



**BROOKLYN
KINDERGARTEN
SOCIETY**

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
SINCE 1891

Family Handbook

2021-2022

Administrative Office

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Brooklyn Kindergarten Society Centers

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Sample Parent Involvement Calendar

June	July	August	September
Enrollment	New Children	Open House	Parent Orientation
New Children	Open House		Classroom Orientation And Meeting
Family Events	Transfer continuing children		Pedestrian Safety Training

October	November	December
Classroom Orientations and Meetings	Harvest Festival Family Events Progress Report	PAC, DAPC Certified
PAC, DAPC Elections		Family Holiday Activities and Parties
Parenting Workshop: Positive Discipline and Managing Challenging Behaviors		Parents and Teachers Conferences
Parent –Teacher Conferences		

January	February	March
Family Engagement Activities	Meeting with parents of Graduates	Family Engagement Activities
	Family Engagement Activities	Planning for summer trips and family summer events
	Parent-Teacher Conferences	

April	May	June
Family Engagement Activities	Classroom Meetings	Moving Up Celebration
Making reservations for summer trips	Progress reports	Enrollment of New Children
	Parent-Teacher Conferences	



Brooklyn Kindergarten Society

Dedicated to Early Childhood Education since 1891

Brooklyn Kindergarten Society (BKS) is a community-based organization that provides year-round early childhood education, and family support services to more than 375 children and their families.

In 1891, BKS started the first free kindergarten in Brooklyn offering early childhood education to immigrant children. BKS now has seven early childhood centers that provide children and families with a full-range of services to support children's academic success and assist families in reaching their goals. Each center is licensed by the New York City Department of Health.

Our mission is to provide a secure, nurturing, educationally-rich environment to ensure that the children develop the social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills they need to succeed in life and in school. We engage parents and caregivers as partners, encouraging them to nurture the development of their children while training them to advocate effectively for their children.

BKS uses the research-based Creative Curriculum in all of its classrooms to ensure that children are learning the skills they need. To support children's success in the education program, all children are screened for developmental delays, and on-site services are provided for those who need it. Our Family Services staff works directly with individual children, small groups and entire classrooms to help address the social and emotional needs. In addition, the Family Service staff provides support to families who may be in crisis through referrals to community resources when different needs arise. A strong partnership is formed with families to support children's development at home.

The majority of BKS's annual funding is provided by the New York City Department of Education, which supervises the use of these funds and determines each family's eligibility on an annual or as-needed basis. Additional funding comes from individual donors and foundations.

Admissions Policy

BKS programs provide safe, educational, and nurturing environments to children ages 2 to 5 years old, depending on the specific center at which you are enrolled.

Depending on your families' income eligibility and the slot types at a given center, your family may qualify for a child care subsidy through the Department of Education, Head Start slot, or school day only slot. ***Furthermore, in order to maintain a child care subsidy, all families receiving a subsidy must provide DOE the required paperwork.***

Hours of Care

- Hours of care are planned for your family individually.
- Upon enrollment your family is required to commit to a specific schedule based on employment or school hours (for Extended Day/Year and Head Starts slots). Children in School

Day only slots are entitled to 6 hours and 20 minutes each day. Each center has its own school day hours.

- Any child who is picked up later than their scheduled pick-up time will be considered late and may be subject to a late fee (for UPK only and 3-K only students).
- It is essential that your family keep it's agreed upon admission schedule because adequate teaching staff is planned for on the basis of the number of children in the classroom at any given time.

Arrival Time and Pick-up Time

- Children are expected to arrive by their scheduled drop off time.
- Children are expected to be picked up by their scheduled drop off time.
- If your schedule changes, please let your center know so that they can adjust your arrival and dismissal times accordingly.

Attendance

- We ask that you contact your child's center whenever your child will be absent. A doctor's note is required if your child has been absent for three or more days. Be sure to notify your child's center if they will be out for an extended period to avoid a disruption in services.
- If your child's monthly attendance drops below 70%, the Center Director and Family Service staff will meet with you to develop a plan to best support you to ensure the child is attending the program regularly.
- If a child is absent for 30 consecutive days and BKS has not received notice from the family regarding the reason for absences and/or if BKS cannot contact the family during this time, your child's slot in the program may be jeopardized and could result in discharge.

Payments

- At this time, child care fees have been paused due to COVID-19. We anticipate fees resuming in the fall.
- Fees are due no later than Tuesday for the upcoming week's service.
- You can opt to pay your fee on a monthly basis, paying the entire month's fee on the first Tuesday of each month. You are responsible for the entire weekly fee even if your child is absent for one or more days.
- If you receive a child care subsidy from the Department of Education, you must "recertify" your case with the DOE every few months. At that time the fee agreement may or may not change.

- At this time, fees **must** be paid in **cash or money order**. **We will not accept personal checks.** We hope to transition to a cashless process soon.
- **Only the bookkeeper and Center Director are authorized to collect fees. You will always receive a written receipt for your fee payments.**

Delinquent Accounts

- Parents will receive a written notice when fees are not paid on time within 30 days.
- In the event that fees are not paid for two consecutive weeks, the program may suspend services until the account is paid in full.
- If you do foresee a financial problem, you may request to develop a payment plan that must be approved by the BKS fiscal office in order to avoid termination.
- Families who fail to meet their financial obligations will be terminated from the program.

Enrollment and Eligibility Status

Each center operates based on different funding sources that include Head Start, DOE and Child Care funds. Each family will be enrolled based upon space and slot availability, which is determined by the Department of Education.

For some programs, your eligibility to receive subsidized child care services expire every 3, 6, and 12 months, or 2 years. DOE will send you a recertification package by mail. It is very important to keep these documents and copies in your personal records. If your child's recertification paperwork is submitted late, it may impact your child's enrollment.

Holidays and Other Closings

BKS is closed 11 days each year in observation of some holidays. Specific dates for observing each holiday will be included in the monthly calendar of events.

