
Rye Playschool

“Where Children Learn Through Play”

2020-2021

Parent Handbook

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Rye Council For Childcare, Inc.



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Rye Playschool Philosophy

The Rye Playschool is a non-profit, non-denominational playschool for children 6 months to 4+ years of age located in the heart of Rye, NY. Our goals as teachers and educators are to ensure a happy, joyful and safe experience for each and every child. In addition, we strive to:

- Consistently care for the children in the most loving and attentive way we can
- Display sensitivity to children's needs both individually and in a group setting
- Always treat children with respect
- Meet the emotional, physical, social and cognitive needs of each child
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment in a relaxed setting
- Encourage children to explore their classroom environment and learn through their experiences
- Conduct ourselves professionally, acting as proper role models for small children
- To help children find pleasure and confidence in developing new skills

While accomplishing the above, we can foster the cognitive and social development of each child through fun activities and group projects that are lovingly guided by our early childhood professionals.



The Rye Playschool History

The Rye Playschool has been in existence since the fall of 1982. It began with the intention of providing high quality childcare to Rye and its neighboring communities. Although it has grown tremendously in size, it has remained true to its original intent. A playschool by nature, it has served close to 3,000 children in its history, providing programming for children six months through four+ years of age.

The Playschool is unique in that mothers of small children not eligible for nursery school can register for quality early childhood programming one or more days per week. Many families begin their child's early school experience with us, some supplement our program with another program, and some continue on until they go on to elementary school. Our program provides enrichment for younger and older children. All of our activities lend to stimulating growth physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively. We believe children learn through their interactions with peers and teachers and that play is the universal language of young children. We encourage children to explore their classroom environment, and encourage them to touch, feel, smell, hear, and explore their surroundings. We work closely with our families to incorporate them into our bigger Rye Playschool family.

The Rye Playschool is staffed by a full time Director and eight teachers. We provide morning sessions from 8:50-11:20 and an afternoon Lunch Bunch session for three, four, and five year olds.

Our Staff

The staff at Rye Playschool is made up of caring, competent individuals. Children at Rye Playschool are offered ample opportunities to develop their natural curiosity and creativity through exploration and discovery, guided by caring teachers who cultivate these moments for lasting understanding. Many of our teachers are certified by the Early Childhood Certificate Program at SUNY Purchase. All our teachers participate in in-service training and workshops. They are certified in Child/Infant CPR and First Aid. The Playschool is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, as well as the Westchester Association. We are proud of our staff. Combined together they have **150** years of experience.



Separation and Orientation

Before school begins in September, your child will be invited by their teacher to visit their classroom. During the month of August you will also receive an individual orientation schedule. When school begins your child's schedule will be specific to their age group and their individual needs.

Each child will be different during the separation process. We believe that through this adjustment period children gain important skills; self-confidence, coping skills, and the ability to be independent. You will be working very closely with the child's teacher and at times you may be asked to remain in the classroom a bit longer than anticipated, or asked to pick your child up a bit earlier. Working together with you, we can help him or she build trust and grasp the concept of your return.

Never sneak away without saying goodbye. Say goodbye and leave quickly. If your child cries it is usually subsides quickly.

Please feel free to talk with the Director about your own child at any given time during this process.

Communications

Excellent communication between our teachers and parents is an important goal for our staff. Please feel free to call your child's teacher or the Director to share information or discuss a problem. Our teachers are in school by 8:30 A.M. and can be reached either then or after dismissal at 12:00/2:30 P.M. to have discussions. Yvonne Zuk can be reached at any time during regular school hours by calling the Playschool at 967-6334 and leaving a message (Ext. 223) or emailing her at info@ryeplayschool.com

Your child's art work and projects as well as certain communications from the Director or teacher will go home directly with your child at pick-up.



Arrival and Dismissal

The school day begins at 8:50 a.m. for the morning classes. We ask that you do not bring the children before that time, as your teachers need those minutes to prepare for the day. Our teachers wish to give each child a special greeting as they enter the room. Those first few minutes are so important for the readiness of the day

Dismissal time is at 11:20 a.m. **Please be on time to pick up your children.** Our 11:20 pick up times are especially important because of our afternoon program. Teachers have only 15 minutes to clean up and sanitize from morning activities and set up for the afternoon Lunch Bunch program where they join the children for lunch. If you are late picking up, please contact the office. Children will wait with the Director in the main office until a parent or guardian arrives.

School Pick-Up

Unless we have a written note from a parent or guardian, **we will not allow a child to leave school with anyone other than the person(s) listed on the “Pick-Up” Permission Form.** This includes those occasions when a child is to go home with another child in the school. A note or email is required.



