



2024-2025
Family Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to *Carmel Nursery School!* We are excited that you have chosen to take this journey with us. We are here to provide the best possible care and early education for your child/ren. Our program offers children learning opportunities by providing a rich environment that encourages learning through experimentation, exploration, and questioning. We are proud of our enriched program, our comfortable and well- equipped school, and our qualified Staff.

We have prepared this FAMILY HANDBOOK to acquaint you with our program and your responsibilities. For the purposes of this handbook, “parent” is defined as the person who has legal responsibility for the care and welfare of the child. Please become familiar with this handbook and refer to it often. It will answer many questions you may have regarding our policies and daily procedures.

We are a fully inclusive daycare, preschool and before and after school program welcoming all families, regardless of their religious traditions or social make up. It is our goal to ensure that all families feel supported as partners in their child's care and education. We welcome all and look forward to having your family in our program.

Mission Statement

Philosophy

Carmel Nursery School is a loving, supportive, safe, and educationally sound environment for children ages 2 ½ through age 12. We are committed to providing high quality childcare programs that stimulate learning and promote positive social and emotional awareness of self and others. Our program fosters the on-going development of creativity, cooperation, problem solving and self-expression at all ages.

Program Goals

Support Children Socially and Emotionally by providing staff that is responsive to the individual child while encouraging self-care and independence. Staff also facilitates the development of self-control through redirection, structure and age-appropriate consequences.

Support Children Intellectually by providing opportunities that reflect the child's interests.

These opportunities provide time for interactive exploration while also providing unique and exciting learning experiences that ignite the imagination!

Support Physical Development by nurturing healthy eaters and getting kids moving! Our campus is an outstanding outdoor classroom; we also have two age-appropriate playgrounds and a variety of physically stimulating activities built into the school day.

Admission Policy & Procedures

Carmel Nursery School admits students of any race, religion, color, sexual orientation, gender status, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school. The same policies apply to the school staff, educators, and parents and/or guardians of our student population. We do not discriminate in the administration of the school's educational policies or its admission policies.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Security

Our church, school, students, parishioners, visitors, and entire organization endeavors to keep every person safe while under our care. Our preschool security is top-notch with all outside or inside doors leading directly into the school always locked and equipped with a security camera and doorbell. The only way for individuals to enter is by ringing the doorbell, allowing us to visually identify them through the camera and verify their identity with an ID check before buzzing them in. Only employees of the church or preschool with background security clearances have access to the building with a unique code, and all doors remain locked at all times.

Parental Involvement

At Carmel Nursery School, we believe that we should bring every family into our classroom! Carmel uses Procure's App to connect teachers with students and parents to build amazing classroom communities!

Procure Solutions is an easy-to-use childcare mobile app used to enrich classroom and parent interactions and automate the payment process. Once enrolled you will receive an email inviting you to join Procure. The app provides an opportunity for real-time updates from the classroom to enhance the parent and staff experience. **Monthly Calendars and Classroom Newsletters**, are available on our Procure App

The app allows you to:

- Sign your child in and out using your phone
- Receive childcare activities and daily reports
- Streamline your communication with teachers through the Messages section
- Simplify childcare payment processing with online and mobile payments
 - Invoices are sent out weekly. You can pay directly from your invoice or by dropping a check in the tuition folder in the main office.

The app allows the teacher to:

- Share photos and videos
- Record and share milestones
- Send the latest news and events via Newsletters
- Communicate with families efficiently

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered twice per year for our PreK3, PreK4 and PreK5 students. If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher simply sign up and one will be arranged for you. The conference is usually 15-20 minutes long and provides time for you and your child's teacher to discuss your child. Conferences may be scheduled as needed at the

request of the parent or preschool during the year to discuss your child's progress.

Registration and Enrollment

Electronic Enrollment Process

Families interested in enrolling at Carmel will follow a two-step process: (1) submit an application with basic contact information (2) upon receipt of the application you will receive an email with information on how to formally register (usually done after a tour). There is a \$55 non-refundable deposit required to register and *you may be placed on a waitlist.*

Registration forms

Registration forms required for each student's file can be found on our Procure app.

