



**Infant, Toddler, Preschool, Kindergarten
and School Age Programs**

Family Handbook

Updated January 2018

This Family Handbook is intended to provide all new and existing families with Great Bay Kids' Company's current standards and policies. A hard copy will be given to each new family upon enrollment. Any current families at the time of any handbook revisions will be notified per our changes to policies procedure which can be found within the handbook. Updates will be posted on our website at www.greatbaykids.org. An email notice will be sent to families to inform of the policy change.

**Welcome to
Great Bay Kids'
Company!**

(This page intentionally left blank)

Welcome Note

Dear Great Bay Kids' Company Family,

We want to officially welcome you to our Great Bay Kids' Company family. Early childhood education in the first five years is the foundation for all future learning, and we thank you for choosing us as your child's educators. Here at Great Bay Kids' Company, you will find knowledgeable and accessible staff; think of us as your partners in your child's development and success in education.

With a variety of coursework and degrees in the field of early childhood education, our teachers are providing the environment and curriculum that is perfect for your child's continuing growth and development in all areas. Our administrators have a variety of backgrounds in education and experiences in early childhood education that bring expertise in the management of our program.

Great Bay Kids' Company is licensed by the State of New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Unit, and we also hold Licensed Plus standing. We guarantee a safe and welcoming environment to you and your child/children.

As a part of the Great Bay Kids' Company family, you are welcome at the center at any time. Research has proven that you and your family play an incredible role in your child's education. We have an open door policy to parents and encourage family involvement at our center through visits or volunteering in your child's classroom.

This handbook outlines many systems we've put in place to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment that works for the families, children, and staff. Please utilize this handbook as a reference of our policies and procedures. After reviewing this handbook at your enrollment appointment, please sign the Signature Page in the back of this handbook and return it to your Program Director along with any other remaining paperwork, at least one full week before your child's start date. A copy of the handbook can also be found on our website at www.greatbaykids.org.

On behalf of all Great Bay Kids' Company families, staff and Board of Directors, we value your family, input, and involvement in Great Bay Kids' Company.

Katelyn Dennis

Katelyn Dennis,
Executive Director

Administrative Offices
81 New Hampshire Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801
P: 603-772-9830
F: 603-772-4917

Holly Davis, Pease Director
h.davis@greatbaykids.org
81 New Hampshire Avenue
Portsmouth, NH 03801
P: 603-766-5437
F: 603-766-5439

Tara Stone, Pease Director
t.stone@greatbaykids.org

Bekah Kistler, Exeter Director
b.kistler@greatbaykids.org
64 Epping Road
Exeter, NH 03833
P: 603-772-4132
F: 603-772-5962

Emily Scarito, School-Age Director
e.scarito@greatbaykids.org
64 Epping Road
Exeter, NH 03833
P: 603-772-4132
F: 603-772-5962

Audra Indelicato, Newmarket Director
a.indelicato@greatbaykids.org
3 Simons Lane
Newmarket, NH 03857
P: 603-659-2324
F: 603-659-6882

Table of Contents	4-5
<hr/>	
Welcome Note	3
<hr/>	
About Great Bay Kids' Company	6-8
Mission Statement	6
Program Philosophy	6
Our History	6-7
Board of Directors	7
Fundraising	7
Enrollment	7
Attendance	8
Statement of Non-Discrimination	8
Snow Days & Emergency Closings	8
Program Closings and Holidays	8
<hr/>	
Billing and Tuition	9-10
Fees/ Payments	9
Payment Policies	9
Overdue Payment Procedures	9-10
Withdrawal	10
Late Pick-Up Fee	10
Drop-In Care	10
<hr/>	
Program Orientation	11-21
Great Bay Kids' Company Staff	11
Who we are & what we do	11-12
Employing Students as Staff	12
Professional Development	12-13
Current Programs Offered	13
Center Ratios/ Group Sizes	14
Arrivals/ Departures	14
What to Bring/ Not to Bring	15
Classroom Plans and Schedules	15-16
Curriculum	16
Developmental Screenings	16-17
Transitions	17
Outdoor Gross Motor Play	17
Nap/ Rest Time	18
Social Media	18
Inclusion	18
Custody, Visitation, Support, Care and Related Issues	18-19
Reporting Suspected Abuse and Neglect	19
Discipline Philosophy	19
Challenging Behavior	19-20
Biting	20-21
Field Trips	21

Table of Contents continued

4-5

Health/ Safety & Nutrition/ Wellness	22-26
Child Immunizations/Physicals	22
Illness	22
Medication Policy	22-23
Injured Child/ First Aid	23-24
Emergency Transportation	24
Emergencies & Drills	24
Emergency Operations Plan	24
Wellness Policy	24-25
Meals & Nutrition	25
USDA Non-Discrimination Policy	25-26
Parent Partnerships	26
Communication	
Parent Groups/Parent Involvement	
Family Handbook Statement	
Parent Handbook Signature Page	27

About Great Bay Kids' Company

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT

Great Bay Kids' Company (the "Agency" or "GBKC") is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality early childhood education and school-age enrichment programs for children.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

"The Child Comes First" is the basic philosophy of the Agency. We believe that the program must attempt to adjust to the child's needs, rather than the child to the program. Planning and implementation revolve around the needs and cues from each child. By respecting and encouraging individual abilities, we hope to develop a strong feeling of self-esteem in each child.

Since children's needs are diverse, we provide for all aspects of the child's development: physical, intellectual, emotional and social. Our programs are designed to integrate all aspects of the child's development. Our primary goal at GBKC is to help each child to become a well-rounded individual. Each program offers an environment filled with warmth and caring. At the same time, we strive to provide a safe environment for each child to learn, grow and be happy. You will be given an information sheet about your child's specific program and daily schedule upon enrollment.

OUR HISTORY

The Newmarket Community Action Council for Day Care Centers, Inc. was incorporated in September of 1967 as a non-profit organization to administer quality child care programs for children. The Center's funding came through local fundraising and a grant from the Spaulding-Potter Charitable Trust. In 1973, the Agency applied for a 3 to 1 matching federal grant through the Division of Welfare. In 1980 the name of the Agency changed to "The Newmarket/ Exeter Child Care Center Inc." to reflect the additional programs provided. We changed names again in 1997 to reflect who we are today, Great Bay Kids' Company.

The Newmarket Child Care Center was opened on October 2, 1967 for 40 children. It was relocated to 3 Simons Lane in Newmarket in 1977, where it still stands. In 1983 the building was expanded to serve 64 children. Newmarket's program has changed to meet the needs of the community, with their most recent addition including an infant program, starting in 2016.

