**Glocester Childcare Center**



**Play, Learn & Grow Together**

**Family Handbook**

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Welcome to Glocester Childcare Center. This family handbook will provide you with all the necessary information that you will need to make your child’s day as comfortable as possible. We hope to make this a great experience for you and your family!

Here at Glocester Childcare Center we do more than just care for your children. We provide a safe and nurturing learning environment, following an academic curriculum where children can play, learn, & grow together.

**Mission Statement**

We at Glocester Childcare Center believe that children are unique individuals who play, learn, and grow at their own pace with the support of their teachers, peers, and their parents. Being a smaller center, teachers can work one on one more often with the children as well as pair them in small groups. They can learn and earn support from their own peers as well as learning through play. We provide love and support along with a learning environment that recognizes the needs of children as individuals. When a child enters our care, they and their parents become like our own family. Following early childhood theorist Lev Vygostky, children play, learn, and grow together with the help of the staff, their peers, and parents. Also, through imaginary play, we believe that we provide children with the best learning experience possible.

**About Us**

From Infant to Toddler, we focus on the growth of sensory and fine motor skills through sight, texture, sounds, activities and more. Once the children are 3 years old, they transition from toddlers and enter our Preschool 3 classroom. Here they begin their preparation for their journey into kindergarten. Once your child is 4, they move onto our Pre-K classroom. This room is led by Miss Rachel who has achieved her Bachelors in Elementary Education and much more. She gets each child ready for the transition in academics, structure, and socialization. When your child leaves Glocester Childcare Center, they will be fully prepared to begin the next chapter in their lives!

At Glocester Childcare Center we follow the RIELDS (Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards). We are working with the Center for Early Learning and Professionals towards staff professional development to further our education. Each staff member is required to maintain a minimum of 20 hours of Professional Development classes each year. We work closely with BrightStars and strive to the best we can be. Our program serves children 6 weeks – 5 years of age. Each classroom follows a monthly curriculum and weekly lesson plans created by our teachers. We provide positive guidance and firmly believe in redirection and positive reinforcement. At Glocester Childcare Center we understand every child is different and learns and grows at their own pace.

**Our Classrooms**

**Infant Room**

In the infant room we have a daily schedule specifically designed for your child displayed. We will always work with parents and encourage input when developing or changing your babies schedule. We want your child’s day to meet your needs and make them as comfortable as possible. In our infant room we serve ages 6 weeks-18 months and are licensed for a maximum of 8 infants with a 1:4 ratio.

Our teachers will provide you with daily updates of your child’s day using the leading early education app called Brightwheel. This will inform you all about your child’s day including diapering, feeding, activity information and photos. We think you will love Brightwheel and how it connects you with your child’s day.

Each parent is required to provide the following each day:

1.) filled plastic bottles or sippy cups, sufficient for one day

2.) healthy foods such as cereal, jarred baby food and finger foods

3.) diapers, diaper wipes, and ointment

4.) 2 crib sheets and a blanket

5.) 2 complete changes of clothes and at least one bib for the day

6.) any specific rest item such as a pacifier or a “lovie”. All infants are napped on their backs without blankets or lovies in their cribs. This is in accordance with DHS regulations and infant sleep guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics to prevent SIDS.

Food may be brought in either on a daily or weekly basis. All items are specifically labeled and stored for your child. Diapers may be brought in daily; however, we prefer that diapers be brought in bulk, we will label your diapers and store them for your child.

Our infant room provides lesson plans that are fun and educational. We will provide you with monthly newsletters to keep you informed of the lessons we have planned. In addition, we plan monthly goals specifically designed for your child’s stage of development.

Teachers will provide one on one time that emphasizes these goals and will make weekly observations to track your child’s progress.

 **Infant Food Guidelines**

Teachers will adhere to the parents feeding plan if it does not conflict with the guidelines set forth by Glocester Childcare Center. All infant parents must follow the guidelines in accordance with the licensing regulations set forth by DHS.

Each bottle and sippy cup will be labeled by the teacher with the child’s name and the date it was brought to school. Please note, we will not rinse bottles or sippy cups for multiple use. All bottles and sippy cups are single use and upon use will be emptied, rinsed, and placed back in the child’s basket to be sterilized at home. Once your child is using sippy cups, we require a minimum of 3 filled sippy cups every day. Please note, parents are required to supply one extra bottle/sippy cup every day. We must discard any leftover formula or breast milk at the end of each day. All bottles must be stamped BPA free to be used at the center. Only formula, breast milk, and whole milk can be served in the infant room. Water can be provided for infants six months of age or older.

All commercial baby food must be brought to school in an unopened container. Teachers must receive clear instructions regarding portions to be served.

All table food must be diced into small bite size pieces that do not pose a choking hazard. All table food must be brought to school in a microwave safe container.

Parents must bring an adequate number of bibs for use throughout the day. We will not reuse any soiled item. If provided we will use disposable bibs.

