

# Oak Lane Child Care Center

## Parent Handbook



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Oak Lane Child Care

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## **LICENSING**

Oak Lane is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services and was one of the first centers in Westchester to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We are extremely proud of this distinction, which is awarded only to programs that have voluntarily undergone a comprehensive process of self-study and professional review and have successfully met the Association's stringent criteria for a high-quality early-childhood program. Fewer than half of the child care centers in the region are accredited by NAEYC.

## **STAFF**

We pride ourselves in hiring—and retaining—a well-educated and experienced staff. Our staff includes the Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, full-time Chefs, and Building Supervisor, as well as the teaching staff. All of our head and assistant teachers have degrees in early-childhood education or a related field, as well as years of hands-on work with children.

We have four classes. The Acorn Class is comprised of thirteen children 18 months to 3 years of age. The Chestnut class serves nine three-year olds or four-year olds, depending on enrollment. The Walnut class serves twelve three-year-olds, and the Coconut class is made up of seventeen children aged four and five. Because Oak Lane follows the teacher-student ratios required by our NAEYC accreditation, our teacher-to child-ratio exceeds the state licensing standards in all of our classrooms.

All of our staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid. Each teacher performs fifteen hours of in-service training every year. The teaching staff attends teacher development training at Sarah Lawrence College. Several of our staff members have New York State certification to administer medication to the children in our care.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Our intention is to nurture the whole child, to make each and every girl and boy feel secure, loved, and well cared for. A child's self-esteem and ability to interact with peers and adults are of the utmost importance.

We address each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs through a well-planned, developmentally appropriate program steeped in convictions about community, preferences, equality, and fairness.

The key to our educational experience is to build an awareness of self, others, and the environment. We help children:

- become comfortable in their setting and develop the ability to separate from parents.
- develop positive self-concept and a sense of belonging.
- develop curiosity about the world and a sense of autonomy.
- develop trusting relationships with adults and peers. Learn to negotiate and apply rules of the community and/or group.
- understand and respect cultural and social diversity.
- use language to communicate effectively.
- represent ideas, thoughts, and feelings through pretend play, drama, music, dance, art and construction.
- think critically, reason and problem solve.
- construct understanding of relationships among objects, people and events (classifying, seriation, numbers, space, time).
- develop understanding of physical world, learn cause and effect.
- become competent in management of their bodies and acquire basic gross and fine motor skills.

## GOALS

- We recognize that children learn through first-hand interactive experiences with their environment and the people and things within it. Our goal at Oak Lane is to provide an outstanding educational childcare experience within a setting of early emotional nurturing so that children:
  - begin social interaction with peers and teachers.
  - learn self-help skills: toileting, eating, dressing, choosing an activity.
  - learn the order of the educational environment.
  - are introduced to the tools of learning.
  - develop habits of observation, questioning and listening.
  - learn to use the equipment appropriately.
  - are provided with activities which encourage increased language development.

- develop the ability to express needs verbally.
- use language as a tool in social situations and feel comfortable speaking within a group.
- make choices that do not impinge on others' rights.
- work with others to accomplish a goal.
- learn from mistakes and be risk takers.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

Oak Lane Child Care Center is committed to a setting that is fully accessible to children and families without regard to race, religion, national origin, linguistic need, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

## **TWIN CHILDREN POLICY**

It is the policy of Oak Lane that whenever possible, twin children will be separated and placed in separate classrooms. This will only occur in the preschool classes: Walnut, Chestnut and Coconut. This is the same policy based on the same educational philosophy of elementary schools.

Pedagogically, it is better for twin children to be separated in order for them to be able to develop more independence and confidence in their interpersonal relationships. Studies show that the earlier twin children have the opportunity to be an individual in a class, the stronger their personalities and their sense of independence become. Since the size and setting of Oak Lane is such, we find that this is a supremely safe and nurturing setting for twins to have this experience.

## **DISENROLLMENT POLICY**

The Executive Director of Oak Lane Child Care Center reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at his/her discretion.

Possible reasons for disenrollment include, but are not limited to, the following possible reasons:

- Nonpayment or excessively late payments of tuition and fees.
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement.
- A chronic pattern of picking a child up after our normal closing time.
- Special needs of a child resulting in a situation where the children in our care cannot adequately be kept safe with our current staffing patterns.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.
- Failure to maintain current annual physical examinations.
- Failure to provide a current, up-to-date immunization record.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Our regular hours of operation are from 7:00 am<sup>1</sup> to 5:30 pm. You may contract, at an additional cost, a 6:00 pm pick-up time. If you are unable to pick your child up by your contracted time, a late fee will be charged beginning at 5:35 pm and will increase after 6:00 pm in 15-minute increments. If an unexpected late pick-up is to occur, please call Oak Lane. Due to insurance restrictions, no staff member is permitted to transport a child either to or from the center at any time.

<sup>1</sup> Oak Lane reserves the right to modify its hours of operation, from time-to-time, after reasonable notice to parents.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Oak Lane opens at 7:00 am. No one is permitted inside the building prior to 7:00. If you arrive earlier, please remain in your car.

The adult bringing and picking up the child each day must make contact with the teacher. No child is to be dropped off or picked up in the parking lot or at the door. Parents are responsible for their children en-route to and from the center.

Please allow enough time both in the morning and evening for a calm, smooth, and relaxed separation and re-connection. All children should arrive by 8:15 for a successful transition and continuity of the program, as well as to enjoy breakfast with their friends. Conversely, you should not pick up your child prior to 3:30. If an earlier pick-up time is necessary please be sure to give the staff ample notice so the children are not napping when you arrive.