Due to the growing need for child care in the Exeter area, a center was opened in January of 1975 in that community to hold 50 children. The Exeter location outgrew its original facility and moved to 13 School Street in Exeter in 1992. This property also incorporated the SAU#16 Developmental Preschool operated by the school district. In the fall of 2008 the program expanded to include a Toddler Program for children ages 2-3 years. With an increasing demand for infant and one-year-old care, GBKC built a new facility in Exeter in 2015 and opened the doors in September of that year to its current building at 64 Epping Road.

We established before and after school programs in Exeter in 1990. Programs at both the Main Street and Lincoln Street schools offer care for elementary school children before and after regular school hours as well as during school vacations, some holidays and snow days. In the fall of 2008 we opened an after-school program at the Newfield's Elementary School for children in Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Due to a need for more quality child care in the Portsmouth area, we opened a center at the Pease Tradeport in January of 2010. This center is located at 81 New Hampshire Avenue and was our first center to provide care for infants. This is also the location of our Agency's business office.

Fiscal support from the town, state, and county governments, the United Way of the Greater Seacoast, New Hampshire Division of Health and Human Services as well as fundraising and donations help the Agency provide programs to serve over 600 families, annually.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

GBKC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who have the responsibility of hiring the Executive Director and guiding the administrative staff with general agency policy. Community members, staff and parents are encouraged to attend the open sessions of the Board meetings and participate in committee meetings. If you would like more information about our Board of Directors please contact our Executive Director.

FUNDRAISING

In order to support the monetary needs of our not-for-profit agency, fundraising occurs throughout the year. We work towards diversifying the income of our funds to keep the cost of tuition as reasonable as possible for our families. The Agency holds one larger fundraising event each year. This event is an adult-only evening with food, dancing and silent auction. Community participation is essential to the success of this event. The money raised from this event goes into our Agency's general budget and helps to keep child care costs reasonable for families. Other fundraisers include our Logo Shop, Dot Dot Smile dresses, Yankee Candle, Coin Wars & other family events. Please talk with your center's Program Director to find out information concerning our fundraising efforts or to join our fundraising committee.

ENROLLMENT

Children are eligible for enrollment on a first come/first served basis. Priority is given to children at risk referred by the Division of Children, Youth and Families and to siblings of enrolled children in order to keep families together. Part-time and drop-in care is provided on a space-available basis.

If we are unable to enroll your child immediately, we ask that you fill out a wait list form and submit it electronically on our website. The wait list form is time and date stamped to offer care on a first come/first served basis. The wait list form can be held by our office for no more than 30 days, without a wait list deposit. Your family's wait list fee can be paid by check or cash at any location, or mailed into the business office. Upon enrollment, your wait list fee becomes the registration fee. This fee is non-refundable if you do not enroll your child.

During the enrollment process, all necessary forms will be completed, policies and procedures reviewed and tuition agreements will be signed. Enrollment will begin on a Monday with payment prior to enrollment. The enrollment deposit consists of a registration fee (waived if you have paid the wait list fee, prior), activity fee, and one week's tuition. If you choose to start your child in the middle of a week, the full week's tuition payment is still required.

All children are required to have an up-to-date immunization record on file prior to entering child care. All significant medical facts (allergies etc.) must be made clear during the enrollment process. In accordance with the New Hampshire Child Care Program Licensing Rules (the "NH Licensing Rules"), every child must have an up-to-date physical within 60 days of enrollment. Thereafter, physical records must be updated annually for children 5 years of age and under and every other year for children 6 years of age and older. Programs shall not be required to obtain physical examination records for children whose parents object thereto in writing, on the grounds that such physical examination is contrary to their religious beliefs. See your Program Director for the Physical Exempt form which will require a notary signature and stamp.

A child enrolled part-time (2-3 days/week), but interested in changing to a different schedule will be put on a wait list if space is unavailable immediately. Please see your child's Program Director for more information.

ATTENDANCE

Agency hours are Monday-Friday 6:30am-6:00pm. Parents are responsible for payment of any days your child is registered, including days that the program may be closed and for days your child is absent. Please notify the center when your child will be absent so we can plan accordingly.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Our programs do not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, religion, national origin, alienage or citizenship status, creed, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, veteran/military status, genetic information, predisposition or carrier status, medical condition, family care or medical leave status, or any other unlawful consideration.

SNOW DAYS & EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the unlikely event that our Agency is closed or has a delayed opening due to a bad storm, lack of electricity, etc. the Executive Director will notify WMUR (Channel 9) to announce closings. The closing will also be posted on the WMUR website at wmur.com. Please like our Facebook page, as we have found WMUR & Facebook to be the most reliable and fastest source for closing and delay information. We may also initiate a "Call Blast" to announce a closing or delay when possible. Please do not rely 100% on this system as it can only be initiated if internet, electricity and computer systems are all operating. You will be responsible for payment on these days, unless we are closed for more than three consecutive days.

PROGRAM CLOSINGS & HOLIDAYS NOT IN SESSION

As a quality early education program, we offer professional development days to our staff. Two days per year (usually in May and August) are designated for Agency personnel to prepare, set-up rooms, and receive Agency-wide training. We will be closed for these two Program Development Days as well as the holidays listed below. Every year the Agency also closes for our winter break, which is approximately one week between Christmas and New Year's Day. The dates of the shutdown will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors and will be voted on each year at the Agency meeting in June. Families are billed their regular tuition for all weeks that include professional development days, holidays and winter break. Our Agency's dedicated staff work year-round with your children and deserve to be compensated for holidays and professional development days.

HOLIDAYS NOT IN SESSION:

*New Year's Day *Martin Luther King, Jr. Day *Memorial Day *Independence Day *Labor Day
*Thanksgiving Day *Day after Thanksgiving *Christmas Eve *Christmas Day *Winter Break

Billing & Tuition

FEES/PAYMENTS

Upon enrollment, you will be required to complete a Tuition Agreement for each child. A non-refundable registration fee, activity fee and one week's tuition are required at the time of enrollment. The registration fee is waived if you have paid a wait list fee prior to enrollment. Activity fees are charged each year in the week of January 1st and June 30th. The activity fee assists in covering special activities for the programs as well as general expenses and seasonal related expenses and is assessed per child.

