

Flying Hills Preschool

Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Parent Handbook

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WELCOME

At Flying Hills Preschool Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Center we understand the trust you impart to us when you enroll your child. We feel that it is important to start our relationship with strong communication between family and school. This is essential to providing quality care. We look forward to a fun and stimulating year. The Staff at Flying Hills Preschool welcomes ALL.

HOURS OF OPERATION/CONTACT INFORMATION

The Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Center is located at 11 Village Center Dr. Reading, PA 19607. The school opens at 7:00 AM and closes at 6:00 PM Monday-Friday. Please feel free to contact the school during operating hours at 610-775-4066. You can find more detailed information about the programs and staff by going to the school's website at: www.flyinghillspreschool.com. We can also be reached at anytime via email at the following address: flyinghillspreschool@gmail.com

MISSION STATEMENT

Flying Hills Preschool's primary purpose is to provide an atmosphere conducive to discovering joy in learning and developing a positive self-image for every child while maintaining an affordable, nurturing, safe, and supportive environment.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Flying Hills Preschool's programs are designed to provide each child with an opportunity for exploration and self-expression in a structured program with an unstructured atmosphere. It is our intent to give each child the opportunity to discover, explore, and problem-solve through direct experiences. We realize that each child has his or her own learning style. We gear our wide range of programs to develop the rich potential within each child through:

- **Free play-outdoors, weather permitting**
- **Gross and Fine motor skill development**
- **Language arts activities**
- **Math and manipulative activities**
- **Science and STEM activities**
- **Expressive arts: music, art and dramatic play**
- **Social science and intercultural activities**
- **Nutrition and Health and safety**

LICENSING

We are licensed by Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

We are inspected annually to ensure our compliance with the health and safety standards by PA Department of Human Services.

STARS

We are participating in the Pennsylvania Keystone Stars early learning quality initiative. This is a voluntary program that recognizes childcare providers who exceed state health and safety certification requirements. We are a four-star facility. (This is the highest possible rating!) For more information visit <https://www.pakeys.org> or [papromiseforchildren.com](https://www.papromiseforchildren.com)

OUR STAFF

The Flying Hills Preschool staff is comprised of professionally trained and experienced early childhood educators who share an enthusiasm for working with young children. Our classroom teachers, along with directors and teacher's aides, take their responsibility for your child very seriously.

We feel it is just as important to dry a tear and give a hug as it is to provide a stimulating environment. Above all, our staff members treat children with respect and strive every day to look at life through the eyes of a child.

Our teachers are selected after an extensive interviewing and observation process. All teachers and teacher's aides have Criminal History and Child Abuse Clearances. Once on staff, they continue to grow as professionals through professional development trainings, local workshops, and seminars. Members of our staff are also certified in Pediatric First Aid, CPR, and Fire Safety.

PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each family is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the office prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization records on file at Flying Hills Preschool. This is per our licensing regulations. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please talk to the director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the site or center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend Flying Hills Preschool. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend Flying Hills Preschool, must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the school within the first 30 days of enrollment. The Child Health Report must be completed at returned after the following well visits: 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, 30, and 36 months; and annually thereafter.

ENROLLMENT

- Children must be at least six weeks of age.
- Prior to the start date, children must submit a medical record that includes a complete physical and a current immunization record.
- All registration materials in the Flying Hills Preschool Enrollment Packet must be completed prior to your start date.
- A registration fee must be received to complete enrollment.
- A “Getting to Know You” Check list is to be completed and returned.

Flying Hills Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and admissions policies.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Flying Hills Preschool will accept children with special needs if reasonable accommodation is possible. Staff members will work with the child’s physician, therapist and other professionals to accommodate the child, or make referrals to more appropriate settings when necessary.

The more information provided to us about the child and the resources he or she requires, the better FHPS will be able to meet those needs. For this reason, we will require parents/guardians to complete an individualized assessment with the Center Director prior to enrollment.

Upon enrollment, Flying Hills Preschool requests copies of all children’s IEP or IFSP, written plans, and/or special needs assessments completed by professionals to inform classroom practice. It is the parents’ responsibility to ensure that FHPS always has a current copy.

STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Information pertaining to a child and his/her family is kept confidential at all times. Occasionally, records may be reviewed by regulatory agencies for information that may be pertinent to a child’s well-being or requested by a legal subpoena. Student files are otherwise confidential and monitored only by the administrative staff. If your child is involved in an incident concerning another child, FHPS will not reveal the other child’s identity without prior written consent from the other child’s parent/guardian except where prohibited or required by law.

TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS

At the request of a parent, Flying Hill Preschool will transfer a student's records to another educational facility. Authorization for release of information forms can be obtained in the Flying Hills Preschool Office.

TUITION AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES

- A 5% discount will be given for the oldest child's tuition when 2 or more children are enrolled full time.
- A half day consists of 1-4 hours; a full day is anything above four hours. **Children attending morning classes must be picked up by 12:30 PM.**
- Fees are payable on a weekly basis and are due on the first day of attendance of every week. **No reductions are made for absences whether due to illness, vacation, or closings except for 3 make-up days for part-time students. Parents are required to pay the full tuition during extended absences.**
- **Late Pick-up Fee:** \$10.00 per every 10 minutes past scheduled pick up time.
- **The Preschool requires a two week written notice for withdrawals from the program.** Any withdrawal made without notice will be billed two week's tuition.
- **Failure to pay two consecutive weeks will result in the dismissal of your child** from Flying Hills Preschool until fees are paid in full. A late fee of \$20.00 per week will be charged if your child's tuition payment is not paid by Thursday of each week.
- A \$40.00 fee will be charged for any check returned for insufficient funds. No exceptions!
- Subsidized child care is accepted at FHPS. The office will supply parents with all necessary information.
- Please note that if your account remains unpaid for a period of 30 days, your account will be went to collections. You will be responsible for interest of 1.5% per month (18% per year), and for reasonable attorney fees.

It is important as child care providers to maintain a secure and stable environment for your child/children. In order to accomplish this, we must also offer our staff the security of knowing that their employment with FHPS is also secure and stable. This becomes an impossible task when parents feel that they should not have to pay tuition when their child is absent from school for illness or vacation. Your tuition is what supports our staff salaries. If tuition is only paid when your child is in attendance, it does not allow us to guarantee stability to our staff and quality of care to all concerned.

VACATION CREDIT REQUEST FORM

One vacation week will be earned after 6 months of enrollment with a maximum of one vacation week per child per calendar year. Tuition is due prior to the vacation week in order to avoid late charges. Parents are expected to pay the full tuition during extended absences.

For this reason, FHPS will require all parents to obligate themselves to their entire tuition. Should you decide to keep your child home for any reason, you will be required to pay your tuition in full for that period of absence as part of your contractual arrangement with us. Your child cannot re-enter the center without this payment in full.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT BY PRESCHOOL

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to discontinue a child's enrollment. This decision is based on the best interest of the child concerned, other children in the class, and the well being of everyone at the center. Every effort will be made to correct a situation before a final decision of termination is made; i.e. re-directing behaviors, providing choices, separating children who are not getting along, and making referrals for intervention services.

Termination of enrollment may be a result of the following:

- Abuse of other children, staff or property by child or parent/guardian
- Continued violation of Flying Hills Preschool's policies by child or parent/guardian
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior by child or parent/guardian
- The center's inability to meet the child's needs or the parent's/guardian's expectations
- Non-payment of tuition

This is a partial list and Flying Hills Preschool reserves the right to end the enrollment of a child at any time for any reason deemed appropriate. Whenever possible, prior notification will be provided to the parent.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT BY PARENT

We require two weeks written notice prior to withdrawal from the center. We will continue to charge tuition for two weeks from the time of written notification.

MANDATED REPORTING

Our Responsibility in Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect:

As caring and concerned childcare providers, we take our responsibilities seriously. Abuse and neglect, whether physical or emotional, can happen in all types of families, from all walks of life and in varying degrees. When abuse occurs, both children and parents/guardians are the victims and need support, understanding and help. The staff at Flying Hills Preschool is trained upon hire to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. Furthermore, the law requires us to report all suspected cases of abuse and neglect. Parents may ask the Center Director for a confidential referral for outside intervention and suggested resources for prevention and assistance in dealing with this sensitive matter.

Should abuse and/or neglect be suspected by the Center Director or staff, we are required by law to report it to ChildLine immediately.

DAILY SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT TABLET

A daily Sign-In/Sign-Out Tablet is located on the top of the cubbies in the Preschool. Your code is given to you upon enrollment. Please do not allow children to enter or exit the building without a parent or guardian. **The sign in tablet and door unlock button are for adult hands only!** Children are not allowed to use these.

