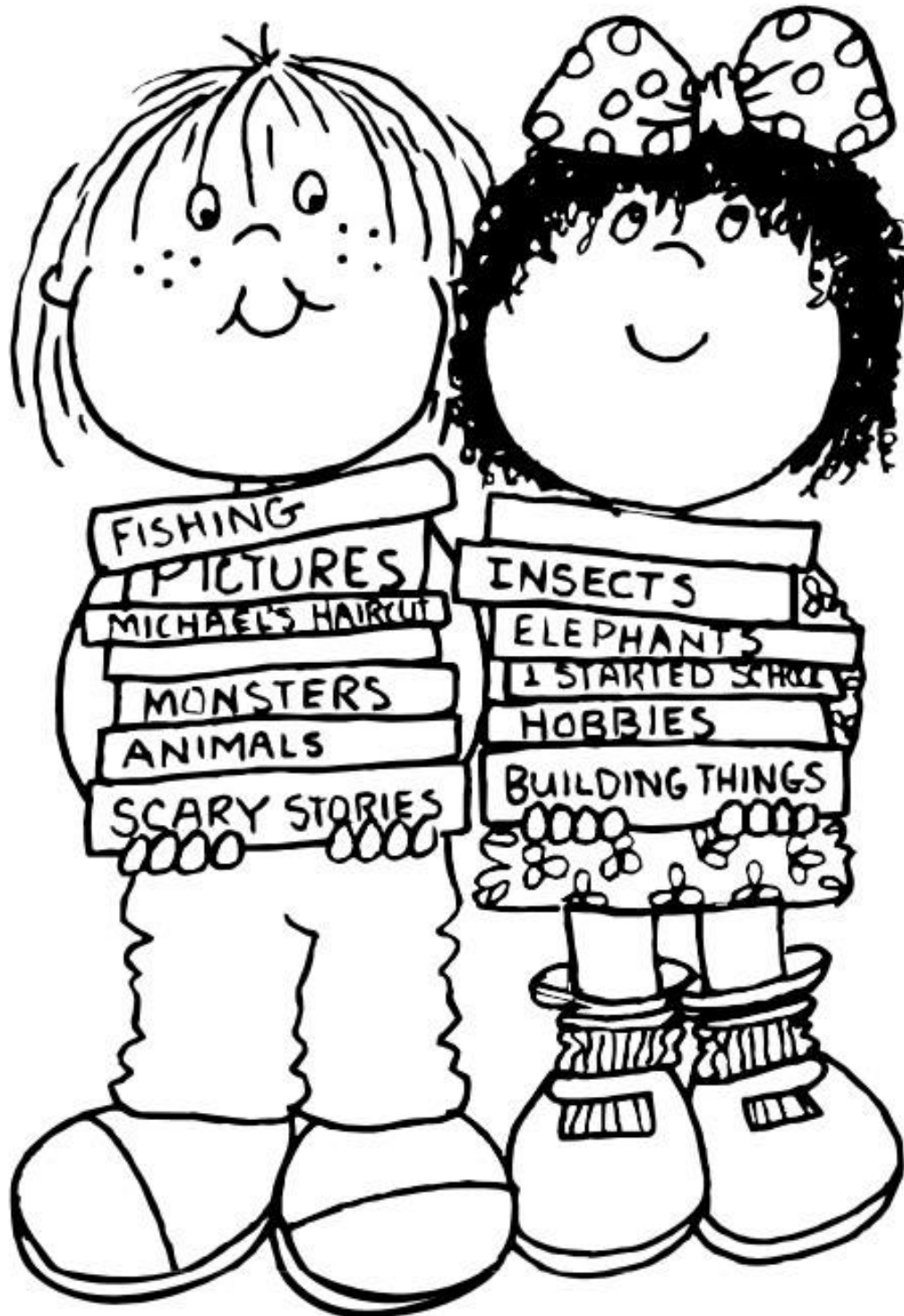




Preschool & Kindergarten
Handbook



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CHILD STEPS PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

Welcome to Child Steps Preschool and Kindergarten! Our goal is to provide a safe, secure, caring and nurturing environment for your child that fosters physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Your child's teachers are a very important part of our program. We hope to develop a partnership between home and school which will benefit the development and growth of your child. We ask that you read this handbook and feel free to ask any questions.

