



February 2021

February 15 - 19

Vacation week

Wednesday, February 24

Board meeting 7:00 pm (via Zoom)

Notes from the Head of School

Over the summer after one of our “Reopening Committee” meetings, one of the teachers approached me about holidays and if we’d be able to trade Valentines. My first response was that Valentine’s Day was almost six months in the future and that for sure by then we’d be maskless and COVID free. Those six months went fast and unfortunately we are not maskless nor are we COVID free. I belong to a group on FaceBook that’s for directors and administrators of early childhood programs and a few weeks ago the chatter began about Valentine’s Day and what others were planning. The overwhelming majority of the programs are keeping the tradition of allowing the trading of Valentines among the students. Many centers have decided to not allow food treats to come into school, but that’s our preCOVID rule about Valentines anyway so that’s not a change for us (due to food allergies, valentines should not include candy). The theme of the directors’ responses was that these children have had so much of their lives modified, to take away their gestures of kindness, friendship, and love that are represented by Valentines was unnecessary.

At Berrybrook, Valentines are a big deal around here, and not in the “Hallmark” ish, commercialized manner. The Berrybrook process of Valentine exchange is a good example of scaffolding in the education world, in which scaffolding is the process of building upon a sturdy understanding before moving onto the next level. Quite simply, you cannot move onto the next level without first establishing a steady base. One goal of scaffolding in the preschool world is increasing independence for each child. For our younger students, the act of passing out Valentines is a basic one, where we ask families to provide Valentines that do not

have classmates' names on them, so that each child can easily choose of the cards brought in and drop it into a peer's Valentine pouch or container. In the older 4 and 5 Day classes, we have higher expectations for the students. We ask that each 4 or 5 Day student write the name of their classmate on the Valentine they have specifically chosen for that person. We ask that they also sign their own name to each card. This process involves a lot of planning as the advice for parents is to have the student write one or two valentines each day leading up to the big day, as writing too many at one time can prove frustrating for some. The Valentine exchange for the older students becomes of the those "sneaky academic" activities that I often tell families on tours - the children are now practicing identifying a classmate's name on the valentine and matching it to the name of their classmate's decorated box. This process involves the practice of writing letters and then identifying letters and it so meaningful to them! We all love the Valentine celebrations that occur at school. When we see a child proudly take the Valentine they chose for their peer and see that peer's name on the box, and then deliver their Valentine it's just beautiful!

~ Mrs. Watts



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 will be cancelled.*****

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

Please remember to label all clothing with your child's name.

Teacher's Notes

♥ February = Love, Kindness, Joy ♥

Traditionally, when we think of February, we think of love. We think of Valentine's Day. We think of spreading our love to those around us with special cards or gifts of love. In current times, it has also become the month of kindness. Everywhere you look, kindness is in the air. What does kindness look like? We know kindness can "look" like many things. A kind word, a nice gesture, a charitable contribution, or just showing up. An act of kindness is much easier to discern than just a kind person. Kindness is genuine, and that type of kindness is the one that you can count on. Teaching children to do nice things for other people now could be the key to helping them recognize opportunities to show kindness later in life.

We all heard the quote "*People may not remember what you said, or what you did, but they will ALWAYS remember how you made them feel*".

Some acts of kindness that I have recognized over the past several weeks are:

- Everyone is affected by the act of kindness. Kindness is contagious and you never know just how big of an impact a small gesture of kindness can have.
- Kindness improves our quality of life in the workplace as well as in our own homes, it can bring people together.
- Doing good for others feels good! Showing kindness to others is just as rewarding as receiving it from someone else.
- Remember to ALWAYS laugh throughout the day, spreading JOY is its own act of kindness. I enjoy this act of kindness at Berrybrook every day!

The teachers at Berrybrook shared with me what "kindness" means to them:

Mrs. Watts - "Kindness, to me, is when I see my coworkers helping out each other when "no one is looking".....they do it just because, not so that someone will owe them a favor another time."

Mrs. Piccuito - "I think that kindness is generosity of the heart."

Mrs. Fosdick - "Kindness is doing something for someone even if you don't want to."

Mrs. Knight - "To me, kindness means giving love and feeling loved."

Ms. Kelley - "When someone shows you kindness, it makes you feel warm and fuzzy inside, and like you really matter."

