**Pentucket Workshop Preschool Handbook**

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**OUR PHILOSOPHY**

***We Believe****:*

 *Children learn naturally through play and developmentally appropriate activities.*

 *Sensitive, experienced, well-trained teachers are necessary for a quality program.*

 *Preschool is where children learn and practice the skills they need to be life-long learners.*

 *Success in school is dependent upon a child’s ability to: process thoughts, communicate, follow directions, maintain self-control and organize him/herself.*

 *Children learn best in an environment where families and educators work together.*

 *Readiness skills are achieved when each child is developmentally (both physically and mentally) ready.*

 *Self worth and confidence develop in a climate of acceptance and active exploration.*

 *The uniqueness of each child brings richness and diversity to our program.*

**PROGRAM GOALS**

**Physical:**

 • To develop motor skills and coordination of large and small muscles

 • To promote good health and safety attitudes and habits

 • To develop physical stamina

**Emotional**:

 • To develop a positive self-image

 • To promote self confidence, self control, self reliance and sense of security

**Social**:

 • To develop the ability to work and play with others

 • To promote desirable social behaviors

 • To introduce desirable work habits

 • To promote standards of good citizenship

 • To develop a respect for people of all races, creeds, sexual orientation, and economic backgrounds

**Cognitive**:

 • To foster the natural curiosity innate in all children

 • To teach readiness skills necessary for future success in Kindergarten

 • To develop the recognition that information can be obtained from many sources

 • To develop concepts and enrich vocabulary

 • To promote observing, listening, thinking, and reasoning

 • To enrich the children’s lives by fostering an appreciation of music, art and literature

**Speech & Language:**

 • To develop and use good communication skills which include listening and speaking

 • To provide a language rich environment

 • To value all children’s attempts to communicate

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Pentucket Workshop Preschool, in operation since April 1971, is a nonprofit corporation providing a preschool education for children between 2 years 9 months and 5 years of age.

We are licensed by the State of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) located at 360 Merrimack St, Lawrence. You may contact them regarding our regulatory compliance history at 978-681-9684.

The school is administered by the Director, Assistant Director, and the Office Manager. The Director or Assistant Director is on site at all times.

We are an inclusive program which welcomes all children. If we feel that any child is struggling with the expectations of the program, we will meet with parents and make referrals to appropriate specialists.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability in any of our school policies, including hiring and services to children and their families.

We are governed by a Board of Directors who share all policy making responsibilities with the Director. Copies of corporation by-laws and other organizational information are kept at the school.

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

Our schedule is flexible, depending on the needs and abilities of the children, the weather, and special events. Work with individual children, on a one-to-one basis, occurs during the day’s activities.

 7:30-8:45 Early Drop Off

 8:45-9:00 Arrival

 7:30-9:15 Free Play/Discovery Learning

 9:00-9:10 Meeting

 9:10-9:30 Group I

 9:10-10:45 Discovery learning/Snack

 9:35-9:50 Group II

 10:00-11:00 Discovery Learning/Snack

 10:45-11:00 Clean-Up

 11:00-11:30 Circle Time

 11:30-12:00 Outdoor Play

 12:00 Departure

 12:00-4:00 Optional Lunch/Extended Day Program

**EXPLANATION OF ROUTINE**

Our daily routine incorporates all of the State Guidelines for Early Childhood Education.

**Discovery Learning:** Includes use of all classroom materials including: blocks, toy vehicles, writing tools, puppets, flannel and magnet boards, dramatic play, dress-up clothes, balance beams, tunnels, climbing structure, math manipulatives, books, art supplies, science activities, sand table and cooking. A variety of learning centers are set up daily. Play includes both structured, teacher-led and self-directed activities.

**Meeting**: All children meet briefly with the teachers for any special announcements or to acknowledge any special celebrations.

**Group Time**: Children work in groups, divided by age/developmental level. There are two groups, Preschool and Pre-K Readiness. This is the most structured time of day when a teacher directs the group in listening, observing, communicating, cooperating, experimenting, creating, and learning readiness skills.

**Snack Time**: Children decide individually when to come to the snack table during Discovery Learning time. After washing their hands, they get their own cup and napkin from the shelf and sit at the table with their peers and a teacher. Snack includes: milk or water, a grain product, cheese, or peanut butter and a fruit or vegetable. (For Food allergy information please refer to “Allergies” under our HEALTH POLICY & PROCEDURES section on page 14)

**Clean-up Time**: All children are expected to participate in cleaning up the toys and materials used throughout the day. Teachers supervise and children work cooperatively.

