

PARENT HANDBOOK

Jerusalem Child Care &
Learning Center
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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide high quality, compassionate and reliable child care and early childhood education service using Christian-based early childhood educational programming that focuses on the individual child.

PURPOSE

Our center was established in October 1969 as a community outreach service for both working and non working parents. The Christian-based program's goal is for children to build a relationship with God, peers and caring adults. The staff serve as positive role models and provide care that is supportive, nurturing and responsive to each child's individual needs.

PROGRAMMING

All staff are first aid and CPR certified and attend annual training sessions. Our dedicated board of directors consists of interested people from Jerusalem Lutheran Church, parents and the community.

The Child Care Board meets the third Tuesday of every month. We respect parents as the primary and most important provider of care and nurturing and we believe parents and staff are partners in your children's care and early education.

Quality is a priority and as participants in the Keystone Stars Program, our staff is constantly offered educational advancement opportunities, annual training and seminars. We are very pleased to have achieved a STAR 3 rating!!

Our center offers a variety of programs to meet parents' needs. A year round Child Care/Preschool/Older Toddler program, Little Critter Preschool, a before and after school program and a Summer school age Enrichment Camp are available to meet your family's needs. We offer full and part time slots and part time slots are limited. When you are contracted for a part time slot, flexibility in changing those days is only done with a change in your work schedule.

OLDER TODDLER PROGRAM

We now offer programming for children who are 2 years old and may or may not be potty trained. Our daily schedule includes an early learning curriculum, daily jobs, daily schedule and various educational activities. Parents are responsible for all diapers, wipes, change of clothes, nap time items and any creams or powder. Daily news sheets will be sent home with communication of information such as diapering/toileting activity, how they and slept and any needed items from home. A monthly calendar is also sent home to keep parents aware of all happenings. All food

is provided by the center. Pacifiers are permitted but are encouraged only at nap time. Our toddlers participate in a weekly chapel service on Tuesday mornings at 10:00am. All are welcome. Television is rarely utilized. A separate monthly calendar of daily age appropriate activities is utilized with the older toddler classroom.

PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

With the program for ages 3-5 yrs. old, your child must be independently using the potty and pull up underwear are not permitted. Parents will receive a monthly calendar and newsletter. This information lets you know all of the weekly themes and upcoming events. This is a year round program and during the school year, we learn the alphabet, numbers, colors, shapes, etc... Through daily interactions with other children we encourage basic socializations skills, manners and readiness skills in preparation for kindergarten. The summer schedule is a bit more relaxed with less structured activities and more outdoor play. When developing our activities and schedule, the PA Dept. of Education's Early Childhood Learning Standards are utilized as our guide. A copy of these standards is available for your viewing. Breakfast, a hot lunch and an afternoon snack is provided daily. The weekly lunch menu is posted outside of the kitchen. No outside food is permitted unless staff is notified of a special treat. Because food allergies are possible, the staff must approve all treats. The children in the pre-school program participate in a daily nap routine to accommodate this nap-time parents will need to purchase a \$13 mat from the center. When your child leaves the program the mat will then be your property. Once a week the children will participate in a Show and Tell time. At this time your child will share 2 items placed in a bag with their name on it. Check with your child's teacher for the classroom schedule of when your child will be participating in show and tell. If your child is not in attendance on show and tell day you may speak with the classroom teacher to make arrangements for another day. You will find a sign up sheet for movie day in the main hallway parent's board. Please check with your child's teacher for movie day and the movie rating. MUST BE RATED G! The preschool children attend chapel weekly on Wednesday at 10:00 am. with Mrs. Cappel. The children learn bible stories, prayers and songs and the parents are welcome to join us!!

LITTLE CRITTER PRESCHOOL

This program is offered for children who turn 3 or 4 years old by September 1. Children must be independently using the potty. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday morning 8:45 - 11:30 am for 3 year olds and on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 4 year olds. If the enrollment allows for it, an afternoon class will be offered for 4 year olds, 11:45-2:15 pm. Socialization and readiness for Kindergarten are the main focus. PA Dept. of Education Early Learning Standards are utilized in creating the daily schedule and curriculum. All day child care is NOT offered with this program. Monthly Sail Away days are offered for the 4 year olds and a bagged lunch must be provided on these days. All children are offered a snack each day and no outside food is permitted.

The Little Critters program runs September through May and follows the Schuylkill Haven School District calendar. Class size is a maximum of 15 students.