PAYMENT POLICIES

- Tuition is to be paid by Friday for the following week.
- The following forms of payment are accepted for tuition: Cash, Checks, Money Orders and Electronic Funds Transfer. Please see your Program Director to complete an agreement for Electronic Funds Transfer. Credit cards are accepted with an additional processing fee.
- Your balance must be current in order to utilize drop-in care. Payment for drop-in care is expected on the day you use drop-in care.
- Tuition balance must be current in order to move from one site to another within our Agency. Your balance must be current to increase days that your child attends.
- Tuition is charged regardless of child's attendance. This includes illness, snow days, holidays, winter break and professional development days. Effective January 1, 2016, children enrolled after that date will be charged their regular weekly tuition for our winter break (the days the Agency is closed between Christmas and New Year's Day).
- Tuition Agreement revisions must be communicated to the Program Director in writing at least two weeks in advance.
- Any child enrolled full time before August 3, 2015 will be grandfathered into a "free" tuition week for family vacations. Child must not be in attendance the week of vacation.
- For every schedule change, a re-registration fee will be assessed.
- The Agency participates in the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Development Fund Scholarship Program which subsidizes tuition fees for eligible families. Our Executive Assistant or Program Directors can give you more information.
- A fee of \$30.00 will be charged for a payment returned for any reason.
- Tuition and fees are subject to change at the discretion of the Board of Directors with thirty (30) days written notice.

For current tuition rates, please refer to our current tuition rate sheets.

OVERDUE PAYMENT PROCEDURE

If payment is not received by Monday of the following week, an overdue notice will be sent. Payment for the current week and for the overdue payment is expected by Friday.

If payments become overdue, payment arrangements must be made with the Administrative Office. A late charge of \$25.00 per week may be assessed for overdue payments, unless payment arrangements have been approved by the Administrative Office.

If tuition falls behind more than 3 weeks without payment arrangements being made with the Administrative Office, or if payment arrangements are not fulfilled, we will need to withdraw your family from the program.

Unpaid client balances will be turned over to the New Hampshire Credit Bureau for collection.

WITHDRAWAL

Parents/Guardians who intend to withdraw their child(ren) are required to give the Center Director two full weeks advance written notice (or two weeks tuition). Last day of enrollment must end on a Friday; therefore, notice given in the middle of the week will be in addition to the required two-week notice. Though our policy permits 2 weeks of notice, please provide as much time as possible so that we may transition your child appropriately.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

As our programs end at 6:00 PM, all children must be picked up by then. This rule is strictly enforced as we respect the time that our staff spend at school. If you are aware that you will be arriving late due to unavoidable circumstances, please call the center to inform them so they may plan accordingly.

A fee of \$5.00 for every 5 minutes you are late will be added to your bill for the week. This late fee charge is assessed on a per-child basis. A Late Pick-Up form will need to be signed by the guardian upon arrival.

DROP-IN CARE

For enrolled families: Drop-in care is granted for families who are currently enrolled 2-3 days a week, but occasionally need care for additional times. Fees are charged at the hourly rate for drop-in care use and the hours are rounded up. Your family's account must be paid in full to utilize drop-in care. If your child attends the center for a full day (6 or more hours), the daily rate will be charged. Drop-in care is granted if space is available in your child's classroom. Contact the Program Director for availability and authorization.

For Outside Parents/Guardians: Drop-in care is available for parents of children who do not regularly attend a program. Our current registration and activity fee must be paid and all required paperwork must be completed and on file before your child attends. The registration fee expires every six months, and a maximum of 15 days within a six-month period may be utilized for drop-in care. Outside families are charged a daily rate for days used, regardless of the number of hours in attendance.

A 48-hour notice is usually required in order to process all paperwork. Contact the Program Director or Site Director (School Age) for availability and necessary paperwork. Payment is required prior to care being provided.

Program Orientation

GREAT BAY KIDS' COMPANY STAFF

Our Agency is committed to providing a quality and enriching environment for our staff as well as the children and families. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, religion, national origin, alienage or citizenship status, creed, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, sex, marital status, veteran/military status, genetic information, predisposition or carrier status, medical condition, family care or medical leave status, or any other unlawful consideration.

For teacher qualification requirements, please see the following chart, which meets the standards required by the NH Licensing Rules:

GBKC Title:	Qualifications:
Program Director	Minimum of an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education ("ECE") or Elementary Education PLUS, 2 or more years of experience as a supervisor and 3 credits in Early Childhood Program Administration, Management coursework preferred
Educational Lead (Not specified in NH Child Care Licensing Regulations)	Minimum of Associates Degree in ECE or other child-related field with 5 years teaching experience is a plus
Lead Teacher	Minimum 18 college credits in ECE
Associate Teacher	Minimum 9 college credits in ECE
Child Care Assistant	Must be at least 16 years of age and must be under direct supervision of an Associate Teacher, Lead Teacher, or Educational Lead

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

GBKC is governed by a Board of Directors, to whom the Executive Director reports. The **Executive Director** is responsible for Agency-wide fundraising, budgeting, administrative functions and duties, programs compliance with laws, upholding licensing rules and regulations and overseeing all of the GBKC programs.

Our Financial Administrators and **Executive Assistant** are charged with all billing and tuition, record keeping, data collection for our CACFP Food Program, as well as operating expense accounting.

The **Program Directors** are responsible for day to day management of their site, compliance with the NH Licensing Rules, enrollments, child transitions, family relations, and all aspects of policy and personnel.

We have full-time **Cooks** at each site to provide nutritionally sound meals daily that are in accordance with CACFP as well as our wellness policies.

The **Educational Lead Teachers** support and strengthen the teacher's instructional practices in curriculum planning, classroom management, and scheduling. They are often in classrooms directly supervising children and mentoring teachers.

Our **Teaching Staff** are responsible for all classroom operations, planning curriculum that provides developmentally appropriate learning experiences, completing Ages & Stages screenings in collaboration with parents to ensure all developmental areas are being met and strengthened, conduct daily communications between teachers and parents and so much more.

EMPLOYING STUDENTS AS STAFF

Employing high school and college students along with our classroom Lead teachers allows us to mentor and train future teachers in our field so that we can invest in the future of Early Childhood Education. In addition to teaching students real-world, job-related skills, employing high school and college students gives them exposure to and nurtures their interest in fields they may hope to enter as adults. A job as a Child Care Assistant (CCA) will enable these students to understand the many career demands of our teachers. Many of our tenured teachers started at GBKC as teenagers through similar programs.

