspondence, explore whole number addition and subtraction, instant recall, counting in groups, commutative and associative properties, place value and base-ten

***Geometry and Spatial Sense*:** shape identification, symmetry, manipulation and visualization of two and three dimensional objects and representations, spatial awareness

Algebraic Thinking: awareness of patterns and sets, strategic counting and problem-solving

Measurement: quantities and scalar comparison using math vocabulary and units of measurement, use of tools and nonstandard measurement

***Data Analysis and Probability*:** classification, sorting, awareness of visual representations of data, estimation and prediction

Science

Our program incorporates numerous opportunities for scientific exploration, discovery, and problem-solving. Children observe natural phenomena and conduct their own experiments using information from their senses and through the use of real tools. Children develop a deep connection and are comfortable spending time in nature. Every morning children share weather observations and check that they have appropriate clothing for the day's adventure.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

Scientific inquiry: ask question, conduct research, form a hypothesis, test with experiment, analyze results and draw conclusion, report results, awareness of cause and effect, reasoning

States of Matter: cause and effect, characteristics of living and nonliving things, classification and properties of matter, comfort and connection with outdoor environments

Systems: weather identification, awareness of habitats, life cycles, and anatomy of local plants, animals, and fungi

***Sustainability and Health*:** identify precious natural resources, collective care and respect for our bodies and the environment, awareness of energy consumption and use of tools

Social Studies

Our program values activities and conversations involving the ways in which people are similar and different. Children experience accurate depictions of human diversity and local history through stories, visitors, and respectful discussions that challenge bias. Educators incorporate indigenous Abenaki culture and knowledge to facilitate children's understanding of place and time, and to broaden their ideas of community and families. A daily Share Circle provides opportunities for children to share information about their own families by bringing in a photo or artifact and talking about who is in their family and what's important to them.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

Knowledge of Self and Others: recognize, appreciate, and respect similarities and differences, recognize that there are many languages, family structures, racial identities, ethnicities and cultures, develop a positive self-identity and family pride

***Knowledge of Place*:** interact with local people, places and resources, explore indigenous culture and change over time including in environment, recognize unique features of a geographic location

Creative Arts

Children are encouraged to explore open-ended materials which don't have a specific purpose or set of directions. Educators emphasize the process and techniques that children use during their explorations with the materials in order to support their creativity and self-expression. For example, educators provide water and paint brushes outside for children to use and explore however they choose; whether it's to make a magic potion, paint a tree, or create a sculpture .

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

Visual Arts: explore and represent ideas and experiences with paint, drawing, watercolor, sculpture, graphics, architecture, film, photography, printmaking, poetry; compare and contrast color, shade, texture

Performing Arts: explore and represent ideas and experiences with music, dance and movement, drama through actions and language, patterns, sequence of steps, creativity

Perceptual, Motor, and Physical

Children spend most of their time running, climbing, rolling, and jumping outside. They experience uneven ground surfaces and have to adapt their bodies to be able to move more competently. Educators help children by ensuring the environment is safe enough for children to explore and manage healthy physical risks. The outdoor play environment engages various senses and improves physical coordination by providing dynamic and diverse textures and surfaces to explore.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

Gross Motor: large muscle strength and coordination, ability to balance, persistence, self-help, body awareness, physical self-regulation, personal health, nutrition, and safety (i.e. risk assessment and management)

Fine Motor: use of hands and fingers, feet and toes to manipulate objects, strength and coordination, use of writing and drawing tools, sensory integration and awareness

Language and Communication

Children learn methods for how to communicate effectively using verbal and nonverbal signals. Educators pair hands-on experiences with new vocabulary which helps children grasp and express new concepts. Songs and words are spoken in English and other world languages throughout the daily routine, so that children can better understand the use of language in multiple contexts. Educators facilitate public speaking opportunities each afternoon that require children to take turns and modulate their voices while sharing about special events from the day's activities.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

***Receptive*:** language comprehension, multi-step directions, recognition of social cues, interest in educator-led activities

***Expressive*:** articulate speech, use of complete sentences, voice projection, engage in conversations, voice volume moderation, social rules of language

Cognition

Free, child-driven play develops children's ability to think symbolically using mental representations of objects, compared to thinking using only the physical objects in their hands. Through engaging in imaginative scenarios, children learn to take on new perspectives and adapt to changing situations. Children have ample opportunities to problem-solve, think creatively and critically about issues that are important to them.

Instead of cleaning up materials after each play session, children can leave their materials out and return to them the next day. Long-term play projects enable children to have more rich play that incorporates planning, prioritizing, and mental flexibility.

Children will develop the following skills and knowledge at their own pace:

***Approach to Learning and Problem-Solving*:** curiosity, motivation, flexibility, creativity

***Approach to Play*:** mental representation, flexibility, and cognitive decentering, incorporates rich multifaceted roles, extended time frame, language is used to create a pretend scenario, complex interwoven themes, symbolic representations and actions

Executive Function: attention and engagement, persistence, planning, prioritizing, organization, cognitive self-regulation, flexibility in thinking and behavior, holds information in mind and manipulates it to perform tasks

Higher-Order Thinking: memory recall, make connections, use classification skills, problem-solving, flexibility and inventiveness in thinking