



# **PRESCHOOL/PRE K HANDBOOK**

*“Hop on board the learning train!”*

*About our Center.....*we are entering our 53rd year and have been leaders in the field of Early Childhood Education since we opened our doors. OECC is a privately owned, non-sectarian, non-denominational school. We are licensed through the State of NJ and are a 4 Star Rated program through Grow NJ Kids. OECC offers a certified staff with over 100 years combined experience dedicated to providing a sound educational program.

Our teachers have a special way of making learning fun, finding joy in every day, and enhancing the best in everyone. We are proud to announce that many of our certified staff members have been with *Ocean Early* for more than a decade – so we not only offer competent teachers, we also offer stability and experience! Our programs, as well as our facility, have been continuously updated to meet the demands of the community. Over the past 51 years many children have passed through our doors and left with what we believe to be a fine foundation to continue their education. We in turn have many beautiful memories and experiences.

We want to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to be your child’s first educators. *Ocean Early Childhood Center* strives to provide your children with the necessary tools to make them feel good about themselves and learn to live in a world that will greet them with many challenges. This handbook has been prepared especially for you, the caretaker of the child enrolled in our center. You will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained here. By reading this handbook you will feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. We suggest you keep this handbook for reference throughout the year. We hope that you and your child will remember their experiences here at *Ocean Early* with fond memories. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to us.

Very truly yours,

*Lori DiBiase, Director*

\*Signature page at end of handbook to be signed and returned.

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## 1. ABSENTEEISM POLICY

Tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved space), not attendance. To maintain a reserved space, fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation or for any other reason. We ask that you call us if your child will be out for any reason. If the absence is for three days or more, we will reach out to check on you and your child.

## 2. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY

Your child's safety is a top priority at Ocean Early. The doors to our center remain locked throughout the day. You will receive a key fob for the front door upon registration. One per family, any additional are \$10. We ask you to return upon the completion of your child's time with us. Any lost key fobs will be charged a \$25 fee. Parents are responsible for transporting their children, escorting them to and from the classroom and must check them in/out on the Procure app located on your phones.

Please be prompt in arriving to class. We will expect you to arrive within five minutes of the start time of class. When your child arrives late they may miss academics, too much activity time and also causes disruption to the class. If your child arrives after 9:30am someone from the office will bring them to the classroom. If you will be late in arriving, please let us know via Procure, it helps to minimize unnecessary concerns.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief, the longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful goodbye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. In my experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

Departure times are generally hectic. Please keep in mind that once you have arrived at your child's room you are responsible for your child. Our program has a center wide expectation of children needing to be "within an arm's reach" of an adult at all times. Please help your child to learn this expectation when you are with your child in the building each day.

Children may be released only to those persons authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Identification will be required when someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up your child. **The center closes at 6 PM** and our "closing" staff is required to stay in the building until all rooms are empty. Please arrive at least **5 minutes prior to 6 PM** to gather your children and their belongings so the building is clear by 6 PM and the staff can lock up the facility. Anyone that is picked up after 6pm will be charged \$1 per minute. After 30 minutes past 6pm, the Brick Township Police Department will be notified.

In the case of separation/divorce, court documents must be provided to inform the center of custodial rights and days and if the non custodial parent may pick up. Restraining orders must be on file with our office in order for us to uphold the order.

## 3. BITING POLICY

Biting is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for young children. Some children and many toddlers communicate through this behavior. However, biting can be harmful to other children and to staff. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting and resolve these issues. If the issue cannot be resolved, this policy serves to protect the children that are bitten. If a biting incident occurs, state regulations require that the parent of the child biting and the parent of the child who was bitten be contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

### When Biting Does Occur:

Our staff strongly disapproves of biting. The staff's job is to keep the children safe and help a child that bites learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not use techniques to alarm, hurt, or frighten children such as biting back or washing a child's mouth out with soap.

**For the child that was bitten:**

1. First aid is given to the bite. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, the bite is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. An accident/injury form is filled out documenting the incident.

**For the biter:**

1. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay – it hurts." We will avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. Caring attention will be focused on the child who was bitten.
2. The biter will not be allowed to return to work/play and will be talked to on a level which he/she can understand. "I can see that you want that truck, but I can't let you hurt him. We don't put our teeth on people."
3. The child will be redirected to other work/play.
4. Staff will complete an accident/injury report and notify the family of the biter when the child is picked up for the day.

**When Biting Continues:**

1. The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.) The administrative staff may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
2. The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.

**When biting becomes excessive:**

1. If a child inflicts 3 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.
2. If the child again inflicts 3 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the child will be suspended for 2 business days.
3. If a child once again inflicts 3 bites in a one week period (5 weekdays) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, the parents will be asked to make other child care arrangements. If a child, who has been through steps 1 and/or 2, goes 3 weeks (15 business days) without biting, we will go back to step one if the child bites again. If a child bites twice in a 4 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up from OECC for the remainder of the day. This will not count towards the 2 day suspension.

#### **4. BREASTFEEDING POLICY**

Human milk is the ideal food for babies. Research overwhelmingly shows that exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continued breastfeeding for at least a year or longer, dramatically improves health outcomes for children and their mothers. We help our mothers and their children increase their breastfeeding duration by providing an environment that supports breastfeeding.

**OECC subscribes to the following recommendations for promotion and encouragement of breastfeeding:**

1. **Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.** Breastfeeding mothers can use our office closet as a private and sanitary place where mothers can breastfeed their children or express milk.
2. **Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their children - OECC is**

committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their children in the morning and evenings.

## **5. CHILD ASSESSMENTS - COR Advantage**

Assessment is the process of observing, recording and documenting what children do and how they do it as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affects the child. Assessment provides information that helps programs do the following:

- Monitor children's development and learning over time to identify strengths & needs
- Guide lesson planning and decision making about children's interests, needs, and abilities
- Identify children who might benefit from special services
- Report to and communicate with families information about individual children

We participate in ongoing, systematic assessment that provides information on your child's experiences, learning and development related to our curriculum goals and objectives. These assessments are sensitive to each child's cultural background.

