

THE CHAPEL SCHOOL
2011-2012 Parent Handbook

26 Pleasant Street
Methuen, MA 01844
978 689 8414
ChapelKids.com

Staff

DIRECTOR - Cindy Mazella

OFFICE MANAGER - Sue Donohue

OUR TEACHING STAFF

Krista Bajor
Simone Bradley
Leslie Buresh
Carolyn Casey
Christine Deck
Jayne Downing
Patty Donald
Lisa MacDonald
Carol Sasso

The Chapel Staff are all licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education & Care (EEC). Each staff member is Lead Teacher or Teacher qualified and First Aid & CPR Certified. Staff training and professional development are an ongoing process. The teachers all participate in workshops and courses throughout the year related to Early Childhood Curriculum and Child Development.

Chapel Committee

The school's governing board is The Chapel School Committee. This committee oversees the financial and policy-making components of the program.

The members that serve on this committee meet monthly with the director to discuss program issues. To serve on the committee you must be a member of First Church, Congregational or a Chapel Parent. Terms of service are from 1 - 4 years. If any parent is interested in serving on the committee please contact the director.

State License

The Chapel School is licensed by the Department of Early Education & Care. This license is valid for two years and is subject to revocation, suspension or probation by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Parents may contact EEC for information, regarding the program's regulatory compliance history at 978 681-9684. The regional office is located 360 Merrimack St. Lawrence, MA 01843

Philosophy

Chapel is committed to providing a warm and caring learning environment where children can grow and develop self-confidence and self expression in a school setting.

Our primary goal is to foster in each child a positive attitude toward school and learning.

Program Offerings

TWO DAY: (3 - 4 YEARS OLD)

Tuesday & Thursday 8:30 - 11:30

Tuesday & Thursday 12:15 - 3:15

THREE DAY: (4 - 5 YEARS OLD)

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8:30 - 11:30

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 12:15 - 3:15

FIVE DAY: (4 - 5 YEARS OLD)

Monday - Friday 8:30 - 11:30

FIVE DAY PRE -K: (5 YEARS OLD by December 31st)

Monday - Friday 8:30- 11:30

EXTENDED DAY: (Morning classes)

Preschool 11:30 - 2

Optional Early Drop Off 7:30 (Morning Classes)
Optional Late Pick up 4:15 (Afternoon Classes)

Financial Matters

Registration

Registration is on a first-come, first serve basis. Completed forms and fees are taken beginning in January for the following school year. Being prompt will assure your child's placement, and choice of time slot.

Preschool Registration

A registration form completed and signed by the parent along with a \$75.00 non-refundable fee.

5 Day Pre-K Registration

A registration form completed and signed by the parent along with a \$75.00 registration fee plus the first month's tuition is required. Both of these fees are non-refundable.

Discrimination Statement

The Chapel School employs a policy of non-discrimination in all of its services to children and their families. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability. Toilet Training is not an eligibility requirement.

Tuition

PRESCHOOL

2 DAY - \$1575.00 Yearly 3 DAY - \$2115.00 Yearly
5 DAY - \$2655.00 Yearly

5 DAY PRE-K - \$2655.00 Yearly

Tuition is based on 9 payments made September through May.

EXTENDED DAY - \$60.00 A DAY PER MONTH

Tuition is due the 1st of each month. All tuition must be paid by the 1st of May in order for your child to complete the program..

Payments can be dropped off to the Chapel office or mailed. Please **Do Not Allow** your child to hand carry the tuition to school and **DO NOT** leave the tuition payment with your child's teacher. Make all checks payable to The Chapel School.

Please Note - Please write your child's name on the check to assure your payment is recorded properly. There have been mix-ups with same last name, or payments by a 2nd party.

Discounts

Tuition for two children from the same family will be: full tuition for the first child and 10% off tuition for the second child. One registration fee is required per family.

Tuition

Tuition is figured as an annual fee. It may be paid in full by September 30th, or in nine equal monthly installments due the first of each month, beginning with September and ending with May. Because tuition is an annual fee no refunds are given for illness, vacations, or snow days, and those days are not made up.

Full Payment

A full payment of the tuition will be given a 5% discount. The tuition must be paid in full by September 30th to qualify. This does not apply to Lunch Bunch or extended day fees. Discounts cannot be combined.