When you enroll your child at Oak Lane, you are required to provide contact numbers for three people authorized to pick your child up from the center. These should be people who live locally. Also, please list any other person(s) authorized to pick up your child. Please keep this information current. If at any time during the day, another person will be picking up your child, you will be asked to inform the staff in writing, by fax or e-mail. Children will not be released without this information. In addition, please inform any person who may pick up your child that the teacher/staff may ask for a photo ID to verify his/her identity. A minor (anyone under 18 years old) cannot be responsible for picking up a child.

## TUITION DEPOSITS

All Students: A tuition security deposit equivalent to one month's tuition for each child is given to the center prior to the first day of attendance. The security deposit is deposited into Oak Lane's general operating account, no interest is accrued and the amount paid is applied toward the August tuition fee of the child's final year at Oak Lane.

**Siblings:** Siblings of Oak Lane children attending Oak Lane are required to have their own security deposits maintained in order to secure their spots in the program.

**Oak Lane Year:** The Oak Lane year runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>. We expect children to attend Oak Lane for the entire year. If for any reason your child is withdrawn from the program prior to August 31<sup>st</sup>, the one-month's security deposit is forfeited.

If you withdraw your child from the program and wish to return at a future date, you must re-apply with a new security deposit(s), and be placed on the waiting list.

## TUITION CONTRACT and PAYMENT

Tuition is paid monthly and is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month. Tuition is payable and due even for days when the center is closed for bad weather, holidays, and teacher training days, or if your child is absent for illness or personal reasons. The center also reserves the right to charge minor, miscellaneous fees in connection with its programs (for example, the cost of field trips or late pickup fees), which are called Incidental Billings.

Oak Lane has partnered with FACTS Management Company to manage our tuition payment program. We require all our clients to register for a FACTS account for both Tuition and Incidental Billing. Automatic ACH Payments are required for Tuition payments. The tuition will be withdrawn on the first of each month. Automatic ACH Payments are also strongly recommended for the Incidental Billing charges to avoid costly late payment fees, but are not required. By taking advantage of the security and convenience of payment processing and information technology offered by FACTS you will realize the following benefits:



1. Payment Dates: The 1<sup>st</sup> of each month is your payment date. Automatic payments can be made from a checking or savings account.
2. Convenience & Security: Your payments are processed securely through a bank to bank transaction.
3. Consumer Account: You may check your personal account or make payments online from the convenience of your home or office anytime.
4. You can download receipts for employer reimbursement programs at your convenience from the FACTS website.
5. Enrolling in FACTS: You can enroll in FACTS by going online to the following link – <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/4KQRJ>

A late fee of \$30 will be assessed if an ACH payment is unable to be processed (such as for insufficient funds) or if an Incidental invoice is not paid on time. Oak Lane is a no-for profit and depends on prompt payment. If your account is in arrears, it may be referred to the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors. If any portion of a payment is one month overdue, the center reserves the right to terminate this agreement and no longer admit your child. You will be charged the bank's fee for any checks returned to the center for non-payment. Any family finding monthly tuition payments to be a hardship can discuss alternative payment arrangements with the Executive Director.

When you enroll your child at Oak Lane you are asked to sign an annual tuition contract that states the days your child will attend and covers the Oak Lane calendar year of September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>. The days that you contract for are the days that your child is eligible to be here. Although legal holidays may result in the program being closed on one of your child's scheduled days, we are not in a position to make allowances for part-time children to come on what would be an "off" day for them. If your child attends Oak Lane on a part-time basis, and you would like your child to attend on an "off" day, it will be necessary for you to purchase an additional day at your child's regular daily rate. This will only be possible if there is space available in the classroom.

Oak Lane extends a discount to families who enroll more than one child. The child whose tuition is highest pays full tuition. Each additional child's tuition is reduced by 10%. If parents choose to waive this discount, the money will be used to fund scholarships for families with financial hardship as determined by the discretion of the Board.

You will be asked to sign a release, which will allow Oak Lane Child Care Center to photograph and videotape your child. You will have the option of choosing if the pictures can be used for internal use (picture documentation of projects, etc.) or for publicity purposes.

Oak Lane reserves the right to modify its fees upon 30 days written notice of change. Extended hours can be added or dropped by families at any time.

Oak Lane shall not be responsible for any failure to comply with the terms of this Contract due to fire, flood, explosions, acts of God, labor strikes, acts of a government agency thereof, judicial action, or any legislation, i.e., an unanticipated event. If one or more of these unanticipated events occur and render Oak Lane unable to operate for a period of greater than thirty (30) days, either party shall have the right and option to terminate this agreement by giving written notice to the other party to that effect. In such a circumstance, Oak Lane shall make its best effort to return to parents any unused tuition or security deposit amount as soon as is reasonably possible.

This policy agreement is subject to change/revision at any time with appropriate notification to parents.

## **CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Our curriculum is developmentally appropriate. It is based on what is known about how children develop and learn. Young children need concrete, hands-on experiences and lots of time to explore along with knowledgeable adults to facilitate their learning:

They learn about cause and effect by mixing red and yellow paint to get orange, by raising caterpillars to be butterflies, by watching behaviors of others and talking about the consequences.

They learn about seriation by building with blocks, playing with Cuisenaire rods and acting out stories.

They learn about sequencing by cooking, getting dressed, repeating daily routines and observing the seasonal changes. They learn about comparing and contrasting by singing loudly and softly, by packing a snowball with and without mittens and by celebrating different holidays.

They learn about classifying by sorting objects, by finding a seat at the snack table or a place in line and by making collections.

They learn about physics by watching snow melting in the water table, balancing on the beam, climbing on the jungle gym and running down the hill.

They learn about botany by collecting fall leaves, examining seeds and planting flower and vegetable gardens. They have the experience of working in the greenhouse at the Center.

They learn about zoology by studying the butterfly, examining bugs through a magnifying glass and meeting with the naturalist.

They learn about sociology by rehearsing adult roles in the housekeeping corner, learning about families and communities, adjusting to being part of the group and making and keeping friends.

