



the VILLAGE GREEN gazette

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Snow Days and School Cancellations

Village Green Preschool follows the same cancellation schedule as the Sterling Public Schools. If the Sterling Public Schools (listed as the Wachusett Regional School District) has a one or two hour delayed opening, preschool will be canceled for our morning session only. If the public school is canceled for the day, Village Green will also be closed for the day. An email will be sent out, and the three major television networks ABC, CBS and NBC usually run a continuous listing of cancellations across the bottom of the television screen during the daily morning news programs. Up to date cancellations can also be found on theBostonChannel.com. If you should miss the announcement and have a concern as to whether preschool will be held or not, do not hesitate to call or text Karen Ormsbee at 508 667-4394.

If more than two school days are lost due to cancellations, they will be made up either during the course of the school year or at the end of the year. Our last scheduled school days are currently May 29 for TuTh classes and May 30 for MWF classes.

We encourage our preschool parents to make the best decision for your own family's safety and comfort regarding whether to attend VGP on a day when conditions are inclement, but school is open. The decision to bring your child to school is always yours to make and we will honor your best judgment. Should the weather become more hazardous during a school session please know that we will always release a child early as requested at any time during our preschool day. If you wish to pick your child up early because of road conditions, please call the school at 978 422-8256 to let us know.

Preschool Open House

We will be hosting our Parent Open House at the preschool on Monday evening, January 13th from 7:00 - 8:00 PM. If you know of anyone with an interest in sending their child to Village Green, this is an excellent time for them to visit. The staff will be in attendance to talk to parents and the classroom will be set up as it is for a typical preschool day.

Toy Drive

Once again, Village Green Preschool is honored to serve as a collection location for the Elizabeth Todorov Toy Drive. Our amazing Preschool Board sets up and begins to fill the collection box. All items will support children in the Child Life program at UMass Memorial Children's Medical Center. This year, the organizers have asked that all donations be made prior to December 17th. Monetary donations can be made until that time as well. A separate email will be sent with additional details and list of requested items.

Annual Holiday Program

This year you and your extended families are all invited to our annual holiday program which will feature the children's dramatic interpretation of "How do Dinosaurs Say 'Merry Christamas?'" as well as the singing of some of our holiday favorites. This special event will be held on **Dec. 19** (TuTh Classes) and **Dec. 20** (MWF Classes) in the First Church Parish Hall at **11:00 AM for ALL CLASSES** and is planned for parents, siblings and guests. We hope you will plan to join us! If your child attends preschool on Thursday and Friday, please let Karen know if your child will attend one or both programs. There will be *NO preschool will be held in the afternoon on either day.*

Coming Attractions

The three weeks that fall between Thanksgiving and the December holiday break are always especially busy at preschool. We love to spread the message of kindness and cheer all month long! Our focus areas in December include our five senses, families, & holidays. These themes provide the perfect opportunity to discuss all the ways that we can be kind and make someone feel special and loved during this wonderful season. As always, if you have a particular story or activity you would like to share, you are more than welcome to do so - just speak with the Lead Teacher or with Karen. Also, the children may not be bringing projects home every day, but all art projects will be completed and sent home by our last school day before vacation.

Holiday Gift-Giving for Teachers

The staff at Village Green respectfully requests that parents refrain from gift-giving to teachers. Although your kind thoughts and generosity are most appreciated, we feel that this practice may put undue pressure on some families. In keeping with the true spirit of the season, if parents would like to involve their children in showing kindness to others through gifts, choosing something special for a local charity is a wonderful idea. **Look for specific suggestions in a separate Parent Advisory Board email.** Your involvement in and support of our program is a special gift to us (and your child!) which we cherish all year.