Professional Development Closings

We are required by the New York City Department of Education to close a minimum of 12 days a year for professional development and/or Clerical Days for our staff.

Emergency Closings

BKS Centers are closed in the event of a citywide emergency (such as a snowstorm) and if New York City public schools are closed. In an event there is inclement weather or other closure, BKS centers will offer remote learning. BKS centers may also close for painting, lead abatement, or other maintenance by the City's Housing Authority.

Staff

The Executive Director at BKS provides administrative oversight for all staff. Each site is supervised by a Center Director who holds a Master's Degree in the field of Education or a similar field. Our food services staff all hold "Food Handler's Certification" and are monitored by the New York City Department of Health. All employees are screened through the Department of Investigation and the New York State Central Registry. At least one teacher in each classroom is CPR and First-Aid Certified as well as trained to use the "Epi-Pen."

When a Center Director is absent, a "Acting Center Director" will be designated as interim supervisor of a center. For any issues or concerns that require immediate administrative input, the Director of Compliance will be contacted.

Accident and Liability Insurance Coverage

Brooklyn Kindergarten maintains accident and liability insurance coverage for children and adults. The certificate is located in the Center Director's office and is available upon request for review.

Our Educational Program

Adjustment Period

- All new children are given a "transition schedule" for the first three days of school. The Center Director will work out your child's schedule. The length of time needed for the transition depends on the individual child.
- Parents/caretakers are typically asked to remain with the child during the first few days of school, however, due to COVID-19 families will drop off their child at the entrance.
- It's normal for your child to have some fear and misgiving about starting a childcare center arrangement. This is known as *separation anxiety*. Children, like adults, need time to get used to new situations.
- At Brooklyn Kindergarten Society we practice a policy of keeping children with their teachers for at least nine (9) months (September through June) whenever possible. However, because we have open enrollment, we may not always be able to adhere to this policy.

How BKS Supports Children's Academic Success in the Classroom

The Creative Curriculum is a research-based curriculum for early childhood programs serving children from 2 years old to 5 years of age. It guides teachers on how to set-up their classrooms using various types of toys, games, and learning materials to enable children to gain academic skills. Such skills include language and reading development, math skills, science skills, social studies knowledge, physical development, social and emotional competence.

All children are assessed multiple times a year by the classroom teachers using the Creative Curriculum's Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) developmental assessment tool. The results of the assessment are shared with you at least twice a year during parent-teacher conferences.

The Creative Curriculum is aligned with New York State Prekindergarten Foundation of the Common Core, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and New York State's Quality Review Rubric.

Each classroom is set up with learning centers. Children learn many skills while engaging in the different centers. They include:

- **Block Area:** math, social skills, language skills, problem solving, and creative thinking
- **Dramatic Play:** creative thinking, social and emotional skills, language skills, social studies
- **Educational Toys and Games:** problem solving, math skills, language skills, social and emotional skills.
- **Art and Writing:** fine motor skills, reading skills, alphabet, creative thinking, aesthetic development
- **Library:** listening skills, language skills, reading skills, social skills
- **Science:** scientific process, evaluate information, math skills, language skills, and problem solving, language development, social skills
- **Sand and Water:** math and science skills, problem solving, creative thinking
- **Music and Movement:** physical development, math skills, social and emotional development
- **Computers:** fine motor, technology skills, reading skills, computer competence

Goals of Curriculum

The most important goals of our curriculum are for children to get along well with others and love learning! We want children to become independent, self-confident, and curious learners who can work well with others.

We also want to help children develop excellent language skills because research shows that children who have good language skills, know a lot of words, and can recite nursery rhymes will be more prepared to learn how to read in elementary school.

Our curriculum has four areas of development that it focuses on:

Social/Emotional: to help children develop independence, self-confidence, and self-control; follow rules and routines, make friends, and learn how to be a part of a group.

Physical Development: to increase children's large muscle skills – balancing, running, jumping, throwing and catching – and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like buttoning, stringing beads, cutting, drawing and writing.

Cognitive Development: to acquire thinking skills so they can solve problems, ask questions, and think logically – through activities that encourage sorting, classifying, comparing, counting, making patterns – and to use materials and their imagination to show what they have learned.

Language Development: to use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversations with others, understand the purpose of print, recognize letters and words, and begin to write for a purpose.

Sample Flow of Day

Arrival /Center Time
Breakfast
Meeting: Greetings, Songs, Story, and Planning Time
Center Time
Clean-up Time
Small Group Activities
Recall Time
Outdoor Play
Wash for lunch/ Lunch time/ Brush Teeth
Naptime
Wake up/ Bathroom/ Snack
Story time and Discussion
Outdoor Time
Center Time/ Small Group Time
Music/ Table Toys/ Story time
Pick-up Time

What to Bring

We provide each child with a plastic shoe-box size container to keep a change of seasonally appropriate clothing available in the event that your child's clothing becomes soiled. Children must have the following:

- shirt
- pants
- socks
- undershirt
- underwear
- pull-ups, if needed
- Change of shoes to wear in the classroom during the winter months or inclement weather

Toddlers who are in the process of toilet-training should have at least two sets of clothing in their cubbies at all times.

Please purchase a waterproof laundry marker to label each of your child's clothing items.

What to Wear

We encourage families to send their children to our centers dressed in comfortable play clothes.

During the day children may be playing or listening to a story on the floor, playing with play dough, sand, water or painting at the easel. While we do use smocks to cover clothing during messy art activities, clothing will, at times, get dirty. Occasionally children may spill juice or food on their clothes, too. We do not want children to feel inhibited from experiencing all of the wonderful activities that we engage them in, therefore, we ask that they do not wear fancy clothing. Remember, “play is children’s work” and play clothes are their work clothes.

We also take the children outdoors twice a day, weather permitting. Because we go to the playground, we request that you send your child in sneakers or rubber soled shoes that are safe for climbing and running. During the winter time, children need to wear hats, scarves, and gloves so that they will be comfortable when we go outside. According to Department of Health regulations we are able to take the children outside to play as long as the temperature is 35 degrees or higher, with reasonable winds. A sun hat or cap may help to keep the sun out of your child’s eyes during the summer months.

