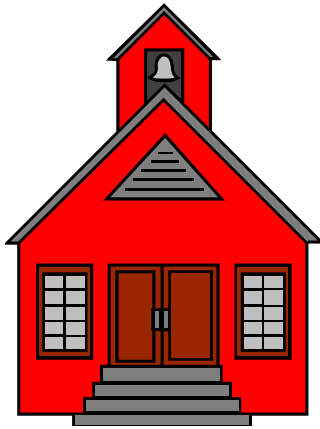


JEFFERSON CHILD CARE & EDUCATION CENTER

Parent Handbook



PROVIDING QUALITY CHILD CARE IN THE
COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

Jefferson Child Care & Education Center
P.O. Box 527, Nolan's Point Road
Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849
(973)663-2704

Mission Statement

Jefferson Child Care & Education Center is a not-for-profit state licensed organization committed to providing affordable quality developmentally appropriate care for children from toddlers to school age. Jefferson Child Care and Education Center strives to meet the individual needs of the children it serves to meet the individual needs of the children it serves and to foster supportive relationships between its families, staff and community.

Dear Parents,

The Jefferson Child Care & Education Center welcomes you and your child to our childcare program. The childcare center, a non-profit organization, is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of local citizens and parents. The Center originated as a preschool program in 1974 and expanded to school-age care in 1983. We are now serving more than 150 children in our preschool, before and after kindergarten, school age and summer camp programs, which are located in Lake Hopatcong, and Oak Ridge.

Our programs are designed to provide safe, healthy developmentally appropriate environments for children of working parents. Within the confines of the policies outlined in this information packet, you will find our staff to be sensitive and flexible in addressing the individual needs of children and busy, working families. We will do our best to accommodate your childcare needs whenever our regulations, space, and budgetary restrictions permit.

Enclosed in this packet you will find policies addressing health, registration, pick-up, fee payment and other areas, which will enable our programs to function smoothly.

We regard parents as the child's first and most important teacher and, therefore, we welcome your input in understanding the unique needs of your child. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the Child Care Office at 973 663-2704. The Child Care Office is located at our Nolan's Point Road Preschool, and you are welcome to stop in at any time. We are looking forward to sharing our programs with you and your family. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christine A. Murray
Executive Director

October , 2005

JEFFERSON CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION CENTER PROGRAMS

- Preschool 29 Nolan's Point Rd. Lake Hopatcong 973-663-2704
- Before and After Kindergarten: Drummond School: (973) 663-1890
- After School 1st and 2nd Grade: Briggs School: (973) 663-3822
- Before and After School 3rd through 5th Grades: Stanlick: (973) 663-0674
- Before and After School 1st through 5th Grade: White Rock: (973) 208-2191
- Part Day Preschool: Milton: (973) 697-6818

Fax: (973)663-9447

E-Mail: JCCEC@optonline.net

Web Site: Jefferson Child Care. Org

FEE POLICIES

Reduced Tuition Rates

A limited number of reduced tuition rates are available for all programs. To qualify for a subsidy, parents must provide proof of income in order to show eligibility in the form of:

- ◆ Four most recent pay stubs;
- ◆ A letter from employer(s) stating gross income; OR
- ◆ The family's income tax return.

Subsidies are determined by family size and income.

Form of Payment

Fee payment will be accepted in cash, check or money order. If the bank returns a check, the Center will charge a processing fee of \$20.00. If the bank returns checks more than twice, we reserve the right to require cash or money orders for future payments.

Payment Schedule

Fees are due one week in advance, each Thursday. Fees may be paid more than one week in advance if specified in the fee contract. The center requires a two-week notice of withdrawal from the program. Failure to provide notice may result in forfeit of deposit.

Late Payment

If fees are not paid when due, a Notice of Intent to Terminate Services will be issued and a late charge will be added to your account. If fee payment is not received by the Center within five (5) days of the date of this notice, services will be terminated.

Contracted Weekly Fee

The entire weekly fee is due for every contracted week of service. If a program is closed for a holiday, the entire contracted weekly fee must be paid. The entire contracted fee is due when a child is absent due to illness, inclement weather, vacation, family visits or any other reason.

No additional fee is charged when public schools schedule half-day sessions for parent/teacher conferences or public school teacher workshops.

A 10% sibling discount is given for children in full time care.

Late Pick Up Fee

A late fee payment of \$1.00 per minute will be charged if a child remains in any program after 6:00 p.m. No child will be readmitted into any program if the Late Fee is not paid within one week. The child care program may refuse to provide services to any child if he/she is picked up late more than three times a year.

