



Joyful Noises Preschool  
Parent Handbook  
2025-2026

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Address: 9 East Common Street Topsfield, MA 01983  
Telephone Number: 987- 848-2018  
E-mail: Preschool: [jnp@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org](mailto:jnp@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org)  
Director: [director@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org](mailto:director@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org)  
Assistant Director: [ad@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org](mailto:ad@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org)  
Business Manager:  
[businessmanager@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org](mailto:businessmanager@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org)  
JNP Board: [board@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org](mailto:board@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org)

Website: <https://joyfulnoisestopsfield.org>

Federal Tax I.D. number: 04-3496713

### PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

Joyful Noises is a non-denominational preschool, serving as a ministry of the Congregational Church of Topsfield (U.C.C.). We instill Christian values and embrace the diversity, individuality and uniqueness of all children and families. We offer programs for children ages 15 months to 7.0 years of age. Our enriching curriculum, genuine interactions and guided play opportunities develop the whole-child physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, creatively, academically and spiritually. WE encourage creativity, curiosity and exploration through hands-on activities allowing each child to develop individually at their own pace.

*We provide an opportunity for every child to develop at his or her own pace:*

*Physically* ~ to develop the whole child, their small and large muscles, their overall healthy growing bodies.

*Socially* ~ to be able to play, communicate, cooperate, and negotiate with others of all culturally diverse backgrounds and abilities.

*Emotionally* ~ to develop confidence to express and understand oneself, through the development of a positive self-image.

*Cognitively* ~ to learn skills and apply knowledge for personal success, academic success, and to become contributing members to society.

*Creatively* ~ to explore and express oneself in open-ended, hands-on, medium visually, dramatically, or linguistically.

*Academically* ~ to recognize, use, and interact with language, literacy, science, technology, engineering and math, STEM all through developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum

*Spiritually* ~ we foster sound Christian values throughout our programs.

## **GOALS FOR EACH CHILD TO RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THEIR INDIVIDUALITY INCLUDE:**

- To learn social skills, problem solving skills, communication skills and cooperation
- To learn respect for everyone's individuality and special needs, and to accept and show kindness to all and to treat others as we would want to be treated
- To learn in a safe, stimulating environment in which they can develop and use sound health, safety and nutritional practices.
- To have fun, to be able to learn through play and to make Joyful Noises!

## **CHILDREN SERVED**

Joyful Noises Preschool offers multi-age Toddler and Preschool classrooms as well as a Pre-Kindergarten classroom, serving children 15 months through 7 years.

### *Non-Discrimination Statement*

Joyful Noises Preschool with childcare provides services to all children and their families regardless of their race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran or active military status, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by state, federal or local law.

### *Administrative Organization*

Joyful Noises is a non-profit preschool and childcare center serving the greater tri-town area and its surrounding towns. The Preschool is overseen by a Board of Directors and administratively run by the Director, an Assistant Director, and a part-time Business Manager.

## **AUTHORITIES**

### *Licensing Authority*

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is the licensing authority. The telephone number for the Northeast Regional EEC Office is 978-681-9684. The address is 360 Merrimac Street, Building #9 Lawrence, MA 01843. The EEC Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Children is available upon request from the Director.

Any parent may contact EEC for information regarding the programs' regulatory compliance history at 1-978-681-9684 x 317.

### *Board of Directors*

Joyful Noises is overseen by a Board of Directors with three to nine members who have an affiliation with Joyful Noises, Inc., the Congregational Church of Topsfield, and/or the local community. There can be up to two Joyful Noises parents on the Board.

## **STAFF**

*Director:*

The Director, Yvonne Beirne, M.Ed. has a B.S. in Early Childhood Education and a M.Ed. in Moderate Disabilities PreK-8. She has been in the field for over four decades as a teacher of infants through school-age children, administrator, playground inspector, and adjunct ECE faculty. She joined the JNP team in 2016. The Director reports to the Board of Directors.

*Assistant Director:*

Emily Davie is the Assistant Director who has a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, specializing in young children and families. She has many years experience working in HeadStart programs, elementary and middle schools, camps and preschool/daycares. She began at JNP as a parent, a volunteer and then staff in 2010. The Assistant Director reports to the Director.

*Full-Year Teachers:*

The classroom teachers work as a team in a co-teaching situation, teaching September through June. Some work part-time during the summer program. Each teacher reports to the Director.

*Part-time Teachers:*

These teachers work either full or part of the year in various capacities. Some are regular Float teachers assisting all throughout the school. Others work specifically with certain classes, mornings or afternoons. Some work part-time during the summer program.

*Assistant Teachers:*

This staff works mostly part-time, seasonally or full year. They are not qualified EEC teachers and are not responsible for individuals or groups of children but always work under the direct supervision of a teacher.

Many of our experienced teachers hold associate and bachelor's degrees in early childhood and elementary education. All our teachers are caring, nurturing and sensitive teachers, tuning in to the needs of each individual child and the group as a whole. Teachers participate in regular on-going Professional Development and Training opportunities annually.

