

**Christ Church Nursery School  
and Drop In Center  
30 East Lane  
Short Hills, NJ 07078**

**973-379-6549 / 973-379-5999 FAX**

**[www.christchurchnurseryschool.org](http://www.christchurchnurseryschool.org)**

**Email: [info@christchurchnurseryschool.org](mailto:info@christchurchnurseryschool.org)**

*“Helping children embrace learning with  
curiosity, enthusiasm and confidence!”*



**2023-2024 Parent Handbook**

**Hours: Monday thru Friday 8:00—4:00  
Mid-September through Mid-June**

## Welcome

Welcome to Christ Church Nursery School and Drop In Center! Our school takes pride in the close relationships developed among students, parents and staff members. We offer not only an educational experience for you and your child, but also a center for support, guidance and feedback in all areas of your child's development.

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## Forms, Required

***Loose forms enclosed must be completed and returned by the first day of school. CHILDREN MAY NOT BE DROPPED OFF UNLESS THESE FORMS ARE SUBMITTED. RECORDS SIGNED MORE THAN A YEAR AGO ARE OUT OF DATE!***

- Annual emergency contact form\*
- Annual health form to be completed by doctor including immunizations\*
- Documentation of an annual flu vaccine required prior to 12/31
- Classroom intake form
- Receipt of mandatory state policies\*

## Questions?

General Inquiries  
info@christchurchnurseryschool.org

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Msaint-val@christchurchnurseryschool.org

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stuncer@christchurchnurseryschool.org

Jennifer McGregor (director)  
jmcgregor@christchurchnurseryschool.org

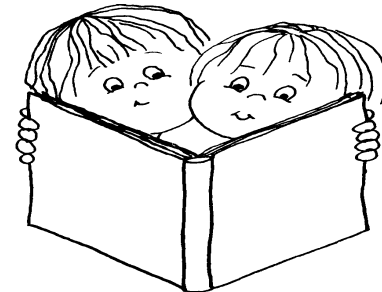
(973) 379-6549

## **We welcome parents to visit us anytime during the day.**

As a courtesy to the staff, please give them advance notice that you intend to visit. Also note, many children's behavior changes in the presence of a parent in the room and may not be indicative of their typical classroom behavior.

\* \* \* \* \*

We would like to thank you for choosing Christ Church Nursery School. Our programs have been designed and carefully implemented in such a way that we, as professionals, believe they are the best developmentally for preschool children. In choosing our program, we require that you understand and accept our policies as written here. To make this a rewarding experience for all, we need your full cooperation and we offer you ours.



2023-2024 CALENDAR	
Wed & Thurs, September 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>	Staff Days: All Staff Report
Fri, September 8th	Orientation Meetings
Mon, September 11th	Orientation Meetings
Mon, September 11th	Drop In Center Opens Today
Tues, September 12th	Regular Class Schedules Begin
<b>Mon, October 9th</b>	<b>Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
Wed, October 11th (tentative)	Back to School Night and Book Fair
Fri, October 27th	Halloween Parade (Pre-K 4s & 5s only)
Thurs & Fri, November 2nd & 3rd	Picture Days at CCNS
<b>Thurs &amp; Fri, November 9th &amp; 10th</b>	<b>NJ Teacher's Convention, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
Wed, November 22nd	Full Day & Drop In Center Close at Noon
<b>Thurs &amp; Fri, November 23rd &amp; 24th</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Recess, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
Sat, December 2nd	Breakfast with Santa in Parish Hall
Thurs, December 14th	Christmas Church Service at Christ Church, Preschool 3s
Fri, December 15th	Christmas Church Service at Christ Church, Pre-K 4s & 5s
Fri, December 15th	Full Day & Drop In Center Close at Noon
<b>December 18th -January 1st</b>	<b>Christmas Recess, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
December 18th - December 21st	Christmas Mini-Camp
Tues, January 2nd	CCNS & Drop In Reopen
<b>Mon, January 15th</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
<b>Thurs, January 18th &amp; Wed, January 24th</b>	<b>Parent/Teacher Conferences, CCNS Closed</b>
Thurs, January 18th & Wed, January 24th	Drop In Center Open
Thurs, February 1st	<b>Last Call for CCNS Registration for September 2024</b>
<b>February 19th - February 23rd</b>	<b>Mid-Winter Recess, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
February 20th - February 22nd	Mid-Winter Mini-Camp
<b>Wed, March 13th</b>	<b>CCNS In-Service Staff Day, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
<b>Fri, March 29th &amp; Mon, April 1st</b>	<b>Good Friday &amp; Easter Monday, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
<b>April 8th - April 12th</b>	<b>Spring Recess, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
April 8th - April 11th	Spring Mini-Camp
<b>Mon, May 27th</b>	<b>Memorial Day, CCNS &amp; Drop In Closed</b>
Thurs, June 13th	Last Day of Regular Classes for CCNS and Drop In
Thurs, June 13th	Full Day & Drop In Center Close at Noon
Mon, June 17th	Summer Camp Begins
Thurs, July 25th	Summer Camp Ends
CCNS & Drop In follow Millburn Township public schools for emergency closings. Should Millburn adjust their calendar due to unused snow days, CCNS & Drop In will also adjust their calendar.	