Holiday Babysitting Event

On Saturday, December 7 from 3:30-7PM, Girl Scout Troop 30502 is offering a Holiday Babysitting Event for children ages 4 to 10 in the Parish Hall. The cost for the first child is \$35 with a \$50 cap for families. Dec. 1 is the registration deadline using the QR code below



VGPlay Days - Jan. 2 & 3

Our second group of optional VGPlay Days will be held on Th., Jan. 2 and Fri. Jan. 3. It is open to everyone on both days regardless of the class/es your child is enrolled. Your child can attend on either or both days. Children can attend only in the morning; only in the afternoon; or all day with a minimum of 10 students/day and max of 20 students/day. Pricing for half-day (9-11:30 OR 12:30-3:00) is \$30 and full day (9-3) is \$60 and you MUST sign up here - first-come; first-served. Extended day options are also available for an additional \$10 for each option (before school 8-9AM), lunch bunch (11:30-12:30 PM) or after school 3-4 PM.) These are our final optional play days this school year.

Preschool Registration

Children who are presently enrolled at Village Green Preschool are eligible to pre-register for next year during the month of December. Parent Advisory Board members can also register younger children who will be eligible for preschool next fall in December.

In September 2025 we will offer the same sessions as this school year with the caveat that we are trying to reserve the morning sessions for younger students and the afternoon classes for pre-K/older students. We are hoping that this arrangement will help to focus learning within age groupings and allow for extended learning within those groups.

A Registration Form should be completed and returned to VGP with an \$85 non-refundable registration fee no later than December 13th. (All second year children who register will receive an official VGP sweatshirt!) **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to note on the Registration Form the particular session/s you desire. Please remember that all fees and tuition are non-refundable.

All spots will be filled on a first come, first served basis, so promptness in returning Registration Forms is recommended to ensure availability in the class/es that you prefer. (Places in the MWF class fill especially quickly!) Please speak to Karen if you have any questions.

We will be holding registration for children not presently enrolled at the preschool on Thursday, January 16th and Friday, January 17th at 8:30 AM in Room 2 (adjacent to the preschool). **New this year** - Thursday, January 16th will be registration for those interested in sending their child all day and for siblings of present and former students and members of the First Church. Friday, January 17th will be open registration for all others interested in sending their child to Village Green Preschool. Tuition rates for the coming school year will be set in March. It is not anticipated that any increase in tuition rates should exceed 5%.

Kindergarten Readiness

If you are unsure whether or not your child will be ready for kindergarten next fall, it may be wise to reserve a place at Village Green for Sept. 2025 to keep your options open. Usually the four year old afternoon classes do fill up at registration so there may not be a place available for your child should you decide later in the year that you are interested in this option.

Kindergarten registrations generally open in February/March.

Tuition Payments

Why not take the burden off your plate and set up automatic payments through your bank on a recurring basis? If you set this up, please have checks mailed to Village Green Preschool at PO Box 40, Sterling, MA 01564.

Remember that payments are due at the first of each month (for monthly payments) and the final quarterly tuition payment is due on February 1. Please let me know if you need our bank's routing number.

Cubby Treats

In the past some parents have most generously sent treats in for holidays or special occasions to be put in the children's cubbies. If you should do this, please give the treat to one of the teachers upon arrival and be sure that each item it is marked with your child's name so the child and parent know who it is from. Teachers will assist children during choice time to put these in cubbies. (Non-candy "treats" most gratefully appreciated!)

Snack Helpers

We would like to remind our daily snack helpers to arrive via the back hallway door five to ten minutes before the start of class. This gives us an opportunity to post the snack before all the children arrive and allows parents of children who have allergies to assess the safety of a particular snack for their child. Also, when applicable we need to have a listing of ingredients in all snacks whether homemade or store bought. Remember to cut all grapes in half *lengthwise* for snack and to send snacks in larger quantities instead of individual bags (which reduces food and packaging waste.) There should be enough for 24 portions.

Parents can expect to be contacted by one of the VGP teachers prior to their scheduled day as “snack helper”. Please be sure to respond so that we may post what you plan to provide for snack on the parent’s bulletin board (above coat hooks next to classroom entrance) prior to the start of class.

