

# **ChildsPlace Parent Handbook**

Welcome to ChildsPlace! Our Early Childhood programs, accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), are presented and guided by nurturing, experienced, educated professionals. Our safe, caring, educational environment will provide opportunities for your child to grow and learn at their own pace while being supported and respected for his/her unique learning style and personality. We are excited to have you join us at ChildsPlace - "A special place to grow and learn".

Please read the information provided on our philosophy, policies, procedures and educational programs. Please reach out if you have any questions that we can assist you with. Once you have read and understand the information provided, please sign and return our Parent Contract along with your registration paperwork.

## **Philosophy/ Mission Statement**

We believe that during the early years of a child's life, his or her mind is naturally inquisitive and open to learning. We take the time and apply the skills needed to nurture and challenge each child's unique interests and ideas. A child's feelings of adequacy and accomplishment are central to the successes of the whole educational process. When children feel good about themselves, they become motivated and want to be involved in activities. A positive self-image gives each child the confidence, security and motivation to enjoy learning. We want children to have a positive feeling about school and their accomplishments.

Our teachers respect the individuality of each child and are dedicated to developing a loving and supportive relationship with each of them. This special relationship, built on respect and trust, will enable your child to have a positive, rewarding, fulfilling experience that will be the foundation for their never-ending love of learning.

Here, at ChildsPlace, we let children know how important and special they are. Each educational program is designed for a specific age group and meets the learning goals established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our enthusiastic, educated staff members have the knowledge needed to design and implement developmentally appropriate activities. The program and their activities provide each child with the opportunity to observe, explore, create and learn within a safe educational environment.

## **Our Curriculum**

At ChildsPlace, our goal is to provide the highest quality care and education for children. We believe that each child is an individual who deserves respect and appreciation for his or her own unique character. We believe that young children will learn and grow to their highest potential by interacting within an age appropriate ECE environment. We meet NAEYC's Age Appropriate Practices while taking into consideration the NH kindergarten Readiness Indicators set forth by the NH Dept of Education for our Preschool and Pre-K programs. ChildsPlace takes into consideration every aspect of designing our classrooms, from the selection of furniture and materials, the daily schedule, activities we present and how we communicate with children to create a holistic learning environment. We believe that the best curriculum for young children is one that provides for growth in all areas of development:

- Social/emotional: Interactions with peers and adults. Help children develop self-help skills, self-confidence, independence, understand routines and learn what it means to be a part of a group.
- Language: Encouraging children to use words to communicate with others, listen and participate in conversation with others.
- Physical: Large muscles skills like balancing, running, throwing and jumping. Small muscle skills like stringing beads, drawing, cutting and writing. These areas of development foster the awareness of his or her body's capabilities.
- Cognitive: (Intellectual and creative) Children begin to remember and connect experiences, learn about problem solving and engage in sociodramatic play with his or her peers. Attending and engaging in small or large group activities.

## **Curriculum Frameworks**

Learning at ChildsPlace takes the form of hands-on activities and experiences that are developmentally appropriate. Our teaching staff create an outline for each school year that is thematically based and includes activities designed with objectives to meet age specific learning goals. Learning goals follow the curriculum standards put forth by the National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC). Learning goals, areas and specific activities are documented by teaching staff weekly and posted on the Parent Board. In addition to daily activities, our teachers present weekly educational materials which are selected and offered in our classroom Learning Centers. The learning objectives are designed to follow ChildsPlace's formal developmental assessments which are completed and presented to families twice a year.

Our teaching staff plan curriculums and create environments to reflect the home values and beliefs of their students. Through the information collected on our Child Information Sheet, interactions with parents/families at drop off and pick up times, and parent participation within the classrooms, teachers create individual learning goals that correspond with those of children's families. Additionally, teachers work with parents, administration and other professionals to make individual adaptations and modifications to ensure success for all.

## **Learning Centers**

Our priority is to provide classrooms with daily routines that are child-centered, engaging and stimulating. To allow for these new experiences for each child, the teachers are responsible for: Rotating toys, games and manipulatives between classrooms each week. Enriching each learning center weekly, including new props in the block area, a new theme in the dramatic play area, unique materials in the art area and a different medium in the exploring/sensory table each week. Our staff also provide an abundance of visuals that change regularly-bright bulletin boards that include text, hanging displays and books prominently displayed.