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMMING

Before and/or After school care is offered for children in grades Kindergarten through 6th. Breakfast and an afternoon snack is provided daily and no outside food is permitted. Grades Kindergarten through 4th grade are transported by bus and grades 5 and 6 walk to and from the Sch. Haven Middle School. Homework assistance, free play, computer use, outdoor play, weekly movie and arts and crafts are part of the schedule. Delays and early dismissals are covered with before and/or after school care and you may register for before school, after school, or both. All day care is also offered for an additional cost when school is closed and the center is open. A bagged lunch must be provided and if none can be provided, the center will provide one at an additional cost.

Summer Enrichment Camp is offered during the summer for children entering first through 7th grade and full time and part time slots are available. Please arrive before 9:00am. A bagged lunch must be provided daily. Field trips, open swim, swimming lessons outdoor activities, sports camps, cooking activities and much more are offered each summer.

ENROLLMENT

No child will be denied enrollment on the basis of his/her race, sex, color, religion or ethnic background. We do retain the right to deny enrollment if all our enrollment slots for a particular child's age group are filled. We do not discriminate at enrollment on the basis of a child with special needs, However, if after talking with the parents of such a child we realize that we do not have the training, equipment, facility, etc. to meet the child's needs, we will not accept the child. This denial for enrollment is in the best interest of the child, since our goal is to meet the needs of each child. If we are not sure whether the staff can handle a special needs child, we would be willing to try to accommodate their needs as long as a safe and supportive environment can be provided. The parents and staff and outside professionals would then evaluate whether or not the needs of the child are being met.

Upon acceptance into our program parents are required to complete important and necessary paperwork. The state regulations require children who attend child care centers to be given annual physical examinations, including immunization, by a physician and must be completed before enrollment. If an appointment is scheduled beyond starting date, a note on the doctor's letterhead or appointment card must be filed for admittance. You will be required to update the physical yearly for preschool age children, every 2 years for school age children. Emergency contact forms must be completed with all spaces filled included pick up/drop off persons addresses must be completed. We must be notified immediately of any changes to this information. As part of the enrollment process, you will be asked to sign an agreement to pay contract and you will need to update all information every 6 months.

PAYMENTS OF FEES

The cost of individual programs will be discussed during your initial visit. All payments are due on the first day of your child's attendance. We will accept cash or check payable to J.C.C.C. Please submit the exact amount of payment due. Subsidized child care is available for families who qualify through Schuylkill County Child Care Information Services, see community resource list enclosed.

We will take off-site field trips periodically and you are responsible for payment for the trip due the day of departure. Chaperones are welcome on the bus if seats are available otherwise chaperones are always welcome to follow the bus.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Our center is in operation from 6:00 am-5:30 pm. and all children are to be picked up by that time. A late pick up will result in a late fee, and you will be charged \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after 5:30pm.

If the center is closed you are not responsible for that days payment.

If your child is absent for an entire week due to illness, vacation or any other reason, you are responsible for the normal fee for which you are contracted.

CLOSINGS

The center will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. All child care fees will be adjusted for the above closings.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Unless there is severe weather, J.C.C.C. will always remain open. We will close if a statement of roadway emergency is declared. Please listen to T -102 radio, check T102.com or call the center at 385-4244. In the event of a need to evacuate the building, our emergency plan is to proceed to the Schuylkill Haven Senior-Recreation Center on Haven St. in Schuylkill Haven.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Our doors are locked during operational hours. There is a camera and door bell located in the entryway and to enter our building please ring the bell and wait patiently for a response. We ask that all parents be aware of the persons around them and do not allow any person you are unfamiliar with to enter the building with you. To exit the building, push the red button located on the left side of the wall.

When you enter your child's room you must make eye contact with the staff. We are not responsible for your child until you make us aware of his/her presence. Please be sure to communicate any concerns or changes in pick up information with the staff. A staff member will place the information in the communication log. We ask that your child arrives before 9:00 a.m. for the all day sessions. If your child is unable to attend their normal session, please contact the center as soon as possible. When you come to pick up your child at the end of the day, you must make eye contact with staff. Help your child to clean up what he/she is playing with and empty all paperwork from his cubby. If you must speak to a staff member, instruct your child to stay in a supervised room or keep him/her with you. You are responsible for your child when you arrive for pick up.

Please advise all persons picking up and dropping off your child of our procedures. We will not allow any child to leave with someone who is not on the release for pick up list, unless you have otherwise stated. Please advise all persons that will be listed for pickup to be prepared to show some form of personal identification. Please do not

allow your child to run through the building or parking lot since this is a public traffic thruway and is used by our neighbors. You must take your child by the hand, and supervise them while walking through the building and parking lot. If the children are in the play yard when you arrive, you must get out of your car, open the gate, and take your child by the hand. Your child will not be permitted to leave the gated area without you.

At no time can you park your car outside our entrance doors. If you are in a hurry or it's raining or you have a sibling strapped in the car, call the center ahead of time and we will help you to enter the facility without blocking the street.

