

Sunset's Playmates Nursery School welcomes funds for new play structure

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Ellie Wexler (right) checks out the "Young 5" play area at Playmates Cooperative Nursery School as teacher Melissa Vivas looks on. Playmates is renovating its Young 5 play area, thanks in part to a donation from Goodwill Industries.

Photo: Tom Prete / Ocean Beach Bulletin

Youngsters at the Sunset District's Playmates Cooperative Nursery School and their classmates for years to come can look forward to a new play structure, thanks in part to a donation Goodwill Industries made Thursday.

Representatives from Goodwill, including Sunset District store manager Martin Lam, delivered a check for \$3,500 to the school Thursday morning at an event that was equal parts press conference and St. Patrick's Day celebration. Children and staff from the school watched Irish dancers perform before the official speeches and check-delivery ceremony.

In combination with funding from other sources, Goodwill's donation to Playmates Nursery School will help cover the estimated \$25,000 cost of the playground improvements, said Melissa Vivas, who teaches the school's "Young 5" program for children who are almost ready to move on to kindergarten. Vivas said the new play area will have a rubberized ground surface and structures better suited to active older students than the small, plastic play set currently in use, and moving the play area may allow the school to convert its sunniest spot into a garden.



Irish dancer Emily Naughton kicks up her heels as Megan Sicord waits her turn.

Photo: Tom Prete / Ocean Beach Bulletin

San Francisco Supervisor Carmen Chu said she sees both Goodwill and the nursery school as key partners in improving the Sunset District, and since she was aware of both the school's need for a new play area and Goodwill's desire to help out the neighborhood, her office assisted in putting the school and Goodwill together.

Goodwill “has a mission to really contribute back,” Chu said.

“We connected them, and they decided to donate.”

Goodwill opened its Sunset District store at 25th Avenue and Irving Street in April 2010.

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