



# Fact Sheet

## Our Mission Statement

Explorer Preschool is a parent participation preschool where children, at an individual pace, can learn and develop through play and parents can learn and grow in their abilities to be child educators at home, at school, and in their community.

## Our Philosophy

Explorer Preschool is a play-based, developmentally designed program which provides a learning environment for both parents and children. The children's program is based on the growing knowledge of child development and appropriate practices. Materials and methods are research-based and children are given choices of activities which are supervised by the teacher and parents in the classroom. Parents receive instruction from the staff and other resources to increase their knowledge and skills related to the child.

## Our Teachers

Explorer is committed to quality education which is evidenced by its highly educated staff. Konne Ainsworth is Explorer's Director and has been on staff since 1976. She holds a bachelor's degree in Child Development and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education. She is a credentialed California elementary school teacher and credentialed to teach early childhood education to adults at community college. Konne teaches the 4-day and Tuesday/Thursday class.

Annie Castle Deckert joined the Explorer staff in 1995. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, a master's degree in Educational Psychology, and an Adult Education credential. Annie guides the Together Time and 2s classes.

Jackie Kite came aboard the Explorer team in 1997. She obtained her teaching credential in Visual Arts, English and Education in England, and also has an Adult Education credential. She brings a wealth of experience through her travels and teaching in Greece and Italy. Jackie teaches the Monday/Wednesday/Friday class, Friday 5s, co-teaches Tuesday/Thursday and assists in the Together Time classes.

Explorer Parent Participation Preschool  
2700 Booksin Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125  
(408) 723-0757  
[www.explorerpreschool.org](http://www.explorerpreschool.org)

## **Is Explorer Preschool licensed and accredited?**

Explorer Preschool is licensed by the California Department of Social Services as a daycare facility and is accredited as a preschool by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In addition, the school is a member of the California Council of Parent Participation Preschools. Explorer is presently fully enrolled with 100 children. Since its inception, approximately 3000 children from about 1500 families have attended Explorer Preschool.

## **What is Parent Participation?**

A parent participating preschool is a family enterprise. Families join together and draw on each other's talents and resources to provide a sound educational environment for their children. The director and teachers provide leadership and guidance as parents assume the responsibility for implementing the program.

The advantages of the parent participation system of education are numerous. Studies show that children whose parents are involved in their education and learning are more successful in school. Sharing in your child's preschool program provides you with a unique opportunity to see him in a group situation and participate in a program designed for that specific age group.

## **What are Parent Education Classes (PEC)?**

The parent education program is a necessary component of Explorer which gives parents an opportunity to learn new skills from experts in the field of child education. Research shows adult and adult-child learning builds stronger and healthier families.

There are two PECs a month. The daytime PEC is led by the class instructor. It is held during class time and focuses on age-related topics and concerns specific to each class. The evening PEC gathers the entire school of parents together and features workshops or invited speakers. These class meetings and seminars contribute to a parent's knowledge of early childhood development and trends in education.

## **Is Explorer Preschool associated with a particular religious organization?**

Explorer is not affiliated with any religious organization, and accepts children without regard to religion. Parents are often invited to talk to the children about popular holidays celebrated in their religion or culture. Though Explorer currently leases space from Lincoln Glen Church, the school has no specific religious affiliation with the church.

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## **What is the Curriculum?**

What the preschool is teaching may not be evident to the casual observer, but your child is learning and growing in a very real way. Play is important business.

There are eight separate classes at Explorer for children ages 14 months to 5+. All the classes adhere to Explorer's developmental philosophy, which holds that children are best prepared for K-12 education when they have developed self-confidence, strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to pay attention to teachers and to focus on a task. These skills are gained through a combination of free play with peers and structured activities in art, sciences, music, cooking, dramatic play, gross motor activities and manipulative toys.

The classes emphasize the development of verbal and focusing skills through circle time and group reading, as well as interpersonal skills through actively supervised, cooperative play. The kids also engage in additional age-appropriate activities.

The 4-Day class is a unique class and is held at nearby Vasona Park during the fall and spring months. Vasona classes emphasize a science curriculum including hiking, field trips, experiments, creek exploration and the study of local animals and insects. Teacher-assisted journal writing motivates an interest in reading and the alphabet.

## **What is the "Outdoor Classroom?"**

In 2004, Explorer families, teachers, and alumni realized a dream to create an outdoor educational environment that stimulates the students' senses and provides endless opportunities to explore and learn. The outdoor classroom is a space filled with more than 30 different types of plants which add texture, color, smell, and taste to the classroom.

There are winding pathways, water and sand areas, two climbing structures and a full-scale play house. Students continually find new ways to interpret this space every day like the one student who learned a "new way" to work the tire swing or another student who sees the climbing structure as her very own pirate ship. The structures are kept simple to foster imagination and the many play areas build cooperation and sharing. Water play areas, sand play and the bicycle trail helps build fine and large motor skills. The entire outdoor classroom encourages exploration!