Childrenspace North

An Early Childhood Program

Parent Handbook

2026-2027

WHO WE ARE

Childrenspace North is an early childhood program serving children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

OUR MISSION

Childrenspace North's mission is to create an environment where relationships are nurtured, differences are celebrated, challenges are seen as opportunities for growth, and children are happy.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Childrenspace North provides a progressive, play-based approach to education where community is central to our curriculum. Our educators use intentional, experiential, and developmentally appropriate practices to provide hands-on activities that promote learning in every area of development. Critical thinking and preacademic skills are woven into the fabric of everything we do. We meet each child at their developmental level and individualize our program while still meeting the needs of the whole classroom. We believe in providing structure, routine and boundaries in a safe, nurturing and fun environment where children are celebrated, feel valued, and part of the classroom community.

ADMISSION POLICY

Children will be admitted to Childrenspace North without regard to sex, race, color or country of origin. The Childrenspace North program is designed for children between the ages of 6 weeks and 5 years of age. Each child admitted will have a completed Admission Form, an Alternate Pick-up Form and a signed Tuition Agreement Contract on file. Also required are an up-to-date Medical Form and an Emergency Release Form.

As part of the registration process, parents of infants will fill out a Getting to Know You form. The purpose of this form is to provide a vehicle for parents to share important information about their child with the child's future teachers.

Each year, parents will review forms on file and any necessary changes made to keep information current. Parents will also be required to update medical forms annually.

HOURS

The Childrenspace North will operate from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Fridays. Childrenspace North operates on a year-round basis. It is closed for an average of ten to twelve holidays a year, a week over the Winter and Spring Break, and two weeks before Labor Day for staff vacations and building maintenance.

Daily Schedule

The Childrenspace North day is organized to include certain regularly scheduled activities and sufficient time for free choice periods. During the course of the day there are time periods set aside for snack, lunch, rest,

group activities, individual activities, indoor play, and outdoor play when weather permits. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and available upon request.

COMMUNICATION

We will provide each child in Rooms 2, 4, 5 and 8 with a Home/School communication notebook. Each day, information will be sent home in the notebook about eating, toileting and daily activities. An email including a classroom update and photos will be sent home at the end of each week to ALL classrooms. We welcome all communication from parents as we value the importance of the home/school connection. Please always feel free to reach out to us with questions, comments or concerns and we will return your call or email promptly.

DISCIPLINE

Each year, our students have the difficult task of learning and remembering many new rules and routines. It is up to the staff to remind them as often as possible of the rules and the reasons for those rules. We must make sure that the school is safe, both physically and emotionally, for all the children in our care.

If a child is not following a rule, he/she will be gently reminded of the rule and told the reason for it. If the child persists in not observing the rule, he/she will be removed from the difficult situation for a few minutes and his/her energy channeled into a more acceptable activity.

Discipline is not carried out in a punitive way. It is rather our attempt to guide the child to more appropriate behavior; it is our attempt to teach. At all times, the child's positive self-image is considered most important, and is carefully supported.

A child whose behavior is injurious to self and/or others may be discharged from Childrenspace North at the discretion of the Director.

Childrenspace North will work closely with parents and caregivers to prevent discharge from our program. We view ourselves as partners in your child's education and development and understand the importance of consistency for very young children. Childrenspace North recognizes that some children's individual needs may require a higher level of support and understanding from our staff. Any strategies or behavior plans developed for a specific child will be discussed with parents and caregivers to develop a plan that promotes success and consistency across environments. We also recognize that some children may have outside related therapists working with them (i.e., physical therapist, speech therapist, etc.) All related service providers are welcome in our program. We will work closely with children, families and relevant professionals in order to maintain open lines of communication, use shared language and promote consistency and expectations of behavior.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance to our program. All verbal and written information shall remain confidential and will not be discussed or shared with any individual, other than relevant Childrenspace North staff, without explicit written permission from the parent or caregiver.

FEES

Childrenspace North will operate on a space-reserved basis. At the time of registration, the child's schedule and weekly fee will be determined. Parents will sign a Tuition Agreement form to pay the determined amount on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis, regardless of the child's attendance. There will be no reduction in your child's tuition if she/he is absent due to illness, family vacation or religious observance. Tuition will also not be reduced for school closings, whether scheduled holidays or weather or emergency-related events (i.e. COVID-19 exposure or quarantine). A schedule of school holidays will be distributed in September.

Childrenspace North offers flexible scheduling. We require a minimum of 14 hours per week (2, 7-hour days) so that your child will benefit from our classroom community and more easily learn the routine of the day. You may choose a 2-, 3- or 5-day schedule. If your child attends Childrenspace North between 14 and 28 hours per week, tuition will be $14.50 per hour; if your child attends Childrenspace North between 29 and 34 per week, tuition will be $13.50 per hour; if your child attends Childrenspace North for 35 or more hours per week, tuition will be $12.50 per hour.