MEALS

Preschool

The Center serves breakfast / lunch and 2 nutritious snacks daily.

School-Age / Camp Child Care

The Before & After Kindergarten, School Age and Camp programs provide a nutritious breakfast, and snacks daily. Parents are responsible for providing lunch.

Food Allergies

Please notify the child care programs of any food allergies or dietary restrictions in writing.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

The environment and social interactions of our childcare programs are structured to teach children self-discipline and self-control. Respect for the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult are fostered.

Children feel more secure when they have limits that are appropriate and consistently enforces. Given limits, children can learn to make independent decisions. Children need the security of knowing that there are adults who will not let them go beyond reasonable boundaries when their own self-control fails them.

The goal of our program is to maintain appropriate limits, which allow children to explore and grow without harming other children or themselves by:

- Providing consistency in enforcing limitations;
- Responding to inappropriate behavior by redirection activities and providing positive alternatives;
- Showing disapproval of the child's act rather than the child;
- Talking with and not to children in a natural voice;
- Giving children positive attention and recognizing positive behaviors;
- Helping children to express anger with words rather than inappropriate actions;
- Involving the group in making rules;
- Considering the individual needs of children as well as the needs of the group, whenever possible;
- Providing a choice of developmentally appropriate activities;
- Using encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism;
- Showing appreciation for children's opinions responding to positive behavior, and using praise and approval.

The childcare curriculum is structured to allow children to select their own activities, which fosters independence and promotes children's self-esteem. Conflict is minimized and independence is fostered when children are engaged in activities that are filling their individual needs.

In no instance shall a child be deprived of food, isolated, or subjected to corporal punishment or abusive physical exercise as a means of punishment either by staff or by another child.

Time Out

Time out is used to remove a child for a few minutes from an area or activity so that he or she may regain self-control. Positive discipline teaches respect and self esteem.

EXPULSION POLICY

Consistently Disruptive Behavior

The Center will make every effort to encourage appropriate and considerate behavior in individual children. Growing is difficult, and all children have setbacks, bad days and sometimes traumatic live experiences, which affect their behavior. Staff is provided with training and guidance in positive supervision as outlined in the program discipline policy.

Occasionally, when an individual child's behavior proves to be consistently disruptive, and/or demands so much individual attention that supervision of the entire group is compromised, the following actions will be required:

1. Staff will document the child's behavior and the staff's actions to modify the behavior.
2. Parents will be provided with a written notification requesting a conference with the parent(s), the child and the staff to address the problem.
3. Staff will implement a plan mutually agreed upon with the parent(s) and the child to modify the child's behavior.
4. A second conference will be arranged to provide positive feedback for further planning, if necessary.
5. If all attempts, as outlined above, result in little or no change in the child's behavior, the Center reserves the right to suspend child care services to the family for a period of one week. At this time, parents will be required to pay tuition in order to reserve the child's space in the program.
6. If upon returning to the program, the child's behavior continues, the Center reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment with one week's notice to the parent(s).

If a child's behavior results in causing purposeful physical harm to others, the Center reserves the right to immediately terminate the child's enrollment.

Parent(s) may grieve any action taken by the Center, in writing, to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director's written response proves unsatisfactory to the parent(s), a grievance may be submitted, in writing, to the Board of Trustees to be addressed at the next scheduled Board Meeting.

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 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 Division's 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (188-792-8610) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

All children are to be picked up BEFORE the 6:00 p.m. closing time. If a child remains in attendance after 6:00 p.m., the following steps will be taken:

1. Two staff members will remain at the program with the child.
2. A staff member will attempt to contact the parent(s) and/or other person(s) authorized to care for the child as indicated on the Emergency Card submitted to the program upon registration;
3. A late fee of \$1.00 for each minute that the child remains at the program after 6:00 p.m. will be charged to the parent or guardian. A child will not be readmitted to the program if the late fee is not paid within one week. The program may refuse to provide services to any child who is picked up late four times within one school year;
4. A staff member shall contact the Director or Director's designee;
5. If after one hour (7:00 p.m.) a child has not been picked up, a staff member will call the DYFS 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610) to seek assistance.

EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY

In the event of inclement weather the Jefferson Child Care and Education Center follows the same emergency closing as the Jefferson Township Public Schools.