## Forms Continued

**\*These forms must be completed and returned to the school annually. Parents must sign off on receipt of the following mandatory state licensing policies:** Information to Parents, Release of Children, Technology and Social Media, Positive Guidance and Discipline, Methods of Parental Notification, Communicable Disease Management and Expulsion Policy.

## First Day of School!

**Orientation** is held in September and begins your child's school year. Orientation is held in the classroom, where you and your child will meet the teachers and explore the room for fifteen minutes. You will be asked to submit all of your paperwork on that day including the enclosed intake form.

Please be sure to complete all of the enclosed forms, in advance, and bring them with you to orientation. All completed forms are due *prior* to your child's first official day at school.

Children starting school mid-year are encouraged to visit prior to their first day to see the classroom and meet the teachers.

## First Day at Drop In Center

All children enrolled at CCNS are automatically registered in our Drop In Center. Children attending Drop In only must submit a registration form and fee, health form, emergency contact form and parent receipt form prior to their first day.

ALL CHILDREN MUST HAVE A RESERVATION TO ATTEND DROP IN.

Children new to our Drop In Center start with a transition schedule, beginning with a one hour introduction to this new environment and increasing gradually.

*We look forward to meeting with you and your children and working together to make this the best school year ever!*

## CCNS Staff Babysitting Policy

Our experienced and dedicated staff is trained annually to offer the very best early childhood educational experience for your child. As wonderful as they are, it is important to stress that CCNS strongly discourages parents from engaging staff members as babysitters, especially as driving sitters. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

## Educational Philosophy

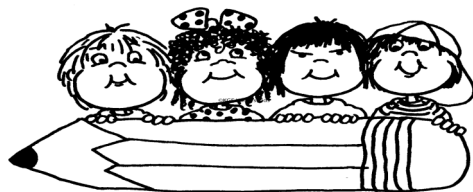
We believe that young children are eager to learn and that they learn best through exploration and appropriate hands-on learning experiences. We offer a wide variety of activities that contribute to the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and communicative development of the child. Our days are busy as we learn about ourselves and the world around us.

With an understanding of child development, we aim to create a high quality early childhood environment using the expectations outlined in the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale and the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale. These research-based scales have been used in early childhood environments for over 40 years and continue to be updated as our field evolves.

In our **Young Learners 2's Classes**, the children are introduced to a school setting as they learn to separate from their parents. The main focus is social interaction and language as children learn to communicate and cooperate with peers. Our young students learn how to work in a group, follow directions, take turns, and communicate their needs. Through play and interaction with teachers, we encourage pre-literacy skills (through stories and songs), math skills (such as one-to-one correspondence and comparisons), fine motor skills (through drawing, painting and manipulatives), gross motor skills (on the playground, gym and stair walking) and sensory exploration (with paint, sand, shaving cream, etc.)

As children progress to our **Preschool 3's Classes**, we continue to reinforce and build upon previously learned skills. We also work to help children visually recognize and write their names. Our activities offer them ample time to learn through play, as they practice writing, tracing, cutting, gluing and painting. Letter and number recognition is formally introduced this year. Each day is a new adventure full of music, movement, art, discovery and fun!

In our **Pre-Kindergarten 4's/5's Classes**, children continue to work on their social and emotional development as they grow. We encourage cognitive development by focusing on creativity and problem solving, amongst other skills. They advance their fine motor skills by continuing to practice tracing, cutting, painting, gluing and writing. Letter and number recognition, along with other pre-reading and pre-mathematical skills are incorporated in all we do, as we prepare for kindergarten. The children will also work to learn their addresses and phone numbers as the year progresses. Learning is always hands-on, as preschoolers learn best by doing. We utilize all of children's senses to make learning meaningful and memorable.



## Communication

Open communication between home and school is paramount! In addition to an initial enrollment tour, parents are invited to attend an orientation in their child's class. Parents will have the opportunity to meet the staff of the Nursery School and learn more about the goals and objectives of the year during this orientation. The teachers welcome parents back to the classroom in October for our Parent Night.

Teachers will make a call home in October to touch base about the beginning of the year.

Parent/Teacher conferences are held as needed and are offered formally to all parents mid-year, prior to registration for the next school year. **Parents are encouraged to reach out to the teachers with any questions or concerns at any time throughout the school year.**

Classroom newsletters are sent home monthly to keep you informed of the classroom activities. Monthly communication from the director is also distributed. Email is also a communication tool that is utilized by the main office and our teaching staff. Some teachers may offer texting as an option for communication with parents, but they are not required to do so.