*Staff Supervision*

The Director and Assistant Director conduct observations of staff while working with children every two months. A consultation is held with staff regarding the children's individual needs, communication with families and professional and personal goals. These observations are documented. Additionally, staff is formally evaluated annually with an opportunity for staff to have input and set goals. This is also documented.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

### **Program Hours & Schedule Options**

Joyful Noises provides year-round programming for children, Monday through Friday.

- **School Year Program (September – June):**  
Operating hours: **7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Typical program hours: **8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** (half-day) or **8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.** (full-day)

- **Summer Program (July & August):**  
Operating hours: **8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**  
Typical program hours remain **8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** or **8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Families may choose flexible attendance options ranging from **2 to 5 days per week**. **Extended care hours** are available **before and after the typical program hours**, by **advance scheduling**, depending on availability.

Joyful Noises will be closed the following days:

New Year's Day	Columbus Day
Martin Luther King Day	Veteran's Day
Presidents Day	Wed. before Thanksgiving (half day)
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Patriot's Day	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve (half day)
Juneteenth	Christmas Day
Labor Day	

Please refer to our Annual School Calendar for specific dates of our, Winter Break, Summer Break, and Teachers' In-service days. The school calendar is posted on the website (<https://www.joyfulnoisestopsfield.org>) and available on the shelves in the entry.

## **II. BILLING & FISCAL INFORMATION**

### **TUITION AND PAYMENT POLICIES**

- Tuition payment is due on or before the first of each month, even when the first of the month falls on a holiday or weekend day, or when a child is absent because of sickness.
- Please put tuition payments, any other payments, and written correspondence in the mailbox at the entry.
- Tuition may also be paid directly to JNP from your bank with our ACH option, please reach out to our Business Manager with questions.

*Checks may also be mailed to the school:*

Joyful Noises Preschool  
Attn: Business Manager  
9 E Common Street  
Topsfield, MA 01983

## LATE PAYMENTS

- Tuition payment is due on or before the first of each month.
- Payments that are more than 5 days past due will be assessed a late payment fee of \$25.00 on day 6.
- Joyful Noises reserves the right to discontinue providing care to a child or children whose account is greater than 10 days past due.
- If tuition and fees have not been paid in full by the 21st of the month, Joyful Noises will reserve the right to fill the childcare slot. Tuition Deposit will be forfeited.
- The school reserves the right to take legal action for collection of unpaid school tuition and fees. Parents will be held responsible for all costs of collection of unpaid fees, including court expenses and attorney's fees.
- A fee of \$15.00 is charged for each occurrence of a returned check for insufficient or other form of uncollected funds.

## REGISTRATION FEES

### *New and Returning Families:*

Upon acceptance notification for the School Year Program or Summer Program, a yearly non-refundable registration fee will be required to secure your child's placement.

### *New Families:*

A tuition deposit is required for all families. This amount varies based on tuition. This deposit will be applied to the family's account in their last month of enrollment, given the appropriate withdrawal notice, or rolled into the summer and following fall's tuition deposit when balance of the account is zero. Failure to comply with this may result in forfeit of the deposit.

### *Summer Program Reservations:*

A non-refundable registration fee along with a \$250 tuition deposit per child is required. This deposit will be applied to the family's August tuition obligation or rolled into the fall tuition deposit when balance of account is zero. Failure to comply may result in forfeit of the deposit.

### *Schedule Decrease Fee:*

Families who decrease their child's schedule during the year are subject to a 5% fee of the total monthly tuition as agreed to in the contract. If this fee is not paid families will forfeit their Tuition Deposit for a given enrollment period.

## OTHER FEES:

### *Withdrawal:*

**Parents sign a contract stating they are responsible for tuition payments for the time slots for which they enroll for the duration of the contract, or until such time as their slots can be filled. Parents are expected to sign & return contracts to ensure placement. Failure to comply with this may result in forfeit of the deposit.**

### *Late Pick Up:*

- Due to staff/child ratios regulated by the EEC and staff schedules, all children must be picked up on or before the contracted time.
- If you are going to be late due to unforeseen circumstances- PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL.
- The school clock is used to determine the pick-up time.
- A late fee of \$1.00 is charged for every minute after the scheduled pick-up time. The first 15 minutes of the first occurrence will be waived. Teachers will have parents sign a late pick-up slip for each occurrence.
- If you are late a second time, or any additional times, you will still be charged even if you called the school. The amount owed will be reflected on your monthly statement.
- Please have someone available to pick up your child if you are going to be late.

### *Drop-In Care & Extended Care:*

- Parents whose children are enrolled in the program may inquire about extra time if space is available.
- All Drop-In Care is at the discretion of the Director and based on availability and restrictions due to statewide health emergencies and student to staff ratios in compliance with the EEC.
- Extended Care may be requested in the following increments:  
between 7:30 -8:30 a.m. and 4:30-5:00 p.m.
- Drop-in Care may be requested for 8:30-12:30 or 12:30-4:30 p.m. or add-on time at the beginning or end of your child's scheduled day.
- When you arrange for Drop-In Care, you must sign the Request for Drop-In sheet held by the Teacher/Director.
- Parents will be billed the following month for Drop-In Care.

