



# The Chapel School

## 2022-2023 Parent Handbook

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# Table of Contents

<b>School Information</b>	<b>Page</b>
• Staff.....	3
• Philosophy.....	3
• Discrimination Statement.....	3
• Chapel Board.....	4
• State License.....	4
• Programs.....	4
<b>Financial Matters</b>	
• Registration.....	5
• Monthly Tuition.....	5
• Other Options.....	5
• Discounts.....	6
• Late Fees.....	6
• Late Pick-Ups.....	6
• Returned Checks.....	6
<b>Program Operations</b>	
• Start of School.....	6
• Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures.....	6
• Attendance.....	7
• Clothing.....	7
• Parking Lot Safety.....	7
• Personal Toys.....	8
• Holiday Celebrations.....	8
• Birthdays.....	9
• Parent/Teacher Conferences.....	9
• Snacks.....	9
<b>Communications</b>	
• Chapel Newsletter.....	9
• Classroom Updates.....	9
• Notices.....	9
• Bulletin Boards.....	9
• Website/Facebook.....	9
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
• Parent Volunteers.....	10
• Fieldtrips.....	10
• Photographs & Publicity.....	10
• School Calendar.....	10
<b>School Closings/Delays</b>	
• School Closing/Delay.....	10
• Unexpected Cancellations.....	10

<b>Policies</b>	<b>Page</b>
• Child Guidance.....	11
• Referral.....	12
• Termination.....	12
• Toileting Plan.....	12 & 13
• Withdrawal.....	13
<b>Procedures and Plans for Health Care &amp; Emergencies</b>	
• Emergency Telephone Numbers.....	13
• Emergencies and Illness.....	13
• Evacuation of School.....	13
• Injury Prevention.....	13
• Managing Infectious Diseases.....	14
• Infection Control.....	14
• Meeting Individual Needs of Mildly Ill Children.....	14
• Administering Medication.....	14
• Meeting Specific Healthcare Needs.....	15
• Identifying and Reporting to DCF.....	15



# The Chapel School

## Staff

Cindy Mazella, Director

Roberta Jurovich, Office Manager

### **OUR TEACHING STAFF**

Kristina Bertolami

Simone Bradley

Leslie Buresh

Jayne Downing

Cindy Duma

Susan Ginchereau

Donna Guilmette

Mary Kazis

Carrie King

Janna Mansour

Heather Snow

The Chapel Staff are all licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education & Care (EEC). Each staff member is Lead Teacher or Teacher qualified and First Aid & CPR Certified. Staff training and professional development are an ongoing process. The teachers all participate in workshops and courses throughout the year related to Early Childhood Curriculum and Child Development.

## Philosophy

Chapel is committed to providing a warm and caring learning environment where children can grow and develop self-confidence and self-expression in a school setting.

Our primary goal is to foster in each child a positive attitude toward school and learning.

## Discrimination Statement

The Chapel School employs a policy of non-discrimination in all of its services to children and their families. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability. Toilet Training is not an eligibility requirement.

## Chapel Board

The school's governing board is The Church Board. The Chapel Director reports monthly directly to the Board of Directors which includes the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee also meets monthly to track the school's finances and budget. They set tuition rates and recommend all financial policy for the school. The Chapel Office Manager prepares and reports monthly statements.

## State License

The Chapel School is licensed by the Department of Early Education & Care. This license is valid for two years and is subject to revocation, suspension or probation by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Parents may contact EEC for information, regarding the program's regulatory compliance history at 978-681-9684. The regional office is located 360 Merrimack St. Lawrence, MA 01844

## Program Offerings

- **TWO DAY:** (2.9 - 4 Years Old)
  - Tuesday & Thursday,
    - 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
    - 8:45 AM - 11:45 AM (*Classroom 1 only*)
- **THREE DAY:** (4 - 5 Years Old)
  - Monday, Wednesday & Friday
    - 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
    - 8:45 AM - 11:45 AM (*Classroom 1 only*)
    - 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
- **FIVE DAY:** (3 - 5 Years Old)
  - Monday - Friday
    - 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
    - 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
- **FIVE DAY PRE-K:** (5 Years Old *by December 31<sup>st</sup>*)
  - Monday - Friday
    - 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
    - 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
- **LUNCH BUNCH:** 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM
- **EARLY DROP OFF:** 7:30 AM
- **EXTENDED DAY:** Until 4:00 PM

# Financial Matters

## Registration

Registration is on a first-come, first serve basis. Completed forms and fees are taken beginning in January for the following school year. Being prompt will assure your child's placement, and choice of time slot.

