

VIP Child Development Center Parent Handbook



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Mission statement

The mission of VIP Child Development Center is to provide safe, affordable, high-quality childcare for the parents of Ocean County and the surrounding community. In doing so, we support families in their efforts to reach their goals. VIP Child Development Center provides a cognitively and emotionally supported based program for children six weeks to five years. We provide a home-like environment where children are encouraged to develop at their own pace. VIP Staff is committed to the families we serve, providing support and encouragement.

Philosophy

We believe that every child develops by going through developmental stages, which occur in predictable sequential fashion according to his or her physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth. We provide experiences in dramatic play, math, art, science, music, language, pre-reading, and pre-writing. These experiences nurture and facilitate growth at each stage of a child's development for lifelong learning.

Verbal skills are encouraged through group discussions and through one-on-one conversations between teacher and child and between children. These verbal activities enable children to develop the critical-thinking skills necessary to further learning. One of the teacher's roles in this process is to ask the right question at the right time to spark the interest and desire to pursue a line of inquiry.

Finally, children are assisted in identifying and participating in activities that will help better the larger communities and world in which they live. As a child develops from an egotistical self to one with more concern for others, the curriculum emphasizes thought and activity directed toward the other members of the community.

In pursuing these objectives, the major task and calling of the teacher is to nurture the self-esteem of each child. Children who are secure and have a strong sense of self-worth develop into whole persons, ready to tackle any future learning activity and able to give of themselves.

Leadership

The early childhood staff at the VIP Child Development Center is committed to life-long learning. Staff members are encouraged to be active leaders in the field through continuing education, working toward a national credential and through memberships in professional organizations.

Service

Family is respected as the most important teacher in a child's life; therefore, communication, cooperation with families and meeting children's individual needs are of utmost importance. The early childhood staff at the center serve as an integral part of each child's family by recognizing the need for nurturing and respecting children's own level of development. We also promote service to the community and those in need within a developmental context that children can understand.

Statement on Human Dignity and Diversity

As an advocate for Early Child Education we recognize and cherish the dignity of everyone regardless of age, culture, faith, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability or social class. We are open to all who share our mission and seek the best for their children. Through

our admissions and employment policies and procedures, our curricular and co-curricular offerings, and our welcoming and caring environment, we seek to become a more diverse and inclusive academic community dedicated to the promotion of justice.

Our commitment to a diverse childcare community helps us to achieve excellence by promoting a culture of learning, appreciation and understanding. Each member of our community is charged to treat everyone with care and respect and to value and treasure our differences. This call to action is integral to the tradition which we share.

Non-discrimination clause

VIP Child Development Center is committed to the principle of admission to the center regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. However, the center being a private institution we have the right of refusal.

Children with special needs

We act in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable federal, state, or local laws pertaining to the provisions of services to children with disabilities. Our goal is to meet the individual needs of the child within the structure of our program, while maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all the children and staff. We will make reasonable accommodations to afford children with disabilities for full and equal enjoyment of our programs and services in the most integrated setting appropriate for their needs. We will make individual assessments to determine if we can meet each child's needs in our group childcare setting.

Education

Our center is committed to providing young children and their families with high quality early childhood education and care. The early years are the most critical part in a child's life; experiences during this time have a lasting impact on a child's development and future academic success. Our purpose is to empower children to acquire skills they will need to become creative problem solvers, life-long learners, and responsible members of their community.

Our center's curriculum, Creative Curriculum, is based for infants through five-year-old children. Our program is designed to teach children through meaningful experiences, encourage each child to reach his or her full potential and to approach learning with enthusiasm, persistence, and joy. Our goal is to ensure that each child has numerous successful experiences every day to give him/her a positive self-image and to ensure a lifelong love of learning.

The Classroom Environment

Brain research has shown that children make deeper connections in comfortable, calming, home-like environments, surrounded by the beauty of the natural world. We know that children feel secure here, and are, therefore, best able to focus and learn. Our school environment is clean, safe, and well planned.

We make a concerted effort to place all children in appropriate classrooms. The child-sized furniture, equipment, sinks and toilets will help your child develop self-reliance in taking care of his or her own personal needs. The classrooms are arranged into learning centers that encourage exploration within a predictable daily routine, including small and large group times. Your child's learning experiences will be enriched by the space we create and the toys and equipment we provide. In our infant rooms, you will see there is room for babies to move their bodies and explore.

In our toddler rooms, we have space for push-pull toys and the opportunity for toddlers to do their favorite things. In our preschool room, you will observe a group of children developing their social skills by playing dress up in our Dramatic Play Center while other children may be developing their emerging literacy skills in the Language Center, and others are in the Science Center discovering the many wonders of our world.

Children are encouraged to work and play together in small groups around the classroom. In our environment, you will see your child involved in meaningful and self-directed activities, as well as teacher-initiated instruction.

Teacher-Child Interactions

Our skilled teachers observe and assess each child's interests and levels of developing skills. It is through their careful observations that teachers learn how to adapt to the environment and activities to meet their children's needs effectively. Through careful observation of the children in their classroom, as well as a thorough knowledge of child development, our teachers create respectful, nurturing, caring relationships that allow children to feel valued and empowered.

Our teachers offer learning opportunities that ensure children are both supported and challenged. They encourage children to express their ideas and feelings in the ways each child is most comfortable, freeing themselves from fears of mistakes and deepening their knowledge of the world around them.

Our school-age program is designed to complement the school day rather than replicate it. School-age children are given opportunities to design, implement, and evaluate group projects, visit with friends, perform in plays, or create works of art.

Child Supervision

Caregivers/teachers always directly supervise infants, toddlers, and preschoolers by sight and hearing, even when the children are going to sleep, napping, or sleeping, are beginning to wake up, or are indoors or outdoors. School-age children are always within sight or hearing.

Caregivers/teachers are not being on one floor level of the building, while children are on another floor or room. Ratios will remain the same whether inside or outside.

Transition Plan

The quality standards set forth call for high quality care and learning programs to have and implement written transition plans for the children and families. The purpose of these plans is to identify and outline activities and strategies that "facilitate the transition of children and families into and out of classrooms, early learning environments, community services, and school settings including transition to kindergarten.

VIP Daycare has long implemented a variety of strategies to successfully transition children and families transition through these life passages successfully and confidently. This policy can be found in our Parent Handbook, and Staff Handbook,

This document will summarize activities that VIP Daycare do to help children and families navigate necessary transitions.

The five key transitions this policy will focus on:

1. Transitions into a program.
2. Transitions while enrolled.
3. Transitions within the program day.
4. Family transitions outside a program; and
5. Transitions when leaving a program.

1. Transitions **INTO** our Center.

a. Transitions Folders - A transition folder will be created for each child upon enrollment. Included in the transition folder are: developmental screening assessments, individual planning forms complete with goals and observations based on ASQ, GOLD assessment reports for each marking period, parent-teacher conference forms, behavioral reports, pictures of the child, artwork and other artifacts of learning (which will be sent home at the end of each school year). In addition, part of the child's transition folder will be kept digitally which includes photos and descriptors of child's progress.

b. Prospective family visits—families considering enrolling their children are invited to visit the Center for a tour. During this tour, families learn of our approach to teaching and learning (philosophy), see our learning environments, meet our teaching staff, and have opportunities to have their questions answered. The goal of this visit is to make sure that our Center is a "good fit" to prospective families.

c. New family orientation sheet—we use an orientation checklist to make sure the enhanced orientation is complete. The orientation includes: a tour of the building, showing children where their cubby is, meeting teaching staff, playing in their classroom with peers and teachers, conversations between parents and teachers and between children and teachers, learning more about the childcare policies and practices, learning drop-off and pick-up procedures, and much more. Teachers also speak with parents about a child's first day and talk about how we will help the parent and child with common separation issues. The goal of orientation is to help children and families feel comfortable and part of the VIP Daycare family and ease the child into their first day of attendance.

d. Family information sheet—when a family chooses to enroll, we provide the parents with several forms to complete. One form is a "Family Information Sheet." This four-page document provides parents with the opportunity to tell us all about their child and their family. From this sheet we learn about child interests, typical guidance approaches, family dynamics, health history, etc. After this form is returned the Director, Assistant Director and teachers of the room read the form as a means of getting to know the child and family

better. A copy is put into the classroom binder, and the original is placed in the child's file in the office.

e. Family Handbook—upon enrollment parents are provided with a comprehensive Family Handbook. This handbook clearly explains the Center's purposes, policies, and procedures. The purpose of the handbook is to help the parent transition into the culture of the Center with a clear understanding of how the Center operates. Choosing a childcare center is an important task and we use our Handbook as one way of telling families all about who we are and what we do.

f. New family welcome—teachers warmly welcome new (and continuing) children into the classroom with a well prepared learning environment and warm interactions. Teachers help children who may be having a difficult time separating by speaking calmly to them, helping them get involved in activity, singing to them, listening to them, looking at a family picture from home, waving to parents from our "waving window," etc.

g. New family info sharing—teachers encourage parents to call later in the day to see how their child is doing. Teachers also try to send a quick text during nap time so parents can know how their child's first day is going.

2. Transitions **WHILE** enrolled:

a. Transition schedule: As we find your child is ready to transition from one classroom to the next; the following steps take place.

- + Parent/family is contacted for approval.
- + Team meetings between previous teachers and perspective teachers to discuss readiness and expectations of new rooms.
- + Letter is sent to families outlining expectations of new room, copy of schedule, etc.
- + Families are introduced to new staff.
- + A 3 day transition schedule takes place: (Ex: Day one: Child visits for one hour. Day two: Child visits through naptime. Day three: child spends entire day in new room.

b. Blended classroom—we open and combine two classrooms (Waddler & Preschool) from 7:00am-8:00am. Infant and waddlers are in the Waddler room and 2 1/2-5-year-olds are in the preschool room. During the summer months if the enrollment is low we close the classroom (preschool room) and combine the preschool children in the 4/5 classroom. This mixed-age classroom helps our preschoolers develop relationships with their older peers thereby making moving from to our Older Classroom easier at the start of the fall semester.

c. Community Services and Specialists—when children enrolled in our Center have special learning needs necessitating the use of specialists (ex., speech or physical therapists), the specialists spend time at the Center working with children in the classroom. Prior to beginning to work with children at the Center, parents are asked to have the specialist work at home with the children to gain familiarity.

3. Transitions **WITHIN** the program day.

a. Written daily routine—each of our classrooms follows the same daily routine. (Posted). This routine includes: Choice Time/choose areas, breakfast, lunch, snack time, bathroom breaks, group time, small/large group activities, and outdoor play time. While exact timing of transitions from one activity to the next may vary slightly from day to day, each day includes the same sequence of activities. This allows children to easily transition from one activity to the next because they know the schedule and can predict what is coming next.

b. Plentiful time for play—we minimize the number of transitions we have by providing generous amounts of playtime.

c. Notice of change of activity—prior to switching activities (ex. from child-choice play time to group time), teachers walk around the room and give children time reminders such as “in ten minutes, we will be cleaning up for group time.” Teachers also involve children in announcing upcoming transitions by asking children to walk around and share that the transition is approaching with their peers.

d. Songs, finger plays, and movement activities during “waiting” times—on occasion where children are waiting for an activity to begin (such as the start of mealtimes or bathroom breaks), our teachers engage in singing songs, doing finger plays, participating in movement activities, etc. so children are not required to sit idly but rather can have fun and learn while waiting. Our teachers work together during transitions. For example, at the conclusion of mealtime, the teacher not facilitating meal time sends children in small groups to the bathroom for hand washing. This process minimizes waiting time.

4. Family transitions **OUTSIDE** a program.

a. Connect parents to helpful services—our center works closely with CHS (Childrens Home Society), Social Worker Agency, Parent Resource Center and several other community agencies. When a family is experiencing challenging times, we work to connect the parent with these important resources so they can receive the support and assistance they need. When a self-paid family experiences a financially challenging life change, we refer them to these agencies for information about the Childcare Financial Assistance Program.

5. Transitions **WHEN LEAVING** our program.

a. Kindergarten transitions: With regards to children leaving for kindergarten, Majority of the students we currently serve are part of Toms River School District. Rather than having one or two elementary schools where childcare graduates will transition to as a typical community center may have, we have over 7 different elementary schools where our graduates may attend. It is difficult for our small staff to connect with such a large number of schools on an individual basis “receiving” kindergartens. Rather than trying to connect with all individual schools, we focus on connecting with the district’s main personnel. And we assist individual schools when they reach out to us.

c. Equipping children to be learners who can succeed in school. Because of the challenges identified above, we help children to transition to next care environments and kindergartens in a few strategic ways. First we work to help children to be successful life-long learners by building in them the dispositions needed such as curiosity, cooperativeness,

friendliness with peers, respect for teachers and administrators, ability to follow routines, ability to speak and listen, ability to follow directions, etc. Second, we also develop academic skills and knowledge so children will know what they need to know when entering kindergarten. Third, we frequently provide a workshop for parents entitled "Kindergarten Readiness" that helps parents understand what they need to know to help their child be ready for formal school. Fourth, we help parents learn how to partner with their children's teachers and center administrator. By encouraging parents to attend parent-teacher conferences at our Center and get involved at our childcare center, we are working to help them develop the understanding of how important their involvement is in their child's continuing education.

d. Practical help—when a child exits the Center and moves to a new Center, we help the parent with this transition by providing a copy of the child's physical so they can take it with them to the next care setting.