**Circle Time**: The children are divided into two groups. A teacher leads each “circle” with the assistance of another teacher. Together they practice communication/social skills, count, sort,

classify, have group discussions, learn about letters and sounds, sing, dance, use rhythm instruments and do creative movement exercises.

**Outdoor Play**: Includes swings, sandbox, wheel toys, climbing structure, balance beam, ball play, gardening, and outdoor art experience.

**Lunch/Extended Day Program Begins**: (See Extended Day details on page 6)

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

We are open from 7:30 to 4:00 daily. Early drop off between 7:30 and 8:45 is included at no additional charge for children attending extended day. Early drop off is available at an additional charge for those not attending extended day. Our Readiness/Preschool session is from 9:00–12:00. Regular drop off time is between 8:45 and 9:00. Optional Lunch/Extended Day session is from 12:00–4:00. Lunch only (Lunch Bunch) is from 12:00-1:00.

Children’s individual schedules are set at the beginning of the school year. Changes to schedules must be approved in advance by the Director.

Let us know if your child will be absent as well as the reason for the absence. You may call and speak with us or leave a message prior to school hours. There is no tuition refund due to absences. Absences cannot be made up.

In the event that you need to withdraw your child from school, at least two weeks written notice is required.

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Parents and caregivers walk the children into the school. Upon arrival children are checked in on the attendance sheet by a staff member. Drop off should be brief as the children are learning to separate and function independently. Teachers are always available to help if your child has difficulty saying good-bye. Please have your child here NO LATER than 9:00. Please call us from the parking lot if you need help getting your child into the building, or if you have a sleeping sibling in the car.

Departure takes place promptly at noon (1pm for Lunch, or 4 pm for extended day). Please arrive a few minutes beforehand if you need to chat with a teacher or take a little time to gather your child and his/her belongings. Plan to leave the school by noon, 1pm, or 4 pm. Children MUST be holding an adult’s hand as they depart through the gate. A staff person is always on duty at the gate to assure the children’s safety and check them out on the attendance sheet. (Please see Late Pickup Policy on page 9).

Please inform us if someone other than a custodial parent/guardian is picking up your child. We will only release your child authorized by you on the Pick Up list in your child’s file. A picture ID must be presented by anyone with whom we are not familiar. To assure your child’s safety, changes to your authorized pick up list may NOT be made by telephone; you must do so in person.

**PLAYGROUND SAFETY WITH SIBLINGS**

At pick up time, while the playground is in use by our preschoolers, please refrain from allowing your younger or older child(ren) to run freely. This is a safety issue involving all of the children! Siblings must remain by their parent’s side until all of the preschoolers have been dismissed to their parents care or have gone into the school for lunch. Once the playground is empty, siblings are allowed to use it under parent’s close supervision.

**LUNCH BUNCH/EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

Monday through Friday from noon until 4:00 children are welcome to participate in our Lunch Bunch/Extended Day program. You may enroll your child for the same days of the week for the entire school year for a discounted fee. You may also sign up and pay month by month for your chosen days. Drop-ins are welcome based on daily availability. Payment is due on the day of attendance. Specific fees are included in the Rate Sheet.

Lunch Bunch (12pm-1pm) includes lunch, and a story or activity.

The Extended Day Program (12pm-4pm) includes lunch, quiet time, story time, teacher directed activities, free play, group discussions and outside play.

Early arrival (7:30 - 8:45) is available on the days which your child attends extended day.

Early Arrival is available for a fee of $10.00 per day if your child does not attend Extended Day. Please let us know if your child will arrive early in advance if possible.

Lunch: Lunch is brought from home. We provide milk or water if you do not choose to send a drink. Lunch time at school is relaxed and comfortable. The children are given teacher assistance when needed. It is also a learning experience when nutritional eating habits, different foods, methods of preparation, and manners are discussed.

Quiet time: Includes either rest or yoga time on a blanket. Please send in a crib sized blanket or bath sized towel on which your child may lie. For those children signed up for the whole year, these will be sent home periodically for washing.

**CLOTHING POLICIES**

The children will be more comfortable if dressed appropriately for playing and working at school.

Please send the children to school wearing soft-soled shoes. Flip-flops, cowboy boots, “crocs,” rubber boots, dress shoes etc. are not safe for the climbing structures or for active play outside. Sneakers are best for school.

