



The Nest

Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to establish guidelines that will allow us to work together with parents so that we may provide the best possible care for your children and make your child's experience a positive one.

Keep this information handy for future reference. Policies may be changed as deemed necessary. Parents will receive a copy of any changes in our policies or in New York State regulations that may affect our policies.

Program:

The Nest Child Care hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. The center serves children aged six weeks to five years of age. The Nest has the capacity to serve 64 children. We currently have one infant room (Hummingbirds), two toddler rooms (Chickadees & Bluebirds), a three year old room (Robins), and Kindergarten Readiness Program (Fine Feathered-Friends). The center is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

Payment and Holidays:

Payment is due on a weekly or monthly basis depending on your contract. Fees are charged according to the fee schedule. Because we cover many hours and in consideration of our families and other commitments we would appreciate it if you would arrive no later than 7 p.m. Consistent lateness will be cause for us to ask you to withdraw your child. Thank you for your cooperation. The center observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, and Christmas. We will close early Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. The center will charge for these holidays. Fee payment is based on enrollment and not on attendance. You will be charged even if your child is absent for vacation, weather, or illness.

Clothing and outdoor play:

Children should wear comfortable and casual clothing. Weather appropriate outerwear marked with the child's name should be worn. Please keep in mind that we play outdoors even in snowy and cold weather. A complete change of clothing must be provided in a labeled bag for emergencies. Diapers must be provided by the parents-please keep abreast of need. You are encouraged to bring a blanket and/or a stuffed animal for your child to rest with.

Meals and Snacks:

A morning and afternoon snack will be provided in addition to lunch. Please notify the director of any food allergies your child may have. A weekly menu will be posted on the bulletin board near the office. Where infant formula is required, formula must be provided by the parent. All bottles and individual food must be marked with the infant's first and last name. For any child under 18 months old we must have an infant feeding schedule. These should be updated as necessary.

Health:

All children must have received a health examination within ninety days prior to registration. They must have an updated immunization record and must be free from communicable diseases.

These immunizations are required: Polio, DTP, Hib, Hepatitis B, MMR, and Varicella. Parents/Guardians are required to provide documentation when a child receives immunizations at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15-18 months and 4-6 years. Tuberculin test (12 months) and lead screening test are also required.

Medication Policies and Procedures:

The Office of Children and Family Services, which licenses this center, has strict regulations regarding the administration of both over-the-counter drugs and prescription drugs while your children are at The Nest. The Nest will administer prescription and over-the-counter medication. The center will administer medication based on the child's illness and needs within the guidelines of OCFS regulations.

A certified MAT (Medication Administration Trained) staff member is responsible for administering all over-the-counter and prescription medications. Staff members who have attended the medication administration training have received certificates upon completing the course. These staff members have also been recently certified in infant/child CPR and First Aid. A staff member certified to administer medication will be on-site from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. In the event medication is required when a certified staff member is not present, the parents/guardians will be contacted and no medication can be administered.

Children will not be allowed to self-administer medication of any kind. Medication cannot be put into bottles or cups and brought to The Nest. We are required to have health care provider permission for staff to administer any medication; prescription or over-the-counter (i.e. Tylenol, cold medicine). The Nest uses the OCFS consent forms for permission to administer medication. The forms must be completely filled out. All medication must be in its original, labeled container and must be labeled with the child's first and last name. You must supply any equipment (i.e. dosing spoons or droppers) needed to administer the medications and this equipment must also be labeled with the child's first and last name. Medication and consent forms can only be given to a certified MAT staff member. The staff member will check to ensure all required information is provided. You must inform staff if your child has taken any medication

prior to arriving. This will insure that your child receives the appropriate monitoring for any medication side effect and that any as needed medications are spaced according to health care provided directions. The Nest **cannot** administer any medication without the proper consents. A separate form must be used for each medication to be administered.

We suggest that all parents consider having a consent form filled out for acetaminophen or ibuprofen (which ever your doctor recommends) and have a bottle on hand at The Nest in case your child develops a fever or other pain symptoms while in care. If you chose to bring medication to The Nest, the package insert or pharmacy information sheet must be provided to us with the consent.

Permission from you is required for over-the-counter topical ointments, such as diaper rash cream and sunscreen. These ointments do not require health care provider's consent unless they are prescription strength. The OCFS consent forms must be used for permission for these ointments. You will have to fill out #1-17 in section 1 of the form for us to apply ointments.

Our center is not equipped or staffed to provide care for sick children. Children should be kept home if they have a high fever, discharge from eyes, vomiting or diarrhea lasting over several hours, any unidentified rash or skin lesion that blisters, or excessive signs of cold, tiredness, sore throat, runny nose, or coughing.

Please notify the center if your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. Skinned knees and bumps are not considered emergencies and will be treated with first aid by a qualified staff member. Injuries are documented on an incident report form and filed in the child's file. In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified immediately. Please keep the office notified of any changes in contact numbers.

A copy of The Nest's Health Care Plan is available in the office. This plan includes all medication policies and procedures as well as information on sanitation procedures, staff and child medical information requirements and exclusion criteria for illnesses.

Biting:

We recognize that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when toddlers are in group care. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for toddlers to do, we know that they bite for a variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Our program, then, does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs our three main responses are:

1. To care for and help the child who was bitten,
2. To help the child who bit learn other behavior, and
3. To work with the child who bit and examine our program so the biting will stop.

Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and help the child who has bitten learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques, and timelines to address it. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water. If skin is broken we recommend that they be seen by medical personnel.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. When children are bitten, their parents are informed personally.

We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting.

We encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations directly to the teachers.

Toys From Home and Birthdays:

Appropriate toys from home are welcome, however, your child must be aware that they will have to be shared. The center's staff is not responsible for toys and items brought from home. Candy, gum, money, balloons, and play weapons are not welcome at the center. You are welcome to help us celebrate your child's birthday by providing a special treat. For many reasons we discourage chocolate goodies and would appreciate your cooperation.

Discipline:

At The Nest under no circumstance is physical punishment, deprivation, or ridicule used as a form of discipline. We would hope to defuse quarrels before they escalate and address the emotional needs of each child in an effort to build their self-esteem. When needed, if giving choices and redirecting their attention fail to resolve a situation, we will remove the child from the situation and have them sit in "time out" for a short while. This gives everyone a chance to regroup.

Arrival and Departure:

Upon arrival, parents/guardians will be responsible for their children's supervision until entering their assigned room and also upon leaving the room at their time of departure. The caregivers will assume supervision when the children are in the room and a child will only be released to a parent or person for whom we have authorization. Please use provided parking spaces and refrain from blocking the front entrance. Be aware of other vehicles in the parking lot and closely supervise your children in the parking lot.