

# **ROYAL OAK NURSERY SCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN**

**4413 Mt Royal Boulevard  
Allison Park, PA. 15101**

**(412) 487-1668**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**September 2003**

To Our Parents:

All that we expect of the child is that he comes to school and be himself. What we expect of the parents is that they read the operating procedures and policies in this handbook and in supplemental notes and newsletters that we may be sent home from time to time; and that you feel free to be part of the school, offering suggestions, comments, and constructive criticisms, as well as moral support.

We want you to know, to understand, to discuss with us, our goals.

We want you to look often into our busy, happy, noisy, creative classrooms and see your child at play.

We want you to realize the validity of that play and the importance of what he is learning.

Parents and teachers together can help your child develop to his full human potential.

Have a Happy Year!

SCHOOL CALENDAR -- 2003 - 2004

September 2	Tues	First day of school
October 31	Fri	Halloween party
November 27 To December 1	Thurs Mon	Thanksgiving vacation - SCHOOL CLOSED
December 2	Tues	Return to school
December 23	Tues	Christmas party
December 24 to January 4	Wed Sun	Christmas vacation - SCHOOL CLOSED
January 5	Mon	Return to school
February 13	Fri	Valentines day
February 16	Mon	Presidents day - SCHOOL CLOSED
April 8 to April 12	Thurs Mon	Easter vacation - SCHOOL CLOSED
April 13	Tues	Return to school
May 31	Mon	Memorial day - SCHOOL CLOSED
June 4	Fri	Last day of school term
June 7	Mon	Summer program begins

## THE SCHOOL

Royal Oak Nursery School & Kindergarten is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, State Board of Private Academic Schools and also the Department of Public Welfare and complies with all of the standards put forth by those departments. It was founded at the present site by Frank Harlovic and Joanne Potlas in May 1967. Royal Oak is a private school which operates on tuition only and is not funded by any other sources.

The majority of our staff are certified graduate teachers with degrees in early childhood, elementary, or special education. All staff participate in a continuous program of in-service education and studies for professional advancement in order to remain alert to the ever-changing needs of today's families and to the findings of current research. The staff members have been selected for their personal traits, especially their keen and sympathetic understanding of children, and their interest, enthusiasm, and ability for working with children.

## GOALS

The primary purpose of Royal Oak School is to provide skilled guidance, an enriching environment and varied experiences which will help the child to know his/her full potential and attain it, understand and appreciate himself, make a successful home-school transition, learn to relate to other children, become familiar with a group setting, and develop the following: interest and joy in learning, security and self-satisfaction, self-expression, self-control, creativity, and responsibility.

## PHILOSOPHY

The knowledge that each child is a person of intrinsic worth is the philosophy upon which our school is based. More learning takes place during the first years than at any other single period in life; therefore, the significance of a good beginning is evident. A good school provides an enjoyable environment in which a well-balanced educational program is carried out under the guidance of a trained staff. It provides an opportunity for the child to contribute to group life and welfare and to acquire a mastery of environment and consequent security through accomplishment. The preschool/kindergarten is the first group experience of the child outside his home. To ease the transition between home and school a good child-parent-teacher relationship is to be desired as the first step in the educative process. Ease of real communication between people is the most basic promoter of good relationships and understanding, and will provide a working basis for joint effort in a program for the child's benefit.

## PROGRAM

A beneficial program prepares the child for his school years. The best preparation for these years is to provide the preschooler/kindergartener with the opportunities he needs to live and learn as a preschooler/kindergartener and to experience widely and intensely what is relevant and appropriate to that stage of development. Consideration must be given to the whole child: his physical, mental emotional and social welfare. Your child will have experiences with art media, music, literature, and the natural world. Yet, all the time the child is being continuously challenged by specific learning goals we have set for him:

In order to begin to read and perform other academic tasks the child must first gather meaning from the world and develop an awareness of concepts.

In order to gather meaning from the world, the child must have many satisfying sensory and sensory motor experiences - he must touch, feel, smell, hear, see. Perceptual development follows: This is how the child interprets his sensory experiences, which is a prerequisite for developing his mind.