At Great Bay Kids, we are proud to partner with local programs, such as the Seacoast School of Technology ("SST"), which offers the Careers in Education program to its students. Vocational programs, like SST, are able to offer students the ability to learn the profession of education by working with advanced classroom instruction alongside teachers (for instance, Wright Start Preschool at SST is the laboratory component of its Careers in Education program). The goal of these programs is for students to gain real-world experience with internships or job shadowing, partnered with the study of theories of development, foundations of education, classroom management, methods of instruction and more. As these teachers are just students themselves, CCA's are never left alone with children in our Agency. Our partnership with these students and their schools works because they are closely monitored and mentored throughout their time in classrooms.

Often these students go on to study Early Childhood Education at a college or university. Our children and staff are excited to see the same teachers come back year after year, when their schedules allow. Having consistent college students return during the winter and summer breaks gives our regular teaching staff time to take their hard-earned vacations with the confidence that the classrooms are managed well in their absence. Many of our college students are qualified to take the lead in a classroom for a lesson or two, and do so with the guidance of our Lead teachers.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Regardless of age, qualification and classroom assignment, all early childhood teachers are required to complete ongoing professional development in line with the NH Licensing Rules. These include a specialized set of 11 trainings on topics such as emergency responses, specialized infant care, allergic reactions, etc. The NH Licensing Rules also require the following:

- all full time teachers must complete no less than 18 hours of professional development per year,
- teachers who work 25 hours or less must complete no less than 12 hours of professional development per year, and
- teachers who are attending high school or college full time must complete no less than 3 hours of professional development per year.

All staff are required to maintain current First Aid and CPR certifications. GBKC provides two Professional Development days as well as some evening opportunities for trainings to be completed.

CURRENT PROGRAMS OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE AGENCY

All programs are licensed by the New Hampshire Child Care Licensing Unit.

****All ages are approximate as development varies****

Our Newmarket Location offers:

- * An Infant Program for children ages 6 weeks-15 months
- * A Young Toddler Program for children ages 13 months-24 months
- * A Toddler Program for children ages 24 months-3 years
- * Preschool Programs for children ages 3-4 and 4-5 years

Our Exeter Location offers:

- * An Infant Program for children ages 6 weeks-15 months
- * A Young Toddler Program for children ages 13 months-24 months
- * A Toddler Program for children ages 24 months-3 years
- * Preschool Programs for children 3-4 and 4-5 years
- * A Kindergarten Program for children 5-6 years

Our Pease Location offers:

- * An Infant Program for children ages 6 weeks-14 months
- * A Young Toddler Program for children ages 12 months-24 months
- * A Toddler Program for children 24 months-3 years
- * Preschool Programs for children 3-4 and 4-5 years
- * A Kindergarten Program for children 5-6 years
- * A Summer School Age Program for children 6-12 years

Our School Age Program offers:

- * An Action Club at Main Street School in Exeter for Kindergarten, First and Second Grade
- * An Action Club at Lincoln Street School in Exeter for Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade
- * An Action Club at Newfields Elementary School for Kindergarten through Fifth Grade
- * A Summer Camp Program for children in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade.

A separate handbook is provided for our School Age programs.

CLASSROOM RATIOS & GROUP SIZES

We regularly maintain teacher-child ratios in accordance with the NH Licensing Rules. Please take note that ages are listed as ranges rather than absolute ages because we are sensitive to the developmental needs of children as well as space available in all classrooms.

In the chart below you will find detailed classroom age ranges and ratios.

Ages Ranges **All ages are approximate as development varies**	Classroom Ratios	GBKC Maximum Group Size
Infant Classrooms (6 weeks – 15 months)	1:4	10
Young Toddler Classrooms (12 – 28 months)	1:5	15
Toddler Classrooms (24 – 38 months)	1:6	12
Nursery Classrooms (36 – 48 months)	1:8	16
Pre-Kindergarten (42 – 60 months)	1:12	18
Kindergarten (60 months)	1:15	18

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

When children are dropped off, they must be brought into the classroom by the parent/guardian and their presence must be made known to the staff. Staff will sign your child in upon arrival and will sign your child out upon departure each day. The parent/guardian is responsible for signing the form during the week to verify the times of arrival and departure. Please notify the teachers when you are leaving with your child and make sure that your child does not go anywhere within the building or outside unattended.

Parents/Guardians must designate on appropriate forms any individual authorized to pick up their child from GBKC. Persons authorized to pick up any child must be at least 18 years of age and provide picture identification to Agency personnel upon request. If a parent calls the center to make alternate arrangements, the parent will receive a return phone call from Agency personnel to verify the phone call and information. If any person arrives to pick up a child that is not listed on appropriate Agency forms as an authorized pick up person, or we do not have written or verbal parental approval for the pickup, Agency personnel will immediately call the family for assistance. Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave the premises with anyone that has not been given prior parental approval. If the child's family and/or an approved person is not reachable to pick up the child, Agency personnel will call police. The child will be turned over to the police and/or DCYF for care.

If a parent/guardian or designated pickup person is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol/drugs, the child's teacher and/or Program Director will call the individual aside to discuss the suspected condition and potential danger to the child. Agency personnel will offer to call a spouse, friend or taxi for the individual. If this is ineffective, Agency personnel will notify the police to report their concerns about the welfare of the child and will assist the police as requested.

WHAT TO BRING/ NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

All items must be clearly labeled with child's first and last name. GBKC is not responsible for the damage or loss of any items, toys, or books brought to the center.

Infant:

- ✓ 2 pack n play fitted crib sheets
- ✓ Enough clean bottles for the day
- ✓ Pacifier, if needed, without strings, clips or attachments
- ✓ Breast milk or formula, if not using center formula
- ✓ Diapers
- ✓ At least 3 sets of extra clothes/socks

All children:

- ✓ 2 crib sheets
- ✓ Blanket and/or Lovie/Stuffy
- ✓ Pacifier, if needed, without strings, clips or attachments
- ✓ Diapers/Pull ups if needed
- ✓ Water bottle or Sippy cup
- ✓ At least 3 sets of extra clothes/socks/ 1 pair of extra shoes (more if toilet training)

Please do NOT bring these items to school:

- ✓ Toys (unless your classroom is having a Share Day Activity; See Classroom Calendar)
- ✓ Outside food is NOT permissible without signing the appropriate paperwork due to our wellness policy and food program. NO gum, candy, or junk food is allowed at any time. If you have any questions about the CACFP Food Program or Wellness Policies please see your Program Director.
- ✓ Pacifier strings, clips or attachments are NOT allowed per the NH Licensing Rules.
- ✓ Child necklaces for children under the age of 6 years old are ONLY allowed with written parental permission and must be removed at nap time per the NH Licensing Rules.

