

Parent Handbook 2012



St. Paul's Child Care Center

A Full Day - Year Round
Infant-Preschool
Educational Child Care Program

761 King Street
Rye Brook, New York 10573
(914) 939-3079
www.stpaulsryebrook.com

Statement of Philosophy and Goals

School Philosophy

St. Paul's Child Care Center's mission is to provide for the physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth of its children consistent with Christian principles, in a safe and healthy environment.

We view each child as an individual, developing at his/her own pace. Our teachers support this theory and are extremely child centered, while maintaining a nurturing and caring atmosphere.

School Goals

The goals supporting the Center's mission are:

- A loving and caring environment for children.
- To foster mutual respect for self and others.
- To establish a stimulating and developmentally appropriate early childhood education.
- A consistent and stable environment fostering a sense of security in young children.
- A place where each child is regarded as a child of God.

Organization of the Center

History/Facilities



St. Paul's Child Care Center opened its doors in April 2000 and features safety technology with our keycard entrance system. We have an open floor plan for the different age groups, an indoor play area, a rubber-surfaced fenced-in playground and a large fenced-in grass area for outdoor activities. The Director's office overlooks the entire indoor program area.

Pictured: Our toddlers enjoying our rubber-surfaced play area.

Structure

The center has four different age groups: Infants, ages 6 weeks to approximately 10 months (judged by mobility); Mobile Infants, ages approximately 10 months to 18 months; Toddlers, ages 18 months to 3 years; Preschool, ages 3 to 5 years.

Transitioning procedures, where children are slowly and consistently introduced to the class they are moving to, are employed. The decision to move the child is made jointly by the Director and the teachers. Four factors are taken into consideration: the age of the child, his/her "readiness" in relation to the composition of the group into which he/she will be moving, whether there is space in that group, and state requirements. In all cases, the best interests of the child are always at the forefront of all decisions.

Infants must be 6 weeks old upon admission. Children will move into the toddler program as early as 18 months. For the preschool program the child must be completely potty trained and at least 2 years and 9 months.

The Center's maximum capacity for licensing is 44 children (though we use 40 children as a goal as it is more efficient use of teacher/child ratios).

The group composition is as follows:

Infants: capacity for 8 full time children, **Mobile Infants:** capacity for 8 full time children **Toddlers:** capacity for 10 full time children, **Preschool:** capacity for 14 full time children

Teachers

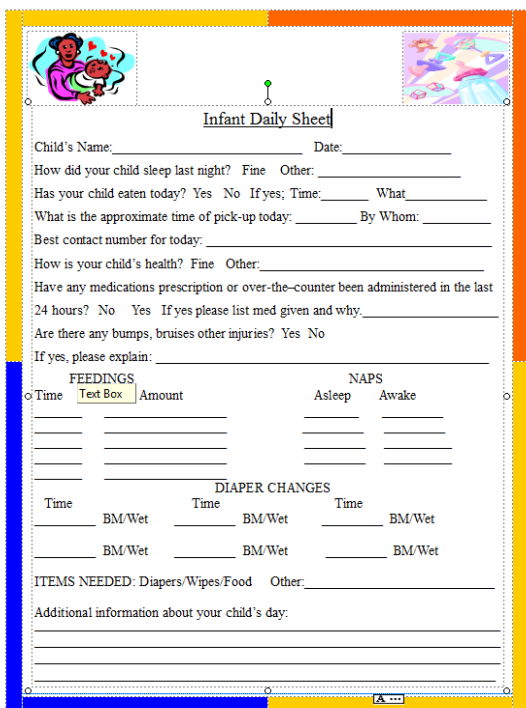
The Head Teacher of each room is required to have formal college level training in Early Childhood Education or a related field. We are very proud that in relation to industry standards we have a relatively high staff retention rate. We select our staff very carefully to make sure they "fit" with our nurturing and caring culture. In terms of staffing, whenever possible, and as the need arises, we try to exceed the state mandated child/teacher ratios with teachers that float from one room to the next. We always adhere to the state mandated teacher/child ratio in each group.

The Daily Schedule/Curriculum

Infants & Mobile Infants: We respect and comply with each infant's individual schedule. In both classrooms the children enjoy songs, books, outside time, art experiences, gross motor exploration and one on one time with his/her teacher(s). The Infant and Mobile Infant Rooms have bi-weekly infant care plans for each child. These plans chart the growth of each child's specific language, social/emotional, physical and cognitive development. There is also a full evaluation tool used three times per year.

