



Parent Handbook

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Introduction

This Parent Handbook serves three main purposes:



It introduces you to the Winchester After School Program, its origins, organizational structure, philosophy, and goals.



It informs you of the policies and regulations by which you, as a participating parent, are expected to abide. These policies have been developed and carefully formulated to ensure a stable environment for your child(ren) and the financial well being of the Program.



It serves as a reference source for other questions you will have about the operation of the Program and procedures to follow.

Please read this handbook carefully, keep it in a convenient place, and refer to it as needed throughout the year.

Revision Date: January 2024

Grass Roots Beginnings

In January 1982, Kids' Corner, a pilot after school child care and enrichment program, opened its doors at the Lincoln School in Winchester. Its founders were a dozen local women who wanted and needed quality child care for their school-aged children while they worked full time outside the home.

In 1980, several of these women had participated in the Winchester League of Women Voters' study of the need for after school care in Winchester. Because the study clearly indicated such a need, and finding they could not depend on town funding or official support, these women struck out on their own.

Joined by parents in the community with similar needs, they formed a town-wide planning coalition to establish a program. The first step was to incorporate as a nonprofit organization— hence, the birth of Kids' Corner. The second step was to negotiate rental space in one of the Winchester public schools. After seven months of intensive work, Kids' Corner was in place. It was to be an entirely self-supporting program, staffed by professionals in the field of child development and education, and supported by the parents through a Board of Directors.

Kids' Corner has grown by leaps and bounds. During the first full year of operation, the Program served roughly 50 families and an average of 35 children per day. A Kindergarten component was added in September 1982 and a special program for older children (grades 4-6) was designed to begin the following September, when the Program moved to its new quarters at the McCall Middle School. The Program has more than quadrupled in size since that time. The Program moved to Winchester High School in 1996 and remained there until June 2003. In July 2003 we moved to our new home at the old Mystic Elementary School.

Purpose and Organizational Structure

As stated in the Bylaws of the Corporation, Kids' Corner was organized for a three-fold purpose:

-  To establish and maintain a childcare program of high quality, that fosters sound development of children, thereby permitting parents to pursue academic, professional, and other activities during the working hours of the day,
-  To maintain an organizational structure that allows parents to be involved in the lives of their children at the Program; and
-  To serve the Winchester community at large, without regard to race, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, marital status, political beliefs, cultural heritage or national origin.

Children are accepted into Kids' Corner on a first-come, first- served basis, with priority given to siblings of children already enrolled in the Program. The process for enrollment is:

- 1.** Submit an online registration form on our website and non-refundable \$150.00 registration fee.
- 2.** When space becomes available, an acceptance letter is mailed to the family. It stipulates the days/time available and the monthly tuition rate. The family is asked to return the signed letter with a deposit of one month's tuition.
- 3.** Upon receipt of a signed acceptance letter and deposit, an enrollment packet is sent to the family. It contains all forms (medical, emergency contacts, transportation, etc.) that need to be completed prior to the first day of enrollment.
- 4.** Child begins attending Kids' Corner.

Members of the Corporation are the parents or guardians of each child enrolled in any program sponsored by the Corporation and any other persons as may be elected to membership by the Board of Directors of the Corporation. At the Annual Meeting in June, members elect the Parent Board of Directors. This group makes important policy, financial, and hiring decisions during the year, under the leadership of the officers whom the Board, in turn, elects from among its members. Officers and other Board members donate their time in service to the Program. Input from parents at large is always welcome and at times may be sought.

The staff at Kids' Corner consists of the Executive Director (Site Coordinator), full- time teachers, part- time teachers, and high school student aides. The teachers and aides report to the Executive Director. The Executive Director in turn reports to the Board of Directors.

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the licensing authority for Kids' Corner.

If you have any questions or would like to know our compliance history, please contact the EEC Regional Office.

Contact information can be found below:

Department of Early Education and Care
Northeast Regional Office
360 Merrimack St, Building 9, Third Floor
Lawrence, MA 01843

Phone: 978-681-9684

Program Goals and Design

The Program goals, set forth by the founders, include the following:

-  To provide a comfortable, safe, and stable environment, as well as a variety of recreational and enrichment activities for children attending the Program.
-  To offer a balance of structured and unstructured activities, with opportunities for relaxation, free play, or homework.
-  To meet the special needs of both older and younger children in the Program.
-  To make extensive use whenever possible of resources in the community and the greater Boston area, including the library and Ginn Field.

To implement these goals, the Board employs an Executive Director and support staff for a 9:1 student-teacher ratio. Criteria in staff selection include not only educational background and experience, but also personal qualities like creativity and flexibility. Staff must also have a genuine liking and understanding of children and the ability to interact effectively with children of different ages in the special after-school environment.

To ensure a stable environment, allow for continuity and progression in program activities, and help each child develop in the Program context, children must attend Kids' Corner a minimum number of 2 days each week.

Parent Support Philosophy

Kids' Corner is not a cooperative. Although parents are not required to put in classroom time or regular hours of service, parent involvement and support are essential to the Program's philosophy and goals.

Through the parent Board, parents determine actual program direction, thus ensuring that their children have the kind of experience they, collectively, desire for them. Occasional help from parents at large and regular support from the Board free the staff to concentrate on implementing the parent's goals for the Program and serving the needs of the children. Support of this nature also helps keep the administrative costs of the Program down.

The kinds of commitment and support expected of parents are described in more detail in the policy section of this handbook in the Parent Responsibilities section. The Program belongs to you, the parents, and your children. Your cooperation, constructive input, and contributions— large and small— help determine its success.

Parent Responsibilities

It is each parent's responsibility to:

-  Familiarize yourself with all information in this handbook and all later written communications regarding policy and program structure.
-  Pay tuition, fines, and other bills on time, and to contact the Main Office immediately with any questions regarding these payments.
-  Make your child(ren) aware of his/her responsibilities in the Program.
-  Attend parent meetings, conferences, and occasionally assist the Program (e.g. helping with Town Day booth, fundraising, serving on a committee, carry out specific tasks under direction of a Board Member or Executive Director, working on the Board).
-  Check for program notices each day your child attends. We primarily communicate with families via email or phone calls so be sure to periodically check your email and have your phone available in case of phone calls from the program.
-  Discuss any problems or concerns with your child(ren)'s teachers and the Executive Director.
-  Ensure your child(ren) knows which day he/she is to attend each week.
-  Keep your child(ren) home when ill.
-  Telephone/email the program before 11am on Early Release Days and 1pm on regular school days.
-  Pick up your child(ren) on time each day.

Parents cannot drop off their children at the Program, except during February and April school vacations weeks or in the event a child misses the bus at school.

The smooth operation of the Program depends on the cooperation of all parents in carrying out their responsibilities. Habitual violation of any of the policies addressed in the handbook, or of any new policies communicated in writing during the year, is considered grounds for dismissal from the Program.

Parent Involvement

Parents who serve on the Board of Directors help determine policy, hire the Executive Director, and make other important decisions. The officers of the Board volunteer their time to help administer the Program, work on community relations, and generally ensure the Program's smooth operation and continuing success.

All other parents are expected to contribute time by serving on a committee with a particular charge, helping with an event such as Town Day, or contributing a needed skill on a short-term basis. You can expect to be called upon by a Board member to help with a particular function or task sometime during the year.