CLASSROOM PLANS AND SCHEDULES

Early childhood teachers prepare developmentally appropriate curriculum plans incorporating goals and objectives based on Early Learning Guidelines. Classroom plans are intentionally planned with the specific children of each classroom in mind. These plans are prepared at least one week in advance and reviewed by the Program Director, and posted for parents. If you would like more detailed information about your child's classroom lesson plans, please feel free to speak to your child's teacher(s).

You will receive a program specific sheet for your child's room containing a detailed schedule as well as any additional information pertaining to that program.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum utilized by our programs is The Creative Curriculum. We have found that The Creative Curriculum not only matches our Agency philosophy of "the child comes first," but is based on the latest research in child development. The Creative Curriculum is the country's leading scientifically-based, comprehensive curriculum for programs serving children from birth to age 5.

If you were to go into any one of our child care centers you would find that each age group is working towards the same goals. The activities may be different, but the objectives would be the same. Planning revolves around the needs and interests of each child. Instruction is based on observing and documenting what children do and say.

The Creative Curriculum is a model for all staff to help develop and implement a program that is rich in diversity of learning in core areas. Teachers offer activities that meet objectives beyond each child's present level of mastery. Core knowledge areas of Math, Literacy, Science and Social Studies are integrated into each interest area in the classroom, including: Art Area, Block Play, Cooking, Discovery Area, Dramatic Play, Library Area, Music and Movement, Outdoor Play, Sensory Table, Technology and Toys and Games.

Preschool programs also utilize other supportive programs such as Zoo Phonics for letter introduction. Kindergarten programs create lesson plans integrating Common Core as well as Creative Curriculum to ease the children into public school teaching methods. Classrooms may also incorporate elements of different teaching philosophies and theorists such as Reggio Emilia, Vygotski, Piaget, Gardner and others.

All of our early childhood teachers have received training on The Creative Curriculum and will continue to train through workshops and literature. Please visit our website or your child's classroom for more information about Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives. We welcome your questions and comments and are confident that our children are learning the best way possible.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

Upon enrollment, families will fill out a developmental information sheet that gives information about current developmental abilities, family dynamics, likes/dislikes, routine, sleep habits, etc. This information helps teachers in planning and getting to know your child before they even begin in the classroom.

We screen children's development through the use of the Ages & Stages Questionnaires. This system screens infants and young children for developmental delays during the first 5 years in the areas of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social; there is also a special social-emotional questionnaire. Questionnaires are completed twice a year, by both the classroom teachers as well as the families. By having both families and teachers complete these evaluations, the information gathered is a more accurate reflection of developmental growth and more effective in developing goals. After we have received the parent's questionnaire, scores for both screenings are calculated by the teachers in the classroom. Parents are given the results with the option to attend a parent/teacher conference. Conferences are beneficial to allow time to discuss any or all developmental areas and to formulate goals together as a team. A full evaluation will be comprised from the ASQ findings and signed by parents, teachers, and the Program Director.

While we schedule semi-annual parent teacher conferences, families are also encouraged to request a conference at any time during the year to discuss questions or concerns. If a question or concern arises about your child, their care, or the program, please make a point to speak to your child's teacher. If the teacher has not provided an adequate answer, please seek the assistance of the Program Director. If you still

have not received what you feel to be the proper attention to your question or concern, contact the Executive Director.

TRANSITIONS

As children develop and are ready for the next age group, we begin the planning process of a transition based on space available and developmental readiness. We time transitions to allow for children's positive development. The following factors are considered when determining transitions for each child:

- 1) The developmental level of the child (e.g., gross/fine motor skills, language, social development, independence, self-regulation);
- 2) The composition and ages of the children in the new classroom;
- 3) The number of peers who are ready to move at the same time; and
- 4) Space availability.

Before a child transitions to the next classroom, families are notified via letter stating the new classroom name and teachers, a transition schedule, and new tuition rate and all pertinent information surrounding the transition. Typically, a couple of weeks before the scheduled transition a Transition Night will be hosted by the new teachers where families will have the opportunity to meet the new classroom teachers, visit the classroom, and have time to ask any questions they may have pertaining to the new classroom and stages of development.

Families may make requests or express an interest in a specific classroom and we will try our best to make such accommodations whenever possible. While we respect and value our families, these requests are not always possible given the factors listed above. GBKC will ultimately determine which classroom children transition into as other factors may affect the room, such as, but not limited to, age of peers and classroom makeup. As often as possible, we prefer to move children with at least one or more classmates from the same room to assist with the adjustment to the new classroom and to support existing social bonds.

Any parent interested in discussing transitions is welcome to do so with the Program Director in charge of transitions at your center.

OUTDOOR GROSS MOTOR PLAY

At GBKC, we value the great outdoors and encourage children's sense of wonderment and exploration. There is much to be learned in the natural world during all seasons throughout the year. We ask that you please dress children appropriately as we will more than likely get messy and even possibly muddy during play. Please send children with numerous changes of clothing and provide weather appropriate footwear such as winter or rain boots, sneakers, and summer shoes. Please note that summer shoes must have toes covered and a back strap so feet cannot slip out easily while running.

Infants will go outside whenever possible; our goal is at least once per day, weather permitting. Our young toddler classrooms have two opportunities to use our playgrounds outdoors at scheduled times during the day. Our toddler, nursery, pre-k, and kindergarten programs each have three scheduled playground times mid-morning, early afternoon and after 3 pm daily.

In the event we are unable to go outside (i.e. extreme weather conditions), we offer play spaces indoors so that children are still able to participate in gross motor play. These spaces may also be used when teachers deem it necessary for big-body play. Your child must be well enough to participate in all indoor and outdoor activities to attend school. For children with ongoing medical concerns that are affected by outside play, teachers and families will work together to create a plan for care in these circumstances.

REST TIME

Our Agency follows the NH Licensing Rules concerning nap and rest requirements. Our Agency provides an opportunity for at least 1 hour of rest, relaxation or sleep depending on the child's needs. Children who do not fall asleep after 30 minutes of quiet rest will be given a quiet activity to work on in their rest space. After one hour of quiet rest, children who are still awake will be given the opportunity to participate in quiet activities around the classroom. Children who are able to adjust to a scheduled nap or rest time shall have the flexibility to fall asleep and awaken at their own pace within a block of time set aside as nap/rest time. We provide individual mats and maintain constant supervision of sleeping areas.