Traffic Guidelines

Please follow the following traffic pattern when entering and leaving the school grounds. Enter on the Milton Road drive and exit on the Parson's Street drive. The church and school have gone to a great deal of expense to provide adequate parking for parents in the three lots adjacent to the playground. Please park your car facing the traffic island and **walk along the island to the crosswalk**. Follow the sidewalk to the entrance of the school. **Parents and children should NOT walk in the parking lot.** All parking spaces in front of the school entrance are designated for the 35 staff members of the Rye Playschool and RPNS programs. This is a safety issue and will also minimize cars backing out into the flow of traffic exiting to Parsons Street. Please exit straight onto Parsons Street, without turning right along the church parking area. All parking along the church drive is reserved for church business and church staff parking.

All drivers must accompany their children to their classroom entrances at drop off. All Playschool entrances are in the Grape Arbor area of the Church. A Rye Playschool administrator will be ready to accept your child for a health screening; temperature check (no higher than 100 degrees) and a health questionnaire must be completed. Shortly after, your child's teacher will welcome and escort students through the classroom entrance. At pick up, as you leave the dismissal area, please do not allow children to run ahead of you, out the front door or into the parking lot, unaccompanied.

We must always be aware of the traffic at arrival and dismissal time. A staff member will be at the door to help your little one to hold a grown-ups hand. **ONCE OUTSIDE, PLEASE USE THE CROSS WALKS AND PATHS ON THE TRAFFIC ISLANDS WHEN WALKING TO YOUR CAR.** This, too, will greatly help reduce any possible safety hazard. Preschoolers are difficult to see if they are walking in the parking lot. As you drive from the parking lot, please remember to anticipate the unexpected, and **DRIVE SLOWLY!!** Thank you for your cooperation.



Your Child's Health

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. Upon enrollment, you must file a health form with us signed by a physician. The law requires that each have certain standard immunizations and a tuberculin clearance. Please use consideration and common sense when determining if your child is well enough to attend school.

Please keep your child at home if he or she:

- Has a fever (above 100.0) or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- Has a cold that is less than 3 days old.
- Has a heavy, cloudy nasal discharge.
- Has a constant cough.
- Has infectious diarrhea (several loose stools).
- Has infectious conjunctivitis (crusty eyes, oozing eyes, reddened eyes).
- Has Strep Throat (may return the second day after treatment)
- Has symptoms of a possible communicable disease. These are usually sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache, abdominal pain, plus a fever.

Please notify the school right away if your child has the following illness:

- COVID-19
- Strep Throat
- Chicken Pox
- Influenza
- Head Lice
- Fifth Disease
- Coxsackie

*Please note that classes are subject to quarantine due to outbreaks of both COVID-19 and influenza.

Your Child's Health Continued:

Your child **may come** to school if:

- They have **NO** symptoms listed above.
- A doctor's note is provided to the school that states a child is healthy and ready for a return to school.
- If there has been an exposure to a communicable disease, but the school has been notified, the incubation period has been discussed, and it has been determined on what dates your child should stay home, as to not infect others.

Your child **should not** be brought to school if:

- They are fussy, cranky, or generally out of sorts. This generally means that something is about to start and rest, at such times, may prevent the development of a more serious illness.

In Case of Life Threatening Emergency:

We will call 911 immediately, initiating emergency contact with the Rye Police, who will in turn call for an ambulance to respond and to transport the child, depending on the severity, to Greenwich Hospital, White Plains Hospital, Westchester County Medical Center in Valhalla, or Sound Shore Hospital in New Rochelle. A faculty member will accompany the child to the hospital. The parent's child will be notified. If the parent cannot be reached, the Playschool will notify the people on the emergency list.

In Case of Non-Life Threatening Accidents or Injury:

In case of accidental injury that is non-life threatening, but serious, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent, then emergency contact(s). If we are unable to reach any of the above, we will call the child's physician. It is imperative that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers, emails and other pertinent information.



Rye Playschool COVID-19 Health Policies and Procedures:

Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19 RPNS Community Members Should Become Familiar With:

These are the signs of illness staff and families will be instructed to observe in students and staff:

- New onset of cough
- Worsening chronic cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- New loss or decrease in sense of taste and smell
- Hoarse voice
- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Unexplained fatigue or malaise
- Difficulty swallowing
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain

Precautions to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19:

- Rye Playschool faculty members will undergo daily health screenings (outside) by administrators (dressed in full PPE) that will include temperature checks (must not be over 100.0 degrees F) and health questionnaires that will be logged each day.
- Daily health screenings will take place before a child is accepted to his/her class at arrival time. Temperature check (must not be over 100.0 degrees F) and a health questionnaire completed by the parent/caregiver is required each day prior to drop off. Daily health screening information will be logged.