The teachers will create a classroom portfolio that contains documentation of your child's progress. Information is collected throughout the year such as work samples, photos, and artwork, as well as anecdotal notes regarding their skills and interactions. Parents/guardians are encouraged to jot down brief descriptions of what they observe their child doing as he or she plays and interacts at home to add to their child's portfolio at any time.

This information is used to help teachers identify individual areas of strength & areas for growth, and to plan experiences that support each child's unique needs. Conferences will be scheduled to allow teachers and families to review each child's progress and to create action plans for next steps.

Classroom assessment data will also be evaluated as a whole so that teachers can determine general trends and make adjustments to curriculum as appropriate.

## **6. CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT**

We continually assess all aspects of our program in a variety of ways in order to maintain high quality. Throughout the year we utilize research based assessment tools such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and the Classroom Assessment and Scoring System (CLASS). These may be conducted at any time, with or without prior notice to the classroom staff.

The ECERS will be utilized in the PS/PK classes to objectively look at a variety of factors such as room arrangement, teacher child interactions, learning materials and health and safety procedures. It may be administered by the director or head teacher, or by staff from partner agencies such as Grow NJ Kids or First Steps. Results are then discussed by the director and teachers, and an action plan is created to ensure we provide the best possible environment for each child.

The CLASS will be utilized in all classrooms to help us look at language usage and interactions between the teachers and the children. It may be administered by the director or head teacher, or by staff from partner agencies. Results are then discussed by the director and teachers, and an action plan is created to ensure we provide the best possible environment for each child. Professional development opportunities may be provided based on the results.

We also evaluate the implementation of our curriculum with the Preschool Quality Assessment (PQA), an assessment created by the publishers of the High Scope Curriculum. This tool is designed to help ensure the curriculum is being fully implemented, and will be administered by the director or head teacher. Results are then discussed by the director and teachers and may be used to guide future staff development opportunities.

## **7. CURRICULUM**



Beginning with the Perry Preschool Study, High Scope revolutionized early childhood education with a new approach to teaching and learning. Research based and child focused, the High Scope Curriculum uses a carefully designed process called "active participatory learning" to achieve powerful, positive outcomes.

As teachers, parents, and educational researchers have discovered, the High Scope Curriculum not only helps young children excel in language and cognitive learning but also promotes independence, curiosity, decision-making, cooperation, persistence, creativity, and problem solving-the fundamental skills that help determine success in adult life. We also use The Preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA), which is a rating instrument designed to evaluate the quality of our program and identify staff training needs on our curriculum.

## **8. DAILY HEALTH CHECK**

Each day, all staff will perform a daily health check. This daily health check includes a greeting of the child and drop off person, asking the child and drop off person about the child's and family's well-being since the child was last in the facility, while observing the child for signs of obvious ill health. Based on the results of this interaction, it is determined whether those who appear to be ill or injured are able to have their needs and those of the other children met, and if the child is able to participate in the program that day.

During the daily Health Check the staff member looks for:

- Changes in behavior or appearance
- Any skin rashes and itchy skin or scalp
- Any boils or weeping skin rashes
- Signs of fever, such as flushed appearance or shivering
- Complaints of pain or not feeling well
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or drainage from eyes
- When a child has been exposed to a harmful communicable disease

## **9. DCF/OOL INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52), 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

reporting 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 Children and Families. 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 (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). 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 view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at [www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf) or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

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 requirements, 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 diseases. 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 OOL'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 OOL'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 or you can view them online at <https://childcareexplorer.njccis.com/portal/>.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF 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 OOL 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 assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and 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 or 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 provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and 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. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on 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).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc.gov/Recalls](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc.gov/Recalls). Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

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 any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/ (877) 652-2873. Such reports

may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to [www.state.nj.us/dcf/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/).

## **10. DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING**

A developmental screening tool helps provide information about the unique development of each child. Our center uses the ASQ-3 and AS-SE, which are age specific questionnaires about children's development. A screening provides a quick look at how children are doing in important areas, such as communication, physical ability, social skills, and problem solving skills. As a parent or caregiver, you are the best source of information about your child, and that's why the ASQ questionnaires are designed to be filled out by you. The information you supply will help reveal your child's strengths, uncover any areas of concern, and determine if there are community resources or services that may be useful for your child or your family.

Within the first 2 months of each school year (or within 2 months of enrollment) you will be asked to complete the ASQ questionnaires about your child. The center's director will review them and provide feedback to you, including tips for activities you can do with your child to support their development. If there are any concerns, the center's director will discuss the follow up and rescreening process with you, and provide referral information for further assessment and support if needed.

Because of the diverse set of needs of the children in our program, it is important to gather as much information as possible about the best ways to educate each child. If your child currently has an IEP, it is beneficial to share a copy of this plan with us so we can work together to ensure that the plans are put into practice.

## **11. DISCIPLINE POLICY**

All teachers manage behavior in their classrooms in a non-punitive, age appropriate manner. Children will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior. Teachers will use positive reinforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors. Children will be redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate. If a child is doing something that could hurt others, themselves, or destroying property and choosing not to use problem solving techniques the teacher will speak with the director and the director will decide if the behavior warrants the parent be notified. A child will not be deprived of food, outdoor play time, sent to isolation, or subjected to corporal punishment or abusive physical exercise as a means of punishment.

## **12. DISINFECTING AND SANITIZING POLICY**

- To remove gross soil, spray table, sink, bathroom, toys and all other cleaning surfaces with a soap-water solution and wipe with a disposable paper towel.
- To sanitize the eating surface, sink, bathroom toilet, toys and all other cleaning surfaces

spray with H<sub>2</sub>O orange-water solution and wait at least 2 minutes before wiping with a disposable towel or allow to air dry, in order to allow the solution to kill germs. The surface cannot be sprayed and immediately wiped.