Additional Fees

Late Payments

Tuition is due monthly and payable the 1st of each month. Payments not made by the 5th of each month will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee.

Late Pick Up

Children need to be picked up promptly at dismissal time. Children can become anxious and worried when parents are late. A late fee will be assessed for children not picked up on time. Each additional 5 minutes will be assessed \$5.00.

Returned Checks

There will be a charge of \$35.00 for all returned checks. Any additional bank fees are the parent's responsibility.

The success of the program depends on each and every prompt payment.

Program Operations

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedure

Please be sure your child is on time for class and picked up promptly. Children need to be walked into their classrooms accompanied by an adult to ensure a safe arrival. Please stay with your child until you make contact with your child's teacher(s).

Please be on time to pick-up your child at dismissal. Parents are asked to wait outside their child's classroom door until the teacher is ready to dismiss all the children.

Only authorized adults are allowed to pick up children. Authorized adults are those who are listed on the authorization form in your child's file. If there is a change from the usual authorized person, please notify the teacher at arrival or call the office.

If your child is to be picked up by another person not on the authorization form, please let us know in writing in advance. We are very careful whom we release children to.

Morning Sessions

Parents should arrive no sooner than 8:25. The teachers are preparing the classrooms at this time. The doors will open at 8:25.

Afternoon Sessions

Parents should arrive no sooner than 12:10. The teachers are eating lunch and preparing the classrooms at this time. The doors will reopen at this time.

Attendance

It is important for children to attend school on a regularly scheduled basis. Regular attendance develops a sense of belonging and routine to a child's developing time frame. A sense of security and trust forms knowing that everyone has come to school that day.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please call the Chapel office (689-8414). If you know in advance that your child will be unable to attend school, please inform your child's teacher.

Parking Lot Safety

The parking lot is a busy place and can be very dangerous for little ones. We want to ensure the safe arrival and departure of everyone.

Dismissal time can be very hectic, and we need to be mindful of a few safety rules as we exit the building. The parking lot can be a very dangerous place.

1. Always hold your child's hand.
2. Do Not let your child run out of the building alone. (Children are quicker than the brakes on your car.)
3. Do Not leave your child unattended in the car, near the car, or on the playground.
4. Do Not leave your car running unattended.
5. Do not allow your child to run around the parking lot.
6. Please be mindful of the accessibility of the limited spaces and do not park in such a manner that others are blocked or unable to back out of a parking space.
7. Some parents use the front entrance on Pleasant Street. This is allowed providing others are not blocked. **Do Not** park on the grass.
8. Please use the Steven's Street entrance and exit on High Street. The gates are marked for your convenience.
9. Please read additional notice included in your Open House Packet.
10. Please share these rules with anyone else transporting your child.

Birthday

Children enjoy celebrating their birthday at Chapel. Parents can speak directly to their child's teacher to arrange a day. A special treat can be sent in for all the children in the class. Please refer to the **Acceptable Snack List**, given to you in your Open House packet. Home baked & store baked products are not allowed in the classrooms. If your child's birthday is in the summer or during a vacation an "un" birthday day can also be arranged. **DISTRIBUTING BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS FOR OUTSIDE PARTIES ARE DISCOURAGED.**

Snack

Snacks are provided by Chapel. The children are given a variety of snacks. The menu includes milk along with crackers & jelly, a variety of fruits, vegetables, dip, pretzels, & animal crackers. Please be sure to feed your child breakfast/lunch. Please do not send your child to school chewing gum. Cooking projects are an important part of our curriculum also. We always eat what we've created. The children enjoy many new tasting experiences.

Children with food allergies are always given another choice or asked to bring their own snack depending on the level of the allergy. Parents are asked to be mindful of food allergies when sending in birthday or holiday treats. Always check with the teachers to be sure.

Please be sure to read the **Food Allergies Snack & Birthday Policy** included in the Open House Packet.

Chapel is a Peanut & Nut Free Center

Additional handouts are included in the Open House Packet to raise awareness and inform parents on how to read labels.

Each classroom has a Snack Menu Calendar posted. The teachers document the snack served daily on this calendar. Parents can check this menu at anytime.

If you have a suggestion for a healthy snack or birthday treat, please let us know.

Holiday Celebrations

Chapel celebrates the following holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter. More information regarding these celebrations will be provided during the school year and posted on our website.