Health questionnaire questions include:

- Have you/your child had any COVID-19 symptoms in the past 14 days? (New onset of cough, worsening chronic cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, fever, new loss or decrease in sense of smell, hoarse voice, chills, headache unexplained fatigue, difficulty swallowing, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain)

- Have you/your child tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- Have you/your child had close contact or proximate contact with anyone with respiratory illness or confirmed or probable suspected case of COVID-19?
- Have you/ your child traveled or had close contact with someone who traveled within the past 14 days?
- Are you/your child currently under a 14 day quarantine?

If a faculty member, visitor, or student does not pass the health screening, he/she will be sent home immediately and be required to report the outcome after a doctor's visit.

Handwashing practices (soap and warm water) for at least 20 seconds will take place several times throughout the school day (entering building, before/after center play, before/after snack time, before/after bathroom use, conclusion of the day).

A hand washing schedule is created to minimize the amount of children in a bathroom at one time. It will ensure that each class will have different hand washing times. Signage will be available in the building to remind employees and students that this is an important part of the daily routine. Songs & videos will be shared with students about the importance of handwashing.

Hand sanitizer (alcohol based) in the form of automatic dispensers and antibacterial hand wipes will be provided to students and faculty throughout the class day.

Cough Etiquette is recommended by having students and faculty cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Tissues that are used should be disposed of in the garbage and the individual should wash hands immediately after.

Cohort classrooms (children that stay together and do not mix with others) are created to prevent co-mingling of classes. Each cohort class that is designed will consist of a smaller class size. The classes will stay with one another each day and will not mix with other classes that are in session at the same time.

Face Coverings will be required for staff and students (except students under the age of 2). Face covering breaks (pulling face covering down below the chin) will be offered when social distancing is being implemented. Disposable face coverings will be made available to all Playschool faculty and students. Parents should label student face coverings by name.

Rye Playschool COVID-19 Health Policies and Procedures Continued:

Social distancing practices will be encouraged. Playschool classroom spaces have been redesigned with less furniture and additional centers areas where children can engage appropriately with the opportunity to social distance to the best of their ability. Face coverings will be required when children are engaging in play that does not model social distancing.

Frequently used school supplies (scissors, markers, crayons, glue sticks) will be packaged individually and labeled for each student to prevent sharing of these preschool desirable materials.

Each class is assigned a class bathroom and specific toilet to use to prevent the spread of germs. A small limited number of students will be allowed in bathrooms at one time and social distancing will be reinforced.

Proper ventilation in classrooms is provided through fresh outdoor air. Our large classroom windows offer fresh air breezes that invite the outdoors in!

Routine cleaning will take place throughout the classroom day. A water/bleach solution (one tablespoon of bleach per quart of water) will be used to clean classroom furniture, toys, and frequently touched surfaces (door knobs, countertops, light switches). A deep cleaning will take place in between a.m. and p.m. sessions, as well as, in the evening. An electrostatic disinfectant sprayer will be used during times children are not occupying the school building at the end of the day. The cleaning solution for the sprayer will be a light bleach and water solution that is proven to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All cleaning times will be documented and filed.

Outdoor/playground time will be staggered by a class schedule to ensure that each class will be able to have outdoor time one class at a time. Playground areas will be cleaned by custodians after each class use.

Parents and faculty members should communicate any travel plans to other parts of the country or outside of the United States to the teachers and Director. It must be communicated if you have traveled to areas where COVID-19 contains hotspots. If any family or faculty members travel to an area that contains hotspots, they must self-quarantine according to the amount of time suggested by the State of New York.

Covid-19 Policies and Procedures Adapted by Rye Playschool:

If a student, family member of a student, Rye Playschool faculty member, or family member of a faculty member comes in contact with anyone that has tested positive for COVID-19 or tests positive themselves, it is imperative that you report this to the Rye Playschool Director, Yvonne Zuk, immediately.

Confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 will remain confidential and specific names of individuals will not be shared with the Playschool community.

If a positive case of COVID-19 (student, student family member, faculty member, faculty family member) has been confirmed by a medical professional, Rye Playschool will do the following:

- Rye Playschool administrators will immediately notify the Westchester County Health.
- Confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 will remain confidential and specific names of individuals will not be shared with the RPNS community.
- Rye playschool will immediately notify the Westchester County Health Department and follow the recommended health and safety protocols. Names will remain confidential.
- Anyone in contact with the infected individual in the past 10-14 days will be contacted through the Rye playschool director along with possible contact tracers and will be asked to self-quarantine. This self-quarantine will be determined by the Westchester County Department of Health.
- Rye playschool will remain closed for the recommended quarantine period provided by the Westchester County Department of Health. The school will undergo a deep clean of the entire school building to ensure the virus does not spread.