Leggings or tights should be worn under dresses for privacy and warmth.

Very special new clothing is not suitable for school. We do have paint smocks for children but accidents often happen.

Elastic-waist pants are best for independence in the bathroom. Please no belts, onesies or overalls.

A complete change of clothes for children ages 2 & 3 (underwear, socks, shirt, pants) should be sent to school in a plastic drawstring bag. We will label the bag and use them if your child needs them. We ask you to return clothes to your child’s bag so there is always a change available. We have a supply of spare clothing for the older children should they have an accident and require changing. Please return washed “borrowed clothes” on your child’s next school day. We accept donations of spare clothing at any time especially underwear and socks.

As weather permits, we go outside every day. When there is snow on the ground, children MUST have snow pants, hat, boots, and mittens (preferred over gloves).

**PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING!**

**Snack and Lunch**

Snack: Each family will be asked to donate snack supplies several times during the school year. You will be reminded when it is your week to donate. Snack consists of a grain product, such as crackers, bread/toast, or pretzels, cheese, hummus, and fruits or vegetables. Children have a choice of milk or water to drink.

Lunch: Lunch is brought from home. We suggest that you help give your child the energy he/she needs for an active afternoon by including foods from a variety of food groups in his/her bagged lunch - protein, dairy, grains, and fruits/vegetables. You may send in peanut products as children with allergies are closely monitored. As we try to cut down on food waste, please limit the amount of food sent for lunch. Keep in mind your child’s typical eating habits. We will send home uneaten food so that you will know what doesn’t get eaten.

**HELPFUL HINTS FOR GETTING ADJUSTED**

Cubbies: Cubby is our word for the wooden storage unit in which your child keeps his/her belongings. The cubbies are in the “cubby room”. Each cubby is labeled with a child’s name and will also contain a family photo provided by you. They are generally in alphabetical order by first name. Help your child use the cubby above his/her name for their belongings. Please bring in a labeled bag or small backpack for your child’s school creations and belongings. Please do not leave toys from home, chapstick, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, pacifiers, etc. in your child’s back pack. The children have access to their backpacks during the day to put their work away and these items are distractions.

Coat Hooks: Preschool children use the coat hooks on the right side of the cubbies for their outer clothing. Readiness children use the hooks near the front door. Coat hooks are not labeled with children’s names. Children must hang their own coat to learn independence and so that they can easily locate it later in the day. Please label all clothing.

Bathrooms: There are two bathrooms inside of the classroom. They do not lock for children; but for adult privacy, there are hooks near the top of the door. All children may use the bathroom any time they need (with teacher supervision), but we make sure everyone goes in the bathroom before snack time.

Parking: NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN YOUR VEHICLE AT DROP OFF OR PICK UP TIMES. If you are in a hurry or if unloading younger children is difficult, call the office, or ask anyone heading into the building to send a teacher out to bring your child in.

Birthdays: A birthday board is located in the classroom. We celebrate birthdays in a number of ways. This bulletin board has the names and ages of children celebrating a birthday during the month. Some parents choose to send in something to serve for snack the day of (or close to) the birthday. This is an option, not a requirement. We sing “Happy Birthday” and the children make birthday crowns if they choose. Let us know if you plan to send something in so we will plan on it for snack.

Toy Policy/Show & Share: We kindly ask that toys from home are not brought into school. We have so many wonderful toys and supplies for all of our children to share while they are here at PW. We encourage students to bring in things from nature, special mementos or pictures from a trip or vacation, or something they have created to show and discuss with their peers at Show and Share. Show and Share is held on an as needed basis, during our morning meeting time every day of the school week. Children should approach a teacher at drop off, so that we can prepare to have them show their item during morning meeting.

**KEEPING INFORMED**

Parent Information: We distribute a variety of information via our website, email and written notices. We also have a number of books and articles on topics of interest to parents of young children. If you are trying to get more information on a specific topic, let us know and we will try to help you in any way we can.

Parent Mailboxes: Each family has an assigned box in the front hallway. These are arranged in alphabetical order by last name. We use these for adult communication. Please check your box at least weekly. Although children may try to be helpful, these boxes should be used only by adults. Sometimes we use half sheets of paper, so look carefully!

Email: Most of our communication is done via our website, email and/or telephone. Please be sure that your contact information is always up to date if you make any changes throughout the year.

