

Gloucester Township Recreation Department Preschool



Parent Handbook

Recreation Center
80 Broadacres Dr.
Clementon, NJ 08021
856-435-5734

Point Ariel Park
2900 Erial-NewBrooklyn Rd.
Sicklerville, NJ 08081
856-782-8028

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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 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 may 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 (DCF). 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 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 premise a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child care Centers and make it available to interested parent 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: NJ Department of Children and Families, 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 for 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 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 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 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 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 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 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, or may contact the US 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 product 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 <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/prerel/prerel.html>. 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 1 (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.nj.gov/dcf and select Publications.

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 parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE 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.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears 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 center shall ensure that:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
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 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE to seek assistance in caring for the child.

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

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.

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 (playtime, etc).
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, 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.
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 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 2 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
Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center. (1800-877-NJ- ABUSE)
Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures.
Without giving the parent an adequate amount of time to make other child care arrangements.

Policy on the Management of Communicable Diseases

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend the center. If such symptoms occur at the center, the child will be removed from the group, and parents will be called to take the child home.

Severe pain or discomfort
Acute diarrhea
Episodes of acute vomiting
Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
Lethargy
Severe coughing
Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
Red eyes with discharge
Infected, untreated skin patches
Difficult or rapid breathing
Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
Mouth sores with drooling
Stiff neck

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the center unless contraindicated by local health department or Department of Health.

EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease **may not** return to the center without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others. These diseases include respiratory, gastrointestinal, and contact illnesses such as Impetigo, Lice, Scabies and Shingles.

Note: If a child has chicken pox, a health care provider'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 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.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTING GUIDELINES

Some excludable communicable diseases must be reported to the health department by the center. The Department of Health's [Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work-Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide](#), a complete list of reportable excludable communicable diseases, can be found at http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf.

Medication Administration Rules

We will only administer medications when accompanied by permission to administer medication from your child's doctor. Prescriptions must be clearly labeled as follows:

- Be in the original container bearing the original pharmacy label
- Prescription name & number
- Patient's name
- Name of medication
- Expiration date
- Physician's name
- Directions for dosage
- Date the prescription was brought to provider

Gloucester Township Recreation Department Preschool

The Gloucester Twp. Recreation Dept. Preschool has been operating for over 25 years! Our goal is to provide Gloucester Twp. and the surrounding communities with an affordable program to help preschoolers with socialization skills, beginning their independence and helping them prepare for their grade school years. We have one of the highest teacher retention in the state! Our open door policy allows you to come and observe your child anytime!

Our Philosophy

We hope to instill in our children the following:

- Social Interaction
- Physical development
- Intellectual and creative stimulation
- Audio and verbal communication skills through the use of:
 - Letter and number recognition
 - Shape and color awareness
 - Health, nutrition and safety guidelines
 - Organized play

Our Daily Schedule

Our classroom schedules support the overall development of preschool-aged children by providing a balanced program for social interaction. Each child has the opportunity to explore, learn and grow through a variety of experiences throughout the day. A consistent daily routine of events provides structure and comfort to our learners. Our daily schedule includes:

- Arrival, greet children
- Readiness activities with individual teacher at tables
- Calendar Time
 - Pledge of Allegiance, calendar (month, date, year), weather
- Exercise (music and movement in large group)
- Learning time
 - Activities such as colors, shapes, ABC, and number recognition
 - Teacher demonstrates lesson of the day
- Lesson activity with individual teacher at table
- Bathroom break (will take children whenever asked)
- Snack time (snack and drink provided by parents)
- Storytime, songs and fingerplays
- Free play and centers
 - puzzles, lacing, blocks, games, imaginative play areas
- Dismissal

Our Philosophy on Discipline

Positive discipline will be used to intervene when necessary. Our staff will try to re-direct the child to a new activity to change the focus of the child's behavior, provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation, and provide alternative activities and acceptable ways of releasing feelings. At times, the staff may use "time-out" by removing the child from the situation for a few moments so that the child can gain self-control. We will respond to and reinforce positive behavior by acknowledging and praising it, providing reinforcement through rewards, and using encouragement and love.

For serious misbehavior, the above policy will still be observed, but parents will also be notified of the child's behavior. If unacceptable behavior continues, a conference will be set up with the director and the teacher. It is our aim to provide helpful guidelines for the parent and try to work together to eliminate the problem. However, if we feel that after a set time no progress is being made and the child is still disrupting the class, it will be necessary to terminate your child from the school.

Evacuation, Lockdown, and Fire Procedures

As per the New Jersey State regulations, the Gloucester Township Recreation Department is required to conduct monthly fire drills. It is also mandatory to have evacuation and lockdown procedures in place. We have worked closely with the Gloucester Township Police Department to develop our plan of action in case of an emergency. All staff is familiar with our procedures to be sure we maintain a safe environment during emergencies.

Evacuation: In the event that we must evacuate our buildings, we have locations designated as evacuation sites. For the Recreation Center, Cherrywood Park is the location all children would be evacuated to. For Point Ariel Park, the lower field in the park is the evacuation site. If we need to be in a sheltered area, the Recreation Center will evacuate to Cherrywood Academy; Point Ariel Park will evacuate to Malvern School. The students would remain in the care of the preschool staff until children are released to a parent or authorized adult.