- Copy of the child's current immunizations
 - ***Due two weeks prior to the student's first day of class and must be kept current***
- Copy of annual physical examination (due at the beginning of each school year)
- Completed and signed Tuition Express authorization downloadable at Procure
- Completed and signed Enrollment Agreement downloadable at Procare
- Completed and signed Registration Policies downloadable at Procare
 - ***By registering on-line and then signing off on the agreements and policies you are certifying that you have authority for the child/ren.***
- Any relevant court orders regarding the child's custody status
 - ***Pennsylvania law is clear in that those parents who have joint legal custody have equal access to all information regarding the child including enrolling the child and making changes to the enrollment information. Court orders are required to prevent a parent or legal guardian from certain activities such as picking up the child or visiting the child at a preschool. We reserve the right, however, to prohibit individuals from being at our school if the health and safety of any child or staff is threatened or compromised.***

It is important that *Carmel Nursery School* maintains current and accurate records on each child so that parents/guardians or other authorized individuals can be contacted in case of an emergency. Each family needs to provide information about at least two people other than the parent(s) who are authorized to pick up your child. Any changes to emergency contact information can be made via your www.MyProcure.com account.

It is your responsibility to notify the Director of any changes to the above list of documents.

Failure to do so may result in termination of enrollment. You can reach the administrative office staff at 3

carmelnursery100@gmail.com

Our policies do not allow staff to make copies of forms and other documents or provide testimony, verbally, or in writing, about any child. If subpoenaed by court order, our director will review the subpoena and contact the attorney. It is not in the best interest of any child for staff to act with partiality to one parent or the other. If you should have any questions, please speak with our director.

Changes to Enrollment Status or Schedule

Any changes to your child's enrollment status or schedule must be requested in writing. You can find the "Change of Enrollment Form" [here](#). You may drop off the form at the office or scan to carmelnursery100@gmail.com Once received, our Director will review the request to determine if an opening and staff support is available to fulfill the request.

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees are subject to change at any time with a 10- day written notice.

Since full and timely payment of tuition is critical to our ability to maintain our operations, we would like to outline our policies and procedures regarding the payment of fees to *Carmel Nursery School* as follows:

- All Tuition is due by 10:00 AM the Friday before for the next weeks care.
- If the weekly tuition payment is not received by Monday at 9 a.m., a late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for each account.
- A Tuition Express Application/Authorization is required prior to the first day of school
- Payment options are:
 - ACH transfer (direct withdrawal from checking/savings acct)
 - Credit or Debit Card
- If paying with cash, check or Money Order your payment is due in the office on the Friday **BEFORE**.
 - Checks/money orders should be made payable to *Carmel Nursery School*.
 - If a check is returned, you will be notified and will be expected to obtain a money order for the original check amount **plus** the returned check fee. Subsequently, you will be required to pay tuition with cash or a money order. Checks will no longer be accepted as payment.
- Returned checks, credit card declines, or insufficient funds (ACH Transfers) will be subject to a \$50.00 processing fee.
- There are no fee reductions if your child is sick or on vacation. Payment of your tuition assures that your child's place in our program is maintained during his or her absence.
- An annual registration fee is due every September.
- *Carmel Nursery School* reserves the right to discontinue services if the tuition and any late fees are not paid in a as detailed above.

If your child is ill for an extended length of time, the school should be notified so that your child's place in the program is maintained. An absence of more than five (5) consecutive days when the director has not been notified will result in termination of enrollment.

Should the school be closed through no fault of its own there will be no refunds. Examples include closure by Montgomery County, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or other governmental agencies as a measure to protect the health and safety of staff, students, and others. Additionally, there will be no refunds due to closure because of an event that may include but are not limited to weather related emergencies such as blizzards, tornados, hurricanes, or

earthquakes, as well as any public safety/public health emergency like an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic that could prohibit the administration and staff at Carmel Preschool and Child Care Center from providing a safe and healthy environment for our students.

Parents are responsible for tuition until *Carmel Nursery School* has been notified that you plan to discontinue enrollment. If you wish to withdraw your child from the program, you are required to notify the Director by completing an “Enrollment Change” form listing final date of enrollment at least 2 weeks in advance of your child’s intended withdrawal. You can download the form [from the Procure app](#). There are no refunds for the tuition or registration fees should you decide to withdraw.

Late PICK-UP Policy and Fee

Please call as soon as you realize that you are going to be late. If pick-up occurs after your scheduled pick-up your account is charged \$25 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 a minute for each minute thereafter.