Attendance at parent meetings or social functions is encouraged, since it develops a sense of community with others in the Program, as well as an identity with and commitment toward the Program itself. The Board of Directors meetings are open to all parents, and we especially encourage you to attend the Annual Meeting in June, when goals and future directions of the Program are discussed. The success of the Program depends on the active support of all parents.

Policies

Absences

If your child will not attend the Program on a particular day for which he/she is enrolled, you must notify the Program by calling 781-721-1514 or emailing the classroom, no later than 11am on Early Release Days or 1pm on regular school days.

Classroom emails:

k1room@kidscornerwinchester.org

23room@kidscornerwinchester.org

456room@kidscornerwinchester.org

Non-compliance to this policy will result in a fine of ten dollars (\$10.00) the first time. The fine increases to twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) after the first offense. It is disruptive for staff to track down the whereabouts of your child for any reason. No refunds will be made for contracted days that your child does not attend.

Habitual lack of absence notification will result in dismissal from the Program.

Accident Insurance

You are required to carry adequate health insurance or accident insurance that covers your child(ren) for the hours of the Program.

A low cost policy is available through the schools if you do not have family health insurance, but it must cover the hours of the program as well as school hours.

Allergy Policy

Several children attending Kids' Corner have severe allergies. Allergic reactions range from mild skin irritations, to severe reactions during which the child may experience anaphylactic shock and even death. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, Kids' Corner maintains a program-wide procedure for addressing life-threatening allergies.

Children with known food allergies or other life-threatening allergies must have an Emergency Health Care Plan (EHCP). Student's parent/ guardian and the primary care provider/allergist must provide an EHCP. The EHCP must be updated annually. Parents must provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.

 In the classroom, an allergy table is maintained for students with food allergies. Before school begins, the lead teachers take note of all of the specific food allergies of their students. The teachers place a sign on the table listing the foods to avoid eating at that table. When we eat lunch at Kids' Corner, that table is reserved for children with food allergies. All lunches eaten at that table are checked by a teacher for any of the known food allergens. If any food allergens are found in their lunch, alternative seating arrangements are made for those students.

 Tables are washed with a bleach solution following any food related events held in the classroom.

 Sharing/trading food is not allowed.

 Proper hand washing is taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

 Kids' Corner provides peanut/nut free snacks during daily snack time.

Please do not send in food for the whole class. A copy of the complete policy is available in the office.

Behavior Management

Kids' Corner staff strives to maximize the growth and development of the children at the Program and to protect the group and individuals within it. We use behavior management in a consistent, reasonable, and appropriate way based on an understanding of the needs and development of each child. Behavior management procedures used by the staff will be clearly and consistently communicated to the children. Where appropriate and feasible, children will participate in the establishment of the rules and procedures that will foster a positive, nurturing environment.

The five basic rules that we expect the children to follow are:

- 1. Safety** - Children refrain from actions that could be physically harmful to themselves, other children or adults.
- 2. Respect for others** - Children respect the rights and feelings of other children/staff.
- 3. Responsibility** - Children are responsible for their own actions and for helping to keep the program space, equipment and supplies clean.
- 4. Fairness** - Children share equipment, show good sportsmanship, and abide by the rules set forth by the staff.
- 5. Boundaries** - Children stay within the physical boundaries of the Program unless accompanied by staff. Children must ask permission/inform staff if they need to leave the area.

Following these five basic rules will help ensure the children's safety and enable them to enjoy the activities offered at the Program.

Behavior management procedures used by the staff are:

-  Demonstrate positive role modeling.
-  Provide positive encouragement and feedback thus fostering development of confidence and self-control.
-  Allow children to express themselves verbally.
-  Promote positive limit setting by offering a wide choice of activities that fit within necessary boundaries and rules.
-  Phrase rules and discussions in a positive format as much as possible.
-  Set forth reasonable expectations for the children's behavior and clearly communicate them.
-  Consider situational circumstances that might be influencing a child's behavior and, if possible, rectify any of these factors.
-  Anticipate problems and try to prevent them by distracting or redirecting a child when necessary, changing group dynamics, switching activities or schedules, reminding children of rules, etc.
-  Discuss the consequences of disruptive behavior in a calm, non-threatening manner.
-  Implement any necessary consequence (e.g. loss of privilege, a time out of reasonable duration, removal to another area) as soon as possible after the disruption occurs, so that it is a learning experience for the child.
-  Re-establish positive contact with a child after the consequence. Call parent/emergency contact to pick up any child who is too emotionally upset to function within the standard operation of the Program and/or exhibits behavior that endangers self or any other children or staff.

Behavior Management *(continued)*

When dealing with a persistent or serious behavior problem, some additional steps that are explored and implemented if they seem helpful are:

-  Arrange an initial parent/teacher conference to address issues.
-  Continue regular communication among the Kids' Corner staff and parents in the form of phone calls, written reports, and additional face-to-face conferences.
-  Confer with the child's School Teacher, Principal and School Psychologist.
-  Establish a behavior modification plan based on feedback and progress that will be applied at home as well as the Program.
-  Suggest referrals to outside professional organizations. A separate Referral Plan, including a list of currently available services, is available to parents upon request.

Kids' Corner prohibits the following:

-  Spanking or other corporal punishment of children.
-  Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment.
-  Depriving children of meals or snacks.
-  Force-feeding of children.
-  Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
-  Excessive timeouts – a time out that exceeds one minute for each year of a child's age (e.g. a time out for a 5 year old can not exceed 5 minutes).

Suspension

If the Executive Director and staff determine that a child's negative behavior endangers their safety or the safety of others, needs constant one-on-one supervision, or needs to be separated from the group for the majority of each day, the child may be suspended from the Program at the discretion of the Executive Director for a span of one (1) to five (5) enrollment days. This action will only be used in extreme cases. Prior to the child's return to the Program, the Executive Director will meet with his/her parents to discuss the conditions of reentry. The Executive Director (and any appropriate staff member) will also meet with the child on the day he/she returns to welcome him/her back and to reinforce the rules of reentry.

Termination

A child may be terminated from the Program for the following behavioral reasons:

-  Persistent behavior or needs that puts self, other children or staff at risk.
-  Constant one-on-one supervision required.
-  Behavior that disrupts the daily normal operation of the Program.
-  Inappropriate adult behavior by parents/guardians at the Program. Such behavior includes (but is not limited to):
 - Not adhering to Kids' Corner policies.
 - Being abusive to the staff.
 - Habitual undocumented absences of child.
 - Habitual late pick-up.
 - Violation of Confidentiality Policy.
 - Failure to pay tuition.

The Executive Director will recommend termination to the President of the Board of Directors or his/her Board Member designee, and a mutual decision will be made.

Communication

Good communication among parents, staff, parents-at-large, and the Parent Board of Directors is essential to the success of the Program. Vehicles of communication include parent-staff conferences, newsletters, monthly Board Meetings, and notices from the Board or from the Executive Director. Please check your email daily for timely information updates.

You are welcome to visit the Program. You are encouraged to bring up your concerns to the Board at scheduled monthly meetings. Finally, you are encouraged and expected to communicate directly with the Executive Director or an appropriate Board Officer if any specific problems or questions regarding policy arise.

