



# Mallett/UMF Pre-K Parent Handbook

Mrs. Neal, Mrs. Casavant, and Mrs. Bailey  
Mrs. Spear and Mrs. Hutchinson

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## Teacher Bios:



**Erika Neal began her career teaching infants, toddlers and preschoolers at a nationally accredited early childhood program in Augusta. She earned her Master’s degree in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Maine. In her career, she has provided developmental therapy for children with special needs and consultation to other early childhood teachers around special education and challenging behaviors. She has been teaching Pre-K in this partnership since 2010. She lives with her husband in Salem Township.**



**Angie Casavant earned her Bachelor’s degree in Recreation from University of Maine at Presque Isle. She has worked in education for many years and has been at the Mallett Pre-K since the fall of 2014. She has an extensive background in Special Education particularly working with children with challenging behavior. Angie enjoys being active outside and she lives in Farmington with her family and 2 dogs.**



**Jubilee Bailey earned her Bachelor’s degree from the University of Maine at Farmington where she majored in Early Childhood Education with a minor in Psychology. She has worked for the Head Start program since 1998. In that time she has been a teacher, home visitor, and lead teacher. With her background in Head Start, Jubilee brings with her a wealth of experience related to child development, using a holistic approach to working with children and families, as well as collaborating with community resources. She lives in Jay with her husband and their daughter.**



**Sara Spear began exploring early childhood education directly after high school. She owned and operated her own childcare center for four years before working for Head Start as a preschool teacher for the last twenty years. She was the first to be a nationally accredited home visiting/preschool program in the state. She graduated from the University of Maine at Farmington with a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood. She holds an Early Literacy Certification and is continuing her education in the early childhood and special education field. She resides in Farmington with her husband and two daughters.**



**Rebecca Hutchinson is the Ed Tech in the Pre-K room shared by Mrs. Spear and Mrs. Oakley. She gained her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education from Central Maine Community College. She has been teaching in preschool rooms for a total of five years, including a small learning center she co-owned in Dixfield. Rebecca lives in Carthage with her husband and two young boys.**

## Program Overview

The Mallett/UMF Pre-K program was developed in 2009 and was originally housed in a building on the University of Maine at Farmington campus. The program moved into the new W.G. Mallett School in the fall of 2011. The program has expanded and now serves 64 children throughout four sessions. The maximum group size is 16 children with two teaching staff. There are two Pre-K classrooms in the school and the sessions are Monday/Tuesday and Thursday/Friday.

This is a unique program offering children the opportunity to learn in a classroom alongside Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education students from UMF. These students are enrolled in either their practicum or internship and their participation in the Pre-K classrooms is part of their coursework toward their degree. Most of these students are enrolled in ECH 293- Intermediate Practicum and they are required to spend 8 hours per week in the Pre-K classroom. Erika Neal is the instructor for the course and she along with the other teachers spend time supervising and supporting these students as they participate in the daily routines of the Pre-K classroom. In addition, the UMF students meet each Wednesday morning for Seminar in Mrs. Neal's classroom where they discuss topics and learn strategies relevant to their experience in the classrooms. Students are also placed in Mrs. Mrs. Spear's classroom and are mentored by that teaching team. This partnership provides the children with many opportunities for increased attention and support as there are more adults in the classroom however, the amount of practicum students in the classroom at any one time is limited to four.

The program also includes a partnership with Child Development Services (CDS). CDS is the agency that provides special education for children who qualify for these services. The inclusion of children with special needs is integral to the fabric of the Pre-K program. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to learn alongside their peers and it is the role of the family and educators to ensure the needs of all children are being addressed. Some children enrolled in Pre-K will be receiving special education services that will be delivered in the classroom and therapists will spend time in the classroom to support the child's acquisition of skills in this setting.

We are also partnering with Community Concepts-Head Start and will be serving 8 Head Start children in Mrs. Neal's Thursday/Friday session. This partnership allows us to increase services for those children/families who qualify. Mrs. Jubilee Bailey is an employee of Community Concepts and will be working alongside Mrs. Neal and Mrs. Casavant in the classroom on Thursdays and Fridays.