STUDENT PICK-UP POLICY

Flying Hills Preschool must be notified in writing if anyone other than a parent or someone listed on your emergency form will be picking up your child. The note should include name, address, phone number, and relationship to child, as well as the date and approximate time of pick-up. **If at any time our staff is not familiar with someone picking up your child, they will ask for photo identification.** If we are still unsure, the parent will be contacted for verification. This is for your child's safety. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

In an emergency, a child may be released to an individual upon the oral designation of the parent, providing the identity of the person can be verified by the Director or a staff person. Flying Hills Preschool will complete a form that documents the verbal request and identifying information by a parent for the release of a child to a person(s) not indicated on the Emergency Contact Form.

CUSTODY/PARENTS

It is Flying Hills Preschool's policy to not interfere with the custody arrangement/order. The Department of Human Services states under **3290.116 Release of Children**: A child shall be released from care only to the child's parent or to an individual designated in writing by the enrolling parent. A child shall be released to either parent unless a court order on file at the facility states otherwise. Flying Hills Preschool will follow the most recent dated court document without prejudice to either parent/guardian.

INSERVICE OR SNOW CLOSINGS FOR GMSD

Flying Hills Preschool will provide care for our currently enrolled Before/After School students if Governor Mifflin School District is closed for in-service or due to inclement weather. There is an additional charge of \$20/day for early dismissal and \$40/day for a full day of care.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

In the event of severe weather conditions which prevent the center from opening, please check channel 69 STORMCENTER School closings/Delays or wfmz.com/snowclosures for the necessary information. You may always call the school and listen to the outgoing message on the machine as well. Should severe weather conditions make it necessary for a center to close early, you will be notified by the staff on your emergency contact number and we will post as necessary on the news media as stated above. It is your responsibility as the parent/guardian to ensure your child's emergency contact information is current.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Evacuation drills are held regularly at Flying Hills Preschool. Should an emergency occur which requires evacuation of the center, you will be notified as soon as possible and asked to pick-up your child if the emergency is expected to last a significant length of time. If you are at the center at the time of a drill or an emergency, you are requested to follow our procedures and evacuate the building immediately along with the children or follow the emergency instructions of the Center Director or Management Person in charge. Please check with the Center Director for specific information related to evacuation and emergency procedures. Our designated evacuation site is:

The Heritage at Green Hills
200 Tranquility Lane
Reading, PA 19607
484-577-8673

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Our child care center's philosophy is to keep your child safe at all times when he/she is in our care. With recent world and local events, we have developed an emergency plan that will be put into place in the event that special circumstances require a different type of care. Plans for these special types of care are reviewed annually. Staff is trained in the appropriate response and local emergency management is aware of these plans. The specific type of emergency will guide where and what special care will be provided.

- **Shelter at the site** – This plan would be put into place in the event of a weather-related emergency or unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, children will be cared for indoors at the center and the center may be secured or locked to restrict entry. Parents will be notified if they need to pick up their child before their regular time.
- **Evacuation to another site** – This plan would be put into place in the event that it is not safe for the children to remain at the center. In this situation, staff has predetermined alternate sites for care. The choice of site is determined by the specific emergency and what would be an appropriate alternate site.
- **Lockdown** – This plan would be put into place due to the physical response to provide a time barrier. Lockdown is not a stand-alone defensive strategy. When securing in place, this procedure should involve barricading the door and readying a plan of evacuation or counter tactics, should the need arise.
- **Method to contact parents** – In the event of an emergency: parents will be called, a note will be placed on the door, and radio/TV stations will be alerted to provide more specific information. You can also check for information by calling our main office at 610-775-4066. Depending on the distance from the center, the children will walk if feasible or be transported to the alternate site.
- **Emergency ends/reuniting with children** – When the emergency ends, parents will be informed and reunited with their child as soon as possible. The contact methods listed above will be used to inform parents.

