



Parent Handbook

Welcome!

Welcome to Appleseeds Day School! We are pleased that you and your family have decided to join our family here at the center. Appleseeds offers a developmentally appropriate environment that is guided by caring and trained child care professionals. The center follows guidelines set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for the curriculum of young children. We offer a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment where each child is respected and noticed for his/her own unique personalities.

This handbook is to familiarize you and your family with our philosophy, policies, procedures, and program. You are asked to read this carefully and sign and return the last page stating that you have read and understand the policies of the center. Any questions, comments, or suggestions are greatly appreciated. Your input is important to us!

Philosophy/ Mission Statement

We at Appleseeds believe that childhood should not be a race but a journey. We cherish the privilege to grow and learn alongside your children. This journey will be accomplished by professional teachers and caregivers working with parents and families. Each child will be nurtured and challenged as the wonderful, creative, unique person that they are. We will honor their special qualities by meeting their needs individually.

We believe children have potential, curiosity and interest in engaging in social interaction, establishing relationships, constructing their learning, and negotiating with everything the environment brings to them. Children's rights should be recognized, not only their needs. Children have a right to high quality care and education that support the development of their potentials. It is by recognizing that children have rights to the best that society can offer, that parents' rights to be involved in the life of the school and teachers' rights to grow professionally will be recognized.

Loris Malaguzzi
Reggio Emilia, Italy

Hours of Operation

Appleseeds Day School is open Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The center closes promptly at 5:30 p.m. **If you are late in picking up your child you will be charged a late fee of \$10.00 per child for every five minutes beyond the 5:30 p.m. closing time.** If the staff has not heard from the parent by 5:30 p.m., the staff will then call the next person on the emergency form. Upon enrollment you will be asked to set hours for your child to be agreed upon by administration. Please adhere as close as possible to these set times as they effect our staff to child ratios.

Holidays

Appleseeds Day School will be closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. The center will be closed a few additional days, such as for teacher in-service. These dates will be determined yearly at the beginning of the year as to provide plenty of advance notice. Tuition is still due for these days.

Snow Days

Appleseeds will make every attempt to stay open during bad weather. However, sometimes it is just not safe for the staff, parents, and children to travel in such dangerous weather. At these times the administration will make a determination whether to close or have a delayed opening. We will try to be open when public schools are canceled. If we are forced to close or have a delayed opening we will announce it on WMUR TV Channel 9. Tuition is still due for closings due to weather.

Intake/Registration Procedures

There is a \$75 registration fee, \$50 for each subsequent child, at the time of enrollment. At this time rates and contracted time will be agreed upon. We also offer a 10% tuition discount for the older child when you have more than one child enrolled. The following registration forms must be on file before the child begins:

1. Registration and emergency release form
2. Physical health form (to be filled out by child's doctor)
3. Signed parent handbook agreement form
4. Photo/video permission slip, for documentation purposes
5. Tuition agreement

The child's health and registration forms need to be updated annually or earlier if there are any changes.

Payments

Tuition is due on Fridays by noon, for the upcoming week, payments received after noon are subject to a \$10 late fee. Tuition is charged each week that your child is enrolled regardless of attendance. This includes sick days, vacation days, holidays, and snow days. Payments made by check or money order should be deposited into the tuition box outside the office door (it is not necessary to submit payments directly to the office staff). However, cash payments should be placed in a sealed envelope with the amount and the child's name on it and either given to office staff or placed in the locked tuition box. It is recommended that you get a receipt for cash payments, as Appleseeds will not be responsible for lost cash payments. At no time should payments be made to the child's teachers. Appleseeds reserves the right to terminate the child care contract if payment is not received within two weeks. The annual registration fee of \$75 is due upon contract renewal. This happens in March to confirm upcoming June enrollment.

Absences

When your child will not be attending the center we ask that you please notify us. If your child is out because he/she is ill, please inform the staff as to what the illness is. We will post contagious diseases so that parents of the other children can be aware of what they may have been exposed to.