Toddlers & Preschool: Toddler and Preschool Rooms both have daily schedules that are followed to give children a sense of routine and so they can predict each day's events, fostering a sense of security. Each also follows a detailed weekly theme-based curriculum. Weekly schedules give the parents an idea of what activities will take place each day. The activities are chosen to provide growth in different areas such as, fine and gross motor skills, pre-literacy skills and math and counting skills. We also provide circle time, art activities, science exploration and sensory experiences. A full evaluation tool is used by the teachers for each child three times per year. The Preschool Room also focuses on preparedness for Kindergarten in regards to written, verbal and cognitive and social skills.

Daily Sheets



The form is titled "Infant Daily Sheet" and includes the following sections:

- Child's Name: _____ Date: _____
- How did your child sleep last night? Fine Other: _____
- Has your child eaten today? Yes No If yes; Time: _____ What _____
- What is the approximate time of pick-up today: _____ By Whom: _____
- Best contact number for today: _____
- How is your child's health? Fine Other: _____
- Have any medications prescription or over-the-counter been administered in the last 24 hours? No Yes If yes please list med given and why: _____
- Are there any bumps, bruises other injuries? Yes No
- If yes, please explain: _____
- FEEDINGS**

Time	Text Box	Amount	Asleep	Awake
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
- DIAPER CHANGES**

Time	BM/Wet	Time	BM/Wet	Time	BM/Wet
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
- ITEMS NEEDED: Diapers/Wipes/Food Other: _____
- Additional information about your child's day: _____

All classes use Daily Sheets to record general daily activities (naps, diapering, food eaten, etc.). While dropping your child off you will complete the top of the sheet with information that your child's teachers will need to know (breakfast eaten, medications taken, approximate pick up time, etc.). Throughout the rest of the day your child's teachers will complete the rest of the sheet to give you a complete report of the day. Feel free to discuss any of these details with your child's teacher.

Weekly Special Activities

St. Paul's Child Care Center has weekly Music, Art, Pre-Literacy and Movement Classes. The Music Teacher, along with her guitar, has a weekly visit with each classroom. She brings different musical instruments and song books each time. The children learn rhythm, instrument names and best of all to enjoy music. Hello and goodbye songs are sung each time as a way of warming up and preparing for the end of the session. The Art Teacher comes weekly and visits both the Toddler and Preschool Rooms. He brings a variety of art media each week where children are allowed to explore both 2 and 3 dimensional art. The children learn about specific artists and forms of art while discovering their creativity. The Toddler and Preschool groups attend Movement Classes weekly. For movement we alternate between a dance class and a soccer class. The children get to explore the freedom of movement, learn new music and dances as well as explore their physical abilities while learning some soccer skills. In pre-literacy both the toddler and preschool groups enjoy books, songs and rhyming games to promote pre-literacy skills. They start out each class with a name rhyming game to get their bodies and minds ready for some learning fun.



Center Policies Admission/Enrollment

St. Paul's Child Care Center is open to children between the ages of 6 weeks and 5 years. As openings in the various age groups occur, admission is offered to children on the waiting list for the age group. In order to be placed on a waiting list, you must submit a completed **application** and a **non-refundable \$100.00** application fee to the Director. This fee does not guarantee future enrollment.

After a spot has been offered and accepted, the Director will send the enrollment agreement and necessary paperwork to be completed by the parent(s). The **enrollment agreement** and other paperwork must be filled

out, signed and returned to the Director along with the first month's tuition payment, the child will then be officially placed in his or her class.

Tuition

Annual Tuition

- ❖ The annual tuition for a student is billed monthly at 1/12th the annual fee.
- ❖ No adjustments are made for snow days, holidays, illness, personal vacations or center closings. There are no "makeup days" for days missed.
- ❖ "AM or PM only attendance" is billed for a full day. However, parents may use any part of the day that is appropriate for their needs.
- ❖ Yearly tuition changes go into effect on January 1, following the approval by the Child Care Center's Advisory Committee's annual budget review. This review takes place in the Fall, and the changes will be communicated to all parents prior to January 1.