Hours of Operation and Holidays/Days Closed

Carmel Nursery School is open 6:00A.M. To 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. *A calendar of holidays is posted [on our web](#) and downloadable for printing.*

We will be closed:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve closed from 12:00 noon to January 2

President’s Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Any holiday that falls on a Saturday will be observed on the Friday before and any holiday that falls on a Sunday will be observed on the Monday after.

Early Childhood Program

Carmel Nursery School provides an educational program designed to meet the needs of the whole child. This program is based on the premise that young children are active learners involved in a process that uses all their senses as they work and play with people and materials. Professionally trained staff plan and arrange stimulating learning environments which are appropriate for the different developmental stages of a child’s life.

Accreditation

Carmel Nursery School is registered as a Private Academic Preschool by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (AUN.300461400) and licensed by the Department of Human Services as a Child Care Center

Curriculum

Our curriculum at *Carmel Nursery School* is based on current research that supports developmentally appropriate practices. Developmentally appropriate practices are those that consider the way children develop and learn. We support the interest of each child, helping them to grow in their socio-emotional and cognitive skills, development through hands-on experimentation with materials and concepts. We believe that your child will discover and learn by making the decisions needed to work through an activity, rather than being told exactly how to accomplish a task. We encourage the children to express themselves through their play and art by allowing them the freedom to create their own unique way. Rather than focusing on a specific end result, we provide inspiration and let them explore their creativity without limitations. *Our teachers build their classroom curriculum around ideas of interest to the children. Each day there are opportunities for children to explore materials and create meaningful experiences.*

Our curriculum provides opportunities in several basic areas: _

- **Language and Literacy** – children are encouraged to talk, sing, make-up rhymes and listen to stories. Teachers provide supplies and opportunities for children to experience written material, flannel board stories, dramatic storytelling, dictations and puppet play.
- **Mathematical Thinking** - children are encouraged to develop a sense of number and quantity. Examples are activities that include counting, determining more or less, larger or smaller, how many, recognizing patterns and shapes and developing a sense of time awareness.
- **Scientific Thinking**- children focus on the world they know and understand. Knowledge grows from the child's innate need to discover. Examples are measuring, comparing, using the five senses, questioning, predicting and analyzing results.
- **Social Studies** – children explore the roles of relationships in their world. Examples are dramatic play, block building, recognizing similarities and differences in people, families, and professions, and understanding the reasons for social expectations.
- **The Arts** – encourage children to express their creativity through art, self-expression, dance, music, and dramatic play. In art children mix paint, pound and shape clay, and build structures with blocks, boxes and logos. Teachers expose children to a wide variety of ideas and experiences in the arts throughout the day.
- **Personal and Social Development** – children are encouraged to develop a self-concept and self-control through interacting with others, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
- **Physical Development** – includes large and small motor development, and an understanding of personal health and safety.

The day is a blend of child-initiated and Teacher-initiated activities including group time, free choice times, outdoor play, appropriate meals, snacks, and rest times.

The curriculum will be enriched using community resources. Local groups such as the police, fire department, musicians, artists, dentists, and dog training clubs will be invited to visit. *If you have a special interest, hobby, or talent you would like to share with the children please let your child's teacher know.*

Staff Qualifications

Carmel Nursery School staff is composed of professionals trained in Early Childhood Education. It is important to select the employees with the best education and experience. All Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers meet or exceed qualifications as required. We require teachers to obtain 10 hours of professional development training every year. Qualified Substitute Teachers are available as needed. Regularly scheduled staff meetings and professional development activities encourage staff members to continually increase their knowledge of developmentally appropriate teaching practices so that they may better serve young children.

All staff are fingerprinted for submission to Pennsylvania who then completes a criminal background check. Prospective staff is not allowed to work with children until we have received clearance from the Pennsylvania State Police, FBI, and the National Sex Offender Registry. Staff also maintain current CPR, First Aid, and Fire Safety training certification.

Communication Systems

Open communication is vital to your child's successful experience. We have an open-door policy from educators to our director and administration staff, right up to our Pastor.

Parents comments, suggestions, and concerns are welcome at any time.