They develop eye-hand coordination by climbing ladders, pouring liquids, turning pages in a book, coloring, cutting and painting.

They learn various ways in which to paint. They learn to recognize various musical instruments and the joy of singing. They learn the difference between a hop and a jump. They learn the satisfaction of a job well done. They learn to employ new words and complex syntax, to be patient, to ask questions, to listen to answers, to share, to understand that is all right to make mistakes and to be silly.

They learn that learning is fun and that childhood is a journey—not a race.

The teachers bring their knowledge of child development and their experience in working with children to the classroom. It is their responsibility to collect information regarding each child's progress, document what the children know and use the data to design learner-centered environments and plan effective strategies for implementing the curriculum.

Our teachers' classroom activities are supplemented by visits from a music teacher, a naturalist, a Sign Language specialist, and a Yoga teacher. The oldest Preschool class has a science specialist who comes once a month.

In addition, our teachers work collaboratively with any itinerant educational consultants that may be assigned to a child who has been identified as having special needs.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum for the Preschool classes. Field trips support our curriculum, spark children's imaginations, and give them the opportunity to experience new situations. Field trips also empower children to have hands-on learning experiences in unique settings. The trips are planned over the summer for the academic year. Each family receives a list of the scheduled trips in September.

We invite you to join us as chaperones. Several of our trips require parent chaperones and you are welcome to volunteer. There is a sign-up sheet in each classroom listing the trips where volunteers are needed. Parents must provide their own transportation and Oak Lane will pay the admission fees. Parent volunteers will be responsible for chaperoning their own child plus two other children in the class. Please volunteer only if you are willing to attend the trip and be responsible for helping out. We ask that parent volunteers refrain from cell phone use while on the trip.

The trips are always scheduled for mornings, so that we may return for lunch and naptime. Some of the trips will include a picnic lunch. If the trip should fall on a day your child is not scheduled to attend Oak Lane, your child may still accompany us. Please pick him/her up upon our return to Oak Lane. A week before the trip, you will receive an email with a permission slip. Permission slips will also be available in the front office and your child's classroom. Please sign and return the permission slip and your account will be billed with a nominal fee to cover admission and a portion of the bus expense. On trip days, we ask that your child arrives at Oak Lane by 8:00 so (s)he has time to have breakfast and because it takes some time to strap all the car seats into the bus. Children are also required to wear their bright green Oak Lane shirts while they are on a trip.

We contract with Chappaqua Transportation to provide school buses for all the trips. On trip days, please leave your child's car seat along the fence in front of Oak Lane when you drop him/her off in the morning. Masking tape and markers will be available so that you can label your seat. When you return in the afternoon, your seat will be waiting for you by the fence.

Children under four years of age **or** under 35 pounds must use a car seat on the trips. (That means a 40 lb. 3-year-old should be in a car seat or a 35 lb. 5-year-old

should be in a car seat.) A car seat is a seat with an internal harness. It's installed in the car using either a latch or a seatbelt. Children who are over 4 years of age may also use a car set as long as it has its own internal harness. Booster seats (that use the vehicle's seat belt system rather than an independent harness to attach them to the car seat) are prohibited by the bus company and will not be used.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Parents must be informed of and sign an acknowledgement that they agree to the Oak Lane Child Care Center of Pleasantville, Inc. (Oak Lane) Transportation Plan as follows:

Oak Lane does not provide or arrange for regularly scheduled transportation between a child's home or alternate child day care setting and Oak Lane. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for transportation to and from Oak Lane. Parents' arrangements for pickups by other child care workers or family members must comply with Oak Lane's Child Release Policy.

Oak Lane staff members are not allowed to transport children independently.

During the transport of children, the program will adhere to the required ratio of caregivers to children at all times as determined by regulations.

Oak Lane schedules field trips for the preschool-aged children (ages 3 – 5).

Oak Lane will obtain written consent on approved NYS OCFS forms or approved equivalents from the parent of the child for the transportation that the Center arranges for these field trips.

Oak Lane arranges transportation for these trips with Chappaqua Transportation, Inc.

- Chappaqua Transportation, Inc. is solely responsible for
- All insurance, vetting and licensing of drivers.
- Ensuring that drivers and vehicles meet all Department of Motor Vehicles and Department of Transportation requirements.
- Ensuring that drivers must be 18 years of age or older and hold a current valid license to drive the class of vehicle they are operating.
- Ensuring that any motor vehicle used for a class trip has a current registration and inspection sticker.

Oak Lane will obtain and maintain a copy of Chappaqua Transportation, Inc.'s Certificate of Insurance.

Children will never be left unattended in any form of transportation.

Each child will board or leave a vehicle from the curb side of the street.

All children will be secured in parent-provided child safety seats properly installed per manufacturers recommendations, or with safety belts, as appropriate for the age of the child in accordance with the requirements of the Vehicle and Traffic Law, before any child may be transported in a motor vehicle where such transportation is arranged for by Oak Lane.

No one transporting child care children shall operate a motor vehicle while using a mobile phone, or other electronic communication device, including hands-free devices. All communications made or received by the driver while the motor vehicle is in use for the transportation of child care children must be made from a legally permitted parked position off the road.

In the event of an emergency which renders either Oak Lane's building or the local area (New Castle, NY) unsafe, it may become necessary to transport the children to a place of safety. In such a case, Oak Lane will follow the directions of law enforcement or emergency management officials. The Executive Director or his/her representative will have a master list with each child's contact information and will advise parents of where their children have been relocated.

If the Transportation Plan is amended, parents will receive a copy of the amended plan prior to its start date.

## **SUMMER PROGRAM**

The summer schedule for the Acorn class remains unchanged. For the Preschool classes the last week of June is the start of our summer camp program. The classes are combined for morning activities that include an art project, sports and games and a cooking experience. At lunchtime, classes regroup in their respective rooms for the remainder of the day. In the afternoon, water play either in the sprinklers or at the water tables becomes the outdoor activity.

