



BROOKLYN FRIENDS SCHOOL

March 26, 2020

Dear Preschool Families,

In this email you will find:

- A video message from Maura
 - What is ***Distance Learning*** in Preschool?
 - A ***Sample Home Routine/Schedule***
 - What to expect on March 30th
 - Maura's Request: Partnership and grace in challenging times
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Video message from Maura

Keep scrolling down. This is more than a short swipe but I will try to keep emails short as time goes on!

What is Distance Learning in Preschool?

First, let's look at what **Learning in Preschool** is:

Anchored in the Social Emotional development of children, Developmentally Appropriate (learning through Play), Experiential and Hands On!

And, what **Learning in Preschool** is **NOT**:

As you can see from the above, learning for 3-5 year olds does not mean:

- Being home and unable to be with friends;
- Sitting in front of screens or devices for lengthy periods of time;
- Doing "workbook" type academic exercises online that are neither exploratory nor hands-on.

This means that Remote Learning online is not appropriate for 3-5 year olds. This poses a unique challenge for the current crisis we are in.

You are probably asking, "What are we supposed to do now?"

First, let's take a deep breath together.

I know that your children will likely have a bit more screen time as you are easing in to getting the schedules up and running and getting your own work done. This is okay! There is no need to feel badly about this.

What this DOES mean is that we can give you continuing guidance and make the following possible:

Connection. Connect our community – children and families – with one another in various ways. This will include LIVE ZOOM TIMES in addition to other digital and offline ways of connecting.

Engagement. Learning through play at home – providing videos and suggested activities, apps, and creative ideas so that you can facilitate learning at home on your schedule. *You will receive preset videos and activity ideas from your child's classroom teachers and specialists.*

Asynchronous Learning. (*Yup - I learned that term recently!*) So that you can play videos, create with your child, or do an activity at a time when YOU need to.

Consistency. Create sample schedules that will work for many, but that can be individualized at home, based on your needs.

Sample Home Routine/Schedule

Again, ***what follows below is an example.*** Each of you will make your own adjustments and let us know how it is working for you. We will be responsive and may adjust again. You will let us know – you get the picture.

As stated earlier, remote online learning is not age-appropriate for 3-5 year olds. This is the challenging part now. You will be playing a key part here because **the learning for young children needs a grown-up loved one to set up, start, and facilitate activities.**

I do realize this may pose challenges. Each of us in our community can't imagine what the other may be going through at home – teachers who are also homeschooling their own children, health issues, caring for vulnerable relatives and friends, work demands, childcare schedules, and so much more. This is why **connection** and **supporting each other** will be vital as we move through this (please see my note at the end of this letter).

8:00 - 9:00

Open-ended developmentally appropriate playtime: (puzzles, trains, legos, magnatiles, puzzles, etc.) **Or** start another activity if you like to facilitate bright and early in the a.m. *You will get many suggested activities from teachers integrating all of the domains of experiential Preschool Learning.*

9:00 - 10:00

Messy Art/Play (painting, collage, etc.), **Or** another teacher- suggested activity

*** 10:00 (*see What to expect on March 30th for details)**

Connection Time with Teachers - A Live Zoom Morning Meeting! *You will receive an invitation with the Zoom link ahead of time.*

10:40 - 11:00

Snack Time

11:00 - 12:00

Open-Ended Play (trains, legos, magnatiles, etc., **Or** a dance party/physical activity like an obstacle course. Suggestion: FaceTime with grandparents or friends! **Or** a less messy art project such as beading, drawing, play dough on a tray, **Or** another teacher-suggested activity. *There will be lots of ideas from teachers, along with videos and apps coming your way from them.*

You are getting the idea by now. Switch out open-ended playtimes, or not. Don't stress! If you and your children are talking, reading stories, cooking, and having fun, they are learning!

12:00 - 12:30

Lunch

12:45

Take a stroller walk, keeping in mind social distancing. *A tip from a fellow BFS Parent:* to help keep your child happy in their stroller, walk where you won't pass by a playground.

1:45

Return home. Watch a short show so you can settle in.

2:00 - 3:00

Child's choice, example: pretend play, drawing, trains or making a city out of blocks, **Or** chore time (jobs with family).

BFS Parent tip: "Try to use this time as work/chore time, like sorting laundry, but I don't harp on it...if she/he is playing by herself or just chatting with me while I do a chore, that's fine!"

This could be another good time to switch to a teacher suggested activity!

Tip: Find out what each grown-up loved one likes, and let that person be the "Specialist" for that activity. Feel free to change roles!

What to Expect March 30th

Monday and Tuesday, March 30th and 31st: **Video greeting** to children from teachers, email with suggested activities that you can plug in to your routine.

Wednesday and Thursday, April 1st and 2nd: 10:00 and 10:30 Live **Zoom** meetings in **half groups** with your child's teachers. **They will let you know who is in each group.**

And more suggested activities for both of those days!

Friday and (ongoing every school day each week): 10:00am Live **Zoom** meetings with the **whole class** *and more suggested activities.*

Looking Ahead

We are currently training teachers and working on the evolution of our [Virtual BFS distance program](#). Stay tuned!

Lastly, a personal note from me:

I know it is hard. **We are here.** Although you haven't heard a lot from us because we have wanted to mind your time together these last couple of weeks, we have been working around the clock to plan, educate ourselves, and wrap our heads around a reality none of us could have imagined.

We know you are stressed, anxious and trying to cope, AND keep calm for your children who we also love and care about. Thank you for all you are doing.

Please be patient with us. **We will be there for you** and we will get there more and more. We will get there with you, together.

We will give you the language that we use in class, lots of ideas, videos from teachers, etc.

We will set up "office hours" so that we can connect and meet with you.

Know that I care about each and every one of you; so do the teachers, Jane, Crissy, Joy, and all the BFS folks who teach and care for your children. **We will get through this together.**

We understand that it has not been the Spring Break that we were looking forward to. Not for me, not for you, not for our teachers. Yet, we want to maintain as much normalcy as possible for children. *The welcome back from Spring Break will be for them*

only. On March 30th, there will be a video message from the teachers welcoming the children back from “Break” and activities that you can plug into the schedule.

We will be ready to ZOOM the morning meeting/s with you by Wednesday, April 1st!

Jane and I will be letting you know about a Coffee Hour ZOOM for the week of April 6th!

Till then,
Maura