## **DISCOUNTS**

### *Sibling Discounts*

If a family would like to enroll more than one child at Joyful Noises, a sibling discount is available. Joyful Noises will deduct 10% of the lowest tuition for each additional child. (i.e., The Smith family has three children enrolled at Joyful Noises. The child with the highest Core Program Tuition Rate will pay full price. Each additional child will receive 10% off their Core Program Tuition Rate.) This discount will also be applied to contract days, extended days and afternoon programs provided that the schedules for all children are identical.

### *Church Member Discount*

If a family is a member of the Congregational Church of Topsfield or enrolled in a new member program at the Congregational Church of Topsfield, each child will receive a discount of 10%.

### *Exceptions to the Rules*

If a family enrolls four or more children at Joyful Noises at one time, that family will receive a flat 20% off the total invoice amount.

### *Financial Assistance*

Limited financial assistance may be available for currently enrolled families facing temporary financial hardship. Please contact the Director for more information.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Joyful Noises is a non-profit organization and a “mission” of the Congregational Church of Topsfield. Joyful Noises provides a few opportunities for fundraising throughout the year, and we encourage all families to participate. The fundraising money will be donated to individual classrooms or to the school. If you have any questions or would like to be a leader in any of these efforts, please contact the Director.

## **III. PARENT INFORMATION**

### **INTAKE PROCEDURES**

Before enrollment, parents complete an inquiry and arrange a tour of the school to become familiar with our environment, philosophy, and overall program. Upon enrollment, the child will be placed in an age-appropriate class, as space is available. The parent(s) will then meet with the Director for a second intake to collect the child’s enrollment forms, review the parent handbook, and health care policies.

Once a child and family have been accepted into the program, the parent(s) must follow the registration requirements of the Dept. of EEC by providing the documents below. All forms can be found on the school website.

1. A record of the child’s immunizations
2. Results of a recent lead screening test if the child is 9 months or older
3. A complete developmental questionnaire for the child
4. The results of a current doctor’s physical examination of the child
5. Any pertinent medical history
6. All required forms and permissions

Placements will be prioritized as follows:

1. Preference will be given to currently enrolled students.
2. Siblings of currently or previously enrolled students.
3. Those seeking full time care.
4. All other applicants.

### **ORIENTATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

A pre-enrollment visit, visits to the classroom before the start of school, fall parent/children orientation day and transition times in June for children already enrolled in the school are available to all families.



## **PARENT VISITS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Parents may make unannounced visits to the school and their child's classroom when their child is in attendance, and when they are not under restrictions due to a health emergency. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, help with school events, fundraising projects, join the class on any walking field trips, and share any hobbies or holidays. Speak to the Director or classroom teacher in advance so that plans can be made for the activities in which you plan to participate. Family members are always welcome visitors in the program (for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child, or volunteer in the classroom).

## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

- Children may be released to the child's parent(s) or anyone that the parent with physical custody of the child authorizes, in writing, to pick up the child.
- The person picking up the child must be sixteen years of age or older.
- If anyone other than those listed are to pick the child up, they need to have a written notice stating permission to pick up. The school will not release the child to the individual until permission is obtained from the parent or guardian to do so.
- If the Staff or Director has not met the person picking up, they will need to see a picture ID at the time of pickup.

## **SNOW POLICY**

It is our practice to keep school open whenever possible. However, adverse weather conditions and certain emergency situations may require the school to be closed, delayed, or dismissed early.

Joyful Noises will follow the Topsfield Public Schools and/or the Tri-Town School Union closures and delayed openings due to weather or emergency plans.

If there is a forecast of bad weather, you can watch the following television stations or listen to the following radio stations to see if Topsfield schools are closed.

### Television

WBZ – Channel 4  
WCVB – Channel 5  
WHDH – Channel 7  
WFXT – Channel 25

### Radio

WBZ – 1030 AM  
WESX – 1230 AM  
WBUR – 90.9 FM  
WRKO – 680 AM

We will also try to notify you regarding any school closing by Remind app and/or e-mail before 6:30 AM. Joyful Noises will open at 9:00 if there is a delay in opening Topsfield schools. This will allow for the church parking lot to be plowed and give time to the teachers to arrive at school safely. You may drop your children off after the delay at 9:00AM. In the event of severe weather or emergency related warning made during school hours, the Director will decide whether to close school early and the Director will contact parents by phone or e-mail to make pick-up arrangements. If Joyful Noises closes due to weather or emergency, parents are still responsible for payment. At all times, closures will be at the discretion of the Director.

## OFFICE HOURS

The office is open during regular school hours. When there is no one available in the office, you may leave a message in the school's mailbox on the office door, on our voice mail or by email. The school's phone number is 978-848-2018. Messages are checked regularly, and you can expect a response within 24 hours, with the exception of weekends and holidays.

## SECURITY SYSTEM

To maintain and improve your child's safety while attending Joyful Noises, a keyless security system has been installed. Every full-day family will be given their own unique code upon enrollment that will open the main door of the school for afternoon pickup. Simply enter your 4-digit code followed by the # button. This will allow admittance into the building. We ask that you refrain from sharing your code and thus offering admittance to anyone that you do not know. If your older child wants to enter the code, please supervise them and do not let them enter the school without you. Each code will expire upon withdrawal from Joyful Noises Preschool.

## PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IF:

- Your child will be absent and the reason for the absence.
- Your address or phone number (home, work or cell) changes.
- There is any change in the authorized person picking up your child.
- There are significant changes at home.
- Your child has a communicable disease, prolonged illness or will be away from school for an extended length of time.
- Your child has been given any medication upon arrival, prescription or over the counter.
- Your child has been sick or under the weather over the weekend.

## PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INPUT

Joyful Noises is committed to strengthening the bond between home and school. We do this through daily communication with parents, Toddler Day-sheets, posted Daily schedules, written notes, parent-teacher conferences, regular classroom emails and schoolwide email updates. If needed, important messages will be sent home in your child's backpack or lunch bag, so please be sure to check daily.

We are here to serve you. If you have any concerns, questions or recommendations please do not hesitate to share them with the Director. You may do this in person, via email, or by placing a note in our mailbox in the entry.

### *How to Get Involved:*

- **Board of Directors:** Parents wanting to take a more active role in shaping the program are encouraged to become part of the Board of Directors. Two spaces on the Board are reserved for parent members. To be a part of this Board, let the Director or a Board member know that you are interested.
- **Room Parents:** Parents also have an opportunity to sign up to become Room Parents for their children's classes. These volunteer positions usually involve interacting with other parents to coordinate classroom activities.

- **Parent Committee:** We also have an active and engaged Parent Committee, led by a Parent Co-Chairpersons, who work planning activities and events in the school. They can be reached via email at
- parentscomm@joyfulnoisestopsfield.org

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

- Teacher Conferences provide an opportunity for parents to speak with the classroom teacher, ask questions and view their child's work.
- School wide Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled for Toddlers, Preschoolers and Pre-Kindergarteners in January. These conferences are optional and generally held at night. A written report will accompany the conference. Parents have the opportunity for a second conference in June as needed and must be individually scheduled with the classroom teachers.
- Written Progress reports are completed and distributed twice a year in January and June. If your child has any special needs or is in the process of having a referral, additional communication or written information can be provided as needed).(The progress report will be delivered every three months.)

### *Issues and/or Concerns Regarding Children's Development:*

On occasion as educators, we notice developmental, emotional or behavioral issues that raise concern. These issues will be brought to the parents' attention as soon as they arise. In addition, day-to-day communication can be arranged in the form of phone calls or notes at the request of parents to monitor progress. Please speak to the classroom teacher and request a method that will work for you. Staff will also be available for individual conferences as requested by parents and to assist with making referrals to outside resources for further evaluation with parental consent.

## **YOUR CHILD'S RECORDS**

Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. The center's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

### *Access to Your Child's Record*

You will be able to have access to your child's records. The center must provide access within two days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is located in more than one location. The center must have procedures regarding access, duplication, and dissemination of children's records. They must maintain a written log, which identifies anyone who has had access or has received any information out of the record. This log is available to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

### *Amending the Record*

You have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials to your child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If you are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the Director to make your objections known
2. The licensee shall, within one week after the conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason(s) for the decision. If his/her decision is in your favor, he/she shall immediately take steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

#### *Charge for Copies*

Joyful Noises may charge a small fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

#### *Transfer of the Record*

Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, Joyful Noises can give you your child's record or transfer it to any other person that you identify. The center will ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the records.

### **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING LOT PROCEDURES**

Pick up and drop off - parents are responsible for the child's transportation to and from the school.

- There is a 5mph speed limit in the parking lot.
- Parents will drop off children in the loop in front of the school three cars at a time. Your children will then be brought into the school by staff. However, if you are paying for an early drop off, please use the code on the door and bring your child to their classroom.
- Families picking up their children at 12:30 should use their door code to enter the school and collect their children from their classroom, waiting at the door while teachers bring them to you.
- Full day families will be allowed into the school using their codes to pick up their children from their classrooms. Please wait outside your child's classroom while they get ready.
- If children are outside, please wait at the playground gate and your children will be brought to you.
- Please do not park in spots reserved for church staff and members.
- Please park in the white designated parking spaces (second parking row).
- Please do not leave your car running unattended to pick up or drop off.
- Please do not leave children unattended in your car while you run in to pick up your other children, this is considered neglect and is reportable to DCF.
- Parents will hold their child's hand while crossing the parking lot leaving school.
- Please do not allow children to run into the school and in the hallways, out of your sight, as you are responsible for them until they are signed in to their class and once, they are signed out of their class.
- Please do not allow siblings to roam around the school or out of your sight.

## **LOST AND FOUND ITEMS**

If your child is missing items, please email classroom teachers and let them know so we can search for them. If teachers find unidentified items, they will send a picture via email to all to discover the owner.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Parents and others who volunteer regularly in our school have received orientation, a background records check, have read our handbooks, and have received training from our teachers for the duties they will perform. Volunteers only work with the children under the supervision of EEC qualified staff members. They must be always under direct visual supervision of these EEC staff members and their duties, dates of service, hours of service, and responsibilities held must be documented by the classroom EEC educator or Director.

## **ANNUAL PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Family questionnaires are also passed out annually to families. This gives parents an opportunity to give input regarding policies and procedures. We review this information to make the changes needed to better serve families.