***Special Accommodations will be made when needing to evacuate infants, toddlers, and children with special needs. For the infants, they will be wheeled out of the building in our evacuation cribs. Toddlers who are not yet walking, will be placed in strollers or the red buggy. Director will be responsible for bringing the strollers and/or buggy to the toddler classroom if there is a need.**

***Should any currently enrolled children have life-sustaining medicine stored at the facility, it will be the responsibility of the Director to obtain this medicine prior to evacuating the building. This will be noted on the Allergy/Dietary Restrictions list posted in all classrooms and in the Emergency Binder located in the office.**

BABYSITTING POLICY

In the event you enter into an arrangement with a Flying Hills Preschool employee to baby-sit for your family outside of the employees work hours and/or outside of the center's hours, it must be done away from the center with the full knowledge and understanding that the sitter enters into such an agreement as a private citizen and not as a Flying Hills Preschool employee. Flying Hills Preschool cannot be responsible for its employees away from the center, outside their working hours, and will not be liable for their act or omission when not on Flying Hills Preschool property. I agree not to solicit FHPS employees for alternative employment. I agree to hold FHPS and its affiliates harmless in any situation that may occur should I retain the services of a FHPS employee outside the FHPS premises.

COMMUNICATION

Flying Hills Preschool has an open door policy for our enrolled families. We feel that communication between parents, teachers, and children is very important. Therefore, if at any time you have questions, ideas, or concerns, please feel free to contact the director or any staff member at our school in person, via email, by phone, or now through the Procure App. We will address your needs immediately. Your input is valuable to us!

Conferences will be scheduled during the months of November and May for each child enrolled at the center. You may request additional conferences at anytime.

Teachers will send home monthly calendars and/or newsletters to inform you of each month's activities. Keep this posted in a handy place so you are aware of our day's activities. The office will also send out newsletters to keep you abreast of events and news.

Your communication and involvement is important and will enhance the feeling of partnership in the education and care of your child.

If you ever need to contact the school, you may call us at 610-775-4066. Emailing the school is also a great way to reach us. You can send any questions or concerns to flyinghillspreschool@gmail.com. The fax number is 610-285-1086. Our address is:

11 Village Center Dr.
Reading, PA 19607

ALLERGIES

Upon enrollment, a Child Health Assessment form must be completed and signed by the child's health care provider and parent/guardian. Any known allergies must be noted along with an allergy action plan from your pediatrician. These must be documented allergies as noted by your physician. This form must be updated regularly. Written instruction regarding the food or items which the child is allergic to and steps that need to be taken to avoid that food or item must be included in an Action Plan. The action plan can be described as the following: A detailed plan to be implemented in the event of an allergic reaction, including names, dosages, and methods of administration of medications the child should receive in the event of a reaction. The appropriate medication forms must be completed and on file at the center. The plan must include specific symptoms that would indicate the need to administer one or more medications as per a doctor's prescription. Non prescription medications may be administered with a doctor's written consent.

DISPENSING MEDICATION

Flying Hills Preschool will only dispense over-the-counter and/or prescription medication that is in its original, labeled containers, and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. Flying Hills Preschool will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. One doctor's note per course of treatment is required. If a child, for example, is to be given a course of antibiotics for 10 days, the doctor's note must identify the dates that the medication is to be given.

Parents are required to complete a new medication log each time a medication is to be dispensed, since this is a state form and only good for 7 days. The log can be found on our website at www.flyinghillspreschool.com under the Enrollment Forms tab. Or simply ask your child's teacher or the director for a new form.

Staff will also inform the parent or emergency contact person if it is necessary for the child to be picked up due to illness.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date. All medications shall be stored in a locked box in your child's classroom. Please do not send any medications in your child's backpack, lunchbox or leave any medication in your child's cubby. All medications are to be placed in the specified locked container.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

When you enroll your child in school, you need to plan for sick days. We realize that these unpredictable sick days make life complicated for parents. The best approach is to be prepared and formulate an alternative care plan at the beginning of the year. **A child should not be sent to school unless he or she is well enough to participate in our total program, including outdoor play. We will send a child home if he or she is sick, this policy protects everyone. The rules listed below must be followed:**

Flying Hills Preschool follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual. A copy of this manual is on file with the Center Director and is available upon request for review. Additionally, copies can be purchased, for a nominal fee, from the National Association for the Education of Young Child (NAEYC) 1-800-424-2460.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within a reasonable amount of time upon notification by director or teacher. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick his or her child, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period of a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. Flying Hills Preschool reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the school director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

It is the policy of our facility to inform parents of enrolled children when there is a possible exposure to a communicable disease within the school. A reportable disease is an illness that the Department of Health wants to know about to keep others from catching or being exposed to. If an enrolled child or staff member has a reportable disease, we must call the Local Health Department and the Bureau of Licensing. It is of the utmost importance that the parents of enrolled children keep the school abreast of any illness.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the programs until they are fever free, **without fever reducing medication**, for 24 hours. **If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at the minimum, unless seen by your pediatrician and returning with a doctor's note.** A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for diarrhea which occurs 2 or more times in a 24 hour period of time. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

Our health guidelines are based on the American Academy of Pediatrics; National health and safety guidelines.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illness, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information is shared. Flying Hills Preschool will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child’s absence from school.

