**WOODLAND HOLLOW**

**LEARNING CENTER**



**Parent Handbook**

**This booklet contains important information to which you will want to refer as you prepare your child for school and throughout the school year as questions arise. Please keep it at hand for convenient reference. If you have a question not covered by the material in this booklet, please feel free to call us at (845) 986-9959.**

**Philosophy:**

Our mission is to provide a safe and enjoyable first school experience for your child. We will try to help each child learn to get along with others, solve problems, share with others, assume responsibility, and play and learn within a group. We hope that we will prove to be a happy supplement to your home and a real growing experience for your child.

**Goals:**

Our goal is to enhance each child's total growth by...

Developing the child's sense of self-worth

Providing a wide-range of experiences to foster learning, creativity, and problem-solving in all areas - language, mathematics, science, music, art, physical education, health, and safety

Encouraging the child's natural curiosity about the world around him/her

Developing emotional growth of the child and consideration of others

Developing a sense of trust in peers and adults

Encouraging parents to participate as much as possible

Providing a well-qualified and caring staff

**Absences:**

If your child is going to be late (by more than 15 minutes) or absent, please try to call the school prior to the start of class so that we do not wait unnecessarily before beginning class. Absences due to illness or vacation do not affect tuition charges. Monthly tuition due remains the same no matter how many classes your child may have missed unless other arrangements are made with the Director.

**Arrival and Dismissal:**

Please wait for the classroom door to be opened both at arrival and dismissal. If you are early, wait in the entrance area. At arrival, please bring your child all the way into the classroom and stay until one of the teachers has acknowledged your child's presence. At pick-up, come into the classroom to get your child. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please wait until the other children in the class have been dismissed.

**\*Please follow COVID drop off/pick up procedures.**

**Back-To-School Night:**

"Meet the Teachers Night" will be held in the fall (probably the first week of Oct.). Further information will follow.

**Birthdays:**

Birthdays are very special events for our children. Your child will be scheduled for snack on or near his/her birthday. Birthday snacks may be slightly sweeter than regular snacks. **Please do not send in anything with frosting on it.** Some birthday snack ideas: muffins, donuts, pound cake with fruit, cookies. Birthday party invitations may be handed out at school only if the entire class is included. Please do not ask the teachers to pass out invitations to only some of the students - this is difficult for both the children who are left out and their parents.

**Book Club:**

At regular intervals during the year, Book Club order forms will be sent home with all students. There is no obligation to purchase any books. If you do wish to purchase books, you can place your order online (see the book order for instructions). Remember to put your child's full name on the order! Please note the date on the order form by which it must be turned in.

**Child Care Tax Deduction:**

Depending on the advice of your income tax preparer, all or part of your childcare expense may be tax deductible. If you need a year-end statement for tax purposes, please let us know.

**Changes in your Child's Life:**

If any of the information which you have provided us, such as address, phone number, place of business, work number, marital status of parents, or events regarding siblings, grandparents, pets, etc. should change during the school year, please inform us immediately. It is necessary for your child's safety that we be able to contact you quickly, and it is very helpful to us in serving your child's emotional needs if we are aware of any changes at home with which he or she is dealing - sometimes we all need an extra hug.

**Clothing:**

When selecting clothing for your child to wear at school, please think of your child's comfort. Children learn by doing. Consequently, there will be messy art materials, as well as messy activities. We spend a lot of time on the floor and go outside when the weather allows. We strongly recommend clothing that is simple, washable, and warm, and clothing that your children can handle by themselves if they need to use the bathroom. Shoes should be sturdy and comfortable. Please do not send your child to school wearing flipflops or crocks.

While we try to be careful, messy spills and bathroom accidents do occur from time to time. For this reason, we ask that you send in a complete change of clothing (including socks) for your child which will be left at school. Please put it in a zip-lock bag labeled with the child's name.

All clothing, including jackets, hats, gloves, boots, sweaters, etc. **MUST** be labeled with your child's name.

If you have clothing you no longer have use for that might fit some of our preschoolers, please send it in for our "emergency clothing" collection. We can use shirts, pants (preferably ones that fit a range of sizes - sweatpants or stretchy knits), underpants, socks, jackets, and sweaters.