- **Preschool & PreK Registration**

- A registration form completed and signed by the parent along with a \$75.00 non-refundable fee.

## Monthly Tuition

### **Half Day Preschool (8:30/8:45 – 11:30/11:45 AM)**

- 2 Days - \$220
- 3 Days - \$290
- 5 Days - \$345

### **Full Day Preschool (7:30 AM – 4:00 PM)**

- 2 Days - \$524
- 3 Days - \$746
- 5 Days - \$1,105

***Tuition is based on 10 payments made from September through June.*** Tuition is calculated as an annual fee. Because tuition is an annual fee no refunds are given for illness, vacations, or snow days, and those days are not made up.

## Additional Options

- Early Drop-off at 7:30 AM - \$12 per day
- Lunch Bunch until 2:00 PM - \$20 per day
- Extended Day until 4:00 PM - \$12 per hour/\$12-24 per day

*When you sign up for these additional options, those days become part of your monthly tuition as it holds your child's spot in the program. We do only charge for 4 weeks a month, even when there is a 5<sup>th</sup> week of days. The time usually evens out in the end. We do not offer credits for missed days due to sickness, holidays or any other reason. The only month that we do discount (only) these option's tuition is in June, where we only charge for 2 weeks instead of 4 weeks.*

***All Tuition is due the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month.***

Preferred method of payment is done electronically with automatic debit, through the Parent Portal or mailed. Please **do not allow** your child to hand carry the tuition to school and **do not** leave the tuition payment with your child's teacher.

*Note: we are a completely tuition-based school. We do not receive any funding or subsidies to support our program. We are solely dependent on tuition to run our school.*

***The success of the program depends on each and every prompt payment.***

## **Discounts**

- **Sibling\***
  - Tuition for two, or more, children from the same family will be: full tuition for the first child and 10% off tuition for the additional child(ren). The 10% is based on the lesser tuition and is discounted on the half day tuition only. One registration fee is required per family.
- **Full Year Payment\***
  - A full year payment of the tuition will be given a 5% discount. The tuition must be paid in full by September 30<sup>th</sup> to qualify. This discount only applies to half day tuition and does not apply to Lunch Bunch or extended day fees.

*\*Discounts cannot be combined.*

## **Late Payments**

Tuition is due monthly and payable the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Payments not made by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month will be assessed a \$30.00 late fee. Please be mindful that the 15<sup>th</sup> may fall on a weekend or a day your child does not attend school, so be sure to be prompt with the payment to avoid this fee.

## **Late Pick-Up**

Children need to be picked up promptly at dismissal time. Children can become anxious and worried when parents are late. A late fee will be assessed for children not picked up on time. Each additional 5 minutes will be assessed a \$5.00 fee.

## **Returned Checks**

There will be a charge of \$35.00 for all returned checks or declined payments. Any additional bank fees are the parent's responsibility.

# **Program Operations**

## **Start of School**

Parents should arrive no sooner than 8:25 AM, when the doors will open. Teachers are preparing the classrooms prior to this time.

## **Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedure**

Please be sure your child is on time for class and picked up promptly. Children need to be accompanied by an adult to ensure a safe arrival. Please stay with your child until you make contact with your child's teacher(s).

Please be on time to pick-up your child at dismissal. Parents are asked to wait outside their child's designated drop-off/pick-up door until the teacher is ready to dismiss all the children.

Only authorized adults are allowed to pick up children. Authorized adults are those who are listed on the authorization form in your child's file. If there is a change from the usual authorized person, please notify the teacher at arrival or call the Chapel School office at 978-689-8414.