## **Hours of Operation**

ChildsPlace is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The center closes promptly at 5:30 p.m. We ask parents to call the school if they will be late to pick up their child. If we do not hear from a parent by 5:30pm, we will call the Emergency Contact person listed on your registration form. The following late charges will be charged accordingly.

### LATE PICK UP FEE POLICY

Pick up time/charges:

0-10 minutes : \$10

11- 20 minutes: \$20

21-30 minutes: \$30

31-40 minutes: \$40

41 -50 minutes: \$50

51-60 minutes: \$60

## **Holidays**

ChildsPlace will be closed 12 days per school year to observe holidays and teacher workshop/ prep days. A school year calendar will be provided annually. Tuition is required for these closures.

## **Snow Days**

ChildsPlace will make every attempt to stay open during inclement weather. However, if the administration determines it is not safe for the staff, parents and children to travel, ChildsPlace will close for the day, have a delayed opening or an early closure. If we do close or have a delayed opening it will be announced on WMUR TV Channel 9. Please watch for the school listing "Robin's ChildsPlace" on WMUR TV Channel 9. Tuition is required if the school closes due to inclement weather.

## **Intake/Registration Procedures**

There is a \$85 registration fee, \$45 for each subsequent child, at the time of enrollment. We also offer a 10% tuition discount for the lesser rate when more than one child is enrolled.

The following registration forms must be on file before your child may attend ChildsPlace:

1. Registration and emergency release form
2. Physical health form (to be filled out by child's doctor)
3. Signed parent handbook agreement form
4. Photo/video permission slip, for documentation purposes
5. Tuition payment agreement

The child's health and registration forms are required to be updated annually or earlier if there are any changes. Files are kept private in the office where administrators, teaching staff and regulating authorities (if requested) only have access to. Children's legal guardians can have access to the file by requesting to review it with the director.

### **Payments**

Tuition can be paid either weekly or monthly. Weekly tuition is paid through our ACH auto-draft on Thursday, for the upcoming week. Monthly checks are due the last Thursday of the month for the upcoming month.

### **Absences**

When your child will not be attending the center we ask that you please notify us. If your child is out because he/she is ill, please inform the office as to what the illness is. We will post contagious diseases so that parents of the other children can be aware of what they may have been exposed to.

### **Withdrawing Your Child/Scheduling Changes**

ChildsPlace requires two weeks written notice when planning to withdraw your child from the center, to change your schedule or to add an extra day to the number of days your child attends. Your last week deposit will be applied to the 2nd week of the two week's notice.

### **Safety**

ChildsPlace is a secured school. Enrolled families will receive a Key Card to access the school when enrolled. There is a \$25.00 deposit for each Key Card, which will be refunded when your key card is returned. Children must only enter or exit the school when accompanied by an adult. When arriving, the teaching staff must be made aware of the arrival of the child by the parent. We ask that cars are not left idling in the parking area. Children must be signed in and out every day in their classroom. ChildsPlace is not responsible for a child once that child has been signed out, even if the child is still on the premises.

Parents should closely supervise children in the driveway, walkways, lobby and elsewhere in the center. Parents must notify the teacher before taking their child from the room.

Children will be released only to those with written permission from the parents. We will ask for photo identification anytime a person unfamiliar to the staff picks up your child.

Parents should notify the office staff whenever there is a change of address, home or work, phone number, or daily schedule. Correct emergency numbers are essential in case of illness or accident. Smoking is not permitted on the premises.

### **Emergencies**

We have worked with local authorities in planning an emergency plan for medical, evacuation and severe weather emergencies. In the event that we do need to evacuate the building for a long period of time, children and staff will be transported by bus to Dover Middle School, 16 Daley Drive, Dover, NH. Teachers will have each child's contact information in their emergency binder when leaving the school.

### **Refusal to Release a Child**

There are a few instances where ChildsPlace may refuse to release a child to an authorized person or parent. If the adult arrives to pick up your child and is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released to that adult. Also, if the adult is abusive towards the child, the child will not be released to that adult, for the safety of the child. The staff will contact other emergency pick up people to make arrangements for the safe pick up of the child/ren.

### **Parent Communication Policy**

We encourage and welcome parent communication at all times. Parents may call the office directly for assistance or ask to be transferred to a classroom to speak with their child's teacher. We also welcome and respond to emails throughout each day. Information regarding schedule changes, absences or requests are to be sent to our school email below. Phone messages and emails are checked regularly.