Summary

The above-mentioned practices are consistently implemented to help children and families to best handle the various transitions that they face as they enter our center, while enrolled in our center, and as they exit our center. Since one of our goals is to develop lifelong learners, we believe that helping children and families learn to successfully navigate transitions while they are with us will help them learn the skills needed to handle transitions in their future.

Classroom Observation Policy

We use Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS), as a classroom observation tool. It is designed to measure the quality of group programs for children from infant to age 5 years old. The ECERS, ITERS can be used by staff for self-assessment of the quality of their classrooms, and to determine the areas of high quality and areas that may need additional attention. This may also be used by directors and supervisors to determine action plans for working with programs, or to examine the quality of programs over time. These may be conducted at any time, with or without prior notice to the classroom staff.

The ECERS will be utilized in the PS/PK classes to objectively look at a variety of factors such as room arrangement, teacher child interactions, learning materials and health and safety procedures. It may be administered by the director or head teacher, or by staff from partner agencies such as Grow NJ Kids. Results are then discussed by the director and teachers, and an action plan is created to ensure we provide the best possible environment for each child.

The ITERS will be utilized in the Infant/Toddler/Two classes to objectively look at a variety of factors such as room arrangement, teacher child interactions, learning materials and health and safety procedures. It may be administered by the director or head teacher, or by staff from partner agencies. Results are then discussed by the director and teachers, and an action plan is created to ensure we provide the best possible environment for each child.

ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE Policy

A developmental screening tool helps provide information about the unique development of each child. We use the ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE as our screening tool that helps parents provide information about the developmental status of their child. The specific version used will depend on the child's exact age. It's a questionnaire that the parents complete and return. It asks questions on the five developmental areas which are communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. The ASQ-SE is a first level screening tool that is designed to identify children who may be at risk for social and emotional difficulties.

A screening provides a quick look at how children are doing in important areas, such as communication, physical ability, social skills, and problem-solving skills. As a parent or caregiver, you are the best source of information about your child, and that's why the ASQ questionnaires are designed to be filled out by you. The information you supply will help reveal your child's strengths, uncover any concerns, and determine if there are community resources that may be useful for your child and/or your family.

You will be asked to complete the ASQ questionnaire about your child, upon 30 days after enrollment and two times a school year, in November and May. The first ASQ which will be given out in November, will be reviewed and scored by a Family Engagement Specialist from Children's Home Society. The Family Engagement Specialist will score the ASQ-3's and give tips and resources for your child to support their development. Then a follow up ASQ will be given out in May. With the second ASQ, your child's teacher will review them and provide feedback to you, including tips for activities you can do with your child to support their development. If you as the parent/guardian fail to return the ASQ after multiple attempts your child's teacher will fill the ASQ out for you on your behalf. Once the ASQ's are scored, the results of the ASQ will be sent home, and a copy will be filed in each child's transition folders. If there are any concerns, your child's teacher or Family Engagement Specialist will discuss the follow up and 2-3 month post rescreening process with you and provide referral information for further assessment and support if needed.

Child Assessments

Assessment is the process of observing, recording, and documenting what children do and how they do it as a basis for a variety of educational decisions. Assessments help us:

- Monitor children's development and learning over time to identify strengths and needs.
- Guide lesson planning and decision making about children's interests, needs, abilities.
- Share information with families about their child

We will participate in ongoing, systematic assessment that provides information on your child's experiences, learning and development related to our curriculum goals and objectives. Soon, the research-based assessment system that we will use is **Teaching Strategies Gold**. This assessment is aligned with our curriculum and sensitive to each child's cultural background.

The teachers will create a portfolio that contains documentation of your child's progress. Information is collected throughout the school year such as work samples, photos, and artwork, as well as anecdotal notes regarding their progress towards curriculum objectives.

This information is used to help teachers identify individual areas of strength and areas for growth, and to adjust lesson plans to support each child's unique needs. Conferences will be scheduled twice a year to allow teachers and families to discuss each child's progress to create action plans for next steps. During this time at the conferences, the parents/guardians have the opportunity and time to review and discuss with the center director, sponsor, or sponsor representative any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the center or whether the center is in compliance with all applicable provisions.

Classroom assessment data will also be evaluated as a whole so that teachers can determine general trends and make adjustments to the curriculum as appropriate.

Parent Screening Information

As required by the GROW NJ KIDS, VIP Child Development Center, is required to establish a process to ensure that any academic and/or developmental concern of its students are not overlooked and to determine this within the first 45 days of each child's attendance at a new school. To comply with this mandate, you will be given a ASQ questionnaire to be completed and returned to the school. The screening is an informal process of quickly rating your child skills of their strengths and weakness. It's important to keep in mind that all children develop according to their own schedule of growth, some developing faster in some areas and slower in others. Screening allows us to discover any areas in which your child may be growing at a slower rate. Following the completion of your child's screening, your teacher will share the outcome with you. Should you have any questions with regards to the screening process, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or speak to me directly.

Referral

If the center does not feel your child, is meeting their developmental goals we are here to help. VIP Child Development Center will offer a family conference to discuss your child's developmental needs and help refer you and discuss the appropriate resource for your family (i.e Public School Child Study Team, Child's specialized Hospital, Health care providers)

Birth to Three Early Learning Standards Policy

Infant and Toddlers providers can use observation to learn children's interests, abilities and needs. Teachers observe infants' and toddlers' on-going behavior during the daily routines and activities. They carefully document the child's behavior and then reflect on what they observed. In this way infant-toddler teachers can know what babies can do, what they are ready to know, and how they learn.

Staff Training

We have identified certain skills and competencies teachers must have to meet the childcare and early education needs of children. Following a careful selection process, each staff member received ongoing training, beginning with our New Employee Orientation Process. Our management staff observes the teachers and provides feedback to ensure we are providing the most developmentally appropriate, high quality learning opportunities possible. We strongly support the

professional development of our staff. Teachers are provided with a wide variety of in-service training and other resources to develop, maintain, and update their teaching skills.

ENROLLMENT AND TUITION GUIDELINES

Enrolling Your Child

When you enroll your child with us, you are required to complete the **Registration Packet**. These forms give us vital information about your child so we can provide the best possible care. It is imperative for your child's health and safety that all forms are accurately completed and submitted to management for review **before your child's first day**. There are other state-specific forms that must be completed as well. These include but are not limited to Expulsion Policy, Information on Parents/Guardians, Parent and Emergency Contact Information, Universal Health Form, Medication Releases, About Me questionnaire and the Acknowledgement & Receipt of Parent Handbook. In addition, you must provide us with your child's Immunization Record, which you will get from your doctor. **A non-refundable registration fee of \$150 per family per year is due upon enrollment at the center.** Thirty (30) days after the initial enrollment of your child(ren) the director of the center will reach out to you to see how everything is going and if there are any concerns that need to be discussed a conference will be requested at that time.

Tuition

In the Registration Packet, you will be asked to sign an Enrollment Agreement that explains the terms and conditions of your enrollment and our fees. In addition to tuition, there is a non-refundable annual registration fee of \$150. **Tuition Payment is due on Monday morning of each week, in advance of the childcare services to be rendered, unless other arrangements have been made** (or the first day of attendance of that week).

Because of individual needs of each family the head teacher or administrator will review with you your tuition and payment process upon your child's enrollment.

Payment Statements will be sent home the first week of each month. Fees are assessed monthly, based on the weekly schedule, regardless of days attended. **No credit will be given for holidays or days missed.** Any additional fees (i.e., extra hours, late fines, Drop-in care, field trips, non-compliant meals etc.) will be added to the following month's statement, if they have not already been paid. Any questions about statements are to be directed to the director or administrator.

Tuition rates for childcare services are reviewed annually in May. Notification of specific increases will be communicated in writing and attached to your monthly statement; you will also receive an email informing the parent/guardian of the change to tuition.

Payment can be made by cash, credit card, debit card or ACH bank payments. Please give all payments directly to the director, head teacher or administrator. **There is a \$35 returned payment fee.**

If tuition is not received on or before the tuition due date, a late fee of \$5.00 per day may be assessed. If your balance is not paid prior to the next week of care, VIP Child Development Center reserves the rights to suspend care until the tuition including late fees are paid in full.

If your child/ren is participating in our Summer Camp, there is a summer activity fee of \$170.00 per child; this is due by May 1st for children aged two and up.

Multiple Child Discounts

When multiple children from the same family attend our school, a 10% discount from the usual tuition fee may be granted once a second child is enrolled and for each child who enrolls thereafter. To take advantage of this discount, your full tuition must be paid for the child with the highest tuition base. The discount is then applied to the other child/ren that is enrolled from the same family. Please see director or administrator for details.

Other fees

A supplies fee will be assessed monthly based upon the number of days in attendance per week with the minimum amount of \$1 per month and a maximum amount of \$5 per month per child.

Fines for Late Pick-Up

Due to licensing requirements, strict caregiver/child ratios **MUST** be followed, so a late pick-up or early arrival may put a classroom over the mandated ratio. We ask that you call us, if you are going to be early or late, so that arrangements can be made for us to stay in compliance. **The center closes at 6PM** and our "closing" staff is required to stay in the building until all rooms are empty. Please arrive at least **15 minutes prior to 6PM** to gather your child and their belongings so the building is clear by 6PM and the staff can lock up the facility. **If you are late picking up your child, meaning after the 6PM closing, a fee may be assessed at \$2 per minute per child that you are late.**

Schedule changes

Any time it is necessary to make a change to your child's schedule; you **MUST** contact us by phone (732-255-2500), by email (vipkids1851@gmail.com), or through messaging on the Procare app to inform us of this modification. Please give us at least a week's notice so we can stay compliant with State Mandated teacher to child ratios. It is not guaranteed that the space will be available, but we will do our best to accommodate your request. **A child cannot exceed more than 9 hours per day in our care.** If by any chance your child is over 9 hours an additional fee may be charged.

Extra-hours request

We understand that periodically, you may need to request extra time for your child that is not normally scheduled to be in attendance. In this event, you must contact us by phone (732-255-2500), by email (vipkids1851@gmail.com), or through messaging on the Procare app to inform us of this modification. In the message or phone call please inform us of the date and time the extra care is needed, at least 24 hours' notice is required. Hours will be granted provided there is space within the requested time slot. Parents will be notified in writing or verbally whether the request has been approved or denied. The charge for the additional hours will appear on your next week's tuition statement. If things change and the extra hours are not needed, please contact us so that the additional fees will not be charged to your account.

Program Fees

On occasion we will have activities outside of the general curriculum that may require additional fees. Based upon the interest of our students and families and the availability of resources, we may

offer extracurricular opportunities during the school year that your child can choose to participate in. These activities may include computer usage, dance, art, gymnastics, music, etc. We are also open to suggestions for these extracurricular activities.

Summer Camp

There is a mandatory summer activity fee for those children two and older and who will be with us during the summer, this fee is addition to your regular tuition. Each week our summer camp curriculum includes special activities or field trips, a monthly calendar describing the plans and activities for your child's classroom will be provided to you and posted at our facility. Please see the director or head teacher for additional information.

School-Age Programs

Our school-age children are welcome to attend any additional days that their regular school is closed, such as school district in-service days and school holidays, as space permits. **Advance notice is required**, by phone (732-255-2500) or by email (vipkids1851@gmail.com), or through messaging on the Procare app if your child will be in attendance for any of these days. There will be an additional charge for this care, and it will appear on your next week's statement.

To ensure a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for each child in our program, school-age children may only attend our program during official school breaks and days off, emergency closures, before and after their regularly scheduled school day. **WE DO NOT provide care for your School-age child/ren due to the following situations: suspension from school, expulsion from school, illness, or any other time when school is regularly in session, but your child is not in school.**

Wait List Policy

To be placed on the wait list for a future opening at VIP Child Development, a family will be asked to complete an enrollment form and then submit a non-refundable \$150.00 Wait List Fee. The wait List fee insures the family's commitment to the school. When the school calls to notify a family of an available opening, the family may accept or reject the opening. If the opening is rejected, the family will be placed at the bottom of the wait list with the date of the rejection. If a family is offered an opening a second time and again rejects the opening, the family will be removed from the wait list and forfeits the registration fee.

If you are currently expecting a child, please put the anticipated start date on the enrollment form. We will only hold an infant opening for a maximum of 12 weeks. If your child does not start school on the date indicated on the enrollment form, you will be required to pay 50% tuition per month to continue holding your child's class placement or you may choose to withdraw forfeiting the registration fee. If you choose to register later, you will be required to pay another registration fee.