PHILOSOPHY

Our development model is based on and incorporates teachings and theories of Piaget, Montessori, and Erikson. Learning through a multitude of activities such as play, art, drama and music are the cornerstones of the curriculum. Children are respected as individuals in a child-oriented program. We strive to build self-esteem, confidence and independence in each child. We recognize children develop at different rates and have different interests and abilities. By having small group sizes, we can meet the individual needs of our students. Learning and play are not limited to the classroom. We also have a large outdoor play yard and an indoor recreation room where there are opportunities to develop gross motor skills via group games, climbing toys, riding toys, playing with balls, etc.

HOURS

Our site is operational from 7:30 am until 5:30 pm on school days.

Before Care: 7:30 am – 9 am

Regular School Day: 9 am – 2:45 pm

Morning Session: 9 am – 11:45 am

After Care: 2:45 pm – 5:30 pm

TUITION

Tuition is due the first of the month. We DO NOT send out statements or reminder notices. It is the responsibility of each family to track this. We will fill out and sign any company paperwork needed for a parent's workplace pertaining to cost of child care. Checks can be placed in the school mailbox located INSIDE the vestibule at the bottom of the stairs. They can also be mailed to: **Debbie Tarkin, 34 Waterford Way, Wallingford, Pa 19086**. There is a \$25.00 fee for any returned checks. If payment is not made within 10 days of the due date, a \$5.00 per diem fee will be charged. If there are extenuating circumstances where payment cannot be paid on time, please see the director for a workable payment schedule. If an account is past due with no payment or consultation with the director after a month, the parent may be asked to remove the child/children from school. Tuition is based on a 10-month commitment and includes all holidays, sick days and days missed due to vacations and/or inclement weather. There are no make-up days.

DISENROLLMENT

A child may be asked to leave if tuition is not fully paid within an appropriate time. If a child displays aggressive behavior on a regular basis and no intervention is made, a child could possibly be asked to leave. It is our responsibility to provide a safe school environment for all children.

EXTENDED HOURS POLICY

The extended school day begins at 7:30am and is over at 5:30pm. Morning care is from 7:30am-9am and afternoon care is from 2:45 pm-5:30 pm. The cost for our **AM Club** (7:30 am-9 am) is \$7.50 and our **PM Club** (2:45 pm-5:30 pm) is \$12.50. If your needs are hourly, the cost is \$5/hour. If you are late picking up your child, you will be charged for an additional hour. If you are running late picking up at 5:30pm, please call the school. A \$10 late fee must be paid to the teacher in charge at the time of pick up. The school closes promptly at 5:30pm and our teachers need to go home to their families, too!

HOLIDAYS/VACATIONS

The school is closed for Thanksgiving Day and the day after, the week of Christmas and New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Easter week and Memorial Day. For Summer Camp, we are closed for one week after the last day of school, July 4th and the last two weeks before Labor Day. The yearly school/summer camp tuition cost includes these holidays off.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather, Child Steps follows the Haverford Township School District's decision on whether to close school, delay opening or dismiss early. We utilize a text alert system as a courtesy to parents. You must sign an authorization form to be included and we will also send out an email informing you of the school's status. If there is a 2-hour delay within the district, Child Steps will open at 9 am instead of 7:30 am (early care is cancelled).

LUNCH BUDDY PROGRAM

If your child only attends our morning session (9am-11:45am) and you would like them to stay for lunch, kindly let his/her teacher know that morning and bring \$5 in cash in labeled envelope with your child's name on it. Pick up time for our Lunch Buddies is 1pm and you must provide your child a lunch and beverage.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School begins at 9:00am **SHARP**. That is when our doors open to welcome students. A teacher will always be at the door to help any child who needs help getting to his/her classroom. Doors lock promptly at 9:15am. If you are arriving later than 9:15am to drop off your child, you must wait until either 9:30am, 9:45am or 10am to enter the building. You will not be allowed to enter

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (cont'd)

in between any of those designated times. If you are arriving after 10am, simply ring the doorbell and after your identity is verified, you will be buzzed in.

Pick up and drop off will take place at our main entrance doors. During regular drop-off and pick up times, a teacher will be at the door. After hours, please ring the school door bell. **PLEASE** obey the moving car line and **DO NOT** leave your car unattended in the line to walk your child into the school building. Please park in the parking lot if you wish to walk your child to their class. Initially, some students may be upset when saying their goodbyes each morning, but parents departing promptly allow the child to calm down and acclimate to the morning routine. If, after a reasonable period of time a child is still upset, the parent will be notified. If someone other than the allowed family member is to pick up a student, the parent must notify the school with a description of that person and a valid ID must be shown. If questionable, no child will be released to the "unknown" person.