Non-Violent Toys Only

We are asking the cooperation of all parents to discourage your child from bringing toys to preschool that encourage negative or aggressive behavior. They simply are not allowed, either to “play” with, for letterfinders or for Show and Tell. This also includes action figures that exhibit this type of behavior.

Contagious Disease

In addition to COVID, be sure to notify Karen if your child contracts a contagious illness such as strep, impetigo, chicken pox, etc. or if your child or someone in your family picks up head lice or scabies or hand foot and mouth. By keeping informed and posting warnings to parents, hopefully we can curtail the spread of contagious illnesses in our school. We suggest checking all school age children, including preschoolers, for head lice on a weekly basis, as this can be a persistent problem in some areas particularly during the winter months.

If your child has a runny nose, cough, diarrhea, fever, vomiting, tummy ache or is simply not acting like their 'normal self,' then we ask that you keep them home. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms while at school, we will call you to pick him/her up. We understand it's not always convenient to keep your child home, but it is in their best interest and in the best interest of the school community to allow your child time to rest and get well.

If your child exhibits symptoms of COVID, or if they've had close contact with someone who has tested positive, please be sure to test your child.

Please refer to the The CDC website which provides resources and information about COVID, flu and RSV prevention.

We do spray plastic surfaces, frequently touched surfaces and toys after each class at mid-day and end of the day.

White Board Notices

Remember to check the white board each day when you bring your child to preschool. You will find many current notices that may reflect changes or may not have made it into the class calendar. Likewise, take note of the “smiley face” (beside the white board & to the left of the outside entry door) for the latest on outdoor play. If you don’t have time to read everything, you can always snap a quick picture to look at later. This is especially beneficial if there is another caregiver dropping off and picking up daily.

First Church Medical Mission Trip

Every spring, a group of 20 to 30 people travel from central Massachusetts to La Romana, Dominican Republic to bring critical medical care, construction assistance, and women's health education to Haitian sugarcane workers and their families. The workers and their families live in isolated, impoverished conditions lacking permanent housing, clean water, electricity, education, and access to medical care. This life-changing experience takes a great effort and a lot of fundraising to support this mission. VGP helps by reaching out to our families. Monetary donations are always needed (100% of donated funds go directly to the mission and not to any travel expenses). However, there are other needs as well, and we will be placing small donation bags with a list of high-demand medicines on top of the cubbies for your consideration. Please visit <https://laromana.fcsterling.org/> to find out more. No donation is too small.

Play Clothes Reminder

We mix our washable paint with liquid soap – it usually does wash out easily with simple soap and water. We do apologize for the difficulty of removing certain color dyes (especially the blue) from clothing. Playclothes are always best for preschool! We will try to let you know in advance if we plan to use paint that is not listed as washable.

Winter Gear

It's that time of year - you may need to start sending warm winter gear in daily. If you bring snowpants and snow boots, please put them into a larger reusable bag and place that on the floor beneath their hook. Coats, mittens/gloves and hats should also go into the bag. If you bring only coat, hat and mittens - put the hat & mittens into a coat sleeve and leave on top hook. THE BAG & ALL GEAR NEEDS TO BE LABELED WITH THEIR NAME!



Upcoming Events

- Dec. 19, 20Annual Holiday Program at 11:00AM for ALL CLASSES in the Parish Hall – ALL children should be brought to school at 9AM
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 3December Vacation...no preschool
- Jan. 2 & 3Optional VGPlay Days
- Jan. 6Preschool resumes
- Jan. 13Preschool Open House from 7 – 8 PM
- Jan. 16Preschool registration for September 2025 for full-day students, siblings of current students, alumni and First Church members
- Jan. 17Preschool registration for new students

Donation Thanks to...

The Katisch family for

the preschool-friendly assistive scissors

The Salas family for

the assortment of large puzzles and cookie cutters

Special Thanks to...

- Our preschool families who donated apple cider and forks for our Friendship Feasts: The Persson, Tinsley, Inostroza, Smith and Fedeli families!
- Our Preschool Board for supporting the school and providing valuable parent input for current and future planing.