OPERATIONAL POLICIES

DAYS OF OPERATION AND CLOSING INFORMATION

Days of Operation

Our school is open 7:00AM - 6:00PM Monday through Friday all year long.
We are closed in observance of these holidays each year: We Reserve the right to add more closures for training purposes.

Friday before Labor Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	New Year's Day
Thanksgiving Day	Martin Luther King Day
Black Friday	Memorial Day
Christmas Eve	Independence Day

*To promote the professional growth and development of our staff, we will be closed the Thursday and Friday before Labor Day for in-service training that is focused on educational philosophies, curriculum, health and safety policies, and general school operations. (This day may be subjected to change based on the start of school day for the new school year, you will be notified through our various forms of communication, to exactly when VIP Child Development Center will be closed)

If any of the above observed holidays fall on a Saturday, we will be closed the preceding Friday. If any observed holidays fall on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday.

There are NO allowances, credits, refunds, or make-up for holidays and emergency closings. Your tuition must still be paid in full.

Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information

It is VIP's intention that we are open and provides childcare services every weekday of the year, excluding holidays that are pre-determined at the start of each school year. However, situations beyond our control, such as inclement weather, dangerous conditions, or state of emergency, it may be necessary for us to close or have a delayed opening. Our status will be announced on the local radio station **92.7 WOBM**, on our outgoing voicemail message (732-255-2500) and posted on our Facebook page, [VIP Child Development](#).

The following outlines the most likely VIP's schedule based upon **Toms River School's** inclement weather decisions. (you may call if our closure is in question)

- If Toms River Schools are CLOSED, then VIP is CLOSED
- If Toms River Schools are CLOSED, but the weather is clearing VIP will have a 90-minute delay, opening at 8:00 AM.
- If Toms River Schools are DELAYED TWO HOURS but the weather has cleared, then VIP is OPEN ON TIME
- If Toms River Schools CLOSE EARLY and Toms River Administrative offices are OPEN, then VIP will close at 4:00 PM.

*These are general guidelines and with each weather event our closings will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

If it becomes necessary for the program to close early, you will be notified by text, email and/or phone and a notification will also be posted on our Facebook page. It is imperative that you arrange to have your child picked up as soon as possible in the event of an early closing. The VIP staff will stay until all the children are picked up, but keep in mind our staff will need to get home safely so please pick up your child/ren as soon as possible.

We make every effort to communicate a decision to close or delay opening as quickly as possible. Decisions are announced by **6:00 AM** the morning of. Here are the many ways to learn about our closings or delays:

- VIP's Facebook Page (VIP Child Development)
- Email blast from your center director
- Outgoing phone message at the center (732-255-2500)

Closings due to power outages

The State Licensing regulations require us to close for the following reasons: no electricity; no water; no landline phone service. If we need to close due to any of these reasons, a decision will be made by 11:00 AM and pick up will be by 1:00 PM. In these cases, there will be no after school care for the school age program. We will contact families by text, email and/or phone to communicate this information.

If the school is unable to open or must close early, you are still responsible for tuition payments.

WITHDRAWAL AND TERMINATION

Withdrawing Your Child

If you decide to withdraw your child from our care, you are required to give us two weeks' notice. If notification is not provided, you will still be responsible for tuition and fees for two weeks, whether or not your child is in attendance. After your child has withdrawn, he or she will only be eligible for readmission based upon space availability and if all other enrollment criteria have been met. If there was an outstanding balance when your child was withdrawn, you must bring your account current before we can consider you for re-enrollment. If your child is eligible to re-enroll, you must pay a new non-refundable registration fee at the current rate.

Expulsion Policy

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must expel a child from our program, either on the short time term or a permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from the center.

Immediate Causes for Expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children, staff, or himself/herself.
- Parents threaten physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parents exhibit physical or verbal abuse to staff, children, or anyone else at the center.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child(ren)
- Verbal abuse to staff
- Failure to abide by VIP policies or requirements imposed by the appropriate licensing agency.
- A parent/guardian demands special services that are not provided to other children and cannot reasonably be delivered by VIP.

Child's Actions for Expulsion:

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
- Excessive biting.
- Any other actions we may find to be grounds for termination of care.

Proactive Actions That Will Be Taken in Order to Prevent Expulsion:

- Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriate of activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The director, classroom staff, and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parent will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendations of evaluation by professional consultation of premises.
- Recommendations of evaluation by local school district child study team.

Prior to expulsion, a parent will be called, and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both the center and the parent/guardian to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's and staff welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they are no longer able to accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to find another center to provide care for this child. An expulsion action is meant to be a period so that the parent / guardian may work on the child's behavior or come to an agreement with the center. We do, however, have the right to expel immediately if the behavior is harmful to those around him/her or him/her themselves.

Correspondence to the parent/guardian will be provided which will include, if applicable:

- the reasons for the disenrollment or suspension
- the date of the disenrollment or length of the suspension, which affords the parent sufficient time to seek alternative care, (up to two weeks, depending on safety risks presented)
- the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return or to resume or continue enrollment at the Center.

Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

VIP will not expel a child based solely on any of the following:

- making a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements
- reporting abuse or neglect occurring at the center.
- questioning the center regarding policies and procedures
- Without giving the parent sufficient time to make other childcare arrangements.

If the center elects to disenroll a child, VIP will maintain a record of the circumstances, parental notification, and corrective action taken.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE EXPLUSION POLICY THAT IS INCLUDED IN THE REGISTRAION PACKET.

CHILD ABSENCES

Attendance Policy

If your child is going to be absent, you **MUST** notify us through ProCare or via phone call that your child will not be in attendance that day; if a child is ill, you **MUST** also notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. **No allowances, credits, refunds, or make-up days shall be granted for occasional absences; your tuition must be paid in full.** If there is a school-age child that was absent from the elementary school for the day, you **MUST** notify us through ProCare or via phone call, so we know not to expect them for the day.

Child Being Absent for Three or More Consecutive Days

Regular school attendance is a crucial factor in a child's social and cognitive development and can provide children with various enriching opportunities and experiences that are beneficial to their social development and relationships with peers and adults. Excessive absenteeism, whether sporadic or consistent, can have long term effects on a child's educational path starting in pre-school. Chronic absenteeism sets the stage for poor attendance and inability to successfully do grade-level work in later grades. VIP Child Development is proactive in educating families on the benefits of regularly attending school and the disadvantages associated with absenteeism.

Listed below are steps that VIP Child Development Center takes when dealing with excessive absenteeism:

- If an enrolled child is absent without excuse for more than 3 consecutive days, we will make every effort, including calling and emailing a letter home, to contact the family to find out

why the child has been absent and to find out what assistance is needed in getting the child back to school.

- If attempts to reach the family and child are unsuccessful after 5 days, we will continue with efforts to contact the family. If a child's welfare is in question, the Department of Children and Family Services and/or law enforcement may be contacted.

Parent Resource Binder

If you are interested in family education resources specific to the needs of your child/ren or family, we will be happy to share this information with you. We have information regarding what community services and resources are available in our area and how to access them. There is a Parent Resource Binder, located downstairs near main entrance in the cabinet under the Procare clock in/out station, available to our families that provides information on local activities, doctors and hospitals and what community resources are available to you and your family. If you do not see the information on services, you need to please speak with the director or administrator, and we will be happy to get you what information is needed.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Communication with Parents

Proper communication between our parents and the teachers of VIP Child Development Center is extremely important. Teachers will be relaying information about our enrolled child/ren and school activities on a regular basis. A daily report is provided of infant and toddler parents describing the child's day, so you know whether your child took a nap, played outdoors, and ate their meals. A weekly progress report is available to parents for the pre-school aged children, where we describe what part of the curriculum was covered that week, and how their child is doing overall. Parents are encouraged to make a record (i.e., that a snapshot with their phone) of these reports for their own records as the original report is kept on our ProCare database. You are welcome to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher at any time. Concerns about any aspect of our program, or your child's care, may be expressed to the director.

As previously stated, you **MUST** communicate to us any changes in your child's schedule. Also, we need to be informed, in writing, regarding any changes in the people who will be picking up your child/ren.

Our admission office MUST be informed of any of the following changes to your child's information:

- Physical address, any phone numbers, or email address
- Parent/guardian employment
- Health/immunizations updates
- Any other pertinent information related to your child.

Proper communication can prevent misperceptions and mismatched expectations, encourage improved cooperation, and foster a team approach to caring for the children. VIP uses a combination of written, verbal, and electronic means to communicate with our parents.

Handbooks

A key form of communication is the Parent Handbook. It contains VIP's mission statement, our philosophy of operation, includes copies of all relevant policies, the days, and times of operation, how to address illness or absences, information about enrollment, payments, parents' responsibilities, and what children are permitted to bring to school.

Electronic Communication

Electronic communication is often the most expedient way to reach our busy parents at any time. VIP uses email as a regular means of communication; ProCare is a daily form of communication. We recommend that parents check this daily and get the ProCare App for their personal phone. We recommend your parents check your email routinely for communications from our email address, vipkids1851@gmail.com. VIP uses ProCare as an effective form of communication to email, text and share with parents' useful information on their child/ren's day. We also have a Facebook (VIP Child Development) and Instagram (@vipdaycare1851) page where parents and staff can visit for updated photos of the day's activities and to learn of important happenings at the center including emergencies. Text messaging is also an important form of communication used, please make sure we have your most up-to-date carrier information and mobile number.

Meetings, Workshops and Parent Resources

Throughout the year VIP Child Development Center will make you aware of meetings and conferences that will be held at our facility and in our community, these meetings are to be informational on topics that will be relevant to you as caregivers to small children. We welcome any suggestions on topics you would like us to cover or highlight.

We also maintain a binder with information that may be important to you; it is kept behind the desk downstairs labeled **Parent Resource Binder** and you are welcome to access this binder at any time. This binder contains information on local activities, doctors and hospitals and what community resources are available to you and your family. There are also pamphlets and flyers that you are welcome to take with you. We are also able to make copies of any of the articles or other information if needed. If you do not see the information on services, you need please speak with the director or administrator and we will be happy to get you the information that you have requested.

Monthly Activity Calendar

VIP publishes and distributes, via email, a monthly calendar to all parents/guardians of enrolled children. The monthly activity calendar has important information about what is happening at the school during the month including upcoming activities and events, child development issues, home activity ideas, and information about the curriculum. In addition, we post the calendar along with flyers throughout the school with information on special events, programs, and reminders. Monthly calendars are made available to all parents of enrolled children.

Other Communication Methods

For special events, field trips or urgent notifications, we will send home printed material. These

items are given directly to the parents to make sure they see it. We have a secure drop box, by the downstairs office door, so parents can drop off payments and any other important paperwork if they do not feel comfortable handing it directly to a staff member. We will post eye-catching posters and flyers in prominent places to share information about upcoming special events or outings, and to remind parents of holiday closures or any temporary changes in our operating hours. We encourage parents to communicate with our staff about any issues or changes at home that might affect the child's behavior; teething, potty training, an absent parent, or new sibling all falls in this category, knowing this information will help our staff effectively relate to your children.

Open Door Policy (including Visitors and Volunteers)

We welcome relatives and friends to visit the children while they are at school parents of enrolled children the opportunity to visit the center at any time during the center's hours of operation to observe its operation and program activities without having to secure prior approval. With your approval. **All Visitors**, including parents, you must enter through the main entrance and inform a staff member of your arrival. All verified family members must sign in the VIP Visitor Log and then will be escorted to the child they are at VIP to visit. All other visitors, including volunteers, must enter through the main entrance, sign into the VIP Visitor Log, and provide a current Government Issue photo ID, which will be photocopied, and then they will be escorted by an employee to the child or room they wish to visit. At no time is a visitor to be left without a VIP Staff member present. Upon leaving the Visitor must sign out of the VIP Visitor Log.

Family-Teacher Conferences

At the start of each school year VIP will schedule an individual meet and greet each family; we encourage you to take advantage of this time so they can speak with the staff, discuss your child's interests, learn about what activities your children will participate in throughout the year, and address any other questions you may have. The director will contact you to schedule your conference.

We also encourage you to schedule meetings with your child's teacher whenever you have questions or concerns. This gives you the opportunity to review your child's progress and address any other questions.

Family & Teacher Surveys

VIP will send out Family Surveys along with Teacher Surveys though a google form via email. We ask all families to participate.

We will use this information to determine strengths and areas for improvement. After surveys are collected VIP will set up meetings to discuss any feedback or areas of concerns based on the family's response. The results can and will be added to VIP's Improvement Plan.

Strengthening Families Protective Factors Survey

We ask that all our families participate in our Strengthening Families Protective Factors Survey, so we can learn how to better support you and your family. The Strengthening Families is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program. SF is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children as well as to improve

social competencies and school performance. It has been proven that child maltreatment also decreases when parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

Strengthening Families and VIP offers facility friendship and mutual support, strengthen parenting (i.e. parent workshops, parent resource binder), response to family crisis, facilitate children's social and emotional development (i.e. teachable moments), observe and respond to early warning signs of children abuse and neglect, and value and support our parents. You can contact the director or administrator for further details on this program.