Conferences

You are encouraged to arrange conferences with your child's teacher and/or the Executive Director whenever you have concerns about your child and/or the daily activities of the Program. Conversely, a teacher might initiate a conference in order to communicate effectively with you. Every effort will be made to schedule a conference time that is convenient to your work schedule.

Progress Reports

Midway through the year you will receive a progress report from Kids' Corner. The progress report will be in checklist form and completed by the classroom teachers. You will have the option to schedule a conference to discuss the information on the progress report.

Confidentiality Policy / Request for Information

Information which has been received by Kids' Corner on a confidential basis must be maintained in the strictest confidence. No records, documents, or other written or verbal information pertaining to the official business of Kids' Corner and considered confidential may be accessed, discussed, or distributed to any person or organization within or outside Kids' Corner without the approval of the Executive Director and related parties. Personal and confidential information includes social security and other government issued identification numbers, bank and other financial account numbers, and behavioral, health, and medical information received from students, their families, and staff.

Kids' Corner will not release any information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the Program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian. All records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the Program office. We will notify you if a child's record is subpoenaed. Kids' Corner may charge reasonable rates for copies of records that are made for approved parties.

Parents/guardians shall, upon request, have access to their child's records within a reasonable time frame (maximum of two days from date of request). Kids' Corner must keep a record log of each time information is released from our files. A parent/guardian has the right to add or delete information from his/her child's record. Also, when a child leaves the Program, the parents/guardians can request in writing transfer of the record.

Disaster Plan

In case of loss of heat, electricity, or water at the Program for an extended period of time, the Executive Director will contact school administration and/or Winchester Town Hall to find out if we should evacuate the premises. If this is the case, we will move to Winchester Town Hall at 71 Mount Vernon Street until it is safe to

return to the school. In the case of fire, flood, or other natural disaster in which the Program must also evacuate the program facility, the Program will also move to the Winchester Town Hall.

In either case, parents will be notified as soon as the children have been safely evacuated and relocated. Signs will be posted on the doors at the school facility (if we can get near the building) stating that Kids' Corner has moved and giving parents necessary information for pick-up of their children. A complete Evacuation/Disaster Plan is available upon request.

Enrollment Contracts and Tuition

Before any child can attend Kids Corner, the Executive Director must have in hand the Enrollment Contract, Payment Schedule Contract, deposit of one month's tuition fee and all forms needed to satisfy the Department of Early Education and Care regulations.

Tuition is due on the first of each month, based on a ten-month schedule of September-June. Tuition rates can be found on our website, www.kidscornerwinchester.org. The deposit of one month's tuition that is paid with the payment contract will be applied towards the June tuition payment. Deposits and tuition can be made via credit card or check payable to Kids' Corner and mailed to:

Kids' Corner
P.O. Box 773
Winchester, MA 01890

By signing the contract, parents agree to pay tuition by the first of every month. Failure to pay tuition by the 5th of the month will result in a fine of ten dollars (\$10.00). Should you fall further behind with a monthly tuition payment, the procedure described below will be followed:

1. Board members will contact you on the 15th of the month to remind you of your tardiness.
2. If you still have not paid by the 30th of the month, you will be contacted again. You will have seven days to pay the previous month's tuition, plus the tuition for the month. Should you not meet these guidelines, your child will be dropped from the Program at the end of the seven-days.

If you have a special circumstance that makes it difficult for you to meet a payment, you are expected to contact the Executive Director to work out a payment plan. Habitual late monthly payments (those requiring a phone call on the 15th of the month) will result in dismissal from the Program.

This strict policy has been and will continue to be enforced for two primary reasons. First, Kids' Corner operates on a tight budget, relying entirely on monthly tuition to meet expenses. Second, resolving late payment problems is a tremendous burden for the Administrative Team and the Treasurer. The Treasurer already donates many hours of time in service to the Program and to you. Your full cooperation in paying on time is expected and is greatly appreciated.

Enrollment Meeting

Prior to admittance into the Program, parents have the opportunity to meet with the Executive Director or designated classroom teachers to visit the Program and ask any questions they may have. To schedule an enrollment meeting please contact the Executive Director at 781-721-1514.

Fines

A \$10 fine is charged to parents for the following reasons:

-  Failure to pick up your child by 6:00pm (see Late Pick-Up).
-  Failure to notify the Program of absences by 11am on Early Release Days or 1pm on regular school days (see Absences).
-  Failure to send lunch with your child on early release days, school vacation days, full day programs or during the summer program.
-  Late tuition payments (see Tuition and Enrollment Contracts)

Fines *(continued)*

You will receive written notification of fines due and are expected to pay them immediately. Any questions regarding fines should be directed to the Executive Director.

Late Pick-Up

Kids' Corner closes at 6:00pm. Parents **MUST** pick up their children by 6:00pm. A \$10 fine will be imposed for every 10- minute period that you are late beyond these closing times. It is disruptive to the Program and costly as well. If parents habitually fail to pick up their children on time, Kids' Corner reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment contract.

Health Care

Kids' Corner has a comprehensive written Health Care Policy that addresses all health aspects of the Program. A copy is given to all parents, and a summary of this policy follows:

Illnesses and communicable diseases/conditions: Children who do not attend school or who are sent home due to illness may not attend Kids' Corner. Guidelines are the same as those for the Winchester school system. Children are excluded from participation in the Program due to high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, undiagnosed rash, persistent wheezing or severe asthma attack, communicable diseases, and head lice. If a child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please inform the Executive Director. Parents will be notified of communicable diseases/conditions such as head lice, scarlet fever, impetigo, ring worm, scabies, Fifth's Disease, and chicken pox.

Emergency care: If emergency health care is needed, Winchester Hospital is used. On a field trip, the nearest facility will be used. Children will be transported via ambulance, and the parents will be notified immediately.

Mandated Reporting: All Kids' Corner staff members are deemed mandated reporters by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Any incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported by law to the Department of Social Services.

Medication Dispensation: Requirements for the dispensation of prescription medications are: 1) Kids' Corner medication authorization form signed by parent and 2) Medication must be in an original bottle with prescription label (most pharmacists will give you two containers with labels if you request it) and 3) The first dose of a medication can not be administered at Kids' Corner.

Non-prescription medication will be dispensed only upon receipt of an authorization note from the child's physician AND a written parental authorization form, each stating the conditions under which it is to be given. The medication must be sent in its original container.

Kids' Corner may, with written parental consent and a physician's authorization, permit children who have asthma to carry and use their own inhalers as needed, without direct supervision of staff.

The staff will log all dispensations of medications. Medications will be kept in a safe place out of the reach of the children.

Schedule Change for Children

Once the Program begins in September, schedule changes (e.g. additions of or switches to another day) are not permitted except under unusual circumstances. Even then, because the Program operates at full capacity on most days, such changes may not be possible.

If you feel you must change your child's schedule in the Program, such changes must be cleared with the Executive Director one month prior to such changes taking place. A Schedule Change Form must be submitted to the Main Office and approved by the Executive Director one month prior to the schedule change. Furthermore, all approved changes must take effect on the first of the month. In other words, all changes must be cleared well in advance so that our transportation schedules and other records can be changed accordingly.

Financial implications: Your monthly tuition will change only if you have added sessions in the Program to your child's weekly schedule. A decrease in the number of sessions will not decrease your tuition obligation as agreed to in your Payment Schedule Contract. Maintaining the Program budget and the quality of the program depends on achieving the revenues that families committed to upon enrollment.