### **13. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

**This plan defines emergency response operations such as communications plans, student release procedures, general emergency actions, and hazard-specific procedures. This plan will be reviewed annually.**

#### **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS**

**If an emergency occurs during preschool hours:**

- **Do not drive to the school unless it is safe to do so and/or you have been directed by the director to pick up your child.**
- **It may be difficult to get through to the school via telephone because of damage to phone lines or cell phone tower outage. Staff will contact parents as soon as possible.**
- **Tune to news media for emergency instructions.**

**In times of emergency, information about the status of schools is communicated through a variety of media. The preschool requests that parents do not call their child's school in times of emergency as it is important to keep phone lines free for emergency communications. Circumstances may prevent parents from picking up their children or may require that children be picked up at a location other than the preschool facility.**

**The safety of children and staff is our first priority. Our second priority is the reunification of parents with their children. Parents should check the following sources for information and status reports:**

- **Procure App**
- **The preschool Facebook page**

**In times of emergency, general information will be shared with the community through major radio and television stations.**

***The staff of Ocean Early Childhood Center will strive to preserve and protect life, reduce emotional trauma, minimize personal injury, and cooperate with the local emergency preparedness agencies.***

#### **EVACUATION LOCATIONS**

##### **On-site Evacuation**

There are several causes for evacuation utilized by the preschool.

##### **Lock Down and Hide**

When there is a threat of violence or serious incident that could jeopardize the safety of students/staff including intruders, shootings, hostage incidents, gang violence or civil disturbance. The staff will place children in the safest place possible in their classrooms or the nearest safe room that can be locked. *Lockdown and Hide drills*

*are practiced monthly.*

## **Lockdown and Hide Procedures**

### **Preschool Director**

The Preschool Director or designee will make the following announcement using cell phones or runners: “Your Attention, Please. We are in Lockdown and Hide emergency. Teachers move children to a safe place inside your classroom. Ignore all alarms and bells unless advised otherwise. Stay quiet and as still as possible, use furniture to hide under or behind.” Notify staff and classes outside to immediately move to Lockdown and Hide, Account for the students by making sure teachers have classroom rosters. Director or designated staff will call 9-1-1, identify the name and address of the preschool, describe the emergency, state the school is locking down, provide intruder description and weapon(s) if known, and identify the location of the Preschool Close and lock all doors possible.

### **Teachers**

Clear the classrooms by moving everyone into the bathrooms or safe space. Lock your doors, turn off your lights, and shut your blinds and windows

Move students and staff away from the doors and windows.

Have all persons sit down against an interior wall or position behind furniture

Ignore all bells and alarms unless otherwise instructed. (intruders often set off alarms)

Take attendance and be prepared to notify the Preschool Director of missing students or additional students, staff or guests sheltered in your classroom. Allow no one outside of the classroom until the Preschool Director gives the “All Clear” signal.

## **Lockdown/Get Out**

If an immediate life threatening situation exists, exit immediately to a place of safety when possible

**Fire Evacuation** is when staff and students are moved out of the preschool facility to a safe location outside the building. Students are directed to leave the building and assemble at a designated site outside the facility.

### **Procedures for Fire Evacuation**

Activate fire alarm or otherwise alert staff that there is a fire by cell phones or runners. Evacuate the building quickly and calmly

Take class binders.

If caught in smoke, have everyone drop to hands and knees and crawl to exit.

Pull clothing over nose and mouth to use as a filter for breathing.

If clothes catch fire, STOP, DROP, & ROLL until fire is out.

If necessary, have staff person check areas where children may be located or hiding before leaving building.

Report any missing children to the Director immediately

Gather in designated meeting place outside and account for all children and staff  
Call 911 from outside of building.

Do not re-enter building until cleared by fire department.

**Fire Drills are practiced once monthly**

## **Evacuation to Off-Site Locations**

We would move children to off-site evacuation site, as a result of a natural disaster or facility hazard, or bomb threat in which the preschool building is damaged or considered unsafe. The staff and students would need to immediately relocate to a different building. In this case, the children are escorted to the basement of the house next door. Mrs. Pao is one of the owners of our facility and is aware of this process. In the event of an emergency evacuation students will be bussed to a "safe school". OECC has contracted with Hartnett Bus Co. to transport children to one of the following centers depending on the type of emergency. Ocean Kids Academy 1172 Church Rd, Toms River, NJ 08755. The phone number for this center is (732) 244-7070 or Little Tree Preschool 20 High Street Allentown, NJ 08501. The phone number for this center is (609) 259 - 9005. The forms of communication will be by calling the parent, a message left on answering machine at our center, note will be placed on the door, cell phone, text, local police, and Procure. Please make sure that if your contact information changes that we are notified as soon as possible. If the location gets changed, parents will be notified as stated in this paragraph.

## **FAMILY REUNIFICATION**

Purpose: The Family Reunification Protocol is used to ensure a safe and secure means of accounting for students and reuniting parents/guardians with their children whenever the preschool facility or grounds is rendered unsafe and a remote site location is needed.

Preschool Director

Secure a holding area for arriving students and staff away from waiting family members. Set up an adult report area for parents/guardians to sign-in and to check identification.

Set up a student release area where students will be escorted to meet their parent/guardian and sign out.

Only release students to authorized persons after checking proof of identity and signing a student out.

Instruct parents/guardians to leave the site to make room for others once they have signed out their child/children.

## **Teachers Account for your children**

Sign children out to authorize family members only. Check I.D.'s if necessary.

Follow the instructions of the Preschool Director when you arrive. You may be asked to assist in staffing the site areas for pick up and release or help in calming parents.

## **Procedures for Other Emergency Events**

### **Bomb Threat**

**CALL TAKER:** Upon receiving a message that a bomb has been placed in the preschool: Use bomb threat checklist (page 8)

Ask where the bomb is located, when the bomb will go off, what materials are in the bomb, who is calling, why the caller is doing this. (See Bomb Threat Checklist)

Listen closely to caller's voice and speech patterns and to noises in the background.

After hanging up the phone, immediately dial \*57 to trace the call.

