



Parent Handbook

as of 2012

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State Licensing Regulations and Early Childhood Program information
<http://www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us>

Philosophy and Curriculum

“Children deserve respect for how they are.” We offer a nurturing, educational program for preschool aged children. We believe it is of importance to be consistent in maintaining a safe and secure environment that aims to treat every child equally. We believe that every child is unique and a special individual. With a safe, loving and respectful environment all children will have an opportunity to grow and develop. This should be provided through the enrichment offered at the Preschool at Killington. We provide learning and growing opportunities for the children in our classroom through every day experiences. Throughout the program the children can love and trust which makes learning fun. Our classroom will encourage independence, helping each child to gain positive self-concept. Throughout the year we will continue to build a community of learners.

About P@K (The Preschool at Killington)

P@K began in 2012 when a need was noticed for a self-run preschool program. The current space and current director had been in place for almost a decade and with some help from community members and Killington Elementary School (KES) administration and staff, this long overdue business finally took hold. Everyone is very excited for this new relationship and look forward to growing and developing the program for many years.

Hours of Operation

The Preschool Program for children 3 through 5 years of age operates Monday through Friday from 8am to 3pm. The AM session will end at 11:30am and children have the opportunity to stay on for the remainder of the day. These children, staying more than five hours will have an opportunity to rest for at least 30 minutes as required by licensing regulations. We also offer an After School opportunity that goes until 4pm that includes a small number of school aged kids. *These programs are in operation only the days that KES is in session and are closed for holidays, school vacations, snow days and teacher in-service days. Please refer to the KES calendar for regularly scheduled school closings.*

Sample Daily Schedule

Parents will be kept up to date on changes, additional information and monthly activities through a monthly newsletter. Lesson plans will be posted in the classroom weekly. As stated in each family's contract, we ask for a committed schedule upon submission. If you need to change your child's schedule we ask for 3 weeks notice (if possible) and an email sent to the business office. A new contract will need to be completed before the new schedule can begin.

Preschool AM (8am – 11:30am)

8:00AM	Arrival, Choice Time
8:45AM	Circle Time-Calendar, Songs, Weather, Literacy
9:00AM	Wash up/Snack
9:15AM	Activities and Exploration
10:30AM	Outside Time/Gross Motor
11:00AM	Specials
11:30AM	Departure/Free choice for those staying

Preschool PM (8am – 3pm)

12:00PM	Welcome/Wash up/Lunch
12:30PM	Quiet activities/Rest time
1:15PM	Enrichment activities (water/sand play, blocks, art)
2:15PM	Outdoor Time/Gross Motor
3:00PM	Departure/Free choice for those staying

After School (3pm-4pm)

3:15PM	Wash up/Snack
3:30PM	Choice Time (Under 5 - Gross Motor, student initiated projects; Over 5 – Homework)
4:00PM	Departure/Clean up

Nutrition

In the beginning of the year, we ask families to provide an appropriate and nutritious snack for your child. Children have the option of bringing their own healthy lunch or purchasing one through the school. We ask all families to fill out a free and reduced meal form for the state of Vermont to process. Forms like this help programs like us be eligible for sliding reimbursement for snacks that we would like to provide down the road. Even if you're not eligible, we would appreciate the paperwork being completed.

Inclement Weather

If the school is closed for a snow day, the program will be closed as well. Information about school closings can be heard by tuning into area radio stations (98.1, 92.1, 105.3 and 97.1) or by checking local news stations online. If school is in session and the weather grows increasingly worse the program may choose to close and families will receive phone calls and an email.

Outdoor Time

Children will spend time outdoors each day, weather permitting and a minimum temperature of 10 degrees. It is important for every child to get fresh air daily and therefore the supplying of appropriate outdoor clothing is required. *Please provide your child with extra clothing in the winter months as it is common for socks, pants, etc. to get wet from regular outdoor play.*

Guidance and Behavior Management

Behavior management should direct children towards positive behavior. It should never humiliate. We praise good behavior and help redirect disruptive behavior. Our goal is to guide children as they make positive choices about their behavior. Our staff uses positive methods of guidance and behavior management which encourages self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. We strive to meet the individual needs of each child.

Our policy regarding behavior places your child's safety first and foremost. While aggression among young children can be an expected element of development growth, it can be a great concern to all parents whether their child is the victim or the aggressor.