**The following items are not allowed:**

Peanut butter or any product containing peanuts;

Candy, cookies, pre-sweetened cereal; or any high sugar items;

Fruit snacks;

Whole fruit;

Whole vegetables;

Potato chips or any other high salt items;

Any item deemed to be a choking hazard;

Whole meat of any kind including but not limited to hotdogs and chicken nuggets.

Please remember choking is a major concern when babies are moving to table food and all meals must be prepared with this concern in mind.

**Nutritional Guidelines**

Parents are encouraged to follow USDA regulations as well as the centers rules of no drinks served with caffeine and/or sweetened artificially or with sugar, including soda and flavored milk. Children are provided the opportunity to eat at intervals not to exceed three hours. A supply of food that meets the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program nutritional standards is kept at the program for snacks and for when a child is still hungry after a meal or snack. If juice is served at any time it will be 100% fruit juice in accordance with the US Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program. It will be served only at meal or snack time and it will never be served to younger infants. Drinking-water is readily available and offered throughout the day. Staff are encouraged to also follow USDA guidelines while in the center, sit with children during mealtimes to discuss different foods and topics of nutrition and to involve USDA nutrition in their lesson plans when applicable. We keep a copy of USDA nutrition standards posted in the kitchen for reference by staff if needed and copies for parents if requested. A copy of USDA meal patterns for ages 0-Adult are attached for reference. For any additional information you may ask a teacher for guidance with nutrition or you may visit [www.fns.usda.gov/child-nutrition-programs](http://www.fns.usda.gov/child-nutrition-programs).

**Toddler Room**

We follow a daily schedule and provide lessons that stress name, shape and color recognition as well as social development. Our lessons revolve around monthly shape and color goals as well as music, reading and science skills. Our toddlers are kept busy in an environment that stresses love and acceptance. All learning experiences are based upon the following learning domains; science, math, literacy, language development, social studies and gross and fine motor development. All children are assessed using the RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS). All children are assessed twice an academic year and parents can request an appointment to view the RIELDS and/or assessments for his/her child depending on COVID guidelines. In our toddler room we serve ages 18 months-3 years of age and are licensed for a maximum of 7 toddlers with a 1:6 ratio.

Our teachers will provide you with daily updates of your child’s day using the leading early education app called Brightwheel. This will inform you all about your child’s day including diapering, feeding, activity information and photos. We think you will love Brightwheel and how it connects you with your child’s day.

Parents must provide the following each day:

1.) Food: a healthy morning snack; lunch, 2-3 snacks and a beverage; afternoon snack

2.) 2 complete changes of clothing

3.) diapers and diaper wipes

4.) a special rest item (if needed, pacifiers are not allowed) and blanket.

Please remember lunches must be packed according to the preschool lunch guidelines included in your enrollment packet.

**Preschool**

Our three and four-year old’s operate in two separate classrooms. We provide two distinctive programs for our three and four-year old’s. Our programs stress literacy and kindergarten preparation. We feel that separating the three and four-year old's keeps our children challenged but not frustrated by learning experiences that are beyond or below their stage of development.

Parents must provide the following each day:

1.) Food: a healthy morning snack; lunch, 2-3 snacks and a beverage; afternoon snack

2.) 2 complete changes of clothing, including socks and underwear.

3.) a special rest item and a blanket.

Please remember lunches must be packed according to the preschool lunch guidelines included in your enrollment packet.

All toys other than those requested specifically, should be left at home. The toys from home can be broken or misplaced and can cause sharing difficulties. More importantly, toys from home can distract from the lessons we have planned for the day.

Our preschool provides hands on learning experiences that encourage exploration and discovery. Children love to “discover” the right answers and our teachers plan activities that encourage learning at their own pace. Each child can learn something different from the same lesson if they are encouraged to explore and challenge themselves. Our three-year old’s concentrate on learning the numbers 1-10, all upper-case letters, name, color, and shape recognition using monthly themes which make learning fun and exciting. Our four and five-year old’s are taught reading and writing skills. We use both whole language and phonics to teach reading and feel that our children will leave the program with the connection of the written word to language. All learning experiences are based upon the following learning domains; science, math, literacy, language development, social studies and gross and fine motor development. All children are assessed using the RI Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS). They are assessed twice an academic year and parents can request an appointment to view the RIELDS and/or assessments for his/her child (dependent on COVID guidelines). Our Preschool 3 room is licensed for 13 with a 1:9 ratio and our Pre-k, ages 4-5, is licensed for 15 with a 1:10 ratio.