***Important information is often sent home with your child, so please check school papers on a daily basis!***



## Classroom Challenges

A classroom setting will offer many challenges to young children. Working through these challenges will help children grow and learn. Parents and teachers work closely to assist the children as they develop. However, in some cases, a child may not be totally ready for these challenges. If consistent problems do occur, communication will be ongoing and every attempt will be made to help the child cope with the problems being encountered.

***In rare instances, our setting may be inappropriate for a child's particular needs. In this case you may be asked to make other arrangements.***

***(PLEASE SEE STATE MANDATORY EXCLUSION POLICY ENCLOSED)***

## Parental Involvement (PACCNS)

Parental participation is encouraged and welcomed. The Parents Association of Christ Church Nursery School (PACCNS) is our very active and dedicated parent group. Established in 1987, this dynamic group enriches our school environment in so many ways!

Families are strongly encouraged to become members by submitting an annual membership fee (see forms enclosed.) This fee helps defer the expenses of the communication and directory platform, Membership Toolkit.

The group is made up of very active committee chairpersons who are often in need of assistance. PACCNS offers wonderful activities throughout the school year that expand the children's school experiences that may include:

- ◆ Family Social Events
- ◆ Parent Night
- ◆ Annual Book Fair
- ◆ School Pictures
- ◆ School Enrichment Programs
- ◆ Breakfast with Santa
- ◆ School Beautification Projects
- ◆ Outreach Programs
- ◆ Teacher's Appreciation Luncheon
- ◆ Annual Family Picnic
- ◆ Annual School Yearbook



Various fundraising activities, including our annual **Spring Cocktail Party**, are also organized by this dedicated group!

**Classroom Parents** are another aspect of PACCNS. Two parent volunteers are selected from each class to coordinate parent class coffees and class parties. Class parents also set class dues, which are collected at the beginning of the school year and used to provide a basket for the annual cocktail party and year end gifts for the classroom teachers and staff.

We encourage parent involvement and hope that all of you can assist or at least participate in some of the amazing opportunities offered here.

## A Typical Day at Our Nursery School

Our day begins with the first big step of saying good-bye to our parents as we make the transition from home to school. The school day is a balance between teacher-directed activities and individual choice. Children are always busy and actively participate in the day's events. Typical class activities are outlined for you here. Each class participates in similar activities; however, the specific details will vary from class to class. Activities will also vary greatly from one age group to another.

**Arrival:** Once in the classroom, children learn independence by identifying their own cubbies, hanging coats and placing belongings in the appropriate areas; assistance is provided as necessary.

**Free Play:** Children can play with any of the toys that are out in the classroom. Special activities will take place during this time as the teacher works with a few children at a time.

**Circle Time:** After cleaning up the toys, the children gather together on the rug for teacher-directed activities. Topics are discussed, questions are posed and literacy is taught using songs, flannel board activities, books, games and finger plays.

**Snack Time:** Snack is provided by the Nursery School. Children visit the bathroom to wash their hands before joining together for a snack and a drink. A simple prayer is recited before snack begins. ***We strive for a NUT-FREE environment. Nut products may not be brought into the school.***

**Learning Centers:** Learning centers allow for independent work and small group instruction and are used to offer a wide variety of experiences which may include painting, coloring, cutting, gluing, tracing, counting, cooking and science experiments.

**Outdoor/Indoor Play:** Children play outside as they develop their gross motor skills. During inclement weather we use the classroom or the gym for our gross motor activities. Fresh air and exercise is an important part of each day! **Children will go outside any day the "feels like" temperature is 25 degrees or above and conditions are safe for outdoor play.**

**Story Time:** Books are used throughout the day. The books complement the discussions of the day. Reading aloud is a very important focus of every day.

**Music/Movement:** A variety of songs and musical instruments are used as we explore the world of music through sounds and movements.

**Dismissal:** Children sing good-bye and gather their belongings as they prepare to go home.

## Class Scheduling Options Based on Availability

**YOUNG LEARNERS 2's CLASSES:** Age 2 by Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 am–11:30 am  
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00 am–11:30 am  
Monday through Friday 9:00 am–11:45 am

**PRESCHOOL 3's CLASSES:** Age 3 by Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Monday through Thursday 9:00 am–12:00 pm  
Monday through Friday 9:00 am–12:00 pm  
Monday through Friday 9:00 am–1:00 pm  
Monday through Thursday 9:00 am–2:30 pm plus Friday 9:00 am–12:00 pm

**PRE-KINDERGARTEN 4's CLASSES:** Age 4 by Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>  
Monday through Friday 8:45 am–12:45 pm  
Monday through Thursday 8:45 am–2:15 pm plus Friday 8:45 am–11:45 am  
Monday through Friday 8:45 am–2:15 pm



## Registration Procedures

Registration takes place early in February for the following September. Registration links can be found on our website and should be completed prior to February 1st.

