Little Thinkers Preschool

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Thinkery
Austin, TX

Est. 1983
As Austin Children’s Museum

2013
Opened as Thinkery
New Building, New Brand
38,000 sq ft
Austin Childrens Museum: Imaginative Play with a sprinkle of STEAM

Thinkery: STEAM with a sprinkle of Imaginative Play
Thinkery’s Mission

To create innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire the next generation of creative problem solvers.

Joyful learning through STEAM-driven play.

- Play-based
- Inquiry-rich
- STEAM-focused
  (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math)
Why a Preschool at Thinkery?

• Provide a unique active learning environment to support the development of your child’s school readiness skills.

• Nurture a diverse and inclusive generation of young children.

• Utilize research partnerships to ensure that each child benefits from best practices in play-based, STEAM early learning.

• Contribute to and disseminate best practices in play-based STEAM early learning to the broader community through educator professional development and community partnerships.
Our Educational Approach

- **Play is learning**
  - Thinkery uses the process of inquiry to build STEAM knowledge, promote scientific reasoning to cultivate curiosity.

- **Children learn best alongside caring, responsive adults**
  - We support them through an emergent approach and low teacher-student ratios.
  - Safe and open environment to practice and develop social-emotional skills.

- **Engagement and collaboration with our community are vital to our success**
  - Research-based, lab school environment focused on improving kindergarten readiness.

- **We must always approach learning in new and innovative ways.**
  - Iterate learning experiences thought incorporation of research findings and reflective practices.

- **Children deserve stimulating, sophisticated, well-designed spaces and experiences.**
  - Exhibit exploration central to the learning experience.
We believe that play-based, hands-on, STEAM learning experiences through inquiry are a powerful way for children to develop problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and curiosity about the world around them.
Kindergarten Readiness Skills

Cognitive & Math Skills

Language & Literacy Skills

Physical Health & Motor Skills

Social-Emotional Development

Approaches to Learning i.e. initiative & curiosity, engagement & persistence
The 6 C's

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity
- Critical Thinking
- Compassion
- Confidence
Informed by educational theorists Dewey, Piaget and Vygotsky.

Activities are guided by children’s interests, skills, and needs.

Teachers use reflective practice.
Meet our Partners

**Cristine Legare, PhD**
Associate Professor and the Director of the Evolution, Variation, and Ontogeny of Learning Laboratory (EVO Learn Lab)
- Advise on curriculum design
- Co-create teacher & student assessments
- Conduct research projects

**Amy Bryan, PhD**
Director, Priscilla Pond Flawn Child and Family Laboratory, Associate Professor of Practice, Human Development and Family Sciences
- Advise on curriculum design
- Co-create teacher & student assessments
Museum-university research partnership to enhance parent-child interaction and promote children’s learning.

Research Formats
• Teacher & Student Assessments
• Observation Studies

Community Dissemination
• Early Childhood Educator Professional Development
• Community Partnerships
  • Success by 6: United Way for Greater Austin
  • E3 Alliance
Who We Serve

Curious Little Thinkers Ages 3 & 4
Curious Little Thinkers

Must be:

• Ages 3 or 4 by September 1, 2020

Must be:

• Potty trained
• Up to date on vaccines and health screenings
Ratios & Class Sizes

- Current Fall enrollment: 32 students in two classrooms
- January 6, 2021 enrollment: 14 students in a third classroom
- 14 or 16 students to 2 teachers
  - 1 Lead Teacher & 1 Assistant Teacher
School Day

8am-3pm

Extended Care Until 5:30pm

- Optional
- Included with Tuition
Learning Environment

Classrooms

Plus....
Outdoor Exhibits & Park
Meet our Current Lead Teachers

Pre-K 3 years old
Becca Drew Ramsey
• MFA, University of Texas Austin
• Specializes in arts integration and STEAM education for early learners
• Plays the ukulele and great storyteller

Pre-K 4 years old
Ashley Hill
• BA, Texas State University
• Specializes in reflective practices and mentorship for STEAM educators
• Singer & song writer with an amazing voice
We are currently hiring one Lead Teacher and two Assistant Teachers for our third classroom!

www.thinkeryaustin.org/careers
Current 2020-2021 School Year:

- A select number of spaces were held and filled for need-based financial assistance applicants.
- Families who would qualify are encouraged to apply/re-apply for financial assistance each school year.