Carmel Nursery School provides several methods of communications to keep parent(s) informed of the child's activities for the day or week:

- **Daily Reports** are sent through the Procure App for the parents of preschoolers to Pre- Kindergarteners.
- **Classroom doors** contain a whiteboard that provides current information regarding curriculum for the week.
- **Bulletin Boards** are located outside the classrooms to provide a venue for parents to read about the Center's policies, activities, current research, events and news.
- **Monthly Newsletter** is sent by email through Procure and contains classroom information and upcoming events.
- **Visit our website** at Procure app for up-to-date information and happenings including a monthly calendar of events, newsletters, a daily event list, and for forms.
- **Group and Center-wide E-mail** notices sent out through Procure.

Calendars

The *Carmel Nursery School* calendar is available on the Procure app. Printed copies are available in the office. Individual classrooms may also have calendars available throughout the year. Our school calendar will list school-wide important information such as holidays, special events, early dismissal days, and Professional Development days. Classroom calendars, as developed by the lead teacher, will focus on events and happenings specific to that classroom (i.e. children's birthdays or other in-class celebrations).

Field Trip Considerations

If students are on a field trip they are entitled to the same health services, including medication administration, to which they are entitled while attending school. Students must have an order from a Pennsylvania health care professional with prescriptive authority and parent/guardian permission for all medications and treatments administered to them. The school may ask a parent to accompany their student on a field trip to provide the necessary care.

Face-to-face Conversation

It is always helpful for Teachers to know when changes happen in a child's life that could potentially result in a change in the child's behavior, willingness to participate, ability to concentrate, etc. Examples of major changes like a family death, moving to a new residence, loss of a parent's job, a parent away for business or military deployment, someone from the immediate family moving out of the home, etc. should always be shared with the teacher. Children are often worried about these incidents but do not know how to express their concerns and our teachers can partner with you in helping your child navigate that challenge. We are better able to assist your child when we are aware of these changes in the home. Staff are available and open to your comments and suggestions. We are here for you and your child, so do not hesitate to communicate frequently. Please check with our director as to the best times for extended conversations

Health and Safety

Children are expected to be in good health and able to participate in the planned activities. *Carmel Nursery School* has several policies and procedures listed below for the health and wellbeing of each child in the program. Please read these carefully and talk to our director if you have any questions.

Health Information Required

Current immunization, and a physical examination are required to be on file and up to date for each child. Children must have a physical performed and the paperwork on file before admission to our program. Children ages 2 to 5 must have a physical performed every year and children ages 6 to 12 every 2 years

Child Health Check

Your child's health status will be checked each day. This health check is informal; however, if your child appears to be showing signs of illness, s/he may not be admitted into the program. Daily health inspections allow staff an opportunity to check each child for any potential illness. Communication between parents and staff to discuss how the child has been feeling and whether there has been an exposure to any contagious disease is vitally important for your child's wellbeing and that of other children and staff. When doing the daily health check, we are looking for signs of illness such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Unusual behavior (Examples are crankiness, pain, discomfort, very sleepy, the child may not "look or act themselves," or doesn't appear well enough to participate in routine school activities)
- Fever over 100.4 degrees
- Skin that is flushed, pale or unusually warm to the touch
- Sores on any part of the body that are open, have fluid in them or appear infected
- Unexplained skin rash, especially when accompanied by fever or behavior changes
- Red eyes with white or yellow discharge and/or crusty eyes
- Sore throat with fever or mouth sores with drooling
- Head lice or nits
- Runny nose – A child with a runny nose (green, yellow, or clear) should only be excluded if they also appear ill, are too sick to participate and/or have any other symptoms that they need to be excluded for.

Once at School, if a child develops the following symptoms, the parent or other authorized persons will be called and may be required to pick up the child within a reasonable amount of time:

- Fever – over 100.4 degrees
- Flu Symptoms
- Cough – severe uncontrolled coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea – runny or watery stools more than one time in an hour, any bloody diarrhea
- Vomiting –
- Stomachache – pain lasting more than one hour
- Earache or foreign body/injury in the ear that causes pain or bleeding
- Head Injury – if the child has associated symptoms
- Lacerations – a wound that will probably require sutures
- Unexplained skin rashes – especially accompanied by fever and/or behavior changes
- Unusual behavior

Please remember that staff are making “assessments” regarding potential illnesses. They look at each child’s case individually and are sensitive to the fact that family members need to go to work and school. Exclusion from school is to protect your child as well as others at *Carmel*.