General Policies

Screen Time Policy

VIP Child Development understands that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and interacting with others, which encourages learning and healthy physical and social development. Because we care about the health and wellbeing of the children in our care, we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' Recommendations on Screen Time:

- Infants and Young Toddlers: No screen time for children younger than 2 years is permitted.
- Children 2 Years and Older: Children 2 years and older have no more than 30 minutes of screen time once a week while in the facility and only for educational or physical activity.
- Screen-free Meals and Snacks: Children do not have any screen time during meals or snacks.
- Computer Time: Computer time is no more than 15 minutes at a time except for school-aged children completing school homework assignments and for children with special health needs who require and consistently use assistive and adaptive computer technology.
- Content of Screen Media: Any screen media must be free of violent, sexually explicit, stereotyped content (including cartoons), advertising, and brand placement.
- Home Reduction of Screen time: Work with parents and caregivers to ensure children have no more than 1 -2 hours of quality screen time per day.

Home Language Policy

VIP Child Development Center is an open and inclusive program where all children and families are welcome. To support children whose first language is NOT English, we implement the following strategies based on the national standards of best practices:

- We provide a well-equipped classroom that reflects diversity in materials, displays, books and activities.
- All children will participate in quality language and play experiences throughout the day, with both adults and other children.
- All children are taught basic classroom words in sign language to support communication.
- Items in the classroom will be labeled with pictures as well as words.
- Where possible, word labels will be added to the classroom in the home language.
- Books will be added to the reading area in the home language.
- In order to assist us in communicating in the classroom, we ask families to give us a list of common words the child/ren might use in the home language.
- We encourage families to speak to children in the home language at home.

- We encourage families to share items that can be used in the classroom that represent their home culture.
- We encourage family members to visit the classroom, to share cultural activities with all the children, such as holiday celebrations, food, music, books, etc.; Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a visit.
- Parent materials will be translated into the home language upon request.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at VIP Child Development Center. We take bullying very seriously and are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment in which the needs of the individual are respected and appreciated. Bullying is defined as actions taken by one or more people with the deliberate intention of hurting another person. We will take disciplinary action against those in our facility that are accused of Bullying and if a child's behavior is unable to be changed or corrected, they may be expelled from our program.

Bullying can take many forms, but the main types are:

Emotional: being unfriendly or unkind, excluding from groups, tormenting (hiding objects, threatening gestures)

Physical: hitting, pushing, punching, pinching, kicking, hiding, taking or defacing belongings, or any use of violence

Racist/Intolerant: Taunts, slurs and/or physical threats directed around a victim's race, religion or ethnicity

Verbal: name-calling, teasing, sarcasm, writing unkind notes, spreading rumors, making prejudiced remarks

An instance of bullying may fall into more than one 'category' listed above.

Behavior Management Policy

The goal of VIP Child Development Center's behavior management policy is to maximize the growth and development of the child and for protecting the group of individuals within it. VIP will use the behavior management plan in a consistent, reasonable, and appropriate way based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. VIP will set reasonable and positive expectations, offering choices, and providing children an opportunity to verbalize his/her feelings that encourages children to develop self-control through understanding. We prohibit spanking or other corporal punishment of children. These methods are banned from use on VIP property regardless of relation to the child or if the child is visiting/with their authorized guardian. We will not subject children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatments. We will never deprive a child of meals or snacks and will never forcefully feed a child. VIP will never discipline a child for soiling, or wetting him/herself, or not using the toilet. We will not force a child to remain in soiled clothing or force a child to remain on the toilet or use any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting. Where appropriate and feasible, children shall participate in the establishment of rules, policies, and procedures of each classroom environment.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Appropriate Dress for School

Please dress your child for school in comfortable, washable play clothes that will allow him or her to

thoroughly enjoy the classroom, playground, and all school activities. Please take into consideration current weather conditions, as well as the unexpected changes in the weather that may require a change in apparel. This may include having a jacket, coat, mittens or gloves, and a hat for days that become colder or the ability to change into a lighter weight shirt, pants, or shorts for warmer days.

Sneakers or other closed-toed shoes must be worn for safety reasons, **flip-flops, sandals, or open-toed shoes are not permitted**, unless you have signed the waiver stating otherwise.

To help us keep your child happy, safe, healthy, clean, and comfortable while in our care, please send your child with at least three complete change of clothes in their backpack. Accidents and spills can happen at any age. **Please place your child's first and last name (in permanent ink) on each article of clothing and all other personal items you bring to school.** Do not allow your child to wear or bring expensive jewelry to school, we cannot be responsible for it.

Personal Items Allowed in School

Electronic devices (i.e. smart phones, tablets, gaming devices) may be permitted for school aged children with written parent permission, see the director for details. Please take into consideration VIP's Screen Time Policy when sending in an electronic device and when you do **make sure all items are labeled in permanent ink with your child's first and last name.**

If your child is able to sleep on a cot, please provide us with a crib sized sheet and small blanket for naptime. Keep in mind the small size of your child's cubby, which precludes us from storing larger bedding items. Infant and toddler parents should talk to school management before bringing bedding items to the school. **Make sure all items are labeled in permanent ink with your child's first and last name.** Sheets and blankets are sent home every Friday to be laundered, remember to send them back with your child on Monday in a 2 Gallon Zip-Lock bag.

Personal Items to Leave at Home

Please do not bring any valuables that you and your child treasure to school, such as favorite books, jewelry, or toys from home. We ask that you explain to your child why it is not wise to bring these things to school. VIP cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.

Lost and Found

If your child is missing anything, please inquire at the school as soon as possible. It is much easier to return a lost item if it is labeled with the child's first and last name, so remember to label everything in permanent ink.

NUTRITION

One of the core responsibilities of every early care and education center is to serve nourishing food which has been provided by our parents/guardians, that is clean, safe, and developmentally appropriate for children. Current research shows that children need a variety of nutrient-dense foods that include protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals, with a number of calories that prevents hunger, fosters healthy growth, supports learning, and prevents obesity. We are also a tree nut and peanut free environment. We follow and respect students religious and/or dietary restrictions according to USDA guidelines.

If a child's meal or snack provided from home does not meet USDA guidelines, VIP will supplement the child's meal or snack to meet USDA guidelines. And parents will be charged accordingly.

VIP Child Development Center is committed to implementing the following policies regarding child nutrition:

Meals

- We ask that all provided meals and snacks meet the requirements of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- Children in care for more than 8 hours in one day parents/guardians are asked that they provide at least one meal and two or three snacks daily. (Sample meal times for our Pre-K program)
 - Morning snack or breakfast - 8:30 AM
 - Lunch - 12:00 PM
 - Afternoon snack - 2:30 PM
- Children will be allowed to eat their food peacefully and not be rushed during meals.
- Food is not offered as a reward or denied as punishment.
- Special occasions and holidays will be celebrated with activities, non-food items, or if foods are being provided, we ask that they meet healthy standards. We can provide you with a copy of healthy suggestions upon request. Food that is brought into VIP must be **PEANUT FREE**.

Foods

- We suggest that high fat products (containing >35% of calories from fat), high-sugar products (containing >35% of calories from sugar), and salty foods are avoided.
- We suggest that whole-grain breads, pasta, and grains should be provided.
- Developmentally appropriate servings of protein such as lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, cooked beans, peas, eggs, yogurt, or cheese are recommended. We are a nut free facility, but we do allow sunflower butter as substitute (sold at local food stores and Target).
- Staff members will encourage children to try developmentally appropriate servings of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, with no added fat.

Beverages

- Drinking water is available throughout the day indoors and outdoors.
- Children younger than 12 months do not receive cow's milk unless the child's health care professional gives a written exception and direction to do so.
- Children between 12 and 24 months of age are to be provided with whole milk, unless they are consuming breast milk, or a prescribed formula.
- Children 2 years and older are to be provided nonfat (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.
- No Juice will be served, we are juice free.

Nutrition Education

- Teachers incorporate planned nutrition education into their classroom at least once per week.
- Staff receive professional development on child nutrition during the year.
- Families are offered education on child nutrition two or more times per year.

- We provide healthy bulletin board in our entrance featuring "Deals of the Week" at local grocery stores to help parents find sales on healthy foods, along with "Recipes of the Week" to give parents suggestions on new healthy meal options appropriate to each age group.
- Children are encouraged daily to eat healthy, therefore on the bulletin boards we feature pictures of students who are eating healthy and pictures of students who found a new healthy snack each day. Be sure to look for sign-up sheets or monthly newsletters to help your child's class learn about healthy recipes. Parents will be given the opportunity to come into class and bring in ingredients to make a healthy recipe to share with the class.

Build a Healthy Plate

- **Fruit!** Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits are all great choices when providing a child with fruit. Each fruit has its own unique flavor and nutrients, providing different choices each day help children get the nutrition they need. We recommend including fruits with good sources of potassium, such as bananas, dried plums, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, nectarines, raspberries, and oranges. Potassium can help children maintain a healthy blood pressure. Please remember to cut up fruits into small bite sized pieces appropriate for small children and grapes should be halved.
 - **We recommend providing a child with a variety of Fruits**, for example, apples, blueberries, grapes, peaches, plums, strawberries, and watermelon. We applaud parents who provide children with fruits instead of fruit snacks or strips, candy, cookies, cakes or other sweets for their snacks.
- **Vegetables!** Fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables are all great choices when providing a child with vegetables. Each vegetable contains different amounts of nutrients and fiber, so vary the vegetables you provide your child with. Providing different choices each day helps children get the nutrition they need. Please remember to cut up vegetables into small bite sized pieces appropriate for small children.
 - **We recommend providing a child with a variety of vegetables**, some suggestions include broccoli, lettuce, kale, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, corn, peas, potatoes, beans, asparagus, celery, cucumbers, and zucchini. We recommend providing your child with vegetables instead of chips and other salty snacks.
- **Dry beans and peas!** Cooked, canned, or frozen beans and peas are all great choices, when providing a child with beans and peas. We recommend providing different types of beans and peas each week to help children get the nutrition they need, as well as taste new foods. To simplify recipes and reduce cooking times, while providing a healthy meal option for your child, choose canned and precooked beans labeled "no salt added" or "low sodium".
 - **We recommend providing a child with a variety of beans and peas**, some suggestions include, black beans, chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, pinto beans, split peas, and white peas.
- **Protein!** Fish, poultry, beef, and eggs are all great choices when providing your child with protein. Providing different choices each day helps children get the nutrition they need and introduces them to new foods. You can provide your child with different meat and meat alternatives for different nutrients. Protein is a great meal option to make your child feel full for longer.

- **We recommend providing a child with a variety of Fish (fresh, frozen, or canned)** is good choices for meals. You can provide your child with salmon, tuna, and tilapia prepared in different ways: baked, grilled, or in sandwiches.
- **We recommend providing a child with a variety of Poultry**, like chicken or turkey, can be served grilled, roasted, or in pastas, or sandwiches. Lean cuts of meat are also great choices, which include beef, pork, and lamb.
- **We recommend providing a child with a variety of other protein alternatives like eggs**, which can be prepared in a variety of ways, hard-boiled, scrambled, or deviled.
- **We recommend providing a child with a variety with yogurt or cheese that is** labeled fat-free or low-fat. We DO NOT recommend using any form of processed cheese products. Yogurt and cheese are also meat alternatives.
- **Whole grains!** Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or cereal grain is a grain product. Grains are then divided into two groups: whole grains and refined grains.
 - **We recommend providing a child with a variety whole-grains.** Whole grains are a great meal option to help your child feel fuller longer and maintain a healthy weight as they grow. Choose whole grains over refined grains, brown rice, wild rice, quinoa, whole-wheat flour, whole grain bread, whole-wheat pasta, and whole-grain crackers.
- **Milk** Children who consume dairy products such as milk, yogurt, and cheese get important nutrients and have healthier diets than those who don't. Milk helps build strong bones, teeth, and muscles in growing children. Fat-free and low-fat (1%) milk options have the same amount of calcium and other important nutrients as whole and reduced-fat (2%) milks but have much less fat. Whole and reduced-fat milks (2%) contain high amounts of saturated fat and should not be provided to your children over 2 years of age.
 - **We recommend providing a child with unflavored, fat-free, and low-fat milks most often.** They have much less added sugar and fewer calories than flavored, whole, or reduced fat milk. We allow lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk for children who are allergic to dairy. We handle milk substitutions on a case-by-case basis.
- **Less salt and sodium!** Introducing your child to foods lower in sodium at a young age can help get them to like and enjoy foods with a less salty taste.
 - **We recommend providing a child with foods with no salt added, low-sodium, or reduced sodium, along with preparing foods without adding salt.** In addition, we also recommend providing them with more food that is fresh and fewer processed foods.
- **Low in solid fats!** Children can fill up on the extra calories from solid fats and not get the nutrients that they need to grow and be healthy. You should provide children with fewer foods that are high in solid fats or replace solid fats with healthy oils. Oils are a good source of healthy unsaturated fats and are generally cholesterol free.
 - **We recommend providing a child with foods that are baked, grilled, broiled, or roasted** rather than foods that are fried, breaded, or processed.