If your child is to be picked up by another person not on the authorization form, please let us know in writing in advance. ID will be requested as we are very careful whom we release children to.

## **Attendance**

It is important for children to attend school on a regularly scheduled basis. Regular attendance develops a sense of belonging, a routine to a child's developing time frame and a sense of security and trust forms knowing that everyone has come to school that day.

***If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please call the Chapel School office at 978-689-8414.*** If you know in advance that your child will be unable to attend school, please inform the Chapel Office.

## **Clothing**

*Comfortable clothing and footwear are a must.* Children at this age are developing a new sense of independence and are less frustrated when they can move about being busy and involved without the fear of being inhibited by dressy clothes and restricted footwear. Play clothes and sneakers seem to work best for the many varied and "messy" activities that are part of the learning process at this age. Sandals should not be worn to school.

It is also important that clothing be as easy as possible for your child to manage in the bathroom. We don't want to inhibit their growing sense of independence. Outdoor clothing such as jackets, sweaters, hats, mittens, should be clearly **labeled** to avoid mix ups. Children become easily confused with similar jackets etc.

School bags or backpacks are helpful but not necessary. Children's papers, artwork & notices are stapled together to ensure that you receive everything. Please **label** school bags or backpacks too. It helps us to help them find their bags.

## **Parking Lot Safety**

The parking lot is a busy place and can be very dangerous for little ones. We want to ensure the safe arrival and departure of everyone.

Dismissal time can be very hectic, and we need to be mindful of a few safety rules as we exit the building. The parking lot can be a very dangerous place.

1. Always hold your child's hand.
2. Do Not let your child run out of the building alone. Children are quicker than the brakes on your car.
3. Do Not leave your child unattended in the car, near the car, or on the playground.
4. Do Not leave your car running unattended.
5. Do Not allow your child to run around the parking lot.
6. Please be mindful of the accessibility of the limited spaces and do not park in such a manner that others are blocked or unable to back out of a parking space.
7. Please use the Stevens Street entrance and exit on High Street.
8. Please share these rules with anyone else transporting your child.



## Personal Toys

Chapel discourages children from bringing toys from home to school. Our school cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys from home. We strongly advise you not to send your child to school with action figures or any other small toys.

## Holiday Celebrations

Chapel celebrates the following holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter. More information regarding these celebrations will be provided during the school year.

## Birthdays

Children enjoy celebrating their birthday at Chapel. Parents can speak directly to their child's teachers to arrange a day. A special treat can be sent in for all the children in the class. Please refer to the **Acceptable Snack List**, posted on our website, on the lobby Bulletin Board and in each classroom. Home baked products are not allowed in the classrooms. Store bought baked products are now labeled. **Please read the label before purchasing to be sure it is not made in a peanut or tree nut facility.** If your child's birthday is in the summer or during a vacation an "unbirthday" day can also be arranged. **DISTRIBUTING BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS FOR OUTSIDE PARTIES is only allowed if all the children in the class receive an invitation.**

## Parent/Teacher Conference

Progress reports & Portfolios are completed on each child twice a year, in January & May. Individual conferences with parents are scheduled in January.

At any other time, if a matter of interest or concern arises in your child's life, parents are encouraged to set up a meeting with their child's teachers.

## Snacks

Snacks are provided by Chapel. The children are given a variety of snacks. The menu includes milk or water along with crackers, a variety of fruits, vegetables, dip, cheese, & pretzels. Please be sure to feed your child breakfast. Please do not send your child to school chewing gum. Cooking projects are an important part of our curriculum also. We always eat what we've created. The children enjoy many new tasting experiences. If you have a suggestion for a healthy snack or birthday treat, please let us know.

Children with food allergies are always given another choice or asked to bring their own snack depending on the level of the allergy. Parents are asked to be mindful of food allergies when sending in birthday or holiday treats. Always check with the teachers to be sure. Please be sure to read the **Acceptable Snack List** posted on our bulletin board and website. *Please read all labels on cupcakes and treats to be sure they are not made in a facility that does not process any type of nuts.*

## **Chapel is a Peanut & Nut Free Center**

Additional handouts are sent home and posted on the Chapel Bulletin Board to raise awareness and inform parents on how to read labels.