For children ages 24 months through 5 years, during nap time, we may staff one less person in a classroom than required to meet regular ratios for our staff to take a break. Per the NH Licensing Rules, our classrooms are equipped with phones for immediate contact and there are child care personnel on the premises of the program. We maintain a safety plan for these times, and when half the ratio of children are awake, the teacher will call staff from the office to be in the classroom until the teacher on break returns.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Upon enrollment you will be asked to fill out a Media Matrix Form. This form gives us your permission to post pictures, art work, and other classroom materials your child made. There is a section that allows us to use pictures and pieces of art work on our Agency website, Agency Facebook page, as well as grant writing or newsletters. If you are uncomfortable with any of these avenues please do not check off those boxes on the Media Matrix Form.

Pictures or art work will not be shared with others by teachers or administrators without prior parental approval and we ask the same respect from parents. Please do not take pictures of other children that are not your own and share them on social media sources. We want to uphold our confidentiality practices. Thank you for your cooperation in the area. Also, approach your Program Director if you see something inappropriate related to social media so that the matter may be dealt with hastily and appropriately.

INCLUSION

GBKC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. GBKC will not discriminate against any child or deny any child access to the center's programs or services on the basis of disability.

If a child is identified as having a disability, either before, during or after enrollment, GBKC early childhood teachers will work with the parents to seek appropriate referrals, and will make appropriate modifications in the environment whenever and wherever possible. GBKC will work with families and children requiring special services or medical needs, including providing training for staff when necessary and facilitating help from outside service providers such as physical or occupational therapists. Suggestions made by therapists or physicians will be integrated into the classroom whenever possible.

GBKC staff will also make any accommodations we possibly can for food allergies. Please see our administrative staff for a Special Meals Prescription that will need to be completed and signed by your child's physician.

CUSTODY, VISITATION, SUPPORT, CARE AND RELATED ISSUES

GBKC recognizes that the parents or legal guardians of enrolled children may be subject to court orders, stipulations or other agreements which govern custody, visitation, support, care and related issues. GBKC at all times desires to promote the parent-child relationship, to nurture child development, to minimize potential conflicts and problems, and to promote an environment best suited for the provision of high

quality child care, enrichment and education. To promote these interests, the Board of Directors for GBKC has adopted the following policies.

- Unless GBKC is provided with a certified copy of an order from a court of competent jurisdiction which expressly states otherwise, either natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian may visit the enrolled child or children on an unrestricted basis during the normal hours of operation during the day. It shall be the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide GBKC with a certified copy of any court order. In the event that the certified copy of an order expressly states that either a natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian shall not have any contact with the child or children, and in the event that such person attempts to have contact with the child or children, GBKC shall first notify the local police department, and only then attempt to notify the custodial parent or legal guardian.
- Unless otherwise notified, GBKC shall assume that all natural or adoptive parents or legal guardians of the enrolled child or children shall have equal access to the records kept by GBKC regarding the enrolled child or children, subject to state law governing disclosure of such records.
- In the event a parent seeks to have an administrator or staff member of GBKC testify at a deposition or in court, during normal business hours, a subpoena shall be required in accordance with New Hampshire law. Neither administrators nor staff of GBKC shall be permitted during working hours, to take time from their regular duties to provide testimony, affidavits or otherwise act as witnesses on behalf of natural or adoptive parents or legal guardian involving matters such as the custody, care, support, visitation or control of the enrolled child or children without service of a subpoena.
- Parents/guardians may request copies of their child's portion of the sign in/out sheets for the past six months for child custody related issues. Requests must be made in writing to the Administrative Office. A cost of \$5.00 per page will be charged and is to be paid prior to processing of documents.

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

New Hampshire State Law, RSA 169-C, the Child Protection Act, states that any person who has reason to suspect that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has been abused and/or neglected must make a report to the Division of Children, Youth and Families.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

We believe that discipline is not punishment but rather teaching, guiding and redirecting. The word discipline comes from an old English word meaning "instruction" and this is the way we approach discipline. We help children learn to get along with adults and other children, teach them to behave in an acceptable way and help children learn self-control. The purpose of disciplining children is to raise responsible, confident children who grow up to care about others and themselves.

We feel that an open line of communication between families and early childhood teaching staff regarding their child's experiences within the program is very important. If a behavior issue is interfering negatively with the functioning of the program or the safety of the staff or any of the children, we will notify the parent or guardian. Our Challenging Behavior policy below outlines this procedure.

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

GBKC has plans in place to assist in persistent behavior that is negatively interfering with the functioning of the program or the safety of the early childhood teachers or children. As we believe that discipline is not punishment but rather teaching, we strive to help children learn to behave in an acceptable way and learn self-regulation. We will work cooperatively with the family to develop and implement strategies to assist

with the child's challenging behaviors. Early childhood teachers will look for identifying triggers and support the child with corrective action that allows them to begin to recognize what the appropriate steps are when the child is getting to an elevated state.

Should a child act aggressively towards their peers or teachers the following steps shall be taken:

Step 1- Early childhood teacher will remove the child from the area into a calmer area or remove the group from the area when necessary, to allow for self-regulation. Staff will attend to the child who was hurt.

Step 2- Teacher will direct their attention to the child to assist in behavior regulation, and review with the child what happened. An Incident Report Form will be completed by the teacher and shared with the family at pick up.

Step 3- Should the child repeat an aggressive act upon a peer or teachers, administration should be notified immediately to assist in a "reset" for the child. At this time an administrator will notify the parent by phone of the child's day.

Step 4- Administration will call the parent if a third aggressive act happens. At this time the parents may be asked to pick up their child for the day. When the parent arrives on location they may have a meeting with administration regarding the day and develop new strategies to assist the child.

The above protocol must be followed to ensure we have met the needs of the child to the best of our ability. If a child needs to be sent home due to extremely challenging behavior, an administrator will notify you.

It is important to note that while we do our best to change our program to fit each child, and guide a child's behavior, our program is not designed for all behaviors. As each child requires different techniques and strategies to be successful, we will work with outside services to create an effective Corrective Action Plan. If all suggested strategies have been unsuccessful, the parent/guardian may be asked to withdraw the child from the program in order to preserve a safe environment for all children enrolled. Should you have any questions regarding the policy on Challenging Behavior, please see your Program Director.

BITING

Although biting is something we strive to prevent, as it can be harmful and upsetting, it is important to understand that it is a completely normal and age appropriate behavior between infancy and toddlerhood.

At GBKC we are up to date on the latest research methods to help prevent and also respond to biting behavior. It is typical at this stage of development for children to bite while they are developing problem-solving skills and learning to gain self-control.