Hide And Tell Box

Our version of Show & Tell is the Hide & Tell Box. Each classroom has a special box that will go home on a rotating basis with each child.

Chapel discourages children from bringing toys from home to school. Our school cannot be responsible for lost or breakage of toys from home. We strongly advise you not to send your child to school with action figures.

Clothing

Comfortable clothing and footwear is a must. Children at this age are developing a new sense of independence and are less frustrated when they can move about being busy and involved without the fear of being inhibited by dressy clothes and restricted footwear. Play clothes and sneakers seem to work best for the many varied and "messy" activities that are part of the learning process at this age. Sandals should not be worn to school.

It is also important that clothing be as easy as possible for your child to manage in the bathroom. We don't want to inhibit their growing sense of independence.

Outdoor clothing such as jackets, sweaters, hats, mittens, should be clearly **LABELED** to avoid mix ups.

School bags or back packs are helpful but not necessary. Children's papers, art project and school newsletters and notices are stapled together to ensure that you receive everything. Please **label** school bags or backpacks too.

Parent/Teacher Conference

Written progress reports are completed on each child twice a year. (January & May). Individual conferences with parents are scheduled in January.

At any other time a matter of interest or concern arises in your child's life, parents are encouraged to set up a meeting with their child's teacher.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are welcome to assist the office staff as well as the teachers in the classroom. It is important to prearrange the day and time you can help so that we can make the most of your time spent here. We can always use an extra pair of hands. If you have a special talent or a handyman talent please let us know.

Fieldtrips

In house field trips are scheduled throughout the school year. Bringing the field trip to the children (fireman, police man, etc.) has proven very successful. Walking field trips to the Methuen Nevins Library or park are routinely arranged also. Written parental permission is required for any field trip when leaving the school grounds.

Photographs & Publicity

We take many pictures of the children throughout the school year and are proud to display them for everyone to enjoy. Photographs capture many memorable moments of the children involved in daily activities. If you are uncomfortable having your child's picture displayed please let us know. Photographs will only be taken and displayed for use within the school. If an opportunity arises for a photograph to be publicly used or for a press release, parents will be contacted for written permission.

Communications

Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is sent home with your child. This newsletter is an overall program information source.

Classroom Updates

Updates are sent home regularly by each classroom teaching team. This information keeps parents informed about curriculum and activities specific to the child's class.

Notices

Many other notices are sent home as well. Please be sure to check your child's papers. Open communication is an important aspect in strengthening the home/school relationship. Keeping parents informed is very critical to open communication and the success of each child's progress and consistency at Chapel.

Bulletin Boards

Chapel's bulletin board & weekly easel board is located in the main lobby. Newsletters, notices, and current information is posted there. Parents often ask to post carpools, baby-sitting services, etc. Please speak to the director before posting items. Thank you.

Website

The Chapel Website is also another source of information. As we prepare to launch our new and improved website, we will be able to keep you up to date with timely reminders and postings of all newsletters from the office and as well as the classroom newsletters.

School Calendar

Chapel's school year calendar is included in this Handbook and posted on The Chapel School website. The holidays and vacations correspond with those of the Methuen Public schools. Parents will be notified in advance should there be any changes in the calendar.

School Cancellations

Chapel follows Methuen Public Schools for Weather Cancellations.

School cancellations due to snow, inclement weather and hazardous driving conditions will be announced on Channel 10 Methuen Cable TV. The major TV stations will also announce Methuen Public Schools No School Announcements.

In the event of a delayed opening, morning classes will be cancelled only. Afternoon classes will be in session.

As always if you feel that the driving conditions are not safe, then your own discretion is advised.

Unexpected Cancellations

In the past, Chapel has had to cancel classes due to electrical or heating outages, specific only to Chapel. In these unusual circumstances, once the decision is made to close, a voice mail message will be recorded on the Chapel answering machine and posted on our website. Every attempt will be made to call each family directly.

Policies

Child Guidance

The staff of Chapel will not allow any child to be treated in any manner that is inconsistent with the accepted knowledge of the developmental growth patterns of the young child.

Cooperative and interpersonal skills are emphasized. Children learn through role modeling and imitation of others behaviors. The Chapel Staff demonstrates and reinforces positive behavior. Safety and respect for each other and for classroom materials is emphasized. We use redirection, logical consequences, and prevention strategies to promote self control and positive self-esteem. Time Out is not used.