# **IV. IV. PROGRAM INFORMATION**

## **THE TODDLER PROGRAM FEATURES**

Our Toddler program provides a loving, home-like atmosphere in which we care for children between the ages of 15 months and 2 years 8 months.

- Each child is cared for according to his/her own schedule.
- Activities are provided which are stimulating and encourage each child to grow at their own rate.
- We have quiet cuddly times as well as songs, games and outdoor play.
- We also provide toddler art activities, which help develop social skills, self-awareness and tactile experiences, so important to a growing Toddler.

## **THE PRESCHOOL - PRE K PROGRAM FEATURES**

- Individual learning experiences.
- Small classes with supportive adult staffing.
- Thematic curriculum.
- A strong emphasis on phonemic awareness and language development.
- Hands-on open-ended materials and activities.
- Fun activities in science, technology, engineering and math, STEM.
- Self-help skills like problem solving, critical thinking, communication, social skills, and relationship building.

## **SPECIALS**

**Chapel** - is offered for Toddlers and Preschool/Pre-K. Children will learn songs and stories from the Bible. Basic themes of kindness, caring for ourselves, our world and

others are fostered. Traditions of the Christian church are taught (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.).

**Music & Movement**- is offered by a seasoned early childhood teacher who incorporates songs, chants, rhythm and movement, fingerplays into an enriching experience.

**Other Specials** - Visitors from Police, Fire Dept, Dentist, Farm Animal Visits, Nature Enrichment Programs, etc.

## **SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE**

- 7:30-8:30: Early Arrival time, quiet activities, Breakfast for those that bring it.  
8:30-12:30: Programs begin in individual classrooms. This includes cognitive skills development, creative expressive art activities, outdoor play with at least 30 minutes physical activity. Snack time shall occur each morning.  
12:00-12:25: Lunch and clean-up  
12:25-12:30: Dismissal of morning program  
12:30-1:00: Transitional time for diapering, use of bathrooms & quiet activities  
1:00-3:00: Rest time - This required time is based on the individual needs of the children and shall last a minimum of 45 minutes per day.  
2:30/3:30: Wake-up time, Bathrooms, Snack  
3:30-EOD: Afternoon activities include choices for: art, blocks, table games, manipulatives, and dramatic play and outdoor time with 30 minutes of physical activity. In case of inclement weather, children do movement and play games upstairs in the Fellowship Hall.  
4:25-4:30: Dismissal of full day and afternoon program  
4:30-5:00: Extended day care available as needed

## **NAPS**

- Toddlers rest from 12:30 to 2:30.
- Preschoolers rest from approximately 1:00 to 2:30/3:00 p.m.
- Children who do not sleep, or those who awaken early, rest and then are allowed a quiet activity. Appropriate space and adequate lighting will be provided.

At times, the Staff may rub the backs or tummies of children who are restless. Children are allowed to wake up at a gentle, relaxed pace. Teachers try to make the time pleasant and restful by dimming the lights and playing soft music. Each child will rest on a cot. Parents are encouraged to work with staff if there is a problem with children either sleeping too much or too little at home. However, it has been our experience that children need their sleep and easily fall asleep.

Please notify the staff if you are picking up your child during naptime so that we can have your child ready for you. These pickups should occur prior to 1:00 and after 2:30, this is requested to minimize disruptions and is in the best interest of the child.

## THINGS TO BRING TO SCHOOL THE FIRST DAY

**PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING THAT COMES TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD!!!**

1. A complete change of clothes labeled and kept at school; Toddlers please send two sets.
2. A recent photo so that we may label their cubby with a photo as well as the child's first name.
3. A family photo for our classroom displays.
4. Full day students need to bring a crib sheet (52"x22") and a small blanket.
5. A morning and/or afternoon snack labeled with your child's name
6. A nutritious ready to eat lunch in a labeled lunch box
7. A water bottle labeled with your child's name available daily.
8. Diapers or pull-ups (these must be the type that Velcro on the sides), wipes, ointments for those needed
9. Appropriate clothing for children to run, jump, play and get messy. Weather Appropriate clothing should be provided for all seasons:
  - o Winter: Boots, snow pants, coat, hat and mittens, indoor shoes
  - o Summer: Bathing suits, water shoes, swim diapers, TOWEL
  - o Spring/Fall: Raincoats, rain boots
10. Footwear- Appropriate and safe lace or Velcro shoes for active outdoor
  - o Play (no flip flops).

## MEALTIME PROCEDURES

**JOYFUL NOISES PRESCHOOL IS A NUT-FREE SCHOOL** – Please check all food labels to ensure the safety of children with nut allergies. Joyful Noises uses reasonable care to strictly enforce its nut-free policy but cannot be responsible for nut products that may inadvertently be brought in by children. Labeling may indicate two different scenarios. Items labeled “may contain trace nut products” should not be sent in. Labels stating “made in a facility that processes nuts” are acceptable.

Learning continues at meal and snack times. Joyful Noises consider mealtimes a relaxed social experience. Teachers provide guidance to children to promote as much self-help as possible. Children are not forced to eat. Children are served at least a small portion of every food and encouraged to taste all foods. No food will ever be withheld as a punishment or used as a reward. The Staff eat seated at the table with the children, converse and model good mealtime eating habits and behavior.