The program we pursue is geared toward helping the child develop habits of observation, questioning, and listening. It gives him awareness of his own feelings and of his right to express those feelings by sometimes channeling them into other means of expression. He learns that he is free to make choices, and that as long as he stays within the limits of consideration for people and things he does not always have to conform. An open-end program like ours prepares the child to utilize his intellectual and creative abilities in future learning tasks.

Our computer program is available to the prekindergarten and kindergarten children. It offers them a basic introduction to the computer and a reinforcement of our educational program. The school has its own library, which is equipped with print/nonprint resources for teachers to enhance curricular areas and for all students to enjoy. It is used as a lending library for the kindergarten children to teach responsibility and foster the love of reading. Our kindergarten curriculum also includes a foreign language - Spanish. The school has a large playground equipped to meet the physical and social needs of all the children. To develop the children's agility and interest in athletics we have a properly equipped gymnasium. All activity in this area is supervised by a staff member.

#### TUITION

Tuition is due the first of each month. If tuition is not received by the tenth of the month a bill will be sent. Since costs are fixed, there will be no rebates to the monthly fee. Receipts are only given if requested.

#### LATE FEE

A \$15.00 per child fee will be charged every 15 minute period any child is picked up after the closing time (6:00 PM).

#### ADMISSIONS/WITHDRAWALS

1. Children are admitted regardless of race, religious creed, color, sex, or national origin who may benefit from our type of program.
2. To be admitted into the nursery class a child must be toilet trained and at least 2 years and 7 months before the first day of the school term. A child must be at least 3 years and 7 months before the first day of the school term to be admitted into the prekindergarten class. A child must be at least 4 years and 7 months before the first day of the school term to be admitted into the kindergarten class.
3. Classes are filled on a first-come/first-served basis according to the date of enrollment.
4. If the classes are filled when a parent calls, the child's name will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies when they occur.
5. If a child needs to be withdrawn from the school two weeks notice is required so that the vacancy can be filled by another child. Should more notice be possible, it would be appreciated.

#### DAYS/HOURS OF OPERATION

The school term begins in September and continues through the first week of June. Immediately following is a ten-week summer program. Royal Oak's hours of operation are from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm Monday through Friday:

Nursery/Prekindergarten Morning program - 9:00 am to 11:30 am  
Kindergarten All Day program 8:30 am to 3:30 pm

Nursery and Prekindergarten children enrolled in the all day session attend the morning program of class. The all day afternoon session (nappers excluded) runs from 12:30 pm until 3:30 pm. During this

session the children engage in additional learning activities that do not duplicate but only supplement the morning session. Royal Oak does not close for snow days or in-service days; the only closings are those listed on the school calendar.

## DISMISSAL POLICY

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick the child up. We must have written or verbal authorization for changes in this respect. A court order must be on file at the school if a child is not to be released to one of the parents. If you know you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we can reassure your child. Because the school has no provision for care after 6:00 pm, consistent lateness after that hour will be cause for consideration of dismissal.

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS

Throughout the year Open Houses, Parent-Teacher meetings, and an Art Show will be held for parents to visit the school, discuss their child's progress with the teachers, and see what work the child is doing. Progress reports are given out twice a year. A record is kept on each child. Parents may call the school (412 - 487-1668) to arrange for personal conferences or information at any time.

## DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an essential ingredient in the lives of children and adults. It is not a hardship to be endured nor a punishment, which results from an infraction of a rule. More properly, discipline is about obedience to the rules and to salutary regulations without which an orderly life would be impossible. With mutual understanding and cooperation of the home and school, the teaching of our students to lead orderly lives can be easier and more successful. Parents are as welcome to request the help they may need from the school personnel as the school personnel is open to receive the help of the parents in solving any problems they may have with their child.

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by the teacher verbally thus reinforcing the child's good feeling about his/her behavior. Asking the child to stop and think about his/her unpleasant behavior enables that child to work at self-control. For a child not cooperating in a group listening situation, the child is seated by a teacher and reminded of acceptable behavior.