Weekly Newsletter: Every week the Director send the newsletter out via email and posts the it to our website. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events, classroom activities etc. It often contains general information about child development and readiness skills. If you have something to add to the newsletter that you feel is relevant to other preschool families please present it to the Director for approval and it may be posted in the newsletter. We welcome your response/input to/about information we send to you.

“What We Did Today” Daily Email Update:

Each day by 12:00 noon, a synopsis of the day’s activities is emailed to parents/guardians. The email may contain photos of the day’s activities in addition. We welcome your response/input to/about the information we send to you.

Song Sheet: We love to sing! Our way of letting you know some of our favorites and keeping you involved is to make a monthly song sheet available to you. At the beginning of the month we place a few in a convenient location in the front hall. Help yourself!

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

We APPRECIATE and WELCOME your involvement in our program in any number of ways. Please let us know your ideas or concerns regarding your child’s participation in our program at any time. You can speak with the Director, or any staff person about your questions, concerns, or ideas.

Keep us informed regarding any changes which affect your child new phone numbers, changes in living arrangements, family situations, etc. We are able to care for your child best when we are informed of any life changes which affect him or her.

Progress Reports are distributed once during the school year, in February. You will receive a written report on your child’s progress at school. You may schedule a conference to discuss your child’s progress at any time. If at any time you or we find it necessary to meet to discuss issues regarding your child it will be arranged at your convenience.

Visitors are welcome once children have made their adjustment to the classroom. Parents may participate by sharing special talents or interests with us, reading, or by serving snack in the classroom. Notwithstanding the above, parents may drop in to the classroom and have full access to the classroom any time their child is present.

Periodic meetings and workshops for parents will be held throughout the school year. A Parent Night for currently enrolled families is held in the fall on a scheduled evening. This evening is for parents/guardians only.

**HELPING OUT**

We welcome many types of volunteer service. We might ask for specific assistance in our weekly newsletter. Carpentry/repair work for projects, equipment or the classroom is occasionally requested. At other times we need someone to shop for a particular item or to chair a certain event for us. There are many ways to pitch in!

Snack Helpers: Parents are welcome to assist with serving snack. This is a commitment of one hour, 10–11am, on any mutually agreed upon day.

Fundraising: We try to keep our fundraising efforts to a minimum. You are under no obligation to participate in any of our activities. In the past, our yearly fundraising activities have included, but are not limited to, Trivia Night and sports ticket raffles.

**TUITION POLICY**

Tuition is due by the 15th of each month for the following month. We accept payments by personal or bank check made payable to “Pentucket Workshop Preschool”. Please limit cash payments.Tuition payment should be left in the tuition mailbox outside the office. We appreciate your on-time payments. Please note: There will be a $5.00 per day late fee for payments received after the 30th of the month. Please do not include money for any other purpose in our tuition check (i.e. book club, raffles, pictures). Tuition rates apply to the 10 month school year, September through June. The first tuition payment is due August 15th. There will be no refunds in tuition for illness, holidays, vacations, snow days or emergency closings. School calendar indicates yearly schedule. We will be closed for public school vacation weeks in December, February and April. Tuition for drop-in extended hours or drop-in Lunch Bunch should not be included in regular tuition checks. A separate check is needed for any extra hours. Our bank may charge a fee for returned. We will add these charges to your balance. Tuition receipts for Flexible Spending Accounts will be issued quarterly (October1, January1, April1, July1), upon request via email. Your canceled check can serve as your receipt.

**LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

Children are contracted to be picked up at either 12:00 noon, 1:00pm or 4 :00 pm. If your child is picked up late, (after a 5-minute grace period) you will be charged a $10 late fee. For every 15 minute interval after that, there is an additional $10 charge. The bill will be given at the time of pick-up, indicating the total fee. This should be paid immediately, if possible, or when your child returns for his/her next scheduled school session. The child will not be allowed to remain at school unless the bill is paid. The fee is not to be added onto the regular tuition bill.

**NO SCHOOL POLICY**

We do not anticipate having to close school before noon dismissal time on any day. However, extended day may be cancelled in the event of severe weather. If there is a weather situation that warrants our closing school early and/or cancelling extended day, we will send an email to parents, followed by a phone call.

We are closed any snow day on which the Georgetown Public Schools close. If there is a delayed public school opening, we will not have early drop off and school will open for everyone at 9:00am.

