



PARENT HANDBOOK

JACK & JILL PRESCHOOL
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Rev. 8/12/25

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The School's Philosophy:

Those who work at Jack & Jill Preschool believe that a good beginning has no end. Our mission is to provide a quality preschool and pre-kindergarten education in a loving and nurturing environment, in which individual creativity is fostered in a developmentally appropriate setting and children love to learn.

Our staff of teachers nurtures curiosity and self-expression through innovative programs and personal attention to the developing child, providing for his or her social, emotional, moral, intellectual, and physical growth. What develops along with the child is a love of learning and respect for others and the world around them.

The staff of Jack & Jill Preschool believe that this nurturing environment should not be limited only to those students attending our school. For that reason, we offer programs open to all children in the area, including:

- Summer camps for preschool and kindergarteners.
- Kindergarten preparation class in the summer.
- Enrichment classes for preschool and kindergarteners.
- Pumpkin Patch Party free literacy event, held annually in October.

We see each child as a unique and special individual, and we are eager to make each year at Jack & Jill Preschool the very best that it can be for your child!

The School's Programs:

EARLY LEARNERS (TWOS):

For children 31 -36 months of age; one class that meets twice a week – Monday and Wednesday from 9:05-11:35.

PRESCHOOL:

For children who are age 3 prior to September 1; two mornings a week: Tuesday/Thursday mornings – 9:05 a.m. until 11:35 a.m.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN, 3-DAY:

For children who are age 4 prior to September 1; Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM or PM classes. 9:05 a.m. until 11:35 a.m. or 12:35 p.m. until 3:05 p.m.

PRE-K EXTENDED DAY:

For children who are age 4 prior to September; Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:05-1:35. Children must pack a lunch.

The School's History:

Jack & Jill Nursery School was established and licensed in 1970 under the direction of Carol Maurer and Rita Moore. It was formed to serve all children, regardless of ethnicity or creed.

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| 1970 | Jack & Jill officially opens in September, with Rita Moore and Carol Maurer holding classes in their homes. |
| 1971–79 | Rita and Carol teach together at the Zion of Iona United Methodist Church in Lebanon, with classes for threes, fours, and Pre-K. |
| 1978 | A Kindergarten class begins at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Lebanon. |
| 1979 | Classes for threes, fours, and Pre-K children are added during the next several years at St. Andrews. |
| 1982 | A new center at Friedens Lutheran Church in Myerstown begins for three- and four-year-olds. |
| 1988 | The last year at the Myerstown facility. |
| 1990 | Jack & Jill is the first school in Lebanon County to become nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). |
| 1997 | The last year at the Iona facility. |
| 1998 | Rita and Carol semi-retire but continue to guide the school as board members. The school is now administered by a volunteer parent Board of Directors. |
| 2002 | The Board of Directors purchase the property at 280 Hillcrest Road, Lebanon, the current location of Jack & Jill Preschool. |

First Days at Jack & Jill Preschool:

The first days at Jack & Jill Preschool are a milestone in your child's life as well as your own. Your greatest gift to your child at this time is your loving support and understanding. Remember that learning to like school and liking to learn are closely related. Your child's first school experiences can contribute to a positive or negative attitude toward school in the years ahead. Show enthusiasm for what lies ahead, and your child will respond.

We realize that you may feel some anxiety when your child comes to school for the first time. This is normal. We also know that this adjustment is often harder for parents than for the children.

Experience has shown us that the best procedure to follow on the first days of school is when you bring your child to school to first take him or her to the bathroom and have them wash their hands; then proceed to the classroom. Greet and meet the teacher ("Good morning/afternoon"), have your child find his/her name card on the classroom table and place it in the attendance box, hang up any personal belongings on his/her coat hook, and explore the classroom together for a few minutes. Check the mail slot, the class bulletin board, the calendar, the snack schedule, etc. Then tell your child you are leaving, but that you will be back for him/her when school is over.

Give a goodbye kiss/hug, say, "I love you! Have a good day!". Be positive and casual about it, as well as resolute. These actions build your child's confidence that there is nothing to worry about. Even if your child cries for a few minutes after you leave (and it is almost always only a few minutes), that is better than what would happen if you linger.

Be on time when you return to pick up your child. Create a normal routine atmosphere at home on the first days of school. Do not deny or avoid the uniqueness of the situation. Be a good listener, allowing time to talk about school and the people there.