## **PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS**

We take the responsibility of communicating with parents very seriously. An ongoing dialogue is initiated when your child becomes a member of one of our classes. In each classroom, there are multiple sources of information including messages posted on bulletin boards and message boards, memos in mailboxes and conversation with the teachers. In the Acorn class, due to the children's sometimes limited language capacity, the staff creates an anecdotal journal with weekly entries to inform you of the developmental accomplishments of your child. This practice is continued through the preschool years as well.

Formal conferences are scheduled twice a year, generally fall and spring. Additional conferences may be held at any time. If you have a concern, first speak with the child's head teacher and then if necessary, the director is always available to be included in these discussions.

We encourage frequent communication and involvement between home and school. You are welcome to call during the working day in order to speak with a teacher in your child's class or a staff member.

Each week, each Head Teacher and her staff will send out a newsletter with information about the week's activities and other pertinent classroom information.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Parents will be asked to read and sign an acknowledgement that they have read and understand our Plan for Behavior Management pursuant to the regulations of NYS OCFS.

### The Plan for Behavior Management

Our program chooses to implement and follow this plan for behavior management, and will attach any additional information as needed. Valuable information is available from our local child care resource and referral agency and other resources. Information is also available on the agency website:

[ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare](http://ocfs.state.ny.us/main/childcare)

- The program is responsible for educating all staff on this plan upon employment and as needed. The program must supply copies of this plan to all staff and parents of children enrolled in the program.

- A child may only be disciplined by the director, group teacher, assistant teacher, provider, substitute, and/or assistant.
- The program must apply all rules consistently and appropriately to the ages of the children and their developmental level and abilities.
- Any discipline used will relate to the child's actions and be handled without prolonged delay.
- A child may be separated briefly from the group, but only long enough to gain self-control and must be in view of, supervised and supported by a director, group teacher, assistant teacher, provider, substitute, and/or assistant.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- No child can be isolated in an adjacent room, hallway, closet, darkened area, play area of any other area where a child cannot be seen, or supervised.
- Withholding or using food, rest or sleep as punishment is prohibited.
- Methods of interaction that punish, demean or humiliate a child are prohibited.
- Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise, is absolutely prohibited. Any child care program must not tolerate or in any manner condone an act of abuse or neglect of a child by an employee, volunteer, any person under the programs control.
- Physical restraint is prohibited.
- The following acceptable child guidance techniques will be used:
  - Redirect. In a conflict, give an alternate toy or activity to one of the children competing for the toy. Have multiples of popular toys.
  - Focus on "Do" rather than "Don't." For example, "We walk inside" instead of "Stop running inside." Offer choices: "You can either sit on the rug or at the table for story time."
  - Encourage children to use friendly words rather than physical acts. For example, suggest using the phrase, "I was playing with that toy."
  - Praise positive behavior: "Thank you for using your words."
  - Model desired behaviors in order for the children to learn by example.
  - Arrange the program space to positively impact children's behavior. For example, avoid large open spaces that might encourage children to run indoors.
  - Listen to the children and respond to their needs proactively to achieve their goals. Keeping the children engaged with activities helps prevent conflict.



- For preschool and school age children, involve the children in the development of the classroom rules and consequences.

Parents are required to sign and date an acknowledgement that they have read and will abide by the Plan for Behavior Management when they complete the first registration packet upon enrollment. This acknowledgement is kept in the child's private record.

## **TRANSITIONING**

Oak Lane recognizes and supports the separation process that all children go through.

If your child is starting at the center as a toddler, to help ease the process we require that the toddler spend part of the first morning in the class and leave before lunchtime. The child leaves after lunch on the second day. On day three, the child may stay until after naptime. On day four, you will follow your regular daily schedule by spending some time in the classroom at drop off, and then leaving the child for a full day. Please pick up at your normal pick-up time.

If your child is starting as a 3- or 4-year-old, please visit often prior to the child's first day. You may be asked to spend time in the classroom to ease the transition on your child's first day or two.

## **MOVING FROM THE TODDLER CLASSROOM TO THE PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM**

August 31<sup>st</sup> is the last day of the school year at Oak Lane. On September 1<sup>st</sup> the children in the Acorn class who are eligible to move on to the Walnut or Chestnut classes will do so. In order to be eligible to move, a child has to be 3 or turning 3 in September of the school year. In some cases, because the child entered the Acorn class at 18 months of age, it will be the case that the child will spend 2 years in the Acorn class and move into the preschool class having already reached his 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

This situation has been accounted for by the design of the classroom academics. There are 4 teachers who, by education and training, are equipped to design curriculum and activities that meet the needs of all the children in the class – from the youngest to the children who are 3.

On September 1st, all eligible children move on to the next class. The Acorn children who will be moving up to the Preschool classes begin the process in August. The last two weeks are dedicated to this process. The children begin by visiting their new Preschool class regularly in small groups, along with an Acorn teacher. The Preschool teachers also visit the Acorn children in the Acorn classroom. The last week of August, we ask that you start the day by visiting the Preschool class with your child before you bring your child to the Acorn class to say good-bye.

## **SUNSCREEN**

Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to Oak Lane in the morning. Teachers will re-apply sunscreen in the afternoon after nap. In order to comply with New York State regulations, we must have a fully-completed written consent form on file in order for us to be able to apply your child's sunscreen. We require you to leave a new bottle of sunscreen labeled with your child's name in the classroom for your child's use each fall. All sunscreen will be discarded at the end of the summer because it becomes outdated.

## **CLOTHING**

A child should feel free to experiment with all our classroom materials and to engage in activities requiring large muscle actions. Washable play clothing and rubber-soled sneakers are the best clothes to wear to take full advantage of the activities. If girls wear dresses, it is advisable to leave a pair of shorts in the summer and sweatpants in the winter in case the child needs to change.