Director immediately if needed.

### **Preschool Director**

Preschool Director or Staff notifies law enforcement by calling 911.

Meet or assign staff to brief emergency responder agencies outside the building

Notify staff through by cell phone, word of mouth:

“Your Attention Please. A building emergency is in effect. All Staff and Students

Should remain in their rooms until notified otherwise. All two way radios and cell phones should now be turned off so they do not trigger hidden devices. A decision to evacuate immediately will be made with advice of law enforcement. Search the building and evacuate to an offsite location outside the building (fence line)

Ensure staff who received the call completes the Bomb Threat Checklist and gives to law enforcement official.

If a suspicious item is located, notify law enforcement official, order an EVACUATION immediately selecting routes away from the suspicious item. Evacuate to our offsite location DO NOT ACTIVATE the fire ALARM.

Teachers and staff will leave doors open when exiting.

Students and staff must be evacuated to a safe distance outside of school building(s) a MINIMUM of 1000 Feet is the general rule. Consult with Fire and Police officials. Arrange for person who found a suspicious item to talk with law enforcement official. No one may re-enter the building until fire or police personnel declare them safe.

The Preschool Director and law enforcement will notify students, teachers to “All Clear” or for Family Reunification procedures.

### **Teachers and Staff**

Teachers and staff will check their classrooms, offices and work areas for suspicious items and report any findings to the Preschool Director. If a suspicious item is found – DO NOT TOUCH IT. Secure the area

where the item is located, but do not guard it.

Teachers will account for their students and be prepared to evacuate if suspicious items are found.

Teachers and staff will evacuate using standard procedures and exit routes to evacuation site.

Teachers will leave classroom doors open when exiting; take classroom rosters and emergency backpacks. Teachers take roll after being evacuated. Be prepared to report the names of any missing persons to the Preschool Director.

Keep your class together at the offsite evacuation location until given further instructions. If given the “All Clear” signal, return to the building and resume normal operations.

If not be prepared for Family Reunification procedures.

*Family Reunification Guidelines will be followed if children need to be picked up from evacuation locations.*

## **14. EXPULSION POLICY**

OECC aims to help children grow and thrive in a safe and stimulating setting that is respectful of them, their parents/guardians and our staff. We make every effort to work with families to address concerns that arise which may compromise our ability to successfully reach these goals. In the rare event that attempts to work with families to resolve concerns and issues fail, we reserve the right to terminate care. We will give a minimum of two weeks' notice of termination, unless the safety and welfare of parents, children, staff and/or the integrity and professional standing of the center is in immediate jeopardy.

Reasons for expulsion:

- the child is at risk of causing injury to staff, other children or him/herself
- failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time
- uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- excessive biting
- parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members or other parent
- parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff or other parents in front of enrolled children
- parent failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments
- parent failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records
- parent habitual tardiness when picking up child

## **15. EXTENDED TIME**

Children may add hours/days to their schedule based on availability. Parents requesting these extensions must do so 24 hours in advance and must also know that they may not always be available. After school children may attend Ocean Early on days when their school is not in session. Please inform staff in advance.

## **16. GROW NJ KIDS**

We are a 4 Star rated program through Grow NJ Kids. Grow NJ Kids is New Jersey's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) administered by the Department of Children and

Families, Education, Health, and Human Services. As a Grow NJ Kids participant, we are showing our commitment to offering high-quality child care and getting your child ready for school. A QRIS is a process for supporting and strengthening care provided by child care and early learning programs. Similar to a hotel rating, participating child care and early learning programs are assigned a star rating based on observed quality. Observed quality means GNJK staff will be coming into our program to work with us in reviewing quality standards. Working together we will review things such as our activities and curriculum, how we work with families and how we interact with children. As a GNJK participant, we will get resources to help our program continually improve - including coaching, training, and scholarships.

## **17. HAND HYGIENE POLICY**

All children, parents, staff, volunteers, and visitors attending Ocean Early Childhood Center, must perform hand hygiene at the following times:

- Arrival for the day
- When moving from one childcare group to another
- When coming in from outdoors
- Preparing, eating, and handling food or beverages or feeding a child
- Giving medication or applying a medical ointment or cream in which a break in the skin (ex. Sores, cuts, scrapes) may be encountered
- Playing, wading, swimming in water that is use by more than one person
- Toilet, or helping a child use the toilet
- Handling of body fluids (ex. Urine, feces, mucus, blood, vomit): wiping noses, mouths, and sores: handling mouthed toys, or touching any clothing contaminated by stool, urine or body fluids
- Cleaning and handling garbage
- Handling animals or cleaning up animals waste or habitats
- Playing in sand or other sensory table materials, play-doh, on wooden play structures, or outdoors

## **18. HAND WASHING POLICY**

All children, parents, staff, volunteers, and visitors attending Ocean Early Childhood Center, must perform the following procedure for hand washing:

1. Moisten hands with water and use liquid soap.
  2. Rub hands together away from the flow of water for 20 seconds.
  3. Rinse hands free of soap under running water.
  4. Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper towel or air dry with a blower.
  5. Turn off faucet using paper towel.
- Throw the used paper towel into a hands-free trash can.

## **19. HEALTH SCREENINGS**

Children must have screenings for vision, hearing and oral health signed off on their health forms.



## **20. HOME LANGUAGE POLICY**

We are an open and inclusive program where all children and families are welcome. In order to support children whose first language is not English, we implement the following strategies based on national standards of best practice:

- We provide a well-equipped classroom that reflects diversity in materials, displays, books, and activities.
- All children will participate in quality language and play experiences throughout the day, with both adults and other children
- Items in the classroom will be labeled with pictures as well as words
- Where possible, word labels will be added to the classroom in the home language.
- Books will be added to the reading area in the home language.
- In order to assist us in communicating in the classroom, we ask families to give us a list of common words the child(s) might use in the home language.
- We encourage families to share items that can be used in the classroom that represent their home culture
- We encourage family members to visit the classroom, and to share cultural activities with all of the children, such as holiday celebrations, foods, music, books, etc. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a visit.