Tooth Brushing

In January 2010, EEC issued new regulations for child care programs that include a requirement that educators assist children with brushing their teeth if children are in care for more than four hours or if children have a meal while in care [606 CMR 7.11(11)(d)]. This regulation is intended to:

- Help children learn about the importance of good oral health.
- Provide information and resources regarding good oral health to child care programs and families.
- Help address the high incidence of tooth decay among young children in Massachusetts, which is associated with numerous health risks.

Kids' Corner must comply with this regulation. However, parents may choose that their child not participate in tooth brushing while at the program.

At the start of every school year, Kids' Corner will provide you with a form that allows parents to opt out of the required tooth brushing. This form must be renewed annually and will be kept in each child's record at the program. Should a parent change their mind and wish for their child to participate in tooth brushing, this form may be withdrawn at any time by requesting in writing that it be removed from their child's file.

Parents are required to provide a toothbrush for their child and replace it as requested by the classroom teachers. Kids' Corner will provide fluoride toothpaste and will store the toothbrushes according to the EEC regulations.

Transition Between Classrooms

Children transition between classrooms twice at Kids' Corner. There is a transition from the Kindergarten-First Grade classroom to the Second-Third Grade classroom. There is another transition from the Second-Third Grade classroom to the Fourth-Fifth-Sixth Grade classroom. On occasion it may be necessary to form a transition plan for an individual child to assist the transition from one class to another. The transition plan will be age-appropriate and put into place in a manner consistent with a child's ability to understand. The transition plan will also require collaboration between classroom teachers and permission from the parents

Withdrawal from the Program

As a courtesy to the Program staff, withdrawals should be announced in advance with at least 1 month's notice. To withdraw, please submit a Schedule Change Form to the Main Office. Barring exceptional cases (e.g. your child's dismissal from the Program, an unexpected move out of town, or the loss of your job), we expect you to honor your tuition commitment to the program for the remainder of the year, as agreed to in the Payment Schedule Contract.

Program Operation

Calendar & Schedule

The Kids' Corner calendar is tailored to the Winchester Public Schools calendar and daily schedule, operating from the first day of school in September through the last day of school.

Kindergarten children begin the Program on their first day of Kindergarten at Winchester Public Schools, which is usually an early release day.

The regular program, for children in grades 1 through 6, runs from school dismissal time to 6:00pm on all school days. This includes early release days, when children bring their lunches with them to the Program.

Kids' Corner does not operate on holidays observed by the Winchester Public Schools or on school "snow days."

Full-day vacation coverage in February and April is offered for an additional fee and we are open for full-day programming on select occasional federal holidays (see **Vacation Weeks**).

Early Release Days

Please remember to pack a lunch and drink on all Early Release Days. A newsletter will be distributed at the beginning of each month informing you of upcoming Early Release Days and any special activities or field trips that are planned.

Field Trips

Trips are planned on Early Release Days and will be announced in the monthly newsletter. Local bus companies will provide transportation. Parents must sign a special permission slip for trip locations other than those listed on the Off-Site Activities Permission Form that is on file at the Program. If you do not or choose not to sign the permission slip, it is your responsibility to have your child picked up prior to the field trip departure time.

Please remember to send a lunch and drink, and have your child wear their blue Kids' Corner t-shirt.

Blue Kids' Corner shirts are available for purchase in the office for \$10/shirt. Please note, if your child attends a field trip without their blue Kids' Corner shirt either on their body/packed in their backpack, you will be invoiced for a new t-shirt.

Lunch & Snacks

On Early Release Days, school vacation weeks and during the Summer Program, **all children** must bring a lunch and drink, unless they ordered lunch through our lunch program (see below). Please avoid including soda and candy in these lunches. Favorite foods that would round out a healthful lunch are: baby carrots, cut-up veggies and fruit, popcorn or pretzels. A nutritious afternoon snack is provided by the Program.

Lunch Program

We offer a lunch program on days that your child will be at Kids' Corner for lunch (early release days, full day program, Summer Program, etc). If we are offering the lunch program on a specific day, we will send out information via email. In that email, there will be a form to fill out, information on payment and a due date. We generally offer a variety of sub options from D'Agostino's Deli or pizza from a local pizzeria.

Parking

Parents must park in the parking lot off Marshall Street when picking up their child(ren). The Kids' Corner entrance is the entrance facing Main Street. Please do not park on Main Street. The heavy traffic on this busy road presents a hazard to the children.

Snow Days

The Program will not operate on days when the Winchester Public Schools are closed because of snow. If a serious storm develops during the day, Kids' Corner expects parents to make every effort to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible. There are no refunds for days canceled due to snow.

Transportation

Children travel to Kids' Corner on the public school buses that are contracted by the Town of Winchester. Parents must purchase a bus pass for their child(ren) in order to board the bus. Please be sure that your child carries this pass at all times. Kids' Corner is not responsible for the supervision of children on the public school buses until they arrive at the Program.

Children cannot be dropped off at the Program. The only exception to this policy is if your child misses the school bus. Kids' Corner staff cannot pick up children who miss the bus at their respective schools. This is a liability issue for the Program and would also require additional staff to ensure coverage for the children already at the Program site. Parents will be contacted by the public school to pick up their children. Parents must notify the Program immediately to inform a staff member of the situation. Any questions regarding the transportation policy should be directed to the Executive Director.

At the end of the day, a parent, guardian or designated individual must pick up each child. Designated individuals must be a responsible adult or sibling and written in the child's transportation plan. Any individual not previously known to the classroom teachers will be asked to show a photo identification.

Vacation Weeks

The Program is not open during the school December holiday vacation. Exclusive of Monday holidays, Kids' Corner will operate full days (8:00am to 6:00pm) during the February and April school vacation weeks, depending on sufficient enrollment (at least 15 children). You may sign up your child(ren) for just a couple of days, or for the entire week.

You will not be charged for this coverage unless you register for it. Registration for these programs opens at the beginning of the school year. You will be emailed information on how to register through our online registration page on Sawyer (www.hisawyer.com). Payment will be due in advance on Sawyer and cancellation policies are outlined on our registration pages.

Transportation to and from the site is your responsibility during these days. Children must bring lunch, including a drink. A nutritious afternoon snack will be provided.

Summer Program & KC Xtreme

Kids' Corner offers multiple exciting programs during the summer, including our regular Kids' Corner Summer Program (K-5), and KC Xtreme for middle school students (completed grades 6-8). The Kids' Corner Summer Program is open to all families in the community. (Priority given to families currently enrolled in our After School Program.) Registration occurs on our online registration page on Sawyer (www.hisawyer.com) on January 15th at 8am. You will be emailed more information close to the date.

Kids' Corner program is operated by the
Winchester After School Program, Inc.
a parent-sponsored non profit organization.

Kids' Corner does not discriminate on the
basis of race, cultural heritage,
national origin, marital status,
religion, political beliefs,
disability or sexual orientation.

