

Lilliput Land Cooperative Nursery School Approach Regarding Emergent Curriculum

Emergent Curriculum is planning the focus of learning in the classroom, based on interactions between teachers and children, with both contributing ideas to create appealing units of study. Emergent curriculum is socially and intellectually engaging and personally meaningful to children.

Educators follow the children's lead and then introduce new and exciting activities to sustain their interests and deepen their explorations. This is a method that requires genuine responsiveness and attention to children. Our emphasis is focused on developing social skills, problem solving skills, fostering independence and building a foundation for a lifelong love of learning.

Goals of Emergent Curriculum

1. To inspire delight, curiosity, celebration and inquiry.
2. To build intrinsic motivation and a long-term love of learning in children.
3. To help guide children as a learner, rather than relying on instruction and direction from others.
4. To inspire children to celebrate their unique talents and abilities.
5. To encourage consistent self-reflection and professional growth among teachers, so they may always improve the quality of classroom experience.
6. To maintain a teaching staff well-versed in the fundamentals of how and what children learn, so they can support and guide learning as it emerges naturally inside the school, in the natural world, and in our community.
7. To allow the natural pace of individual and group learning to emerge, and not be guided exclusively by the clock.
8. To create cooperation, partnership, resource-sharing and amiability between staff, students, parents and the community.
9. To give children an organized environment in which to use all their senses and faculties to learn.
10. To recognize that critical learning takes place during conflict, negotiation, brainstorming and resolution.
11. To honor and welcome all children.

Where Do Ideas for Emergent Curriculum Come From?

The children provide the ideas that form the foundation for the units of study that are prepared, organized, coordinated and facilitated by the teachers. Other sources of ideas include:

1. Things, events and people in the environment.
2. Developmental tasks to be mastered at each developmental stage.
3. Family, community and cultural influences. Parents are encouraged to participate and contribute to their children's learning and daily experience.
4. Questions that arise over the course of living together day-to-day.
5. Serendipity or what just happens.

Documentation

Documentation of children's interests and experiences is the basis, and ongoing process, of the Emergent Curriculum. It is a collection of the learning taking place daily. All documentation collected should be dated to create a timeline of the interests as they develop. It is for the children to view. It also helps parents to know and understand their child and his/her daily learning. Some of the ways that teachers at Lilliput Land may display and document growth include:

- Teacher's Notes - these entries give the teachers the opportunity to reflect upon how the day went and how the children's interest and learning is progressing. We learn more about the children we teach and prepare ourselves better to respond to them. Effective notes will open up possibilities for deeper learning, research, and children's experiences. We can then use this to find new activities and materials that will lead children to sustain deeper interests and construct new understandings of the world around them.
- Daily Observations – complete daily observations of children's play, conversation, and learning.
- Photographs -pictures can provide children with wonderful memories, give the teachers visual aids when planning future activities, and provide parents with opportunities to view their children at play.
- Children's Artwork - this can become a visual timeline showing where children's abilities were and where they are now. It is a representation of their learning and understanding.

Tools

The educators collect and present the children with as much information as they can gather, revealing it through experiences such as: visuals, art activities, stories, circle times, songs, and guest visitors. The educators strive to expose the children to as many hands-on experiences as possible.

Music geared to children is available in the classroom to encourage creative expression through dance, song, and rhythm. Stories on CD are also used to engage children. Lilliput Land does not have television or video materials within its classroom. We have an iPad which is used to enhance children's experiences by allowing access to information. ex. While reading a story, the sound a giraffe makes is mentioned, staff can find that sound in real time and relay it to the children. Children are not allowed to engage with the iPad alone.