## **21. HOME VISITS**

To get to know our families better OECC offers families the opportunity for a member of our staff to visit with you privately. This helps facilitate the bond between families and school while allowing the staff the opportunity to connect with your child on a more personal level, as well as answer any questions you may have. These meetings will be held at a mutually convenient location. Participation is not mandatory.

## **22. INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS**

Protecting the safety of our children in our facility is extremely important. Part of our education plan includes teaching and explaining safety rules to your child. The staff constantly monitors the facility to remedy unsafe conditions and parents are asked to alert us to hazards or concerns they observe. We have two health care providers on staff and all staff are certified in CPR. Parents will be notified immediately of any injury to the head. In the event of a minor injury requiring basic cleaning and first aid treatment you will be notified by an incident form. In the event of an emergency and a responsible person from your child's card cannot be reached, OECC may take your child to nearest hospital to secure proper treatment. It is understood that all reasonable efforts will be made to notify parents/guardians before any action is taken. It is very important for parents to keep their child's card up to date with new numbers and any emergency contacts. If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached.

## **23. LATE FEES**

A \$1.00 per minute late pick up fee will be assessed for all children picked up after closing. This must be paid in cash at the time of pick up, or before the child's next regularly scheduled day. This will be strictly enforced, and habitual tardiness may result in termination of services

## 24. MEDICAL POLICY

All children **MUST** return the required Health Forms – the universal form along with a copy of their updated immunization record on their first day of school. A doctor's written notice is required if there is a delay in any scheduled immunizations. After 30 days your child will not be allowed to attend school under any circumstances. OECC is a "well-child preschool". At no time do we provide sick childcare. This policy is designed to reduce the spread of infectious illness in the classroom. Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to OECC, if the child shows any signs of illness (see policy on Communicable Disease), or unable to participate in the normal routine. The control and prevention of infectious diseases in preschool depend on the good communication between parents, caregivers, health departments, and primary health care providers. Your cooperation on this issue is extremely important. For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after the condition has returned to normal.

If your child is unable to participate in the everyday activities of preschool, including being able to play outside, then your child **MUST** stay home.

## 25. MEDICAL HOME POLICY

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) believes that every child should have a "medical home", a specific long term primary care provider, where families can be supported at all stages of their child's development. Rather than a walk-in clinic or the emergency room, a primary care provider can get to know your child and family, and track long term trends of growth and development. They should be your partner in decisions about your child's health.

We encourage you to choose a primary care provider for your child/ren, and to share their contact information with us. When there are questions about health issues, medication or allergies, we can contact your provider directly for clarification and possibly save you a trip to the doctor.

## 26. MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

Medications may be provided to your child while in our care in accordance with our policies and state regulations. Medication administration at this facility is limited to prescription or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications ordered by a prescribing health care professional for a specific child and must be accompanied by written consent from you.

We do ask, whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. You may administer medication to your own child during the day.

In order for OECC to administer medication to your child while in our care you **MUST**:

- Personally hand over all the medications to the office staff, not the staff in the classroom.
- Complete an Medication Release Form, which will be kept in the medication log.

Any medications brought in by you for your child **MUST BE**:

- Accompanied by a written order of the health professional and must specify the medical reason for the medication, name of the medication, dose, route, when (i.e., part of the day), for how long the medication is required (i.e., number of days), and any reactions or side effects that might occur
- In the original container
- Labeled with child's first and last name

- Labeled with date the medication was issued and when it expires
- Labeled with prescribers and pharmacy names and phone numbers
  - Include directions to administer the medication
  - Provide any relevant warnings

Our office staff will record the following information:

- Name of the child to whom the medicine was given
- Name of the medication
- Date, time, route and amount of medication given
- Name (not initials) of staff administering the medication

All medications are stored in a locked area that is inaccessible to children. We will refrigerate medications that require it.

For ALL medications, **you must** complete a Medication Release Form, *this will include, instructions, consent, and waiver*. The signed form expires seven (7) days from the date of the signature. **Prescription medications must** be stored in the original container with the child's name, physician's name, date, pharmacy name and phone number, prescription name, number, and clear instructions with frequency and amount to be given to the child. No injections will be administered, with the exception of Epi-Pens.

For over-the-counter medications, **you must** complete a Medication Release Form *this includes, instructions, consent, and waiver*. The signed form expires seven (7) days from the date of the signature. The only exception to this is for the use of sunscreen, and insect repellent. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original container with the child's name clearly written and expiration date. The authorization must indicate the times the medication is to be given and the exact dosage and route. You must supply additional information on possible side effects of the medication.

Non-prescription Over-the-counter and topical medications are defined as follows:

- Non- Prescription Antihistamines
- Cough Suppressants
- Decongestants
- Non-Aspirin fever reducer/pain relievers
- Topical ointments such as sunscreen, insect repellents

**No medications will be dispensed in a manner that is contrary to the label directions without a physician's written instructions**

We all have unilateral right to refuse or discontinue administration of any product/medication if:

- an adverse reaction results
- the product expires
- the child is ill or injured
- the product can be administered before or after child care
- the consent waiver form is incomplete
- for any other reason if, in staff's opinion, it is in the best interest of the child

## **27. NUTRITION POLICY**

Food will not be offered as a reward or denied as punishment. If your child is not eating, we will notify you as the staff is not allowed to force any child to finish snack or lunch. High-fat products, high-sugar products and salty foods are avoided.

To provide some guidance for implementing feeding best practices for optimal nutrition, some or all of the following categories should be included at each meal and at least two categories for snacks: fruits and vegetables, milk, meats and meat alternates, grains and breads. Check out [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) for great nutritional tips and ideas.

**Breakfast:** Cereal and milk, muffins, bagels or other breakfast items may be sent in with children who arrive prior to 8:30am. Children who arrive after 8:30 should eat breakfast at home.