Future Years:

- Actively seeking support to offer financial subsidies for 50% of our enrollment.
## Typical Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Routine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Drop Off &amp; Greetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30 AM</td>
<td>Outdoor Play/Gallery Exploration*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Handwashing &amp; AM Snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Music &amp; Motor Skills/Story Time/Gallery Exploration*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Handwashing &amp; Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Nap/Rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Start to wake up - Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>Centers/Small Group/Gallery Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Handwashing &amp; PM Snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>End of school day – pick up; Centers for Extended Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>Outdoor Play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>End of day – pick up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Day Things To Know

Parents/caregivers provide:

- 2 daily snacks and lunch
- Reusable water bottle
- Beddingnap mats
Health & Safety Protocols

• Plan includes additional health and safety protocols
• Informed by:
  • CDC guidelines
  • Direct collaboration with Austin Public Health
  • American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations
• Drawn from summer camp experience
• Updated as conditions change
Drop off / Pick up & Health Screening at Entry

- All student drop off and pick up will take place outside of the museum.
- Daily temperature checks and health screenings for all students, their adults, and Thinkery staff.
- No parents/guardians are permitted in the building. Stop at the building entrance.
- After drop off, any student showing signs of illness will be separated and caregivers will be called for pick up.
Health Screening Questions

1. Did you, your child(ren), or anyone other household member take any medication (i.e. Tylenol, Advil, Aspirin) to reduce temperature this morning?

2. Have you or any household members been exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 that are outside of your normal health and well-being, including but not limited to: Fever, chills, muscle pain, headache, runny nose, coughing, sore throat, shortness of breath, new loss of taste or smell, vomiting, diarrhea?

3. In the previous 14 days have you or your child(ren) had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19; is under investigation for COVID-19; or is ill with a respiratory illness?

4. In the previous 14 days have you or your child(ren) traveled outside of the Austin area? If so, where?

*Answers to these question may require you to immediately return home. If you or your child(ren) have a temperature over 99.6, then you and your child(ren) must immediately return home. Depending on the signs and symptoms you may not return to school for 3-14 days.*
Face Masks & Handwashing

- All Thinkery staff will be required to wear face masks.
- Preschool students will be required to wear face masks to the extent possible.
- Handwashing will be required many times throughout the day, including arrival to the classroom, after transitions, bathroom visits, and before/after eating.
• Increased disinfecting of classrooms, nap mats, equipment and surfaces, especially doorknobs, high-touch surfaces, exhibits, and restrooms.

• Nap mat bedding laundered every other day.

• Nightly deep cleaning.

• Weekly electrostatic disinfection.

• HVAC system using fresh air circulation.

• Non-consumables (books, tape, crayons, etc…) are separated and quarantined for 72 hours between uses.
Social Distancing Measures

• Preschool groups will be held in separate classrooms.
• Classrooms will not be combined or interact throughout the day.
• Social distancing within groups implemented to the degree possible.
• Exhibit time will be scheduled to minimize public interaction.
• Prepared to reduced class sizes if mandated by State or Local health authorities.
Tuition
- $1,195 per month
- Includes Thinkery Family Membership
- Due 1st of the month
- Autopayment

Registration Fee
- $100
- Nonrefundable

Enrollment Fee
- $150
- Nonrefundable

Supply Fee
- $100
- Annual
Register (in English or Español):
jovial.org/thinkery/register

Website:
thinkeryaustin.org/preschool/

Email:
preschool@thinkeryaustin.org