

Kiddling Art

Highlands Preschool, supporting young learners

Active Learning: The way children construct knowledge.

For over forty years, children have been attending a remarkable pre-school in Edgemont Village.

Today Highlands Pre-school is welcoming a second generation of students whose parents were enrolled there as youngsters. The 'play-based' environment helps children develop learning skills that last a lifetime.

"At Highlands, our beautiful classrooms are all above ground with huge windows," says board member Kathy Bright. "We have a private playground and a gymnasium. We have chosen to use the HighScope curriculum because it meets our goals of instilling curiosity and a love of learning for our kids, and because it matches our values of a play-based environment for exploration. Through the curriculum, the children are introduced to fifty eight key experiences in five areas: music and movement, science and nature, language and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, and finally art and creative play."

Developed in the 1960's, the HighScope curriculum places a special focus on problem solving and working with children to learn how to address conflict positively, in a calm manner, and using words to create solutions.

There is a daily routine which provides children with structure and security. Students review the plan for the day with their teachers, create their own plans and then go explore and play. They are then brought back to a small group to review what they 'worked on' that day.

"This process of 'plan-do-review' instills planning skills, a sense of pride and accomplishment, and helps children learn about process," says Ashley Kureluk, Executive Director. "A number of elements from the HighScope curriculum have been used in the creation of the full-day kindergarten curriculum by the ministry of education. Many kindergarten teachers comment that they can recognize Highlands Preschool students in elementary school as they are already skilled in planning and in problem solving."

“There is no pressure to learn the 'right' way to do something- rather they are encouraged to explore and enjoy the process of learning.”

To qualify for the HighScope program, the school must meet strict high standards.

"HighScope is a very rigorous certification program in which every single teacher as well as the director and the classrooms must be certified. Schools and teachers are re-evaluated every 3 years and mandatory training is held every year. Our teachers are by far some of the best educators in the lower mainland and probably North America."

This fundamental focus on instructional excellence creates the



environment where children are free to flourish.

"The children come to school to have fun and to play--they are completely free to be children. There is no pressure to learn the 'right' way to do something- rather they are encouraged to explore and enjoy the process of learning. At the same time, they are gently exposed to these key experiences and concepts that prepare them for kindergarten and elementary school success. It's fabulous."

If you're looking for a pre-school that encourages your child's natural curiosity and creativity and gives them a head start on preparing for kindergarten and elementary school, find what generations of North Shore residents already know- Highlands Pre-school gives your child a great start in life.

highlandspreschool.ca
highscope.org