A reason a child might bite is because:

- They are teething
- Exploring cause and effect ("What happens when I bite?")
- Oral-motor stimulation
- Imitating other children
- Seeking attention
- Self defense

- Communicating needs before they have developed the language
- Communicating to express feelings of anger, frustration, etc.

We observe the environment to determine cause so that we can respond in the appropriate way for the situation. We never yell or punish but instead look for understanding and growth from each event. Below are some resources on biting in the early years. If you would like to have a meeting with your Program Director or teachers to discuss this topic further, we would be happy to oblige at your earliest convenience.

NAEYC for Families. “Understanding and Responding to Children Who Bite.”

<https://families.naeyc.org/learning-and-development/child-development/understanding-and-responding-children-who-bite>

Zero to Three. “Why Do Toddlers Bite? Finding the Right Response.” www.zerotothree.org/child-development/challenging-behavior/chew-on-this-resources-on-biting.html

FIELD TRIPS

All field trips will be announced in advance either by memo or a notice from your child’s teacher. We travel in insured parent/guardian cars as well as 12 passenger vans and school busses (for children 5 year and older) and follow the New Hampshire seat belt law. Children under four years of age must be in an approved child passenger safety seat or booster seat while being transported during field trips. If your schedule allows, we welcome your participation on such trips. On all of the trips, we maintain strict child to teacher ratios. If we cannot provide this ratio, the trip will have to be canceled. Occasionally an extra fee may be charged for these trips. Field trip forms must be signed prior to the field trip in order for your child to attend.

If we have planned a field trip that you do not want your child to attend, please talk with your center’s Program Director immediately. Your Program Director will make every effort to make arrangements for your child to participate in another group within the center during the scheduled field trip time.

Health, Safety, Nutrition & Wellness

CHILD IMMUNIZATIONS & PHYSICALS

In order to adhere to state health regulations, we are required to have a current physical on file at the time of enrollment, and for children eight weeks to five years, this must be updated annually. For children ages 6 and older, an updated physical is required every two years. We cannot provide care without a current physical that is updated annually. We are committed to providing as healthy and germ free an environment as possible for children and adults. All staff practice communicable disease control procedures. This includes using rubber gloves and a solution for disinfecting when necessary. Our early childhood teaching staff is First Aid and CPR certified.

ILLNESS

As State regulations require that children be excluded from the center when they are ill and our Agency is not set up for the care of sick children, we are unable to care for ill children. If your child is ill, please keep him/her home until (s)he is well enough to attend. Your child may return when (s)he is well enough to participate in the day's events, including outside play. In the case of a contagious condition for which antibiotics have been prescribed, the child may not return to the center until after required treatment has been administered in accordance with the NH Licensing Rules.

Please see our Illness Policy for more detail. By signing the Handbook acknowledgement form, you are also agreeing to comply with our Illness Policy.

If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child immediately. For this reason, we ask that you keep your emergency information updated. In the best interest of your child, please make every effort to pick your child up within the hour that you have been contacted.

You will be called if:

- Your child has an under-arm temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher;
- Your child has uncontrolled coughing or wheezing;
- Your child is vomiting while at the center;
- Your child has diarrhea while at the center;
- Your child has any other symptom that prevents him/her from participating in the program;
- Your child has an illness that may infect other children; and/or
- Your child has head lice and/or nits.

MEDICATION POLICY

According to the NH Licensing Rules, we are not obligated to administer medication at any time. We request that medication be given to your child at the centers only when necessary.

Absolutely no medication will be administered without a written authorization from the parent or guardian and the order of a licensed practitioner. (A pharmaceutical label is acceptable). Medication forms are available in each classroom and all medication must be in its original container and labeled with the child's

name, medication name, dosage and the physician prescribing. There will be no medication administered past the expiration date.

Medications:

The following are regulations from the “New Hampshire Child Care Program Licensing Guidelines” regarding dispensing medication to children in care, which applies to all programs and all age groups. In addition to these guidelines, please note Agency policy regarding non-prescription medications in Paragraph (2).

Medication shall be stored and administered in accordance with the following:

1. Child day care agencies shall not administer prescription medication to a child unless the medication is accompanied by written authorization from the parent and written order of a licensed health practitioner.
2. Child day care agencies may administer non-prescription medication to a child only when the medication is accompanied by written authorization from parents. (NOTE: GBKC ALSO REQUIRES WRITTEN ORDERS FROM A LICENSED HEALTH PRACTITIONER FOR ALL NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**)
3. Non-prescription medication shall be administered in accordance with the instructions printed by the manufacturer, or in accordance with the written order of a licensed practitioner.
4. Medication shall not be administered unless it is in the original container and labeled with the name of the medication, dosage, name of the child and if prescription, the name of the physician.
5. Medication shall not be administered beyond the expiration date.
6. The Agency director or designee shall supervise the administration, records and control of all medications.
7. Medication shall be stored in accordance with instructions for storage and in a location not accessible to children.
8. Each dose of medication administered shall be recorded by the staff person responsible for administering the medication.
9. Medication shall be administered from an infant feeding bottle only when instructed to do so by a licensed health care provider.
10. Proper dosing tools must be provided with medication.

These medication policies are intended to be applied for a maximum of 1 to 2 doses each day. When possible, GBKC encourages parents to give all medications at home before or after child care. Parents are welcome to come at midday to administer a needed dose.

INJURED CHILD & FIRST AID

At GBKC, we understand how concerning any injury can be when it comes to the health and safety of your child. We provide numerous CPR/First Aid trainings throughout the year to ensure all of our staff are certified to provide your child/children with the safest quality care possible. Minor injuries such as scrapes or small cuts are treated by First Aid certified early childhood teachers. All injuries are then entered on an accident report form, with the child’s name, time, location, type of injury, treatment given, etc. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to have the parent or pick up person review, sign and date each

accident report. Parents receive a copy of the report. The master copy will be reviewed by the Program Director and then placed in the child's health folder.

If a child receives a head injury of any type, the parents or emergency contact person are notified by phone immediately. If a situation arises where immediate outside emergency care is needed, an ambulance will be called. We will then attempt to contact the parent or emergency contact concerning the injury and give information as to where you can meet your child.

In the event that one child is injured by another child, no names will be used when describing the injury and the incident. This is a requirement of privacy laws, as well as Agency policies of confidentiality.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

When injuries require medical treatment beyond basic first aid, families are notified immediately and an appropriate course of action is decided upon. When families cannot be reached, the Program Director will notify the emergency contact person(s) listed in the child's file.

In the unlikely event that immediate medical attention is required, the child will be taken to the closest regional hospital by ambulance and will be accompanied by an adult. The child's parents and pediatrician will be contacted immediately. Parents should meet the ambulance at the hospital.