Withdrawing Your Child

Appleseeds requires a thirty-day written notice when planning to withdraw your child from the center. We expect payment for thirty days after the noticed is received. This also allows closure for the child, his/her teachers, and friends.

Safety

All children must come into the center accompanied by an adult. When arriving, the teaching staff must be made aware of the arrival of the child by the parent. Children must be signed in and out every day in their classroom. This is very important since this list is used to check attendance during emergency drills and events. When not signed into their classroom, parents should supervise children in the driveway, lobby, and elsewhere in the center. Parents must notify the teacher before taking their child from the room. Appleseeds is not responsible for a child once that child has been signed out, even if the child is still on the premises. Children will be released only to those with written permission from the parents. We will ask for photo identification anytime a person unfamiliar to the staff picks up your child. Parents should notify the office staff whenever there is a change of address, home or work, phone number, or daily schedule. Correct emergency numbers are essential in case of illness or accident. Smoking is not permitted in the building.

Refusal to Release a Child

There are a few instances where Appleseeds Day School may refuse to release a child to an authorized person or parent. If the adult arrives to pick up your child and is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released to that adult. Also, if the adult is abusive towards the child, the child will not be released to that adult, for the safety of the child. The staff will contact people to make arrangement for the safe pick up of the child.

Open Door/ Communication Policy

We believe communication between parents and staff is essential to a great child care program. We encourage parents to visit or call at any time. We also welcome direct classroom participation, field trip assistance, and sharing special talents and interests. All children will receive daily reports regarding the activities of the day, what they enjoyed or did not enjoy, their mood, etc. Each classroom may do this in a different way. Some do journals, some daily sheets, and some write a general summary of the day on a wipe board in the classroom. All teachers are available through email and can verbally communicate with parents at the beginning or end of your child's day. Parents and teachers may want to talk about an issue that is not appropriate for the classroom. In this instance, a phone conference may be appropriate. Parents should keep their child's teacher informed of home happenings, new activities of interest, milestones, and any other helpful hints about their child's routine. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Parent-teacher conferences will be offered annually by the teachers. If either parents or teachers feel that at any time additional conferences are necessary, the director should be notified so that a conference can be scheduled. If a parent would like to speak with the director, the parent may:

1. Use our contact page, <<http://www.appleseeddayschool.com/contact.html>>
2. Call and leave a message, 603-772-9995
3. Leave a written note in the office mailbox.

Rest Periods/Bedding

The state of New Hampshire requires a rest period of at least one hour for children in a program longer than five hours. For this reason, there will be a "nap time" every day in each classroom. If children do not fall asleep within a half hour they are offered a quiet choice such as a puzzle or manipulative. We can not keep a child awake at a parent's request. Appleseeds will provide cribs and crib sheets for infants and mats and sheets for older children. Parents should provide a blanket and any other nap time objects your child may need (i.e. a pacifier, stuffed animal, no other toys please). Nap items will be stored in your child's cubby or other designated area in the classroom and should go home each Friday for laundering. Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, unless the child's doctor provides a note stating otherwise. Infants nap according to their own schedules determined with the help of the parents. Pillows will not be used in cribs due to the risk of suffocation.

Food and Nutrition

Appleseeds Day School provides nutritious meals and snacks daily for children eating solid foods in our program. Tuition includes two snacks, and at an additional cost (cash only) lunch Wednesday and Friday is an option, \$4.50 per week/per child.

Morning snack times vary from each classroom, usually between 9:30 and 10:00. Lunch times also vary from classroom to classroom starting between 11:00 and 12:00. Afternoon snack is served according to each groups awakening from their nap, usually between 2:30 and 3:30. The school age group is served afternoon snack shortly upon arrival from school.