The Staff will be prohibited:

1. To use any means of corporal punishment including spanking.
2. To use any form of punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
3. To use the denial of food as a form of punishment.
4. To punish a child for soiling or wetting or not using a toilet.

Toileting Plan

No child shall be punished, verbally abused or humiliated for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Children cannot be denied admission to The Chapel School based on their toilet training status.

Children must wash their hands with soap and running water at the following times: after toileting and before snacks. Staff members must also wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting or toileting themselves. Paper towels must be used to dry hands. Hand washing is also required upon arrival to school and before and after waterplay.

Soiled clothing will be double-bagged in plastic/water proof containers and stored apart from other items.

A change of clean clothing will be available in case an "accident" occurs. New underwear will be provided by the school. Please launder outer clothing and return to school promptly. Underwear cannot be returned. New underwear is always appreciated.

At the beginning of each school year, the classroom teacher shall familiarize each child with the bathroom she/he will be using as well as the location of tissue, soap and paper towels.

Extra clothes can be kept in child's backpack. **Please Label Backpacks.** Children become easily confused in identifying their belongings.

Referral

There may be times when our staff becomes concerned with a child's developmental progress.

1. Prior to making a referral to appropriate educational or medical services, the teacher will observe and record concerns.
2. The director and the teacher will meet to confer with the parents regarding their concerns and will provide the parents with a written statement containing a brief summary of the observations related to the referral as well as the efforts made by The Chapel School to accommodate the child's needs.
3. Parents written consent will be requested by The Chapel School before any referral is initiated.
4. Referral will be made to a local school Early Childhood Coordinator or to appropriate medical services.

Withdrawal

It is customary for the parents of a child withdrawing from Chapel to provide the school with one months notice.

Termination

A child will be asked to leave under the following circumstances:

1. Refusal to make arrangements for payment.
2. Lack of parental cooperation with school staff.
3. When a child's needs can no longer be served by the program.

The parents will be notified in writing, the circumstances surrounding the termination and reasons for actions. Chapel will assist the parents with information about other services and assist the child in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

(a) **Emergency telephone numbers**

Fire/Police/Ambulance	911	Chapel School Office	689-8414
Holy Family Hospital Pediatric Health Clinic	687-0370	Health Care Consultant Norm Porter	978-794-2277
Holy Family Hospital	687-0156	Poison Control	1-800-682-9211

(b) **Procedures for emergencies and illness**

Notification of director or office manager
Notification of parents or designated adult (consent form)
Permission for action;
Transportation - Call 911

(c) **Procedures for using and maintaining first aid equipment**

First Aid equipment is located in office, kitchen, and teacher's room with manuals. First Aid is administered by the director and the staff who are certified in first aid. Materials and supplies are constantly checked by the director and reviewed annually by the health care consultant. All adults transporting children in their vehicles on a field trip will carry a portable first aid kit with emergency telephone numbers.

(d) **Plan for evacuation of center in emergency**

An evacuation plan is posted in each room. Each teacher takes daily attendance upon arrival of the children. Documentation of any early dismissal will be highlighted with a marker for reference in an emergency evacuation. The director is responsible for assuring that evacuation drills are practiced with all groups of children and staff every month and for maintaining documentation of the date, time and effectiveness of each drill. In the event of an emergency that would force an early dismissal, parents will be contacted by phone to pick up their children.

(e) **Injury prevention plan**

The director and staff are responsible for assessing the environment on a daily basis to identify and eliminate hazards. A central log is kept in the school office to be maintained by the director. The log contains the date, and treatment of the injury. A copy is placed in child's file. The log is reviewed on a regular basis at staff meetings to identify areas which could contribute to incidence of injury. A boo-boo notice is filled out and sent home with the child documenting the incident, treatment given and by whom.

(f) **Plan for managing infectious disease**

Children with signs of infection such as fevers, rashes, drainage from eyes, mouth or any site; children with vomiting, diarrhea, excessive coughing, sneezing or headache will be sent home until symptoms no longer exist. Medical care and treatment may be necessary. Medical treatment by a physician is recommended for Impetigo, conjunctivitis, strep throat and any other contagious disease. The duration of the absence will 24 to 48 hours or relative to the diagnosis and treatment plan. Universal precautions will be taken while a child is in our care. In the event of any diagnosed communicable disease, a letter will be sent home to parents alerting them to the disease and precautions to take.