TICK REMOVAL

If a tick is found on your child, a Flying Hills Preschool staff member will call you and ask you to pick up your child in order to have the tick removed by a physician and have it sent for analysis.

BITING

Flying Hills Preschool recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit, or will bite another child. Biting typically occurs due to a lack of communication skills. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset if their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations, which provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child’s services terminated.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of Flying Hills Preschool cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

INJURY

As children grow, they begin to seek out new adventures, which occasionally result in bumps and bruises. We make every effort to prevent the possibility of injuries, but in the event an accident occurs, these procedures are followed:

- An accident report is completed and signed explaining how this incident occurred and what action was taken by the staff person.
- Parents are notified at pickup.
- For more serious injuries, the staff will contact parents immediately.
- In the event the child needs to go to the hospital, a member of our staff will accompany the child and additional staff will be called in to work.

WEATHER AND PLAYING OUTDOORS

Outdoor play in the fresh air contributes to a child's good health and overall development. Flying Hills Preschool plans daily outdoor activities. **It is our policy that a child must be well enough to participate in both indoor and outdoor activities.** If there are medical reasons why your child cannot play outdoors, but is well enough to be at the center, we will make every attempt to comply with your request when presented with a physician's written instructions. Children will remain inside when weather is inclement (raining, snowing, icy conditions) or in extreme cold or heat. Please make sure your child has weather-appropriate clothing such as hats, mittens, coats and boots.

All children will be taken outside daily unless:

- The wind chill factor is 25 degrees or less
- The heat index is 90 degrees or higher
- There is an air quality alert or advisory recommending young children stay indoors
- We will still go swimming when the temperature is above 90 degrees

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Our discipline policy seeks to teach attitudes by demonstrating and encouraging the kinds of attitudes that make for harmony, understanding and tolerance. It teaches control of impulses by clearly limiting and discouraging destructive behavior, and by offering acceptable substitutes as well as opportunity for discussion.

The goal of discipline is to teach children acceptable behavior as well as to become responsible for their own actions. We will strive to provide an environment where children can make their own decisions. A natural consequence might be a child having to choose a different activity if he or she has broken crayons or hurt a friend.

Our philosophy of positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. The following are ways that we will encourage appropriate behavior through effective program planning:

- We will anticipate and eliminate potential problems.
- We will establish a few clear and concise rules that can easily be explained by adults and understood by children. These rules will be posted in our classroom as a reminder to all.
- We will follow a well-planned daily schedule.
- We will provide the understanding and support children need to resolve their differences.

Positive discipline will be nurtured in our classroom by intervening in the following ways when necessary:

- We will redirect a child to a new activity in order to change the focus of a child's behavior.
- We will provide individualized attention to help a child deal with a particular situation.
- We will provide alternative activities and acceptable ways for children to release feelings, such as sending them to the "me cube".
- We will address the behavior, not the child. A child will never be labeled as "bad". Instead we will address the behavior by saying, "That is not an ok choice".

Positive discipline is different than punishment. Punishment tells children what they should **not** do; positive discipline tells children what they **should** do. Punishment teaches fear and focuses on past misdeeds. Our method of positive discipline teaches love and respect and focuses on future helpful behavior. Our goal is to increase the children's self-esteem so that he/she can function and make appropriate decisions on their own.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES DUE TO BEHAVIOR

- Staff and director feel the child is at risk of harm to either him/herself, other children and/or program staff.
- Parent conference will be held. Probationary period set. If aggressive behavior continues, termination date will be determined by the Program Director. Violent/aggressive actions will not be tolerated. Parents may be called to pick up their child immediately. Temporary suspension may also be necessary but will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- Referrals may also be made to other county services.

