

Why Joyce Preschool?



Joyce Preschool offers high-quality education and preparation for school. Our unique two-way language immersion program:

- provides **bilingual instruction in Spanish and English**, innovative and creative programming, and extensive school readiness work
- ensures native language early literacy support as well as second language acquisition
- emphasizes **social and emotional development**
- enriches classroom learning through puppet shows, special presentations, guests from the community, field trips, and literacy packets
- is accredited by the **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**, and received the highest possible rating from **MN Parent Aware**

Joyce Preschool involves and supports families by:

- **working closely with parents** to ensure a positive, successful experience
- welcoming back many returning families each year
- **bringing families together** for classroom celebrations, field trips, conferences, potlucks, year-end picnic and parent workshops
- encouraging parents to **volunteer** in the classroom once per month
- working with community organizations to bring **resources and support** to families
- maintaining an active Board of Directors with significant parent representation
- providing guidance and resources to families about Minneapolis kindergarten choice

Joyce Preschool offers a safe and nurturing environment where:

- children learn from experienced teachers who love teaching
- our **average teacher-student ratio is 1:7**
- staff is very **kind, caring, enthusiastic and nurturing** with the children
- parent and community volunteers are encouraged in the classroom
- staff continually invests in professional development

Joyce Preschool appreciates language and cultural diversity. Our policies ensure:

- student enrollment is approximately 1/3 native Spanish-speaking, 1/3 native English-speaking and 1/3 native bilingual Spanish and English
- children **develop skills in both languages**, learning from each other and from teachers
- at least half of teachers are native Spanish speakers (currently 4 of 7)
- **all cultures are affirmed and celebrated**

Why Joyce Preschool?

Joyce Preschool is accessible to everyone. We offer:

- sliding fee scholarships for families with financial need
- mid-day **transportation** in our school van
- bilingual staff who communicate with families in English or Spanish
- **extended day options** (up to 5 hours per class day, 2-3 days per week)

Joyce Preschool provides in-home support services in Spanish and English:

- **all incoming** students and families are visited by the Parent Outreach Coordinator before beginning school and are offered support in preparing for preschool as well as assistance finding any necessary resources or services
- our Parent Outreach Coordinator is available to help **all students and parents** learn techniques to enhance **school readiness skills**, and help address any behavioral or familial concerns that impacts the child's well-being



Classroom Overview



Language Use

Throughout the daily schedule, language learning is promoted through use of vocabulary that is common to the classroom and introduction of new vocabulary. Our two-way immersion model reinforces native language development and introduces children to a second language through our monthly thematic curriculum. Teachers, parents, interns and community volunteers serve as strong language models by interacting in their native languages, while students negotiate language in mixed groups through child-directed play. By maintaining a balance of native languages in each classroom, Joyce Preschool helps students learn from each other as well as from their teachers.

We welcome parents, family and community members to be involved in the life of the classroom through sharing about their countries, cultures or traditions throughout the school year.

Assessment

Joyce Preschool uses Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI's) to measure language development and early literacy skills, as well as a Developmental Checklist as part of the Work Sampling System. Work Sampling is an early childhood assessment tool that assists teachers in observing, recording, and evaluating an individual child's skills, knowledge, behaviors, and accomplishments. There is a rubric that provides specific examples of skills and behaviors within the appropriate range for most children in each age group. The checklist is completed three times per year, and includes the following domains: Personal and Social Development, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, The Arts and Physical Development and Health.

Classroom Schedule

Arrival Time

Children are greeted and welcomed to school each day by their teachers. This is also an opportunity for parents to connect with teachers and with other parents from the class. During arrival time children are able to choose between large motor activities or puzzles, sensory play and early literacy activities, building with blocks, Legos and various constructive materials, games, math, science and more. The learning materials used during arrival time are rotated throughout the year to provide children with an exposure to a wide array of learning experiences. Teachers will guide children to activities when assistance is needed.

Children build social and emotional competence, conversation skills, gross motor ability (running, climbing, playing active games) and fine motor skills (writing, drawing, cutting and coloring). **Approximately 20 minutes**

Large Group Time (Circle Time)

Children sing songs, participate in literacy activities, talk about the calendar and weather, hear stories, participate in finger plays, and interact with flannel board stories. They also experience dancing and movement, learn about musical instruments and talk about what activities are planned for the day.

Children learn how to take turns speaking in a large group and how to sit in a large circle and follow teacher-led activities. This is a time where children hear single language instruction (Spanish or English) and children develop their native language or begin learning a second language. **Approximately 15-20 minutes**

Learning Centers

This time of the day allows children to explore and choose from a wide variety of activities; some activities are teacher-directed and others are designed for children to explore on their own. During this time, two teachers are generally doing small group activities and one teacher is assisting children throughout the classroom with social interactions, providing guidance and direction when needed, and assisting with bathroom breaks. Activities during this time include: art, music, reading, blocks and building, science, large motor activities (i.e. tricycles), science experiments and activities, dancing and movement, writing activities (journaling in notebooks), sensory exploration (water, sand, play-dough, etc), and dramatic play that includes house play and rotating theme exploration in a variety of theme-based play such as a doctor's office, post office, or restaurant. **Approximately 50-60 minutes**

Snack Time

Children bring a healthy snack to school and enjoy being part of the group life of the class. Children learn to use manners when asking for help with snack and to communicate in both languages with classmates and teachers. They learn responsibility for cleaning up their snack and putting it away. **Approximately 15 minutes**

Secret Sack and King or Queen of the Week

Children have opportunities throughout the year to speak in front of their class. This is a time for each child to bring in special items that include family pictures, items from his or her culture and items that are special to the child. This promotes cultural awareness and self-esteem.