GBKC is not responsible for any medical charges incurred as a result of any medical attention.

EMERGENCIES & DRILLS

We take emergencies very serious at GBKC which is why we routinely practice fire drills as well as other drills including drop and cover, shelter in place, lock down, evacuation drills, reverse evacuation, and secure campus drills.

In the event that we need to close early due to inclement weather, no heat or hot water, no electricity, or other emergencies, we will contact each parent via voice blast (if we have power), informing parents to come and pick up their children within the hour. If we do not have power, the Program Director and other designees will begin calling parents on their emergency phone numbers and will speak directly with the parent(s) and/or emergency contact(s) (or will leave a message). An email blast may also be sent out if we have power to do so.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

Each location practices regular Emergency Preparedness training to maintain the safety of staff and children in accordance with the NH Licensing Rules. Upon enrollment, each family will receive information regarding our safe-keeping practices, drills and procedures for the required responses for possible incidents. Information will include procedures for families in the event of an evacuation, on-site or off-site reunification of families and children, and plans for the Seabrook Power Plant Reactor, if applicable. Please see your Program Director for more information.

WELLNESS POLICY AND SPECIAL EVENTS

We feel strongly that children should be exposed to healthy eating habits from a young age. As part of our Agency Wellness Policy and in consideration of those children with food allergies, we ask that you refrain from bringing in food items for your child's birthday. Your child's birthday celebration will be incorporated into the curriculum for that week. With input from your child, your child's classroom teachers will plan a special classroom project in celebration of your child's birthday. Examples may include decorating birthday hats, baking a healthy treat, painting paper balloons at the easel or scarf dancing to your child's favorite music.

This policy includes other special days or celebrations being held as part of the classroom curriculum. Although we appreciate the fact that you all want to help out by bringing in a special treat or other goodies, we ask that you refrain from doing so. The activity fee that you pay to GBKC helps to supply materials needed for all activities, including parties and celebrations. As always, we welcome you to come into the classroom and help with an activity, celebration or just to visit for a while.

Part of the reason for this policy is to teach children that parties and celebrations do not have to revolve around food and especially not around high sugar snacks. By giving children healthy food options and non-food options for celebrating birthdays and other special events, we hope to send a good message to children that we can have fun without high calorie foods involved.

MEALS AND NUTRITION

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) Food Program, GBKC provides nutritious meals daily. A breakfast and afternoon snack are served in all of our early childhood education programs. For those children who are with us for a full day or for kindergarten wrap-around care, we also provide lunch. All of these meals meet USDA requirements and guidelines. The meals are served in the classrooms in a pleasant atmosphere in which the teacher sits with the children to encourage appropriate manners and conversation.

If your child has a food allergy or has special dietary needs, we must have a “Special Meals Prescription Form” on file in our office that has been signed by your child’s physician. If your child has special dietary requirements due to religious or other philosophical beliefs, we will need a “Special Meals Prescription Form” signed by the parent/guardian stating your requirements. When possible, we will make substitutions to the menu to meet the needs of your child. The Program Director and Cook will meet with the parent/guardian of a child with special dietary needs as requested in order to work out a plan concerning food substitutions and who will be responsible for providing food items. Please do not bring in any food for any reason unless prior arrangements have been made with your center’s Program Director.

GBKC has a commitment to provide families and employees with a safe, healthy, and clean early childhood environment. Because of this commitment, tobacco use of any kind is not permitted on the grounds or within the buildings.

USDA NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

In accordance with Federal law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the USDA prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to the USDA by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for

program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Parent Partnerships

COMMUNICATION

Our Agency realizes the importance of good communication. The lines of communication between family and teachers should be open and effective. To better facilitate communication between staff and parents, we provide a variety of ways in which to transfer information to one another, including mail pouches, daily reports, newsletters, memos, phone calls, suggestion boxes and letters. Please be sure to utilize these communication methods daily so that you are informed and up-to-date.

You will also find that Agency updates will be emailed to you via constant contact. Please be sure that you have a working email on file to receive information from your child's location and the Agency. Good communication facilitates the team effort between staff and families that is necessary for the care of your child(ren).

We also schedule semi-annual parent teacher conferences. Teachers prepare an evaluation on each child based on the goals of the Creative Curriculum. Parents or guardians are also encouraged to request a conference at any time during the year to discuss questions or concerns. If a question or concern arises about your child, their care, or the program, please make a point to speak to your child's teacher. If the teacher has not provided an adequate answer, please seek the assistance of the Program Director. If you still have not received what you feel to be the proper attention to your question or concern, contact the Executive Director.

The early childhood teaching staff, administration and families feel very strongly about the community that GBKC has created over the years and the communication that is utilized. If you have a grievance to air, we encourage you to contact a Program Director or the Executive Director to have a conversation. The administration is happy to hear any comment, discuss any concern and listen to what you have to say.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We encourage family involvement within the classroom setting. To that end, we offer an open-door policy to families and would love for you to join your child and early childhood teachers by visiting or volunteering in the classroom. There are a variety of ways you can support your classroom including facilitating a group activity for the children in the class, volunteering to read a book or two at circle time, attending a class trip as a chaperone, or offering to assist teachers in gearing up for the week's activities by cutting, copying, or organizing.

We also encourage family input for ideas on center-specific or Agency-wide family days, fundraising ideas for our non-profit Agency, or suggestions on how to better our center. Families and early childhood teachers are a team in creating a great space for learning.

FAMILY HANDBOOK

We are excited to partner with your family for your child's early education. This family handbook is meant to be as comprehensive as possible, though not every possible scenario can be covered. At times we may find that some policies need to be revised or updated to reflect new research or guidelines. GBKC policies can be changed by the Board of Directors in its sole discretion with thirty (30) days written notice. We will notify families of changes by sending out an update via email and posting the change on the website. Please see your Program Director if you have any questions that have not been answered.

Great Bay Kids' Company

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form

These policies have been explained to me and I have retained a copy for my records. I have read, or have had read to me, the attached handbook and I understand that I am held accountable for these policies until my child is no longer enrolled or I am otherwise notified. I understand that the Agency reserves the right to change these policies in its sole discretion and will notify me by sending out an updated handbook or written notice as soon as possible after any changes have been made via email and posted on the website.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Program Director's Signature Date

Child's Name (please print)

My child is currently enrolled in the Newmarket Exeter Pease Center.
(please circle one)

**Please return this completed page to your Program Director
and keep the Parent Handbook for future reference.**