If your child has any of the above symptoms and needs to be kept at home parents must notify the center before 9:00AM. A message can be left on Procure or on the answering machine in the school office at any time.

Plan ahead

Parents must keep emergency phone numbers current with the director and can do so directly at your MyProcure.com account. We must be able to reach you if your child becomes ill. Once contacted the parent has 30 minutes to either pick-up the child or send an authorized contact to *Carmel Nursery School*

- Please make plans for who will care for your child if they are too sick to attend *Carmel Nursery School* or need to go home unexpectedly.

When your child is sick, please be sure to promptly notify the office staff of their diagnosis and treatment by writing to the director at carmelnursery100@gmail.com. Also notify them if your child has a contagious disease or has been exposed to one. Such reports are treated with confidentiality. When necessary, staff will need to notify families of potential exposure to a contagious disease.

Guidelines for Returning to School

Children should be symptom free, and fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Children may return to school if the child is feeling well, remains fever free, and symptoms are resolving. Children who are prescribed antibiotics, in any form, are required to be on medication for a period of 24 hours prior to returning to school.

A permission to return to school note from the Physician is required for:

- Pink eye or conjunctivitis
- Contagious looking rashes e.g., scabies, impetigo, scarlet fever, hand foot and mouth disease
- Strep throat or mouth sores with drooling
- Hepatitis in family
- Meningitis in family
- Any child that has been sick and doesn't seem to be improving
- Any time a child is hospitalized or has a procedure done as an "outpatient" basis

We have the right to request a permission to return to school note at any time it is in the best interest of *Carmel Nursery School*. We also reserve the right to exclude a child with signs of illness even if a permission to return to school has been obtained. If you felt it was serious enough to seek medical assistance, please remember to ask for a permission to return to school note while still at the Physician's office.

At the direction of Federal, State and/or Local Government and the CDC, as in the case of the COVID pandemic, additional policies and protocols will be instituted to ensure that all steps are being taken to protect the health of our students, families, teachers, and staff.

Injuries

The staff work very hard to keep children safe and well, however, occasionally typical childhood accidents, such as bumps, scrapes and falls occur while in care. Staff will tend to minor injuries that can be adequately dealt with by using soap, water, antiseptic solution, ice, and bandages. An injury report will be completed to inform you of the type of injury, location on the child's body, how the injury occurred, where the injury occurred, treatment and child's reaction to the injury. Please sign the injury report and leave it with your child's teacher. Parents will be notified immediately of accidents requiring more extensive intervention.

If your child becomes injured more than just a boo-boo while at *Carmel Nursery School*, these steps will be followed:

1. The seriousness of the injury will be assessed.
2. First-aid will be administered and if necessary, emergency personnel will be contacted.
3. Parents will be contacted.
4. Persons listed as emergency contacts will be contacted if we are unable to contact you. *It is essential that you notify the staff if you are not going to be at your regularly scheduled work or training site and leave an alternate phone number.*

5. Arrangements will be made to have the child taken to the emergency room if necessary.
6. You or the person you designate (must be a person that you have listed as authorized to pick up) must pick up your child as soon as possible if you are called.
7. After a medical evaluation and/or treatment are administered, please contact the school to inform us of your child's status.

Carmel Nursery School is not responsible for the payment of fees such as medical or ambulance fees that may be associated with an injury that occurs on the premises.

Medications

It is encouraged for parents to give medications to their children at home. However, if it is necessary for your child to receive medication while at *Carmel Nursery School*, the following will apply:

Prescription Medication

- Container must have the original pharmacy label listing the child's name, physician's name, name of medicine, issue date, dosage, expiration date, and directions for administration and storage.
- Container must be child resistant
- Medication must be for the current illness

If your child needs to receive the medication during the day, inform the Lead Teacher who will give the medication to them. Parents will need to complete a Medication Consent Form for all medications (prescription). Parent's instructions on the consent form must be in accordance with the instructions from the Physician. If the consent form is incomplete, medication will *not* be administered, and parents may have to return during the day to give the medication until the form is completed. A new form needs to be completed whenever there is a change i.e., dosage. Medications can only be given to the child indicated on the label. Twins and siblings cannot share medications! Parents may ask their pharmacist to dispense a second labeled medication container for school. Children may not bring self-administered medicines i.e., aspirin, cough drops, eye drops.