Each classroom has a Snack Menu Calendar posted. The teachers document the snack served daily on this calendar. Parents can check this menu anytime.

# Communications

## Chapel Chatter Newsletter

The Chapel Chatter Newsletter is an overall program information source. This will be posted and emailed monthly.

## Classroom Updates

Classroom updates are also emailed to each family. This information keeps parents informed about curriculum and activities specific to their child's class.

## Notices

Many other notices are sent home as well. Please be sure to check your child's papers. Open communication is an important aspect in strengthening the home/school relationship. Keeping parents informed is very critical to open communication and the success of each child's progress and consistency at Chapel.

## Bulletin Boards

Chapel's bulletin board is located by the entrance stairs. Newsletters, notices, and current information is posted there, as well as sent to families. Parents often ask to post carpools, baby-sitting services, etc. Please speak to the Director before posting items. Thank you.

## Website/Facebook

Our Chapel School website ([chapelschoolmethuen.com](http://chapelschoolmethuen.com)) is another source of information. We are also on Facebook under *Chapel School Methuen*.

# Miscellaneous

## \*Parent Volunteers

Parents are welcome to assist the teachers in the classroom, or the school office for events. It is important to prearrange the day and time you can help so that we can make the most of your time. We can always use an extra pair of hands. If you have a special talent, please let us know.

## \*Fieldtrips

In house field trips are scheduled throughout the school year. Bringing the field trip to the children (fireman, police man, etc.) has proven very successful.

## Photographs & Publicity

We take many pictures of the children throughout the school year and are proud to display them for everyone to enjoy. Photographs capture many memorable moments of the children involved in daily activities. *Photographs will be taken and displayed for use within the school. Pictures could also be used for publicity, our website and social media. Permission to use your child's picture is granted by your signature on the photo section of the Family Information Sheet.* If you are uncomfortable having your child's picture displayed, please let us know.

## **School Calendar**

Our school year calendar is posted on the school bulletin board in the lobby, on our website ([chapelschoolmethuen.com](http://chapelschoolmethuen.com)) and included in the Welcome Packet. The holidays and vacations correspond with those of the Methuen Public schools. Parents will be notified in advance should there be any changes in the calendar.

# **School Closings/Delays**

## **School Cancellations**

Chapel follows Methuen Public Schools for Weather Cancellations. School cancellations due to snow, inclement weather and hazardous driving conditions will be announced on Methuen Cable TV. The major TV stations will also announce Methuen Public Schools No School Announcements. We will email the parents, as well as post on our Facebook page and the website.

## **Delayed Openings**

In the event Methuen Public Schools has a delayed opening, we will open at 9:30 AM. As always if you feel that the driving conditions are not safe, then your own discretion is advised. We will email the parents, as well as post on our Facebook page and the website.

## **Unexpected Cancellations**

In rare instances, Chapel has had to cancel classes due to electrical or heating outages, specific only to Chapel. In these unusual circumstances, once the decision is made to close, a voice mail message will be recorded on the Chapel answering machine, we will email the parents, as well as post on our Facebook page and website.

# **Policies**

## **Child Guidance**

The staff of Chapel will not allow any child to be treated in any manner that is inconsistent with the accepted knowledge of the developmental growth patterns of the young child.

Cooperative and interpersonal skills are emphasized. Children learn through role modeling and imitation of other's behaviors. The Chapel Staff demonstrates and reinforces positive behavior. Safety and respect for each other and for classroom materials is emphasized. We use redirection, logical consequences, and prevention strategies to promote self-control and positive self-esteem. Time-out is not used.

The Staff will be prohibited:

1. To use any means of corporal punishment including spanking.
2. To use any form of punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse.
3. To use the denial of food as a form of punishment.
4. To punish a child for soiling or wetting or not using a toilet.

## **Referral**

There may be times when our staff becomes concerned with a child's developmental progress.

