



## **PARENT'S INFORMATION BOOKLET**

*This booklet is compiled following the recommended format of the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services. Specific references can be located in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations, 102 CMR 7.00, titled "Standards for Licensure and Approval of Group Day Care Centers".*

*Parkside Pre-School operates under the licensing authority of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.*

[revised 9/10]

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### Parkside Pre-School's Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives:

We feel that children develop to their full potential when they are given the opportunity and environment that allows them to "want to know". In a nutshell that is what we are all about - helping a child explore the start of the roadway leading to knowledge, awareness, and self-expression. Given the proper care, attention, and surroundings combined with an encouragement to learn, we help a child to gain the confidence and desire to progress at his or her own pace.

Each and every child is special in ways that we strive to recognize. These special qualities are the ones that must be allowed to flourish. Every child will be given the opportunity to develop in a creative and social experience within a safe and attentive atmosphere. Our curriculum is geared towards the achievement of self-expression in creative activities and will concentrate on cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development while allowing the child to have fun as they explore the exciting world around them.

Recognizing the necessity to balance a child's developmental progress, we concentrate on the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical growth of the child through introducing creative ways to explore and learn. Activities and experiences are structured to promote the cognitive and motor development in a non-threatening environment. Each child is encouraged to grow and learn through the use of a variety of media and materials, and always at the individual child's own pace.

### Characteristics of Children Served:

Parkside Pre-School admits boys and girls who are between the age of 2 years and nine months as of their enrollment date until they are eligible for Kindergarten.

### Intake Procedures & Services Provided:

Parents interested in enrolling their children at Parkside are forwarded an Application form and Informational Booklet that explains our program in detail. This ensures that all necessary information will be received and that parent's fully understand the purpose and services provided by our Pre-School program. The Informational Booklet along with this Parent's Information Booklet are designed to provide Parents with all relevant information as well as answer what ever questions they may have.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Parkside Pre-School believes in equal opportunity for both its students and its staff. The school admits children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin. The school will not discriminate the staff or the students on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political belief, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation.

## **FEE SCHEDULE**

Fee Schedules for the current year are forwarded to Parents along with the Application form and Informational Booklet. They are also available on request. All Parents interested in enrolling their children at Parkside are given the current fee schedule prior to executing the Enrollment Agreement.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

Parkside Pre-School was incorporated under the Laws of Massachusetts on 7 March 1991.

The organizational structure and lines of supervisory responsibility of the Pre-School are depicted in the Organizational Chart that is available to any parent upon request. In general, the school has a staff of 14 teachers including a Director, a Head Teacher, five Lead Teachers, and seven Assistant Teachers. Consulting resource teachers are brought in on a scheduled part-time basis. A Business Manager who functions on a part-time basis handles the business administration of the pre-school. The Director of the Pre-School is responsible for curriculum development, supervision of the staff and management of the daily operations.

## **PARENT VISITS & INPUT**

Parents are permitted and encouraged to visit Parkside and their child's room while their child is present. Parents are also encouraged to provide input in the development of programs and policies. In the event a suggestion made by a parent cannot be implemented, an explanation will be given the parent and if requested, the explanation will be made in writing.

## **WRITTEN PROGRESS REPORTS**

Periodically, but at least every six months, Parkside will prepare a written progress report of the participation of each child in the pre-school's program. This report will be maintained in the child's records and will be discussed with parents every six months. In the event special problems or significant developments arise, parents will be informed as soon as practical. Every three months a written report on a child with special needs will be completed by the lead teacher of that class with the special needs liaison.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

The staff is always available for individual conferences with parents at parental request. Advance notification for unscheduled parental conferences is appreciated so as to ensure the appropriate staff member is available.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

A written record for each child is maintained at Parkside and includes the following:

(a) A face sheet or sheets, which identifies the child by the following information where available:

1. The name, date of admission, date of birth, place of birth, and primary language

of the child's parents if other than English;

2. The parent's name, address, and phone number (home and business);  
3. The name, address, and phone number of person to contact in case of emergency when the parent is unavailable;  
4. Sex, race, height, weight, color of hair, color of eyes, and any identifying marks;

(b) Copies of periodic progress reports.