Priority registration is given to supporting Church members of Christ Church in Short Hills, current families enrolled in the school, siblings and alumni, Drop In students and new families to the school, respectively. ***Class size is limited to conform to licensing regulations and best educational practice.***

A non-refundable registration fee of \$75.00 will be collected after placement in early February. Upon confirmation of enrollment, you will be required to submit a **non-refundable** tuition deposit of \$200.00 by March 15th. This process will begin your child's file. Additional forms, including emergency information and an annual health form, are required prior to the start of the new school year. All forms will be supplied by the school. The health form must be completed annually by your child's physician and returned with a current immunization record which must include an annual flu vaccine.

## EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY

We run our calendar in accordance with the Millburn Public Schools for most holidays and recesses. Therefore, snow days, delayed openings and early closings will also be taken in accordance with the Millburn Public Schools.

In the event of inclement weather, an email will be sent through Smartcare to notify you of any changes in our schedule. Our website, Facebook and Instagram pages will also have closing information posted. **There is no tuition reimbursement for vacations, holidays, sick days or snow days.**

If the Millburn Public Schools call a "delayed opening," the Nursery School and Drop In Center will open at 11:00; which means that all classes that end between 12:45 and 2:30 will start at 11:00. **All classes that end between 11:30 and 12:00 will be cancelled on delayed opening days.**

If an "early dismissal" is called, all classes that end between 12:45 and 2:30 will dismiss at 12:00 and Drop In will close at 12:00. **All classes that start at 12:00 will be cancelled on early dismissal days.**

If adjustments are made to the Millburn Public School calendar regarding too many or too few snow days, the Nursery School calendar will be adjusted accordingly.



## EMERGENCY OPERATION PLAN

In light of recent events in our world, we have emergency plans in place. In the event of an emergency, the staff will contact local authorities by dialing 911. If an evacuation of our building is required, we will walk down the hill to Christ Church and go to the sanctuary. If necessary, we are also prepared to lock-down and shelter-in-place.

Staff members will be responsible for the children in their care at all times and every attempt will be made to communicate with the parents of our school. Emergency information will be communicated through our answering machine message. We will also do our best to contact parents via email or phone as best as we can.

Our main goal will be to keep the children safe and comfortable at all times and to reunite children with their parents as quickly as possible.

## OUR PLAYGROUND AREAS

We have several large fenced in playground areas, including our rubberized poured-in-place surface area that offers the use of tricycles, play cars and wagons. ***Playground areas are available first to all Christ Church Nursery School classes and Drop In students.*** Parents may use the playground area after school hours if it is available. Parents **must** supervise their children carefully and be mindful of our Playground Rules.

### CHRIST CHURCH NURSERY SCHOOL

#### PLAYGROUND RULES

\*PLAYGROUND IS FOR SCHOOL USE, FIRST. PARENTS ARE WELCOME TO USE THE PLAYGROUND AREAS WITH THEIR CHILDREN AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

\*SECOND GRADE AND UNDER WELCOME TO PLAY BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL HOURS 8:00–4:00

\*ONLY ADULTS OPEN AND CLOSE THE GATE

\*CHILDREN MUST PLAY CAREFULLY

\*SAND TABLES ARE FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

\*ADULTS MUST SUPERVISE CHILDREN CLOSELY

\*RESPECT MUST BE SHOWN FOR THE SAFETY AND FEELINGS OF OTHERS

\*RESPECT MUST BE SHOWN FOR SCHOOL/CHURCH PROPERTY

\*SHED SHOULD REMAIN CLOSED BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

\*PLEASE STAY OFF OF THE FENCES

\*PLEASE TAKE YOUR TRASH WITH YOU

\*PLEASE CLOSE THE GATE WHEN YOU LEAVE

***PLAY AT YOUR OWN RISK AFTER YOUR SCHEDULED SCHOOL HOURS!***



## Classroom Placement Information

Children are eligible for entrance into most of our classes based on an October 1<sup>st</sup> cut-off. This cut-off follows the Millburn Public School entrance date into kindergarten and is used so that peers can move together into kindergarten.

Children who attain the appropriate age beyond October 1<sup>st</sup>, but up to October 31<sup>st</sup> may be eligible. We do feel strongly that it is a benefit to children to honor the October 1<sup>st</sup> cutoff. It is not our practice to rush children or to place them inappropriately, but we do recognize that there are sometimes exceptions to the October 1<sup>st</sup> cutoff.

***Please note: Future placement will be determined by the classroom teacher and the director for anyone missing the October 1<sup>st</sup> cutoff.***

## Nursery School Fees

Fees at CCNS include an annual non-refundable registration fee of \$75, per child.

Our annual tuition fees are set for each class and schedule by our volunteer governing board. The specific fees can be located on the registration forms on our website. Please call us with any questions. Upon confirmation of enrollment into one of our classes, you will be asked to submit a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$200.

For your convenience, the balance of your annual tuition (less your \$200 deposit) is then collected in three equal payments due on May 15th, October 15th and February 15th. Tuition payments are non-refundable. Tuition invoices are emailed on May 1<sup>st</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup>.