- **Fewer added sugars!** Sugars are considered empty calories because they add calories to food without offering any nutrients. Introducing your child to foods lower in sugar at an early age can help get them to like and enjoy foods with a less sugary taste.
 - **We recommend providing a child with foods that have little to no added sugars.** In addition, we also recommend providing them with more food that is fresh, unflavored, and unsweetened.
- **Water!** Provide your children with water instead of beverages containing artificial sweeteners or other high-calorie sweetened beverages. We also have water available to children all day long, indoors, and outdoors. When babies have finished their milk bottles, we offer water.

Policy on Food Service

- Everything that touches food will be clean, including hands, containers, utensils, and plates.
- All will wash hands with warm water and soap before and after handling food.
- Tables are washed and cleaned before and after meals.
- We only use clean towels or paper towels to wipe down surfaces. Dirty towels or sponges collect and spread bacteria, instead of removing them, therefore will not be used.
- Parents - All foods, snacks, and beverages must be named and dated each day.
- Parents - All foods and vegetables must be properly washed, dried, and stored before consumption.
- Perishable foods will be kept in the refrigerator.

Choose My Plate (choosemyplate.gov)

MyPlate is a reminder to find your healthy eating style and build it throughout your lifetime. Everything you eat and drink matters. The right mix can help you be healthier now and in the future. This means:

- Focus on variety, amount, and nutrition.
- Choose foods and beverages with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars.
- Start with minor changes to build healthier eating styles.
- Support healthy eating for everyone.

Eating healthy is a journey shaped by many factors, including your stage of life, situations, preferences, access to food, culture, traditions, and the personal decisions we make over time. All your food and beverage choices count. MyPlate offers ideas and tips to help you create a healthier eating style that meets your individual needs and improves your health.

Health Screenings

- Parents are required to turn in child immunization records each time they receive a shot.
- Parents are required to turn in child universal health records annually at health birthday visit.

Eye Assessments

- Every child needs a regular vision screening and to effectively address vision issues in children, SPOT, a revolutionary automated vision technology has been developed to quickly detect any indications of treatable sight threatening conditions.
- We will be providing a free service of automated vision screenings once a year sponsored by the Lions Club of Toms River. Results will be sent home and a copy emailed.
- Screenings do not replace a complete and comprehensive eye examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist, nor can it detect all diseases or conditions. Screenings determine if a child requires the attention of a vision care specialist.
- Please note that the screenings are free of charge, but you will need to follow up with a doctor/specialist in the event that additional attention is needed.

Dental Care

- We ask of you to stress the importance of dental hygiene to your children while at home.
- Once a year, Brick Pediatric Dentistry will come into our center and teach the children of the importance of dental hygiene and learn how to properly care for their teeth. We will continue to work with the children throughout the year.
- Please provide your child with a toothbrush, tooth paste, and a toothbrush cover/cap and have all the items labeled with your child's name.
- Children will be brushing teeth after each meal and snack.

Dental Care

1. Food Choices: This facility serves foods and beverages that are low in sugar, such as drinking water, with a preference for protein-, calcium-, and vitamin-rich foods such as milk, cheese, eggs, and fresh fruit and vegetables—foods that are good for nutrition and oral health.

2. Pacifiers and Teething Rings: Pacifiers and teething rings are used only by the child to whom the pacifier/teething ring belongs. Pacifiers may only be used in the child's crib for sleeping. Pacifiers and teething rings are cleaned when soiled and then cleaned and sanitized at the end of the day. Pacifiers that are damaged, have attachments, or are clipped, pinned, or tied to the child are not allowed.

3. Bottles and No-Spill Cups: Devices for children who cannot yet drink from a regular cup are used only during meals and snacks and while the child is held or seated. Children are weaned from the bottle or no-spill cup to drink from a regular cup as soon as the child shows interest and learns to do so.

4. Oral Hygiene: As soon as a child's first tooth erupts, teachers/caregivers start oral hygiene with a soft toothbrush. Oral hygiene is a daily curricular activity for all children who have teeth.

a. Toothbrushing Procedure

- i. After performing hand hygiene, teachers/caregivers prepare a disposable paper cup by putting the portion of fluoride-containing toothpaste on the edge of the cup and provide each child with the child's individually assigned, clean toothbrush. Children who are ready to learn to swish and spit may have a small amount of water in the cup.
- ii. The portion of fluoride-containing toothpaste for children younger than 2 years is a smear and for children older than 2 years is a small pea-sized amount.
- iii. For toothbrushing, children are seated at a table or stand at a sink that is not used for toileting or diapering. They are not allowed to walk around with or share their toothbrushes.
- iv. The teachers/caregivers demonstrate toothbrushing to the children and assist a different child in the group each day so that each child learns how to properly brush. Wearing disposable gloves while assisting with toothbrushing is recommended. Because a longer duration of brushing leads to more plaque removal, the teachers/caregivers encourage children to brush for 2 minutes.
- v. After brushing, children who are ready to learn to swish and spit and are not brushing their teeth at a sink are encouraged to use the water in the cup and spit the water back into the cup.
- vi. After brushing, the teachers/caregivers rinse toothbrushes individually in running water and store them to dry so their bristles are up and do not touch any other surface. Paper cups are discarded in the trash.
- vii. Children and teachers/caregivers perform hand hygiene after toothbrushing.
- viii. Families provide a new toothbrush, labeled with the child's name, every 3 to 4 months or sooner if the bristles become frayed or the toothbrush becomes contaminated.

b. Water Rinsing After Eating: When tooth brushing is not performed after eating, children are given a drink of water to rinse the food off their teeth.

5. Dentist for Each Child: Parents/legal guardians identify a dentist who cares for their child's teeth. has lists of dentists in the community for families to use if they have not already found a dentist for their child.

6. Tooth Decay and Dental Emergencies: When opportunities arise for staff members to look at a child's teeth, especially behind the front teeth and under the lips, staff members note signs of tooth decay or injury such as discoloration of the teeth or patchy appearance of tooth color. Any concern is reported to the child's parents/legal guardians with a request to take the child to a dentist for evaluation of the observations. In the event of a dental emergency, the director or lead teacher immediately contacts the parents/legal guardians.

7. Oral Health Education: Teachers/caregivers include activities about oral health in the curriculum.

The director arranges for dental health professionals to come to the facility to teach about oral health at least yearly.

ACTIVITIES

Physical Activity

Young children need physical activity to develop healthy bodies (brain and neurologic development, lungs, heart, muscles, bones, and appropriate weight) as well as gross motor and social skills. They sleep, learn, and exhibit greater self-regulation when physical activity is part of their daily routines. Physical activity habits developed in early childhood may last a lifetime. Young children's activity level depends on the opportunities that their teachers/caregivers and families provide for them. Because the hours spent in child care are such a large part of the child's waking hours, it is essential that we include as much of the total time and type of physical activity children need daily.

Outdoor Play

We believe that children, even babies, should spend time outside each day in most weather. Our children go outside into our well-equipped playground area every morning and afternoon. Of course, how long they stay out depends on how comfortable the weather is, and cues from the children. They are adaptable to a variety of weather conditions, and are, we believe, healthier for it. If individual children become uncomfortable, they may be taken inside, but the rest of the group shall remain outside for their full play period.

Children bring their water outside with them and we encourage the children to drink frequently.

Outside time is an opportunity for active, noisy, rowdy play and may include water play, sand play, snow play, art and nature activities, as well as imaginative play and opportunities to run, climb, and shout. Quilts may be spread on the ground for the babies.

Daily Outdoor Playtime for students:

- Toddlers: At least for 30 Mins in AM and 30 Mins in PM = 1 hour per day
- Pre-Schoolers: At least for 45 Mins in AM and 45 Mins in PM = 1 ½ hour per day

Water Play

Your child may participate in water activities with us during our warmer summer months with your written authorization. Older children may attend local swimming facilities as part of the summer activity program. We follow all state regulations in regards to maintaining lower staff/child ratios in relation to water activities to ensure child safety.

Children may also participate in "Splash Days" during the summer months. There children will have the opportunity to run and splash in sprinklers, use water tables, and use water toys. If your child will be participating in water activities, you will be asked to send your child to school with sunscreen, a swimsuit, water shoes, a towel, and any other necessary water items on these days. In addition, we require a signed authorization for the application of sunscreen and/or insect repellent.

Air Quality

1. Regardless of temperature, the children will continue to play outside every morning and afternoon, on their regular schedule - **UNLESS** the air quality index for that day is CODE RED. That is the only time (except for rain, snow, extreme heat or cold) that the children are to be kept inside. When the index is CODE ORANGE, the outside time will be limited. On code orange days (moderately unhealthful) outside time is limited. On code yellow (moderate) and code green (good) ozone days, outside time is unlimited.
2. Staff is to reapply sun block every 2 hours that a child remains outside in the summer months.
3. From May through September, staff checks the National Weather Service each day of the air quality and weather conditions, which determines how much outside time will be allowed that day.
4. When the wind chill factor is at or below -15°F, children are to be kept inside.
5. Because ultraviolet radiation is most intense between 10:00AM and 2:00PM, when possible, outdoor play is not scheduled during these hours. If outdoor play occurs during these peak hours, children members use activities in the shade, sunscreen, and sun-protective clothing.

Although the staff will use these temperatures as a guideline, the decision will be made on a daily basis considering the weather at the time the children would be outside.

Families must provide outdoor clothing that keeps their child/ren comfortable and is appropriate for the weather, such as a raincoat and boots on rainy days, warm coat, snow pants, mittens, and hats for cold weather on sunny days lightweight clothing that is sun protective, including long-sleeved shirts and hats.

The staff is required, both by our standards and the Law, to report chronically under dressed children to Social Services.

Holidays and Birthdays

Celebrating holidays and birthdays is a meaningful and fun experience for children, families, and teachers.

Holidays are a reflection of the cultural and ethnic diversity of our families and are an opportunity for children to learn about each other. We encourage our families to share their own traditions as a wonderful benefit to their children, and a great way to become involved in the classroom. We ensure that the holiday experiences are developmentally appropriate for the children in our classrooms, reflective of the diversity of families in our program, and meaningful interests of the children.

We encourage you to bring in **Nutritious Birthday Treats**, that are purchased from a licensed food provider OR a **Non-Food Birthday Celebration Option**, a copy of these suggestions is available upon request. Food that is brought into school must be **PEANUT FREE**. We are happy to acknowledge your child's birthday within his or her classroom and will gladly make your child feel special; please make arrangements for birthday celebrations at least one week in advance with the Director or Head Teacher.

Naps and Quiet Time

Naps are important and required for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Infants sleep "on-demand", according to their own schedule. For other age groups, our daily schedule incorporates a balance of active and quiet play, including a rest period. During this time, children are encouraged to rest, but not required to sleep.

For toddlers and preschoolers VIP provides a cot for them to sleep/rest on, please provide us with a **crib sized sheet and a small blanket**. For additional information on infant and toddler sleeping policy please refer to our Infant & Toddler Handbook. Make sure all items are labeled in permanent ink with your child's first and last name and placed in a VIP tote bag. Every Friday we send home the sheet and blanket to be laundered, they are to be return with your child on Monday morning in their VIP tote bag.

Animals at School

New Jersey state standards allow that VIP may have a class pet or can interact with a pet as part of specialized programming. We encourage good hygiene and require hand washing after handling or encountering an animal and items used by animals, such as water, food bowls, and cages. You **MUST** notify us if your child has an allergy to certain types of animals.

Field Trips

Preschool programs can be enriched through the inclusion of carefully planned field trips. Firsthand experience can provide children with information and a level of understanding that adds elements of realism to their play and enriches their overall learning. Therefore, field trips may be incorporated into our curriculum with **children four years of age and older AND weigh 40 pounds or more**. You will be notified of a planned field trip in advance by an email, a posting in the school and/or a message on the sign in/out kiosk as well as in the monthly activities calendar. You will be asked to sign a separate authorization form or permission slip, for each field trip, this will include the date, time, location, cost and special instructions or items to bring, and the anticipated time of arrival back to school.

The following procedures are followed when taking your child on a field trip:

- We must have signed permission from you to take your child on a field trip, this includes permission to transport.
- One or more staff members will carry emergency medical consent forms and emergency contact information for each child on the field trip.
- Medication is not typically administered on field trips unless it is a life-threatening circumstance (such as allergic reactions to bee stings or foods) or a drug that has a dosage duration shorter than the anticipated time for the field trip.
- Staff members will have a written list of all children on the field trip and will check the list frequently to account for the presence of all children.
- Staff members will have a first aid kit available on field trips.
- Each child must wear a shirt, nametag, or other identification listing name and telephone number of the school.
- Each staff member must be easily identifiable by all children on the field trip by wearing easily spotted identification and/or clothing.