(c) Medical records indicating the child's health while enrolled, including admissions and physical examinations, and immunizations; and a record of any prescribed medications administered to the child.

(d) Individual program plans and periodic review of such plans, for any special needs children.

(e) All necessary authorizations and consents and information required in 102 CMR 7.07(9).

(f) All pertinent correspondence concerning the child, including referrals for social services.

(g) Parent will be immediately notified if a child's records are subpoenaed.

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. Parkside will not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parent.

The child's parent shall, upon request, have access to their child's record at reasonable times. In no event shall access be delayed more than two business days after the initial request without the consent of the child's parent(s). Upon such request for access the child's entire record, regardless of the physical location of its parts, shall be made available. Procedures governing access to, duplication of, and dissemination of such information will be explained by the Director. A permanent, written log in each child's record indicates any person to whom information contained in the child's record has been released.

#### Charge for Copies:

A reasonable fee is charged for copying any information in a child's record. Information as to the current fee for copies can be obtained from the Director.

#### Right to Amend:

A child's parent shall have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to a child's record. A parent shall also have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's record. Procedures for making changes or amendments to a child's record can be obtained from the Director.

#### Transfer of Records:

Upon written request of the parent(s), the individual child's record may be transferred to any other person the parent(s) identifies, when the child is no longer in care.

## **AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION TO Office of Early Education and Care**

Upon request of an employee, authorized by the Commissioner and involved in the regulatory process, Parkside will make available to EEC any information required to be kept and maintained under its regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of the EEC regulations. Authorized employees of the EEC shall not remove identifying case material from Parkside's premises and shall maintain the confidentiality of the individual records.

## **DANGERS OF LEAD PAINT AND RECOMMENDED SCREENING**

Parkside will admit children only if provided with a statement signed by a physician or an employee of a health care agency stating that the child has been screened for lead poisoning, or obtains one within one month of admission, or obtains a written verification from the child's parent(s) that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.

## **LUNCH BAG SUGGESTIONS**

The staff at Parkside Pre-School knows that you, as parents, are well aware of what constitutes a nutritious lunch for your child to take to school. However, new Office of Child Care Services regulations require that we give you this list of lunch bag suggestions.

Milk or fruit juice; meat or meat alternate such as cold cuts, roast beef, chicken, ham or bologna; poultry or fish without the bone; tuna or fish sticks; chicken nuggets; eggs; peanut butter; vegetable and or fruit (two or more); bread or bread alternate, enriched or whole grain. Carrots, grapes and hot dogs are 3 of the major causes of choking in small children. Please cut them lengthwise if including them in your child's lunch.

It is also an Office of Early Education and Care regulation that no food goes home in lunch boxes. All food must be disposed of at school. If your child does not eat at least 1/2 of what you send, a teacher will inform you.

## **SNACKS**

The school will provide midmorning snacks. Due to allergies, health regulations and storage, they will be kept simple. Apple juice and saltines are provided.

## **EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE PROCEDURES**

Emergency Health Care procedures are maintained in conformance with the Office of Child Care Services regulations. Parkside employs a Health Care Consultant who is responsible for the development and implementation of all health related policies and procedures. A Health Care Policy and Procedural Manual is available for inspection by any parent. Posting of required policies is the responsibility of the Director.