PHONE: (603)929-1976

EMAIL : [childsplace1990@comcast.net](mailto:childsplace1990@comcast.net)

### **Teacher Communication Policy**

Teachers will send daily emails to share information about your child's weekly curriculum, daily activities, upcoming news and reminders. We encourage parents to speak in person with their child's teacher at drop off and pick up each day. Classroom emails received by parents will be read and responded to during naptime hours only. Responses requiring immediate attention should be directed to the office.

**Teachers should not be contacted by the use of social media or by calling/ texting their personal cell phones at any time. Teacher responses will only be provided through classroom emails.**

We are happy to arrange for a personal phone conference or in person meeting with your child's teacher if this would be the most beneficial way to communicate. It is

important to create a positive and productive parent- teacher relationship. Parents should keep their child's teacher informed of home happenings, new activities of interest, milestones, and any other helpful hints about their child's routine. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Parent-teacher conferences are offered annually by the teachers. If either parents or teachers feel at any time that additional conferences are necessary, they may contact the Director so that a conference can be scheduled. If a parent would like to arrange for a conference they may contact our Director at [childsplace1990@comcast.net](mailto:childsplace1990@comcast.net) or call the school at 603-929-1976.

### **Rest Periods/Bedding**

The state of New Hampshire requires a rest period of at least one hour for children in a program longer than five hours. For this reason, there will be a "nap time" every day in each classroom. If children do not fall asleep within a half hour they are offered a quiet choice such as books, puzzles and/ or manipulatives. We cannot keep a child awake at a parent's request. Nap mats are provided for children, families are required to provide a sheet and blanket for his/her child's mat. The infant room provides cribs but parents are asked to bring a crib sheet for their child. Nap items will be stored in your child's cubby or other designated area in the classroom and should go home each Friday for laundering. Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, unless the child's doctor provides a note stating otherwise. Infants nap according to their own schedules determined with the help of the parents. Pillows will not be used in cribs due to the risk of suffocation.

### **Food and Nutrition**

Meal time is a valuable learning experience for children. Meal time promotes self help skills, good table manners and social skills. We encourage teachers to sit and eat with their classroom to model these skills. ChildsPlace offers a food program for \$5.00 per day, that includes nutritious meals and snacks for children in our program eating solid foods. Children 1yr to 2 yrs are given whole milk and children 2 and over are given 2% milk. Children are to wash hands before helping set up. At the end of each meal staff are sure to have the children wash their face and hands, clear tables, sweep floors, wash tables with disinfectant and mop during nap if necessary.

### **Food Allergies**

We are very concerned with the safety of the children in our care who have food allergies. We are aware that food allergies can be life threatening. Each classroom is provided with a confidential list of all children in the school that have food allergies. We are a NUT FREE school. Our food allergy policy is as follows:

- Nuts of any kind are not allowed in any meals or snacks provided by the school or by the families.
- Kitchen staff and/or the office staff will make all aware of any foods that may have been made in a facility that processes nuts. These items will only be given to children with allergies with the permission of the family.

- Families are free to choose to bring in their child's own food and opt-out of the ChildsPlace food program.
- Food labels will be made available upon request from the kitchen. Teacher's will remind parents/guardians that we are a NUT-FREE school prior to them bringing in a special treat.

### **Infant Food, Formula, and Breast Milk**

Parents of infants are responsible for providing baby food, formula, or breast milk for their child. Breast milk needs to arrive pre-made in bottles every day. Formula needs to be pre-measured in a container or bottles can also be pre-made daily. Due to possible bacterial contamination, breast milk and formula can only be offered for one hour after the initial heating. Childcare Licensing requires all bottles to be labeled with the child's name and date of preparation and cannot contain any solid foods, such as infant cereal, without a note from a doctor. Any breast milk or formula remaining in the bottle after one hour will be discarded. This is to protect your child from possible illness. Please provide enough pre-made bottles that your child will need in one day. Parents are welcome to come and nurse or feed your child at any time. We will provide a comfortable area for mothers and fathers to nurse or feed their infant and enjoy that special time together.

As infants begin to eat solid foods, parents are required to provide all cereals and jarred food. As your child moves to table foods you have the option to move to the school food program or bring your own food.

When you arrive in the morning please fill out the top of their daily sheet with any information that you would like the teachers to know throughout the day. We ask that whenever possible your infant be fed before coming to the center in the morning to make the transition from home a smoother and happier one.