- Each staff member supervising a field trip will have a communication device such as a two-way radio or a working cellular phone available for an alternate plan at the field trip location in case of an emergency.
- Staff members with training in CPR and first aid will be present on the field trip.

Field trips begin and end at the school. You may not drop-off your child at the field trip site and we will not release your child to you while on a field trip; all children must return to the school before being released to their parents.

Sun Safety

VIP's Sun Safety Policy for children can significantly reduce skin cancer risk. The vast majority of skin cancer is caused by overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation, particularly during childhood. If children learn how and why to protect themselves from the sun, they will enjoy a much lower risk of developing skin cancer. At VIP, we not only teach children the principles of sun safety but have also adopted policies that are aimed at protecting from the sun's harm while they are at school and school-sponsored events.

- VIP offers shade and encourages use of it in our outdoor play areas and in areas where children go for field trips. In addition, we apply sunscreen as indicated on the product label, for outdoor play and field trips that occur between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM; children are encouraged to wear sun-protective clothing. Infants younger than 6 months are kept out of direct sunlight.
- We encourage parents/guardians to apply sunscreen prior to arriving to daycare for the morning hours in the sun.
- When we are to be outdoors in sunlight, all children are asked to be dressed by you in cool, comfortable, lightweight, tightly woven (sun-protective) clothing that covers the body but allows evaporation of sweat. We also encourage a wide-brimmed hat that shadows the eyes, ears, face, and neck.
- Teachers/caregivers will apply sunscreen of no less than SPF 50, 15 to 30 minutes prior to sun exposure on skin that is not protected by clothing. At the beginning of each spring season or when a new child is enrolled a sun safety acknowledgement and sunscreen permission slip is given out, they are to be signed by you and to be returned to VIP. It is required that you provide your child with their own sun block, you must label your child's sun block with their first and last name in permanent marker. We do not share sunblock. Sunscreen is reapplied approximately every 2 hours if children continue to be exposed to sun.
- While sun safety is a year-round concern VIP will heighten our focus on sun safety between April 1st and September 30th. This is the time span during which the UV index routinely reaches or exceeds moderate levels.

The Head teacher will check the UV index provided by the EPA on the Internet or by listening to local news broadcasts to plan sun-safe activities for the locations where outdoor program activities occur.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. Methods of positive discipline

shall be consistent with the age and developmental needs of the children, and lead to the ability to develop and maintain self-control.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

You can use positive discipline by planning:

- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems.
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults.
- Have a well-planned daily schedule.
- Plan for ample elements of fun and humor.
- Include some group decision-making.
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone.
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has had some positive impact on the group.
- Provide the structure and support children need to resolve their differences.
- Share ownership and responsibility with the children. Talk about our room, our toys.

You can use positive discipline by intervening when necessary:

- Re-direct to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior.
- Provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation.
- Use time-out -- by removing a child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self-control. (One minute for each year of the child's age is a good rule of thumb).
- Divert the child and remove it from the area of conflict.
- Provide alternative activities and acceptable ways to release feelings.
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior.
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options.
- Criticize the behavior, not the child. Don't say "bad boy" or "bad girl." Instead, you might say "That is not allowed here."

You can use positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:

- Catch the child being good. Respond to and reinforce positive behavior; acknowledge or praise to let the child know you approve of what he/she is doing.
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior.
- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism.
- Overlook small annoyances, and deliberately ignore provocations.
- Give hugs and care to every child every day.
- Appreciate the child's point of view.
- Be loving, but don't confuse loving with license.

Positive discipline is NOT:

- Disciplining a child for failing to eat or sleep or for soiling themselves
- Hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment
- Using abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating, or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children
- Engaging in or inflicting any form of child abuse and/or neglect
- Withholding food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest or sleep

- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for an inappropriately long period of time

Positive discipline takes time, patience, repetition, and the willingness to change the way you deal with children. But it's worth it because positive discipline works.

Progressive Guidance Policy

The Progressive Guidance Policy is designed to provide a systematic approach for teachers, administrators, and families to assist children who exhibit inappropriate behavior over an extended period and with whom positive guidance techniques appear to be ineffective. The basic progressive guidance techniques are:

- **Overlooking:** At times a child may exhibit negative behavior to gain attention. A proactive stance is to generously give positive attention while overlooking inappropriate behavior.
- **Redirection/Distraction:** Teachers may offer alternatives to children engaged in undesirable behavior.
- **Verbal Invention:** When it is developmentally appropriate, staff may explain to a child why behavior is inappropriate and suggest to him or her the appropriate way to handle a situation.
- **Logical Consequences:** Logical consequences are related, respectful, and reasonable consequences of specific misbehavior. For example, if a child uses a block to hit other children, then a logical consequence would be that that child loses blocks until he or she can demonstrate how to use them properly. The teacher will monitor the child's subsequent behavior and follow through if required.

If your child continues to exhibit inappropriate behavior over a period of time, you may be asked to participate in a family-teacher discussion, this meeting will include the director and teacher, the child may be invited to attend as well. A Behavioral Intervention Plan will be developed at this conference to address how to correct your child's behavior. The action plan will outline:

- Inappropriate behavior
- Type of redirection that will be used
- Consequences

Depending on the severity of the inappropriate behavior, you be asked to pick up your child early and/or keep your child at home for a day or two. If your child's inappropriate behavior persists, the Director may request that your child be disenrolled.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Security Entrance System

Our school is equipped with a security entry system to protect the children in our care. This system ensures that only people with access will be allowed to enter the school. There is an open-door policy for the school during business hours for approved visitors, see Open Door Policy for more details. Upon enrollment, the director will provide the parent/guardian with access and instructions for entry. We ask that when entering the building you do not allow other people to "piggyback" into

the building. While we know you want to be polite and hold the door for others, the security system cannot be enforced if parents allow others to enter at the same time they do.

You will use your unique Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) at the Check-In/Check-Out Kiosk each time a child is left at or removed from the center; this is a New Jersey State Law. Each approved drop off /pick up person will be assigned a unique PIN upon a child's enrollment; this is so we are able to track who the child has been brought to the center by and who the child was released to.

Arriving at the School

You must always keep your child with you until they are released to a teacher, especially when exiting your vehicle in the parking lot. You are NOT to leave children, regardless of their age, unattended in a car when dropping off or picking up. We ask you to lock your car when it is left unattended, as VIP cannot be responsible for any personal belongings taken from vehicles while they are on our property. **NO CHILD WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 9:30 NO EXCEPTIONS**

You must sign in at the Check-In/Check-Out Kiosk with your unique PIN or on the Procure app on your mobile device, then accompany your child into their classroom, and let the teacher know the child has arrived. This provides a smooth transition and allows a brief exchange with the teacher to convey any information about your child and for you to learn of the day's plans. Children are always supervised; therefore, if you have more than one child at our school, you should take the older child to his or her classroom first. It is unsafe for our infants and toddlers to have older children in their rooms.

When we first open for the day and attendance is low, children may be gathered into one/several rooms before moving to their respective classrooms. Likewise, at the end of the day as children are picked up, remaining children may be placed in a room other than their assigned classroom.

Picking Up Your Child

When you arrive to pick up your child, you need to allow time for your child to complete whatever activity they are participating in. You will then let the teacher know their child is leaving. As required by New Jersey State Law you will then sign the child out at the Check-In/Check-Out Kiosk using your unique PIN before exiting the building.

We ask that you make every effort to pick up your child by 5:45PM to allow for enough time to gather your child and his/her things before our closing time of 6PM. If you are going to be late, we request that you call the center immediately to let our staff know. If an authorized person has not arrived to pick up a child after VIP Child Development Center has closed and we have not yet heard from you, the director and staff will attempt to reach each authorized contact listed in your child's record, if this effort fails, we will then make the decision on what to do with your child before contacting the authorities, your child will never be left unsupervised. If a child is still unclaimed an hour or more after closing time, VIP Child Development is required by New Jersey State Law to contact the Department's State Central Registry Hotline, 877-652-2873. After two times of being late and you fail to comply with the Pick-Up Arrangement you will be charged a \$2.00 per minute per child late fee.

Releasing Your Child to Someone Other than Parent/Guardian

You MUST notify us any time someone other than yourself or the other parent/guardian will be picking up your child. We will only release a child to his or her parents/guardians or a person that is listed on the Emergency Contacts or your Authorized Pick-Up Persons lists, that was

provided to us on your child's Registration Information. We will not release a child to anyone (other than a parent) under the age of eighteen, this includes siblings. The adult that is picking up your child must also have the appropriate car seat with them upon arrival.

If a situation arises that requires someone that is not on your Emergency Contact or Authorized Pick Up Person list is sent to pick up your child, prior written authorization must be provided to us and you must supply us and the designated pick up person with the pre-determined Safe Word. We will require a government-issued photo identification to be shown for any person not positively known to us before we can release your child, we will also make a copy of this ID. In an emergency where you are unable to submit prior written authorization, we will use your personal information and the pre-determined Safe Word to verify their identity and to authorize release.

Under no circumstances will any children be allowed to leave the center unsupervised for any other location. We will not release a child to walk to a bus stop, store or to walk home.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times.
2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1- 877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the center shall ensure that:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual.
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent, or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and

3. If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

For school-age childcare programs, no child shall be released from the program unsupervised except upon written instruction from the child's parent(s).

Fire Drills

VIP regularly conducts fire and emergency evacuation drills. Our parents, staff, and children are NOT made aware of when a drill will occur, as this is the most effective way to assess the success of fire and emergency/evacuation plans. During a fire/evacuation drill, you cannot sign children into or out of the school but must wait until the drill is complete and your child/ren has returned to the building. You can wait with your child's class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency, the director or head teacher will inform the classroom staff that the school will need to be evacuated. Our trained staff will do this in a quick and orderly manner. We will notify you of the situation as soon as possible. If it becomes necessary to remove the children from the school property, we have a predetermined emergency evacuation site that we will transport the children to. In the event of an emergency evacuation, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child/ren at the emergency evacuation site. A full copy of VIP Evacuation plans is available upon request.

Smoking and Prohibited Substances

Smoking of any kind; use of tobacco products, alcohol, and illegal drugs; and unauthorized use of potentially toxic substances are all prohibited in this facility, on facility grounds, in any vehicles that transport children, or whenever a staff member is supervising children in off-site play areas and on field trips away from the facility. Violators of this policy will be disciplined by the director. Our staff is expected to refrain from the use of alcohol or any drugs that may impair their ability to perform their job for as long as is required not to affect their behavior or abilities at work. Teachers/caregivers, other staff members, or other adults who are inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or other substances that can result in harm to others will be required to leave the premises immediately.

Persons Appearing to Be Impaired by Drugs or Alcohol

If a parent or other adult enters the school to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated either by the smell of alcohol or their actions to be impaired, we have the right to refuse to release the child to them and will call another contact on the emergency contact list to pick up your child. If the intoxicated individual becomes aggressive or unruly, the director or head teacher may notify the local authorities. Our Parent Resource Reference Guide provides information about available drug, alcohol, and tobacco support programs.

Weapons

No weapons of any type are permitted on the facility premises and will not be used for activities that are part of the facility's program. Prohibited items include firearms, pellet guns, BB guns, darts, bows, and arrows, cap pistols, stun guns, paintball guns, ammunition, explosive devices, knives

or any type of supplies intended for use as weapons, and any objects manufactured as toy versions of these weapons.

Anyone who attempts to enter or gains entry to the facility and has a prohibited item will be asked to leave our premises immediately. The director will call the police without delay if anyone attempts to violate the policy.

Pest Control

VIP Child Development Center controls pests to protect the health and safety of our children and staff, to maintain a productive learning environment, and to maintain the integrity of the school and grounds. We use all appropriate techniques to prevent pests. If we must apply a pesticide, we will use only the products registered for such use in accordance with Federal, State, and Local laws.

The use of any pesticide will be in strict accordance with the product's labels. Pesticides are used only as a last resort when pests are present and cannot be controlled by mechanical means and less harmful pesticides (i.e., gels or baits rather than broadcast sprays). If a more effective pesticide application is needed, at least 3 days' notice prior to the pesticide application is given; the director notifies all staff members, families, and visitors to the facility about the plan. The notification may involve sending an e-mail, a text and/or a posted notification at the center per Federal, State, and Local laws. Any contractor and anyone who applies the more effective pesticide or who provides any type of pest-control services for this facility must be licensed by the state and certified as a pest control operator. The full Pest Control Policy is available for review upon request.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL MATTERS

Maintaining a Clean and Healthy Environment

Our commitment to a clean and healthy environment compels us to take precautionary steps to prevent the spread of illness, especially communicable diseases. Our school is designed to be easily cleaned and maintained at the highest standards of sanitation. We implement daily cleaning and disinfecting in our classrooms. Toys in the infant and toddler room are sanitized, as they are mouthed by children. Table tops are regularly disinfected, including before and after meals and snack times.