## **PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCIES AND ILLNESS**

1. Method of Transportation: If a child is seriously hurt or in a life threatening situation, the police and ambulance should be called immediately. A staff member shall accompany the child to the hospital and should remain with the child until a parent or guardian has arrived.
2. At the same time another staff member will attempt to notify the parents if a child needs attention at the hospital parents shall meet them (child and staff person) at the hospital.
3. If parents can not be reached a staff member shall remain with the child either at the hospital or school until someone responsible for the child can be located and has arrived. This information is located on the child's Emergency Notification form.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR FIELD TRIPS**

A small first aid kit will always go along as well as a list of emergency numbers for each of the children. Also the center number, nearest Health Care facility, poison control and police-ambulance numbers in the area. Change for pay phone calls and enough staff so that one person can remain with the injured child, while other staff remove children from the area, back to the school.

## **PLAN FOR MANAGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

1. The best way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases is to keep the school and people clean, dry, and surrounded by fresh air. The school should be aired out once each day even in cold weather when the children are not there.
2. There should be enough space for the number of people at the school.
3. The children should be taught to sneeze or cough into their elbows.
4. Staff and children should wash their hands frequently. After using the bathroom, changing a child, when entering the school, before touching food or after using a tissue.
5. Children who exhibit symptoms of infectious diseases shall be evaluated by the staff member. A child with a temperature of 101 by mouth with a digital thermometer, a severe cough, an unidentified rash, discharge from the eyes, ears or nose, a child who is vomiting or appears too ill to participate will be evaluated and if necessary the parents will be notified and asked to pick-up their child.
6. The child will be separated from the group with a staff member who will remain with the child until a parent or a responsible person arrives. The child will engage in quiet activities such as listening to a story, puzzles or drawing. The staff person will be loving and reassuring to the child.
7. A child who has been removed for health reasons may return 24 hours after being seen by a doctor. A child with conjunctivitis may return 24 hours after being on medication; Chicken pox, seven days after the outbreak of the spots; strep throat, 24 hours after the start of medication; ear infection, 24 hours after the start of medication; impetigo, 24 hours after the start of medication. Whenever a communicable disease has been identified in the school; such as chicken pox, parents will be notified by letter. Samples of letters are in the Health in Day Care reference manual figures 43-57 pages 281 through 345.

## **PLAN FOR INFECTION CONTROL**

1. Rubber gloves will be worn whenever bodily fluids are involved.
2. The staff and children shall wash their hands with liquid anti bacterial soap and running water-using friction. Hands shall be dried with disposable towels. Staff and children shall wash their hands at least at the following times:
  - a. Before eating or handling food
  - b. After toileting or diapering
  - c. After coming into contact with body fluids or discharges
  - d. After handling center animals or their equipment and
  - e. After cleaning.
3. A staff member will monitor the children whenever they wash their hands to see that it is done correctly.
4. Classroom and bathroom surfaces shall be washed daily with soap and water and disinfectant. Tables, chairs, water table, equipment, door knobs, counters, bathroom fixtures, smooth surfaced non-porous floors, and mops used for cleaning will be washed with soap, water, and disinfectant daily.
5. A solution of 1/2-cup bleach to 1-gallon water made fresh daily or an approved Red Cross disinfectant can be used.
6. The licensee shall provide disposable gloves to be used for the clean up of blood spills and bodily fluids. The effected areas shall be disinfected. Used gloves shall be thrown away in a lined, covered container. The licensee shall ensure that the staff washes their hands thoroughly with soap and water after cleaning-up the bloodied area. Bloody clothing shall be sealed in a plastic container or bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the parent at the end of the day.
7. All cleaning supplies and disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place and out of the reach of children.
8. Staff Training: All staff shall be trained in infection control procedures before the start of the school year.
9. Diapering surfaces, mops used for cleaning bodily fluids and thermometers will be washed with soap and water and disinfectant after each use.
10. At least monthly fabric toys and dress-up clothes will be machine-washed.

## **PLAN FOR MEETING THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF THE MILDLY ILL CHILD**

1. A child who becomes ill will be removed from the group. The child will be placed in the care of a staff person while another staff person attempts to contact a parent or responsible person to take the child home.
2. If it is during lunch and the child wishes to eat, they may do so or if the child would like something to drink, it will be available. Books, puzzles and other quiet play materials will be available to provide a quiet restful atmosphere. Individual mats will be provided if the child would like to rest or sleep. This space provided will be in the administrative office where the child will be monitored and comforted at all times.