# Assessment and Curriculum Planning

In order to provide the highest quality of care and education to children, the Mallett/UMF Pre-K program has designed the following assessment plan which is done collaboratively with families. At the initial parent/teacher conference, families are given information regarding the assessment plan and timeline, including choice, use, scoring and interpretation of screening and assessment methods. The variety of assessment methods are sensitive to family culture, experiences, children's abilities and disabilities and home language, translator will be provided as needed. They are meaningful and accurate. Staff and families achieve consensus about assessment methods that will best meet the child's needs.

## **Why do we do assessment?**

Assessment is done in order to see where a child is developmentally and to determine their interests, strengths and needs. Assessment helps to identify when children may need more work in a particular area of development. Additionally, assessment ensures that the needs of children who are progressing to higher stages of development are being met.

Assessment is also a tool that teachers utilize to communicate children's developmental progress with families. Families are part of the assessment process in that they offer information on children's interests and needs as well as their progress and accomplishments that have been observed at home.

Assessing children's progress also ensures that the program is meeting the needs of all the children in the group and reflects the overall effectiveness of teaching practices, strategies and the environmental design. The staff use the assessment process to evaluate their performance and to plan for program improvement.

## **What do we assess and what instruments are used?**

The Brigance Preschool Screen II is used as the initial screen/assessment. It assesses: Personal Data Response, Color Recognition, Picture Vocabulary, Visual Discrimination, Visual Motor Skills, Gross Motor Skills, Rote Counting, Identifies Body Parts, Follows Verbal Directions, Number Concepts, and Syntax and Fluency for the 4year old child . This screen is done within 45 days of entry into the program.

The teachers and practicum students keep anecdotal records and collect work samples on all of the children so as to maintain consistent records of children's progress in various learning domains throughout the year.

The anecdotal records and work samples are aligned to the Maine Early Learning and Development Standards and are compiled into a portfolio of learning that is given to the child's

parents at the end of the year. Portfolios are worked on by the teaching team as well as the UMF Early Childhood Education students working in the classroom for practicum and internships.

*The Maine Early Learning and Development Standards are the state learning standards for children in Preschool programs in the state of Maine. As the teaching staff designs curriculum, based on children's interests and assessment data, they align each activity to these learning standards to ensure that the curriculum is addressing the learning needs of individual children enrolled in Pre-K.*

### **What do we do with the results of assessment?**

The results of the assessment process may be utilized to seek outside additional services such as developmental screenings and diagnostic assessment for children with developmental delays or other potential issues. Additionally, teachers and families utilize it to create and adjust the curriculum to improve programming and plan for further scaffolding of children's learning. Finally the results will be evaluated continually to assess the effectiveness of teaching techniques and strategies as well as the assessment process.

### **Under what conditions are children assessed?**

Assessments are done in the least restrictive, familiar and natural environment for the child with a familiar adult. The teaching team (including UMF Practicum Students and Interns) will conduct anecdotal observations while the child is engaged in free play (free choice), small or large group activities to include meals and napping routines and transitions. Parents also contribute information which is utilized in the assessment process.

### **How are families involved ?**

Family conferences occur three times per year. At these conferences families, staff, and relevant specialists communicate with each other regarding the child's progress, strengths and areas of concern. Families share their wishes on their child's individualized curriculum opportunities. Teachers then utilize this information in further planning for the child.

Conferences and information will be conducted in the home language if the parent requests the assistance of a translator.

### **How is confidentiality maintained?**

All records are confidential. They are kept in a locked file, and are accessible only to staff members. Staff members and others who are authorized by written permission from the parent/guardian have access to these records in order to continue to provide ongoing services to children.