\*Physical distancing shall be in place during health emergencies.

Morning and Afternoon snack. Parents must provide healthy snacks, such as sliced fruit, vegetables, crackers, graham crackers, saltines, rice cakes, cheese, etc. are suggested. Parents may send snacks for special celebrations. Please check for classroom allergies first. Please do not send soda or tree nut products to school.

We ask that you bring a “table-ready” lunch. We are unable to heat or refrigerate your child's lunch. Hot foods such as soup or pasta should be put into a thermos; ice packs should be used to keep food cool, especially when sandwich meats are packed.

Some suggestions for lunch include.

Sandwiches

Soy butter and jelly

Tuna salad

Egg salad

Chicken nuggets

Hummus and Pita

Soup & Crackers

Pasta

Fruit and Vegetables

Hot dogs cut in half moons or smaller

Remember, “table-ready” means cut into bite size, no choke hazard pieces, grapes should be cut in half; sandwiches should be cut into easy-to-handle sizes.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special to children. Every child’s birthday is celebrated during our school year. We ask you to please bring in enough food for all the children in the class. Due to severe allergies please tell the teachers several days in advance that you are bringing food in so parents with allergic children can bring a special treat for their children as well.

## **TOILETING POLICY**

The following is the procedure used by preschool staff:

- Preschool children shall be accompanied by an adult when they need to use the lavatory.
- The teacher will assist the child, if needed, but the child is encouraged to wipe him/her, etc. Parents can send disposable wipes to help the child wipe himself.
- When a child has had an accident wetting or soiling their clothes, the teacher/assistant shall assist the child in changing their clothes while encouraging independence, in the lavatory. The soiled clothing shall be put in a double plastic bag and put with the child’s other belongings. The parents will be informed of the soiled clothing.
- \*During a Health Emergency the left bathroom shall be designated to PS2 and the right bathroom shall be designated to Pre-K, additional cleaning and sanitizing shall also take place as needed.

## **TOILET LEARNING**

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, please speak with your child’s teacher or director so that we may work with you through this process. Occasionally, we see signs of readiness in school and may approach you. We ask that you send in 3 pairs of underwear, 3 pairs of pants, socks and extra shoes, if possible, labeled with your child’s name. There will be accidents. If after a few days to a week, your child is having excessive accidents, no awareness of eliminating, fear of using the toilet or no interest, we may need to discuss this with you further and possibly return to pull-ups. During the toilet learning process as well as in the older classrooms, pull-ups with Velcro sides are used for the ease of changing without having to dress and undress the child every time. These may be worn for naps and for playing outside.



## **TRANSITIONS**

When children are transitioning between classrooms the educators in each classroom must:

- Collaborate regarding the needs of the child.
- Inform parents that the child will be transitioning and obtain permission.
- Have a plan in place that is in a manner appropriate for that child's ability to understand.
- Have the child make visits to the new classroom if at all possible.
- \*This process is restricted during a Health Emergency

## **CLASSROOM PROMOTIONS**

EEC regulates how we group children in classes. The following are the guidelines for your child's age upon entry into a class:

- Toddler: 15 months to 2 years 8 months.
- Preschoolers: 2.9 years or older
- Pre-Kindergarten: 4's and 5's or ready for kindergarten next year.

Considerations for Classroom Promotions:

- Your child's developmental level as well as chronological age.
- Generally, children are moved in July and September.
- A parent wanting to guarantee a slot in an older classroom may pay for the time slots in both classrooms until his/her child reaches the appropriate age for promotion.

## **PHOTO POLICY**

Our program relies on capturing pictures of children while at school. These pictures are used in the following manner:

- Classroom pictures are taken for nametags, cubby labels and the like.
- Classrooms share a link to google photos with pictures of children taken throughout the day sent only to enrolled families and not to be shared.
- With permission, photos of authorized children only may be used in our weekly Face Book posts or on our website.
- All photos of children are deleted from our devices once children leave JNP.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

We discourage children from bringing toys from home. Any toys from home will be placed in the child's cubby/backpack for safe keeping. They often cause conflict, and the school cannot be responsible for their safekeeping. However, bringing a 'piece of home' to childcare is often important to children. You may arrange with your child's teacher for a 'special lovey' that travels from home to the Center and is used for napping.

**\*\*Note:** the exception to bringing toys from home is during "Sharing Day" which will be communicated to parents by classroom teachers with advance notice. **\*\***

## **ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH POLICIES**

The parent or the person on the emergency contact list must always be available by phone during school hours. It is the parent's responsibility to have someone available who can come to the school for emergencies or for a sick child. If a child is sent home with a fever, they may return after being fever-free for 24 hours without medication.

Please call if your child has a communicable illness or infestation, such as chicken pox, conjunctivitis, pinworms, fifth's disease, impetigo, hand, foot & mouth disease, mites or head lice so we can exercise additional control methods and notify other parents. Your child's identity is protected.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

It is the responsibility of the staff of Joyful Noises to protect children from abuse and neglect while in the school's care and custodial staff are mandated reporters. Any incident of suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to the Director.