We promote cleanliness and good hygiene with children as part of their daily routine. Frequent hand washing is practiced by staff and children, and is always required before eating, after toileting, and after outdoor play.

Universal Health Record and Medical Home

VIP Child Development Center requires each of our enrolled children to have a Universal Health Record, this record is to verify overall good health and required immunizations.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and so do we believe that every child should have a "medical home", a specific long term primary care provider, where families can be supported at all stages of your child's development. We encourage a "medical home" as opposed to a walk-in clinic or the emergency room; a primary care provider can get to know your child and family and should be your partner in decisions about your child's health.

It is encouraged that when you choose a primary care provider for your child, you share the doctor's contact information with us. When there are questions about health issues, medication, or

allergies, we can contact the provider directly for clarification and possibly save you a trip to the doctor.

Immunization Requirements

All children must be up to date on their immunizations before being admitted to our program. If your child is behind on immunizations, VIP has the right to refuse care until you become current. You will still be responsible for tuition during this time. This applies to all children, birth through school-age. Adequate documentation of immunizations records must be validated by a physician or other health-care professional with a signature or rubber stamp, and **MUST** include the child's name and birth date, the number of doses and vaccine type, and the month, day, and the year the child received each vaccination. Validated proof of updated immunizations is to be submitted when your child receives a new immunizations or booster shots. If any state licensing regulations exist that exceeded these requirements, the state licensing regulations will be adhered to by the school. Failure to abide by the immunization requirements may impact your child's enrollment.

You have rights to waive immunizations. To do so, an Immunization Waiver must be provided to us indicating the religious, cultural, or medical reasons surrounding the relinquishment. You may speak to the director to acquire this waiver. Once this waiver is filled out and given back to VIP it will be filed in that child's record. Children with an immunization exemption may be excluded from the center during a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak or threatened outbreak.

Dispensing Medication

Medications may be provided to your child while in our care in accordance with our policies and state regulations. Medication administration at this facility is limited to prescription or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications ordered by a prescribing health care professional for a specific child and must be accompanied by written consent from you.

We do ask, whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. You may administer medication to your own child during the day.

For VIP to administer medication to your child while in our care you **MUST**:

- Personally, hand over all the medications to the director or head teacher, not to just any staff in the classroom.
- Complete an Authorization to Give Medicine Form, which will be kept in the medication logbook while the medication administration is in active then, will be filed in your child's record.

Any medications brought in by you for your child **MUST BE**:

- Accompanied by a written order of the health professional and must specify the medical reason for the medication, name of the medication, dose, route, when (i.e., part of the day), for how long the medication is required (i.e., number of days), and any reactions or side effects that might occur
- In the original container
- Labeled with child's first and last name
- Labeled with date the medication was issued and when it expires
- Labeled with prescribers and pharmacy names and phone numbers
- Include directions to administer the medication
- Provide any relevant warnings

Our management staff will record the following information:

- Name of the child to whom the medicine was given
- Name of the medication
- Date, time, route and amount of medication given
- Name (not initials) of management staff administering the medication

All medications are stored in a locked area that is inaccessible to children. We will refrigerate medications that require it. Medications are not typically administered on field trips unless it is a life-threatening circumstance (such as allergic reactions to bee stings or foods) or a drug that has a dosage duration shorter than the anticipated time for the field trip.

For ALL medications, **you must** complete a complete an Authorization to Give Medication Form, *this will include instructions, consent, and waiver*. The signed form expires seven (7) days from the date of the signature. **Prescription medications must** be stored in the original container with the child's name, physician's name, date, pharmacy name and phone number, prescription name, number, and clear instructions with frequency and amount to be given to the child. **No injections** will be administered, except for Epi-Pens.

For over-the-counter medications, **you must** complete an Authorization to Give Medication Form *this includes instructions, consent, and waiver*. The signed form expires seven (7) days from the date of the signature. The only exception to this is for the use of sunscreen, diaper cream and insect repellent, we have different waiver to cover these items. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original container with the child's name clearly written and expiration date. The authorization must indicate the times the medication is to be given and the exact dosage and route. You must supply additional information on possible side effects of the medication.

Non-prescription Over-the-counter and topical medications are defined as follows:

- Non- Prescription Antihistamines
- Cough Suppressants
- Decongestants
- Non-Aspirin fever reducer/pain relievers
- Topical ointments such as sunscreen, insect repellents, teething gels and diaper rash creams

No medications will be dispensed in a manner that is contrary to the label directions without a physician's written instructions

We all have unilateral right to refuse or discontinue administration of any product/medication if:

- an adverse reaction results
- the product expires
- the child is ill or injured
- the product can be administered before or after child care
- the consent waiver form is incomplete
- for any other reason if, in management's opinion, it is in the best interest of the child

Daily Health Check

Each day, every parent/guardian must complete a daily health check. This daily health check

includes asking if your child has any injuries or marks, a fever, any symptoms of illness, exposure to COVID, recent testing of COVID, recent diagnosis of COVID, or if you have traveled to anywhere with a high-transmission rate out of state. Your child must pass these series of questions located on health screening through Procure to stay at the facility. If you answer yes to two or more questions your child may not attend school. In addition, based on the results of this interaction, it is determined whether those who appear to be ill or injured can have their needs and those of the other children met, and if the child is able to participate in the program that day. If the child can stay but needs special care, the staff member makes a Special Care Plan with the drop off person for the time the child will be at the facility, verifying a method of easy contact with you during the day.

The daily Health Check looks for:

- Changes in behavior or appearance
- Any skin rashes and itchy skin or scalp
- Any boils or weeping skin rashes
- Signs of fever, such as flushed appearance or shivering
- Complaints of pain or not feeling well
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or drainage from eyes
- When a child has been exposed to a harmful communicable disease

The Daily Health Check is documented, and the records are kept in a binder for easy reference if needed.

TRANSPORT OF STUDENT IN AN EMERGENCY "No employee of VIP Child Development Center shall require any student or pupil to be transported for any purpose or for any reason without the written permission of the parent or guardian. This section shall not apply to the transportation of a student in an emergency arising from illness or injury to the student or pupil."

LIABILITY FOR EMERGENCY CARE OF STUDENTS "Notwithstanding any provision of any law, no VIP Child Development Center staff member, physician, or hospital treating any child enrolled in our school shall be held liable for the reasonable treatment without the consent of a parent or guardian of the child when the child is ill or injured during regular school hours, requires reasonable medical treatment, and the parent or guardian cannot be reached, unless the parent or guardian has previously filed with VIP a written objection to any medical treatment other than first aid."

"No person who in good faith, and not for compensation renders emergency care at the scene of an emergency shall be liable for any civil damages resulting from any act or omission. The scene of emergency shall not include emergency departments and other places where medical care is usually offered."

POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS & COMMUNICABLE DISEASES **SICK POLICY**

Infectious diseases, illness and injuries are common occurrences among children. VIP Child Development Center clearly states the procedures we follow to make decisions about children; when

to exclude, when attendance is permitted, and when those who have been excluded may return. During the winter, many children have a common respiratory illness (a common cold) at any one time and do not need to be excluded from the program unless their condition meets the exclusion criteria specified in our policy. You **MUST** have a backup plan for taking care of your child when they are unable to be in the facility due to illness or injury.

You are expected to openly share information about your child's behavior, symptoms, or exposure to illness. A note from your child's primary health care professional is necessary only when our staff needs advice about any special care that is required for your child or if your child's condition poses a health risk to others. We rely on your description of your child's behavior or symptoms to determine when your child is well enough to return to the classroom after an illness or injury.

The director or head teacher decides about inclusion/exclusion if you have an ill child, considering what is known about the illness. The decision is made by what you and the child's teachers/caregivers share about the child's condition and findings of the daily health check procedure.

For the health and well-being of your child and others, your child must be kept home if he or she develops any of the following symptoms and must be kept home until the child is symptom free for forty-eight hours or the child's physician indicates, in writing that your child no longer possess a serious health risk to himself/ herself or others, that a child can return to the school (unless otherwise directed by the local health department):

- Your child's condition must not prevent them from participating comfortably in activities that the facility routinely offers.
- Your child's condition requires more care than teachers/caregivers can provide without compromising the needs of the other children.
- Keeping your child in care poses an increased risk to the ill child or other children or adults with whom the child encounters.

If your child has any of the following conditions, they may not be brought to school:

- Appears to be severely ill - lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or have a quickly spreading rash.
- Green/yellow nasal mucus (booger)
- A fever:
 - 100.3 degrees F or higher if taken orally.
 - 100.3 degrees F or higher taken axillary (under arm).
- Acute Diarrhea
- Blood or mucus in the stools are not explained by dietary changes.
- Vomiting; two or more episodes within a period of 24 hours
- Persistent abdominal pain or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other symptoms of illness.
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash
- Head lice
 - or nits, until after treatment has begun.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e. strep throat or other streptococcal infection)
- Scabies, until after treatment has begun.

- Chickenpox (varicella)
- Impetigo
- Pertussis (i.e., whooping cough) (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Tuberculosis (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Hepatitis A virus infection (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Severe coughing or difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavioral changes
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Stiff neck

If your child appears mildly ill, but it has been determined by the director or head teacher that your child is able to stay for the day, you along with the child's teacher/caregivers will discuss treatment for the child and develop a Special Care Plan and your child's wellbeing and will be monitored during the day. If your child's condition worsens throughout the day or your child becomes ill the teacher/caregiver will complete a Symptom Record to document date, time, and symptoms of illness. Then it will be determined if the child can stay or must leave the facility, the director or head teacher will call you to discuss the symptoms and how to manage the situation. If your child is too ill to stay, we will have you or a previously authorized emergency contact come to pick up your child. The teachers/caregivers will manage the child's symptoms; your child will be taken to a place where they can rest until they are transferred to your care or a previously authorized emergency contact person.

If your child has a Communicable Disease, you must inform the school immediately so we can take the necessary precautions. We will take necessary measures to protect your child's identity, and only share the information relating to the communicable disease with those that need to know. We also will notify you if we become aware that an employee or child in our care has contracted a communicable disease that the local health department requires us to report.

A child who contracts any of the following diseases may not return to the center without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others:

TABLE OF EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

<u>Respiratory Illnesses</u>	<u>Gastrointestinal Illnesses</u>	<u>Contact Illnesses</u>
Chicken Pox**	Campylobacter*	Impetigo
German measles*	Escherichia coli*	Lice
Haemophilus influenzae*	Giardia Lamblia*	Scabies
Measles*	Hepatitis A*	Shingles
Meningococcus*	Salmonella*	

Mumps*
 Strep Throat
 Tuberculosis*
 Whooping Cough*
 COVID-19*

Shigella*

COVID-19 POLICY

To ensure the health and safety of your child, VIP Daycare will be following state-mandated requirements. There will be no exceptions to the rules if you are uncomfortable with any of VIP Daycare policies or state policies and regulations you have the option of opting out of care. Failure to comply with VIP Daycare policy to ensure the health and safety of all will result in immediate expulsion of childcare services.

VIP will be following the NJDOH School Exclusion List, CDC Guidelines and DCF COVID-19 health and safety requirements. Any signs of illness your child will be removed from their classroom, and you will be notified for pick up.

When VIP receives a call that a child has tested positive for Covid-19 VIP is required by law to notify the DOL. Upon their instructions will determine VIP's quarantining stasis. This may result in closing the whole classroom of exposure.

If anyone in your household tests positive for Covid-19, your child/children must quarantine for 7 days before returning to school.

If your child/children test positive for Covid-19 they must quarantine for 7 days before returning to school and must be symptom-free when returning.

*Reportable diseases that must be reported to the Ocean County Health Department by VIP Child Development Center.

****Note:** If your child has chicken pox, a health care provider's note is not required for re-admitting the child to VIP. A note from the parent is required, stating either that at least six days has elapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried and crusted.

If a child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, parents will be notified in writing, by a letter sent home and/or by email.

Children with Allergies

VIP Child Development Center is a Tree Nut and Peanut Free facility; we make every effort to accommodate the children who are in our care that have food and/or other allergies. You are required to notify us immediately when you learn of your child's allergies. If your child requires medication for a life-threatening allergic reaction (i.e., bee stings or certain foods); your child's prescription will be kept at the school to be administered when necessary. You must, along with the director or head teacher, complete a Special Care Plan Form and an Authorization to Give Medication Form, for that child.

Head Lice

Head lice are parasitic insects that live on people's heads and feed on human blood. An adult is called a louse - it is grey or brown, about 1/8 inch long, and wingless. The eggs (nits) are light brown or greyish- and are found firmly attached to the hair shaft. Lice and nits can usually be found on the scalp, especially at the back of the head near the neckline and around/behind the ears. Usually one gets head lice after head-to-head contact with those with head lice. Lice may also spread by sharing clothing (hats, coats, etc) or by using infested items (e.g. combs, hair ties, towels, etc). Symptoms of head lice include feeling like tickling or like something is moving in the hair, itching, and possibly sores on the head caused by scratching.

