

ECC Easton Community Center

A 501(c)(3) Charitable Organization



Playtots Preschool Parent Handbook 2017-2018

Easton Community Center
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www.eastoncommunitycenter.com

www.playtots.org

Welcome

Welcome to Playtots Preschool. This handbook will help you with questions you may have regarding our school and its policies. Please read it carefully so you will be familiar with our practices. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to a great year of fun and learning.

Staff

Our Playtots Preschool staff is made up of highly qualified individuals who have been hired based on their education, training, and experience with young children. There are a minimum of two adults present in each classroom with teacher's aides available to help out when needed. Most of our staff members are certified in first aid and CPR and are members of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Our Philosophy

The Playtots Preschool program is designed to promote the social, emotional, physical, sensory, and educational growth and development of our young students in a friendly, nurturing, and safe environment. We provide children with plenty of hands-on experiences and expose them to many new themes, activities, songs, and games while interacting socially with other children and having fun!

Registration and Tuition Policy

Registration for the following school year begins November 28th for current students and their siblings that are ECC members, November 29 for current students and their siblings that are non-members and November 30th for new families. An initial non-refundable deposit of \$100 is required to hold a place for the following year and a second non-refundable deposit of \$500 will be due on February 1st in order to maintain that spot. Half of the preschool tuition remainder is due on August 15th; the final payment on December 31st. Before and after care services will be billed monthly. All tuition payments are non-refundable and you will be required to sign an Enrollment and Tuition Agreement.

Communication

Communication with parents and families is very important to us. To ensure that we get information to you on a timely basis we send out classroom newsletters via our school website (parent logins will be assigned and are for the exclusive use of Playtots parents). We also post a hard copy of each newsletter on our parent bulletin boards which are located outside each classroom. The bulletin boards will also contain other pertinent information that you may need on a daily basis. Please read our newsletters and check the bulletin board frequently.

Each child will have a cubby/mailbox outside the classroom. You will receive important notes and work that your child has completed. Please check your child's cubby each day.

During the month of October you are invited to our "Parents' Night" when you will be able to see the school, classroom, visit with the staff, hear about our program, and ask any questions that you may have.

Throughout the school year, we also provide two scheduled opportunities to meet individually with your child's teachers to discuss your child's progress. The first will be an informal discussion period when we can meet to talk about your child's adjustment to the program. This meeting is optional and will be scheduled in November. Our second conference period will be scheduled in the spring. At that time you will receive a written progress report. We will also discuss your plans for the following year and answer any questions you may have regarding preschool or kindergarten placement. In addition to these conferences you are free to contact us at any time if you have a question, problem, or issue you need to discuss.

Health and Safety

The state of Connecticut requires that a copy of your child's health form, completed within the last 12 months, is on record in our files. This form must be in our files by the beginning of the school year and updated annually. Please make sure that these documents are on file prior to the start of school so that your child can participate in the program. We will host a form and medication drop off day in August in order to ensure we have all of the information and medication needed for your child to start on the first day of school. Failure to provide necessary forms or medication needed during the school day can delay the start date of the child until the requirements are met.

If your child will be out of school for any reason, please contact the Director in the Playtots office at 459-9700 or email your child's teacher. Please let us know the reason for your child's absence.

Some general guidelines for returning to school after an illness include:

- Vomiting, diarrhea, fever: 24 hours after child's symptoms subside.
- Chicken Pox: after breakout has dried and scabbed over.
- Pink Eye: 24 hours after first application of medicine.
- Flu, cold: 24 hours after fever has returned to normal.

Please use your discretion when deciding to keep a child home from school. Sometimes children will recover more quickly with a day of rest at home.

If a child becomes ill at school, his/her parents will be notified immediately. The child will be isolated from other children and kept comfortable until he/she is picked up.

Emergencies will be handled according to the emergency form signed at registration. Our staff is certified in first aid and CPR and will take appropriate action as needed. A parent or emergency contact will be called immediately and, if needed, the child will be transported by emergency vehicle to a local hospital.

We are not able to administer any routine medications at school. If a child requires medication during the school day, it is the parents' responsibility to administer it at the proper time. If emergency medications are required (i.e. Benadryl or Epi-Pen), staff members are trained in administration of medications and can handle such based on doctor's orders on record with the Director.