Valuable Items and Jewelry

We request that valuable items, including but not limited to money and jewelry, remain at home. Coins can be a choking hazard for young children, and jewelry should be kept at home and saved for special occasions. Toddlers should not wear large earrings or jewelry that could be pulled by other children or catch onto bedding or carpets. We will not take responsibility for items lost or broken while at school.

Health Code Policies

All centers under the sponsorship of Brooklyn Kindergarten Society are fully licensed by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. New York City Department of Health requires that each child enrolled in a child care facility must have a medical examination prior to admission and must be re-examined annually thereafter (examination frequency requirements may vary depending upon the child’s age). Children cannot be admitted into the program without submitting the required health form completed by a licensed physician. Each child enrolled must have immunizations kept up to date and documented on his/her health record unless you have a medical exemption.

Families who are in contact with other school-age children should be especially aware of their child’s capacity to introduce illness into the center. If it is suspected that your child, or any member of your household, has been exposed to a contagious illness, the center should be made aware as soon as possible. We will also immediately inform all families of any contagious illnesses at the center.

As a general rule, parents should notify the center whenever a child is kept home for the day. If a child becomes ill while in our care, a teacher or administrator will contact the family immediately and ask that someone pick up the child. It is essential that families adhere to our health policies because they benefit the health and safety of all of the children in our care and our staff.

Discipline Policy

Discipline is a learning experience. Working and playing in a child care setting – sharing, waiting, and listening – can be difficult for children. Teachers view these difficult times as opportunities to teach children self-control, social skills, and appropriate language to deal with conflict or frustrations. BKS always utilizes positive behavior guidance.

- No one on our premises is permitted to engage in any form of corporal punishment or use any form of discipline that is harsh or humiliating to children.
- Children cannot be slapped, spanked, shaken, pulled, yelled at, threatened, or placed in a corner or hallway as a form of punishment.
- Children who need additional support with understanding and managing their emotions may spend time in the “Cozy Corner” with a teacher. We want to support our children with self-regulation. The “Cozy Corner” provides a space for a child to take a break from the classroom environment as they navigate big feelings. Sitting quietly in a chair or other special place gives the child a chance to relax. It gives the teachers the opportunity to talk to the child and help him or her discover a better way to deal with the problem.
- We make every effort to work with children and families to avoid any interruption in services. BKS’s policy is that we do not suspend or expel children. If a child exhibits ongoing problems that are disruptive to the classroom, the child’s physical safety, or the safety of other children, families will be asked to meet with our administrative staff and Family Service team to assess the child’s needs. Our Family Services team will work with families of children who may require an outside evaluation or additional services.

Responding to Concerns About a Child’s Progress and/or Behavior

1. If a parent or caregiver expresses concern to the teacher about their child, the group teacher will contact the Center Director and a member of the Family Services Team and develop a plan to meet with the family and discuss the family’s concerns as they relate to the child.
2. If a teacher is concerned about a child’s health, emotional, or developmental progress the group teacher must request to present at the Child Study Team (CST) meeting. To prepare for the meeting, the group teacher must gather documented evidence of interventions and support he or she has provided, TSG observations, samples of work, anecdotal notes, parent outreach and relevant classroom observations All evidence must be presented to the Child Study Team (CST) team for review and discussion. **Teachers are NOT allowed to videotape or take pictures of children while they are engaging in challenging behaviors.**
3. If a teacher is still concerned after a CST meeting has already taken place and the child has not responded to at-risk intervention; the teacher must bring the concern back to CST along with documented evidence for a possible evaluation. (see sections F3 and F4) .
4. If a child has challenges that are disruptive to other students or unsafe for the student and/or others the teaching team should notify the Center Director and Family Services Team immediately and refer to **BKS Behavior Guidance Policy** for positive behavior guidance strategies. All staff involved are responsible or documenting the behavior, supports and interventions. This concern may initiate the contact of a Mental Health consultant to work with Family Services and the teaching staff. These individuals can help the teacher develop a behavior assessment and corresponding behavior intervention plan. Throughout the process, it is imperative that parents are informed and engaged in supporting their child.

Suspension, Expulsion and Termination of Services Policy

It is the policy of the Brooklyn Kindergarten Society not to allow expulsion, suspension or termination of services for any reason. Our goal is to create positive experiences for children and their families that nurture positive learning and development.

The beginning years of any child's life are critical for building the early foundation of learning, health and wellness needed for success in school and later in life. During these years, children's brains are developing rapidly, influenced by the experiences, both positive and negative, that they share with their families, caregivers, teachers, peers, and in their communities. Therefore, expulsion, suspension and termination of services for any reason at all BKS sites are not allowed.

This policy is aligned with federal and state civil laws that prohibit discriminatory discipline practices.

Biting Policy

- Biting is not an uncommon occurrence in group child care, especially for two's. Very young children who do not yet have expressive language may bite when becoming frustrated or upset.
- When a child bites we will immediately address the situation with you and work together to develop a plan to help the child learn other ways to express herself.
- Teachers also work together to be more vigilant with the biting child to "shadow" him or her during the day.
- We immediately comfort the child who has been bitten and wash off the bite with soap and water.
- In the event that the bite breaks the skin we will contact you, advising you to contact the child's pediatrician.

Assessment & Screenings

- Within 45 days of enrollment and then annually, all children are given the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to identify learning strengths and weaknesses and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social/Emotional Assessment to identify children's social and emotional characteristics. You must give written consent for your child's screening. Results of any child screenings may be shared only with you or someone for whom you give written permission to view screening results.
- If screenings show that there may be some areas that need further observation, you will be contacted and the information will be discussed to see if further evaluations or interventions are needed.
- If you agree to have your child receive a more formalized evaluation, specific forms are signed and the staff will assist with overseeing the referral process in partnership with the center's Family Service staff.
- If a child is in need of special education services, BKS will make the necessary arrangements with CPSE (Committee on Preschool Special Education) for evaluation and support families through the process.