Lockdown: In the event of a lockdown situation, the following procedures are implemented for both schools: Any open doors will be locked, blinds will be closed, all children and staff will be moved to a secure area within the buildings with no outside windows. A lockdown would continue until staff receives an "all clear" from the Gloucester Township Police Department. No one will be permitted to enter the building during a lockdown.

Fire: In the event of a fire, children are evacuated to the parking lot. The students would remain in the care of the preschool staff until children are released to a parent or authorized adult.

Parents can help keep their children safe while in our care by making sure the preschool always has the following current information:

1. Home Address and home telephone number
2. Parent's business or cell phone numbers
3. Pertinent information on allergies and health conditions
4. Name and telephone number of 2 other persons authorized to pick up child

Parent Participation

Parents of enrolled children are encouraged to visit our school at any time. These visits do not require prior approval unless you would like to do an activity in the class, in which case we just ask that you speak with your child's teacher ahead of time. We encourage all parents to attend the field trips that we schedule.

Social Media Policy

This social media policy applies to parents, members of Gloucester Township Recreation Department Preschool Program staff and volunteers at Gloucester Township Recreation Department Preschool at the Rec Center and Point Ariel Park.

This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. YouTube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter)

As part of our duty to safeguard children it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families. We therefore require that:

- No photographs taken within the preschool setting or at preschool special events and outings with the children are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child. Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children. (This excludes those photographs taken by staff if parental permission is given).
- Staff are advised to manage their personal security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with.
- In the event that staff name the preschool or workplace in any social media they do so in a way that is not detrimental to the preschool or its families.
- Staff observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work.
- Staff should not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view.
- Staff and parents should report any concerns or breaches to the Recreation Supervisor. Any member of staff, parent or volunteer found to be posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, bring the preschool into disrepute or that are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the preschool or other employees, or posting/publishing photographs of the setting, children or staff may face disciplinary action in line with Gloucester Township disciplinary procedures. Any comment deemed to be inappropriate is to be reported to the Recreation Supervisor and any action taken will be at their discretion or the Human Resources Dept.

General guidelines for using social media:

- Personal security settings should be managed to ensure that information is only available to people you choose to share information with.
- Remember that no information sent over the web is totally secure and as such if you do not wish the information to be made public refrain from sending it through social media.
- Maintain professionalism, honesty and respect.
- Apply a "good judgement" test for every social media post you make.

Note: The Gloucester Township Recreation Center does use social media and will post updates to Facebook and Twitter about program information and school cancelations.

Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Our program hours are as follows:
3 Year-Olds attend Monday & Wednesday
Am:9-11am or PM: 12-2pm
4 Year-Olds attend Tuesday & Thursday
Am: 9-11am or PM: 12-2pm

Classroom doors will open at 9am for the AM session and 12 noon for the PM session. It is required that children be picked up at 11am for the AM Session and 2pm for the PM session. Always notify the center should there be someone other than you picking up for the day. Anyone taking your place for pick up should be listed on the Registration Form under "Emergency Contacts". If they are not listed, a written authorization from you is required. We will not release your child without your approval. Anyone who our staff is not familiar with will need

to provide photo id prior to taking a child out of our center. If for some unforeseen reason, a parent/guardian is delayed and unable to make the dismissal time, please call the Recreation Center or Point Ariel Park, giving the reason for delay and approximate time of arrival.

Requirements for Preschool

We require all children to be fully potty trained. We group children by the year they will enter Kindergarten. To be eligible for our 4 Year-Old Program, your child must turn 4 by September 30th of the school year. Children placed in our 4 Year-Old Program must be eligible to attend Kindergarten the following school year. 3 Year-Olds can begin our program during each session. For the Fall session, your child must be 3 by September 30th. For the Winter session, your child must be 3 by January 1st. For the Spring session, your child must be 3 by March 1st.

Before your child can begin our program, all required paperwork, fees and supplies must be received. All information will be kept confidential and is for our records only. Below is a checklist of what you will need:

- Registration Form
- Universal Child Health Record Form (Filled out by Dr.)
- Immunization Record
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- All children under age 5 are required to have a Flu Shot annually between the months of Sept. – Dec.
 - **If a child has not received the Flu shot before the winter session, the child will be excluded from the program until the end of flu season or once the child receives the immunization. No refunds will be given.**
- Parent Verification Signature

Helpful Reminders for Preschool

- Please pack a small snack and drink for your child daily.
 - We are peanut-free (No Peanut snacks).
- Label all of your child's belongings.
- Dress your child for play.
- Send your child with a small backpack or bag for papers and homework.
- Please review all paperwork and monthly calendars for daily events and school closings.
- Help your child with their homework and return to your child's teacher.

Payment Schedule

Our Preschool year is cumulative (runs Sept. through May) however, we do break our payments into 3 sessions to help ease the financial burden. Payments can be made at anytime throughout the school year and can be paid in full at anytime. Our sessions run as follows:

- **Fall** September through Mid-December
- **Winter** January through Mid-March
- **Spring** Mid-March through the end of May