Party shoes, sandals, flip-flops, and "cros" are unsafe when running, jumping and climbing. Please dress your child only in sneakers.

In keeping with the high level of outdoor activity that is a major component of the curriculum, we strongly suggest that you leave a set of seasonally appropriate outdoor clothing in your child's cubby.

Each child is to bring a labeled change of clothing to the Center to keep in his/her cubby. Please check the clothing frequently for size and seasonal appropriateness. Please bring a small blanket to put on your child's cot at naptime. One sheet is provided by Oak Lane at the beginning of September. If your child needs a new sheet during the year, Oak Lane will provide it at a cost to the family of \$10. The sheet and blanket are to be taken home and washed

according to the classroom schedule. A special small item or doll may be brought if necessary for naptime security. You are required to provide diapers, wipes and any ointments your child uses. If your child needs a diaper ointment, we must have a fully-completed written consent form on file in order to comply with New York State licensing requirements.

## **PERSONAL TOYS**

Our classrooms are equipped with the most up-to-date educational toys, games and other intellectually stimulating materials. When a child brings a home toy, it causes unnecessary disruption and conflict. Please do not permit your child to bring toys from home.

We teach peaceful, non-violent negotiated solutions to problems. War toys, guns, swords or other objects typifying violence are not allowed under any circumstances.

We always encourage and welcome books, music, items from nature, photographs, etc. If you are unsure about any item your child wishes to share with his/her classmates, check with the teacher.

## **NUTRITION**

Oak Lane is proud to be a participant in the Child and Adult Food Care Program which is sponsored and monitored by the New York State Department of Health which focuses on providing excellent nutrition and preventing childhood obesity. We employ experienced chefs who prepare and serve breakfast, a hot lunch and a nutritious snack every day

We strive to offer lunchtime options to satisfy the pickiest child. Our chefs, who are able to accommodate any dietary requirement, specialize in creative solutions to the challenge of helping young children enjoy eating healthily. Weekly menus are posted outside the classrooms. We also email the menus for the upcoming week to all the families each Friday. All meals are served in the individual classrooms. Occasionally, weather permitting, the children may have a snack or meal outside in their yard.

## **ALLERGIES**

We have children in care and staff at Oak Lane who have life-threatening allergies. No outside food can be brought into the center. Your child's breakfast treat may contain food products that can be life threatening to a child with allergies. It would be best if your child either finished his or her breakfast at home, or just had breakfast here. Please do not have your child "finish" his or her breakfast at Oak Lane.

Please be sure to let the office know of any food allergy, no matter how minor.

Food allergies are not to be considered as insignificant. We want to be as vigilant as possible for the safety and health of all the children at Oak Lane. If you inform us of an allergy, you will be asked to complete an additional form that will also be signed by the child's doctor. We will restrict your child from that food item until we receive a doctor's note to the contrary.

Birthdays and special holiday celebrations are important events at Oak Lane. Please coordinate with your child's teachers regarding the date and the special treats you plan to provide. The teacher will advise you as to our policy regarding acceptable birthday treats. She will inform the office of the decision that was made. Please be advised that if you bring an unacceptable treat, we will not serve it and we will ask you to take it home.

We have children with severe nut allergies in the house. We're a nut free center. Please be sure the ingredient labels are on any food products you send in. Because of the nut allergies please do not give any food to any child other than your own without checking with his/her teacher.

## **GUIDELINES FOR BRINGING IN FOOD FOR CELEBRATIONS**

We have students enrolled and staff who have life-threatening food allergies. Our Food Rules were developed to keep them safe:

No homemade foods are allowed.

The food must be in its original container with the ingredients list attached and legible.

The ingredients cannot include NUTS of any kind.

Even if nuts are not listed as an ingredient, items are not allowed if the label says they

- May contain nuts
- Were made in a factory that processes nut products

Bakery items which do not have an ingredients list attached to the original packaging must be accompanied by a note on the bakery letterhead or receipt saying that the product is nut-free. This includes grocery stores, local bakeries, etc.

If you would like to bring in special treats and would like an alternative to baked items, you might consider bringing in fresh fruit, sherbet, ice cream or ice pops after checking the labels to be sure that they are nut-free.

## **SCHEDULES**

### **ACORN SCHEDULE**

- 7:00 - 8:15 Wash hands, welcome, free play
- 8:00 - 8:40 Breakfast
- 8:30 - 9:00 Diapering, Clean up
- 9:45 - 10:30 Group time, story
- 10:30 – 11:00 Activity groups
- 11:00 – 11:30 Outside
- 11:30 – 11:45 Wash hands
- 11:30 – 12:00 Lunch
- 12:15 – 12:30 Bathroom (diapers)
- 1:00 - 2:30 Naptime
- 2:45 – 3:10 Bathroom, table activity, cots away
- 3:10 – 3:30 PM snack, birthday parties
- 3:30 – 6:00 Activity, outside/inside play, free play

### **CHESTNUT AND WALNUT SCHEDULE**

- 7:00 – 9:30 Wash hands, welcome, breakfast, free play
- 8:00 – 8:40 Breakfast
- 9:00 – 10:00 Calendar, news of the day, clean up
- 10:00 – 10:30 Group time (stories, games, discussion)
- 10:30 – 11:00 Activities (art, manipulatives)
- 11:00 – 11:45 Outside play

- 11:45 – 12:00 Wash hands
- 11:50 – 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 – 1:00 Storytime, bathroom
- 1:00 – 2:30 Naptime
- 3:00 – 3:15 Snack
- 3:15 – 4:00 Group time
- 4:00 – 6:00 Outside/inside play, pick up

## COCONUT SCHEDULE

- 7:00 – 9:30 Wash hands, welcome, breakfast, free play
- 8:00 – 8:40 Breakfast
- 9:30 – 9:45 Calendar, news of the day, clean up
- 10:00 – 10:30 Group time (stories, games, discussion)
- 10:30 – 11:00 Activities (art, manipulatives)
- 11:00 – 11:45 Outside play
- 11:45 – 12:00 Wash hands
- 12:00 – 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 – 1:00 Storytime, bathroom
- 1:00 – 2:30 Naptime
- 3:00 – 3:15 Snack
- 3:15 – 4:00 Group time
- 4:00 – 6:00 Outside/inside play, pick up

## NAPTIME

Each classroom has a prescribed naptime. We have found from our experience that the children need this time. While we are sensitive to parent requests in terms of limiting the time their child sleeps, we feel that the child does need to have this rest. We do our best to accommodate a family's needs, but are reluctant to disturb a child who is clearly fast asleep and is in obvious need of this rest.