**Communication:**

You will receive a monthly calendar and newsletter reviewing the activities and events taking place in your child's class. Please refer to it often throughout the month. Ask us about any matter concerning your child. Many problems are easily solved if we work together early.

**Emergency Phone Numbers:**

Please be sure to provide us with the following emergency contact phone numbers with the school: all business or cell phones, designated emergency contact, and your child's physician. If any of this information changes during the school year, it is important that you update the numbers in our records.

**Fund-raisers:**

In an effort to keep tuition costs reasonable while offering special programs for our students, and also to make needed improvements to our school, we will be having a few fund-raisers during the year. Participation in fund-raisers is voluntary. We will have two fund-raisers this fall (with items to be delivered in time for holiday gift-giving).

**Health Standards and Immunizations:**

To ensure the health of the children, we ask your cooperation in making sure your child is well when he or she comes to school. The following are indications that your child should remain at home: vomiting or nausea, severe cold symptoms including earache, sore throat, cough, nasal secretions that are not clear, fever, or pain. Please notify your child's teacher or the Director if your child contracts a communicable disease such as strep throat so that the teachers can be alert to similar symptoms in other children.

New York State law requires that each child be vaccinated against diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus (DPT), polio, measles, mumps, rubella, (MMR), hepatitis B, meningitis (Hib), and pneumonia (PCV) before entering nursery school. In addition, New York state law requires that all children entering childcare programs in New York show proof that they have been tested for lead.

**Inclement weather:**

Woodland Hollow will follow the lead of the Warwick public schools in snow closings. You can check the Warwick schools’ website - www.warwickvalleyschools.com to find out about weather-related closings. It has been our experience that you should check this website even when the weather doesn’t look so bad – the decision to close school doesn’t always follow any logic that we can see!

If there is a "School Closed" announcement for Warwick Valley Schools, it means that Woodland Hollow is closed also.

In case of a 2-hour delayed opening, Woodland Hollow will open at the regular time.

In the rare case of a 3-hour delayed opening, the morning classes only will be cancelled.

If you “like” us on Facebook, you will also find school closing information posted on our Facebook page whenever there is a weather-related closing.

**Items from home:**

Toys and other items from home are not allowed to be brought to school unless discussed with the teacher ahead of class.

**Parent Teacher Conferences:**

Conferences and Evaluations - Individual parent conferences will be scheduled in the spring.

Issues pertaining to skills, achievement, social, and emotional growth will be discussed. During the school year you are welcome to meet with us at any time. Please don't wait for your conference to review pressing matters. A written Parent Report will be given to you at your conference.

**Refund Policy**

Your one-month tuition deposit that was paid prior to enrollment is held in reserve for June’s tuition and is non-refundable.

**School Pictures:**

Individual and class pictures will be taken during the year by a local photographer. There is no obligation to purchase any of the picture

**Snacks:**

WHLC is a **nut free school**. Peanut butter and snacks containing nuts are not permitted. Refer to your monthly calendar to see when it is your turn for snack. If you are unable to provide snack on your assigned day, please let us know as soon as possible and we will try to switch your day.

Please send in enough snack for all the students in your child’s class. If there are any allergies in the class, please bring in approved snacks from the class snack list.

**Snacks should be nutritious, and water is the only approved drink.**

Your child will be scheduled for snack on or near his/her birthday. Birthday snacks may be slightly sweeter than regular snacks. **Please do not send in anything with frosting on it.** Some birthday snack ideas: muffins, donuts, pound cake with fruit, cookies.

If your child is on a special diet or has allergies to certain foods, please let us know in writing so that we can plan for your child's needs.

**Trips:**

Local field trips are periodically taken by our classes. You will be notified about dates. Signed permission slips are required for all trips.

PLEASE NOTE: Since all children are required by law to use a car seat or booster seat, they will need to bring one on all field trips if they will be transported by another parent.

**Tuition:**

Tuition is due the first day of each month that your child attends school. There are two ways that tuition may be paid:

1. Cash payments: Cash should be put in the manila envelope that your calendar comes to you in and placed in the basket just inside the classroom door.

1. EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer): We can set up a pre-approved recurring debit from your checking account, or an automatic monthly charge to your credit card. You should still return the manila envelope that your calendar comes to you in (empty) so that we have it for the following month’s calendar. We will not accept check payments unless it is through EFT. EFT payments will be processed on the 2nd of each month.

**A $10 late charge will be applied to fees received after the 15th of the month. A $20 late fee will be applied after the 22nd of the month, and a $30 late fee will be applied after the 29th of the month. Checks returned for insufficient funds or closed accounts are subject to a $20 charge for processing.**

**Making Separation Easier:**

There is a definite relationship between a parent's feelings about leaving their child and the child's feelings about being left. If the parent is fearful and nervous and expects difficulty, the child will surely sense it, no matter what jolly and cheerful words the parent uses. If the parent feels quite confident that the child will have fun playing with the other children, that the teachers will take good care of him or her, and that he or she is ready to grow a little independent, then in almost every case the child will have little trouble separating.

It is best to explain to your child just what will happen, "Today I will take you to school and kiss you good-bye inside your classroom. I will come back and pick you up later in the day when your class is over."

The first moments of separation are always the hardest. In many cases the tears and emotional pleas at leaving time are used to get at you and test your confidence. But if you're already out the door, most children are realistic enough to know that there is nothing much they can do, and that you must have confidence in your decision to have brought them to school. Soon the child will be having so much fun that he will be less and less reluctant to have you leave.

If you are feeling badly to have left a crying child, please feel free to call us during class as often as is necessary for your peace of mind. We are happy to check on your child.

**Delayed Reactions:**

It sometimes happens that a child who has adjusted to separation very quickly and cheerfully has a delayed reaction a few weeks or months later. This is always puzzling and worrisome for the child's parent. Why does your child suddenly cling to you at the door and not want you to leave? Worse still, why does he say "I don't want to go to school," and refuse to get dressed in the morning when he seemed so enthusiastic at the start! Usually the answer is not that something is going wrong at school. Often the child is just testing, to see what Mommy or Daddy will say and do, and to find out just exactly how you feel about his going to school. Also, some of the newness and excitement has worn off by now, and the child suddenly realizes that he has given something up in exchange for his good time at school: time with Mommy or Daddy. He may be feeling a momentary pang of regret for his not-too remote babyhood.

What is the best way to handle this situation? Accept his reluctance with sympathy, but maintain a feeling of certainty about his attendance. You might tell him about some occasion when you didn't want to do something and just felt like staying home. You can tell him that joining a nursery school means doing everything, and that the other children and his teachers miss him when he is not there; that he is really important to the group. If you continue to feel confident about school and its value to your child, you will find it easier to keep an air of inevitability about his attendance. Many children need a face-saving "out" when they have said they won't do something before they will reverse their position. Almost any change in routine might serve as an "out". Have Daddy take him instead of Mommy. Or for a while, allow him to take his favorite toy.

If he clings to you at the door, crying that he wants you to stay with him, remember that growing up is not an uninterrupted process, and you can be sure that your child's anxiety about leaving you is temporary. Tell your child that school is for children, not for mommies or daddies, and he may even feel sorry for you. In all cases of delayed reaction to school, it is a good idea to try to spend some extra time alone with the child at other times, especially if there is a new baby at home, or older children taking up much of your attention.

**NOTHIN'**

When children come home At the end of the day

The question they're asked

As they scurry to play, is

"Tell me, what did you do in school today?"

And the answer they give

Makes you sigh with dismay

"Nothin', I did nothin' today."

Perhaps nothin' means that I made some neat pictures Or counted to ten with one of my teachers.

Maybe I picked a flower while taking a walk Or heard a story about a mouse that could talk.

Maybe I made a snack to eat today Or went outside on the swings to play.

Maybe today was the very first time That my scissors followed a very straight line.

Maybe I led a song from beginning to end, Or played with a special, brand-new friend.

When you're very young and your heart has wings, **Nothin'** can mean so many things!

*Author unknown*