Listen to the radio or go online to (WBZ, WHDH) for public school “No School” announcements. We do not announce the name of our program individually, so listen for the Georgetown school closing. There is no tuition reimbursement for snow days or emergency closings.

**IMPAIRED DRIVER PICK-UP POLICY**

There is a policy on file (given upon request) for faculty to adhere to if it is determined by a faculty member that a person who is designated to pick up a child is not competent to drive home. A child’s safety is our most important concern.

**BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The purpose of discipline and guidance in a preschool classroom are two-fold. First, to assist children in developing their own internal behavior controls; and second, to ensure smooth functioning of the classroom. We believe that in a mixed age classroom, it is necessary to be flexible about all program practices to best meet the needs of individual children. The following guidelines, however, serve as the basis for classroom discipline. Modifications in this plan for individual children will be discussed at faculty meetings.

Outline

* Rules should be definable, reasonable, and enforceable.
* Rules should be stated positively.
* Rules should deal primarily with safety issues.
* Children should be given the opportunity to participate in the development of classroom rules where appropriate and feasible.
* Equipment and supplies should be sufficient to reduce conflict.
* Helping children anticipate transitions reduces the need for discipline.
* Good communication between parents and faculty helps in understanding a child’s behavior.
* Learning new behaviors (i.e. classroom functioning) involves making mistakes. Children learn that everyone makes mistakes -- even teachers!
* Soiling, or not using the toilet are not issues that require punishment.
* Positive behavior should be rewarded with praise whenever possible.
* Children should be encouraged to express themselves verbally, using appropriate language with respect to others.

Discipline, when necessary, should:

• Be prompt and appropriate

• Relate to the problem behavior

• Require as little intervention as possible (look, movement, word, action)

• Be firm, not apologetic

• Condemn the act, not the child

• Use a few, well chosen words

• Be a natural consequence

Discipline will not include:

• Corporal punishment – hitting, spanking, physical abuse

• Verbal abuse, humiliation

• Denial of food or force feeding

• Cruel or severe punishment

• Forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting

• Confining a child to any piece of equipment for extended periods of time in lieu of supervision

Techniques which may be effective are:

• Planned ignoring

• Interpretation of the behavior to the child

• Counting or other warnings

• Removing the child from the situation

• Provisions of acceptable physical outlets, alternatives

• Child loses use of object that was misused

• Proximity, touch control

• Time out (w/in view of staff and not to exceed one minute for each year of child’s age)

**PLAN FOR AVOIDING SUSPENSION OR**

**TERMINATION OF A STUDENT**

Continuity is of utmost importance in the development of a child. When a child is having difficulty following the routines and rules of the school, every effort will be made to keep the child enrolled in our program. Efforts may include:

• Meeting with parents

• Offering referrals for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services

• Pursuing options for supportive services to our program, including consultation and educator training.

• Developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program

If all of these efforts are made and the child is still unable to participate appropriately in our program, we will refer the child to a more suitable setting. We work closely with the public schools in identifying children with special needs. Every public school offers preschool programs for children with learning disabilities and other special needs.

**REFERRAL POLICY**

Referrals to appropriate social, mental health, education, and medical services may be needed by children in our care. Parents may request such referrals or we may recommend them.

Responsibility for the implementation of a referral and following the plan belongs to the Program Director. Parents are to be involved in the process to the maximum extent possible.

Concerns regarding potential referrals are brought to the Program Director. Referrals will be discussed at staff meetings. Program Director determines if further action needs to be taken.

Parents are informed as soon as possible by direct contact with the Director. Discussions regarding referrals attempt to involve both parents, if possible, at a conference. Any relevant referral

Information is provided at these conferences, including phone numbers, sample referral letters, and advocacy information.

Parents shall be provided with information on services available under the law through the public schools.

When written referrals are prepared, parents must sign a “Release of Information” form giving consent to share information with the agency involved in the referral. Phone contact may be made to agencies to discuss, in general terms, the appropriateness of the referral.

Parents will receive a copy of any written reports about the child.

A faculty member may accompany family to the agency or team meetings, if requested. We find our participation to be a key factor in the child’s assessment by an outside agency.

The Director documents concerns and the action taken on behalf of the child. A written record will be provided of all referrals, parent conferences, and team meetings.

Regular contact with the family is maintained and follow-up is conducted according to established principles of good social service.