As part of our operational policy, we will release a child only to a responsible person who is 18 years or older with parental permission.

CHILD CUSTODY

We can not deny a parent custody or visitation of a child unless we have a court order on file that states specific release information.

HEALTH/ILLNESS

An emergency number and person must be given to the center in the event parents can not be reached. Please notify us immediately of any changes to this information. A child should not be sent to the center unless he/she is well enough to participate in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play. The health of your child is your responsibility. If your child has been ill due to vomiting, diarrhea, or fever within the past 24 hours, please do not bring your child to the center. If your child becomes ill while attending, you will be contacted and expected to pick up your child as soon as possible. Children will be refused entrance to the center if they show symptoms of a possible contagious disease: scabies, lice, impetigo, pink eye (conjunctivitis), chicken pox, ring worm, pinworm, etc. Any suspicious rash will be questioned and you may be asked to have it checked by a physician. A doctor's note must accompany your child upon re-entering the center.

The staff will give required medication as long as it is a prescription medication with the child's name and dosage on the label. You will be asked to sign a medication log when you drop off your child. Any over the counter medications must be accompanied by a note from the doctor stating the amount and frequency to be administered.

You must notify the center of any allergies your child may have. For the child's welfare, you will be required to fill out an allergy action plan with your doctor. For your child's safety, he/she may not attend the center until an emergency action plan is in place.

In order to ensure the wellness of all staff, students, and parents, we ask that parents assist their child with hand washing before entering the classroom to play each morning. Further information is available upon request.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Please bring your child to the center dressed appropriately for the weather. Please provide your child with proper walking shoes. Avoid any open toed shoes. We will go outside daily as long as the temperature is between 25 degrees and 90 degrees and it is not icy or raining. School age students may bring water bottles. Donations of freeze pops during the summer months are always appreciated!!

BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY TREATS

Birthdays and holidays are a time for celebration and we welcome those special treats. Talk to your child's teacher or center cook about your treat and the amount that will be needed. With the increase of food allergies we prefer that no homemade treats be brought in. If you bring in a baked treat be sure that the ingredients are easily read on the label. Always make the staff member aware of what you intend to bring in and have it approved by a staff member.

PERSONAL ITEMS

Children are not permitted to bring in toys or food from home unless it is show and tell or previously arranged with the teacher. We are not responsible for lost items. Place your child's name on all items that are brought into the center. School age students are responsible for any items brought in to the center.

PARENT/ TEACHER INTERACTION

Your child will be evaluated within 45 days of enrollment and every year thereafter. Your child's teacher will share his/her comments/concerns and a conference will be offered at your convenience. You may contact your child's teacher or center director at any time during the normal operational hours. The center has an open-door-policy and you are welcome at anytime. We encourage parent involvement and will address any problem or concern immediately. An annual "Getting To Know You " night or open house will be held in the fall of each year. This is the parent's opportunity to meet all of the staff, ask any questions and learn about what we do each day in the classroom.

TRANSITIONING

Moving from classroom to classroom within the center is based on age appropriateness, developmental level and space availability. Check with your child's teacher for more information. Information will be provided to you in preparation for your child's transition. We provided many activities to help parents and children with transitions including meet and greet with the teacher, socializing with peers and a kindergarten visit. A parent/teacher conference will be offered to discuss any concerns you may have about the transition.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTER

A two week notice of withdrawal from any program is required and you will be responsible for the contracted payment during that time.

BEHAVIORAL MODIFICATION

A positive discipline procedure is in place at the center. Behavioral modification charts are used to indicate good behavior and progress. Time out is utilized when thought to be necessary, but is never overused. Positive behavior is modeled

through interaction with the staff along with problem solving activities. Other behavior modification tools utilized include: Loss of privileges, communications with the parent, or potential intervention counseling with a suitable professional. Physical restraint will not be used except to ensure the child's safety or the safety of others.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Jerusalem Child Care Center reserves the option to release any child at any time a problem arises that can not be resolved. The release will take effect after a review of the problem with the staff, parents, outside professionals, and the Child Care Board of Directors. Parents will be given 2 weeks notice of dismissal to make other child care arrangements.

The following misbehaviors are grounds for dismissal but are not limited to these behaviors:

1. Excessive foul language.
2. Excessive biting, punching, kicking, scratching and pinching other children and staff
3. Habitual food throwing.
4. Continual disrespect for the children and staff.
5. Continual defiance of all rules.

Failure to pay contracted fees will also result in dismissal of a child from the center. A written notice of late payment will be given to the parent. If payment arrangements are not received, as verbally agreed upon with the director, your child may not attend the center.

Fees and policy in this handbook are subject to change. We will give you a 2 week notice of any change.