# Sample Daily Schedule

(subject to change throughout the year)

9:00 Arrival, Breakfast/Snack, Toothbrushing, Free Choice

9:20-9:35 Morning Meeting

9:35-10:15 Outside

10:15-10:30 2nd part of morning meeting

10:30-11:40 Learning Centers and Snack as a center

11:40-12:00 Circle

12:00-12:30 Lunch

12:30-1:00 Clean up, bathroom and Reading books

1:00-2:00 Quiet/Rest Time

2:00-2:45 Afternoon Centers

(2:00 Afternoon snack offered as a center)

2:45 Clean up and prepare for dismissal

## Guidance/Discipline

Our goal is for children to be independent and able to access self-disciplinary skills as they interact with their peers. In order to achieve this goal, we use the following guidance techniques to foster children's growth in this area:

- Redirection.
- Offering children appropriate words to use in social situations.
- Modeling of language skills to be used in social situations.
- Assisting children in approaching other children with conflict resolution strategies.
- Modeling appropriate conflict resolution strategies. This will include validating feelings of all children involved in the conflict; find out from all parties what the problem is; all parties will be part of coming up with a solution (teachers will model if necessary); children will implement solution, check in with children to see how it worked.
- Positive reinforcement.
- Ignore negative behaviors if no harm is being done to people or materials.
- Removal from current area of play may be necessary if the child is not able to compose him or herself, is using profanity or is otherwise out of control, until the child can conduct him/herself appropriately. The teacher will guide the child to another area or stay with the child until they are settled and able to resume play.
- Adults will foster conversations between the child and his/her peers as to what are appropriate behaviors.
- Adults will give children who need extra assistance specific criteria for being able to play in a particular area.
- Supportive holding will only be used if a child is posing a danger to him/herself, other people or materials.
- Teaching staff never use physical punishment such as shaking or hitting and do not engage in psychological abuse or coercion.
- Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory remarks and do not withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

## Inclusion

The concept of inclusion is to provide all children and their families—regardless of race, religion, gender, preferred language, abilities, cultures, ethnicities, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, family structures and other personal choices and experiences—with opportunities to actively participate in all aspects of the program. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Ultimately, the implementation of inclusive practices must lead to equal developmental benefit for each individual child and family. All opportunities for inclusion will consider each family's interests and skills and needs of the program staff.

In the name of inclusion, Mallett/UMF Pre-K...

- Supports the continued development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of high-quality, full inclusion supports, services, and systems for all children and families.
- Supports the development of pre-service and in-service training programs that prepare families, service providers, and administrators to develop and maintain inclusive settings.
- Keeps current with, and adheres to, professional research and recommendations that relate to inclusive practices.
- Supports the restructuring and unification of social, educational, health, intervention, and other supports and services in order to ensure that all children and families are able to participate actively in our program.
- Supports the idea that access to—and participation in—the age-appropriate general curriculum of the center becomes central to the identification, implementation, and continuance of specialized support services.



# **Pre-K Bus Information**

**Mt. Blue RSD Bus Garage**  
**108 Learning Lane, Farmington, ME 04938**  
**207-778-4307 [busgarage@mtbluersd.org](mailto:busgarage@mtbluersd.org)**  
**<http://www.mbrsd.org/index.php/transportation-a-facilities>**

Your child will be greeted each morning by a Pre-K teacher or UMF practicum student as he/she gets off the bus.

In the afternoon, a teacher or UMF practicum student will ensure that your child gets on his/her bus safely.

Parent drop-offs and pick-ups will be done at the front Pre-K vestibule entrance near the Pre-K playground.

Please have your child wear the name/bus tag during the first few weeks of school as we get to know everyone. These will be handed out at open house and can be attached to the child's backpack.

## **Rest Time:**

**Learning and playing in Pre-K is hard work, full of stimulating and engaging activities and interactions.**

Daily rest time gives children a quiet break to recharge and then be ready to resume learning for the afternoon. Children accustomed to sleeping will be allowed to sleep, and others will rest quietly.