In the event of an aggressive act towards a child the following will take place within the classroom:

1. The injured child will be given necessary first aid and comfort.
2. The aggressive child will be disciplined with logical, developmentally appropriate consequences for their actions. Staff will give children choices, show mutual respect, use redirection, provide clear, concise and consistent group rules, use peer and adult modeling.
3. Parents of the injured child and the aggressive child will be notified by verbal communication by a staff person at the child's departure.
4. In keeping with our confidentiality policy, the injured child and the aggressive child's identity will not be revealed to the other parents/guardians by staff.
5. To address a child's on-going behavior, staff and administration will work closely with the child and parents/guardians to deal with the behavior at hand. Close supervision, redirection and diffusing conflicts between children, firm and consistent limit setting and alternatives to children expressing their behavior will be implemented. A newly created thought spot will be available for children feeling aggression to go and be alone and work through feelings on their own. Staff and administration will continue to examine the classroom environment/structure and work with children who find it too frustrating and stimulating.
6. The policy for the above behavior will be as follows:
 - a. First behavior issue will be a warning. Parents will be notified at pick up, if not sooner and constructive measures will be taken as outlined above.
 - b. Second behavior issue will result in the child being sent home. A meeting will be scheduled with parents, the director and the business office to address the ongoing concern.
 - c. Third behavior issue will result in the child's dismissal from the program. Parents will be responsible for any tuition owed to the program at that time.
7. Our commitment is to provide a quality learning environment for every child. We will honor that commitment unless it becomes apparent that we are unable to provide the most appropriate and safe learning environment for a particular child.

Please schedule a meeting with the child's teacher or business office at any time if you have questions about the above or suggestions on how to intervene and improve learning for your child.

Celebrations/Holidays

The P@K recognizes the diversities of the children and families enrolled in our program. To be sensitive towards various cultures, we do not celebrate individual holidays. Children will have an opportunity to learn about a variety of cultures and hold celebrations throughout the year which are inclusive of all children. Celebrating of a child's birthday is allowed in our classroom – please check with teachers in advance to schedule the best day/time.

Toys from Home

Books and materials that relate to topics being explored at our program are always welcome, as are: items from the natural world – fall leaves, sea shells, a pumpkin, mementos from a trip, found treasures, stories, etc.. Toy weapons are not allowed. It is understandable that some children may have a need to bring a blanket or stuffed animal, especially when they are adjusting to the new school routine.

Children with Special Needs Inclusion

Children with disabilities are simply children with differing abilities. All children are capable of learning, growing and developing into loving and nurturing people. An inclusive environment allows for all children's development to continue unimpeded and uninterrupted. All children's needs are a priority.

Early Childhood Special Education Services

The P@K is a private non-profit organization, which operates the Preschool and Enrichment Program independently of KES. As needed, we will work with families to help refer their child to the appropriate service provider for necessary assessments or services for their child(ren). Any early childhood special education screenings, assessments or services must be obtained through the supervisory union where the family resides. If you have questions or concerns about your preschool child's development or about available services, please contact your supervisory union's special education office. The P@K will be happy to assist you in finding the appropriate people to contact if needed.

Residents of Killington/Bridgewater – Windsor Central SU at 802.457.1213

Residents of Pittsfield/Stockbridge – Windsor Northwest SU at 802.234.5364

Residents of Plymouth – Rutland Windsor SU at 802.228.8359

Residents of Mendon – Rutland Northeast SU at 802.247.5757

Residents of Rutland Town – Rutland Central SU at 802.775.4342

Parent Involvement

Parents are VIPs in our program and we will try to carry out your requests whenever possible. We will make every effort to respond to your questions, requests, emails and voicemails within 48 hours. Each child enrolled in the program has a file on record. Parents may view their child's records at any scheduled meeting.

Parent visits are always welcome. Come spend a few minutes with your child as your schedule allows, or share a special talent or activity with the entire group. Please let us know how you would like to be involved.

Phone Calls and Messages

In addition to below, information, invoices and suggestions can be given to teachers and the business office via dropboxes located immediately outside the P@K classroom.

The best way to reach your child's teacher during program hours (8am – 4pm) is to call the classroom directly at 802.422.3366 x230. If there is no answer and it is urgent, someone at the main number can help direct your call. If your question is after hours or business related, please feel free to contact our business office at 802.729.0660. A non-urgent message left on either line will receive a return phone call within 48 hours. A voicemail to the classroom phone is the best way to notify the school that your child will be missing a day.

Parent Board and Conferences

Located across the hall from the classroom is a parent board with all useful information. While you will have access to daily schedules and monthly newsletters, please do not hesitate to schedule individual time to talk about your child. Parent-teacher conferences will be offered in the fall and any other time parents would like to schedule a meeting.

Board of Directors

The P@K is a not-for-profit organization that offers preschool opportunities for children ages 3-5. The Board of Directors is subject to the by-laws of our organization and will be in place within 30 days of opening. More information to follow as this important piece of our business gets finalized. Anyone who is interested in learning more about our Board of Directors and/or potential involvement should contact us via email or our business office phone number.

Policies and Procedures

Grievance Procedure

If at any time you have concerns about your child's welfare while in our care, you should:

1. Discuss the problem opening with your child's P@K teachers. In many cases the problems can be resolved.
2. Submit a written report of the grievance to the Business Office. A meeting will be arranged with necessary parties, including the Board of Directors if necessary.