According to the Office of Children and Family Services, sleeping and napping arrangements must be provided to the parents in writing and an acknowledgement must be signed by the parent that they understand this policy. While under the care of Oak Lane Child Care Center of Pleasantville, Inc., all children will nap on a cot in his or her classroom. Each napping child will have competent supervision at all times through direct supervision by a caregiver who is in the same room and has direct visual contact with him/her.

Children are allowed to have a small blanket and a small comfort item. Items must fit in the child's cubby.

Parents are responsible for taking the child's bedding home once a week, laundering it and returning it to Oak Lane. If a child arrives without a clean sheet, a new one will be provided and billed to the child's account.

Children are not required to sleep. A quiet activity in the classroom will be provided for children who are not sleeping under the supervision of the classroom staff.

## **PARKING LOT**

Upon arrival at the center, you must use the designated parking spaces. Parking by the dumpster or fire lane is dangerous and prohibited. There aren't enough spaces for everyone simultaneously, so please be patient. In addition, as you travel down Memorial Drive, it is strongly recommended that you drive no more than 10 mph. Be alert for small children.

**YOU MUST HOLD YOUR CHILD'S HAND WHILE WALKING IN THE LOT.**

**WHEN YOU PARK YOUR CAR, YOU MUST TURN OFF THE ENGINE.**

**YOU MAY NOT LEAVE ANY CHILD UNATTENDED IN YOUR CAR FOR ANY REASON.**

When leaving the parking space, be certain there are no children around or near your car, or exiting from the gate area.

You must use an appropriate child restraint system as required by law. No child will be released to an adult whose car does not have a legal and appropriate car seat.

No child will be released to an adult whose car does not have a legal and appropriate car seat.

Oak Lane employees are not allowed to install car seats in private cars. If you are leaving a car seat at Oak Lane for someone who is picking up your child, please be sure he or she knows how to install the car seat in the car.

## **PLAYGROUND**

Each of the playgrounds is equipped with play items specific to the age of the children for whom the play area is intended. Children under 3 are not allowed to play in the preschool playground, and children over 3 are not allowed to play in the toddler playground. When the weather permits, the children are out on the playground at dismissal time. Often when parents come to pick up their child, they are accompanied by siblings. It is our policy that you are responsible for both your Oak Lane child and any other child who may be with you. It is expected that you will monitor your children while they play on our playground equipment. The older children should be mindful of the younger children. They may not climb fences or trees, jump off equipment or use riding toys that are designed for younger children. If the children are inside at dismissal time, it is your responsibility to keep the children with you and not leave them on the playground unattended.

## **ABSENCES**

Our chefs and teachers work very hard to provide the children with healthy and tasty meals and snacks, and to plan for a productive school day. Also, in our effort to hold down costs and eliminate waste, the chefs prepare enough food to feed all the children we are expecting for the day. Toward that end, we ask that you give us a call or let us know in advance if your child is going to be absent from Oak Lane so that we can plan our meals and lessons effectively. If your family will be away, there are vacation sheets to fill out in each classroom. If you are going to be keeping your child home unexpectedly, please call the office that morning.

## **HEALTH POLICY**

Every child is required to have a physical examination by a doctor upon admittance to the program, and once a year thereafter. All vaccinations must be kept up to date. The doctor's report must be made on the New York State Medical Form. If a form expires and is not replaced in a timely manner, the child may be excluded from care until the new form is provided.

If your child should become ill at the center, we will notify you by phone. If you are unavailable, we will contact the emergency contacts you provide at registration. The child will be isolated from the other children until either you or your emergency person listed in your child's file can arrange pick-up. If your



child is too ill to wait for your pick-up, an ambulance will be called and the director or teacher in charge will arrange to meet you at the hospital. The child's file containing the medical record and medical emergency release will be brought along to the hospital.

If your child should be injured and need immediate attention, an ambulance will be called. You will be called next, and the director or teacher in charge will arrange to meet you at the hospital. If you are unavailable, we will contact the emergency contacts you provide at registration. The child's file containing the medical record and medical emergency release will be brought along to the hospital.

We recognize that small children tend to "catch" everything, and this can add up to a lot of sick days. Still, out of respect for others we ask that you keep your child at home on the first day of a cold, if (s)he has vomited the night before or early in the morning, and on the day following antibiotic treatment. If you arrive at the center and the teacher feels your child is not well enough to participate in the activities of Oak Lane, you will be asked to take your child home.