There will be a 10% late fee charged for any tuition balances that are a week or more late. If a parent has extenuating circumstances or needs a different due date than what has been established at the beginning of care, please email or call the program directors to let them know.

# Of Hours	Price Per Hour
14 - 28 hours per week (minimum)	$14.50
29 - 34 hours per week	$13.50
35+ hours per week	$12.50

There will be no registration fee. Payments are due on the first day of the month incurred, or on a date agreed upon by the director and parent/caregiver. Payments will be processed through an online tuition program called ProCare. If needed, payments may also be made in cash, check or via Venmo. All tuition payments must be made on time.

When checks are returned to the Center due to insufficient funds, a $15.00 fee will be charged.

In the case where two or three siblings are enrolled at Childrenspace North, the largest fee will be paid in full while the remaining fee(s) will be discounted by 10%.

UPK Fees:

There is no fee for the UPK regular program hours from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Childrenspace North offers early care and extended day for a fee. Parents will sign a Tuition Agreement form to pay the determined amount on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, regardless of the child's attendance. There will be no reduction in your child's tuition if she/he is absent due to illness, family vacation or religious observance. Tuition will also not be reduced for school closings, whether scheduled holidays or weather or emergency-related events. A schedule of school holidays will be distributed at the startof each year.

Early Arrival and Extended Day Hours	Price Per Week
Early Arrival: Monday-Friday, 7:30-8:30	**$75.00/week flat rate**
Extended Day: Monday-Friday, 1:30-4:30	**$225.00/week flat rate**
Additional Hour Extension until 5:30	**$75.00/week flat rate**

WAITLIST

If all of the spaces in the classroom appropriate for your child are filled, we can put your child's name on a waitlist for the next available spot. At that time, we will ask that you fill out a tuition agreement and submit a $500 deposit. Your deposit is fully refundable up to 90-days before your child's start date and after that it is nonrefundable. The deposit will go towards your child's first month of tuition.

OCCASIONAL CHANGES IN SCHEDULING

If, on an occasional basis, parents need to add hours or days to their child's schedule, requests should be made as far in advance as possible. If requests can be accommodated, additional hours will be charged at the child's regular tuition rate.

If your child misses a day of school on their scheduled day/s, you may request a make-up day/s within that same week. This can only be offered based on availability within your child's class as we must maintain the ratios according to our NYS license.

If there are any changes in the child's routine (different hours one day, different time of pick-up, different person than usual picking up), such information must be verbally discussed with your child's teacher and also emailed to the directors before or on the morning when these changes occur.

PERMANENT CHANGES IN SCHEDULING

If for any reason the parents' scheduling needs change, Childrenspace North requires a **30-day notification** in writing to amend or nullify the fee agreement. If notice is not provided, Childrenspace North will hold the parents responsible for one month of payment.

BREAKFAST, SNACKS AND LUNCH

Childrenspace North works hard to ensure a breakfast and snack menu which includes a variety of fresh, healthy foods (i.e., produce that is in season) while still incorporating familiar favorites.

Breakfast is served between 7:00 and 8:30 a.m. daily and is provided by Childrenspace North. It consists of cold cereal, yogurt and/or milk.

Childrenspace North will provide snacks twice a day. At this time, the children may choose from a fresh fruit or vegetable, yogurt, cheese, etc. and a "crunchy snack" like crackers, pretzels or veggie straws. The snack will change daily. Weekly snack menus are available upon request.

Parents are responsible for preparing an adequate and nutritious lunch for their child. Suggestions for lunch include a source of protein and/or yogurt, cheese, pasta or a sandwich, a piece of fresh fruit or a fresh vegetable and milk/water. The quantity of food sent will be determined by the number of hours the child is in our care and the size of his/her appetite. We respectfully request that you leave all sweets at home.

Childrenspace North values the importance of promoting healthy eating choices and habits. We will always encourage children to try new food items. Likewise, we will never force a child to eat something they adamantly oppose; this includes items sent from home. Please send items that you know your child will eat, in addition to any new items you would like us to encourage her/him to try. Lunchtime is viewed as a time to eat, as well as, a time to socialize, promote language and a sense of community.

Childrenspace North will happily heat up food but actual cooking is not an option. If there are perishables in the lunchbox (yogurt, cheese, tuna fish, etc.) refrigeration is available. Parents should inform the teacher that such is required.