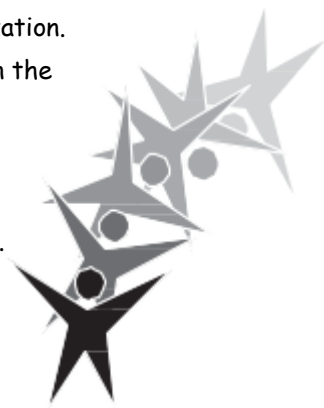


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Introduction

This Parent Handbook serves three main purposes:



It introduces you to the Winchester After School Program, its origins, organizational structure, philosophy, and goals.



It informs you of the policies and regulations by which you, as a participating parent, are expected to abide. These policies have been developed and carefully formulated to ensure a stable environment for your child(ren) and the financial well being of the Program.



It serves as a reference source for other questions you will have about the operation of the Program and procedures to follow.

Please read this handbook carefully, keep it in a convenient place, and refer to it as needed throughout the year.

Revision Date: January 2024

Grass Roots Beginnings

In January 1982, Kids' Corner, a pilot after school child care and enrichment program, opened its doors at the Lincoln School in Winchester. Its founders were a dozen local women who wanted and needed quality child care for their school-aged children while they worked full time outside the home.

In 1980, several of these women had participated in the Winchester League of Women Voters' study of the need for after school care in Winchester. Because the study clearly indicated such a need, and finding they could not depend on town funding or official support, these women struck out on their own.

Joined by parents in the community with similar needs, they formed a town-wide planning coalition to establish a program. The first step was to incorporate as a nonprofit organization— hence, the birth of Kids' Corner. The second step was to negotiate rental space in one of the Winchester public schools. After seven months of intensive work, Kids' Corner was in place. It was to be an entirely self-supporting program, staffed by professionals in the field of child development and education, and supported by the parents through a Board of Directors.

Kids' Corner has grown by leaps and bounds. During the first full year of operation, the Program served roughly 50 families and an average of 35 children per day. A Kindergarten component was added in September 1982 and a special program for older children (grades 4-6) was designed to begin the following September, when the Program moved to its new quarters at the McCall Middle School. The Program has more than quadrupled in size since that time. The Program moved to Winchester High School in 1996 and remained there until June 2003. In July 2003 we moved to our new home at the old Mystic Elementary School.

Purpose and Organizational Structure

As stated in the Bylaws of the Corporation, Kids' Corner was organized for a three-fold purpose:

-  To establish and maintain a childcare program of high quality, that fosters sound development of children, thereby permitting parents to pursue academic, professional, and other activities during the working hours of the day,
-  To maintain an organizational structure that allows parents to be involved in the lives of their children at the Program; and
-  To serve the Winchester community at large, without regard to race, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, marital status, political beliefs, cultural heritage or national origin.

Children are accepted into Kids' Corner on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to siblings of children already enrolled in the Program. The process for enrollment is:

- 1.** Submit an online registration form on our website and non-refundable \$150.00 registration fee.
- 2.** When space becomes available, an acceptance letter is mailed to the family. It stipulates the days/time available and the monthly tuition rate. The family is asked to return the signed letter with a deposit of one month's tuition.
- 3.** Upon receipt of a signed acceptance letter and deposit, an enrollment packet is sent to the family. It contains all forms (medical, emergency contacts, transportation, etc.) that need to be completed prior to the first day of enrollment.
- 4.** Child begins attending Kids' Corner.

Members of the Corporation are the parents or guardians of each child enrolled in any program sponsored by the Corporation and any other persons as may be elected to membership by the Board of Directors of the Corporation. At the Annual Meeting in June, members elect the Parent Board of Directors. This group makes important policy, financial, and hiring decisions during the year, under the leadership of the officers whom the Board, in turn, elects from among its members. Officers and other Board members donate their time in service to the Program. Input from parents at large is always welcome and at times may be sought.

The staff at Kids' Corner consists of the Executive Director (Site Coordinator), full- time teachers, part- time teachers, and high school student aides. The teachers and aides report to the Executive Director. The Executive Director in turn reports to the Board of Directors.

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the licensing authority for Kids' Corner.

If you have any questions or would like to know our compliance history, please contact the EEC Regional Office.

Contact information can be found below:

Department of Early Education and Care
Northeast Regional Office
360 Merrimack St, Building 9, Third Floor
Lawrence, MA 01843

Phone: 978-681-9684

Program Goals and Design

The Program goals, set forth by the founders, include the following:

-  To provide a comfortable, safe, and stable environment, as well as a variety of recreational and enrichment activities for children attending the Program.
-  To offer a balance of structured and unstructured activities, with opportunities for relaxation, free play, or homework.
-  To meet the special needs of both older and younger children in the Program.
-  To make extensive use whenever possible of resources in the community and the greater Boston area, including the library and Ginn Field.

To implement these goals, the Board employs an Executive Director and support staff for a 9:1 student-teacher ratio. Criteria in staff selection include not only educational background and experience, but also personal qualities like creativity and flexibility. Staff must also have a genuine liking and understanding of children and the ability to interact effectively with children of different ages in the special after-school environment.

To ensure a stable environment, allow for continuity and progression in program activities, and help each child develop in the Program context, children must attend Kids' Corner a minimum number of 2 days each week.

Parent Support Philosophy

Kids' Corner is not a cooperative. Although parents are not required to put in classroom time or regular hours of service, parent involvement and support are essential to the Program's philosophy and goals.

Through the parent Board, parents determine actual program direction, thus ensuring that their children have the kind of experience they, collectively, desire for them. Occasional help from parents at large and regular support from the Board free the staff to concentrate on implementing the parent's goals for the Program and serving the needs of the children. Support of this nature also helps keep the administrative costs of the Program down.

The kinds of commitment and support expected of parents are described in more detail in the policy section of this handbook in the Parent Responsibilities section. The Program belongs to you, the parents, and your children. Your cooperation, constructive input, and contributions— large and small— help determine its success.

Parent Responsibilities

It is each parent's responsibility to:

-  Familiarize yourself with all information in this handbook and all later written communications regarding policy and program structure.
-  Pay tuition, fines, and other bills on time, and to contact the Main Office immediately with any questions regarding these payments.
-  Make your child(ren) aware of his/her responsibilities in the Program.
-  Attend parent meetings, conferences, and occasionally assist the Program (e.g. helping with Town Day booth, fundraising, serving on a committee, carry out specific tasks under direction of a Board Member or Executive Director, working on the Board).
-  Check for program notices each day your child attends. We primarily communicate with families via email or phone calls so be sure to periodically check your email and have your phone available in case of phone calls from the program.
-  Discuss any problems or concerns with your child(ren)'s teachers and the Executive Director.
-  Ensure your child(ren) knows which day he/she is to attend each week.
-  Keep your child(ren) home when ill.
-  Telephone/email the program before 11am on Early Release Days and 1pm on regular school days.
-  Pick up your child(ren) on time each day.

Parents cannot drop off their children at the Program, except during February and April school vacations weeks or in the event a child misses the bus at school.

The smooth operation of the Program depends on the cooperation of all parents in carrying out their responsibilities. Habitual violation of any of the policies addressed in the handbook, or of any new policies communicated in writing during the year, is considered grounds for dismissal from the Program.

Parent Involvement

Parents who serve on the Board of Directors help determine policy, hire the Executive Director, and make other important decisions. The officers of the Board volunteer their time to help administer the Program, work on community relations, and generally ensure the Program's smooth operation and continuing success.