Should you need to pick up your child earlier than his/her scheduled time, you must sign them out on the sign out sheet located at the top of the stairway.

ESSENTIALS

ALL items, including school bags, lunch bags, clothing and jackets **MUST BE LABELED** with your child's **FIRST AND LAST** name. Lots of children have the same bags and it does get confusing.

Please make sure you provide an extra pair of clothes (underwear, socks, pants and shirts) in a labeled Ziploc bag with your child's first and last name on it. These are to remain at school in the event of an accident, as they do occur.

ABSENTEE POLICY

We appreciate you letting us know if your children will not be in school. Kindly call the school number, 610-789-9970, in the morning to report an absence. There are no make-up days for absences.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is essential in order to work together to meet the needs of each student. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. We value your input.

DISCIPLINE

Sometimes we need help to redirect a student's behavior. In these instances, we will either use conflict resolution, talking to the child and if all else fails, redirect them to the "thinking chair" for quiet reflection.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children should come to school dressed in comfortable clothing and prepared for outdoor play, weather permitting. During colder weather, we ask that they come properly attired to go outside (hat, gloves, boots, heavy coats). Proper play shoes should be worn always. We recommend children avoid wearing flips flops or sandals, as they can easily slip off.

CLOTHING

We ask that each student have an extra set of clothing to be kept in school at all times. Accidents and spills **do** occur. Please put these garments in a labeled plastic baggie. We also ask that ALL articles of clothing be labeled individually. The same is true for reusable water bottles, coats, lunch and school bags.

POTTY TRAINING

We ask that all children ages 3 and up be potty trained (wearing pull-ups does not mean a child is potty trained!). We understand some need more time than others and we will work with you and your child on going to the bathroom during the school day if necessary. If your child is still in diapers, you must bring your own supply of extra diapers AND wipes. We do not stock these and we simply cannot change your child without them.

NAP TIME

We will only have your child participate in nap time if we are told to. We have sleeping cots but you must provide a thin sheet. Sleeping bags, blankets and pillows are not allowed as we do not have the storage space. You are responsible for laundering your child's sheets. If you would like your child to take a nap during the day, you must sign a permission slip before their first day of school.

MEDICATION

If we must administer any medication, we require written permission with the following information: Name of medication, dosage amount, time to be given, date to be given and a parent's signature. The medication must be in the original container with the child's name on it. We will not give any medication if it is not in the original container with the child's name on it. This medication must be given to the teacher and not left in a bookbag/backpack.

ILLNESS

A child must be free of fever for **24 hours without the use of medication** to be allowed to return to school. Please do not administer a fever suppressant and bring your child to school. If your child gets hurt or becomes ill at school, we will notify you as soon as possible and ask that you pick your child up immediately. If your child becomes ill with a contagious disease, we ask that you notify us so that we can alert the other families.

ALLERGIES

We are a nut-free school. Please do not pack food for your children that contains any nut ingredients. If your child suffers from an allergy, please ask us for a form so you can provide detailed information on the allergy, what symptoms your child will display and what we should do in the event your child suffers a reaction.

SUPPLIES

Child Steps provides a very safe and clean environment for your children. We so appreciate donations of disinfecting wipes, hand wipes, hand sanitizers, paper towels, hand soap, tissues and toilet paper.

BIRTHDAYS

We are very happy to celebrate your child's birthday in school. If you have any special plans, please discuss this with the teacher. Cookies, cupcakes and munchkins are a favorable treat but please remember we are a nut-free school so be mindful of ingredients.

EMERGENCIES

Our staff is prepared to deal with a variety of emergency situations. In a severe or threatening emergency, the children in our Havertown location will be escorted to the Church or Church refectory building behind the school building. In the event of an area wide emergency, the students in our Havertown location may be escorted to the Brookline Fire department, or in the case of the Broomall facility, the Presbyterian Home next to the school. If any of these situations occur, you will be alerted as soon as possible.

GENERAL

You must keep to your child's regular schedule and you cannot switch days. If you have agreed upon an arrangement with the school director, there will be no problems. We need to keep within teacher/student ratios and if days are switched, we could have problems in accordance with state laws. If there is a special event happening at school (holiday parties, pancake breakfasts, student shows, etc.) and it falls on a day that is not normally your child's regular day, your child is most welcome to participate in that festivity. We want all children to enjoy all that we offer and to be part of all school activities.

Thank you for sharing your children with us at Child Steps!



Debbie Tarkin
Havertown Director



Linda Scutzas
Broomall Director