The staff member (with the Director's knowledge) will report suspected abuse or neglect to the local office of Department of Children and Families, DCF, 1-978-825-3800 or 978-469-8800. However, if a child is in immediate physical danger the local police will be called. EEC must also be notified after filing a 51A or learning that a 51A has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the school or during a program related activity. The telephone report will be followed by a written report within 48 hours.

The entire staff will cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect, including identifying parents currently or previously enrolled in the school, providing consent for disclosure of information to EEC, and allowing the EEC to disclose information to any person and/or agency the Office may specify as necessary to the prompt investigation of allegations and the protection of children.

## **ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

Joyful Noises Preschool maintains zero tolerance for abuse. Whether it be staff, parents or other adults, action will be taken in cases where any form of abuse or neglect occurs. All staff participate in EEC's Mandated Reporter Training as well as completing the Middlesex DA's Abuse Prevention Training biennially. Additionally, all staff undergo an extensive Background Check and must be deemed "Suitable" to work with children. These policies are in the Staff Personnel Handbook and employees sign off once they have read these policies and agree.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

It is the responsibility of the staff of Joyful Noises to protect children from abuse and neglect while in the school's care and custodial staff are mandated reporters. Any incident of suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to the Director.

The staff member (with the Director's knowledge) or the Director will report suspected abuse or neglect to the local office of Department of Children and Families, DCF, 1-978-825-3800 or 978-469-8800. However, if a child is in immediate physical danger the local police will be called. EEC must also be notified after filing a 51A or learning

that a 51A has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the school or during a program related activity. The telephone report will be followed by a written report within 48 hours.

The entire staff will cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect, including identifying parents currently or previously enrolled in the school, providing consent for disclosure of information to EEC, and allowing the EEC to disclose information to any person and/or agency the Office may specify as necessary to the prompt investigation of allegations and the protection of children.

### **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT BY A STAFF MEMBER**

- Staff members suspected of abuse will be reassigned to office duties with no child contact for the duration of the DCF investigation and for such further time as the EEC requires.
- If the allegation is founded, the staff member's position will be terminated.
- If the allegation is unfounded the staff member will be reinstated to his/her position. Joyful Noises reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary measures.
- Additionally, should any staff member be identified as "Grooming" a child for abuse, their position will be immediately terminated and a 51A report will be filed. Parents, DCF, EEC and appropriate authorities will be notified of these actions.
- "Grooming" is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or caregiver), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse. This behavior may be witnessed by other staff members who are asked to report this to the director. Any other suspicious behaviors or policy violations witnessed should be reported to the director as well.
- 

### **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ABUSE THAT OCCURS AT JNP**

- Should abuse occur at the school, JNP will notify the families, DCF, EEC and the appropriate authorities as needed.
- Disciplinary action will immediately be taken with that employee.
- JNP will make every effort to provide guidance for those involved.
- JNP will also provide information to victims to obtain assistance and counseling services.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY (CHILD GUIDANCE)**

Teachers are trained to make disciplinary measures as kind and positive as possible by taking into consideration safety, individual needs, and the given situation. Teachers handle each situation individually. Basic techniques include gentle verbal guidance, modeling calming techniques, redirection, natural consequences and communication of feelings. Team members' work together to be as consistent as possible in similar situations. All staff encourage the following simple rules to guide behavior by having children use:

- Kind words
- Gentle hands

- Walking feet
- Safe bodies

**Joyful Noises will prohibit:**

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children
- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment
- Depriving children of meals or snacks
- Force feeding children
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet; or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- Confining a child to any piece of equipment for an extended period in lieu of supervision.

A teacher may need to remove a child from a group situation if a child has lost control verbally, physically, or emotionally. It will be communicated clearly to the child that he/she/they will have a “body break” and must leave the group until he/she/they can gain control over their body and big emotions. We explain that they are not in control right now, which is not safe for him/her/them or the other children, so it is best to go to a quiet area until he/she/they feel ready to return to the group and feel in control again. Any time away from the group should not exceed one minute for each year of the child’s age and must take place within the educator’s or director’s point of view. Generally, additional communication is needed for this situation to become a learning opportunity. A teacher or the Director will take the time to sit and talk with the child. The teacher will seek to help the child communicate how he/she/they feels and find solutions together. The final goal: making it a learning experience for the child.

**TERMINATION AND SUSPENSION POLICY**

Under certain circumstances, when our school cannot meet the needs of a child and/or when the safety of others cannot be ensured, the school reserves the right to temporarily suspend a child from the school until assessments, evaluations or referrals for services have been completed.

Joyful Noises believes strongly in working through any difficulties that children/families may be having. While termination from the program is a rarely used last resort, the school reserves the right to require parents to withdraw their children when the relationship between the school and the child is not mutually beneficial. The Director will meet with the parents to discuss options to avoid suspension and termination. The Director will also provide referrals for evaluation and service, consultation and training for our program. The Director and the parents, with the input of the classroom teachers, will develop a behavioral intervention plan at home and in the program.

When a child is terminated from the school, whether initiated by Joyful Noises or the parent(s), the teacher will prepare the child for termination from the preschool in a manner consistent with the child’s ability to understand.