Our **Drop In Center** provides flexible care for a wide range of ages in a nurturing and developmentally appropriate setting. Open weekdays from 8:00am to 4:00pm parents pay only for the time used at an hourly rate of \$16.20. A sibling discount of \$4.65 per hour is applied when children from the same family attend together. Drop In fees are paid monthly due by the 15th of the month. Time used during the prior month is billed and the invoices are emailed out on the 1st of each month.

Other optional programs such as; **Lunch & Learn**, **Mini Camps** and **Summer Camp** are billed upon registration and full payment is requested prior to the start of the program.

Payments are collected via personal check or electronically through our Smartcare app. Our Finance Manager is very happy to answer any billing questions that you may have. Please feel free to call her at 973-379-6549 x4 or email her anytime.

## Additional Class Options

### Lunch & Learn

Each school year, we offer additional programs which run for 8-10 weeks. One of these programs is called **LUNCH & LEARN**. Children attending school for a half-day have the opportunity to bring their lunches from home and stay at school for a full day enjoying additional learning and extra time with friends. This wonderful program extends the children's school day while focusing on specific topics and skills. LUNCH & LEARN is reserved for our Preschoolers 3s and Pre-K 4s students.

### Mini Camp

In December, February and April, CCNS will be offering an optional three or four day mini-camp that will run 9-12 or 9-2:30 for families looking for something fun and educational during our breaks. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis, and will run based on interest and staff availability.

### School Events

Typically, our older Pre-K 4s/5s classes will venture off on at least one school trip each year. Trips are announced with sufficient notice. School buses will be used as our means of transportation. Details for all trips will be clearly communicated, in advance, on required permission slips. Parent chaperones will be asked to accompany us on school trips.

If possible, parents of our Pre-K 4s/5s classes are invited to attend our annual **Halloween Parade**, while our Preschool 3s classes invite parents to an annual **Thanksgiving sing-a-long**. Special **Christmas services** for our Preschool 3s and Pre-K 4s/5s classes are held at Christ Church and all are invited to attend. Each of our Preschool 3s and Pre-K 4s/5s classes also host individual class end of year

### Summer Camp

We offer a six week summer program that runs Monday–Thursday half days from 9:00–12:00 and full days from 9:00-2:30. It is offered to all toddlers and preschoolers (ages 2 and up.) The activities revolve around weekly themes and includes water play on sunny days. Many of our existing staff members participate in the program. You may register for as many weeks as you want, from two to all six, in a timely manner.



## Our Classes are on SMUG MUG!

In an effort to share all of the fabulous learning activities that are happening in our classrooms, we have created Smug Mug photo galleries for all of our CCNS classes and Drop In Center.

Each of these photo galleries are password protected. The passwords will only be distributed to our CCNS and Drop In staff and parents. You will be emailed the password information directly from the main office.

Photos can be downloaded directly to your computer or you can purchase copies of a photo directly from the Smug Mug site.

We encourage you to visit us at: [Christchurchnurseryschool.smugmug.com](http://Christchurchnurseryschool.smugmug.com)

Need the password? Email the main office and let us know.

### Like us on Facebook!

Visit our school Facebook page to see what is happening at CCNS. We do our best to keep communication open while highlighting some of our wonderful learning experiences. Find us at [www.facebook.com/ChristChurchNurserySchool](http://www.facebook.com/ChristChurchNurserySchool) and “like” us to see our posts on your newsfeed.

### Visit us on Instagram!

Not on Facebook? Our school also has an Instagram account, too! Our user name is christchurchnursery.



## Technology and Social Media Policy

Christ Church Nursery School understands the benefits of technology and uses it as a communication tool for staff and parents. We have iPads in each classroom that are used occasionally within our classrooms as per the following policy:

- ◆ Children under the age of 2 have no screen time.
- ◆ Children over the age of 2 have no more than 30 minutes, at a maximum, per week of screen time

While we understand the limited benefit of some of the apps that are available for use with young children, we also understand that young children's developing minds need activities that will increase their attention span, so we prefer the use of books and hands-on learning experiences. We also encourage children to be physically active and so these sedentary activities are limited.

Parents are expected to refrain from posting pictures of children at CCNS on any social media sites unless they have permission from the child's parent. Staff will limit posting to our website, CCNS Facebook page, Instagram account and SmugMug photo sharing site; which is password protected.



## Child Protection Procedures

Every precaution is taken to ensure the children's safety at all times. Staff members are trained and participate in the following procedures:

- Groups are never left unsupervised.
- Late arrivals and early dismissals are documented at the front desk and on classroom attendance.
- Fire/Safety drills are conducted monthly on a rotating basis.
- The majority of our staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR.
- Bike helmets are not required for tricycle use. Concerned parents are invited to leave a labeled helmet for use by their child while on the riding toys.
- An injury report card may be issued for an in-school injury.
- Accidents requiring medical attention, including serious head injuries and bites that break the skin, or a fall greater than the child's height, will result in immediate notification.
- Allergy information must be communicated to us. This information is then distributed to staff and parents as needed. (See details on page 13.)
- Additional forms will be needed if your child requires medication for a food allergy or chronic medical condition including written authorization from the doctor.
- In the bathroom, assistance is available if needed and occurs with the stall door open.
- First time pick-up by caregivers, other than parents, may be asked to provide photo ID.
- Alternate pick-up arrangements require permission from parents (note/email) or in the case of an emergency- a phone call.
- Cameras have been installed in the hallways and exterior doors to monitor for safety concerns.