**Snacks:** A Healthy Snack Calendar is posted in each classroom for parents to sign up each month. Ask the teacher if you are unaware of how many students are in the class. If no one is signed up for a particular day, snack will be provided by OECC which will consist of fruit, goldfish, crackers, pretzels, cheese, snack mix and other nutritious foods. Safe drinking water is accessible to children who can serve themselves at all times. Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Sweets such as cookies and candy will only be served on special holidays.

**Lunch:** When bringing lunch from home please send in a ready to eat, nutritional lunch with an ice pack to avoid food from spoiling. Any juices brought from home must be 100% juice and no more than 6 ounces. Children between 1 and 6 years of age should only receive a total of 4 to 6 ounces of 100% juice per day, including juice given at home. Your child will need energy to learn and enjoy afternoon activities so we ask that you refrain from packing any sweet snacks or sugary drinks.

### **Nut Aware School Zone**

Our school is very aware of nut allergies present in children. We will not serve any nuts or products that include nuts in our classrooms. We do have snacks that may have been processed in a plant that also processes nuts. Because we cannot eliminate all exposure to nuts, we seat children with nut allergies at a nut free table during snack/lunch times. Before and after lunch/snack, we have all children wash or wipe hands.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

It is our pleasure to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please be sure to schedule the date for celebration with your child's teacher. If parents choose to bring in a birthday treat, we ask that it be on the healthier spectrum. Cupcakes or cake will only be served if they do not have frosting on them. We have found that sugary frosting often interferes with the children's appetite for lunch and afternoon brain activities!

## **28. PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is extremely important in order to ensure the success of your child. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher or the director.

An annual Open House for parents to discuss the program and see the class is held in September. OECC has an open door policy that includes visitation and observation. Please remember that your child's teacher is teaching a class and if you would like an extended conversation with a teacher we can set up a convenient time for all parties. Drop off and pick up should not be a time for an extended conversation. Parent activities, talents, and skills are always welcome. Parent readers are also encouraged.

The school uses Daily Note by Kaymbu as our communication system. Please download the Daily Note app on your phone to be connected to the efficient school messaging. You can also like us on Facebook to keep updated on school activities, closings, ect.

All classes will prepare a daily report on Daily Note for children. This will provide parents with an overview of the child's performance throughout the day.

Newsletters will be sent home monthly.

Each class has a bulletin board that contains menus, a calendar of events, parent volunteer sign-up sheet, program information and class newsletter. Please check the board on a daily basis.

Parent/Teacher conferences are held semi-annually and upon request of the parent and or the staff member. Pre-K February/June Preschool – written progress reports February/June.

## **29. PARENT RESOURCE BINDER**

If you are interested in family education resources specific to the needs of your children or family, we will be happy to share this information with you. We have information regarding what community services and resources are available in our area and how to access them. There is a Parent Resource Binder available to our families that provide information on local activities, doctors and hospitals and what community resources are available to you and your family. If you do not see the information on services you need please speak with the director and we will be happy to get you what information is needed.

## **30. PAYMENTS AND FEES**

Tuition is paid on a weekly or monthly basis. You will receive an invoice via the app.. If you are paying in cash, it must be handed to a staff member and a cash receipt will be issued. Checks should be made payable to : Ocean Early Childhood Center – OECC. There will be a \$35.00 return check fee for checks returned by the bank. If two or more checks are returned by your bank, a money order or cash will be required for all tuition payments. A \$25 fee will be added to your tuition and your child will not be allowed to continue if payment is not received by the 15th of each month.. It is important that tuition is paid on time and on a consistent basis, as we rely on tuition to keep our program running smoothly; pay our teachers for taking great care of your children; and keep our building safe.

No deductions can be made for emergency closing or absences during the school year. All school holidays as well as three snow days are taken into consideration when the tuition rates are established.

## **31. PHILOSOPHY**

Ocean Early Childhood Center believes that children should be allowed to grow at their own pace and to learn in ways that help them become confident in themselves as learners. At OECC learning is an integrated process that occurs when children are encouraged to play,

experience, and discover. Children need to be actively involved in this learning process. Materials are selected to engage children in active, meaningful learning.

We want to help children face the future as it continually changes and to be able to effectively cope with the challenges that awaits them. At all times, we believe in direct communication between teacher and parent for a full exchange of information for fundamental understanding.

The content of our program strives for school success by developing the qualities that feed into success and individual growth.

### **32. POLICY ON MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS & COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Infectious diseases, illness and injuries are common occurrences among children. OECC clearly states the procedures we follow to make decisions about children; when to exclude, when attendance is permitted, and when those who have been excluded may return. During the winter, many children have a common respiratory illness (a common cold) at any one time and do not need to be excluded from the program unless their condition meets the exclusion criteria specified in our policy. You **MUST** have a backup plan for care of your child when they are unable to be in the facility due to illness or injury.

You are expected to openly share information about your child's behavior, symptoms, or exposure to illness. A note from your child's primary health care professional is necessary only when our staff needs advice about any special care that is required for your child or if your child's condition poses a health risk to others. We rely on your description of your child's behavior or symptoms to determine when your child is well enough to return to the classroom after an illness or injury.

The director decides about inclusion/exclusion if you have an ill child, taking into account what is known about the illness. The decision is made by what you and the child's teachers/caregivers share about the child's condition and findings of the daily health check procedure.