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-Prescription medications must be in the original container and must be accompanied by a written doctor's note with instructions. Parents will need to complete a Medication Consent Form for all medications (non-prescription).

Medical Treatments

If your child is required to have one of the specific allowable treatment procedures, such as an inhaler, Epi-pen, or blood glucose monitoring, while in our care, you will be asked to complete additional permission requirements, plus demonstrate staff the proper use of the treatment.

Sunscreen

It is strongly recommended that children wear sunscreen to prevent sunburn. Parents should apply sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher before children come to school.

Allergies

If your child has been diagnosed with allergies, you must notify the School Nurse and Director. We must have a statement in writing from your child's Doctor describing the specific allergy, documented reaction, *emergency* medication management (i.e., Epi-pen, Benadryl, Zyrtec) and any special precautions.

If your child has any food allergies for which substitute foods or beverages are required, you must provide the statement from the child's Doctor stating the nature of the allergy and what substitutions are necessary.

Emergency Information

Your child will be instructed on emergency procedures while at school. S/he will participate in regular fire drills and learn other rules of safety. In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, staff will continue to care for your child until such time as you or your authorized representative can pick up your child. Each center has sufficient food and water or juice and other supplies to take care of children and staff for up to two days. Staff have disaster/emergency training. At all times, at least one staff member on duty has been trained in Infant/Child CPR. In any kind of natural disaster, if our facility has been determined to be safe, all children will remain on site unless an injury requires release to an emergency medical facility. In the event of an evacuation, signs will be clearly posted *at Carmel Nursery School* giving destination of evacuated children.

Only adults previously authorized on the emergency forms will be able to sign out children

Emergency Center Closure

The center may close or delay opening if the following conditions are present:

- Natural disaster which prevents use of the facility,
- Room conditions prevent adequate ventilation and breathing,
- Disruption of utilities which prevent meeting the nutritional needs of the children or natural light is diminished to be a risk to children and staff,
- Presence of live wires,
- Loss of water that disrupts hand washing, and toileting with clean running water,
- At the direction of local, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, or Federal governmental agencies in response to a declared emergency or crisis.

Emergency Center Closure due to *Inclement Weather Specifically*

- In the event of a Pennsylvania issued or Montgomery County issued "Weather state of emergency" our school will be closed until the "state of emergency" order is lifted
- *Carmel Nursery School* follows Abington School District for school closures and delayed openings due to weather.

NOTIFICATIONS to PARENTS about Closure or Delayed Openings:

- *Carmel Nursery School* web at presbycarmel.org
- *Carmel Nursery School* Facebook page
- Notification through the Procure App
- ABC, NBC, FOX and KYW

DEFINITION of Closure, Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal:

- If school is closed there are no staff or teachers on site. Closure includes early drop off and extended day programming.
- DELAYED OPENING is at 10 AM. On days when there is a delayed opening there is *no before care program*. Our staff and teachers will be on site and ready to welcome children at 10AM (two hours after the start of the core school day).
- EARLY DISMISSAL is at 1PM or as soon as possible after the emergency is declared. Parents will be notified about early dismissal using all the same notification channels listed above.

General Policies

Sign In and Out

Children may begin to arrive at the center at 6:00 AM. An adult must sign all children in and out of the center daily using the Procure App on their phone. We close promptly at 6:00 PM.

A person who is not listed on the Emergency Contact Form will not be allowed to pick up the child. Requests to add individuals to the Emergency Contact Form can be made at any time and must be made in writing. A "Permission to Release" form must be filled out for any individual picking up a child other than the legal parent/guardian.

Proper Identification is required before releasing a child. Please inform the teacher if someone other than the usual person will be picking up a child and make sure a "permission to release form" has been filled out.

State law requires that all children must be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint (safety seat or booster seat), until they are at least 6 years old OR at least 60 pounds. Never leave any child alone in the car no matter how short the time! It is not only unsafe, but also illegal.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child, or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program

Extra Clothing

Please provide your child with at least one complete change of clothing. Active play is very important to children's overall development. Your child will regularly participate in "messy" activities such as painting, cooking, sensory activities, etc. Sturdy and comfortable play clothes that are easy for little hands to manage are appropriate and help children to become self-sufficient. Play shoes that are low-heeled, lace-up, or have Velcro closure, and a rubber sole are recommended.