(g) **Plan for infection control**

Hand washing procedures are posted in bathrooms. Staff and children will be instructed in the beginning of the school year regarding proper procedure and frequency of hand washing. The director will periodically inspect to ensure that hand washing procedures are carried out. Liquid soap and running water, using friction will be used. Staff and children must wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival to school
- Before eating or handling food
- After toileting
- After coming into contact with body fluids and discharges
- After handling center animals or their equipment
- After cleaning

Universal precautions will be followed at all times

Staff are responsible for disinfecting surfaces and equipment using an EPA registered solution. All staff are trained in infection control procedures. The janitor and cleaning service are responsible for disinfecting the bathrooms and floors at the end of each day. All cleaning supplies and disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place and out of reach of children.

(h) **Plan for meeting the individual needs of mildly ill children while in care.**

Mildly ill children are cared for in the director's office until a parent or authorized adult is reached to take the child home. A cot is provided for rest and fluids and comfort measures are provided as needed. Until the child has been dismissed all his/her physical, social and emotional needs shall be monitored.

(i) **Plan for administering medication including prescription, non-prescription and topical medications.**

It is the general policy of the school that no medications are administered. However, specific circumstances may warrant that emergency medications are available such as epinephrine auto- injectors for bee sting or food allergies. In these situations medications are kept in the original containers with the child's name, name of drug, and directions for administration and storage. This medication will have a note attached that has granted authorization for administration by the child's parents and physician. This information will be kept in a log in the director's office. Parents are advised to review and train their child's teachers and office staff in specific administration of their child's medication plan. If medication is given, all information regarding time, dosage and by whom will be documented in the child's file. All medications are returned at the end of the school year back to the parents. Training in medication administration will be done by The Chapel School's Health Care Consultant, Norm Porter.

(j) **Plan for meeting specific health care needs.**

All allergies are reported on the application form and medical form. This information is then posted in each classroom, the Chapel office and in the snack cabinet. The child's reaction to the allergy is described with appropriate measures to be taken in event of accidental exposure. This information is reviewed with each teacher.

(k) **Procedure for identifying and reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services.**

Telephone number of DCF office Region III - 689-2688 (8:45 - 5:00 p.m.)

- Chapel will report to DCF any suspected incident of physical abuse, emotional abuse, environmental concerns, sexual abuse or neglect to the DCF Office.
- Teachers will report any observational concerns to the director.
- Incident will be documented.
- Director will consult with parents
- If the school finds reasonable cause, the incident will be reported by telephone to the local DCF Office. 978 - 689-2688
- If the incident is determined just cause by DCF, they will then investigate. The school must follow-up with a written 51A report within 48 hours of the phone call.
- Child - at - Risk hotline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) 1-800-792-5200

All suspected reports or allegations of abuse of a child while in the care of The Chapel School will be reported to Early Education & Care.

Chapel will cooperate in all investigations. Failure to cooperate may be grounds for Suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue or renew a license.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

Emergency telephone numbers

Fire /Police/Ambulance	911	Chapel School Office 978 689-8414
Holy Family Hospital Pediatric Health Clinic	978 687-0370	Health Care Consultant Norm Porter 978 794-2277
Holy Family Hospital	978 687-1240	Poison Control Center 1-800-682-9211

PROCEDURE:

1. Immediately notify director
2. Notify parents – permission to allow for action
3. Call ambulance (911)
4. Notify child's pediatrician

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Assure calm, orderly, single file evacuation of the class.
2. Take attendance book with you. Check attendance when safely out of building
3. Close the door behind you.
4. Take children to designated area
5. Return to the classroom, after alarm has stopped and cleared by director.

Exit Procedure

PRESCHOOL 1	Exit classroom through front door to flag pole circle
UPSTAIRS Pre- K	Exit down the stairs, take a right and out through the Downstairs classroom to flag pole circle.
PRESCHOOL 2	Exit hallway door between classrooms, walk along building to parking lot, to fence along playground.
PRESCHOOL 3	Exit to Parish Hall, left to playground door, to parking lot door, to fence along playground .