- The Center will close when the Jefferson Township Public Schools close for bad weather. All closings will be announced by 6:30 a.m. on the Center's telephone voicemail: 973-663-2704, our website is Jeffersonchildcare.org. Additionally the Jefferson Public Schools announcements are made on the following radio station:
*FM: 102.3-WSUS
- When the Jefferson Township Public Schools announce a delayed opening due to bad weather, all Jefferson Child Care programs will open at 9:a.m. (except the Milton Program, which is closed on delayed openings).
- When the Jefferson Township Public Schools announce a delayed opening, but then change to closing, all Jefferson Child Care programs will be closed.
- If the Jefferson Township Public Schools close early after initial opening at the regular time, all Jefferson Child Care programs will also close early.

- The Jefferson Child Care and Education Center's programs may close early after the public school's regular hours. In either event, parents will be contacted at their emergency number.

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

Fresh air and exercise are important elements in the development of all children. There is direct correlation between fresh air and exercise and the development of a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual well - being.

It is the policy of the Jefferson Child Care and Education Center to provide outdoor play to all children each day. Only severely inclement weather, i.e., below 0 degree temperature, rain, sleet or hail, will keep the children indoors. Parents are expected to provide the appropriate outdoor play clothing at all times.

CLOTHING POLICY

Preschool

Children in the preschool program should be sure to have at least one change of clothes at all times. Please label them with our child's name. Children who are potty training will need several complete changes of clothes at the Center daily.

Summer Camp

All clothing, bathing suits, towels and personal belongings must be clearly labeled.
All clothing and personal belongings must be removed from the program each Friday.

Before & After Kindergarten

An extra change of clothing must be provided

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Preschool

Toilet training will begin when appropriate for each child's age and stage of development. Parents will be consulted on the methods used at home. Feedback will be provided on each child's progress at the Center.

POLICY ON TOYS AND GAMES

Please do not bring in toys / games from home, as the Jefferson Child Care Center cannot be responsible for them.

POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Table of Excludable Communicable Diseases

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend the center. If such symptoms occur at the center, the child will be removed from the group, and you will be called to take him/her home.

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- Sore throat or severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Skin rashes lasting longer than 24 hours
- Swollen joints
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- Stiff neck
- Blood urine

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a doctor's note stating that he/she no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, he/she may return to the center.

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

Respiratory Illnesses

- Chicken Pox**
- German Measels
- Hemophilus Influenzae*
- Measles*
- Meningococcus*
- Mumps*
- Strep Throat
- Tuberculosis*
- Whooping Cough*

Gastrointestinal Illnesses

- Giardia Lamblia*
- Hepatitis A*
- Salmonella*
- Shigella*

Contact Illnesses

- Impetigo
- Lice
- Scabies

*Reportable diseases that will be reported to the health department by the center.

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

If your child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, you will be notified in writing.

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center Information to Parents

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), 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 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 Human Services (DHS). 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 Human Services (DHS). 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 of 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 secure a copy of the Manual of Requirements by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Licensing Publication fees, PO Box 34399, Newark New Jersey 07189-4399.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program 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 standards, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll-free at 1-877-667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your 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 disease. 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 Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office'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.

Our center must cooperate with all DHS inspections/investigations. DHS staff may interview both staff 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 Office 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 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 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 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. 101336 (42U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not compliance with these laws may contact the Division of 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).

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 an adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry and Child Abuse Hotline, toll-free at 1-(877) NJ Abuse (652-2873). Such reports may be made anonymously.

Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting:
Community Education Office, Division of Youth and Family Services, PO Box 717, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0717.

WHAT YOU AS A PARENT CAN DO

There are many ways in which you and the staff can interact to make your child's time in the program as good as it can be:

1. Staff members are happy to discuss your child and his/her participation in the program at any time.
2. Keep us informed about any major changes in your household which may impact on your child's behavior such as: moving, death or illness in the family, a new baby on the way, a separation or divorce. Extra love and attention may often help.
3. Stop in and visit any time the programs are in session. We usually have organized and informal activities going on that parents may enjoy. Join in the fun, the children enjoy your participation.
4. Encourage grandparents to visit and/or volunteer time. Often, they have valuable interests the children will enjoy.
5. Know that the Center Director and/or the Program Coordinator are available to discuss any concerns or questions at any time.



RECEIPT OF INFORMATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that I have received and read a copy of the Jefferson Child Care and Education Center Parent's Manual which includes the information to parents statement, as published by the Division of Youth & Family Services and the Center policies follow:

- Policy on the Release of Children
- Policy on Dispensing Medication
- Policy on Parent Participation
- Philosophy on Child Discipline
- Policy on Management of Communicable Diseases
- Expulsion from program

Child's Name _____

Parent's Name _____

Date _____

My child _____ is in good health and can participate in the normal activities of the program.

Please list below any conditions or special needs that may require special accommodations for your child.

Signature of Parent or Guardian