## Religious Affiliation

Christ Church Nursery School and Drop In Center is an outreach program of Christ Church in Short Hills. Although Christ Church is an Episcopal Church, we welcome children of all faiths. Christian touches can be found in our monthly Chapel lessons, story time and annual Christmas Services. We also say a simple prayer before eating. In true Christian spirit, religious and cultural diversity is encouraged, welcomed and embraced.

Children's Chapel is a special activity offered to our Preschool and Pre-K classes. Children's Chapel is held monthly and directed by the Christ Church Clergy. The Clergy or Children's Ministries Coordinator also visit the school monthly for a special story time using interactive "godly play" materials. This special time offers the children the opportunity to learn about the love that God and Jesus has for all of us through Bible stories and songs.

Families of the Nursery School are considered to be families of the Church, and as a courtesy, information from the Church will occasionally be emailed or sent home with the children.

## Special Activities

All of our Nursery School classes are offered special music classes by our certified music teacher who visits weekly. Classes are held in the gym and are full of songs, musical instruments, movement and lots of fun!

Our Physical Education Teacher comes in weekly. During Gym class, children work to develop their gross motor and coordination skills as they work together in group games and sports.

Our outdoor classroom and active garden offers each of our Preschool 3s and Pre-K 4s classes weekly, multi-sensory lessons with our CCNS Gardener. The children also learn to compost their "special garbage" as they plant, nurture and harvest vegetables and herbs.



## Discipline Policy

To discipline means "to teach". At all times our staff works to guide young children towards self-discipline and self-control. Discipline is always positive as we work to guide and redirect behavior. By using positive reinforcement, we encourage positive behavior and discourage inappropriate behavior. The school rules are clear, fair and consistent. They are enforced firmly with gentle guidance.

Only if absolutely necessary, a child might need to leave the group for a moment or two to calm down (children are never left unattended). Our small group size and exceptionally low teacher/child ratio makes for a very positive and pleasant school environment. This small group size allows for much individual attention. Our staff makes an effort to explain to the children what to do, rather than what not to do. We find we get the best results by simply *expecting* our children to cooperate.

Discipline is never hurtful or humiliating. Staff members do not hit, shake, ridicule or use abusive language or subject children to harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment. Staff members do not withhold food, emotional responses, stimulation or opportunities for rest or sleep. Staff members would never require a child to sit silent or inactive for an inappropriate period of time (no more than one minute per year of the age of the child.) PLEASE SEE OUR ENCLOSED DISCIPLINE POLICY.

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures/Parking

“Door-to-door” drop-off and pick-up (from your car to our door) is provided five minutes prior to the beginning and end of each class session for all classes. Cars line up along the right side of East Lane using ONE car line. At arrival time, please wait for a staff member to help your child out of the car and into the school. The car line will start five minutes prior to the classroom starting time and continues for fifteen minutes. A staggered arrival and dismissal schedule is used for some classes.

***Late Arrivals: Parents must park and ring the door bell. Children will be signed in late at the front desk and on their classroom attendance.***

At dismissal time, your child’s teacher will walk your child to your car. Dismissal will begin five minutes prior to the end of the classroom ending time. East Lane is narrow, so for the safety of all, **PLEASE DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR CAR!** We are not permitted to buckle your child in, as every car seat is different. Please help your child learn how to buckle up. If your child needs assistance with this, we ask that you move up past the doors, so as not to hold up the line of cars behind you.

**Important: The state required Policy on the Release of Children is included in this packet. Please be sure to read through it carefully!**

**Parking on the left side of East Lane is reserved for use by the parents of our Young Learners 2s Classes and Drop In parents only. This rule is strictly enforced.**

Please do not park your car on the left side of East Lane if you decide to walk your children to the school door; instead, please park away from the school building or in one of the lower parking lots near the Church. When you walk your child up to CCNS, please either walk them all the way to the classroom or hand them to a staff person at the door. Children may not be allowed to enter the building unsupervised.

Our classes begin and end promptly and they are busy! Please watch your clock carefully. Late arrivals and early pick-ups will be documented on our classroom attendance sheets and on a sheet located at the front desk. We must be notified ***in writing*** if someone else will be picking up your children. Pick-up people we have never met will be asked to show identification.

**Consistent late pick-ups are subject to one dollar per minute late fee.**

Promptness is a *must* for your children’s sake as well as the staff’s sake. Pick-up does require a few moments, so please be patient! To avoid a line of cars on Highland Avenue, please do not arrive more than five minutes prior to dismissal time.