- All children are assessed three times a year by the classroom teachers using the Creative Curriculum Teaching Strategies Gold Developmental Assessment Tool. This assessment is shared with you at least twice a year during the parent teacher conferences.

Policy Regarding Special Consultants

Brooklyn Kindergarten Society's centers are committed to utilizing the services of special consultants including but not limited to Curriculum Director, Social Workers, Mental Health Consultants, Special Educators, Nutritionists, Nurse and Educational Enrichment specialists. This helps the efforts of supporting staff to meet the needs of children and families to participate fully in the program, including children with disabilities, behavior challenges or other special needs.

Brooklyn Kindergarten Society has procedures in place to address the qualifications of special consultants to the program. Specialized consultants are required to present a degree from an accredited program in the field that they will be employed. Consultants are required to have a signed contract, job description, and must adhere to the policies that all regular staff must abide by.

Enrichment Programs

We believe that children benefit greatly from engagement in the creative arts because music, visual art, movement, dance, and dramatic arts all support children's academic and social emotional development. Our enrichment opportunities vary from year to year. In previous years, we have provided tennis, violin, music and movement, gardening, among other activities.

Our Family Involvement Program

“Back to School Night”

- Our “Back to School Night” is scheduled during late September and early October and is a time to meet your child’s teacher and other staff and a chance for you to see and understand the many ways that their child will learn while they are in our program. You also have an opportunity to learn about the services and activities that are provided by our Family Services staff.

Delegate Agency Parents Committee (DAPC) and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

- Every year, the center director will announce the election plans for the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and Delegate Agency Advisory Committee (DAPC).
- These Committees (DAPC and PAC) are made up of parent leaders who are able and willing to work directly with the director and staff to organize the regular schedule of parent meetings and special workshops, and serve as liaisons for parents who are unable to participate more fully in the program activities.
- All parents are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings. However, in our centers with Head Start slots, 75% of the elected positions are reserved for Head Start families.

BKS FAMILY SERVICES

BKS children’s offers Family Services that are dedicated to assisting families with the enrollment process, setting family and personal goals, helping families connect with community services including health, education and immigration services, and offering a variety of family engagement activities and workshops. Family Service staff may include one or more of the following: Family Worker or Social Worker. Our Family Service staff is also available should a crisis occur during your time at BKS and can help connect you to resources to support you and your family.

Parent Meetings and Workshops

- Family Services works with the DAPC and PAC to schedule monthly parent meetings, parent workshops, and guest speakers.
- Parents/caretakers are encouraged to give suggestions for parenting workshops or topics that you would like to learn more about such as health issues, child development and discipline, budgeting and college savings plans, or career and educational growth.

Parent-Teacher Conference and Observations

- Parent-Teacher Conferences are conducted in twice a year. They will be held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 and Thursday, March 17, 2022.

- You will sign up for a time to meet with teachers to discuss your child's progress. Our centers will be closed for instruction those days so that we can provide families with multiple times throughout the day to meet.
- You do not need to wait until Parent-Teacher Conferences to request a meeting with a teacher or the Center Director. Parents are welcome to call the center to see how their child is doing, or set up a phone meeting with the teacher during his/her lunch break.

What to do if you have concerns

If you have a concern, we encourage you to speak with the teacher, Center Director, or Family/Social Worker.

Confidentiality Policy

All family records are kept in a locked cabinet in the social services and Center Director's offices. Only authorized staff (Center Director as well as the Deputy Directors of Family and Community Engagement and Education) are allowed to remove files for program usage. All records must be signed out upon removal and returned by the close of day.

Families are allowed to review their children's records. Additionally, families may request copies of file documentation at any time during the child's enrollment, and may also request copies of documents up to two years after the enrollment period.

Our Health, Safety & Nutrition Program

Obesity Prevention

BKS has developed an Obesity Prevention policy which guides curriculum, staff training, food handling (preparing and serving food) and parent involvement in workshops to learn about obesity prevention and the relationship between healthy eating and exercise.

Medical Examinations

- A child must have a complete medical exam in order to start the program.
- A complete medical exam is updated each year that the child remains in the program.
- All children must have an annual influenza vaccination given each year between July 1 to December 31 in order to remain in the program.
- A complete exam includes: necessary immunizations, blood test, urinalysis, TB test, vision test, hearing test, blood pressure, vision screening and dental screening by a dentist. You are responsible for providing the center with the results of all tests. We also need the treatment prescribed for any medical problems in writing from a doctor.
- You must inform the staff of any serious illness or condition that may necessitate special training on the part of staff to manage the care of a child, e.g., sickle cell anemia, asthma, seizures.
- A note from the doctor is required to admit a child back into the program once he or she is absent because of a communicable or serious illness.

Emergency Information

- Upon a child's admission, each parent completes an emergency card that provides accurate and important contact information – including names and telephone numbers of family or friends who can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- Be sure to inform the emergency contacts listed about their potential roles and responsibilities as an emergency contact person.
- Please contact your child's center update the information on these cards as soon as changes occur. The center's ability to reach an appropriate person in case of illness, accident or any emergency is essential. Current phone numbers must be on file.

Illness and Medication

- Children may not come to the center when they are sick or have any contagious conditions.
- Colds among young children are highly contagious because children do not have the reflexes to cover coughs and sneezes.

- We ask that you keep your child home if they have heavy runny noses, a fever, coughs and sneezes.
- A doctor's note is required for rashes and allergies.
- You are advised to request a note for the center's file whenever they take the child to a doctor. A note identifying an illness is more important than one that says the child is well.
- A child who becomes sick in school will be sent home with a parent or escort.
- The center staff is prohibited from giving any medication to children unless it is an emergency situation.

INFECTIOUS CONTROL POLICY

Children sent home with illness can return to the center under these conditions:

Cold: No excessive coughing and sneezing and if their mucous is not yellow or green (not clear mucous may indicate sign of infection).

