Little Thinkers
Preschool
Overview & Virtual Tour

Updated April 14, 2022
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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 Children’s 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)
Our goals for Little Thinkers Preschool

• 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.
Thinkery’s 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

STELAM
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
Thinkery Connect

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
Little Thinkers Students

Must be:

- Potty trained
- Up to date on vaccines and health screenings

Must be:

- Age 3 or 4
  by August 31, 2022
Ratios & Class Sizes

- Maximum of 16 students/classroom with 2 teachers
  - 1 Lead Teacher & 1 Assistant Teacher
- Current Fall enrollment: 60 students in four classrooms
School Day

8am-3pm

Extended Care Until 5:30pm

- Optional
- Included with Tuition
Learning Environment

Classrooms

Plus....
Learning Environment

Outdoor Space

Plus....
Outdoor Exhibits & Park
Leadership Team

Maureen Birdsell
Site Director

Ashley Hill
Assistant Site Director/Instructional Coach
Meet our Preschool Educators

Amarissa Urias

Mattie Mosley
Meet our Preschool Educators

Abby Huston

Gabriel Doria
Meet our Preschool Educators

Lindsey Parker

Jada Stewart
Meet our Preschool Educators

Jenni Cuellar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Routine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
<td>Drop Off, Health Screening, and Greeting</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 (M/W) / Motor Skills (T/TH) / Story Time (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>Learning Centers / Small Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Handwashing &amp; Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Nap / Rest / Quiet time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>Staggered wake up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 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 / Gallery Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Transition indoors/ Learning Centers / Story Time / Prep for End of Day pick up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents/caregivers provide:

- 2 daily snacks and lunch
- Reusable water bottle
- Bedding for nap
Current 2022-2023 School Year:

• A select number of spaces have been reserved for need-based financial assistance applicants.

• Families who would qualify are encouraged to apply/re-apply for financial assistance each school year.
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
• Updated as conditions change
Drop off / Pick up & Health Screening at Entry

- Student drop off and pick up will take place at each classroom.
- Morning drop offs will be staggered to reduce congestion in indoor preschool areas.
- Daily temperature checks and health screenings will be conducted for all students.
- After drop off, any student showing signs of illness will be separated and caregivers will be called for pick up.
Thinkery’s Masking Policy

Thinkery’s Masking Policy will be shifting to guidance based on CDC Community Levels for Travis County.

• When we are at LOW Community Levels, masks will be recommended for those who are unvaccinated/at high risk.

• When we are at MEDIUM Community Levels, masks will be recommended for all ages 2+.

• When we are at HIGH Community Levels, masks will be required for all ages 2+.
Handwashing

• Handwashing will be required many times throughout the day, including arrival to the classroom, after transitions, bathroom visits, and before/after eating.
• Daily disinfecting of classrooms, nap mats, equipment and surfaces, especially doorknobs, high-touch surfaces, exhibits, and restrooms.

• Nightly deep cleaning.

• HVAC system using fresh air circulation.
Tuition & Fees

Tuition
- $1,295 per month
- Includes Thinkery Family Membership
- Due 1st of the month
- Auto-charge

Registration Fee
- $100
- Nonrefundable

Enrollment Fee
- $150
- Nonrefundable

Supply Fee
- $125
- Annual
Register:
jovial.org/thinkery/register

Website:
thinkeryaustin.org/preschool/

Email:
preschool@thinkeryaustin.org