**\*\*\*\*\*Cell phone use is strongly discouraged in the car line\*\*\*\*\*  
Please role-model good manners by being available  
to speak to both children and teachers!**

## Tips for Success at Our Drop In Center

- ◆ Be sure your child has a healthy breakfast in the morning before arriving.
- ◆ Bring a labeled bag daily for your child with a complete change of clothes and diapers, if necessary.
- ◆ Until children are ready to eat regular meals and snacks, they will be offered formula, breast milk and/or solid food on an individual basis following a written plan provided by parents.
- ◆ Name tags are posted in the hallway; please bring your child’s in and out with you when you attend.
- ◆ You will be given a QR code to check your child in/out of Drop In.
- ◆ A morning and an afternoon snack will be provided by the center.
- ◆ To help our lunch run smoothly, please arrive or dismiss before 12:00 or after 12:30. **Please avoid dropping off your child BETWEEN 12:00-12:30.** A child arriving after 12:30 must have had his/her lunch.
- ◆ A child attending for lunch will need to bring a complete lunch from home, clearly labeled, including a drink. **Lunch should come prepared- ready to eat.** NUT-FREE, please!
- ◆ Warmed food should be sent in a thermos.
- ◆ A child attending in the afternoon needs a **labeled sheet and blanket** for rest. Children 12 months and younger are prohibited from using blankets, pillows, soft bedding or bumper pads.
- ◆ Children are allowed to bring pacifiers to Drop In, but please note that they are prohibited from walking or crawling while using a pacifier and cannot use a pacifier with straps or other types of attachment for sleeping.
- ◆ Be sure that both the staff and your child know what time you plan to return.
- ◆ Submit a written note if someone else is picking up your child.
- ◆ Your prompt arrival for pick-up is required.
- ◆ In addition to your hourly fee, a \$1.00 per minute late fee will be incurred for all late pick-up after our 4:00pm closing time.
- ◆ Please park on the left side of East Lane, **ONLY**.
- ◆ Please return to your car promptly, as parking spaces are extremely limited.
- ◆ Please keep your child home if he/she are ill. (Review illness policy page 12 of our parent handbook) **A child must be symptom-free for a 24 hour period before returning to school.**



***We do our best to keep you informed, so please check your email, the parent table and door often for important notices.***

***Drop In hosts a SmugMug photo gallery. Staff uploads the photos often. Please check in with the main office if you need the link and password for this account.***

Upon entering our Preschool 3s Classes it is our expectation that children be toilet trained as only Young Learners 2s Classes and our Drop In Center are equipped with changing tables.

## The Drop In Center at CCNS

Our Drop In Center is open daily from 8:00-4:00 and it is a great complement to your child's school day. The facility is located in two classrooms on the lower level of the school building and provides childcare for children **twelve months and up**.

The day is busy and fun with indoor and outdoor activities. A certified teacher oversees and organizes all of the activities. Every experience offered addresses the developmental needs of the children in our care.

The Drop In Center works on a reservation basis for permanent or "every so often" spots. The center is open to the community and also welcomes CCNS children to spend additional time before or after class. Teachers escort the children to/from their classrooms and to/from the Drop In Center as necessary.

Drop In fees are based on an hourly rate and billed monthly. For additional information and reservations, please call us at 973-379-6549 x1 or call the center directly at x2. Parents can also email scheduling requests.

## Drop In Requirements

- Children must be 12 months to 5 years of age
- **Parents must make arrangements in advance with the Drop In Center**
- **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CHILDREN ATTENDING MUST BE IMMUNIZED. WE DO NOT ACCEPT RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS.**
- Attendance in Drop In must also be communicated to the classroom teacher, in writing
- Parents must provide all necessities including diapers, lunch and bottles
- Younger children will also need a labeled, covered cup with water
- Parents of infants and toddlers, under the age of 18 months, must complete a ***daily communication form*** found on the Drop In desk upon arrival
- All personal items must be labeled: jackets, hats, mittens, lunch boxes  
***\*We cannot stress this enough. PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING\****
- Please encourage comfortable play clothes (we will get messy)
- Sneakers or closed rubber-soled shoes are a must for safety
- All necessary forms must be completed before leaving your children in our care

## Car Seats/Booster Seats

**CAR SEATS/BOOSTER SEATS ARE A MUST IN THE BACK SEAT!** We cannot place a child into a car that does not have a car seat or booster seat for your child!

Parents are asked to line up along side the school building and move to the stop sign. A staff member will be there to assist your children at that car and walk them directly to their classroom.

## Parking Etiquette

Remember, there is a strict **NO PARKING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF EAST LANE** rule, not even for a minute! This is a fire zone and the cars there must be kept moving! Also, we ask that you ***never leave a child unattended in a car!*** In an emergency situation, please call ahead and we will assist you.

We strongly discourage on-the-street parking. However, if you must, please use extra care, caution and consideration. Be certain to avoid dangerous curves and supervise your children carefully. It is also imperative that neighbors' driveways be kept clear at all times.