Later, after your child has adjusted to this new experience, you are welcome to join us in class for a day. However, we recommend delaying this until your child has decided that school is a safe, happy place to be. What is important for your child's emotional health is that having faced and mastered a new challenge with support from others, your child has helped to build his/her own feelings of self-confidence and security. Monitor your situation, and if we can be of any assistance, please speak with the teacher.

Thank you and have a great year!

Arrival/Dismissal:

ARRIVAL: Please bring your child to school on time so that he/she does not miss any of the planned activities. Children may arrive at school a few minutes early, but no earlier than 5 minutes before the official start time. This allows teachers ample time to complete class preparations.

DISMISSAL: Pickup time is at the scheduled class end time. Every parent designates on a form the parents, grandparents, and/or friends who are permitted to transport their child from Jack & Jill. If someone other than one of the designated persons will be picking up your child, we must have written authorization prior to that time. A note on the spot is not acceptable. We will not allow children to go home with people who have not been identified by the parents.

LATE: If you will be late either for arrival or dismissal for an extended period of time (or your child will be absent), please notify the teachers. If possible, please notify the school office if you are delayed for pickup due to an emergency. You may wish to store the school's phone number on your cell phone or in your wallet.

Parking Lot Safety

During pick-up and drop-off times, our parking lot can become a very busy location. While Jack & Jill employees do not regularly monitor the parking lot during these times, the following rules have been established to minimize any safety risks posed:

- Drive at a slow and cautious speed.
- Walk next to your child from parking space to building, do not allow your child to run through the parking lot.
- Do not leave unattended children (such as younger siblings) in your car while walking your child into the building. We encourage parents with the same pick-up and drop-off times to cooperate and attend to each other's vehicles should it be necessary to leave a napping or an awake younger child in a parked car.

Potty Policy:

Our Preschool and Pre-K children must be fully potty-trained before September 1st. Our staff is aware that accidents happen. That is why we ask you to keep a full change of clothes, to include socks, in their mailbox at school. Please remember to change the clothing seasonally.

If accidents become frequent and disruptive to the classroom environment, we will call the parents to pick the child up for the day. Our school does not have the staffing to potty-train the child. If a teacher is spending their time with potty-training, then they are not able to work with your child and the other children in our routine daily activities. This is neither fair to your child nor to the other children.

Clothing Recommendations:

We recommend that your child come to school in casual clothes: shorts, skorts, or pants with sneakers or other enclosed shoes — no flip flops, open back sandals, or clogs please. This is the most appropriate dress for the children as they engage in a variety of movement activities and the play structure each day.

Children will sometimes misplace their personal items, such as sweaters, coats, hats, gloves, and show and tell items. Please mark all removable clothing and personal items with your child's name or initials, for easier reunification.

Snack Time:

Snack time is an important learning experience at Jack & Jill. Throughout the year, we reinforce the idea that fruits and vegetables build healthy bodies. Even three-year-olds quickly learn that 'nutritious is delicious!' We encourage children to take at least a 'Jack & Jill taste' of all snacks and foods made from baking/cooking experiences.

A snack is offered to the children each day. Each child will be assigned to bring snack on the day their teacher designates on the snack calendar. The monthly snack calendar is distributed in the student's mailbox, posted on the classroom bulletin board, and via our website.

Should the snack fall on your child's birthday, please bring in a snack that your child enjoys for this special day. Summer birthdays will also be celebrated during our school year. We would like to emphasize that we do not accept cupcakes, donuts or cakes, for your child's birthday. Additionally, have the snack ready to eat so the teacher or student helpers can serve easily.

Please note that the class snack is subject to change to accommodate students with allergies. If a snack is brought in that a child in the class is allergic to, we will make a substitution for the entire class. We want to work with parents on keeping a non-perishable 'safe' snack for the class in case a substitution needs to be made.

(Snack Time Continued)

Teachers will also emphasize the importance and practice of good manners during snack time. Every young child can learn the important phrases: please, may I, thank you, no thank you, and you're welcome, as well as helping with clean up after snack. The Jack & Jill staff thanks you for reinforcing the practice of using good manners in all environments.

Toys from Home:

There is a variety of educational games and toys for imaginative play available at Jack & Jill. This will provide the full benefit that can be derived from the carefully planned developmental materials at Jack & Jill. Personal toys should be kept at home. On occasion, we will have Show and Tell, Game Day, or Puzzle Day, during which time the children may bring these items from home. The items should be labeled with your child's name or initials. In keeping with Jack & Jill's philosophy of refraining from violence, we ask that any guns or toys of a violent nature be kept at home.

