

JEFFERSON CHILD CARE & EDUCATION CENTER

Parent Handbook



PROVIDING QUALITY CHILD CARE IN THE
COMMUNITY SINCE 1974

Jefferson Child Care & Education Center

P.O. Box 527, Nolan's Point Road

Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849

(973)663-2704

Mission Statement

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

Dear Parents,

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

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

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

We regard parents as the child's first and most important teacher and, therefore, we welcome your input in understanding the unique needs of your child. Please keep us informed about any major changes in your household which may impact on your child's behavior such as: moving, death or illness in the family, a new baby on the way, a separation or divorce. Extra love and attention may often help.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the Child Care Office at 973-663-2704. The Child Care Office is located at our Nolan's Point Road Preschool, and you are welcome to stop in at any time. We are looking forward to sharing our programs with you and your family. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christine A. Murray
Executive Director

JEFFERSON CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION CENTER PROGRAMS

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

Fax: (973)663-9447

E-Mail: JCCEC@optonline.net

Web Site: jeffersonchildcare. Org

Hours of operation: 7:am – 6:pm

FEE POLICIES

Contracted Weekly Fee

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

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

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

Payment Schedule

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

Form of Payment

Fee payment will be accepted in cash (**preschool only**), check, money order, visa, master card or debit credit. If the bank returns a check, the Center will charge a processing fee of \$20.00. If the bank returns checks more than twice, we reserve the right to require cash or money orders for future payments.

Check Policy

By using a check for payment, you agree to the following terms: In the event your check is dishonored or returned for any reason, you authorize us to electronically (or by paper draft) re-present the check to your bank account for collection of the amount of the check, plus any applicable fees as permitted by state law.

Late Payment

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

Reduced Tuition Rates

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

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

Subsidies are determined by family size and income.

Arrivals and Departures

Parents must sign their children in when dropping children at the Center, and sign them out when leaving. This is very important for a fire drill or in an emergency. The sign in/sign out sheets are used as a double check on the whereabouts of the children.

Absences

In the event your child will not be attending JCCEC, the parent or guardian should call the office before 9am.

Reporting of Injuries

The Bureau of Licensing requires all licensed Child Care Centers, including Jefferson Child Care & Education Center, to report any unexplained cuts, bruises, marks, or bodily injury on any child enrolled in the Center to the Division of Youth and Family Services. **PLEASE** report any injury to your child's teacher. The teacher will report any injury occurring at the Center to parents. We work together, at Jefferson Child Care and Education Center, to make this a safe environment for our children.

Policy on the release of children

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
3. If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the Division's 24 -hour Child Abuse Hotline (188-792-8610) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

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

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

EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICY

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

- The Center will close when the Jefferson Township Public Schools close for weather. All closings will be announced by 6:30 a.m. on the Center's website, Jeffersonchildcare.org.
- When the Jefferson Township Public Schools announce a delayed opening due to weather, all Jefferson Child Care programs will open at 9:a.m.
- When the Jefferson Township Public Schools announce a delayed opening, but then change to closing, all Jefferson Child Care programs will be closed.
- If the Jefferson Township Public Schools close early after initial opening at the regular time, all Jefferson Child Care programs will also close early.
- The Jefferson Child Care and Education Center's programs may close early after the public school's regular hours. In either event, parents will be contacted at their emergency number.

MEALS

Preschool

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

Jefferson Child Care and Education participates in the (CCAFP) Child Care and Adult Food Program.

Nutritious meals and snacks are provided at no additional cost to the families.

Menus are prepared and posted on the parent bulletin board (copies available upon request). Menus are kept on file for review by the Childcare Food Program Specialist. It is the policy of Jefferson Child Care & Education Center not to serve hot dogs, popcorn, whole grapes, raw peas, pretzels, spoonfuls of peanut butter, or chunks of raw carrots or meats larger than can be swallowed whole. Food will be cut into pieces no larger than ¼" for infants and ½" for toddlers & 2"s according to each child's swallowing and chewing capability. Meals and snacks are served at regularly established times as noted on classroom schedules.

School-Age / Camp Child Care

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

Food Allergies

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

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

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

It is the policy of the Jefferson Child Care and Education Center to provide outdoor play to all children each day. During inclement weather, (example: below 0 degree temperature, rain, sleet or hail), we will keep the children indoors. Playground conditions may also prevent outdoor play.

CLOTHING POLICY

Preschool

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

Summer Camp

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

Before & After Kindergarten

An extra pair of clothing must be provided, please label them with your child's name.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Preschool

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

PRESCHOOL NAP POLICY

Children in the Preschool Program take naps daily approximately from 12:30 PM to 3 PM. We provide a cot and sheet for each child. The sheets are laundered weekly. Parents need to supply a small blanket. Please remember to take it home to be washed once a week.

Children are welcome to have security objects such as a stuffed animal at naptime if they are important to your child. At all other times of the day, security objects are kept in the child's cubby.

We recognize that older preschool children sometimes do not need to sleep for the entire two hours. However, they really need some rest time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. This quiet time enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier child at home with you at the end of the day. If a child awakens early and is ready to get up, he is permitted to do so.