Building Safety and Security

The safety and security of the children in our program is of the utmost importance. There are several security measures in place to ensure that students are always safe while attending preschool.

All teachers and ECC Staff undergo thorough background checks and screenings.

Separate bathrooms are provided for Playtots students. Children will be taken to the bathroom by a Playtots teacher or aide. Children will never be in the bathroom or the hallways unattended.

The Easton Community Center is equipped with surveillance cameras in our common areas and outside; monitored in our front office. ECC is a private facility, open to its members. Any ECC member entering the building must check in and swipe their membership card.

Each Playtots family will be issued a security fob which you will swipe upon entering and leaving the building. Everyone must enter and exit through the Main Entrance.

Parents may visit the school at any time, but must still check in with the front desk who will notify the Director and classroom teachers.

Each classroom is equipped with a security pad to access the room. Only staff members have the security code to open the doors. In addition, teachers have a security remote control that can lock the doors remotely.

In accordance with safety regulations, fire and lock down drills will be conducted on a regular basis.

Bathroom and Hand Washing Procedures

Children in the 3s and 4s classes must be fully potty trained before they begin school. This means that they should be able to use the bathroom independently. Children will be accompanied by a staff member to the bathroom and may be assisted in difficult situations, however, as a rule; children will be expected to manage the basics on their own.

Children entering the 2s class are not required to be potty trained, though they should be working toward that goal with the assistance of the classroom teachers and staff.

Several bathroom breaks will be scheduled during our school day to accommodate the children's needs. Good hygiene standards will be emphasized and modeled by the staff (i.e., proper hand washing).

For their privacy and safety, children will have bathroom facilities that are separate from faculty and other ECC members. Please encourage your child to use the bathroom before entering the classroom at the beginning of the school day. This way we may start our day with minimal interruptions. In addition, children will be asked to wipe and/or sanitize their hands upon entering the classroom each morning.

Dress

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothing. We will be getting messy, running, jumping, and playing. We will also go outside each day that outdoor conditions are appropriate and the temperature is not too cold. Please make sure that children wear a hat and mittens when the weather is cold. A light jacket and boots may be needed during the fall and spring

months. If children wear rain or snow boots to school, please bring a pair of shoes for them to change into before entering the classroom. **Rubber boots are not permitted to be worn during the school day except when going to the playground.** Also, we encourage rubber-soled shoes so that children won't slip, especially in the gymnasium. **Please do not send your child to school in sandals, clogs, or Crocs.**

Snacks and Lunch

Please send in a peanut and tree nut free snacks and drink for your child each day. Children in our full day program as well as in any class that dismisses at 1 or 3 PM will also need a lunch. We encourage healthy eating habits at school. Please help us by sending in nutritious foods that foster a healthy lifestyle. The ECC is a peanut and tree nut free facility. Please avoid sending any foods that contain, may contain or processed in a facility that contains any peanuts or tree nuts.

If your child will be staying for lunch, the lunch should be placed in an additional bag and labeled appropriately. Please keep snacks and lunches in separate bags so the teachers and children will be able to identify them easily.

Please also make sure to cut up foods, especially grapes and hot dogs. Please avoid sending popcorn and candy. We are also unable to heat any foods. If you would like to send your child with a hot lunch, please send a Thermos. As per state licensing requirements, please include an icepack in your child's snack and lunch bags for foods that need refrigeration.

REMINDER: All of our classrooms are peanut/nut free. Please read labels carefully and do not send in any foods that may contain any peanut or nut related items or which is processed in a facility with nuts. We will make every effort to accommodate any other allergy issues. Please make us aware in writing of any and all allergies that your child has.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time for every child. We would love to have you come in and join us at snack time with a special treat. Please let us know if you will be coming in during snack time. Feel free to bring a favorite book to read to the class or you may pick one from our classroom library. Summer birthdays will be celebrated at a time convenient to you and the classroom teacher. **Please remember our classrooms are nut/peanut free.**

Parent Volunteers

We always encourage parents to come in and volunteer. If you have some free time and would like to share a hobby or skill, read a book or just help out, let us know and we can schedule a visit.

One “room parent” will be identified in each classroom. These parents are representatives of your class and will assist with school fundraisers, field trips, classroom celebrations, as well as other school and classroom events. Room parents will be selected in the spring of the current year for the following year. If you are interested in volunteering to be a room parent for next year, please contact the Director prior to April 1st.