Children who are prone to wetting should bring plenty of extra underwear.

Please dress your child(ren) in clothes appropriate to the weather. The children go outside each day unless it is raining. If your child is too sick to go outside, he/she may be too sick to be at the center.

Children need an extra, complete set of clothes in the event of an accident. Parents whose children do not have clothes to change into will be called to pick-up their child or to bring in clothes. Staff will encourage children to take care of their belongings; however, we cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items. There will be a Lost and Found Box at the center. Please help your child learn to take care of his/her belongings.

- Any supplies that are needed will be written on the child's daily report.
- All clothing and supplies must be labeled.

Blankets and Nap Sheets

Each child who naps at *Carmel Nursery School* is required to provide a sleeping bag or nap sheet and a small blanket. The sleeping items are to be taken home at the end of the week and washed. If *Carmel Nursery School* must provide a sheet a fee of \$5 for each incident will be charged to the parent payable at the end of the month.

Confidentiality

The use or disclosure of all information pertaining to the child and his/her family shall be restricted to purposes directly connected with the administration of the program.

Child Abuse Reporting

All *Carmel Nursery School* staff is mandated by Pennsylvania law to report cases of suspected child neglect and/or abuse (physical, emotional, and/or sexual) immediately to a child protection agency. Child Abuse law considers discipline that results in bruises and any other injuries caused by spanking to be a form of child abuse. If you need information about disciplining your children or help with other parenting issues, please see the Director who will give you information, assistance and/or referrals to the appropriate services.

Snacks and Lunch

Snacks and lunch will be provided *by the parents* for all children in the 9:00 to 12:00 and 9:00 to 3:00 program.

Carmel Nursery School will provide two (2) snacks a day: (early morning and late afternoon) for the children enrolled for 8 hours or more. It will consist of fruit, crackers, cheese, vegetables, muffins, etc. The parent of a child enrolled for 8 or more hours still needs to provide snacks and lunch for the middle of the day. Nutritious lunches are provided by the parent. All lunches should be nutritious and something your child will eat. No candy or soda should be sent in. Any parent who wants to bring in something for their child's birthday may do so, if it is not candy. Please be cognizant of food allergies posted.

Food Allergies

If your child has any food allergies, please notify the Office in writing. Provide a doctor's note indicating the nature of the allergy and the steps that should be taken in the event of an allergic reaction. Epi-pens must be in their original prescription box and will be kept with the classroom teacher. A medication log and physician's prescriptive note must be given to the Director prior to the child's attendance. A general letter notifying other classroom parents will be sent out and posted to make them aware of the allergies.

Parent Responsibility

It is the goal of *Carmel Nursery School* to maintain a safe, caring, and respectful environment for children, staff, and parents. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. Unacceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Use of abusive or offensive language including, but not limited to harassment, threats, yelling, rudeness, and profanity.
- Theft or damage to property.
- Physical or verbal abuse of children, staff, or other parents.
- Defiance of authority or disrespectful behavior of any kind

Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs and smoking are prohibited at *Carmel Nursery School*. As stated in more detail above, no child will be released to anyone who appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

Parents, children, and staff are expected to maintain a respectful relationship with each other. Parents demonstrating any of the above unacceptable behaviors may be terminated from the program.

It is not appropriate for parents to approach other parents or children to address an incident that happened at the school. Parents must deal with such concerns through the Teacher or Director.

1. If an incident occurs, the parents will be asked to leave the premises.

2. The parent will be required to meet with the designated administrative staff person for the child to remain in the program.
3. Continuation in the program will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of the incident.
4. If the family continues in care, another such incident will result in termination from the program.

Weather

Children are outside often as they explore the outdoor classroom. Children should come to school wearing appropriate clothing for the season for them to be comfortable while outdoors. On days of extreme temperatures (cold or hot) the children may use the gym or an alternate classroom for gross motor play.