Infants will be provided with school snacks that have been approved by parents or caregivers after 1-year of age. The youngest infants, who are still on formula/breast milk only, will only be given formula/breast milk provided by parents or caregivers. We ask that parents first try all new foods at home before we give them to a child at school.

DROP-OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES

The transitions into and out of school can be challenging for many young children. After having observed parents and children at pick-up and drop-off time over the years, we have some tips that we think may be helpful to you at this delicate time.

When you drop-off your child, it is important to say goodbye. Allowing the child to have a clear understanding of the transition provides a sense of safety and routine and shows the child that you trust the care in which you are leaving them. The Childrenspace North staff is there to help transition your child into the school day.

We will talk them through it, provide a nurturing experience while redirecting and engaging them in an activity.

When you come for your child, please be aware that they may be involved in an activity, may need to clean up or may want a few minutes to collect gear and say goodbye to friends. If other children accompany you at pick-up time, we respectfully ask that you keep them under your supervision at all times. Thank you in advance.

We are a very mobile group. We like to take advantage of our location at the Temple to visit the playgrounds, walk around the grounds or surrounding area. If we are out when you come to pick up your child, there will be a note on the front door telling you where we are and when we will return.

Please do not allow your child to exit from the Center alone at any time.

Please do not send an older sibling to pick up your child. We will not release children to other children.

It is the parent's responsibility to see that the child is picked up by 6:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 5:00 p.m. on Fridays. In case of a last-minute emergency where parent or guardian was planning on picking up the child but cannot, the following procedure will be followed: Parent will call or email the Center as soon as possible to designate either a person on the Alternate Pick-up Form, or a substitute pick-up person for that day. When picking up, the person must be able to provide appropriate identification and/or a password agreed upon in advance between parent, pick-up person and teacher.

No child will be released to a person other than the parent or guardian unless designated by the parent or guardian verbally or in writing. We will not release a child to any undesignated person.

BIRTHDAYS

We love celebrating birthdays at Childrenspace North. Usually, parents bring some special treats and we share it as an afternoon snack. If you would like to celebrate a birthday, please ask the teacher how many children will be present on that particular day.

CONFERENCES

Conferences with parents will be scheduled on an annual or as-needed basis. At this time, observations on your child's adjustment to and development within the program will be discussed. In addition to these formal conferences, we are always available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child.

PLANS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY IN CASE OF FIRE OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION:

The Director will conduct monthly fire and emergency drills to acquaint children with the evacuation procedure and the location of exits from the building. In case of an actual fire, children will be evacuated from the building and will meet on the Grassy Hill. Our fire alarm is hooked up to the Central Station; agents there will notify the local fire department. Parents will be called to come and pick up their children. If an off-site emergency evacuation of the outside grounds area is required, the children will be sheltered at a nearby residential home located at 215 Hessian Hills Road, Croton on Hudson, NY 10520. Teachers will remain with the children until all of them have been safely picked up.

IN CASE OF WEATHER EMERGENCY:

The Director will conduct bi-annual "shelter-in-place" drills to acquaint children with the procedure, in case of extreme weather.

IN CASE OF A RADIOLOGICAL EVENT AT INDIAN POINT

A Westchester County Radiological Emergency Preparedness Plan (REP) has been created in the event of a radiological emergency at the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, New York. The plan covers a range of possible procedures to protect children in public and private schools and facilities within the ten-mile Emergency Preparedness Zone (the EPZ). The Westchester County Executive, acting in conjunction with both the Westchester County Office of Emergency Management (WCOEM), and the Westchester County Commissioner of Health, will be responsible for issuing directives, depending upon the timing of the event, and its severity. Notification of a radiological event may come in the form of the Siren System, or a phone call from a representative of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS), the agency that licenses Childrenspace North. These signals are designed as prompts for Program Directors to monitor the Emergency Alert Radio System in place for detailed information on the emergency at Indian Point and what actions will need to be taken.

GENERAL HEALTH POLICY

All teachers shall have pre-employment physical examinations and regular reviews by a responsible health source. All children shall have accurate and current health records, including allergies and special medications, on file at the Center.

ILLNESS AND MEDICATION

The decision of when to send a sick child to school and when to keep her/him home is often a sensitive and difficult one. While we appreciate the parent's need to work, we are also very conscious of our responsibility to safeguard the health of the larger group. In that spirit of appreciating both viewpoints, we hereby set forth certain guidelines that may help you in making a safe decision. In general, a child with a mild illness, such as a cold or a treated ear infection, can remain in the childcare setting if the child is well enough to participate and manage the expectations of the day.

There are certain times when a sick child should stay at home:

1. When the child's condition compromises the health and safety of others.
2. When there is a fever. Children must remain at home during the course of a fever. Children must remain home until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. A child may return to school after being fever-free for 24 hours or after missing one full school day, whichever is longer. (Fever means temperature by ear of 100.4 degrees or more.)
3. When a child shows signs of not feeling well, and cannot fully participate in the school program.
4. When the child requires one-on-one care.