### **Outdoor Activity**

Outdoor activity occurs daily as part of our programs at ChildsPlace. Except for in extreme weather conditions, the children will go outside every day. Snow pants, boots, hats and mittens are required during the snow season. Sunscreen is required in the summer. NAEYC recommends the use of sunscreen with UVB and UVA protection of 15 SPF or higher and applied to only the exposed skin. Bug spray and a sun hat or glasses are also recommended. NAEYC recommends an insect repellent containing DEET that is applied only once a day to children over the age of 2 months. Please always make sure your child has at least one change of clothes. Slippers are also recommended to replace wet shoes.

### **Biting**

We understand that biting is a normal part of toddler development; however the staff will take actions to reduce the number of incidents. Toddlers bite for a number of reasons such as lack of language, teething, and oral exploration. When biting incidents

do arise the staff will do their best to prevent or redirect the behavior. The appropriate first aid (washed, ice pack, and TLC) will be administered and an injury report will be completed for every incident. If a bite has broken the skin, we will call the parent to let them know about it before they pick their child up. The name of the biter will not be revealed to the parents of the bitten. If the behavior becomes problematic a meeting will be set up with the child's parents, teachers, and director to establish a plan of action. Biting is not grounds for automatic dismissal.

### **Behavior Policy**

Our discipline process is developmentally appropriate and focuses on the needs of the individual child. Each child learns to behave in different ways and what works well for one child may not be the answer for another. Therefore, we use different positive methods in order to redirect each child. We state clear expectations to the children as well as provide individual attention for them. Here are the techniques we use when a child is behaving inappropriately. (mistreating others, not following directions, mistreating equipment, etc)

1. **Positive Reinforcement** – At times of acceptable behavior, the child's behavior will be acknowledged, encouraged and praised.
2. **Redirection** – At times when the child displays unacceptable behavior, the child will be redirected and depending on the age of the child, informed if the behavior is unacceptable and explain why (unsafe, not kind, disrespectful to school property etc.)
3. **Choices** – This is used when a child is not following directions. A reasonable choice is given that encourages the child to make a positive choice.
4. **Take a break** – This is used when a child is demonstrating behavior that could injure oneself, others or school property. The child is removed from the group and is given an appropriate time to relax with a teacher. At this time, the teacher listens to the child about why the situation occurred and discusses more appropriate behavior.
5. If these methods are unsuccessful, seek assistance from the director, assistant director or program coordinator.

There are certain strategies **PROHIBITED** at all times:

No corporal punishment of any kind shall be used.

No child shall be verbally scolded or punished for soiling clothing.

No food shall ever be denied as a form of punishment.

No child will be subject to cruel, unusual or humiliating punishment from physical or verbal abuse.

### **Priority of each teacher**

Our top priority is to provide each and every child with a safe, loving and supportive environment. Each teacher is to present a well-rounded educational program that provides a variety of opportunities throughout the day for the personal growth and development of each child. Through engaging, age-appropriate activities, teachers work to promote the children's curiosity and encourage them to explore their world, allowing them to learn by drawing their own conclusions. Teachers at ChildsPlace are models and mentors, encouraging, caring, enthusiastic individuals whose time in the classroom is spent dedicated to the children and the development of each child's early childhood education.

We work to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom that promotes a healthy self-concept for each child. We provide a nurturing environment in which children grow to respect themselves and others and we offer a positive approach to discipline with an emphasis on what children CAN do, not what they CAN'T do. The limits of children's behavior are clearly defined, but freedom is extended to them to take responsibility for their behavior, make their own choices and take on solving their own problems. Each child is to be loved and respected at all times under all circumstances, even when social/emotional/behavioral issues arise in the classroom.

We recognize that child-centered behavior management begins with a well-prepared teacher, a thoughtfully arranged classroom, smooth transitions, structured daily routines and attentive guidance at all times. We create child-centered classrooms that are developmentally and age appropriate. We provide consistent routines, minimal distractions and limit the time that children are required to 'wait'. We continually offer appealing and engaging activities prepared in advance and learning center activities and materials that change regularly. Classroom arrangements and daily routines are kept consistent and only change due to a need not a preference. Teacher conduct that invites a lack of attentiveness or supervision resulting in unwanted behavior in the children are avoided at all costs.

### **Illness Policy**

We work to provide a clean, healthy and safe environment at all times for children in our care. As mandated by the NH Health Code, ChildsPlace will take appropriate action to protect all children in our care from contagious disease. If upon arrival a child shows symptoms of contagious illness (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, persistent cough, and specific symptoms of a contagious infection) or if the child's overall health is in serious doubt, we reserve the right to not admit the child to school or dismiss the child from school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to have an alternate care arrangement in advance in case of dismissal. If a child becomes ill, notify the office to discuss the situation to receive confirmation regarding calling the child's emergency contact directly.