POLICY ON TOYS AND GAMES

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

Policies on Administering Medicine / Health Care Procedure

Medication and health care procedures shall be administered only after receipt of written approval from the child's parent(s).

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall:

Designate those staff members who are authorized to administer medication or health care procedures to or to supervise self-administration of medication or health care procedures by, those children whose parents authorize it.

Ensure that each staff member designated to administer medication and health care procedures is informed of each child's medication and health care needs.

- All medication and health care equipment shall be kept either in a locked cabinet or in an area that is inaccessible to the children.
- All medication shall be kept in its original container
- Medication shall be refrigerated if so indicated on the label
- Unused or expired medication and health care equipment shall be returned to the child's parent or disposed of safely in a child-resistant waste receptacle when no longer being administered

All prescription medication for a child shall be:

- Prescribed in the name of and specifically for the child
- Stored in its prescription container, which has been labeled with the child's name, the name and expiration date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated and directions for its administration.

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall limit the dispensing of non-prescription over-the-counter medication to the following types of medicines, which shall be dispensed in accordance with the recommended dosage, age and/or weight of the child, as indicated on the label

- Antihistamines
- Cough suppressants
- Decongestants
- Non-aspirin fever reducers, pain relievers
- Topical preparations, such as sunscreen and diaper rash preparations

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center may permit the dispensing of non-prescription medication other than those listed above or according to instructions other than those indicated on the label, if the child's health care provider authorizes it in writing.

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall maintain on file a record of the following:

The child's name and parental authorization for the center to administer medication or health care procedures.

- The name of the medication or health care procedure
- The condition for which the medication or health care procedure is being used
- The instructions for administration, including the dosage and frequency
- The date and time medication or a health care procedure was administered to a child and the name or initials of the staff member who administered it
- Any adverse effect the medication can have or has had on the child

If a child has a chronic health condition requiring the administration of prescription or non-prescription medication or health care procedures on a long-term basis, Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall obtain from the child's parent a written statement from a health care provider indicating:

- The name of the child
- The name of the medication or procedure
- The condition or indications for administration of the medication or procedure
- The instructions for administration of the medication or procedure
- The name and telephone number of the health care provider

Before administering a health care procedure associated with a child's health condition, such as the use of a blood glucose monitor, nebulizer or epinephrine pen, Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall ensure that all staff members who administer the procedure are taught to do so by the child's parent or another appropriately trained person.

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center shall inform the child's parent immediately if a child exhibits any adverse effect of a medication or health care procedure.

POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Table of Excludable Communicable Diseases

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend the center. If such symptoms occur at the center, the child will be removed from the group, and you will be called to take him/her home. The child will remain in the office supervised by the administrative staff on a clean cot if needed until he/she is picked up by the parent or guardian.

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

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

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

Respiratory Illnesses

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

Gastrointestinal Illnesses

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

Contact Illnesses

- Impetigo
- Lice
- Scabies

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

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

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

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

Time Out

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

EXPULSION POLICY

Unfortunately there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from enforced. The following are reasons we may have to terminate or suspend a child from this center:

Immediate Causes for Expulsion

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Physical or verbal abuse to staff
- Other (explain)

Child's Actions for Expulsion

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.
- Other (explain)

Proactive Actions That Will Be Taken In Order To Prevent Expulsion

- Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate of activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- A brief time-out will be given so child can regain control.
- Child may lose certain privileges (Explain).
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The Director / Program Coordinator, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parent will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendations of evaluation by professional consultation on premises.
- Recommendation of evaluation by local school district child study team.

Schedule of Expulsion

- If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center.
- The Parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the center.
- The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows the parent an adequate amount of time to seek alternate child care (approximately one to two weeks notice depending on risk to other children's welfare or safety).
- Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result on permanent expulsion from the center.

A child Will Not Be Expelled

- If a child's parent(s):
 - Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements (1-800-667-9845)
 - Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center. (1800-877-NJ- ABUSE) (1-800-652-2873)
 - Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
- Without giving the parent an adequate amount of time to make other child care arrangements.

Jefferson Child Care and Education Center Information to Parents

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Human Services (DHS). In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Human Services (DHS). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers And make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may secure a copy of the Manual of Requirements by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: State of New Jersey, Department of Human Services, Licensing Publication fees, PO Box 34399, Newark New Jersey 07189-4399.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing standards, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll-free at 1-877-667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable disease. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review.

Our center must cooperate with all DHS inspections/investigations. DHS staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the Office for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the Center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to periodically review the Department of Law and Public Safety (DLPS), Division of Consumer Affairs (DCA), unsafe children's products list, make the list accessible to staff and parents, and ensure that items on the list are not at the center. The list is available at www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/recall/recalls.htm. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the DLPS, DCA, toll-free at 1(800)242-5846.

Our center is required to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101336 (42U.S.C, 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not compliance with these laws may contact the Division of Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by an adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry and Child Abuse Hotline, toll-free at 1-(877) NJ Abuse (652-2873). Such reports may be made anonymously.

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