5. When a child has a special condition that a healthcare consultant has advised may put him or her at increased risk from a contagious disease.

6. Until a medical evaluation allows inclusion, signs and symptoms of possible illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, persistent abdominal pain, discolored urine, change in appetite, unusual irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, an undiagnosed rash, stiff neck or other unusual signs.

7. Persistent diarrhea, defined as two or more loose stools in 24 hours. A child may return to school after being symptom-free for 24 hours or after missing one full school day, whichever is longer.

8. Vomiting one or more times in the previous 24-hour period, or any vomiting accompanied by symptoms of dehydration or other signs of illness. A child may return to school after being symptom-free for 24 hours or after missing one full school day, whichever is longer.

9. The presence of lice or live nits.

10. Any combination of the above symptoms (e.g., vomiting accompanied by diarrhea)

11. In case of a diagnosed condition, please follow the guidelines below:

a. Chicken pox (a note from the health care provider saying it is safe to return)

b. Impetigo (a note from the health care provider saying it is safe to return)

c. Infectious conjunctivitis or "pink eye" (until 24 hours after treatment begins)

d. Lice (until no visible lice or live nits)

e. Ringworm (until treatment begins)

f. Scabies (until treated)

g. Strep throat/scarlet fever (until 24 hours after treatment begins or after missing one full school day, whichever is longer.)

h. Influenza (until fever and other symptoms have subsided. A child may return to school after being fever and symptom-free for 24 hours or after missing one full school day, whichever is longer.)

If your child becomes ill, please advise Childrenspace North immediately. Childrenspace North will likewise inform parents of the presence of any communicable illness in the group, its common symptoms and general treatment.

If a child becomes ill while at Childrenspace North, his or her parent or guardian will be notified immediately and asked to pick up the child. Parents must be able to designate an alternate pick-up person if they are unable to pick up the child within one hour. While the child is awaiting pick up, she or he will be removed from the larger group and offered rest and quiet activities. Since Childrenspace North is a well child only facility, the following conditions will necessitate sending a child home because of illness:

1. When the child's condition compromises the health and safety of others.
2. When the child has a tympanic (ear) temperature of 100.4 degrees or more.
3. When the child shows signs of not feeling well, and cannot fully participate in the school program.
4. When the child exhibits signs and symptoms of possible illness.
5. Persistent diarrhea, defined as more than two loose stools during the school day.
6. Vomiting once in the school day.
7. The presence of lice or live nits.
8. Any combination of the above symptoms, (e.g., vomiting accompanied by diarrhea).

The Childrenspace North program is authorized to administer medications. If your child requires any medication to be administered at school, directors will provide more information. All medication both over the counter and prescribed requires proper

COVID-19

At this time, Childrenspace North will follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC, OCFS and our health consultants. Should any changes be made to our guidelines, parents will be notified in writing.

IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

One or more teachers in every classroom is CPR certified and First Aid trained. Such training is updated as required. First-aid supplies, with directions for administration, are readily available.

In case of a medical emergency, the following procedure will be followed:

- Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, the next person on the notification list will be contacted, as will the child's physician.
- The Director will secure first aid or emergency medical care.
- If transportation of an injured child is necessary before the parent arrives, the police will be called to provide ambulance service to Phelps Memorial Hospital in Tarrytown. If the injury is not life threatening, parents can request transportation to an alternate medical facility.
- The Director or a teacher will accompany the child in the ambulance and bring to the hospital the emergency permission release form and medical form from the Center records.

IN CASE OF CHILD ABUSE OR MALTREATMENT

All teachers have received training to help them identify signs of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as neglect and malfeasance of the children in their care. Under Social Services Law, teachers in early childhood programs are designated as mandated reporters of child abuse and/or maltreatment. If a teacher,

acting in his/her professional capacity, has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused or maltreated, he/she must make a report to the New York State Mandated Reporters Hotline. The purpose of the mandatory reporting statute is to identify suspected abused and maltreated children as soon as possible so that those children can be protected from further harm and, where appropriate, can be offered services to assist their families.

SCHOOL CLOSING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

Childrenspace North will generally, but not always, follow the Croton-Harmon School District's policy on school delays or closings due to inclement weather. We will inform parents of our decision on delays, early dismissals and closings via text, ProCare system or email as early in the morning of the day in question as we can.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Address:	31 Glengary Road Croton on Hudson, NY 10520
Center:	(914) 271-4705, ext. 9
E-mail:	childrenspacenorth@gmail.com