## **PLAN FOR MEETING SPECIFIC HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

1. Allergies - The standard health care form will identify a child with allergies. The forms will carefully be read to identify these children. Then a list of these children along with what they are allergic to will be written down with copies posted in each classroom as well as in the administrative office. It will be the responsibility of the director to keep this list up to date. All children with food allergies will be seated at a separate table at lunch free from those foods. Lunchtime will be monitored by classroom staff to insure that children with food allergies are not exposed to those foods.  
All children with food allergies will be seated at a separate table at lunch free from those foods. Lunchtime will be monitored by classroom staff to insure that children with food allergies are not exposed to those foods.
2. Minor First Aid - The staff will apply minor first aid to a scrape or cut of a child in the form of a mild soap and water.

## **PLAN FOR ADMINISTERING MEDICATION**

1. All prescription medications shall require a note from the doctor or nurse practitioner with prescription privileges as well as a signed permission slip from the parents. A prescription bottle constitutes a doctor's permission. The permission slip will only be good for as long as the medication is prescribed for. This will be kept in the child's folder. A prescription bottle will constitute a Doctor's permission.
2. All non-prescription medications also require the same form for parental consent. This would include such things as Tylenol or any topical antiseptic that is required for more than two consecutive days. A note from a doctor is also required and is good for one year.
3. A new medication form must be filled out for any new medication. A medication log will be kept and a copy placed in the child's file. A medication log will be kept and a copy in the child's file.
4. Medications will be kept locked in the administrative office and the director shall be responsible for administering it or the head teacher in the directors absence. Unused medication will be returned to the parents or disposed of in a safe manner under the supervision of the director and one other staff member.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Our behavior management program is designed to maximize the growth and development of the children and for protecting the group and the individuals within it. Parkside Pre-School will use behavior management in a consistent, reasonable and appropriate way based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of a child. We will set reasonable and positive expectations, offering choices, redirection and providing the child with opportunities to verbalize their feelings, which encourages a child's self-control through understanding.

Our behavior management plan is designed to help promote positive behavior and shall never include physical, verbal, or emotional distress. If a child is displaying negative behavior, the staff person witnessing the behavior will speak to the child and give them the opportunity to express their feelings. Redirection to a different activity may also be used. An apology to the other child or children affected by the behavior may also be appropriate. The staff will also

communicate the behavior to the parent.

No child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including: any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body; punishments which subject a child to verbal abuse, ridicule, or humiliation; denial of food, rest or bathroom facilities or forced feeding; punishment for soiling or not using toilets; punishments relating to eating or not eating food.

Classroom rules will be discussed with the children and established by the children when it is feasible. It will be discussed why we have rules and why we need to follow them. Safety issues for example, running in the class, why that might be dangerous? All issues will be discussed so that the children can understand them. Rules will be posted in the classroom.

### **RESEARCH EXPERIMENTATION: UNUSUAL TREATMENT**

Parkside Pre-School will not conduct research, experimentation or unusual treatment involving children without the written, informed consent of the affected child's parents or guardian, for each occurrence. In no case shall physical harm of children be carried out.

### **UNAUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES**

Parkside Pre-School will not authorize any activities not related to the direct care of the children, including but not limited to fundraising, publicity including photographs and participating in the mass media without the written informed consent of the parents or guardian.

### **REFERRAL PLAN**

Parkside Pre-School shall use the following procedures for referring parents to the appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services for children should the staff feel that an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child.