Show and Tell:

On designated days, this activity will promote language skills, build vocabulary, broaden observational skills, and teach children about new things. This is especially valuable to shy children, who are sometimes reluctant to talk in a group situation. Many times, during the year, Show and Tell items will be related to a specific learning concept such as a color, shape, and/or sound. Parents will be advised of such days. When the type of Show and Tell item is not specified, we encourage parents to help their child select something interesting to bring to school on Show and Tell days — perhaps something found outside in the world of nature, a picture made at home, a gift from a grandparent, an educational item from a trip, etc. Perhaps your child would like to demonstrate a "trick" just mastered, such as whistling, skipping, singing a song, or telling a story. All personal items brought to school need to be marked with your child's name or initials for easy identification.

Communications (Mail Slots/Bulletin Boards):

Each student has their own mail slot for dissemination of written information, artwork, etc. for the student and the parents. Your child will look forward to checking his/her mail slot each day.

A monthly classroom calendar will be placed in your child's mail slot near the end of each month. Please retain it for the month for discussion with your child, for referencing the activities and events, and for notices of special days when items are required, such as Show and Tell. A snack schedule will also be included in the materials; please note when your family is scheduled to provide classroom snacks.

All class calendars and snack charts can be found on our website.

Emails on school news are periodically sent out to parents.

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have with your child's teacher or the school's Director either over the phone, or through email. We are here to work together with you during these important, exciting school years.

Informal conferences may be arranged upon request for any student at any time during the school year. We will hold formal parent-teacher conferences in November and March. Early Learners (2's) will only hold a March Conference.

Unless a parent has a conflict with the designated day for their child's conference, parents can expect to have a conference according to the below schedule. Sign-up sheets are typically posted three weeks in advance or emailed to parents.

- Early Learners (2's): Friday in March
- T/TH Preschool Program: Tuesday or Thursday
- 3-Day Pre-Kindergarten Program and Extended Day Pre-Kindergarten: Monday, Wednesday or Friday

Visiting the Classroom:

Jack & Jill Preschool is an open school. We are proud of our school and hope you are too! We encourage volunteers to come to our school. Parent volunteers will need to attain their PA State Clearances.

Volunteer Opportunities:

PROVIDING A RESOURCE: We appreciate how parents are an important resource to our school with their vast amount of talent, experience, personal connections, ideas, and suggestions that may be useful to our school concepts. If you can be such a resource to us, please contact a teacher or the Director. Possibly those contributions can be shared with children in the classroom or in other programs. We welcome your programmatic contributions and suggestions!

HELPING WITH A SPECIAL PROJECT/EVENT: At Jack & Jill Preschool, we appreciate the extra efforts that have been exhibited by so many people. We have had parents volunteer to do the outside landscaping, tend to the flower beds, remodel various rooms, decorate bulletin boards, help with office work, be classroom aides, etc. There will be announcements throughout the year of requests for help with various projects and special events. We will be following PA's volunteer clearance protocol and specific information is available in the school office. We must have your clearances on hand in order for you to volunteer 1:1 with children and/or chaperone for field trips. In addition, if you ever think of a task you would like to do for the school, please let your child's teacher or the Director know.

PARTICIPATING ON A COMMITTEE: Much work for the school is done by committees of parent volunteers. They are invaluable to the quality and financial well-being of the school. Responsibilities and tasks are highly varied. Please consider serving in your areas of giftedness or interest: Building and Grounds, Finance, Fundraising, Teacher Appreciation, and Bingo (our largest annual fundraiser). For more details on each committee, see the separate handout or ask the School Director.

Field Trips:

Our Preschool Programs do not take Field Trips. Our Pre-K Programs do take Field Trips. We usually take about 4 – 5 trips per school year. We have instituted a new Policy for trips. Parents will meet at the trip site to drop off their children and will pick them up at the trip site. Most of the trips will be during their regular school hours. If they are not, teachers will communicate to the parents about the change. We will keep our trips local, to ensure that parents do not have to drive too far to drop off and pick up their children.

Tuition:

We aim to be as paperless as possible with tuition but do have several payment options.

You may have your payment auto-debited monthly from your checking account.