**Please provide a small blanket to be left at school and a comfort item if needed (labeled with your child's name). These will be sent home periodically for cleaning.**

## **Outdoor play:**

**We go outside every day unless there is a steady rain or frigid temperature. Please be sure that your child comes to school prepared with the appropriate outerwear.**

Please make sure that your child's jacket, hat, mittens, snowpants and boots are labeled with permanent marker, so that nothing is lost.

We ask that you provide practical shoes/sneakers to be worn outside and in the gym, so that your child can run, climb and jump without injury.

On cold or rainy days when your child wears boots, please send slippers or indoor shoes to change into. Flip flops and clogs are difficult to run in so please ensure your child has sneakers in their bag on the days they wear these types of shoes to school.

**If you prefer your child to wear sunscreen, please apply at home before school.**

If you want us to reapply during the day, please send a labeled bottle to keep in the classroom.

## **Extra Clothing:**

**Playing can get messy! Please fill a large Ziploc bag with:**

- \*Socks
- \*Underwear
- \*Shirt
- \*Pants
- \*Remember to label them with your child's name.
- \*If your child may need them, please supply addition pairs of underwear and pants.

These items will be returned at the end of the season for refill and at the end of the year.

## **Snacks:**

**Young children need to eat often to maintain energy and to keep their minds and bodies growing. The school day can be long.**

Please provide 2 healthy snacks every day (one for morning and one for afternoon).

Some snack suggestions:

- \*Yogurt
- \*Crackers
- \*Cheese
- \*Fruit- dried or fresh
- \*Veggies with dip

Please refrain from sending candy, soda, and sugary drinks such as Kool-Aid. Snacks and drinks high in sugar (such as some fruit gummies, some yogurts, and puddings) do not provide fuel for sustained energy for learning and playing.

## **Breakfast and Lunch:**

The Pre-K participates in the public school lunch program at Mallett School. Information will be sent home at the beginning of the school year. Families will be asked to complete a form to determine eligibility for the free and reduced lunch program. Children who do not qualify for free meals, will be required to pay for both breakfast and lunch if they choose to eat meals provided by the school.

Parents must send in money that will be on the child's account. If you choose not to purchase the school lunch for your child, please provide a nutritious bag lunch. It is the responsibility of the parents to inform their child's teacher of the need for breakfast each day by sending in a note.

Both breakfast and lunch are served in the classroom however, we will eat lunch in the cafeteria later in the year to help the children prepare for the transition to Kindergarten.



## Toys from Home

\*Toys at school are carefully chosen to meet the needs of the children in the group and to continue their learning and development.

\*Toys from home may take a child's focus from this learning opportunity.

\*Toys at school are designed for use by multiple children in a large group environment.

\*Toys from home are typically not made for use by many children and could be easily lost, broken, or otherwise damaged.

\*Toys at school are established already to be shared, used in turns, or for working together.

\*Toys from home are often personal and difficult to share.

Any stuffed animals or "lovies" sent for rest time or comfort will be kept in cubbies until needed. We appreciate your cooperation.

Thank you,  
Mallett Pre-K Teachers

# Too Sick For School ??



One of the problems often confronting parents is when a child complains of not feeling well. If your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms or conditions, **please** keep him/her home where he can rest comfortably. Your child's teacher, classmates and their parents will all thank you!!

Temperature / fever free for 24 hours without taking medications that reduce fever

Unidentified rash with a fever.

Diarrhea ( 2 or 3 loose or watery stools in half a day ). Should be free from diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting ( more than once in 24 hours ).

Strep throat, unless your child has been on medication for at least 24 hours.

Eye infection, such as conjunctivitis or pink-eye until treated for 24 hours or when symptoms disappear for viral conjunctivitis.

Toothache ( contact your dentist ).

Earache ( consult your doctor without delay ).

Scabies or lice ( may return when treated and nit free )

A contagious disease such as chicken pox, measles, mumps etc.

Impetigo, unless child has been on medication for 24 hours. Lesions should be covered.

Cold, flu or other respiratory infection that inhibit the child's ability to take part in usual daily activities. The child will need to stay home until fever and other symptoms have subsided or as recommended by their family physician.