Reasons for termination may include but are not limited to, failure to pay tuition, failure to follow through with a recommended referral for services; non-compliance with the Center's policies and procedures; inability to resolve a situation which could adversely impact the child's or others safety at the school. The school provides resources and referral information upon request to parents withdraw their children.

If a child leaves our program, we will help him (with parent's permission) transition by sharing information with the next program.

## **REFERRAL PROCESS**

The following procedures will be used for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services for their child should the center staff feel that an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child.

Whenever ANY staff member is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feels that further evaluation would benefit the child, they should report it to the child's teaching team. The team will review concerns with the Director.

If the Director agrees, the teaching team is requested to complete an observation report and review the child's record prior to making a referral.

### *Referral Meeting with Parents*

The Director will have an initial discussion with parents regarding observed concerns. They will then schedule a meeting with parents to notify them of the center's concern and prepare a current list of possible referral resources.

At the meeting, the Director and teaching team will provide to the parent(s) a written statement which will include the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, a summary of the center's observations related to the referral and any efforts Joyful Noises may have made to accommodate the child's needs.

The Director will offer assistance to the child's parents in making a referral. Parents will be encouraged to call or request in writing an evaluation. If parents need extra support, the Director of Joyful Noises, with written parental consent, will contact the referral agency for them.

### *Follow-up to the Referral*

The Director will, with parental permission, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the Joyful Noises Preschool. If it is determined that the child is not in need of service from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the staff of Joyful Noises will review the child's progress at the center every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

### *Record of Referral*

The Director and teaching team will maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parent conference and results. A referral checklist will be kept in the child's record at school.

### *Referral Agencies*

The following are a list of agencies that provide help and support to children in our school who may need special services:

Topsfield Elementary Special Education Department  
Preschool Special Needs Contact: Jenny Churchill  
978-887-1538 x 4401

Salem Psychology Associates – Nancy Arnesani, LMHC  
70 Washington Street, Salem, MA 01970  
978-741-7898

The Beverly Center, P.C. Contact: Dr. George Beilin  
83 Herrick Street Suite 2005  
Beverly, MA 01915  
978-922-6613

Mass General for Children at North Shore Medical Center  
Psychological/Educational Assessment Team  
57 Highland Avenue  
Salem, MA 01970  
978-354-2705

Northeast ARC Early Intervention - Cape Ann (Serving Topsfield, and Cape Anne area)  
Contact Intake Coordinator Denise (For services to be rendered at JNP)  
11 Dodge Street  
Beverly, MA 01915  
978-921-1182  
Contacts: Martha Levine

Northeast ARC Early Intervention - Northshore (Serving Danvers, Middleton, Peabody, Marblehead, Lynn, Lynnfield, Salem)  
149 Sylvan St.  
Danvers, MA 01923  
978-774-7570  
Contact: Anne Dolan

Thom Pentucket Early Intervention Program (Serving Boxford, Georgetown, Rowley, Haverhill, Bradford, W. Newbury, Newbury, Newburyport, Amesbury, Merrimac, Groveland)  
320 Main St., P.O. Box 956  
West Newbury, MA 01985  
978-363-5553  
Contact Michaela

The Massachusetts Office on Disability  
Christopher N. Coyle  
617-727-7440 x 334 or 800-322-2020

Pediatric Dentistry of the North Shore, Arash Goli, D.M.D.,  
6 State Road #101, Danvers, MA 01923, 978-777-3744

North Shore Eye Specialists, Irwin Nathanson, Optometrist  
85 Constitution Lane Suite 100C, Liberty Tree Office Part, Danvers, MA 01923  
978-774-5510

Speech & Audiology - Beverly Hospital  
85 Herrick Street Beverly, MA 01915 978-922-3000x2690

## **10 FACTS ABOUT YOUNG CHILDREN**

1. They are active. They learn through using all of their senses. Plan multi-sensory activities that include movement. Young children become more fatigued by sitting than moving.
2. They are noisy. They learn by talking and working in an active way. Plan hands-on activities that do not require being quiet and listening.
3. They are observers. They learn through watching and modeling the behavior of other children and adults.
4. They need to feel competent and capable. Learning how to do something well helps a child feel proud of his/her capabilities. Plan varied and creative activities that permit all children to be successful.
5. They have their own ideas and “pretend” worlds. In play, children are in control of the actions and outcomes of their role. Plan for and encourage play by providing time, materials, and a supportive interpersonal environment.
6. They are egocentric and social. Children learn through interaction with objects and people. Help children experience other points of view through language, modeling, and cooperative activities.
7. They are tender and young. They learn best in a caring, secure environment. They need patience, caring, consistency and security from adults. Give them adult support; they develop trust with this support.
8. They are beginners. They learn through their mistakes. Be patient with them. Give them time to learn through errors and repetition.
9. They are curious and inquisitive. They seek meaning and understanding through interests in their immediate surroundings and through important people in their lives. Pay attention to the interests and conversations of the children. Plan curriculum from children’s interests.
10. They are different. Each child has a developmental timetable. They are learning at different levels; their learning levels may vary daily. Plan for individuals and small groups. Plan for difficult and easy activities. Provide opportunities for children to choose what they will do.

*Presented by New England Kindergarten Conference, 1996 Alice M. Meckley*