**For the health and well-being of your child and others, your child must be kept home if he or she develops any of the following symptoms and must be kept home until the child is symptom free for twenty-four hours or the child's physician indicates, in writing, that a child can return to the school (unless otherwise directed by the local health department):**

- Your child's condition must not prevent them from participating comfortably in activities that the facility routinely offers
- Your child's condition requires more care than teachers/caregivers can provide without compromising the needs of the other children
- Keeping your child in care poses an increased risk to the ill child or other children or adults with whom the child comes in contact with

**If your child has any of the following conditions, they may not be brought to school:**

- Appears to be severely ill – lethargy, lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or have a quickly spreading rash
- A fever:
  - 100 degree F or higher
- Blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary changes

- Diarrhea
- Any mucus coming from nose that is not clear
- Vomiting; two or more episodes within a period of 24 hours
- Persistent abdominal pain or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Head lice or nits, until cleared by doctor and free of nits
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e. strep throat or other streptococcal infection)
- Scabies, until after treatment has begun
- Chickenpox (varicella)
- Impetigo
- Pertussis (i.e. whooping cough) (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Tuberculosis (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Hepatitis A virus infection (we will follow the direction of the local health department)
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Severe coughing or difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavioral changes
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Stiff neck

If your child has a Communicable Disease, you must inform the school immediately so we can take the necessary precautions. We will take necessary measures to protect your child's identity, and only share the information relating to the communicable disease with those that need to know. We also will notify you if we become aware that an employee or child in our care has contracted a communicable disease that the local health department requires us to report.

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

### **TABLE OF EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

<b><u>Respiratory</u></b>	<b><u>Gastrointestinal</u></b>	<b><u>Contact</u></b>
<b><u>Illnesses</u></b>	<b><u>Illnesses</u></b>	<b><u>Illnesses</u></b>
Chicken Pox**	Campylobacter*	Impetigo
German measles*	Escherichia coli*	Lice
Haemophilus	Giardia Lambliab*	Scabies
influenzae*		

Measles*	Hepatitis A*	Shingles
Meningococcus*	Salmonella*	
Mumps*	Shigella*	
Strep Throat		
Tuberculosis*		
Whooping Cough*		

\*Reportable diseases that must be reported to the Ocean County Health Department by OECC.

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

If a child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, parents will be notified in writing, by a letter sent home and/or by email.

### 33. POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

1. The provision that each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), as specified in N.J.A.C. 10:122-6.8(a)3, to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached;
2. The provision that, if a particular noncustodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to the child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to this effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order;
3. Written procedures to be followed by staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), as specified in (a)1 above, fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing. The procedures shall require that:
  - i. The child is supervised at all times;
  - ii. Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parents; and
  - iii. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his or her parent(s) or authorized person(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the Department's State Central Registry Hotline (1-877 NJ ABUSE/1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick up the child; and
4. Written procedures to be followed by a staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), as specified in (a)1 above, appear to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual. The procedures shall require that:
  - i. The child shall not be released to such an impaired individual;
  - ii. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
  - iii. If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, as noted in iii above, a staff member shall call the Department's State Central Registry Hotline (1-877 NJ ABUSE)/1-877-652-2873 to seek assistance in caring for the child.



### **34. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY**

Preschoolers have at least 90 - 120 minutes of active play per day. Children will play outdoors every day except when weather or air quality poses a significant health risk. Therefore, children need to be dressed appropriately for the current weather conditions. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Flip flops and sandals are not permitted.

### **35. REST TIME**

All children under the age of five are required to have a “quiet time”. This period of relaxation provides those who need to sleep with a quiet room and for those who don’t with a time of quiet relaxation. Pacifiers/pull ups are not permitted at school. Soft music is played with the room dimmed. You will be provided upon enrollment a blanket and crib sheet in a ziplock bag labeled with name. If these items are lost you can purchase a replacement for \$15.00 each item. These are the only items used for resting at our center, no outside blankets or sheets will be permitted. No pillows or stuffed animals allowed. Blankets and sheets are to be taken home at the end of each week, washed and brought back the following week. They are also to be returned at the end of enrollment or pay a \$30.00 fee.

### **36. SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Our school is open 7:00AM – 6:00PM Monday through Friday from September - June.

It is OECC’s intention that we are open and provide child care services every weekday of the year, excluding holidays that are pre-determined at the start of each school year. However, situations beyond our control, such as inclement weather, dangerous conditions or state of emergency, it may be necessary for us to close or have a delayed opening. Our status will be announced on the local radio station **92.7 WOBM or Channel 12, posted on our Facebook page and a Remind message will be sent out.**

#### **Closings due to power outages**

The State Licensing regulations require us to close for the following reasons: no electricity; no water; no landline phone service. If we need to close due to any of these reasons, a decision will be made by 11:00 AM and pick up will be by 1:00 PM. In these cases, there will be no after school care for the school age program. We will contact families by text, email and/or phone to communicate this information.

In the event that the school is unable to open or must close early, you are still responsible for tuition payments.

### **37. SCHOOL CLOTHING**

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothing and sneakers so that your child will be freely involved in our learning activities. Sturdy, washable clothing is recommended. Sandals or flip flops are not permitted at school. Whatever your child wears to school it is essential they be able to put them on himself/herself (belts, buckles and buttons can pose bathroom accidents.) The children go outside on a daily basis, except in extreme weather conditions, please have them dress weather appropriate. During the colder months they will need hat and mittens (no gloves) along with a winter jacket. Children need to run around, have some large muscle activity, and get some fresh air. If the child is well enough to come to school, he/she should be able to play

outside as long as he/she stays dry.

All children need a complete extra set of clothes, especially socks, left at school. Please place this set of clothing in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it in the bottom of their cubby. Don't forget to change the clothes with the seasons and replace when they are used. All items your child brings to school should be labeled with your child's name in permanent ink.

### **38. SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS**

Your enrollment at OECC implies consent for us to use photographs of your child at school or any activities held on school property for press releases in our community and for our center's FaceBook page. If you have an objection to sharing photos of your child, please inform us in writing. During the Fall and Spring we offer school photos by a professional photographer. You may purchase individual and class photos and will be notified of the date as soon as possible. Posting of photographs or videos of children, other than your own, is prohibited, but not limited to photographs or videos of children obtained through handheld devices, computers, child care monitoring apps, or any other electronic devices or transmission.

### **39. SCREEN TIME POLICY**

DVD viewing will only be commercial-free, educational programming. Children will have less than 30 minutes of viewing per week. Television is stored outside of the classroom. There will be no DVD viewing during meal time. We recommend reducing screen time at home and encourage physical activity at all times. Check out [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov) for tips and ideas to get your children moving.