It is our goal to support all families and make each child as safe and secure as possible while in our care.

Child Abuse and Neglect

As professional teachers and providers we are mandated by the State of Vermont to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Our staff is directed to discuss all suspicions immediately with Business Office and/or Board of Directors prior to calling the Department for Children and Families (DCF) to file the report. Child Protective Services will determine whether further investigation is necessary around the suspected abuse/neglect.

Confidentiality

It is the policy of the P@K to ensure that the rights of clients served are fully protected. Each record shall be treated as confidential and accessed only by those authorized. The P@K complies with state and federal regulations regarding confidentiality of clients and records. All employees, students, temporary employees, substitutes, volunteers as well as others not on payroll but performing certain designated duties are required to sign an agreement of confidentiality.

Pickup Authorization

We **MUST** be informed each time in writing when your child is to be picked up by someone other than the parent or guardian. In addition, if the teacher has not met the pickup person, they will need to show a picture identification card, no exceptions!

Waiting List

If space is not available for a child whose family has inquired about enrollment, their name will be placed on a waiting list. Families that are currently enrolled in the program and/or who have children who will be attending KES will receive precedence over other community families. Children enrolling in Preschool must be 3 years old by September 1st, or are eligible to join our program on their 3rd birthday. A fee will apply to hold a child's spot leading up to their start date.

Safety and Health

We will do everything possible to keep your child safe and healthy. Our safety and health guidelines are from the Early Childhood Licensing Regulations, which govern Child Care in the State of Vermont. If you are unsure of what to do on a given morning concerning health related issues, feel free to call the classroom as early as 7:30am and leave a message if necessary.

Excludable Conditions

Children who become ill at the program will be isolated and comforted to the best of our ability until picked up by a parent or other designee immediately after being notified. It is important that information on your child's contract and medical forms be kept updated. Children who appear ill who have a contagious disease are not permitted to attend school that day.

According to State regulations, a person diagnosed as having any of the following diseases or infections shall be excluded from school until a medical professional indicates that it is safe for him or her to return:

- Bacterial meningitis, Shigella (Shingles), Campylobacter, Streptococcal infections (including Scarlet Fever and Strep Throat), Hepatitis A, Measles, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Rubella (German Measles), Respiratory Synsytial Virus (RSV), Chicken Pox, Polio, Impetigo, Salmonella, Giardia, Diphtheria, Tuberculosis

A child diagnosed as having the following conditions shall be excluded until indicated below (please see State Regulations for the comprehensive list):

- Lice – excluded immediately and may return after appropriate treatment completed. Upon return, the staff prior to parents leaving will check your child's head.
- Diarrhea – excluded if your child is toilet trained and has 3 loose BM's.
- Vomiting – excluded if occurrence is twice or more times in 24 hours. The child may return the next day.
- Fever – excluded if temperature reaches 100 degrees. The child may return the next day, but CANNOT return on any fever reducing medicine, like Tylenol. Your child can not attend the program until the medication is no longer needed to keep the fever down.
- Severe Coughing – excluded if child gets red/blue in the face or produces whooping or croup noise after cough.
- Purulent Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – excluded until 24 hours after if treatment is started or if no treatment then the child may return when there is no longer discharge from eye(s) or return after seen by the child's doctor who gives written permission.
- Ringworm, Scabies, Pinworm infections – excluded until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

- Cocksackie – excluded until all blisters/sores are dried and your child is symptom free for 24 hours from the time your child leaves our care. Other symptoms of possible severe illness include unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing and persistent abdominal pain.

All parents are required to submit any new immunizations dates to your child's teacher to maintain accurate and up-to date immunization records. The P@K will follow-up with any and all families that don't have a complete records according to the State of Vermont Health Department Regulations.

Medications

Prior to giving prescription medications to a child, written permission from the parents shall be obtained. Please give any medications directly to a staff person. No medications should be left in your child's cubby or backpack. Prescription medication will only be administered when:

1. The prescription is for the child.
2. The medication is clearly labeled as to dosage, content, schedule, is in its original container and the date is current.
3. The dosage does not exceed the recommended dosage on the label.
4. The Medication Form in the classroom has been completed.

Clothing

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that is practical for a range of activities including outdoor play and messy art activities. Outdoor clothing (coats, hats, mittens and boots) must be suitable for the child to outside 30-45 minutes at a time. Please provide extra clothing for your child as wet socks, pants, etc. are common with regular outdoor play. Please provide sunscreen and bug spray for application when necessary. We STRONGLY advise that children come to preschool with appropriate footwear. Sneakers are more conducive to a long day of both indoor and outdoor activities - please NO flip-flops.

Terms and conditions of this Handbook are subject to change and will be communicated accordingly if the P@K chooses to update throughout the year.