Mrs. LaForest - "Kindness is when you show someone they are important and seen. It can be as simple as sharing a smile or holding a door. I believe the greatest kindness is putting someone else's needs ahead of your own by giving them your time. Then they will know they are loved."

Mrs. Rosen - "Kindness is giving your best to someone and expecting nothing in return."

Mrs. Costello - "Kindness to me is a smile. It's saying please and thank you and being considerate of others."



Soon at Berrybrook the children will be decorating their Valentine Mailboxes, making their Valentine envelopes and exchanging Valentine cards. The children love to exchange cards with their classmates, this takes a lot of patience and focus for the children. They start to think about friendship and what it means to be a good friend. Valentine celebrations will be celebrated with classmates and teachers, everyone will be discussing at group time about who they love and what it means to be “kind”. I really “Love” this month at Berrybrook!

Ask your children, family and friends what “kindness” means to them, it is a great way to share a smile! 😊

~ Mrs. Connell

Mrs. Connell teaches in the Beginners, 3 Day Room 3 and the 4 Day Room 2 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

From The Board of Directors

The Great Outdoors

As you know, February is a time to celebrate those that we love, whether that be our partners, parents, children, or friends. During this month, Berrybrook celebrates the month of love through classroom Valentine's Day celebrations. Each child shares valentines with his or her classmates and enjoys a special snack to celebrate the gift of friendship. As parents, we do many things on a daily basis to celebrate our love for our children - we use words such as "I love you", we provide supportive hugs and kisses, we provide daily sustenance in the form of food and drink, clothing, and warm homes, and we nourish our children's educational and social and emotional needs by helping them form relationships with family and friends and attend preschool.

Another way that we celebrate our love for our children is by spending time with them. Since many of us may not be able to travel over the winter recess due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have shared a few local activities that families may find enjoyable when home together this winter. As restrictions are changing often, kindly check each organization's website for the most up-to-date information.

Boston has several museums that are accessible to families. The Boston Children's Museum is currently open with limited capacity and restricted hours. Visitors can secure tickets online and review the latest open exhibits. The Freedom Trail is also open for visitors to enjoy a 2.5-mile self-guided tour around Boston's historic sites. A few exhibits are closed, so please check the website for the most up-to-date information.

Closer to home, there are many beautiful hiking and walking trails that families may enjoy. It is helpful to download the All Trails: Hike, Bike, and Run app. This free app allows the user to view the distance of the selected trail and provides a map, which has been helpful to me, as I do not have a good sense of direction. It also rates the trails as hard, medium, or easy. Several local hiking and walking trails include the East Street Bogs Loop, which is a 1.8 mile trail located in Duxbury, and the Tubbs Meadow Loop, which is a 2.4 mile walking trail located in Pembroke. Luddams Ford, located in Pembroke/Hanover, offers both walking and well-labeled hiking trails. My husband and I, our three girls, and our puppy recently walked Tubbs Meadow and Luddams Ford. Tubbs Meadow was more of a walking trail, but both offered an afternoon of fresh air and family time close to home. We saw several other families along the routes, some with pets, and we appreciated that all pets were leashed. Almost everyone we encountered also wore face coverings. There was ample parking at both locations.

Norris Reservation in Norwell also offers several family friendly trails. Also in Norwell, the South Shore Natural Science Center, has several labeled trails for families.

Although the EcoZone Museum is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, families can still walk the trails, visit the owl and the hawk, and enjoy the children's garden. The Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield also offers walking trails for families to enjoy.

Located a short distance north on Rte. 3, Hingham has several walking and hiking trails that may interest families. These include World's End, Wampanoag State Park, Bare Cove Park, and Turkey Hill. Several of these trails include water and city views. The Whitney Spur Rail Trail located in Cohasset also provides walking paths for families. If you are up for a longer drive, Webb Memorial State Park in Weymouth has walking trails and Blue Hills Reservation in Milton also provides several hiking trails for families. Similar to the Boston attractions, please check the trail's websites for up-to-date information about hours, reservations, restrooms, etc.

Hopefully this sample list of walking and hiking trails is helpful. Wishing you and your family the opportunity to spend some time together outside with those you love.

Andrea Doton

Board of Directors



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 22, 2021.*