If these options are not feasible, we still accept monthly check or cash payments. Please have the exact amount in a marked envelope with your child's name and class to be handed to one of the Directors.

A registration fee of \$50 per student is due prior to enrollment. The registration fee is non-refundable and does not go toward tuition payment.

A curriculum fee of \$50 per student is due by September 10th. The curriculum fee does not go toward tuition.

No reduction in fees is given for absenteeism or holidays/vacations.

Board Meetings and Committees:

Jack & Jill Preschool's Board of Directors, which consists mainly of parents of Jack & Jill students, meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the school. For more information regarding the School Board, the Board Committees, or their activities, please contact the school office (717) 272-3588 or any current Board Member.

Home-Based Fundraising: It is always great to have Jack & Jill parents, alumni, and grandparents support our school. Jack & Jill's fundraising policy does not allow us to utilize fundraising methods directly/indirectly connected to any of the student body; therefore, we must respectfully decline your request.

Sickness:

Your child is more likely to maintain good health and get the most out of his/her school day if he/she comes to school well-rested. Eating healthy foods and regular exercise also help contribute to a good day at school. Your child will benefit from a good breakfast or lunch prior to class time, and a conversation about the upcoming class, activities, other students, and the teacher. Set the tone for the day. Also be sure that your child washes his/her hands right before entering the classroom to minimize the spread of sickness and allergens in our school.

If your child exhibits any of the following signs of illness, please keep him/her at home and possibly contact your doctor:

- A temperature of 100.3 degrees or higher (Contagiousness continues until 48 hours after the fever is gone without the lowering influence of medication.);
- Intestinal disturbances (re: vomiting - There needs to be at least 8 hours since last sick.);
- Any undiagnosed rash;
- Discharging eyes or ears (until 24 hours after start of antibiotics);
- Abnormal nasal discharge;
- An uncontrollable cough (until cough is no longer disruptive);
- A sore throat IF strep is suspected.

If possible, please call and notify the school office if your child will not attend class that day. If a child has a prescription that needs to be administered during school hours, we will need a signed note from the parent clearly stating that information.

Medication Administering Policy:

It is Jack & Jill Preschool's policy not to administer any medication to any child without the specific, written permission and instruction from the child's parent. This documentation must be viewed, signed, and dated by all pertinent parties: the parents, the children's teachers, and the School Director. The original document will be added to the children's file, and a copy will be given to all parties involved.

Emergency Incident Plan:

Our staff will treat minor first-aid issues promptly, communicate with the parents, and write up the incident on a form. In the event of an accident/incident, the family will be notified at once and arrangements made for the child's care. If the parents cannot be reached, and an emergency exists, the child will be taken to an appropriate medical facility for emergency treatment.

Please note that Jack & Jill will hold fire drills every 6 weeks.

Severe Weather — Protocol on a Delayed Schedule/Closing:

- If Cornwall-Lebanon School District **closes**; then Jack & Jill will be closed.
- If Cornwall-Lebanon School District has a **2-hour delay**; then all scheduled Jack & Jill classes will be held on that day with **a two-hour delay and shortened class time**:
 - EARLY LEARNERS (TWOS): 10:55 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.
 - PRESCHOOL: The morning classes will start at 10:55 a.m. and conclude at 12:55 p.m.
 - PRE-KINDERGARTEN: The morning classes will start at 11:05 a.m. and conclude at 1:05 p.m. The afternoon class will start at 1:30 p.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m.
- If Cornwall-Lebanon School District has an **early dismissal**; then Jack & Jill will dismiss early accordingly and have no afternoon classes.

Most importantly, use your judgment as to the condition of the weather and roads. If the weather/road conditions are questionable; then err on the side of safety, stay off the roads, and do not take your child to school that day.

What Should I Do If...?:

- My child will be **late for arrival or will not be coming to school** on a given day?
 - Contact the school (717-272-3588) with the name of your child and his/her teacher.
- My child is **sick**?
 - If contagious or your child is extremely worn out, notify the school (717-272-3588) with name of your child and his/her teacher, stay home, and see a physician if necessary.
 - If you are unsure if your child's condition is contagious, consult your child's physician or see the list of some contagious symptoms under the "Sickness" section in this handbook.
- **Someone else will be transporting my child** to or from school?
 - If that person is not already on your signed dismissal release form that will be on file in the office that lists the names of people you approve to pick up your child; then PRIOR to that day you will need to personally give to your child's teacher a signed written note naming and approving the other person to pick up your child.