We are mandated to report cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Social Services. We attempt to work with parents during periods of stress and keep them informed during the reporting procedure.

**HEALTH POLICY & PROCEDURES**

We make every effort to keep parents informed about current health policies and procedures. All specific policies and procedures, activities and programming, are designed keeping health and safety in mind. All specific policies are either posted or available at the center. We are glad to discuss and clarify any concerns you may have about these policies. Our policies on a variety of communicable health conditions are available to parents upon request.

Immunizations and Physical: An updated, yearly physician’s certificate of good health, including record of immunizations must be provided upon admission to the school. It will be kept in the child’s folder and needs to be updated yearly. A child may not enter or remain in school without these completed records.

Health Plan: There will be a detailed health plan in the health book for any medical condition requiring intervention at school. With written permission from a child’s health care provider, parents may train staff in implementation of their child’s individual health care plan.

Sickness: Children are greeted upon arrival and shall not be admitted to school if they have a fever, a rash of unknown origin, have a contagious disease, if they are in obvious discomfort from any physical source or have experienced diarrhea, vomiting, or fever within 24 hours. A child who becomes ill during class time is isolated from the other children. The parent is called and informed that the child must be picked up. If the parent cannot be reached, other emergency phone numbers are called until someone with discharge permission can be located to pick up the child and care for them out of the school environment. A faculty member remains with the child until discharged. If a child is sent home with a fever, diarrhea or vomiting, they may not return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

Health Update forms: must be completed after a prolonged medical absence.

Medications: If a child is on antibiotics, he/she must have been on it for 24 hours before attending school. The first dose of medication cannot be administered at school. Medication (both prescription and non-prescription) may be administered only with written order of a physician. This may include the prescription label or a written authorization including name of medication, dosage, and administration criteria. Medication (both prescription and non-prescription) may be administered only with written parental authorization. “Authorization for Medication” forms are available in the office to be filled out and signed by a parent. A separate form is needed for each medication.

No medications will be administered contrary to directions on original container without written orders from a physician.

Medications are kept in labeled, original container, in the first aid cabinet in the office or in the refrigerator, under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security, and safety. All medications are kept out or reach of children. (All toxic substances and hazardous items are kept stored, out of children’s reach.)

Medications in unlabeled containers will not be accepted from parents nor administered to children.

Topical non-prescription medications such as sunscreen, lip protection, bug spray, and other ointments which are not applied to wounds, rashes, or broken skin, may only be administered with written parental permission. These permission slips are valid for no more than one (1) year from date of signature. These original containers must be labeled with the child’s name and used only for that child. They must be kept in the office, not in the child’s backpack or cubby. Record of each use is not required. One form is sufficient for the number of days the medication is to be administered.

The Director or designee is responsible for administering medications daily, keeping record of the time of administration, and to keep periodic checks on the child for side effects. A second staff member witnesses the administration and co-signs the record. All staff who will be responsible for administering medication will be trained and evaluated annually in their ability to administer medication in accordance with state regulations. The completed forms serve as the written record and are kept in the child’s file.

All unused medication shall be returned to the parent either at daily dismissal, when permission slip expires, or when prescription expires. Disposal of medication will be the responsibility of the parent.

Accidents: The teacher closest to the child at the time of the accident determines whether the child should be moved. If the injuries permit movement, the child is brought to the appropriate first aid area in the office/kitchen. Another teacher assumes the responsibility for the remaining children. Appropriate first aid is given. The parent is called if needed. The injury is recorded on an incident form. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form. One copy is placed in the child’s folder and the parent receives a copy. If the injuries are severe, appropriate first aid is given. Parents and the appropriate emergency service are notified. Depending on the nature of the injuries, the child is isolated from the other children until parent(s) arrives or the child is transported to the hospital by ambulance or emergency vehicle. The child’s folder is kept with the child. It contains emergency treatment permission forms. The child is discharged to the parent’s care. A faculty member remains with the child until that time.

Emergency phone numbers: including police, fire, hospital, ambulance, poison information center, local physicians, and health care consultant are posted near the telephone in the office and in the cubby area.

First Aid: A complete first aid kit with first aid manual is kept at the center. It is maintained by the Director. All teachers have updated Red Cross first aid certificates. There is always CPR-certified faculty on the premises. The teacher closest to the child at the time of injury and/or the Administrator on duty administers the first aid.

