



a cooperative preschool in South Orange County where children and parents learn and love together



Serra Preschool



San Clemente, California

1005 Calle Puente  
San Clemente, CA 92672  
(949) 492-8188

[serrapreschool@gmail.com](mailto:serrapreschool@gmail.com)  
[www.serrapreschool.org](http://www.serrapreschool.org)



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**Kids Birthdays**

Saylor Starks turned 3 on 10/07  
Annika Punak turns 4 on 10/28  
Evie Powell turns 3 on 11/24

**Our Board**

PRESIDENT	Cindy Parker	<a href="mailto:cindyparker80@gmail.com">cindyparker80@gmail.com</a>
DIRECTOR/TEACHER	Patty Nowicki	<a href="mailto:patty.nowicki@gmail.com">patty.nowicki@gmail.com</a>
VICE PRESIDENT	Nancy Wills	<a href="mailto:nancycwills@gmail.com">nancycwills@gmail.com</a>
TREASURER	Devon Azzam	<a href="mailto:devonazzam@gmail.com">devonazzam@gmail.com</a>
WAYS & MEANS	Brook Lahr	<a href="mailto:brooke501@hotmail.com">brooke501@hotmail.com</a>
SECRETARY	Amanda Galston	<a href="mailto:ar.galston@gmail.com">ar.galston@gmail.com</a>
OCCPPNS	Kelly Ansari	<a href="mailto:kelly.ansari@gmail.com">kelly.ansari@gmail.com</a>
MEMBERSHIP	Cassie Kauwling	<a href="mailto:ckauwling@gmail.com">ckauwling@gmail.com</a>
FAMILY GROWTH	Tristen Anderson	<a href="mailto:hoopsidaisy@yahoo.com">hoopsidaisy@yahoo.com</a>

### Upcoming Events

Thurs, Oct 29<sup>th</sup> - Halloween Parade for 2-day class  
Fri, Oct 30<sup>th</sup> – Halloween Parade for 3-day class  
Thurs, Nov 5<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL – Parent/Teacher Conferences Capó USD  
Fri, Nov 6<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL – Parent/Teacher Conferences Capó USD  
Tues, Nov 11<sup>th</sup> - No School! Veteran's Day  
Wed, Nov 18<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting 12:30pm  
Thurs, Nov 19<sup>th</sup> – Stone Soup Celebration – 2-Day Class  
Fri, Nov 20<sup>th</sup> – Stone Soup Celebration – 3-Day Class  
Sat, Nov 21<sup>st</sup> – 6-Week Clean Up  
Mon, Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> – Fri, Nov 27<sup>th</sup> – NO SCHOOL ALL WEEK (Thanksgiving Holiday)  
Mon, Nov 30<sup>th</sup> – Teacher Prep Day – NO SCHOOL

## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS OVERVIEW

**When:** Tuesday, November 10th at 10:00 AM

**Where:** SANTA ANA ZOO, 1801 E. Chestnut, Santa Ana, CA 92701

**What:** We will be exploring the Santa Ana Zoo together. The Crean family farm, extensive primate exhibits, the Tierra de las pampas, Amazons edge exhibit, Colors of the Amazon Aviary, a train, carousel, and more.

**Cost:** \$5 per person. Parking is free.

**Contact Person:** Nicole Bailey- Mobile: (949) 300-8345 – Email: [Nrk1bailey@gmail.com](mailto:Nrk1bailey@gmail.com)



### Five Little Pumpkins Poem

5 little pumpkins sitting on the gate  
The first one said, " Oh my it's getting late."  
The second one said, "There are witches in the air."  
The third one said, " But we don't care."  
The fourth one said, " Lets run and run and run."  
The fifth one said, "Were ready for some fun."  
Then ooooooh went the wind and out went the lights.  
And the five little pumpkins rolled out of sight.

## Director's Message

### ~EXECUTIVE FUNCTION~

Executive function skills are cognitive skills such as impulse control, multi-tasking, following multi-step directions, remaining focused, and avoiding distractions. **Executive function (EF) is a trait that begins in infancy and continues to develop through adolescence.**

An interesting aspect of EF is that it tends to transfer from one situation to the next. A child who learns to self regulate in the classroom will also find it easier to self regulate on the soccer field. **There are many facets to executive function and its helpful to think of a child on a continuum, rather than having or lacking EF.** Definitions of EF are broad and diverse, but these are some common characteristics of executive function:

- **Inhibition** - can think about consequences before acting
- **Self-regulation** - can stop oneself from inappropriate behavior
- **Initiation** - starts new tasks independently
- **Organization** - can organize thoughts as well as materials
- **Planning** - can think through steps and prioritize
- **Time Management** - predicts how long things will take and works at appropriate speed
- **Adaptability and Flexibility** - is able to shift focus and adapt strategies
- **Working memory** - the ability to keep information in your mind in order to carry out a task
- **Multi-tasks** - can deal with several things simultaneously
- **Self-awareness** - chooses a level that is not too difficult or too easy- asks for help when necessary
- **Emotional-control** - is aware of and can manage feelings
- **Focus** - can attend to details and avoid being distracted
- **Self-monitoring** - can reflect on one's work and evaluate performance
- **Delayed gratification** - resists immediate reward for larger reward later.