New or Repeat Contracts

- ❖ **New Contracts:** The tuition charge for all New Contracts is determined by the charge in place on the child's start date. Contracts must be signed on or before the start date.
- ❖ **Repeat Contracts:** We ask these to be signed on or before the start of the new enrollment agreement as the contracts are dated to reflect the child's first day attending for the new term.

Term of Contracts

- ❖ All contracts, regardless of starting date, continue through 12/31 of the current contract year.

Tuition Payment and Modifications

Tuition is paid by check/cash/or money order and is due by the 1st of each month. If not received by the 5th of the month, a 1.5% service charge will be added. In addition, parents whose checks default will be billed a \$20 service charge. If two children from the same family are enrolled full time, a 10% discount is applied to the lower tuition. If three or more children from the same family are enrolled full time, a 15% discount is applied to the lowest tuition.

Withdrawal

To withdraw a child from the program, a written, dated notice must be received 30 days before the actual date of withdrawal. Tuition will be charged for one month following the date of the notice. If parents opt to stop tuition payments, a child will come off of the roster and can only re-enroll if the space has not yet been filled. St. Paul's Child Care Center reserves the right to withdraw a child from the program if there is failure to comply with the terms of the Center policies, or because of disruptive behavior. In the later instance, for a reasonable time, the staff will do all they can to help with the child's adjustment. If all corrective options are exhausted, a request to withdraw the child may be the only option.

Security (Key Cards)



On the first day a child attends St. Paul's Child Care Center, parents will be given access cards. The program used is PASSPOINT Security Key Card System. The **access card will allow entrance into the center from 7:30 AM until 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday.** Each family may request up to 2 cards. There is a \$10.00 deposit requested for each card issued. This will be returned as soon the cards are turned in. Upon withdrawing your child(ren), please return the Key Cards to the Director. It is important to notify the Director immediately of lost cards so cards can be deactivated.

There is a \$10.00 fee for lost or damaged cards. We ask parents to make every effort to remember to bring their card each day as it is extremely difficult for the teachers to leave their children to answer the door without changing ratios or disrupting the class.

Late Pickup Fee

St. Paul's Child Care Center is open from 7:30 AM until 5:30 PM. We discourage parents from coming late to pick up their child. The staff often has commitments and when a parent comes late to pick up it often disrupts the staff's schedule. We realize that situations can occur beyond your control that can result in late pickup. Please call to notify staff immediately when you cannot make it on time, so arrangements can be made.

A late fee of \$15 will be charged, per child, for every 15 minutes or portion thereof that your child is at school past the 5:30 closing. At 6:00PM this fee goes up to \$20 per 15 minutes or portion thereof. This late fee is needed to cover the overtime pay of the staff members who must remain past 5:30 PM, since their normal pay stops. Be advised that two staff members are required to be present in the Center at all times, by NYS child care center regulations, even if there is one child present. Parents will be sent a bill to cover this cost and we ask that payment be made as soon as it is received.

Initial Adjustment

Children who are new to the Center may require a period of adjustment to help feel comfortable with their new surroundings. Parents should talk to the teachers and discuss how to help the child, so a "plan" can be tailored for the individual child and situation. We want to be sure that both parents and children are comfortable and secure with the Center.

Arrival

The center opens promptly at 7:30 AM. Your Key Card **will not** work before this time. **Please do not ring the bell and try to enter the center before the 7:30 opening.** This makes staff uncomfortable since they are not permitted to let you in any sooner. When you bring your child in the morning, please bring him or her into the classroom and make sure the teachers know you have arrived. Please let the teachers know of any pertinent information about your child (i.e. a late night, Mom is away on business etc.).

Clothing

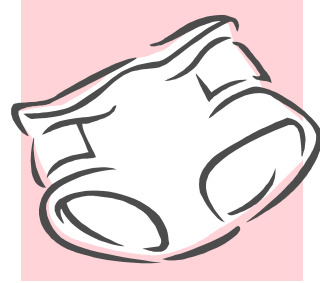
Please dress your child in appropriate clothing for a childcare setting, including comfortable shoes. Remember your child will be wearing this apparel on the playground and for running and climbing. Children can sometimes be involved in messy activities so we recommend they do not wear anything you do not want soiled.