If a student or faculty member becomes ill and develops symptoms of COVID-19 throughout a school day:

- The individual will be placed in isolation away from others. No one will be allowed within that space during that time with the exception of the school director dressed in full PPE
- Emergency contacts will be informed of illness and a medical visit will be suggested for the individual to identify illness.
- The isolation area will be deep cleaned and disinfected immediately after the symptomatic individual leaves the premises.
- Parents of the child or faculty member that has become ill will inform Rye Playschool if they have tested positive or negative for COVID-19.

Rye Playschool COVID-19 Health Policies and Procedures Continued:

All potential or active COVID-19 related illnesses will be fully documented and kept in a file.

Rye Playschool encourages families not to place stigma on any individual that might contract COVID-19 within our school community. We ask that faculty and families provide and participate in positive support systems for families or individuals that come in contact with the virus.

Parents will be provided with a consent form that states that Rye Playschool is not to be held responsible for anyone who contracts COVID-19 while enrolled at the school. Consent forms must be signed prior to the first day of school.

Supporting and Protecting High Risk Category Employees, Students, and Family Members:

Rye Playschool is dedicated to support employees and students that have chosen to attend Rye Playschool for the upcoming school year in the high risk health category (or have someone that lives with them that is high risk).

- An updated medical examination is required by both employees and students before the start of the school year.
- Parents will be required to share any high risk concerns about their child or person living in the same home that is high risk before the start of school. This will be documented by parents in school forms that are required to be completed before the start of school.
- Any students attending Rye Playschool that are considered high risk, will be highlighted on the school's allergy/medical needs list that will be shared with Rye playschool administrators and classroom teachers.
- If at any time a Rye Playschool parent with a high risk child or family member has decided not to send their child to Rye Playschool, this decision will be respected by Rye Playschool administrators and staff.



Security

Security is a top priority at Rye Playschool. All entries to the school building remain locked throughout the school day. Our security monitor is present at the front entrance of the school at all times. During arrival and dismissal, the security monitor will open the doors to greet families. Outside of arrival and dismissal times, anyone visiting during the school day must sign-in with the security monitor and wear a visitor tag. **Safety is everyone's responsibility. Please be vigilant and report any suspicious or unusual situations to the front office immediately. Never leave a child unattended in the car.**

Safety

The safety of your child is always our utmost concern. It is for this reason that we ask you to follow the traffic pattern and parking regulations previously described. As stated earlier, children must be accompanied to their classroom door and never dropped off at the school's front door. The children know they must use "WALKING FEET" in the hall, so please help us keep this policy constant by not allowing them to run in the hallways.

Food Allergies

Food Allergies should be noted on the Child History and Medical Forms. In order to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all students, Rye Playschool is a "Peanut Free" environment. If medication or an Epi-pen is necessary to have on hand in the school, there will be some additional paper work for you to have filled out by your physician and it will be kept in the office.

Snow Days/Emergency Dismissals

Generally we follow the Rye City School Districts decisions. If the RCSD is closed, Playschool will be closed. If RCSD has a one hour delay, Playschool will open at 10:00am. If Rye has a two hour delay, Playschool will open at 10:30 am. We send out a blast e-mail as soon as a decision to close or delay school is made.

Playground

Our playground is for the enjoyment of children attending both our program and RPNS. Please make sure your children have the appropriate seasonal foot wear - closed toe rubber soled shoes are best; **no crocs, sandals or flip-flops**. Please watch for signs which will indicate when the playground is available for afterhours use.

Snack

For any children requiring a sippy cup or bottle we ask that you provide one from home and make sure that it is **labeled with your child's name**. For those children capable of using a regular cup we will provide cups for water and a snack. Please advise your child's teacher of any food allergies that your child may have.

Clothing and Supplies

An extra **seasonal** change of clothing in a zip-lock bag is helpful to have on hand for your child. The best place to keep this is in your child's back pack. **Please label both the bag and the clothing**. We ask that you donate 2 packages of wipes to your child's classroom to be used throughout the year.

Conferences

There will be an opportunity for you to conference with your child's teachers during the school year. The first conference time will be in January and the second in March if requested by a teacher or parent. A letter will go home via your child's back pack and a sign-up sheet will be posted outside of your child's classroom.

Tuition and Refund Policies

Payment

A \$500.00 registration fee will be collected at the time of registration. \$400.00 will be credited towards the second half of the tuition bill. The first payment of tuition is due May 1; the second half is due by October 1st. The registration fee is non-refundable. At the time of registration you will receive an information sheet as well as contracts that reflect our entire refund policy.

Refund Policy

At the time of registration each family must sign and return a copy of our contract. Our refund policy is stated on this contract. One copy of the contract the family retains for their records.

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