MEAL POLICY

- Children in full day and morning programs are required to provide their own nutritious lunch. Refrigeration is available. We can heat up foods in a microwave, but the item must be completely ready to heat (for example, cans must be opened and poured into a microwaveable container).
- Milk and water will be provided by the school or you may send your own drink if you prefer.
- Utensils are provided.
- Our educational portion of the day begins at 9:00 AM; children will not be permitted to eat breakfast after 8:45 AM. Children are welcome to bring breakfast to eat at school between the hours of 7:00 AM – 8:45 AM.
- Please label your child's lunchbox with a permanent marker. If items such as lunch boxes, bags, or other important items are not marked, we will mark them.
- We periodically offer **special lunches** that the children may purchase in advance. **Please check the classroom's monthly calendar for special announcements such as special lunches.**

NAP TIME

There is a required rest period during the day for all children. Each child is assigned his/her own cot or mat to sleep on. Please provide a crib-size sheet and blanket that have been labeled with your child's name. Some children will sleep and others will be allowed to rest or enjoy a quiet activity. Nap time will vary in different age groups.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special time for children. They may bring a special treat to celebrate their birthday if you choose.

You may send birthday invitations to school if there is an invitation for each child in the class. If you are not inviting everyone, please send your invitations through the mail.

BRINGING TOYS TO SCHOOL

We do not suggest bringing personal toys from home unless they pertain to a certain unit being studied in class. Learning to share can be a trying experience with classroom toys, but children quickly learn that they will have a chance to play. But treasures from home cause special sharing difficulties, and toys that find their way to school are often lost or broken. Toy guns, knives, war toys, superheroes, and toys of destruction are not permitted. **The Preschool will not be responsible for misplaced or broken toys brought to school.**

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Children are to come to school dressed in comfortable play clothes and **sneakers** for art and outdoor experiences. We believe that children often get dirty, paint spattered, or messy when they are having the most fun, so please do not dress your children in their best clothes or shoes! (No open toed shoes.)
- Please send a change of clothes for your child, no matter what his or her age! Accidents and spills happen. **Please include a clean pair of underwear, socks, a shirt and pants, and an old pair of shoes,** if available. The extra clothes should be labeled with your child's name, put in a reusable bag, and left on your child's hook. Be sure to replace as needed and as the seasons change.
- **Label everything brought into the school with your child's name in permanent marker! If not marked, we will mark items.**
- Children are encouraged to bring in items that pertain to our units or interesting materials collected from vacations. Please note "Show and Share" days on your child's classroom calendar.
- Please check your child's cubby and folder daily for important notes and reminders!

OUR PROGRAMS

Infant Program

Children enrolled in the infant classroom range in age from 6 weeks through 12-15 months. Parents must have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and sippy cups. Be sure to prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to assure that your child won't run out. You may provide frozen breast milk to keep in our freezer or a can of formula to use in an emergency. Prepared bottles must be stored in the designated refrigerator. All bottles will be heated up in crock pots. **All bottles must be taken home on a daily basis. We are not allowed to store prepared bottles longer than 24 hours.**

Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Staff will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child on a weekly basis, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and how much.

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breastfeed your child with the classroom teacher.

Please be sure that your child has the following items at the center on a daily basis:

- One crib sheet – labeled with the child's name
- Ointments – with proper authorization forms completed (no powder or sprays are allowed)
- Three changes of clothing (including socks or booties)
- Enough prepared and labeled formula or breast milk for one day (labeled with child's first and last name, date and contents)
- Jar food and cereal (labeled with child's first and last name)
- A package of disposable diapers- labeled (replenish as needed)
- A package of baby wipes – labeled (replenish as needed)

It is the family's responsibility to replace the above items when needed. All sheets and blankets will be laundered by the parents on a weekly basis. Infants' belongings (soiled clothing, used and unused bottles, etc.), must be taken home nightly.

All items must be labeled including pacifiers, baby bottles and lids, sippy cups, blankets, sheets and clothing. The center is not responsible for items that are not labeled.

Safe Sleeping Position for Infants

In accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we place infants on their backs to sleep. Infants nap in assigned cribs or on cots according to their own individual schedule. If you request that your child sleep in a different position other than on their back, a physician's note that explains why your baby should not use a back sleeping position is required. According to ITERS-R we will arrange for the child to nap regardless of the napping schedule if we feel that the child is tired and cranky and cannot be positively engaged in activities.