1. Prior to making a referral to appropriate educational or medical services, the teacher will observe and record concerns.
2. The Director and the teacher will meet to confer with the parents regarding their concerns and will provide the parents with a written statement containing a brief summary of the observations related to the referral as well as the efforts made by The Chapel School to accommodate the child's needs.
3. Parents written consent will be requested by The Chapel School before any referral is initiated.
4. Referral will be made to a local school Early Childhood Coordinator or to appropriate medical services.

## **Termination**

A child will be asked to leave under the following circumstances:

1. Refusal to make arrangements for payment.
2. Lack of parental cooperation with school staff.
3. When a child's needs can no longer be served by the program.

The parents will be notified in writing, the circumstances surrounding the termination and reasons for actions. Chapel will assist the parents with information about other services and assist the child in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

## **Toileting Plan**

Children develop toileting skills at varying stages of their growth and development. Chapel accepts enrolling children wherever they are in their toileting development. We work closely with each family to provide a smooth transition to school and create a successful partnership to make children feel comfortable using the bathrooms here at Chapel.

At the beginning of the school year the teachers familiarize their class with the closest bathrooms to their classroom. Children are shown the toileting area and are encouraged to use it when needed. Procedures for washing hands with running water and soap and drying with paper towels is demonstrated.

Hand washing is also required upon morning arrival, before snack time, before and after water play and any other time children need to clean their hands. Sinks are available in the bathrooms and in the classrooms. All staff must wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting or toileting themselves.

Extra clothes are kept in the building if needed to change a child. Parents are encouraged to pack an extra set of clothes including diapers, pull-ups or underwear. Children often feel more comfortable when they have their own changes in their backpacks.

Teachers are the closest care giver to each child. They are the ones that develop the most trusting relationship. Toileting accidents can be overwhelming especially the first time it happens away

from home. The Office staff are also available to assist in changing children. All diapering, pull-ups and underwear changes will be conducted in the bathrooms with running water available. Cleaning wipes will be used. Children can be changed standing up or lying down on one of two changing stations located at either end of the building's bathrooms. Children not comfortable being lifted up on a changing station can be changed on the floor on a vinyl mat. Staff will use disposable gloves. The changing station or vinyl mat will be disinfected after each change.

Soiled clothes will be double bagged and tied up to return home for laundering. Diapers and pull-ups along with used wipes will be disposed in a separate trash bag and brought to the dumpster by a staff person for immediate disposal.

Staff ratios will be maintained at all times in the classroom.

### **Withdrawal**

Parents must give a 30-Day notice if withdrawing a child from The Chapel School during the school year. **Tuition refunds are not available if proper notice is not given.** Please speak to the Office Manager or Director.

## **Health Care/Emergency**

### **Emergency telephone numbers**

Fire/Police/Ambulance	911	Chapel School Office	978-689-8414
Lawrence General Hospital Pediatric Center	978-683-4000 X2240	Health Care Consultant Julia Buresh	603-401-3405
Holy Family Hospital	978-687-0156	Poison Control	1-800-682-9211

### **Procedures for Emergencies and Illness**

- Notification of Director or Office Manager
- Notification of parents or designated adult (consent form)
- Permission for action
- Transportation - Call 911

### **Procedures for Using and Maintaining First Aid Equipment**

First Aid equipment is located in office, kitchen, and teacher's room with manuals. First Aid is administered by the director and the staff who are all certified in First Aid. Materials and supplies are constantly checked by the director and reviewed annually by the health care consultant. First Aid bags are also taken out to the playground.

### **Plan for Evacuation of School in Emergency**

An evacuation plan is posted in each room. Each teacher takes daily attendance upon arrival and dismissal of each child. The director is responsible for assuring that evacuation drills are practiced with all groups of children and staff every month and for maintaining documentation of the date, time and effectiveness of each drill. In the event of an emergency that would force an early dismissal, parents will be contacted by phone to pick up their children.