Vomiting: 24 hours after last episode of vomiting.

Diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode of diarrhea.

Fever: 24 hours after fever is gone.

Strep Throat: 48 hours after medication is administered.

Conjunctivitis: Eye must be totally cleared up; no ooze.

Chicken Pox: When sores are totally scabbed over; no ooze.

Impetigo: 48 hours after medication is started; everything is scabbed over.

Head Lice: After quell treatment and all eggs are removed; children must be nit free.

Ringworm: 48 hours after medication has been started.

Cocksackie: 48 hours after fever and blisters have subsided.

HAND WASHING PROCEDURES

The most effective way to prevent the spread of illness is the frequent washing of hands. **All adults should sanitize their hands and children are required to wash their hands upon entering the classroom.**

All adults and children should wash their hands as follows:

- upon entry to the classroom
- before and after serving eating or food,
- before and after changing a diaper or toileting a child
- after the use of the restroom,
- before and after applying any type of first aid,
- after wiping a child's or your own nose or mouth,
- after sneezing, coughing
- before and after sand, water play, and playdough,
- after handling garbage.

Emergency Medical Treatment

All families must sign a Emergency Medical Treatment Form allowing us to seek emergency treatment in the event that your child suffers a medical or dental accident or becomes very ill during program hours.

- 1) In the event of an extreme emergency, we will have one person contact 911 immediately and another person contact the parent.
- 2) If a child can be moved, the teacher in charge of the classroom will bring the child to the office, pick up the medical treatment release and child's medical file, and along with the Center Director or designated staff member, take the child to the nearest hospital emergency room. Parents will be contacted immediately to let them know where to meet their child.
- 3) Upon return to the center the teacher and Center Director will complete an accident report that will be sent to the DOE and the BKS Administrative Office. A copy will also be kept in the child's file.

Medication Administration Policy

The policy of BKS is that we administer epinephrine auto injectors (Epi-Pen), asthma inhalers and nebulizers only in the event of an emergency. The program is also authorized to administer diphenhydramine (**Benadryl**) when a physician's health care provider's orders state that Benadryl must be administered in combination with the auto injector to combat anaphylactic shock. Medication Administration Training (MAT) is not required to administer these medications. **Parents/Guardians are encouraged to administer medications (antibiotics, sunscreen, etc.) at home before and/or after the child is in the care of center staff whenever possible.**

At all times at least one person CPR/First Aid trained must be present on the center's premises to administer emergency medications.

Serving Students with Serious Health Conditions:

Each program is prepared to serve children with special health conditions, including asthma and severe allergies. The following steps are taken to serve students with these conditions:

- Upon enrollment, all families must sign a **Medical Treatment Form** (318 K) allowing the center to seek emergency treatment in the event the child suffers a serious accident or becomes very ill.

- Upon enrollment, if a child needs to be administered emergency medications, the parent/guardian must submit the ***Medical Consent Form (OCFS-LDSS-7002)***, signed by the parent/guardian and by the child's physician.
- Upon enrollment, if the child is diagnosed with an allergy, the parent/guardian must provide an ***Allergy Action Plan***, signed by the child's doctor. In case of a medical emergency (when 911 is called), this information will be shared with the EMS.
- Upon enrollment, if the child is diagnosed with asthma, the parent/guardian must provide an ***Asthma Action Plan***, signed by the child's doctor. In case of a medical emergency (when 911 is called), this information will be shared with the EMS. Please be advised that the center can only administer **emergency asthma medication**. In the event that a child requires **maintenance asthma medication as outlined by the physician on the Asthma Action Plan**, a parent or guardian can visit the center to administer the medication or indicate a designee to come on their behalf. **Parents/Guardians are encouraged to administer asthma medications at home before and/or after the child is in the care of center staff whenever possible.**

Reports on Accidents and Incidents

The accidents that occur in the center are usually minor. The appropriate staff members who are certified in First Aid/CPR always give first aid. Parents are informed of the incident.

Staff members are required to complete an incident report for minor incidents or medical or dental accidents, including scrapes and bruises and illnesses that a child might exhibit during the day (i.e., diarrhea, vomiting, or fever).

In some cases, family members may be requested to take the child to the doctor.

Exterminating Procedures

Our centers have a visit from a licensed exterminator monthly or more frequently as needed. This is done after hours when no children are present in the building. All pesticides used are not harmful to children.

Fire Drills and Shelter Drills

Fire drills are conducted monthly and are done at varying hours of the day so that teachers and children will know how to leave the building safely and quickly in the event of an emergency evacuation. Children leave the facility when there is a fire drill. Fire Drills can be scary for young children, especially new children who are just transitioning into the center. We ask teachers to inform parents when a fire drill has been conducted.

Shelter drills are done in the center; children do not leave the building but go to a designated safe area of their center. Teachers will also inform you if there was a shelter drill.

Unfortunately there can be a real reason to leave the building or move all of the children to a safe area inside. Again, when these instances occur you will be informed.

Escort Policy

- At enrollment, you must complete the Authorized Escort Form that states the authorized adult who can pick up your child from the program.
- All escorts must both sign the child in at the beginning of the day and sign the child out at the end of the day so that each center has a record of arrival and departure time and the name of the person who leaves with the child.
- You must give the name of any person authorized to bring or pick-up the child. In an emergency, the parent may call or send a note to the center.
- If someone other than the authorized person comes for your child, we will not release your child without your written permission and verbal confirmation. This person must be able to show a valid form of ID as well as state the child's birth date and place of birth to prove his or her relationship to the child.
- The parent or escort when taking the child to his or her classroom, must be sure that the teacher sees the child and the parent so the teacher becomes immediately aware of the child's presence.
- The parent or escort is expected to inform the teacher of any unusual occurrence at home, particularly if the child has received an injury. Teachers are responsible for reporting similar information to the parent in the afternoon.