All other parents are expected to contribute time by serving on a committee with a particular charge, helping with an event such as Town Day, or contributing a needed skill on a short-term basis. You can expect to be called upon by a Board member to help with a particular function or task sometime during the year.

Attendance at parent meetings or social functions is encouraged, since it develops a sense of community with others in the Program, as well as an identity with and commitment toward the Program itself. The Board of Directors meetings are open to all parents, and we especially encourage you to attend the Annual Meeting in June, when goals and future directions of the Program are discussed. The success of the Program depends on the active support of all parents.

Policies

Absences

If your child will not attend the Program on a particular day for which he/she is enrolled, you must notify the Program by calling 781-721-1514 or emailing the classroom, no later than 11am on Early Release Days or 1pm on regular school days.

Classroom emails:

k1room@kidscornerwinchester.org

23room@kidscornerwinchester.org

456room@kidscornerwinchester.org

Non-compliance to this policy will result in a fine of ten dollars (\$10.00) the first time. The fine increases to twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) after the first offense. It is disruptive for staff to track down the whereabouts of your child for any reason. No refunds will be made for contracted days that your child does not attend.

Habitual lack of absence notification will result in dismissal from the Program.

Accident Insurance

You are required to carry adequate health insurance or accident insurance that covers your child(ren) for the hours of the Program.

A low cost policy is available through the schools if you do not have family health insurance, but it must cover the hours of the program as well as school hours.

Allergy Policy

Several children attending Kids' Corner have severe allergies. Allergic reactions range from mild skin irritations, to severe reactions during which the child may experience anaphylactic shock and even death. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, Kids' Corner maintains a program-wide procedure for addressing life-threatening allergies.

Children with known food allergies or other life-threatening allergies must have an Emergency Health Care Plan (EHCP). Student's parent/ guardian and the primary care provider/allergist must provide an EHCP. The EHCP must be updated annually. Parents must provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.

 In the classroom, an allergy table is maintained for students with food allergies. Before school begins, the lead teachers take note of all of the specific food allergies of their students. The teachers place a sign on the table listing the foods to avoid eating at that table. When we eat lunch at Kids' Corner, that table is reserved for children with food allergies. All lunches eaten at that table are checked by a teacher for any of the known food allergens. If any food allergens are found in their lunch, alternative seating arrangements are made for those students.

 Tables are washed with a bleach solution following any food related events held in the classroom.

 Sharing/trading food is not allowed.

 Proper hand washing is taught and encouraged before and after the handling/consumption of food.

 Kids' Corner provides peanut/nut free snacks during daily snack time.

Please do not send in food for the whole class. A copy of the complete policy is available in the office.

Behavior Management

Kids' Corner staff strives to maximize the growth and development of the children at the Program and to protect the group and individuals within it. We use behavior management in a consistent, reasonable, and appropriate way based on an understanding of the needs and development of each child. Behavior management procedures used by the staff will be clearly and consistently communicated to the children. Where appropriate and feasible, children will participate in the establishment of the rules and procedures that will foster a positive, nurturing environment.

The five basic rules that we expect the children to follow are:

- 1. Safety** - Children refrain from actions that could be physically harmful to themselves, other children or adults.
- 2. Respect for others** - Children respect the rights and feelings of other children/staff.
- 3. Responsibility** - Children are responsible for their own actions and for helping to keep the program space, equipment and supplies clean.
- 4. Fairness** - Children share equipment, show good sportsmanship, and abide by the rules set forth by the staff.
- 5. Boundaries** - Children stay within the physical boundaries of the Program unless accompanied by staff. Children must ask permission/inform staff if they need to leave the area.

Following these five basic rules will help ensure the children's safety and enable them to enjoy the activities offered at the Program.

Behavior management procedures used by the staff are:

-  Demonstrate positive role modeling.
-  Provide positive encouragement and feedback thus fostering development of confidence and self-control.
-  Allow children to express themselves verbally.
-  Promote positive limit setting by offering a wide choice of activities that fit within necessary boundaries and rules.
-  Phrase rules and discussions in a positive format as much as possible.
-  Set forth reasonable expectations for the children's behavior and clearly communicate them.
-  Consider situational circumstances that might be influencing a child's behavior and, if possible, rectify any of these factors.
-  Anticipate problems and try to prevent them by distracting or redirecting a child when necessary, changing group dynamics, switching activities or schedules, reminding children of rules, etc.
-  Discuss the consequences of disruptive behavior in a calm, non-threatening manner.
-  Implement any necessary consequence (e.g. loss of privilege, a time out of reasonable duration, removal to another area) as soon as possible after the disruption occurs, so that it is a learning experience for the child.
-  Re-establish positive contact with a child after the consequence. Call parent/emergency contact to pick up any child who is too emotionally upset to function within the standard operation of the Program and/or exhibits behavior that endangers self or any other children or staff.

Behavior Management *(continued)*

When dealing with a persistent or serious behavior problem, some additional steps that are explored and implemented if they seem helpful are:

-  Arrange an initial parent/teacher conference to address issues.
-  Continue regular communication among the Kids' Corner staff and parents in the form of phone calls, written reports, and additional face-to-face conferences.
-  Confer with the child's School Teacher, Principal and School Psychologist.
-  Establish a behavior modification plan based on feedback and progress that will be applied at home as well as the Program.
-  Suggest referrals to outside professional organizations. A separate Referral Plan, including a list of currently available services, is available to parents upon request.

Kids' Corner prohibits the following:

-  Spanking or other corporal punishment of children.
-  Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment.
-  Depriving children of meals or snacks.
-  Force-feeding of children.
-  Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
-  Excessive timeouts – a time out that exceeds one minute for each year of a child's age (e.g. a time out for a 5 year old can not exceed 5 minutes).

Suspension

If the Executive Director and staff determine that a child's negative behavior endangers their safety or the safety of others, needs constant one-on-one supervision, or needs to be separated from the group for the majority of each day, the child may be suspended from the Program at the discretion of the Executive Director for a span of one (1) to five (5) enrollment days. This action will only be used in extreme cases. Prior to the child's return to the Program, the Executive Director will meet with his/her parents to discuss the conditions of reentry. The Executive Director (and any appropriate staff member) will also meet with the child on the day he/she returns to welcome him/her back and to reinforce the rules of reentry.

Termination

A child may be terminated from the Program for the following behavioral reasons:

-  Persistent behavior or needs that puts self, other children or staff at risk.
-  Constant one-on-one supervision required.
-  Behavior that disrupts the daily normal operation of the Program.
-  Inappropriate adult behavior by parents/guardians at the Program. Such behavior includes (but is not limited to):
 - Not adhering to Kids' Corner policies.
 - Being abusive to the staff.
 - Habitual undocumented absences of child.
 - Habitual late pick-up.
 - Violation of Confidentiality Policy.
 - Failure to pay tuition.

The Executive Director will recommend termination to the President of the Board of Directors or his/her Board Member designee, and a mutual decision will be made.

Communication

Good communication among parents, staff, parents-at-large, and the Parent Board of Directors is essential to the success of the Program. Vehicles of communication include parent-staff conferences, newsletters, monthly Board Meetings, and notices from the Board or from the Executive Director. Please check your email daily for timely information updates.