Each student's health and emergency information is to be updated by parents annually and filed in each child's cumulative folders in the office. Each classroom will keep children's emergency and vital information in a well-marked space easily accessible in the classroom.

According to New Hampshire state regulations a child must be excluded from child care when ill. The symptoms for exclusion will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- A severe cough or difficulty breathing
- Reddened, crusty eyes
- One episode of vomiting
- Three episodes of non medicine related diarrhea
- Rash
- Generally out of sorts and not able to participate with the activities of the group

Please keep your child home if he/she has any of the above symptoms unless you have a note from your child's physician stating your child is not contagious and is okay to be in child care. The staff will observe your child for signs and symptoms of illness daily. If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms you will be called and your child will be sent home. Children may not return to the center until these symptoms are gone for 24 hours. This means your child must be fever free for 24 hours without the benefit of fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol or Motrin, before returning to the center. If your child has been prescribed an antibiotic, please keep your child home until he/she has had a full day's (24 hours) dosage, unless otherwise specified by the child's physician in writing.

We will make every attempt to keep your child and the other children healthy and away from contagious disease. If your child is sick please keep them at home to protect other children and the staff from illness. ChildsPlace requires children to be up to date on immunizations unless there is a religious or medical reason. Both will require proper documentation from families and health care providers. If a concern arises of a vaccine-preventable disease, the under immunized or non-immunized child will be excluded from the program for a period of time. ChildsPlace will work closely with NH Department of Health to determine what steps need to be taken.

If your child is diagnosed with any of the following illnesses, please notify the center so that we can post notice of possible exposure to contagious disease:

Amebiasis    Meningitis    Campylobacter Enteritis    Meningococcal  
Infection Clostridium Difficile Infection    Mumps  
Chicken Pox    Otitis Media  
Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)    Pertussis (Whooping Cough)  
Coxsackievirus (Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease)  
Croup    Pneumonia  
Cryptosporidiosis    Polio  
Diarrhea caused by E. Coli    Rabies  
Diphtheria    Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)  
Enteroviral Infections    Ringworm  
Fifth's Disease    Roseola  
Food Poisoning    Rotavirus

Giardiasis	Rubella (German Measles)
Haemophilus	Influenza Invasive Disease Salmonellosis
Head Lice	Scabies
Hepatitis A	Shigellosis
Impetigo	Strep Throat
Influenza	Thrush
Measles	Tuberculosis

At ChildsPlace our goal is to keep the children and staff healthy. In order to do this we follow a strict health policy. Staff is required to wash their hands before and after every meal. All staff are required to wash hands frequently throughout the day especially when wiping children's noses, changing diapers and when handling any food. All surfaces and materials at ChildsPlace are bleached to sanitize them and to keep from spreading disease and bodily fluids. Additionally, all mats, sheets, toys are cleaned every week.

### **What to Bring**

Parents of infants and toddlers should bring diapers, wipes, and any ointment or lotion they may use. All children should also have at least two changes of clothing. Everything should be clearly labeled with the child's full name. We recommend comfortable and washable clothing and shoes that can be managed by the child. Most of our art supplies are washable but sometimes they do not come all the way out of clothing. We will do our best to protect your child's clothing but there may be times when clothing may get stained. Please do not send your child in clothing that you do not mind getting dirty.

Your child will probably, from time to time, wish to bring in a special item from home. All items brought from home must be clearly labeled with your child's name and be able to fit in your child's cubby. If at any time items brought from home are disrupting the classroom or deterring children's focus from classroom activities the teachers can implement a "no items from home" policy, except for a special naptime item. ChildsPlace cannot assume responsibility for items brought from home.

### **Prescription and Nonprescription Medications**

If your child needs prescription or non-prescription medication at school, an authorization form needs to be completed and signed by the parent. All medication must be in its original container. Prescription medication must contain the prescription label that contains the name of the child, physician's name, the dosage and date. This serves as the physician's authorization. Non-prescription medications will be administered according to the label unless otherwise noted in writing by the child's doctor. We cannot administer expired medication.

### **Confidentiality**

We pride ourselves on maintaining positive relationships with families. Confidentiality of information about children and their families is very important to the staff and administration at ChildsPlace. We will always keep any information confidential, unless given permission by the parent to release information.