Rest Time

- Quiet time is important for a child's health and well-being. The children nap or have quiet time each day. You can check with your child's teacher to learn the exact time.
- You are required to supply their child with a sheet and a blanket. Sheets and blankets are sent home every Friday to be washed and dried by the family.
- Very young children may rest better if they have a soft toy or special blanket. Soft toys can be kept in their cubbies.

Meals

- Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are served daily to all children.
- The meals are fully prepared in our center kitchens in compliance with governing federal and state guidelines to ensure nutritional value. Whenever possible, low fat, low salt, and non-additive food is used.
- Menus are posted for parents to review.
- Please notify the staff of any dietary restrictions or food allergies. All food items brought into the center for your child's specific use must be labeled with your child's name.

- The funds for the children's meals come from the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Each family must complete a Eligibility Form for our Food Program upon admission and each year thereafter.

Celebration Policy

Holidays can be a vehicle for learning about the traditions and values of the families in our programs and exposing children to the traditions of others. A child may want to share the anticipation and excitement they feel about their holiday celebrations. All families are invited to share aspects of their holidays with the children in the classroom in a meaningful and respectful way (virtually, due to COVID-19). Staff should contact the center's director before making any arrangements.

We acknowledge:

- Different families celebrate different holidays
- Families may celebrate the same holiday in different ways
- Not everyone celebrates any or every holiday
- What your family does is valued

During **special events** (parent's café, workshops, Stepping Up, etc.) we do not allow outside food. To conform to state regulations, only food prepared on site by the kitchen staff will be served. Food allergies and other food related restrictions require careful selection of appropriate items. Please be aware that all our centers are peanut free.

We are happy to celebrate **children's birthdays**. Birthday celebrations are held once a month. All children with a birthday during a given month will celebrate on the same day. Teachers might provide a birthday crown or hat to help make the birthday child feel extra special.

To promote wellness and foster healthy eating habits among children we use children's birthdays as an opportunity for children to cook their own healthy snack (see recipes from [Growing Healthy Children: A Guide to Enhance Nutrition and Physical Activity in NYC Group Child Care Centers](#)). This is an effort to implement an Obesity Prevention Policy to educate families and staff in providing an environment in which children can grow in a healthy way, reducing the risk of conditions such as childhood obesity. Birthday invitations for parties outside of the school are solely the responsibility of the family.

CELEBRATION PROTOCOL

- No beverages with any added sweeteners, whether artificial or natural, shall be served.
- Only foods indicated on the [BKS Food and Beverage Policy](#) can be used during the celebrations.
- Healthy options, such as fresh fruit, leafy green salad and/or vegetable slices must be served at special occasion celebrations.
- Water must be served at all special occasion events.
- No more than one birthday party is held per month.
- At each celebration, only one sweet or dessert is served. Where possible, the sweet or dessert is prepared from scratch on the premises using recipes modified to lower saturated fat and sugar and to increase fiber, vitamin and mineral content.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are offered at all celebrations.

- Only 1% low-fat/fat free milk, 100% juice, seltzer and water are served during special occasions. (Whole milk is offered to children 12 months to 2 years of age.)
- When sweets are served during celebrations, child-sized portions, such as mini-muffins or small cupcakes are given.
- Outside foods are not allowed for celebrations or special events.
- Physical activities, such as games and dancing, are promoted during special occasions.
- Children can choose their favorite physical activity to lead their classmates in on their birthday.

Due to COVID-19, all in-person large gatherings are temporarily suspended. However, all children's birthdays will be acknowledged.

Photographs and videos:

A child's privacy is very important to us. We periodically take pictures of the children during classroom activities and field trips to let parents see various activities that go on at school and during class time. All parents/guardians must fill out a consent form to photograph/video form and indicate if they wish to allow their child to participate. All forms are kept on file indicating family's request.

When parents are invited into the classroom, please ensure that parents are taking pictures or videotaping only their own child. Our intent is to prevent pictures from being published or on public display on social media sites or on the internet. Internet safety is a very difficult issue for parents and educators; following this policy will prevent images from being used carelessly, or without parent's knowledge. Please be considerate of students' privacy.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Our programs are committed to providing children with the least restrictive environments and to work closely with the families and therapeutic providers of children with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Parents are requested to inform the program at the time of enrollment if a child is receiving outside therapeutic services. In order to support the child's individual educational goals we want to inform the teaching staff about the child's status. The Center Director, teachers, and family support service staff will work with families to develop a communication plan with the service providers. When itinerant services are provided on-site, the Center Director will be responsible for developing a communication plan with the therapists and staff so that the child's IEP goals are supported in the classroom. The same procedure will be implemented when a child receives therapeutic services from one of our family support social staff members.

In some cases, a full-day general education program may not be well-suited to meet the needs of particular child; a child may require a smaller and/or therapeutic setting. If it is determined that our program is not meeting the child's individual need, BKS will work with the family to find the best suitable placement for the child. We have a written policy that details the referral process we will engage in with the parent to get the child placed in a more appropriate setting. It is important the parents understand this process and work with us.

Reports on Suspected Child Abuse and Maltreatment

Under New York State Social Services Law, any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or maltreated should report this information by calling the Toll-Free Hotline number 1-800-342-3720.

Our staff is legally required to report or cause a report to be made when they suspect that a child coming before them, in their official capacity, is being abused or maltreated.

If your child is injured at home, please explain to the teacher how your child received any visible bump, cut, scratch or bruise.

Maintain frequent and open communication with your child's teacher.

Addendum to Child Abuse and Maltreatment policy

Staff members are required by New York State laws to report any and all suspicions of child abuse and maltreatment when functioning in their official capacity. Staff members are also immune from discharge, retaliation or other disciplinary actions when reports are made in good faith. However, if a report is found to be made as a result of malicious intent, staff members may be subjected to disciplinary actions, including and up to termination of employment.

Moving Up Ceremony

- The Moving-Up Ceremony is held in June for our 4-year-old children who will be leaving BKS to attend kindergarten.
- We do not use cap and gowns for this transition into Kindergarten.