You are welcome to visit the Program. You are encouraged to bring up your concerns to the Board at scheduled monthly meetings. Finally, you are encouraged and expected to communicate directly with the Executive Director or an appropriate Board Officer if any specific problems or questions regarding policy arise.

Conferences

You are encouraged to arrange conferences with your child's teacher and/or the Executive Director whenever you have concerns about your child and/or the daily activities of the Program. Conversely, a teacher might initiate a conference in order to communicate effectively with you. Every effort will be made to schedule a conference time that is convenient to your work schedule.

Progress Reports

Midway through the year you will receive a progress report from Kids' Corner. The progress report will be in checklist form and completed by the classroom teachers. You will have the option to schedule a conference to discuss the information on the progress report.

Confidentiality Policy / Request for Information

Information which has been received by Kids' Corner on a confidential basis must be maintained in the strictest confidence. No records, documents, or other written or verbal information pertaining to the official business of Kids' Corner and considered confidential may be accessed, discussed, or distributed to any person or organization within or outside Kids' Corner without the approval of the Executive Director and related parties. Personal and confidential information includes social security and other government issued identification numbers, bank and other financial account numbers, and behavioral, health, and medical information received from students, their families, and staff.

Kids' Corner will not release any information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the Program plan for the child without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian. All records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the Program office. We will notify you if a child's record is subpoenaed. Kids' Corner may charge reasonable rates for copies of records that are made for approved parties.

Parents/guardians shall, upon request, have access to their child's records within a reasonable time frame (maximum of two days from date of request). Kids' Corner must keep a record log of each time information is released from our files. A parent/guardian has the right to add or delete information from his/her child's record. Also, when a child leaves the Program, the parents/guardians can request in writing transfer of the record.

Disaster Plan

In case of loss of heat, electricity, or water at the Program for an extended period of time, the Executive Director will contact school administration and/or Winchester Town Hall to find out if we should evacuate the premises. If this is the case, we will move to Winchester Town Hall at 71 Mount Vernon Street until it is safe to

return to the school. In the case of fire, flood, or other natural disaster in which the Program must also evacuate the program facility, the Program will also move to the Winchester Town Hall.

In either case, parents will be notified as soon as the children have been safely evacuated and relocated. Signs will be posted on the doors at the school facility (if we can get near the building) stating that Kids' Corner has moved and giving parents necessary information for pick-up of their children. A complete Evacuation/Disaster Plan is available upon request.

Enrollment Contracts and Tuition

Before any child can attend Kids Corner, the Executive Director must have in hand the Enrollment Contract, Payment Schedule Contract, deposit of one month's tuition fee and all forms needed to satisfy the Department of Early Education and Care regulations.

Tuition is due on the first of each month, based on a ten-month schedule of September-June. Tuition rates can be found on our website, www.kidscornerwinchester.org. The deposit of one month's tuition that is paid with the payment contract will be applied towards the June tuition payment. Deposits and tuition can be made via credit card or check payable to Kids' Corner and mailed to:

Kids' Corner
P.O. Box 773
Winchester, MA 01890

By signing the contract, parents agree to pay tuition by the first of every month. Failure to pay tuition by the 5th of the month will result in a fine of ten dollars (\$10.00). Should you fall further behind with a monthly tuition payment, the procedure described below will be followed:

1. Board members will contact you on the 15th of the month to remind you of your tardiness.
2. If you still have not paid by the 30th of the month, you will be contacted again. You will have seven days to pay the previous month's tuition, plus the tuition for the month. Should you not meet these guidelines, your child will be dropped from the Program at the end of the seven-days.

If you have a special circumstance that makes it difficult for you to meet a payment, you are expected to contact the Executive Director to work out a payment plan. Habitual late monthly payments (those requiring a phone call on the 15th of the month) will result in dismissal from the Program.

This strict policy has been and will continue to be enforced for two primary reasons. First, Kids' Corner operates on a tight budget, relying entirely on monthly tuition to meet expenses. Second, resolving late payment problems is a tremendous burden for the Administrative Team and the Treasurer. The Treasurer already donates many hours of time in service to the Program and to you. Your full cooperation in paying on time is expected and is greatly appreciated.

Enrollment Meeting

Prior to admittance into the Program, parents have the opportunity to meet with the Executive Director or designated classroom teachers to visit the Program and ask any questions they may have. To schedule an enrollment meeting please contact the Executive Director at 781-721-1514.

Fines

A \$10 fine is charged to parents for the following reasons:



Failure to pick up your child by 6:00pm (see Late Pick-Up).



Failure to notify the Program of absences by 11am on Early Release Days or 1pm on regular school days (see Absences).



Failure to send lunch with your child on early release days, school vacation days, full day programs or during the summer program.



Late tuition payments (see Tuition and Enrollment Contracts)

Fines *(continued)*

You will receive written notification of fines due and are expected to pay them immediately. Any questions regarding fines should be directed to the Executive Director.

Late Pick-Up

Kids' Corner closes at 6:00pm. Parents **MUST** pick up their children by 6:00pm. A \$10 fine will be imposed for every 10- minute period that you are late beyond these closing times. It is disruptive to the Program and costly as well. If parents habitually fail to pick up their children on time, Kids' Corner reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment contract.

Health Care

Kids' Corner has a comprehensive written Health Care Policy that addresses all health aspects of the Program. A copy is given to all parents, and a summary of this policy follows:

Illnesses and communicable diseases/conditions: Children who do not attend school or who are sent home due to illness may not attend Kids' Corner. Guidelines are the same as those for the Winchester school system. Children are excluded from participation in the Program due to high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, undiagnosed rash, persistent wheezing or severe asthma attack, communicable diseases, and head lice. If a child has been exposed to a communicable disease, please inform the Executive Director. Parents will be notified of communicable diseases/conditions such as head lice, scarlet fever, impetigo, ring worm, scabies, Fifth's Disease, and chicken pox.

Emergency care: If emergency health care is needed, Winchester Hospital is used. On a field trip, the nearest facility will be used. Children will be transported via ambulance, and the parents will be notified immediately.

Mandated Reporting: All Kids' Corner staff members are deemed mandated reporters by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Any incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported by law to the Department of Social Services.

Medication Dispensation: Requirements for the dispensation of prescription medications are: 1) Kids' Corner medication authorization form signed by parent and 2) Medication must be in an original bottle with prescription label (most pharmacists will give you two containers with labels if you request it) and 3) The first dose of a medication can not be administered at Kids' Corner.

Non-prescription medication will be dispensed only upon receipt of an authorization note from the child's physician AND a written parental authorization form, each stating the conditions under which it is to be given. The medication must be sent in its original container.

Kids' Corner may, with written parental consent and a physician's authorization, permit children who have asthma to carry and use their own inhalers as needed, without direct supervision of staff.

The staff will log all dispensations of medications. Medications will be kept in a safe place out of the reach of the children.

Schedule Change for Children

Once the Program begins in September, schedule changes (e.g. additions of or switches to another day) are not permitted except under unusual circumstances. Even then, because the Program operates at full capacity on most days, such changes may not be possible.

If you feel you must change your child's schedule in the Program, such changes must be cleared with the Executive Director one month prior to such changes taking place. A Schedule Change Form must be submitted to the Main Office and approved by the Executive Director one month prior to the schedule change. Furthermore, all approved changes must take effect on the first of the month. In other words, all changes must be cleared well in advance so that our transportation schedules and other records can be changed accordingly.