Based on the new policy statement in *Caring for Our Children* (American Academy of Pediatrics, et al.) on SIDS sleep-related infant deaths, blankets are hazardous for sleeping infants under 1 year of age. In order for sleep provisions to be considered safe for infants, no blankets or any other soft materials such as (toys, bumper pads) should be placed in the crib. You may provide your child with a sleep sack or swaddle blanket if he/she requires these items for comfort.

Toddler Program

Once a child turns 1 and has mastered gross and fine motor skills that are necessary for a successful transition to the Toddler room, he/she will move as long as there is space and parents/staff are in agreement. The children in the Toddler room range in age from 12 months to 36 months. We maintain a 5:1 child:staff-member ratio in this classroom. The maximum number of children for this classroom is 15. Parents are required to provide a morning snack and lunch for the half day program and an additional afternoon snack for full day children. The center will provide milk and water at each meal. If your child is still working on drinking independently from an open cup, you may provide 2 sippy cups each day of attendance, one for milk and one for water. If your child requires additional fluids, parents must provide these items. The following items are recommended for your child's participation in daily activities:

- Several changes of weather appropriate clothes
- Diapers and wipes if not potty trained (replenish as needed)
- Crib sheet and blanket if staying for nap
- AM snack, lunch, and PM snack if your child stays all day

Your child will have his/her own cubby for nap stuff and a hook to hang personal belongings. Since cubbies do not have drawers, we recommend leaving labeled, personal belongings in a diaper bag or backpack on your child's hook to prevent personal belongings getting lost or misplaced.

Preschool Program

Our Preschool program will be reserved for children who are 3 years old at the start of the new school year or will be turning 3 throughout the year. Your child does not need to be fully potty trained to transition to this classroom. We understand that children achieve this self-care skill at their own pace. Therefore, we don't feel as though a child should be held back cognitively because they haven't quite mastered this skill by the age of 3. Parents will be required to provide pull-ups and wipes while their child is still working towards mastering this skill.

The Preschool curriculum will focus on the following concepts:

- **Personal and Social Development:** self-concept and self-control
- **Language and Literacy:** listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- **Mathematical Thinking:** processes and practices, numbers, operations and algebraic thinking, measurement, and geometry
- **Scientific Thinking:** inquiry skills and practices, physical science, life science, and earth science
- **Social Studies:** people past and present, human interdependence, citizenship and government, and people and where they live
- **The Arts:** expression and representation, understanding and appreciation
- **Physical Development, Health, and Safety:** gross and fine motor development, self-care, health, and safety

Ultimately, the goal of the Preschool classroom is educational success. The children will be presented with a wide range of experiences, skills, and interests. The teachers will use a variety of techniques to ensure that each individual child is receiving an education that is stimulating and effective, while not being overwhelming, thus paving the way for a strong educational foundation and a love for learning.

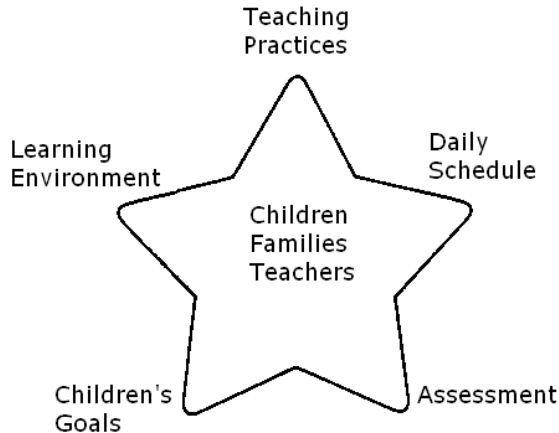
As with the other classrooms at our center, parents are also required to provide meals for this age group too. The center will provide milk and water at each meal. Although they do not have a scheduled morning snack time, you may certainly pack an AM snack for your child if he/she needs something prior to the designated lunch time. A PM snack is also required for children who stay a full day. Furthermore, if your child will be staying for nap, please provide a crib sheet and blanket, labeled with your child's name, each week. Nap supplies come in on the first day of attendance and go home to be washed the last day of weekly attendance.

CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Children actively learn by doing and playing. Children learn best through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. During this active learning process, children are encouraged to discover the world around them by exploring and playing independently and through guided lessons and experiences.

Our teachers use The Creative Curriculum along with Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards to create weekly lesson plans that are both challenging and rewarding, all while being able to assess each child's individual strengths and needs. The following steps are implemented when using The Creative Curriculum: Select an appropriate topic, Create a web of important ideas, Determine how knowledge and process skills can be learned through the topic, Discuss the topic with the children, Inform families of the topic, Use the weekly planning form to organize materials and plan activities, Assemble relevant materials and resources, Facilitate investigations, Document findings, and Plan a special event to end the study.