While you may have a different standard for your child, we must be concerned about the other children and the staff who attend Oak Lane. Pursuant to the requirements of the Office of Children and Family Services, these policies have been implemented:

Your child will be sent home from the center if (s)he shows evidence of the following:

- Temperature of 101 degrees with our Center thermometer.
- Diarrhea (two or more episodes, liquid or green stools)
- Frequent, persistent cough
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Runny nose (green or yellow nasal discharge)
- Any contagious disease or infection
- General malaise/fatigue; an inability to participate in the regular program activities. At times this condition may be evident without an elevated temperature.
- Head lice

Your child may return to the center when:

- Temperature has returned to normal for 24 hours

- Diarrhea has stopped for a minimum of 24 hours
- Vomiting has stopped for a minimum of 24 hours
- Persistent cough has been checked by a physician
- Rash has been checked by a physician
- The condition is no longer contagious, as confirmed by a physician
- 24 hours after strep medication has started
- 24 hours after conjunctivitis medication is applied
- If your child has seen a physician and is placed on an oral antibiotic, (s)he may return to the center after 24 hours (due to potential allergic reaction).
- All of the louse nits have been removed from the child's head

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness (strep throat, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis, head lice, etc.), please notify the director and/or head teacher immediately. We will communicate the information to the families and staff where necessary.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION:**

The administration of medication by day care staff is a voluntary service which Oak Lane provides. Oak Lane reserves the right to choose not to participate in administering medication to the children in care.

The administration of medication is subject to New York State Office of Children and Family Services Regulations. Rules regarding the administration of medication are detailed in Oak Lane's Health Care Plan.

If Oak Lane opts to administer medication, staff will comply with these regulations. Oak Lane reserves the right to refuse to administer medication to any child whose parent has not provided the properly executed documents. These forms are available on our website or from the office upon request.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

We do our best to keep the center open in bad weather, but in the event Oak Lane needs to close or delay opening, an announcement will be made on Cablevision's Channel 12. In addition, we will activate an automated phone chain to notify everyone as early as possible. The calls are usually made prior to 6:00 a.m.

If we need to initiate an early dismissal during the school day, you will be notified via the same automated phone chain. The phone system utilizes the number(s) that you listed on the intake questionnaire when you enrolled at Oak Lane.

Please keep the office advised of current numbers or if you will be away from your normal contact number for the day.

## **RESOURCES FOR PARENTS**

The Director and the teachers are happy to be considered resources of early childhood development. Please feel free to approach either your child's teachers or the Director with any questions or concerns you might have about child-related issues.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

The difference between childcare centers can be measured in many ways, but the one consistent area that transcends socio-economic disparity is the level of parent involvement. A child learns that an activity a parent is involved with is an important activity. Through your involvement in the center, you teach your child that Oak Lane is an important place.

There are many opportunities for you to participate in your child's school experience: accompanying us on trips, sharing special talents, and attending birthday parties. Please speak to your child's teacher. We welcome families at many of our special functions throughout the year. In the past, these have included bagel breakfasts, potluck suppers, picnics and pizza parties. We encourage participation by the parents and siblings of all Oak Lane children. CPR and First Aid classes are also available to parents annually.

Oak Lane is a not-for-profit center. We rely on our parents for help with fundraising. The monies raised by our fundraising events go toward the purchase of special equipment for the center, scholarships for area children, and everyday expenses.

## **STAFF BABYSITTING POLICY**

Oak Lane Child Care Center takes great pride in the child care services that we provide at our Center and in the quality of our professional staff of care givers. Oak Lane Child Care Center complies with all regulations established by the State

of New York, Office of Children and Family Services. However, Oak Lane Child Care Center's mission is limited to the provision of quality child care services at our Center and under the supervision of a professional director and early childhood education teacher.

We realize that there are occasions when families may want to privately hire staff members to perform babysitting services outside on their free time. In the event that you engage the services of any Nonprofit staff member or volunteer for child care or baby-sitting services outside Oak Lane Child Care Center's premises, Oak Lane Child Care Center will not be responsible or liable for any acts or omissions of any of its staff members or volunteers while providing such services.

1. Oak Lane Child Care Center does not recommend arrangements for outside childcare or baby-sitting services between parents and staff members or volunteers. Oak Lane Child Care Center is not a party to any such agreement between parents and staff members or volunteers. Oak Lane Child Care Center does not guarantee, warrant or make any representations as to such outside childcare or baby-sitting services.
2. Parents are required to sign a form at the time of initial enrollment that states that they understand that they release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue Oak Lane Child Care Center and its director, Board of Trustees, other staff members and other employees, from all claims, demands, losses or damages on account of any injury, caused, or alleged to be caused in whole or in part, by the acts or omissions of a staff member or volunteer while providing child care or baby-sitting services outside Oak Lane Child Care Center's premises pursuant to any agreement or arrangement made between a staff member or volunteer and the parent (and/or the spouse or other guardian of the child).

As a separate issue, Oak Lane employees are not permitted to transport any child in care either to, or from, Oak Lane Child Care Center in a private or hired vehicle.

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

No smoking is permitted on these premises.

No firearms, shotguns or rifles are permitted on these premises.

Children, whether students or siblings and regardless of age, may not be left unattended on these premises and they must be kept in an adult's line of sight at all times.

Children may not be left unattended in cars in the parking lot.

The following items must be used and stored in such a manner that they are not accessible to children: handbags, backpacks or briefcases belonging to adults; plastic bags; and toys and objects small enough for young children to swallow.

No child can be released from the child day care center to any person other than his or her parent, a person(s) currently designated in writing by such parent to receive the child, or another person authorized by law to take custody of a child.

In accordance with the provisions of Sections 413 and 415 of the Social Services Law, child day care center staff must report any suspected incidents of child abuse or maltreatment concerning a child receiving child day care to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment, or cause such a report to be made, when such staff have reasonable cause to suspect that a child coming before them in their capacity as child day care center workers is an abused or maltreated child.

No child may be accepted for care in a child care program unless the program has been furnished with a written statement signed by a health care provider verifying that the child is able to participate in child day care and currently appears to be free from contagious or communicable diseases. The written medical statement from the health care provider must also state whether the child is a child with special health care needs and, if so, what special provisions, if any, will be necessary in order for the child to participate in child day care.

## **PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

The child day care center must establish a planned program of activities which are appropriate for the children in care, and which encourage normal progress in the development of cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language skills.

