

**YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY****Puddletown School**

As the first day of school approaches, we want to suggest some ways of preparing. Each child should feel comfortable and secure about coming to school. It's helpful if children know what they can expect and prepare in their own way for coming.

*The following is a list of some ideas. Please add to these with any others you think may help to make your child feel comfortable during their first days at school:*

- Talk about your first days at a new school. Tell stories about yourself at that age and what meeting new people or going to a new school was like for you.
- Let your child pick out some clothes for the first day and the extra set that they will be keeping in the classroom.
- Find a picture of your family that your child can bring and keep at school.
- Make a list of the lunch items with your child that they want to have. The more things that they can prepare on their own, the better.
- Go over how to tell someone you need to use the bathroom.
- Drive by the school, pointing it out.
- Practice leaving any special toys or blankets in a "safe" place (car seat or home) so your child will come to school already trusting that it will be there at the end of the day.

*What you can tell your child we will be doing the first day:*

- Singing songs
- Meeting new people
- Getting to know the classroom and the school
- Eating snack or lunch
- Playing outside

*What your child should bring to school:*

- Lunch
- Change of clothes
- Indoor shoes
- Rain gear

As children transition from home to school they will each have their own way of understanding and dealing with the changes. No matter how much preparation we do, some children adjust to leaving home and making these changes with more difficulty. We feel that a brief goodbye will make the transition easier for everyone.

*If you have any questions or concerns, please call us at 503-233-8069.*

**BRINGING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL****Puddletown School**

Goodbyes can be an emotional and anxious time for children and parents alike. It is important to remember that lengthy goodbyes are hard on everyone. Parents are reminded to model the behavior they want their child to demonstrate. Be strong and confident! Consistency is the key. Please remember the tears rarely last long. You are always welcome to call and check in after a difficult goodbye.

*One suggestion that has worked well in the past is to role-play the goodbye routine before coming to school:*

- Come and visit during the summer or before your child's first day at a time when school is closed (weekends or evenings). Walk around and talk about Puddletown and how exciting it will be to come to school.
- At a neutral time, gather your child and 2 other people (neutral meaning when your child is not tired, hungry or anxious about going to school)
- Explain briefly that you will be playing a game where you practice going to school and everyone will get a chance to play all roles
- Explain briefly that when you drop off your child you will walk them to the door and then give them (for example) 1 kiss and 1 hug. Then they will walk into their classroom, say good morning to their teacher, put their things away and wash their hands.
- Be your child in the first round and have the other person (another parent, older sibling, relative) be your child, and your child the teacher.
- Role-play the routine, with your child saying good morning as the teacher. Switch roles, allowing your child to be the drop off adult and finally the child.
- Keep it fun and light
- End with a reminder "This is how we will drop you off at Puddletown School!"

*Things to remember:*

- Let your child walk from the car rather than being carried.
- Say goodbye at the classroom door, allowing your child to walk in by him/herself.
- If you are doing curb-side drop off, a staff member will help your child from the car to the classroom.
- If your child has a favorite toy or blanket that they are attached to, please practice leaving it in a safe place (the car seat or a specific spot at home) so your child can trust it will be there when they return.
- If your child is having a difficult drop off, stick to the routine. As soon as you change the routine, the message is that you also don't feel safe or comfortable, which will likely make your child feel more uneasy.
- Allow the staff to help by guiding your child into the classroom.
- Feel free to call or email if drop off was challenging or if you have any questions/concerns.

*Arrival Time:*

If you would like to take advantage of our drop-off program, please arrive between 8:20 – 8:30am. Drop off is on the south side of Puddletown on SE Knapp Street. Please make sure you are facing west as you pull up. To help foster good relationships, do not use our neighbors' driveways to turn around. Pull up to the drop off zone and a staff member will escort your child to her classroom.