An easy way to understand curriculum is to think about it with this mental model, the curriculum star. Utilizing a star theme, the points of a star outline the important "points" to remember when implementing good curriculum:



1. Learning environment:

Create a classroom environment that reflects the Key Learning Areas of the Learning Standards, is inviting and stimulating and keeps children involved in learning.

2. Teaching methods or instructional practices

Use child observations to make careful, intentional decisions about what children should learn, using the Learning Standards as a guide. Consider the resources needed to develop activities and experiences that motivate children to explore and stay actively engaged.

3. Daily Schedule:

Capitalize on both routines and planned experiences to build children's growth and development and learning opportunities through a balanced and varied schedule that is flexible, yet consistent.

4. Assessment:

Assess individual children, the classroom as a group, instructional practices, and the experiences that are provided to determine how children are learning or making progress in skill development. Determine adaptations or revisions that may need to occur to enhance learning.

5. Children's Goals:

Develop individualized goals for children that include experiences and activities that are challenging, yet achievable.

ASSESSMENT AND PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire is used to screen children within the first 45 days of enrollment to determine where they are developmentally for their age. This screening tool gives teachers information about the child that can be discussed with the family during a "Getting to Know You Meeting" when the teacher and parent sit down to discuss how their child has adjusted to the new environment and to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. If necessary, outside resources such as the local Intermediate Unit can be contacted to perform further screenings and assessments to identify areas where the children might need additional services.

Research tells us that the best programs constantly measure how well teachers teach and how much children learn. They use the results to continue what is working and improve what is not; for example, to decide whether to adapt teaching practices and the environment, to identify gaps in individual children's experiences, or to improve the curriculum. Flying Hills Preschool currently uses **Work Sampling** as an assessment tool.

Learning Environment

Research in the fields of brain development and early childhood education has shown that children learn best when they are actively involved in the construction of their own knowledge through self-directed learning activities. Deep and true understanding comes when young children are supported in playful exploration by caring and encouraging adults in rich and stimulating environments.

Additionally, Flying Hills Preschool teachers supplement these experiences with large and small group activities that focus on character development, physical fitness, science and a variety of monthly curricular themes. Because we know that our society places a strong emphasis on mathematics and literacy skills, we have designed our programs to give children a strong foundation in these disciplines.

TRANSITION POLICY

Internal to next age group

Parents are provided with information in an individual meeting. They will receive:

- Welcome letter which introduces staff and notifies them what to bring
- Basic developmental information for that age/stage
- Daily schedule for the new room

Teachers and staff will facilitate several visits to the new room and opportunities to ease the transition to the new group/room. A date will be set for the trial move to take place in agreement with the center director, teachers and parents.

External

Transition to a new setting/other child care center:

Parents will complete a release of information form if any part of the child's record needs to be sent to the new setting.

For school age children who are transitioning out of the center, a letter will be provided on guidelines on "tips" for child to be home alone.

At Flying Hills Preschool, parents are given community resource information on an as needed basis which can be as regularly as once a month. Any community resource that is available for the parents is given to them by putting the information in the child's folder. Each child at the school has their own folder in which we put community resource information and daily communication with parents.

Examples of some of the community resource information that has been distributed are upcoming community events, parent programs, information regarding special services, contact names and phone numbers.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The following website links include information regarding developmental concerns for Birth-3 or 3-5, help applying for subsidized childcare benefits and Medicaid, and help accessing behavioral health supports and services:

<https://www.sam-inc.org/pa/homepage.html>

<https://www.berksiu.org/>

<https://www.ccbh.com/>

<https://www.pakeys.org/keystone-stars/>

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Pages/default.aspx>

Should you have specific questions and would like help finding additional supports and services, please don't hesitate to contact Ms. Melanie at anytime for support.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of your child's first educational experience. We look forward to much success in the future!

I/We, _____, the parent(s) /
legal guardian(s) of _____,

acknowledge that I / We have received a copy of Flying Hills Preschool Parent Handbook
and have been given the opportunity to read the manual and ask questions about and
understand the policies contained therein. Furthermore, I / We agree to abide by the policies
set forth in the manual.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____