If your child is sent home from VIP Child Development Center with head lice or suspicion of head lice, they may not return without seeing a professional and with the professional providing a note clearing them, saying they do not have head lice.

You can get a head check from your pediatrician or Lice Lifters which is located at 1501 Route 37e, Tom's River NJ 08753 which also have treatment options.

LICENSING AND LEGAL REGULATIONS

Mandated Report of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

As caring and concerned child care providers, at VIP we take our responsibilities seriously. Abuse and neglect, whether physical or emotional, can happen in all types of families, from all walks of life, and in varying degrees. When abuse occurs, both children and parents/guardians are the victims and need support, understanding, and help. Our staff has been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect.

In New Jersey, it is required by law, if we have any reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or acts of abuse, we are to immediately report this information to the child protective services or the police. Parents/guardians may ask the director for a confidential referral for an outside intervention and can suggest resources for prevention and assistance in dealing with this sensitive matter.

While in our care no child is shaken, hit, or handled in a way that causes emotional or physical pain. Our staff will comfort and will remove a child from a stressful situation when necessary. Staff members who are alleged to be perpetrators of child maltreatment will be dismissed immediately.

State Licensing Requirements

New Jersey State Licensing requirements and strict enforcement of these standards are in the best interest of all children. Our school meets or exceeded applicable licensing regulations and

standards. These standards relate to our facility, staff, safety procedures, nutrition, teacher/child ratios, and record keeping. Our school is subject to inspection by state, county, and city health, fire, and licensing officials.

It is the right of the state licensing agency, as well as Child Protective Services, Social Services, or Children and Family Services to perform their duties as follows:

- Privately interview children and/or staff without prior notice or parental consent
- Inspect, audit, and copy child and staff records without prior notice or parental consent
- Observe the physical condition of the child, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement and, if determined necessary, provide protective custody and/or have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child

We have carefully developed policies and procedures to ensure the comfort and protection of your child. As a parent/guardian, you can always expect our school to adhere to all county and state regulations governing safety, fire, nutrition, and child/staff ratios. Our inspection reports are available upon request from the director. VIP's goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all children and provide programs that suit each developmental level. We welcome your comments and suggestions that may help us achieve and improve these goals at our facility.

Confidentiality of Information

Information pertaining to a child and his or her family is kept confidential at all times. Occasionally, records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies for information that may be pertinent to a child's well-being or requested by a legal subpoena. Student files are otherwise confidential and monitored only by the management. If your child is involved in an incident involving another child, our staff will not reveal the other child's identity. Our staff does not and cannot discuss any child's development, family situation, or any other personal information unique to that child with any other person other than that child's parents. Parents are always welcome in the classroom. However, we ask parents not to make comparisons between children or ask about other children's developmental levels.

FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Just as we set guidelines for appropriate behavior of children in our program, we also must ensure that the parents and other adults who come to our school know what our expectations are in terms of their interactions with our staff, other children, and parents.

Appropriate Language and Tone in School

Parents/guardians and their guests must use appropriate language while on school property. Foul language at any time is not permitted on school grounds, which includes our parking lots and playgrounds.

If a problem or concern arises where voices are raised, the first step is to move the discussion into a private office area where you can express your concerns with the director or head teacher. We will do our best to address every problem or concern that arises, quickly and fairly. If another time must be scheduled to address the problem or concern, a meeting can be scheduled for a time that you and the director can discuss the issue.

Social Media Policy

No discriminating remarks may be made against VIP Child Development Center, its children, staff, or any other person connected in any way to VIP. Individual and group photos of children at school may not be posted on social media outside of our closed Facebook page. You may feel comfortable sharing photos of your child, but other parents may not feel the same.

Custody and Visitation Matters

It is our policy to not interfere with the custody relationships of a child's parents. As such, we assume that both parents/guardians have equal rights to pick up/drop off, visit, or request documents about their child. If that is not the case, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to provide court documents and/or legally binding agreements to clarify the rights and responsibilities of the parents and/or guardians. We will follow the last court dated documents, without prejudice, to either parent/guardian. We ask that parents/guardians keep the school, our staff, and other children out of any legal entanglements or other custodial issues and resolve these issues in another forum. Failure to adhere to this request may result in disenrollment.

Staff Hired by Parents

We do not allow our employees to make independent childcare arrangements with families at the school. However, if you enter into an agreement with a VIP employee to babysit for your family outside of the employee's normal work hours and/or outside of the school hours, it must be done away from the school and with full knowledge and understanding that the sitter enters into such agreement as a private citizen and not as an employee of VIP Child Development Center. We cannot be responsible for our employees away from our school, outside their working hours, and will not be liable for their acts or omissions when not on our property. By signing off on VIP's Parent Handbook you acknowledge this. If you hire a staff member to work for you and that employee resigns their positions with us to accept your employment offer, you will be required to pay us a \$1500 finder's fee.

In addition, staff is absolutely prohibited from transporting any children to or from the school in their personal vehicles without a signed Release of Liability form from the parent/guardian.

Professional Relationships

Parents are expected to maintain professional relationships with the staff. Although individual friendships and bonds may develop, parents and staff need to be careful about the appropriateness of the relationship. When a deeper friendship develops between a parent and a staff member, the boundary lines of friend/parent/teacher can become blurred causing miscommunication and possible breaches of confidentiality.

Confidentiality can be significantly compromised through social networking sites, such as Facebook. Any communication related to the school needs to go through appropriate channels. We encourage parents to send messages or make inquiries through our e-mail: vipkids1851@gmail.com. We check our email daily and your question or concern will be addressed soon as possible. Other appropriate forms of communication with staff include, calling the school to talk with a staff member directly or talking with the staff member at pick up and drop off.

Resolution of Disputes

If a dispute arises out of or relates in any way to our services, we encourage you to attempt to resolve such matters on good faith directly with management. The director can provide you with the contact information for additional management personnel who will be happy to work with you to resolve any issues you may have.

IN SHORT WHAT WE EXPECT OF OUR PARENTS:

We ask you to supply us with information regarding your child's health, nutrition, level of physical activity, and behavioral status upon registration or when there has been an extended gap in the child's attendance at VIP. Your child's health record is required to be updated if they have had any changes in their health or immunization status.

You are encouraged to sign a release of information/agreement so that we can communicate directly with the child's medical home/primary care provider.

- **Read/Be Aware** of bulletin boards, notices, newsletters and emails. This is a way for us to share essential information with you on a regular basis.
- **Give** your child time to adjust before leaving him or her here. Parents can help set a positive tone for the rest of the day by taking a few minutes in the morning to greet the teachers, wash hands with your child and help your child get involved in an activity.
- **Value** staff members and show them common courtesy. Teachers are more than just babysitters. We employ teachers who have a degree in education or a related field and a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education in early childhood. In addition, teachers are trained in recognizing and reporting Child Abuse, trained in First Aid, and Pediatric CPR.
- **Focus** on your child when you pick him or her up. Take time to greet staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave.
- **Pay** your tuition or child care fees on time. We are providing a valuable service and deserve prompt payment. Don't put the administration in the position of begging you for payment or terminating your services due to non-payment.
- **Be** respectful and support school policies. We do our best to enforce all policies always, but your disregard for a policy may cause a problem.
- **Teach** your children follow school rules. Your child's safety and well-being is our primary concern.
- **Keep** a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent the spread of infectious illnesses. These rules also keep your child from being infected by others as well. Make sure you have back-up child care when your child is ill.
- **Address** concerns in a respectful way and to the appropriate person. Seek to resolve your problem with the appropriate staff member.
- **Communicate** with teachers about what's going on at home.
- **Pack** your child a nutritious lunch. We will be happy to assist you with suggestions that meet USDA requirements for good nutrition

In Summary

The Parent Handbook is a summary of VIP Child Development's policies and procedures, if you wish to review the full versions of our policies and procedures you may request to any staff member to view our Guide Book of Policy.

**Department of Children and Families
Office of Licensing
INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food, and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check

or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and programs of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate you bringing these concerns to our attention too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are available soon after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at <https://childcareexplorer.njccis.com/portal/>.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff and members and children,

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office Of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to www.state.nj.us/dcf/.

VIP Child Development Center Breastfeeding Policy

Early care and education programs play an important role in providing all infants access to the varied and nutritious foods they need for healthy growth and development during their first year. Human milk is the ideal food for babies. Research overwhelmingly shows that exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and continued breastfeeding for at least a year or longer, dramatically improves health outcomes for children and their mothers. The early care and education program can help working mothers and their infants increase their breastfeeding duration by providing an environment that supports breastfeeding.

VIP Child Development Center subscribes to the following recommendations for promotion and encouragement of breastfeeding and infant feeding practices:

Staff Behaviors

1. **Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.** Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area will have an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. The location of this area is the downstairs back room.

2. **A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk -** Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the refrigerator located in the infant room. Mothers are to provide their own BPA-free containers or if to be fed within 72 hours of collection, in a breast milk/bag system to which a nipple is or can be attached. All breast milk must be labeled with child's full name, date and time milk was expressed and use by date. Breastmilk will be stored immediately on arrival at the facility. Families are encouraged to bring breastmilk in volumes appropriate for the length of time their child will be in our care, and, in addition, in some extra quantities that can be used if the baby seems to want more after finishing the usual amount.

Storage Guidelines for Human Milk:

http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/pages/Storing-and-Preparing-Expressed-Breast-Milk.aspx>

3. **Staff shall be trained in handling human milk -** All VIP Child Development Center staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of human milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. We will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control in ensuring that breastmilk is properly treated to avoid waste. Special precautions are *not* required in handling human milk.
4. **Staff members will receive professional development training on promoting and supporting breastfeeding two or more times per year.** - The director or head teaching will review the policy and procedures that VIP Child Development Center adhere to and will update the staff on any changes to policy or new information.
5. **Caregivers/teachers should feed infants on cue unless parent/guardian and the child's primary care provider give written instructions otherwise** - Infants are fed on cue of hunger such as opening the mouth or making suckling sounds unless the parent and child's primary care practitioner give written instructions otherwise. These feedings are by the same teacher/caregiver whenever possible. Feedings stop when the infant seems to be satisfied or starts to fall asleep.
6. **Preparing, Warming and Feeding human milk** - Human milk is heated separately from other bottles in warm water or a bottle warmer, not in a slow cooker or microwave oven. Water used to heat human milk is discarded after each use. Gloves are not required for handling or feeding expressed human milk, but human milk should otherwise be treated as a human fluid. Teachers/caregivers who have openings in their skin, such as cracked skin or hangnails, should prevent contact of human milk with their hands.
7. **Accidental feeding of Human Milk to the wrong infant** - No infant if fed expressed human milk of another infant's mother. In the event that human milk is accidentally fed to the wrong infant, other than to a same-aged sibling, the procedure outlined in our breast-feeding policy and procedures will be implemented to address the potential exposure of the infant to a virus-containing fluid.

8. **Infants should always be held for bottle feeding.** - Infants who are not ready to use a bottle independently while seated in a feeding chair are always held for bottle-feeding so that the infant and teacher/caregiver make eye contact during the feeding while the infant is held in the teacher's/caregiver's arms or seated on the teacher's/ caregiver's lap. Bottle propping or taking bottles into sleep/rest equipment is not permitted. A child who can independently use a bottle or eat solid foods is allowed to do so only when seated or held.
9. **Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies** - VIP Child Development Center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their baby in the morning and evenings, and holding off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive shortly. Artificial baby milks (formula) and solid foods will not be provided unless the mother has requested. Babies will be held closely when feeding and bottles will never be propped.
10. **Feeding of Solid Foods** - When an infant's health care professional indicates that the baby is ready for foods in addition to human milk or infant formula, foods high in iron and zinc are gradually introduced. This introduction generally occurs between 4 and 6 months of age.
11. **Breastfeeding employees shall be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding or milk expression** - Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their children. The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used, or the employee can come in a little earlier or leave a little late to make up the time.
12. **Cow's milk is not fed to children under 1 year of age** - With accordance with government standards, cow's milk is not fed to children under the age of one. Early exposure to cow's milk proteins increases the risk of developing allergy to milk proteins. Because of the possible association between early exposure to cow's milk proteins and risk for type 1 diabetes mellitus, breast-feeding and avoidance of commercially available cow's milk and products containing intact cow's milk protein during the first year of life are strongly encouraged.

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received and read VIP Child Development Center's Breastfeeding policy.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Acknowledgement & Receipt of Parent Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the VIP Child Development Center's Parent Handbook. I understand that it contains essential information regarding policies and procedures. I also understand that this Parent Handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise but is simply a general guide to VIP Child Development Center's policies and procedures. I acknowledge the Information To Parents is part of the handbook.

Child Name:

(Please Print)

Parent or Guardian's Name:

(Please Print)

Parent or Guardian's Signature:

(Please Print)

Date

Please sign and return to VIP Child Development Center, this will be kept in your child's file as record of receipt and understanding of our policies and procedures.