



All about Applying to Special Start

The Special Start Program of the Cambridge Public School Department educates “typical” preschoolers and young children with a range of special education needs in a wonderful integrated setting where they will learn and play together.

Each classroom enrolls from 11 to 15 children – five to seven of whom are on Individual Education Programs (IEP’s), while the remaining slots in each class are for typical learners who are selected through the application process. The classrooms are currently located at the following elementary schools: **Peabody, Tobin, Kennedy/Longfellow, Morse and the Fletcher Maynard Academy.**

- The program runs five days a week. We follow the regular school schedule, with some exceptions. We are also closed approximately one day per month on Elementary Early Release Days.
- A certified Special Education teacher will staff each Special Start classroom and is supported by two assistants. Other specialized staff and volunteers are often present.
- Applications are accepted for 3 and 4 year old children. Children **must** be at least three years of age and no older than 4 years 5 months by the up-coming August 30th
- Children will be assigned to available classroom vacancies for typical learners based upon the needs of that classroom population as far as age and sex. Preference will be given to proximity of the class to child’s home, until that class becomes full. Also, priority will be given to those children who will attend the program for a full school year.
- The program is offered to Cambridge families free of charge!
- There is **NO TRANSPORTATION** provided to students without special needs. Families must provide transportation daily to and from the program.
- Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child’s class. This may include visiting the program often, helping with snack, cooking, and shopping or with special events, trips and attending parent/teacher meetings.

This application should be mailed to:

**Cambridge Public Schools Office of Special Education
Special Start Program
Upton Street Building
15 Upton Street
Cambridge, MA 02139**

For more information about the classrooms and this process, please call the Special Start office: **617-349 3251**.

SPECIAL START APPLICATION FORM

Inclusionary Preschool Program Application for Integrated Preschool Classroom

Child's Name: _____ Male Female

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

OPTIONAL/What is your child's racial identity? Native American African American
 Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander White / Other: _____

Does your child speak English? _____ Understand English? _____

Language(s) spoken by Parent/Guardian: _____ by child: _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____ Home Phone #: _____

Address Street: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Phone#: _____ Ext. _____ Can you be called at work? Yes _____ No _____

During which hours? _____

Has your child attended preschool or daycare or had Early Intervention? Yes _____ No _____

Hours per day: _____ Days per week: _____ Dates of attendance: _____

Is there any more information about your child you would like to share? _____

Please indicate if you do not want your child to attend the nearest elementary school Special Start class

Please Note that your application is accepted for entrance to the program, not to a particular school

Program Guidelines

- This is an integrated program. Children who do not have Individualized Education Programs, and who are typical learners, are chosen to attend only through the allocation process
- It is very important that all children attend school regularly and be on time. We ask that your child attend regularly and arrive promptly each day.
- If your child is accepted into our Program through the Application Process, you must complete the enrollment process for the Cambridge Public Schools before your child can enter one of our classrooms.
- Our program relies on parent participation. We ask that parents or guardians visit the classroom on a regular basis, accompany field trips whenever possible, attend teacher/parent meetings and contribute snack and cooking items for our classroom on a regular basis.
- It is important that children be picked up on time after school. Daily pick up must be made no later than the posted dismissal time. Continual tardiness will be grounds for dismissal.
- Families of typical students MUST provide transportation. Transportation is not provided by this preschool program or by the school in which the classroom is located.
- If you have any questions, please speak to a teacher before signing this application. By signing, you are indicating that you understand and agree to the guidelines above.

I agree to the guidelines for participation in the Special Start Program.

Date

Parent(s) or Guardian Signature