Does this sound like a student who will be successful, socially and academically? The student who can multi-task, work independently, get along with others, follow directions, enjoys learning, follows the rules and procedures, etc. It also sounds like a job description for "Employee of the Month."

In a preschool classroom where play is encouraged, especially "social play," is where children learn to regulate themselves and begin to build and take on all the executive function skills. When children engage in social or dramatic play they must remember their own role and the role of others. They have to stay in character during the play. As the play unfolds, they make adjustments to what they do and say.

It's rather frustrating that every expert on EF emphasizes the importance of play, while increasingly play is disappearing from our classrooms and children's lives.

At Serra Preschool when people come to visit they often ask me about Kindergarten readiness. This is the answer I give, "At this school kids learn how to be a student".

If you think about all the opportunities kids have to "play" at Serra you can begin to see how play develops the executive function characteristics.

**Continued on next page...**

## Director's Message – Continued...

### ~EXECUTIVE FUNCTION~

Something we have been talking about for awhile now is how to talk and respond to the kids and the reasons why we do not use the phrase "good job". By talking to and engaging the kids in a more thoughtful way, we strengthen their executive function skills by listening carefully and providing feedback by reflecting on what we see happening. We offer ideas and props to extend their play and we challenge children to use their imaginations and problem solving skills.

We offer songs, stories, performances, dress-up, dramatic play props (like the pirate ship, or currently the harvest market) and stop-and-go games and games where the kids have to take turns. Persisting at a task even when it gets frustrating and experiencing the thrill of accomplishment. Waiting for a turn and finding something else to do while waiting. Listening and thoughtfully giving a response in context. Being part of a conversation. Following the procedures of school or the rules. Taking care of each other. Making amends when you have hurt someone.

I could go on and on, but I think you get the big picture. I really think almost everything we do at school promotes the development of executive function skills. Remember this is something the children will be working on for many years and it started when they were born. When you are wondering about the lack of more formal academics you could instead think of what those kind of activities might be replacing.

Thanks for being part of your child's preschool experience and for trusting me to be your child's teacher.

We are off to a fantastic beginning!

Mrs. Nowicki

## Message from our President, Cindy Parker

**"If we do not feel grateful for what we already have, what makes us think we'd be happy with more?" — Unknown**

I found this quote on a blog I frequently read called momastery.com. Many of us (me included) often think that things would be better or easier if we had more. That often times we don't look at the bigger picture of the things we do have. Being at home with three demanding little people all the time I forget to appreciate how lucky I am that I get to do that. Even though some days I'm pulling my hair out and would appreciate the luxury of peeing alone. I'm so lucky I get to see every little step, every new word, every new amazing or not so amazing idea they have. I have healthy little boys that have a belly full of food 3 times a day, a warm bed to sleep in and lots of love and laughter that keeps my bff- husband and I going. I know the days are long but we are lucky to have our feet in the sand on most days. I'm not sure if I'm delivering the message of gratitude as well as she did so if you get a minute- <http://momastery.com/blog/page/8>. Enjoy!

Xoxo,  
Cindy

## **Newsletter Sponsorship Rates**

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Email your ad to Claudia Rohm at [claudhopper71@gmail.com](mailto:claudhopper71@gmail.com)

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### **What are you afraid of?**

**(From a child's point of view)**

#### **3-DayClass**

**Boden** - The Dark

**Issiah** - Scary Monsters

**Coralyn** - My Dream and the dark. It's terrifying!

**Matthew** - Anything

**Jameson** - Nothing

**Cassidy** - Monsters and Bad Guys

**Taylor** - Monsters

**Logan** - Ghosts

**Riley** - Nothing

**Greyson** - Minecraft guys stepping on my house and knocking on my door.

**Marlon** - Snakes dropping on my head

**Vincent** - Spiders

**Mateo** - Nothing

**Annika** - Coyotes

**Eligh** - Giant worms that might eat you. Sometimes I hear them out my window.

**Samaira** - Frankenstein

**Isabelle** - Ghosts

#### **2-DayClass**

**Saylor** - Pumpkins and Witches

**Diem** - Ghosts

**Austin** - Spiders

**Evie** - I don't know

**Eden** - Spiders

**Miles** - Monsters

**Shane** - Ghosts

**Shaelie** - Ghosts

**Dominic** - Halloween night and Mummies

**Kaitlin** - Witches

**Baylon** - Lightning and Thunder

**Johanna** - Thunder booming

**Kai** - Ghosts and mean pumpkins

**Hannah** - Lightning crashing

**Brooklyn** - I'm not afraid of "nothin"

**Abigail** - Green Goblins