Children should always have at least one spare set of clothing at the Center. In addition, your child will need a warm coat, hat, mittens, boots and snow

pants in the cold weather as we try to get outside whenever possible. Please mark all clothing that may be removed within the course of the day with your child's name, especially gloves and shoes.

Diapers

Parents are responsible for providing their own diapers, wipes, and any non-medicated creams you wish the teachers to use. A non-medicated topical cream permission form must be completed and signed before staff can use any creams, powders or ointments on your child. Children in diapers are changed approximately every two hours or immediately if there has been a bowel movement. Before diapering clean exam paper is pulled onto the diapering surface and the teacher puts on gloves. After diapering the teacher washes both the child's and their own hands. The changing table is disinfected after each use.



Potty Training



Parents, who believe their child is ready for potty training, should notify the teachers about their successes and efforts at home, and the teachers will do the same with their successes at the Center. Until the child shows signs of consistent readiness, encouraging the child before they are ready is both time consuming and confusing. We are happy to work with you by taking your child to the potty at consistent intervals during the day. Even if the child is three they may not move up to the preschool program until they are fully potty trained.

Food

The Center provides a morning and afternoon snack for children 18 months and over. Snacks usually consist of crackers, pretzels, raisins, fruit cups or the results of a classroom-cooking project. Sugary foods are avoided for their lack of nutritional value and adverse effect they have on some children.



Parents are responsible for providing a nutritious lunch for their child. Teachers may ask children with items of heavy sugar or artificial content to save such items until they get home. Parents of children under 18 months will also need to provide lunch for their child and are responsible for providing formula and/or milk as well as any cereal, jar food or finger food needed. Please be sure that all parts of bottles are labeled with first and last name as per the licensing regulations of NYS. Please also label your child's lunchbox, cups or other feeding items. Teachers will feed young infants, but as they get older, they will be encouraged to feed themselves. We realize that although it may be messy, it is an important part of their developmental process. PLEASE REMEMBER TO INFORM YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS AND THE DIRECTOR OF ANY ALLERGIES.

Nap and Rest Time



A rest period is required in all full-day childcare programs for one and one half hours each day. Children will be allowed to sleep for as long as they wish. Nap procedures vary with age group. Infants sleep several times a day, each in their own

Center-provided crib in the infant area. Older mobile infants are gradually moved toward one midday nap on a cot to prepare them for entering the toddler room. Toddlers and preschoolers have naptime after lunch and sleep on cots. Children rest on their cots and if they do not sleep will be provided books or other quiet activities while the other children sleep. Parents provide all sheets and blankets which are taken home each Friday, washed, and returned on Monday.

Weather (Inclement) Closings

The Center's policy is to stay open as much as possible. However, when the weather is inclement, it may be necessary to; close early, delay the Center's opening or close the Center for the entire day. We follow the lead of the Blind Brook Schools (Rye Brook) in the matter of Inclement Weather closings, and will close if Blind Brook Schools close. In the event Blind Brook indicates a "delayed opening," we will do the same. For example a 2 hour delay means our center will open at 9:30 AM. In the event of inclement weather, please monitor one of the following stations:



Westchester Stations

WFAS (1230 AM and 103.9 FM)

WVOX (1460 AM)

Fairfield Station (*Greenwich*)

WGCH (1490 AM)

News 12 TV Westchester & NEWS12.COM

Discipline Policies

St. Paul's helps children develop self-control and learn acceptable forms of social behavior by explaining the limits and providing close supervision. Whenever possible, other children will be involved in the discussion. Positive reinforcement will always be used as well as re-direction. St. Paul's expects children to behave age appropriately, as harmful physical aggression or destruction of materials is unacceptable. Teachers share these expectations with children and their parents as they adjust to the Center. Teachers help children resolve conflicts by facilitating their use of words in explaining needs and feelings while guiding them towards positive conflict resolution. Teachers encourage children to find acceptable ways to problem solve by being aware of each individual's activities and by intervening when necessary. We create and foster an environment of positive interaction and reduction of conflict by: positive role modeling, reminders to cooperate, and praise and support in using words to resolve conflicts.

Sickness Policies

General Sickness Policies



Parents are often faced with the decisions about bringing a sick child to school or keeping a child that may be sick at home. Please keep in mind the home and center environments are very different. Neither the sick child nor the healthy children can receive the care and attention they need when a sick child is at a childcare center. Teachers know your child's typical behavior and are generally good judges of a child's illness.

