



Planet Kids Preschool

Making a world of difference

by Marie Morgan

SATURDAY MORNINGS at our house are tough. Every day our three-year-old, Bethany, pops out of bed saying, “Let’s go, let’s go, let’s go!” On Saturdays, we have to say “Sorry, baby, not today.”

An explanation is in order. Bethany can’t wait to get to her class at Planet Kids Preschool in Mandeville. Saturdays, we get a big “Aw, man.” Monday through Friday, we get an even bigger “YAY!”

Bethany’s enthusiasm for school comes as no surprise when you consider the love and concern her teachers and Beverly Crews McQuaid, the owner of Planet Kids Preschool, harbor for all of their children.

Ten years ago, Planet Kids Preschool started at its Mandeville location with Beverly’s vision of a loving, quality education for each child. The school soon expanded to its Covington location. Now, the beautiful, state-of-the-art Madisonville Academy has been added to the program, and the staff has grown to 53 quality professionals.

The new Madisonville facility is amazing, a parent’s dream-come-true. Every inch of the 7,000-square-foot

facility has been thoughtfully planned to enhance the student’s (and parent’s) experience. Inside, there are 13 spacious classrooms, each designed to perfectly suit the ages of its occupants. The new building also includes a computer center, an art and science lab, a dance studio, and even an amphitheater for budding performers.

All of the colors used in the building have been carefully selected using the latest research to promote calmness, confidence and comfort. In the center of the school is a room that is truly a sanctuary for children and parents about to part for the day. The elevated octagon ceiling has been transformed into an endless sky by local artist Emery Clark, giving the area a feeling of true tranquility. The Covington and Mandeville facilities are also being redecorated to reflect the results of Clark’s research into colors that heal and help children to learn. *(Ed. Note: Please see the article about Emery Clark, our cover artist, on page 18.)*

Outside are more opportunities for learning and play. The 3,800-square-foot

playground was designed by Francis Wardle, Ph.D., a playground specialist for the National Association for the Education of Young Children. There’s also a mini water park, and a reflection pool that serves as a living ecosystem with natural plants, frogs and turtles to enhance the study of science in the lab.

All three locations are continuing to fulfill the goal of providing the best education in the area, raising the bar for other local programs. In addition to being state-licensed with degreed teachers, by 2006 each location will be accredited by the NAEYC. The schools found it easy to seek accreditation by this well-known association because of their already-established high standards for operating pre-school programs.

Our older children left Planet Kids so well prepared for kindergarten that the transition was seamless, and they are at the top of their classes. Now, every morning when Bethany’s hand leaves mine and grasps her teacher’s, I know that my precious child will be nurtured and educated by the absolute best. There is no better feeling than that!