

**BRINGING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL**

## Puddletown School

Goodbyes can be an emotional and anxious time for children and caregivers alike. It is important to remember that lengthy goodbyes are hard on everyone. Caregivers 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 the staff member(s) greeting you, put their things away and wash their hands.
- Be your child in the first round and have the other person (another caregiver, older sibling, relative) be your child, and your child the staff member.
- Role-play the routine, with your child saying good morning as the staff member 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 independently.
- If you are doing curbside 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.