It is important to realize that in a group situation such as this, illness (both major and minor) spreads rapidly in spite of everyone's best efforts. Many of the specific conditions listed below can become epidemic in a group setting. Our policies are designed with this in mind.

Parents will be notified whenever there is a contagious illness in the center. We will call parents or authorized persons as soon as a child shows symptoms of illness during the day, and request your child is picked up as soon as possible. A teacher or the Director may also refuse to admit a child who appears to be ill. Children may return to school after the contagious period has passed; when they are fever free for 24 hours (without medication); and when they are able to resume normal activities at the Center. We strongly recommend that children with questionable symptoms stay home.

Non-Specific Conditions

Your child should not be at school if:

- ❖ they have a temperature of 101 degrees or more
- ❖ has a communicable disease
- ❖ is vomiting or has diarrhea
- ❖ is unable to participate in the usual daily activities.

Your child may return to school when:

- ❖ the fever has been absent, without fever reducer, for 24 hours
- ❖ nausea, vomiting and diarrhea have been absent for 24 hours
- ❖ the contagious stage of the communicable disease has passed

- ❖ a child under a doctor's care has permission to return
- ❖ the child can now participate in all activities.

Colds are common for children. Any child well enough to come to the Center with a cold will be expected to participate with other children in all the usual inside and outside activities.

Specific Conditions

Conjunctivitis: A condition of the eye caused by infection. An eye pink in color and watery can be caused by an infection or an allergy. A yellow crusting eye is often associated with a bacterial infection and needs to be treated by a medical professional. A child must be out of the Center for 24 hours from the time conjunctivitis is treated. If the Center has a question regarding the need for treatment or risk to other children, parents may be asked to provide a note from their child's pediatrician before the child is allowed to return.

Coxsackie (Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease): A viral infection characterized by a fever and tiny blisters on the palms, soles of feet and in the mouth, following a 3-6 day incubation period. Children may exhibit a low-grade fever, sore throat, and abdominal discomfort during the incubation period. Your child should remain home if feverish, if any oozing sores are present, and if generally uncomfortable.

Ringworm: A very contagious fungal infection of the scalp or skin. Symptoms include a rash that is often itchy and flaky. Ringworm on the scalp may leave a flaky patch of baldness and on other areas of the skin; ringworm causes a reddish ring like rash that may itch or burn. The same fungus that infects humans can also infect domestic animals such as cats and dogs. The infection can be acquired from pets as well as from infected humans. Children with ringworm should minimize close contact with other children until effectively treated and the lesions shrink.

Chicken Pox: A child with chicken pox must stay home until all the blisters have scabbed. This often takes a week to happen after the initial outbreak of the blisters.

Ear Infections: Although ear infections are not contagious, they can cause permanent damage to the ear. An infant or child with a suspected ear infection may be asked to have it checked by their pediatrician. A child may return once they are fever-free and able to function in the group, i.e., not crying continuously or lacking energy.

Head Lice: When a teacher has reason to believe that a child has head lice, the child will be sent home. The child must be treated with special head lice shampoo and the nits (eggs) removed. Even after treatment, nits remain in the hair and must be combed or picked out. A child must be nit-free before he/she may return to the Center. All clothing and blankets must be laundered.

Impetigo: This is a highly contagious skin infection that usually starts as small red bumps. The bumps form clear or pus-filled blisters, which can break, leaving a honey colored encrusted soar. A child may return when the soars are no longer blistering or oozing. In any case, a child should be treated for 24 hours before returning to the Center.

Strep Throat: This is a contagious bacterial infection with a variety of symptoms. Have a doctor check for strep throat if your child complains of a sore throat, has a rash or a fever. A child with strep throat must be on antibiotics for 48 hours and fever-free before returning to the Center. Your child must be rechecked for strep after the medication to insure that the strep is gone. Certain forms of streptococcus infection can be more serious and develop into Scarlet Fever, a more serious condition. As prevention, all forms of streptococcus infection should be treated quickly to prevent complications. We will notify you if any cases of strep have been identified in the Center so that you can discuss the appropriate precautions with your pediatrician.

We hope this explains more in-depth our philosophies and policies. Please always feel free to speak to the director or teachers with any concerns.