**Please Note:** When your children are with you, they are your responsibility. Please do not allow your children to run ahead. Insist that your children walk with you. ***Please insist that they use the sidewalk and please drive SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY to ensure the safety of all.***

## Accidents and Injuries/Methods of Parental Notification

If an accident or injury occurs during school time you will be notified by the staff. Injuries occurring to any area above the shoulders, a bite if skin is broken, a fall from a height greater than the height of the child or any injury needing professional medical care require an immediate call home. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we will send you an email immediately.

An injury report card will be sent home informing you of other minor injuries that occur while your child is in our care.

## Illnesses and Communicable Diseases

During the preschool years, children work to build their immune system. Parents need to use their best judgment when determining whether or not to send their children to school.

Consistent attendance is important and we certainly understand that children can have the sniffles or a slight cough for weeks and we don't expect them to miss school all that time. However, illnesses do spread quickly, if symptoms are intense a day of rest may be needed. **PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CHILDREN ATTENDING CCNS MUST BE IMMUNIZED. WE DO NOT ACCEPT RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS.**

### The State of NJ requires that all children under five receive an annual flu vaccine.

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend CCNS. If such symptoms occur at school, the child will be removed from the group, and parents will be called to take the child home.

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Shortness of breath
- Lethargy
- Severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Stiff neck

Once the child is symptom-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to themselves or others, the child may return to the center.

Please note: children who are too sick to fully participate in our programming, including going outside, are too sick to be in school. Unfortunately, we do not have the facilities or staffing to accommodate children whose families want them to stay inside. Special arrangements will be made for children who have been injured and are required by a doctor to stay off the playground.

Also, as a reminder, we do not administer medication in school; however, if medication is necessary for a chronic condition, special arrangements can be made.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in these very important matters. We ask that you **call us** at 973-379-6549 or email us at [info@christchurchnurseryschool.org](mailto:info@christchurchnurseryschool.org) to report illnesses, absences and symptoms so that we can notify the class as necessary.

#### Head Lice Policy:

Head lice is very common in young children. **All cases of lice must be reported.** Once a case is confirmed, parents in the school will be notified, in writing, to begin regular daily head checks on their children. Treatment and identification information will also be distributed to parents. **\*HEAD CHECKS are time consuming; however, removing EVERY single nit is the ONLY way to get rid of the condition.** Anyone treated for head lice must report to the main office upon re-entry into school and submit written documentation of treatment. If one nit is found, we will assume that more are present and the child will be sent home from school for additional combing out. This process will continue until we are free of all active cases of head lice and no additional nits are found. **Removing EVERY single nit is the ONLY way to get rid of it!**

### Healthy Snack Choices

With the assistance of our parents, whole grains, fruits and vegetables will be available and offered to the children at snack time. Parents are asked to sign up for "Healthy Snack." This sign up will be done in each classroom by the classroom teachers. Families will share the opportunity to bring in a healthy snack for the class. Some suggestions for healthy snack for our classes include: ready-to-eat fruits or vegetables, yogurt, cheese, applesauce, etc. (NO NUT OR NUT PRODUCTS, please!) As recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, apple juice intake is limited to four ounces per day for children three and up and apple juice is not served to children under three. **Please do not send in juice boxes as part of healthy snack.**

CCNS will be providing the "Healthy Snack" to children in our Drop In Center. **Please note: Parents of children under the age of 18 months must provide a daily written food plan for their children.**

### Nut-Free Policy and Food Allergies

A drastic increase in nut allergies and severe reactions has directed us to strive for a **NUT-FREE** environment. We do not serve or use nut products in our school. Since our children are so young, we do think that the safest approach is to avoid bringing nut or nut products into our school. We appreciate everyone's cooperation on this important issue. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING NUT PRODUCTS INTO OUR SCHOOL!** You must notify us immediately if your child develops a food allergy. Additional paperwork will be necessary for all required medication.

### Toilet Training Policy

Infants and toddlers that attend the Drop In Center and/or our Young Learners 2s Class will be expected to provide their own diapers and supplies. Diapers are checked periodically and changed when necessary. Soiled diapers are secured in plastic bags and placed in a outdoor receptacle provided by the center.

Parents are encouraged to notify the staff once a child shows an interest in toilet training. We will do our best to follow through on the training that is taking place at home once it is well established. It is recognized that some children take longer to transition this new skill into a **group setting**. Children who are in the process of training may benefit from the continued use of diapers or training underwear while attending the school or Drop In. We will offer the children every opportunity to use the potty more independently. **Children must be able to wear underwear successfully at home for at least two weeks before attempting to transition to wearing underwear in school.**

We will do all that we can to assist in transitioning the child from diapers to underwear as quickly as possible. We will require your full cooperation and understanding throughout this process and we offer you ours. Please let the teacher know once the child has switched into underwear. They should also be able to indicate a need to use the toilet and be able to manipulate their own clothing.