**COVID-19 Drop-off & Pick-up Policy**

To adhere to social distancing requirements and limit exposure, we will be asking all parents to drop off & pick up without entering the building. We will be meeting parents at the appropriate door to their child’s classroom. We ask that while walking from your car to the door to please hold your child’s hand for safety reasons. We will then escort children in with their belongings at drop off and will meet parents at the door with their belongings for pick up. We will be conducting a screening every day at drop off, this will entail a series of questions and temperature check of your child. We will have one designated staff member for each door that will be greeting & conducting the screening required. We ask all parents to adhere to mask requirements, social distancing, remaining 6 feet from the greeting staff member. We ask all parents dropping off and picking up an infant to use the infant room door located on the side of the building. All parents dropping off and picking up a toddler to use the toddler room (front left) door. All parents dropping off for Preschool 3 & Preschool 4 to use the preschool room (front right) door. We ask that you limit the adults dropping off and picking up to try and reduce the number of contacts. When dropping off or picking up please take turns at the door and be considerate of other parents. If there is already a parent and child at the door you are going to be using, please wait in your car until the door is free. There will be hand sanitizer (kept out of child’s reach) at each door, every child should use this upon entering the building. All preschool children should then drop their belongings off at their cubbies and report to a handwashing sink. Toddler room teachers are to place the child’s belongings in their individual cubby, then assist with handwashing.

**Child Release Policy**

All pick-ups must provide positive ID when asked by a teacher. Any person arriving for pick-up who is not authorized for such will not be allowed to depart with your child. We must be notified, in writing, of any substitute pick-up, and such pick-up must provide positive ID. Parents may provide an emergency password to the office to make substitutions over the telephone.

Children must be picked up by 4:30PM each day. Parents 5 minutes late or later will be subject to a late fee of $5.00 for every 5 minutes after 4:35. This rule applies to all parents including those receiving assistance from DHS.

**Medication & Health Policy**

Only prescription medication will be dispensed at our school. All parents providing prescription medication must first complete a medication form (ask the teacher in your classroom to provide one). Please be sure to advise of any and all allergies your child may have. This will be kept in your child’s folder and posted clearly in each classroom. A health policy is included in your enrollment packet where such information should be listed and applies to all those attending our school.

**Tuition Policy**

Tuition is required in advance payable every Friday. All late payments are subject to a $15.00 late fee which accrues weekly. Tuition remains unchanged in the event of absences due to illness (including COVID related quarantines), holidays, inclement weather, emergency closures and vacations if not arranged properly. If there is a lapse in recertification for those who are assisted by DHS, payment will be required by the guardian.

**Contract Policy**

Contracts will be updated annually with any change of hours, tuition rate, or to rules. Contract changes will be sent out August 1st and will be due back August 15th, taking affect September 1st. Minor updates to contracts can be applied throughout the year if required by DHS or the state of Rhode Island.

**Concealed Weapons Policy**

Any persons may not, at any time while on property owned, leased, or controlled by Glocester Childcare Center, including anywhere that company business is conducted, possesses, or use any weapon.

Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives, or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person.

**School Closures**

All parents will be notified VIA text or phone call by administration for any severe weather or unforeseen events. Closures will also be posted on our Facebook page.

**Field Trips**

Our center does not participate in field trips and any extracurricular enrichments will be held at the school. All personnel conducting enrichments will provide proof of background checks.

**Fire and Emergency Drills**

The Program administrator or designee is to conduct at leastfifteen fire drills every twelve months. Both obstructed and unobstructed drills are conducted, and a record of such drills are maintained. Every month at least one fire drill is to be completed and every fourth fire drill an exit will be obstructed.

**Child Abuse & Neglect**

By law, all suspected cases of abuse or neglect must be reported to DCYF at 1(800)-RICHILD.

**Holidays**

We are closed for New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Victory Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and the following Friday & Christmas.

**COVID-19 Child Illness Policy**

The following is the health policy currently in effect for Glocester Childcare Center. We reserve the right to change the policy at any time.

1. All children are required to be immunized according to the plan set forth by your pediatrician and required by DHS.
2. All children with the following symptoms must remain home from school:
3. **Viruses such as; Coronavirus, Flu, Cold like symptoms, Chicken Pox**
4. **Fever of 100.4 or more;**
5. Chronic diarrhea or vomiting;
6. Green or yellow discharge (suggestive of a sinus infection);
7. Chronic bronchial condition;
8. Any undiagnosed rashes;
9. Head lice;
10. Impetigo;
11. Conjunctivitis;
12. Any other communicable disease our director deems a health concern.
13. **Any child who develops the above symptoms during the school day must be picked up immediately. If your child shows symptoms, they will be placed in an isolation area away from other children.**
14. Any child who remains home or is sent home **must be symptom free for 72 hours before returning to school.**
15. **If a household member has coronavirus like symptoms your child must stay home until the household member is 72 hours symptom free.**
16. If a child is placed on prescription medication, he may be required to remain on the medication for 24-48 hours before being allowed to return to school. This requirement will vary depending upon the illness being treated.
17. Only the director can administer prescription medication. Parents with such medication must complete a medication form located in each room. Both the medication and the medication form must be turned over to the teacher for storage. The teacher will return the medication each evening. Over the counter medication will not be dispensed at school without written authorization from your pediatrician.
18. Tuition remains unchanged in the event of illness.