Children must be provided with a program of self-initiated, group-initiated and staff-initiated activities which are intellectually stimulating and foster self-reliance and social responsibility.

A written daily schedule of program activities and routines which offers reasonable regularity in routines, including snack and meal periods, nap and rest periods, indoor and outdoor activities, and activities which provide children

with opportunities for learning and self-expression in small and large groups is required.

Children must receive instruction, consistent with their age, needs and circumstances, in techniques and procedures which will enable them to protect themselves from abuse and maltreatment.

The child day care center must make a sufficient quantity and variety of materials and play equipment available to the children. Such materials and equipment must be appropriate to the ages of the children and their developmental levels and interests, including children with developmental delays or disabilities, that promote the children's cognitive, educational, social, cultural, physical, emotional, language and recreational development.

As age and development permit, children must be allowed freedom of movement and must be provided with an environment designed to develop such skills as crawling, standing, walking and running.

Each classroom or area must be arranged to allow children to actively manipulate and utilize toys and equipment while interacting with peers and adults.

The environment must be designed to provide children an opportunity to choose between quiet activities and active play.

Climbing and large motor apparatus should be available either inside the child day care center or in the outdoor play space.

Daily supervised outdoor play is required for all children in care, except during inclement or extreme weather or unless otherwise ordered by a health care provider. Parents may request, and providers may permit, children to remain indoors so long as required staff/child ratios are maintained.

Appropriate sleep, rest and quiet periods which are responsive to individual and group needs must be provided so that children can sit quietly, lie down to rest. For children unable to nap, time and space must be provided for quiet play. Children must not be forced to rest for long periods of time.

The child day care center must offer information about other community resources to families when they are in need of supportive social services not otherwise provided by the child day care center.

## **PRIVACY POLICY**

Consistent with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services Child Day Care Regulations, Oak Lane treats information relating to an individual child as confidential and as such information will not be disclosed without written parental permission to anyone other than the Executive Director, his/her designees or other persons authorized by law. Information relating to an individual child may be disclosed to a social services district where the child receives a day care subsidy from the district, where the child has been named in a report of alleged child abuse or maltreatment, or as otherwise authorized by law. Redisclosure of confidential HIV-related information, as defined in section 360-8.1 of this Title, concerning a child attending Oak Lane is not permitted except in a manner consistent with article 27-F of the Public Health Law.

Parents often ask for class lists in order to arrange for party invitations or play dates. It is the policy of Oak Lane to distribute these lists when requested. If you would prefer not to be included on these lists, please advise the office.

## **ELECTRONIC MONITORS AND SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT**

Video surveillance cameras are in use at used at Oak Lane strictly for security monitoring purposes. These cameras are located inside on the ground floor at the front door, in the office, and in the kitchen-side hallway. Cameras are also located outside in such a manner as to surveil all of the doorways. There are no cameras in any of the classrooms or bathrooms.

The video surveillance cameras are monitored and maintained by All Time Detection, Inc. and comply with all State and federal laws applicable to the use of such equipment.

Oak Lane has the capacity to request and review all video records in case of a security issue.

Electronic monitoring devices or surveillance cameras are not used as a substitute for the supervision of children.

Representatives of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services will have access to such equipment and to have viewing privileges as required by the Office.

Staff, volunteers, and parents of children will be notified that surveillance cameras are used.

In order to protect the privacy rights of the children in our care, Oak Lane's video surveillance cameras will not be used to allow parents to view their children in the day care setting.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Oak Lane is a community of families and staff working together to create the best environment for your children. We invite parents to join our Board of Directors. The board is composed of individuals who represent a wide spectrum of the community: parents of past and present Oak Lane children, and community residents. Members serve for two years on a volunteer basis.

The Board meets at the Center on the second Wednesday evening of the month from September to July. The board oversees the operations of the center and addresses any current issues that arise. Another of the Board's major functions is to oversee Oak Lane's annual fundraising efforts. If you have an interest in joining the Board, or if you would like to assist the Board by serving on a committee in a non-member capacity, please speak to the Director or the Board President.

## **RESOURCES**

New York State Office of Children Services Child Care Regulations can be found in the main office or at

- <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/regs/416%20GFDC%20effective%205.1.14.pdf>
- The Child Care Complaint Line phone number is 800-732-5207

Child Abuse or Maltreatment:

- Hotline Phone 800-342-3720
- Internet Citizen's Guide to Reporting:  
<http://ocfs.ny.gov/ohrd/ccg/ccg.asp>

Healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity:

- USDA Grow It, Try It Like It! Campaign  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit\\_book1.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/growit_book1.pdf)



- In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

NYS Dept of Health

- <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/resources/obparnts.htm>

Learning Issues

- Please contact your local school district

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Oak Lane Child Care Center

Phone: 914.238.3756

49 Memorial Drive

Fax: 914.238.3757

Chappaqua, NY 10514

Email: oaklaneccc@gmail.com

Executive Director: Ronnie Weinberger, Ms.Ed. [www.oaklaneccc.org](http://www.oaklaneccc.org)

## **FORMS**

There are a number of forms which are required by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services that Oak Lane maintains for each child in care. Oak Lane reserves the right to require a child whose forms are not up-to-date to remain home until the new forms are received.

These forms and their frequency of renewal are as follows:

### **Annual**

- Medical Report of a Child in Care – proof of a child's annual medical exam
- CACFP Food Program Enrollment
- CACFP Income Verification
- Staff Babysitting Waiver

### **Every 6 months**

- Day Care Registration – provides detailed contact information
- Health Care Plan for a Child with Special Health Needs – for children with allergies or chronic health issues
- Prescription Medication Consent Form – must be signed by both Doctor and Parent
- Parent Written Medication Permission Form – for over-the-counter topically applied items such as sunscreen, diaper cream, antibiotic cream

### **TRANSLATION SERVICES**

Translation services are available upon request.