Please note: Children who graduate or “move up” in June are encouraged stay in the program until the end of August. If your child will be leaving prior to August, please inform the Center Director.

Pictures

Each spring, a professional photographer is hired to take pictures of the children. The pictures are available for purchase. Letters will be sent at the time of this event.

COVID-19 Policies/Procedures

The health and well-being of our families and staff are our highest priorities. In the interest of limiting the opportunity for transmission of COVID-19 to our susceptible community, we are taking the following precautionary measures:

I. Daily Health Check

- A staff member who is fully clothed in PPE will conduct a visual health check including temperature check on each student upon arrival, maintaining appropriate distance when possible.
- The adult who drops off the child will wait while the student is being checked. If the child is dropped off by a minor, an adult parent or guardian will be contacted to complete the health check prior to admitting the child. Visual check for signs of illness such as flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing without recent physical activity, fatigue, or extreme fussiness will be made. The parent or guardian will be asked: if the child had a fever or felt feverish in the past 24 hours or if the child has had a new cough, sore throat or shortness of breath in the past 24 hours. If the parent/guardian – who is a member of the same household as the child – is exhibiting signs of COVID-19 or has been tested and is positive for the virus? As a “close contact,” the child must not return to the child care for the duration of the quarantine. If the answer is YES to any question, and/or if a child has a fever of 100.0 degrees or above or other signs of illness the child will not be admitted to the center.
- The staff conducting the check will affix his/her initials.
- These will be recorded on the **BKS- Daily Children’s Health Check and Attendance**. If the student shows symptoms, the parent will be advised to take the child home or to the doctor for further medical assessment.

Staff must change gloves if a child is touched before inspecting the next child.

Child’s P. M. Health Check:

- Staff will conduct a visual health check including a temperature check of each student before the child's departure.
- The staff member will check under the YES box to acknowledge that the authorized escort who picks up the child has confirmed the visual health check and the child’s temperature.
- The staff conducting the check will affix his/her initials. These will be recorded on the **BKS- Daily Children’s Health Check and Attendance**.
- Staff must change gloves if a child is touched before inspecting the next child.

If any symptoms are observed, the **Health Inspection Report** will be filled out to document information relevant to the child’s health. The Health Inspection Report must be signed by the staff member and kept in the Health Inspection binder. Staff must notify office staff immediately if there are concerns about child’s health within the day.

Staff will file the BKS- Daily Children’s Health Check and Attendance in a binder each day and must be available for the review by Site Safety Monitor, etc.

II. Daily Admission to the Classroom

Children will not be accepted into a classroom if they have any of the following:

- nasal discharge (other than a minimal, clear discharge),
- any discharge or matter around the eyes,
- fever 100.0 or higher (must be fever free for 48 hours without fever reducing medication),

- any unexplained rash; any skin infection such as boils, impetigo, ringworm; or pink eye or other eye infection,
- inflamed throat and/or mouth,
- coughing or sneezing,
- head lice,
- open wounds without proper bandages,
- unusually listless or especially irritable behavior,
- any symptoms of a childhood disease such as scarlet fever; German measles, mumps, chicken pox, or whooping cough,
- common cold from onset through one week,
- sore throat, croup,
- any COVID-19-related symptoms (cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell)

III. Cleaning Routines

- Due to COVID-19, shared objects or materials and frequently touched surfaces (door handles, light switches, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected twice a day and as needed.
- Play spaces (indoor and outdoor), shared between groups of children, must be disinfected before each group's use. Therefore, the Health and Safety Checklists have been revised to include additional information as per COVID-19 requirements.
- All classrooms are required to have a labeled "GERM BOX" for toys contaminated with saliva or other body secretion or excretion.
- Toys must be washed before another child is able to have contact with the toy. Items in the germ box must be washed with bleach and water each day before being returned to the toy area (1 tsp bleach to 1 qt water).
- Due to COVID-19, all toys must be washed with soap and water and sanitized with bleach/water solution (1 tsp bleach to 1 qt water) daily and as needed.
- Due to COVID-19, classrooms must be arranged in a way that will allow children to spread out throughout the room (6 feet from each other). Tables must be placed 6 feet apart. Each child must have an individual container with art supplies. All toys that cannot be washed and sanitized daily must be removed from the classroom.

IV. Classroom Environment

- The program will make sure that groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff whenever and wherever possible. Children will be kept together in their small groups with their assigned staff and will remain with the same group throughout the day, every day.
- Due to COVID-19, classrooms must be arranged in a way that will allow children to spread out throughout the room (6 feet from each other). Tables must be placed 6 feet apart. Each child must have an individual container with art supplies.
- All toys that cannot be washed and sanitized daily must be removed from the classroom.
- Classrooms must be arranged to allow children to spread out throughout the room (6 feet from each other).
- Tables must be placed at least 6 feet apart.
- Each child must have an individual container with art and writing supplies.
- All toys that cannot be washed and sanitized daily must be removed from the classroom.

- Social distance (6 feet) must be maintained during:
 - a. mealtime
 - b. nap/rest time
 - c. gross motor activities
 - d. circle time
 - e. routines and transitions (washing hands, using the restroom, lining up before going outside, etc.).
- After the child or group of children are finished playing with the toys, the teacher will remove toys and sanitize them with the bleach/water solution and air dry before returning them to the play area.
- To ensure there are sufficient toys for all children, table toys will be divided into multiple small sets (2-3 bins of the same toy). For example, all legos will be divided into 3 different bins.
- One set of toys will be placed out for a small group to play with and removed when that group is done. The set removed into a closet, will be sprayed sanitized (bleach/water solution) and allowed to air dry. A new set will be provided to a new group of children
- All Toys must be sanitized after each user throughout the day.
- At the end of each day, all toys must be washed (soap and water) and sanitized (bleach/water solution) for the next day.
- New York State Department of Health Guidelines, state that children not yet in kindergarten do not need to wear face coverings when they are in a child care program. If a family prefers to send their child to child care wearing one, that is their prerogative. Staff will do their best to encourage children to keep their face covering on, but will not force a child to wear one if they choose to remove it.
- Staff must wear acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 which include but are not limited to cloth-based faced coverings and disposable masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Surgical face masks will be provided to all staff and visitors (if needed) at no cost to employees and visitors.
- Employees maintain a distance of at least six feet from other employees at all times, unless safety or the core activity requires a shorter distance (e.g. jointly caring for a child or responding to the needs of a child). However, any time that employees are less than six feet from one another, they must wear acceptable face coverings.
- Staff will not be allowed to “float” or move from room to room unless it is necessary to supervise children due to unforeseen circumstances or otherwise authorized by the center director.