Show and Tell

Children love to bring in and share items from home. Details will be sent home from each teacher explaining the procedure that each class will follow. Please be aware that toy weapons of any kind are not allowed in school.

School Closings

For weather-related closings we follow the Easton Public School/Regional School District 9 System. Please listen to WICC, WEBE 108, STAR 99.9, or go to ctweather.com for school announcements listed under learning centers, or watch one of the local television stations (Channel 12) for a listing of school closings and delays.

- If Easton schools are closed, then our Playtots Preschool program will not meet that day.
- If Easton schools have a delayed opening, we will follow the same amount of time for our delayed opening. Please note: If there is a delayed opening, AM care will be cancelled.
- If Easton schools have an early dismissal due to inclement weather, we will dismiss early and will notify parents by phone call and email. Please check your email if there are any questions.
- On the occasion that Easton schools are closed or delayed for an unrelated event (such as a power outage) that does not affect the Easton Community Center, we will be in session and will contact you accordingly. Please check your email for updates.

Parking and Drop Off Procedure

Please use designated parking spaces whenever dropping off and picking up from school. It is a fire hazard to park in the fire lanes at any time, no matter how brief. For the safety of our children please keep in mind that there is a five mile per hour speed limit in our driveway and parking lot. Drivers must stay right and travel one way around the loop.

Everyone must use the Main Entrance for drop-off and pickup. All students must be accompanied by an authorized adult while entering and leaving the building. **Please be prompt for arrival and dismissal as late arrivals and late departures cause undue anxiety for your child and cause a disruption to the other children.**

Dismissal Procedure

Children will be dismissed from the inside classroom doors to parents and/or caregivers who are authorized to be picking up. Proof of identification will be required (i.e. driver's license) of anyone not recognized as an authorized caregiver. An Authorization for Pick Up form must be signed and in our files. If you make any arrangements for your child to be picked up by someone who is not on your form it must be documented in writing and given to the teachers at the beginning of the school day. Children will not be released to any unauthorized person.

Delayed Pick Up Policy

The parent/guardian will be charged \$10.00 for every 15 minute period beyond your scheduled pick up time. If you are going to be delayed, (e.g. there is an accident and you are stuck on the highway) and anticipate a late pick-up, please contact your alternate pick-up designee first to see if they can pick up your child, and/or notify the program of your late arrival. Please advise your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Field Trips

At Playtots Preschool we offer both in-school field trips and occasional offsite field trips. You will be asked to sign a general permission slip giving permission for your child to attend any in-school field trips that we may offer. In the event of an off-site field trip, you will be sent information regarding the trip and must sign a permission slip for that particular event.

Policy: Abuse and Neglect

As child care providers, we at Playtots Preschool are required by law to report if we suspect or have reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused or neglected or is at risk of abuse or neglect. Child care providers are listed as professionals whose work puts them in regular contact with children. Anyone in that capacity is considered a “mandated reporter”. Please see the attached policy provided by the State of Connecticut which gives information and definition on abuse and neglect. This information is posted at the school as well.

If we suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, it is essential that we act to interrupt that cycle of abuse and/or neglect and help the family receive the services needed. When a case of abuse or neglect is suspected, we will call the Department of Children and Families immediately. (1-800-842-2288)

Positive Guidance and Discipline Policy

Our school strives to maintain an atmosphere where students can interact in a positive and enjoyable manner. We also recognize that conflicts with students may occur at school. Our goal is for students to learn to interact with their peers and teachers, and to develop positive social skills. If a conflict occurs the teacher will always keep safety in mind, redirect play as necessary, discuss the conflict, and remind children to “use their words”. In extreme circumstances, a child may be taken out of the classroom with a staff member for some quiet time until the situation is resolved. If conflict continues repeatedly, a conference with the parent will be requested to discuss techniques to remedy the situation. Our goal is to work with families to ensure success for the children in our program but if interventions are ineffective with a child and the safety of others becomes an issue in the classroom, a suspension or dismissal from the program may be necessary.

How to Contact Us

Email: Suzanne.keatley@eastoncc.com

Phone: (203)459-9700

Websites: www.eastoncommunitycenter.com, www.playtots.org

www.myclassroomconnection.com

We look forward to a wonderful year with you and your child.