**ALLERGIES**

Data on each individual child’s health is obtained and kept in their folders and posted on the medication cabinet in the office/kitchen. The allergy board, posted in the snack area, is checked before each snack. Severe food allergies will be handled on a case by case basis. This is an important safety measure. Behavior indicating allergies is recorded in the observation book and is shared with parents. Any child who reports or is observed being stung by a bee or other insect is isolated and observed for 15 minutes, has their records reviewed for special treatment plans, and is treated as if for an accident. Parents are requested to update allergy information regularly.

**FIRE AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN**

Detailed emergency plans are posted or available at the center. Regular fire/emergency drills are held. In the event of a fire or emergency, the appropriate emergency resource will be notified (through fire alarm or phone). The children will immediately be evacuated from the building through the nearest exits. One or two teachers lead the children from each appropriate exit. If the children are napping during a drill or actual alarm, the nap teacher and “floating teacher” on the main floor are responsible for assisting the nap children out of the nearest safe exit. The children are led to a pre-arranged meeting place. The Director or designee is responsible for (1) the final room check for stragglers and (2) closing all doors and shutting out all lights. Attendance is taken at the meeting place immediately upon arrival. No one may re-enter the building until the “all clear” signal has been given by the official authorities. If clearance is not given to return to the building, parents will be called via our cell phone and advised of our whereabouts for dismissal.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Our program does not provide transportation. We do not go on driving field trips.

**PARENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Chapter 28, Section 10, of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates to the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of day care centers (including nursery schools). The licensee (day care center owner) is required to inform all parents of specific information about their rights and responsibilities at the time of admission of their child to the center. Section 7.04 of 102 CMR 7.00, the regulations which govern day care centers, contains more information.

Right to Visit: You have a right to make unannounced visits to your child’s room while your child is present.

Parent Input: The program must have a procedure for allowing your input in the development of center policy and procedure. The program must allow you to make suggestions, but it is up to the program to decide whether or not they will be implemented.

Conferences: You have a right to request an individual conference with the program’s faculty. The licensee has the responsibility to make the faculty available.

Meeting Prior to Admittance: The licensee shall assure that the Director or her designee meets with you prior to admitting your child to the center. At the meeting, the licensee, in addition to the information contained in this information, must provide you with: the center’s written statement of purpose; types of services provided; referral policy; behavior management policy; termination and suspension policy; a list of suggested nutritious foods you could send for snacks and meals, if it is your responsibility; the policy for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect; the transportation plan; a copy of the health care policy (if you request it); procedure for administration of medication; procedures for providing emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy; and a copy of the fee schedule. All of this information may be contained in the “Parent Handbook.” You should also be given the opportunity to visit the center’s classrooms either at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of your child.

Your Child’s Records: Information contained in your child’s record is privileged and confidential. The center’s faculty may not distribute or release information in your child’s record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child’s record is subpoenaed.

Access to the Record: You should be able to have access to your child’s records. The center must provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child’s entire record, even if it is located in more than one location. The center must have procedures regarding access, duplication, and the dissemination of children’s records. They must maintain a written log which identifies anyone who has had access or has received any information out of the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center’s records.

Amending the Record: You have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials to your child’s record. You also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in your child’s record. Such requests shall be made in accordance with the following procedures: (1) If you are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in your child’s record, you have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make your objections known; and (2) The licensee shall, within one week after the conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in your favor, steps shall immediately be taken to put the decision into effect.

Charge for Copies: The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child’s record.

Transfer of the Record: Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give you your child’s record or transfer record to any other person that you identify. The center should ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the record.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM**

Providing Information to the Department of Early Education & Care: The licensee must make available to the Department of Early Education & Care any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes information in your child’s records. Authorized employees of the EEC are not to remove identifying case materials from the center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

Notification of Injury: The licensee must notify you immediately of an injury which requires emergency care. They must also notify you, in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Availability of Regulations: The center must have a copy of CMR 102 7.00, Standards for the Licensure Approval of Group Day Care and School-Age Child Care Programs, on the premises, available to any person upon request. If you have questions about any of the regulations, ask your center to show them to you.

Mandated Reporting: Our first priority is the safety and well being of our students. As early childhood educators, we are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Social Services. Massachusetts law requires, “mandated reporters to immediately make an oral or written report to DCF when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect.” We make all efforts to help our families cope with the stress of such situations and keep them informed during the reporting process. However, our main concern will always remain with the health and protection of the children under our care.