V. Isolation of Staff or a Child In Case of Medical Emergency

- Each center has an identified isolation room or a space in the case that a child or a staff member shows COVID-related symptoms.
- If a child is isolated, a parent/guardian or other emergency contact will be notified immediately. The child will occupy the isolation room or space with adult supervision until they are picked up.
- Each family must have three valid emergency contacts on file at the center at all times.
- In the case of a 911 call, the emergency contacts will be notified and an emergency contact will accompany the child to the hospital.

VI. Protocol for Child or Staff Testing Positive for COVID-19

- *If a parent receives notification that their child has tested positive*, the parent/guardian of the child contacts the Center Director and Family Worker/Social Worker. The Center Director then contacts the Deputy Director of Administration and Director of Compliance to notify them of a possible positive test result via phone and email. This information is confidential and must only be told to the listed parties above. Note: If the child is at the center when the parent/guardian notifies the Center Director and Family Worker/Social Worker, the child must be moved to the isolation room. The child must be picked up within **45minutes to 1 hour** of the initial phone call with the parent/guardian.
- If a child or a staff member has been tested positive for COVID-19, the center will be closed.
- A professional cleaning company will be contracted to deep clean the center using antiviral solutions approved by the CDC and EPA.
- The Deputy Director of Administration will notify the DOH in order for the DOH to contact the individual.
- Staff and families will be notified via ParentSquare by the Deputy Director of Administration to inform them that the center has been closed until further notice due to somebody having tested positive for COVID-19.
- If a child or staff member tests positive for COVID-19 while quarantined, they must notify the Center Director immediately. The Center Director will notify the Deputy Director of Administration and Director of Compliance so appropriate reporting and procedures can be followed.

VII. Visitors:

- Any family meetings will be scheduled in advance to prevent multiple visitors at one time, and will have the option of being held outside, weather permitting, and inside with barriers and distancing if not.
- Visitors on-site will be required to wear face coverings at all times and visits must be pre-approved (no walk-ins). Markings on the floor and signage will reinforce six feet of distance between visitors and other adults.
- Parents are welcome to call the center to see how their children are doing or set up a phone meeting with the teacher during his/her lunch break.

VIII. Meals

- Food-serving tables are cleaned with soap and water and sanitized with bleach/water solution (1tsp. bleach per 1 qt. water) and sanitized before and after each use.
- Family-style meals will not be served. Kitchen staff will prepare a plate for each child, based on the child's dietary needs, and the teacher will place the plate in front of the child.
- Children must be seated least 6 feet apart.
- Food will never be served/touched with bare hands. Staff will use utensils and gloves. Staff serving meals to the children must wash hands with soap and water, then use latex-free gloves, then wash their hands again.
- Outside food is not permitted. If a child has a special dietary restriction, the food will be provided by the center in accordance with information provided by the child's parent/guardian and physician.

IX. Tooth Brushing

- Due to COVID-19, tooth brushing is temporarily suspended.

XI. Toys from Home

- Due to COVID-19, toys from home are not allowed.

XII. Neighborhood Walks

-Neighborhood walks are taken throughout the program year. At this time, field trips have been paused.

- Upon entry to the program, you are requested to sign a permission slip allowing your child to participate in neighborhood walks.

PARENT/CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES AGREEMENT FORM

It is the responsibility of the primary guardian of the enrolled child to:

- Provide and replenish all required clothing items and supplies (wipes, diapers, bottles, water play clothing and towels).
- Take home bedding for washing on a regular basis.
- Clearly label all of your child's belongings with waterproof/laundry marker.
- We have a written policy that details the referral process we will engage in with the parent to get a child placed in a more appropriate setting.
- Inform teacher and Center Director immediately if there is any change in address, phone number, emergency contact or release information.
- Have your child in the classroom no later than specified arrival time (or call if special circumstance arises).
- Pick up your child at the agreed time.
- Keep your child home if ill and notify the center if your child contracts a contagious illness.
- Bring your child to the center clean (if a child arrives with a soiled diaper, it is the parent's responsibility to change the child before leaving).
- Notify the children's center if your child is going to be absent that day or for an extended period of time.
- Read all notices and take children's artwork home.
- Notify staff if your child has incurred any minor injury (bump, bruise, scratch, etc.).
- Notify the center at least two weeks before withdrawing your child from the program for any reason.
- Inform the Center Director if your child is receiving special educational or therapeutic services and has an IEP so that we can support your child's needs.
- Discuss any special circumstances, needs, or requests with the teachers.
- Attend Parent/Teacher conferences throughout the year.
- Attend as many workshops as possible.
- Keep DOE Certification and your child's medical visits up-to-date.
- Pay all fees on time, as required. (if applicable)

I understand that should I develop a pattern of not adhering to any of the above policies, I may lose the privilege of keeping my child enrolled at the children's center.

I, _____, understand and agree to all of the above.

Parent/Guardian Signature

****Note:** One copy of the signed Agreement will be given the Parent/Guardian. One copy of the signed Agreement will be placed in the child's file.



All new policies are subject to change as new information is made available and as Brooklyn Kindergarten Society sees fit.

I have read and understand the new COVID-19 policies.

My signature below certifies that my family and I agree to abide by these new policies, until further notice.

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____