**Observations Prior to Referrals:** If a member of the staff observes any atypical behavior in a child, it will be brought to the immediate attention of the lead teacher and to the attention of the director. The lead teacher including but not necessarily limited to the observation guidelines will do a detailed written observation. The child's records will be reviewed and included in any findings prior to making a referral. If the administrator agrees, the lead teacher will be requested to complete an observation report and review the child's record prior to making a referral. The administrator will maintain a list of current referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list shall include the contact person for Chapter 766 and Early Intervention referrals.

**Referral Meeting:** The director will schedule a meeting with parents to notify them of the center's concern and will prepare a current list of possible referral resources. At the meeting, the director will provide to the parent a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, a brief summary of the center's observations related to the referral and any efforts the center may have made to accommodate the child's needs. The director

will offer assistance to the child's parents in making the referral. Parents should be encouraged to call or request in writing an evaluation. If parents need extra support, the center may, with written parental consent, contact the referral agency for them. If a child is at least 2 1/2 years of age the director shall inform the child's parents of the availability of services and their rights, including the right to appeal under Chapter 766. If a child is under the age of three, the director shall inform the child's parents of the availability of services provided by Early Intervention Programs. All meetings with parents to discuss a concern will be documented in the child's file.

**Follow up to the Referral:** The director will, with parental permission, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the center. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the center shall review the child's progress at the center every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

Parkside Pre-School may request that parents provide dental, vision or hearing exam when deemed appropriate.

### **Policy for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

1. Any Parkside Pre-School employee, who in their professional judgment has "reasonable" cause to believe that a child is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse or from neglect, including malnutrition, shall immediately notify the director that she/he believes a Child Abuse and Neglect report mandated under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 119, Section 51A needs to be filed.
2. The director with the employee shall assess the suspicions using the attached "Indicators of abuse and Neglect" as a guideline. A written report (51A) shall be filled out and called into the nearest DSS office. (See attached telephone listing) if determined warranted. The 51A form should be filled out before making the phone call, since it covers the information needed for the oral report.
3. The director will file a 51A report within 48 hours of the oral report.
4. Only staff members who have direct care responsibilities with the child shall be involved.
5. Staff will keep all meetings, reports and outcomes confidential.
6. Staff must cooperate with the DSS investigation.
7. If the intake social worker that takes the report determines that the situation is an emergency, the investigation will be completed within 24 hours, all other reports are investigated within 10 working days.
8. The licensee program director shall notify the OCCS immediately after filing a 51A report or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the center.
9. The center will cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect.

## **LATE CHARGES**

Due to the nature of our program and the feelings of the children, it is important that children are picked up on time. A late charge amounting to the current extended day hourly rate will be levied for all late pick-ups up until 2:00 PM. For late pick-ups at the end of the day a late charge amounting to the current extended day hourly rate will be charged for the first 10 minutes. After 10 minutes a charge of \$1.00 per minute will be levied.

## **HEALTH FORMS**

All required health forms must be on record at the school before your child's first day. Your child will not be allowed enrollment until this Office of Early Education and Care requirement is met.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSING**

Parkside will close when the Newton Public Schools announce they will either close or delay an opening. Even though an inclement weather closing is a big inconvenience for everyone, the safety issue must be considered first and that is why we depend on the Newton School system to make this informed and carefully thought out decision. Because of the nature of our scheduling policies, we have opted not to delay an opening. Doing so runs a risk of leaving us short staffed and creates a confusing and potentially unsafe condition.

## **TERMINATION POLICY**

Parkside Pre-School reserves the right to terminate services for irreconcilable differences. These differences may include, but not limited to, refusal to pay fees owed, lack of parental cooperation or the centers inability to meet the child's needs. All efforts will be made to resolve differences before termination. Parents will be notified verbally by the Director and with written notification to follow immediately. Parents shall be informed in writing of availability of information and referral for other services. Termination will not occur for punishment, to circumvent referral requirements, or in violation of ADA. All children will be appropriately prepared for termination working with the parents and taking into consideration the child's emotional needs.

Parkside Pre-School does not suspend children from the program.