You must provide your child's breakfast and lunch yourself (except lunch on Wed. & Fri. if participating in our lunch program). We have decided to make Appleseeds nut free, due to the growing number of nut allergies...this means no peanut butter, nuts of any sort, or any nut products can be packed in breakfasts or lunches. If nut products are brought in they will be removed by our staff, we make every effort to keep a nut free environment, but because meals are brought in from private homes, we can not guarantee with a 100% certainty that a child may not come in contact with a product that has traces of nuts. We also cannot heat your child's food from home so please provide cold meals. ***Please inform the staff if your child has any allergies.***

Infant Food, Formula, and Breast Milk

Parents of infants are responsible for providing baby food, formula, or breast milk for their child. Formula and breast milk needs to arrive pre-made in bottles everyday. The staff cannot be responsible for making your child's formula. Due to possible bacterial contamination, breast milk and formula can only be offered for one hour after the initial heating. Whatever is leftover in the bottle after one hour will be discarded. This is to protect your child from possible illness. Please provide pre made bottles, as your child will need in one day. And, of course, you may come and nurse or feed your child at any time! We will provide a comfortable area for mothers and fathers to nurse or feed their infant and enjoy that special time together.

As infants begin to eat solid foods, parents are required to provide all cereals and jarred food. As your child moves to table foods please provide your own table foods.

We ask that whenever possible your infant be fed before coming to the center in the morning to make the transition from home a smoother and happier one.

Outdoor Activity

Except for in extreme weather conditions the children will go outside everyday. Snow pants, boots, hats and mittens are required during the snow season. Sunscreen is required in the summer. Bug spray and a sun hat or glasses are recommended also. Please always make sure your child has at least one change of clothes. Slippers are also recommended in case shoes get wet. If your child is not well enough to go outdoors he or she should not attend the center that day.

Biting

We understand that biting is a normal part of toddler development, however the staff will take actions to reduce the number of incidents. Toddlers bite for a number of reasons such as lack of language, teething, and oral exploration. When biting incidents do arise the staff will do their best to prevent or redirect the behavior. The appropriate first aid (washed, ice pack, and TLC) will be administered and an injury report will be completed for every incident. If a bite is particularly bad, or has broken the skin, we will call the parent to let them know about it before they pick their child up. The name of the biter will not be revealed to the parents of the bitten. If the behavior becomes problematic a meeting will be set up with the child's parents, teachers, and director to establish a plan of action. Biting is not grounds for automatic dismissal.

Discipline

Children will never receive physical punishment at Appleseeds. When conflicts or problems arise, children will be encouraged to vocalize their emotions and concerns. Caregivers will help children in verbalizing their problems, and in finding solutions and natural, logical consequences. We believe in guiding positive behavior rather than punishing. "Time out" will only be used if a child's behavior is out of control, endangering themselves or others, and needs time away to regain control. We will never humiliate, shame, or frighten a child as punishment. Our form of discipline is guiding and directing children towards acceptable behavior to learn the natural consequences of their actions. By being offered choices and opportunities to make their own decisions knowing what the natural consequences will be, children can begin to develop self-discipline. Caregivers will clearly state the choices and consequences in advance. Peer to peer problem solving will be strongly encouraged, helping children to use their words to express their feelings to one another instead of physical force.

Behavior Policy

The first time a child displays a behavior which puts another person in danger of being hurt, parents will be notified if the incident immediately. The second time it happens, the teachers will write an incident report and ask the parent to sign upon reading the report. If the behavior should continue and happen a third time, a meeting may be called between the teachers, parents, and director to come up with a plan of action to help the child through the behavior. If a parent refuses to meet with the teachers and director, this may be grounds for dismissal.

What to Bring

Parents of infants and toddlers should bring diapers, wipes, and any ointment or lotion they may use. They should also have at least two changes of clothing, including onesies and socks. Slippers are also recommended for toddlers in case shoes get wet outside. Preschoolers should have at least one change of clothing. Everything should be clearly labeled with the child's full name. We recommend comfortable and washable clothing and shoes that can be managed by the child. Most of our art supplies are washable but sometimes they do not come all the way out of clothing. We will do our best to protect your child's clothing but there may be times when clothing may get stained. Please do not send your child in clothing that you do not mind getting dirty.