## **Injury Prevention Plan**

The director and staff are responsible for assessing the environment on a daily basis to identify and eliminate hazards. A central log is kept in the school office to be maintained by the director. The log contains the date, and treatment of the injury. A copy is placed in child's file. The log is reviewed on a regular basis at staff meetings to identify areas which could contribute to incidence of injury. A boo-boo notice is filled out and sent home with the child documenting the incident, treatment given and by whom.

## **Plan for Managing Infectious Disease**

Children with signs of infection such as fevers, rashes, drainage from eyes, mouth or any site; children with vomiting, diarrhea, excessive coughing, sneezing or headache will be sent home until symptoms no longer exist. Medical care and treatment may be necessary. Medical treatment by a physician is recommended for Impetigo, conjunctivitis, strep throat and any other contagious disease. The duration of the absence will 24 to 48 hours or relative to the diagnosis and treatment plan. Universal precautions will be taken while a child is in our care. In the event of any diagnosed communicable disease, a letter will be sent home to parents alerting them to the disease and precautions to take.

## **Plan for Infection Control**

Hand washing procedures are posted in bathrooms. Staff and children will be instructed in the beginning of the school year regarding proper procedure and frequency of hand washing. The Director will periodically inspect to ensure that hand washing procedures are carried out. Liquid soap and running water, using friction will be used. Staff and children must wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival to school
- Before eating or handling food
- After toileting
- After coming into contact with body fluids and discharges
- After handling center animals or their equipment
- After cleaning
- Before and after water play

Universal precautions will be followed at all times. Staff are responsible for disinfecting surfaces and equipment using an EPA registered solution. All staff are trained in infection control procedures. The cleaning service are responsible for disinfecting the bathrooms and floors at the end of each day. All cleaning supplies and disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place and out of reach of children.

## **Plan for Meeting the Individual Needs of Mildly Ill Children While in Care.**

Mildly ill children are cared for in the Director's office until a parent or authorized adult is reached to take the child home. A cot is provided for rest and fluids and comfort measures are provided as needed. Until the child has been dismissed all his/her physical, social and emotional needs shall be monitored.

## **Plan for Administering Medication, including Prescription, Non-prescription and Topical Medications.**

It is the general policy of the school that no medications are administered. However, specific circumstances may warrant that emergency medications are available such as epinephrine auto-injectors for bee sting or food allergies. In these situations, medications are kept in the original containers with the child's name, name of drug, and directions for administration and storage. This medication will have a note attached that has granted authorization for administration by the child's

parents and physician. This information will be kept in a log in the school office. Parents are advised to review and train their child's teachers and office staff in specific administration of their child's medication plan. If medication is given, all information regarding time, dosage and by whom will be documented in the child's file. All medications are returned at the end of the school year to the parents. Training in medication administration will be done by The Chapel School's Health Care Consultant, Julia Buresh, and with the First Aid/CPR Instructor yearly..

### **Plan for Meeting Specific Healthcare Needs**

All allergies are reported on the application form and medical form. This information is then posted in each classroom, the Chapel office and in the snack cabinet. The child's reaction to the allergy is described with appropriate measures to be taken in event of accidental exposure. This information is reviewed with each teacher.

### **Procedure for Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect to the Department of Children and Families.**

- Department of Children and Families Region III: 978-689-2688 (8:45 AM - 5:00 PM)
- Chapel will report to DCF any suspected incident of physical abuse, emotional abuse, environmental concerns, sexual abuse or neglect to the DCF Office.
- Teachers will report any observational concerns to the Director.
- Incident will be documented.
- Director will consult with parents
- If the school finds reasonable cause, the incident will be reported by telephone to the local DCF Office (978- 689-2688).
- If the incident is determined just cause by DCF, they will then investigate. The school must follow-up with a written 51A report within 48 hours of the phone call.
- Child-a- Risk hotline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) 1-800-792-5200

All suspected reports or allegations of abuse of a child while in the care of The Chapel School will be reported to Early Education & Care. The Chapel School will cooperate in all investigations. Failure to cooperate may be grounds for suspension, revocation, or refusal to issue or renew a license.



Handbook Updated  
8/11/2022