### **40. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The only social media we use at OECC is Facebook. Any pictures posted to Facebook are taken by the director only from her personal phone and uploaded. They are then deleted from the personal phone. OECC uses the Daily Note App as our digital parent communication. Any pictures posted on that app are taken by the teachers from their class tablet. It is EXPECTED that staff conduct themselves in a respectable manner in any online format, whether acting in a personal or professional capacity.

### **41. STAFF HIRED BY PARENTS FOR BABYSITTING**

We do not allow our employees to make independent child care arrangements with families at the school. However, in the event that you enter into an arrangement with a staff member to babysit for your family outside of the normal work hours it will be done away from our school and with full understanding that the sitter enters into such agreement as a private citizen and not an employee at Ocean Early Childhood Center. We cannot be responsible for our employees away from our school, outside their working hours, and will not be liable for their acts or omissions when not on our property. By signing off on Ocean Early Childhood Center's Family Handbook you acknowledge this.

#### **42. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROTECTIVE FACTORS SURVEY**

We ask that all our families participate in our Strengthening Families Protective Factors Survey, so we can learn how to better support you and your family. The Strengthening Families is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program. SF is an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children as well as to improve social competencies and school performance. It has been proven that child maltreatment also decreases when parents strengthen bonds with their children and learn more effective parenting skills.

Strengthening Families and OECC offers: facility friendship and mutual support, strengthen parenting (i.e. parent workshops, parent resource binder), response to family crisis, facilitate children's social and emotional development (i.e. teachable moments), observe and respond to early warning signs of children abuse and neglect, and value and support our parents. You can contact the director for further details on this program.

#### **43. SUNSCREEN POLICY**

Sunscreen should be applied before your child comes to school. Staff will reapply as needed to students whose parents supply their own sunscreen to keep at school. Clearly label your child's individual bottle with her/his name. They will be applied by staff and stored out of the reach of children. Only sunscreen products with a UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied. There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun.

#### **44. TOILETING POLICY**

All enrolled children should be independently using the toilet. Please refrain from sending your child in clothing that is not easy to get off/on (belts, overalls, buckles ect). Pull Ups are NOT permitted. The staff will work together as partners with parents in assisting each child in continuing the skills used for independent toileting and hygiene. However, if a child has two accidents in one day, the family will be notified to come and pick up the child for the remainder of that day. If the child continues to have frequent accidents on a daily basis, the director may consider asking the family to terminate the child from preschool enrollment until complete toilet training is achieved. Written warning will be given to the parents before this action takes place.

#### **45. TOYS FROM HOME**

Items such as toys, candy, gum and money are not allowed at OECC to avoid hurt feelings, breakage or loss. Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. Your child may bring his or her favorite toy to school only on Share and Tell days. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name. However, we do not permit "violent" toys in our school, including swords, toy guns, knives or any kind of weapon-like toy.

#### **46. TRANSITION POLICY**

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. Your child will begin a Transition Folder as soon as they begin school. This

will include but is not limited to a sampling of their work, all screenings, developmental assessments and behavior guidance action plans. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Teaching staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, transportation options and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

#### **47. WHAT WE EXPECT OF PARENTS:**

- Read the bulletin boards, notices, text messages and the newsletters that are emailed to your home. Important information is shared with you on a regular basis, but you must make the effort to read it. (Check your child's backpack and lunch box daily)
- Give your child time to adjust to preschool before leaving him or her here. Parents can help set a positive tone for the rest of the day by taking a few minutes in the morning to greet the teachers, wash hands with your child and help your child get involved in an activity.
- Value staff members and show them common courtesy. Teachers are more than just babysitters. We employ teachers who have a degree in education or a related field and a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education in early childhood. In addition, Teachers are trained in recognizing and reporting Child Abuse, and trained in First Aid and Pediatric CPR.
- Focus on your child when you pick him or her up. Take time to greet staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave.
- Pay your tuition or child care fees on time. We are providing a valuable service and deserve prompt payment. Your teachers deserve a salary much higher than what can be paid from parent tuition. Don't put the director in the position of begging you for payment or terminating your services due to non-payment.
- Be respectful and support school policies. If we ask that you don't bring in toys, please don't allow your child to do this. It is impossible to enforce all policies at all times, but know that disregard for a policy causes a problem.
- Make sure your children follow school rules. Do not allow them to run away from you, leave the building without you or climb on furniture, etc. Your child's safety and well-being is our primary concern.
- Make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing and shoes. Children will get messy playing on the playground or painting at the easel. It is not realistic to send children in good clothing and expect teachers to keep them clean. Make sure clothing has simple fastenings, snaps and zippers should be in working order. Sneakers or rubber soled shoes are preferred over open toe sandals for safety reasons.
- Keep a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent the spread of infectious illnesses. These rules also keep your child from being infected by others as well. Make sure you have back-up child care when your child is ill.
- Address concerns in a respectful way and to the appropriate person. Seek to resolve your problem with the appropriate staff member.
- Communicate with teachers about what's going on at home.
- Make sure children get a good night's rest so they are ready for a busy day.
- Pick children up before 6:00PM and call if you are held up in traffic or running late.

#### **48. WITHDRAWAL**

Written notice must be turned into the office 30 days before withdrawing.



**PLEASE RETURN A SIGNED COPY OF THIS PAGE TO OECC**

Child Name\_\_\_\_\_

Adult Name\_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Name\_\_\_\_\_

Dear Family,

In keeping with New Jersey's child care licensing requirements, we are obligated to provide you, as the parent of a child enrolled at Ocean Early Childhood Center (OECC), with this informational family handbook. Included is the DYFS Information to Families document which explains your right to visit our school any time, our obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards, and OECC's obligation to report suspected child abuse/neglect to the State's Division of Youth and Family Services.

This handbook also has important policies regarding health, and other pertinent topics.

I also understand that this document can be changed at any time with or without notice by the director or her designee.

I have received, read and understand OECC's Parent Handbook.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_