Your child will probably, from time to time, wish to bring in a special item from home. Under no circumstances are aggressive action toys such as power rangers, or guns or any other item that may offend, scare, or hurt another child acceptable. If they are brought to the center, the classroom teachers will hold them until the end of the day when they will be sent home. All items brought from home must be clearly labeled with your child's name and be able to fit in your child's cubby. If at anytime items brought from home are disrupting the classroom or deterring children's focus from classroom activities the teachers can implement a "no items from home" policy, except for a special naptime item. Appleseeds cannot assume responsibility for items brought from home.

Illness Policy

According to New Hampshire state regulations a child must be excluded from child care when ill. The symptoms for exclusion will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit taken under the arm, or 101 degrees Fahrenheit taken orally or rectally, in the previous 24 hours
- A severe cough or difficulty breathing
- Reddened, crusty eyes
- One episode of vomiting
- Three episodes of non medicine related diarrhea
- Rash
- Generally out of sorts and not able to keep up with the activities of the group

Please keep your child home if he/she has any of the above symptoms unless you have a note from your child's physician stating your child is not contagious and is okay to be in child care. The staff will observe your child for signs and symptoms of illness daily. If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms you will be called and your child will be sent home. Please do not return your child to the center until these symptoms are gone for 24 hours. This means your child must be fever free for 24 hours without the benefit of fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol or Motrin, before returning to the center. If your child has been prescribed an antibiotic, please keep your child home until he/she has had a full day's (24 hours) dosage, unless otherwise specified by the child's physician in writing.

Illness Policy (continued)

If your child is diagnosed with any of the following illnesses, please notify the center so that we can post notice of possible exposure to contagious disease:

Amebiasis	Meningitis
Campylobacter Enteritis	Meningococcal Infection
Clostridium Difficile Infection	Mumps
Chicken Pox	Otitis Media
Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)	Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
Coxsackievirus (Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease)	
Croup	Pneumonia
Cryptosporidiosis	Polio
Diarrhea caused by E. Coli	Rabies
Diphtheria	Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
Enteroviral Infections	Ringworm
Fifth's Disease	Roseola
Food Poisoning	Rotavirus
Giardiasis	Rubella (German Measles)
Haemophilus Influenza Invasive Disease	Salmonellosis
Head Lice	Scabies
Hepatitis A	Shigellosis
Impetigo	Strep Throat
Influenza	Thrush
Measles	Tuberculosis

Appleseeds will make every attempt to keep your child and the other children healthy and away from contagious disease. If your child is sick please keep them at home to protect other children and the staff from illness.

To help keep the children and staff healthy we follow a strict health policy. All children and staff will wash their hands before and after every meal. All staff are required to wash their hands frequently, especially after going to the bathroom, wiping children's noses, changing diapers, before handling food, etc. The materials at the center are bleached (10:1) solution to sanitize them and keep them from spreading diseases and bodily fluids. All mats, sheets, toys, etc. are cleaned every week also. We will do everything in our power to keep ourselves, the center, and especially the children, clean, healthy, and disease free.

Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications

If at anytime your child needs prescription or non-prescription medication at the center, an authorization form needs to be completed and signed by the parent. All medication must be in its original container. Prescription medication must contain the prescription label that contains the name of the child, the physician's name, the dosage and date. This serves as the physician's authorization. Non-prescription medications will be administered according to the label unless otherwise noted in writing by the child's doctor. We cannot administer any medication that has expired.

Birthdays

A child's birthday is very special! Parents may bring in a special snack to celebrate their child's birthday at the center. We also understand that many children begin talking about and planning their birthday parties months in advance. The topic of who is and is not going to a birthday party can be a big one. Sometimes feelings can get hurt. For this reason we ask that if you are planning a party for your child and are not inviting everyone in your child's class to please not give out invitations at the center. We will provide you a list of everyone in the class' address and phone number so you can contact those invited. **If you do not want your address and phone number given out please let administration know.** We will update this list when changes arise.

Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information about the children and their families is extremely important to the staff and administration at Appleseeds. We will keep any information confidential, unless the parent has given written permission to release the information. Staff will be informed on a need to know basis.

We are very pleased that you have decided to join our family here at Appleseeds Day School. We look forward to traveling along this journey with you and your child!