- Your child had an accident/incident at school?
 - The school will promptly communicate this to the parents, complete the accident/incident report form, and review the accident/incident.
- We have extra clothes and items that we bring to school?
 - Mark all your child's items with his/her name or initials for quick and easy identification. They can be stored in the child's bookbag.
- We have a "bathroom" concern?
 - You can also ask the teacher if they have an email address by which you can discuss the issue. Lastly, you can contact the school (717-272-3588 or director@jackandjillschool.org) with the name of your child and his/her teacher, and ask to have an informal conference/discussion with the teacher via phone or email.
- We are having some issues either at home or at school with our (a) student.
 - Contact the school (717-272-3588 or director@jackandjillschool.org) with the name of your child and his/her teacher, and ask to have an informal conference/discussion with the teacher via phone or email.
- We had an emergency, are in the midst of a crisis, or are having emotional issues at home?
 - Please contact the school (717-272-3588 or director@jackandjillschool.org) with name of your child and his/her teacher, and a conference can be set up with the teacher to assist with monitoring or counseling. If you prefer to have this conversation via phone or email, you can ask for the teacher to contact you by those means.

Conversing About the School Day:

When your child comes home from preschool, you are naturally full of questions. You want to know how the time went. With whom did he/she play? What kind of story did the teacher read? What did he/she have for a snack? Some children will bombard parents with information about every single thing that happened at school. Others, when asked what happened at school, will say, "Nothing." This is normal behavior! When that happens, try again later in the day to learn of his/her school experience. Perhaps at bedtime your child will be willing to share with you the events of the day. To help jog his/her memory, ask questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" or base questions around the day's description on the monthly Classroom Activities Schedule. Let your child know that you are truly interested in his/her day by giving him/her your full attention.

Discipline:

The philosophy of Jack & Jill Preschool's discipline can best be described in the following ways:

PROCEDURES: Jack & Jill Preschool has just a few rules: use "walking feet" and "indoor voices," keep your hands to yourself at school, go up the ladder and down the slide, use good manners, and be nice to all people. If there is an incident, we talk with the child and explain why the rule/behavior is necessary in a soft but firm manner while enforcing the rule. Also, we will try to refocus and direct the positive class/school behavior.

LOVING: If a child runs in the classroom or down the hallway, we may gather the child in our arms and ask, "Why did I just call you back to me? Tell me about the 'running rule' at Jack & Jill. We may run when we go outside today but let us see your 'walking feet' inside the building. Thank you. You are special!"

POSITIVE: Our teachers use phrases such as: "I like to see students walking," "I am happy that all students are listening," "Thank you for being so cooperative," rather than: "Don't run!" "Don't spill your milk!" "Don't get any crumbs on the floor!" At Jack & Jill we will try to eliminate those negative orders by using positive reinforcement and expectation statements, such as: "Did you remember to use your inside voice?" "Can you show Sophie how to climb up the ladder on the play structure?" "Would you like help in cleaning up your milk?" "No" and "stop" are not bad words; they may be used to reinforce the positive behavior.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-DISCIPLINE: If there is an incident, we will talk with the child and explain why the rule is necessary in a soft but firm manner while enforcing the rule. Example: When there is a conflict over a toy, a Jack & Jill teacher may say, "Tell me what the problem is? Does Joey want to play with the truck by himself? What could you say to him to let him know that you would like to play with it, too? What else would you like to play with until Joey is ready to give you the truck? Can we share playing with the truck, or would you like to play with another truck? What do you think?"

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

He holds on tightly to your hand—
You're sure he's going to cry—
When you leave him at the nursery school
And have to say good-bye.

You tell yourself he needs a chance
To share and learn and grow.
He's not a baby anymore—
It's time to let him go.

But even so you find it hard
To tear yourself away.
And you wonder if he'll manage
To make it through the day.

Back home, the house is quieter
Than it's ever been before.
You keep wishing every minute
He'd come scampering in the door.

In his room there are reminders
Of his presence everywhere—
Like building blocks and picture books,
His favorite teddy bear.

You can hardly wait to pick him up
When nursery school is through.
You're sure he'll run and hug you
And say he's missed you, too.

But you find him playing happily
With new games, new friends, new toys.
Your precious little man
Is now one of the "big boys"!

Yes, since he has discovered
A new world to explore,
He really doesn't want to be
A baby anymore!

Alice E. Chase