Financial implications: Your monthly tuition will change only if you have added sessions in the Program to your child's weekly schedule. A decrease in the number of sessions will not decrease your tuition obligation as agreed to in your Payment Schedule Contract. Maintaining the Program budget and the quality of the program depends on achieving the revenues that families committed to upon enrollment.

Tooth Brushing

In January 2010, EEC issued new regulations for child care programs that include a requirement that educators assist children with brushing their teeth if children are in care for more than four hours or if children have a meal while in care [606 CMR 7.11(11)(d)]. This regulation is intended to:

- Help children learn about the importance of good oral health.
- Provide information and resources regarding good oral health to child care programs and families.
- Help address the high incidence of tooth decay among young children in Massachusetts, which is associated with numerous health risks.

Kids' Corner must comply with this regulation. However, parents may choose that their child not participate in tooth brushing while at the program.

At the start of every school year, Kids' Corner will provide you with a form that allows parents to opt out of the required tooth brushing. This form must be renewed annually and will be kept in each child's record at the program. Should a parent change their mind and wish for their child to participate in tooth brushing, this form may be withdrawn at any time by requesting in writing that it be removed from their child's file.

Parents are required to provide a toothbrush for their child and replace it as requested by the classroom teachers. Kids' Corner will provide fluoride toothpaste and will store the toothbrushes according to the EEC regulations.

Transition Between Classrooms

Children transition between classrooms twice at Kids' Corner. There is a transition from the Kindergarten-First Grade classroom to the Second-Third Grade classroom. There is another transition from the Second-Third Grade classroom to the Fourth-Fifth-Sixth Grade classroom. On occasion it may be necessary to form a transition plan for an individual child to assist the transition from one class to another. The transition plan will be age-appropriate and put into place in a manner consistent with a child's ability to understand. The transition plan will also require collaboration between classroom teachers and permission from the parents

Withdrawal from the Program

As a courtesy to the Program staff, withdrawals should be announced in advance with at least 1 month's notice. To withdraw, please submit a Schedule Change Form to the Main Office. Barring exceptional cases (e.g. your child's dismissal from the Program, an unexpected move out of town, or the loss of your job), we expect you to honor your tuition commitment to the program for the remainder of the year, as agreed to in the Payment Schedule Contract.

Program Operation

Calendar & Schedule

The Kids' Corner calendar is tailored to the Winchester Public Schools calendar and daily schedule, operating from the first day of school in September through the last day of school.

Kindergarten children begin the Program on their first day of Kindergarten at Winchester Public Schools, which is usually an early release day.

The regular program, for children in grades 1 through 6, runs from school dismissal time to 6:00pm on all school days. This includes early release days, when children bring their lunches with them to the Program.

Kids' Corner does not operate on holidays observed by the Winchester Public Schools or on school "snow days."

Full-day vacation coverage in February and April is offered for an additional fee and we are open for full-day programming on select occasional federal holidays (see **Vacation Weeks**).

Early Release Days

Please remember to pack a lunch and drink on all Early Release Days. A newsletter will be distributed at the beginning of each month informing you of upcoming Early Release Days and any special activities or field trips that are planned.

Field Trips

Trips are planned on Early Release Days and will be announced in the monthly newsletter. Local bus companies will provide transportation. Parents must sign a special permission slip for trip locations other than those listed on the Off-Site Activities Permission Form that is on file at the Program. If you do not or choose not to sign the permission slip, it is your responsibility to have your child picked up prior to the field trip departure time.

Please remember to send a lunch and drink, and have your child wear their blue Kids' Corner t-shirt.

Blue Kids' Corner shirts are available for purchase in the office for \$10/shirt. Please note, if your child attends a field trip without their blue Kids' Corner shirt either on their body/packed in their backpack, you will be invoiced for a new t-shirt.

Lunch & Snacks

On Early Release Days, school vacation weeks and during the Summer Program, **all children** must bring a lunch and drink, unless they ordered lunch through our lunch program (see below). Please avoid including soda and candy in these lunches. Favorite foods that would round out a healthful lunch are: baby carrots, cut-up veggies and fruit, popcorn or pretzels. A nutritious afternoon snack is provided by the Program.

Lunch Program

We offer a lunch program on days that your child will be at Kids' Corner for lunch (early release days, full day program, Summer Program, etc). If we are offering the lunch program on a specific day, we will send out information via email. In that email, there will be a form to fill out, information on payment and a due date. We generally offer a variety of sub options from D'Agostino's Deli or pizza from a local pizzeria.

Parking

Parents must park in the parking lot off Marshall Street when picking up their child(ren). The Kids' Corner entrance is the entrance facing Main Street. Please do not park on Main Street. The heavy traffic on this busy road presents a hazard to the children.

Snow Days

The Program will not operate on days when the Winchester Public Schools are closed because of snow. If a serious storm develops during the day, Kids' Corner expects parents to make every effort to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible. There are no refunds for days canceled due to snow.

Transportation

Children travel to Kids' Corner on the public school buses that are contracted by the Town of Winchester. Parents must purchase a bus pass for their child(ren) in order to board the bus. Please be sure that your child carries this pass at all times. Kids' Corner is not responsible for the supervision of children on the public school buses until they arrive at the Program.

Children cannot be dropped off at the Program. The only exception to this policy is if your child misses the school bus. Kids' Corner staff cannot pick up children who miss the bus at their respective schools. This is a liability issue for the Program and would also require additional staff to ensure coverage for the children already at the Program site. Parents will be contacted by the public school to pick up their children. Parents must notify the Program immediately to inform a staff member of the situation. Any questions regarding the transportation policy should be directed to the Executive Director.

At the end of the day, a parent, guardian or designated individual must pick up each child. Designated individuals must be a responsible adult or sibling and written in the child's transportation plan. Any individual not previously known to the classroom teachers will be asked to show a photo identification.

Vacation Weeks

The Program is not open during the school December holiday vacation. Exclusive of Monday holidays, Kids' Corner will operate full days (8:00am to 6:00pm) during the February and April school vacation weeks, depending on sufficient enrollment (at least 15 children). You may sign up your child(ren) for just a couple of days, or for the entire week.

You will not be charged for this coverage unless you register for it. Registration for these programs opens at the beginning of the school year. You will be emailed information on how to register through our online registration page on Sawyer (www.hisawyer.com). Payment will be due in advance on Sawyer and cancellation policies are outlined on our registration pages.

Transportation to and from the site is your responsibility during these days. Children must bring lunch, including a drink. A nutritious afternoon snack will be provided.

Summer Program & KC Xtreme

Kids' Corner offers multiple exciting programs during the summer, including our regular Kids' Corner Summer Program (K-5), and KC Xtreme for middle school students (completed grades 6-8). The Kids' Corner Summer Program is open to all families in the community. (Priority given to families currently enrolled in our After School Program.) Registration occurs on our online registration page on Sawyer (www.hisawyer.com) on January 15th at 8am. You will be emailed more information close to the date.

Kids' Corner program is operated by the
Winchester After School Program, Inc.
a parent-sponsored non profit organization.

Kids' Corner does not discriminate on the
basis of race, cultural heritage,
national origin, marital status,
religion, political beliefs,
disability or sexual orientation.