Toys

Please help your child keep toys at home. Security objects such as a favorite stuffed animal are an exception and are welcome. Books and items related to the current unit of study are encouraged at any time; just check with your child's teacher before bringing them into the center. Please mark these items with your child's name. ***Toy guns, weapons, knives, and money are never permitted.***

Birthdays

A child's birthday is a day of celebration for some families, and we will be happy to help make this a special occasion. Children start talking about their birthday weeks ahead of time, telling the Teachers, "It's going to be my birthday." We will provide your child with a special birthday crown and sing the happy birthday song. Treats are OK to share as part of the child's celebration – please store bought only and must adhere to any food allergy precautions in effect.

Visitors

All visitors *at Carmel Nursery School* need to sign-in at the Administration Office. Any visitors to see children need to show their picture identification and be listed on the Emergency Form as an authorized individual.

After Hours Child Care/Babysitting

Staff are not permitted to solicit or provide care for children enrolled outside normal working hours. Staff are not permitted to provide transportation for children enrolled.

Potty Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not

physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and

when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Toddler groups have those who are in diapers and some in pull-ups and going without accidents! Once a child is showing signs of readiness and ability to control his/her movements and you begin training at home we will follow through and encourage the child while in our care. We welcome frequent updates from home, so we are aware of any specific prompts the child gives, what words and techniques are you using at home etc.

Naturally, the high activity level of school can sometimes distract children from responding to the urge to use the potty. Our policy in support of potty training is as follows:

- Children are encouraged to use the potty every 30min
- Staff will never put a child on the potty unless the child is willing.
- Staff cannot wash out soiled clothing per regulations set by the CDC. They are required to put soiled clothing in a plastic bag for you to take home and wash.
- We ask that child is sent in with loose fitting clothing that s/he can manage independently. Try to avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps or buttons, overalls, and tight leggings.
- We ask parents to supply pull-ups, wipes and extra clothing (including socks) daily.
Pull ups with Velcro sides are preferred.
- A pull-up will be put on during naptime
- If a child is coming in in underwear and has two or more accidents in a single day, we would ask that they go back into pull-ups until they are able to stay dry for at least three days.

Discipline and Guidance

The goal of *Carmel Nursery School's* discipline policy is to assist children in developing emotional regulation and self-discipline through respectful interactions that support children's emotional growth. The early years are a time of immense cognitive, physical, and emotional growth for young children. Young children are still egocentric, meaning they still think mostly of their own needs and wants as opposed to the needs of others. Because of this, it is not unusual for young children to use physical or verbal aggression in attempt to get their needs met. It is our job as adults in the environment to guide children through this time by setting clear limits and following through appropriately and consistently. Staff helps children understand the expectation for reasonable behavior by discussing, giving examples and by redirecting children to appropriate activities. Gradually, children are helped toward self-control and gain a sense of pride in their ability to care for themselves and each other.

“Rules” to Keep Everyone Safe

In our environment there are behaviors that need to be stopped by adults:

1. Physical aggression such as:
 - a) Hitting
 - b) Slapping

- c) Pinching
 - d) Biting (some toddlers go through a biting stage which is undesirable but a normal developmental process. Teachers try to eliminate biting before it starts through close supervision. If a child does bite, we will first attend to the child who was bitten then address the issue with the biting child by stating, “no biting, biting hurts”).
 - e) Throwing objects at others
2. Willful destruction of school property such as:
 - a) Ripping books
 - b) Breaking toys or other items
 3. Engaging in activities that may be physically or emotionally harmful to themselves or others such as:
 - a) Teasing
 - b) Name calling
 - c) Threatening language
 - d) Using equipment in a dangerous way

This list is not meant to cover every eventuality that may occur. It is important that the adults in the environment manage each case individually

Procedures for Dealing with Unacceptable Behavior

If the unacceptable behavior persists over time the following procedures will be followed: The teacher will help the child to change the behavior. Methods used may include redirection, reinforcement of positive behaviors and/or choices between acceptable behaviors. If the negative behavior continues further action may be required and will include a parent conference, behavioral plan, observation, and referrals. If the behavior endangers others, is persistent the child may be removed from the program.

Termination Policy

Carmel Nursery School reserves the right to exclude children and/or families when it is in the best interest of the program. Termination may include but is not limited to:

- Chronic late payment
- Excessive absence
- Fraudulent information
- Safety and Health concerns
- Failure to follow policies
- Failure to comply with state regulations and guidelines
- Failure to maintain current contact information
- If the staff is unable to meet the physical, social or emotional needs of the child

Withdrawal Policy

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn.

Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally. If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.