Removal from the group for a period of time-out is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behavior. This time-out is not a punishment, but rather a time when the child may calm down, remember what behavior the teacher is asking for, and decide for him- or herself when he/she is ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior.

Corporal punishment is not considered to be an accepted method of dealing with young children' behavior. Children will not be hit, slapped or spanked in any manner while attending Royal Oak.

If behavior problems persist, the parent is asked to a conference to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way. It may be suggested that the child be involved in a behavior modification program, with the parent having the option of being involved in the process as well.

## CLOTHING

Children are encouraged to wear play clothes and tennis shoes. The child's name should be placed on all outdoor clothing and other belongings to help ensure the return of all the proper possessions and clothes. Found items not claimed at the end of the school year will be donated to a charitable organization.

## FIELD TRIPS

After the teachers know that there will be obedience to the necessary restrictions with regard to safety and courtesy, the children will go on field trips. We use the excursions as a learning situation, either to initiate, develop, or culminate a unit. Before each trip notices will be sent home to inform the parents.

## MEDICATIONS

We consider giving medication to your child in your absence a serious responsibility. We will give the proper amount at the agreed time with appropriate written permission. Medications are kept out of reach of the children.

The regulations stipulate the following procedures:

1. All medication should be kept in original containers, labeled with original current prescription label and have safety lock closures. The prescription label on medication with amount and directions is regarded as physician's permission and only your signed instructions are necessary.
2. A daily medication chart is kept on file. Whenever you want us to give your child medication (prescription or non-prescription) please come in and sign the chart.

We realize that in some cases these measures seem inconvenient, but all regulations have been outlined to protect your child.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of the children is of primary importance. Properly spaced rest and play periods are scheduled. Group guidance of health habits is a part of the program. The children are secure from traffic hazards on our grounds.

Each child is required by state regulations to have on file a health statement, which includes a record of up-to-date immunizations and the signature of the child's source of medical care. If a child's health care summary is not complete at the time of enrollment or within sixty days after enrollment, the child will be excluded from the program. Each child who has not had a physical examination within the last year must have one before entrance into school.

No child who arrives at school noticeably ill, with a rash, or with a fever will be admitted for that day. Should a child become ill during the day, the parent is notified immediately. The child is isolated under adult supervision until the parent or authorized person arrives to take the child home. The child should be free and clear of fever, diarrhea, or vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.

In case of apparent exposure to communicable diseases, the school will notify the parents, and parents are requested to assume the same responsibility with regard to the school. Parents should keep a sick child at home.

Fire drills are conducted throughout the year for the safety of our pupils. These drills help to teach the children to evacuate the building quickly and safely.

## LUNCH POLICY

Lunches at Royal Oak are nutritious and varied. We offer, for the most part, items that have been favored by the children over the years: e.g., pizza, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, etc, but we do attempt to introduce food which may be new experiences (beef stew, vegetable soup, lasagna, etc.).

We are fortunate in that we are able to complement the lunches with the two snacks per day. If milk, fruit, or vegetables are not included in the lunch, you can be assured that we will offer them with the snack.

The first serving at each meal is of a very small portion to minimize waste. There are always second and third servings. For example, children may have one and a half hot dogs, hamburgers, or sandwiches if they desire. All the meals are backed by secondary choices and in most instances more than one. Secondary choices are usually sandwiches, but at times may vary. These choices are offered after the second serving of the menu item so as not to distract the children who are eating their lunch.

We encourage the children to try all the foods and enjoy them to take one bite. If they do not like it the secondary choice is offered. A dessert will be given regardless. We never force children to eat. However, should a child ask for seconds or dessert we ask that they try to finish it. If a child whimsically refuses to eat what he/she requested, we will give the child a few minutes longer and encourage them to finish the requested item. If we feel a child has eaten enough or just doesn't like the item (even if they requested it) they are not compelled to continue eating. We hope this practice teaches children not to waste and to moderate their eating.

If a child is teary or disruptive at lunch, he/she is usually led to another table in the same room to avoid upsetting the other children. Occasionally children may be moved from the lunchroom to allow them time to regain their composure and complete their meal. This also eliminates any possibility of the child being humiliated by his/her peers.

We make every effort to ensure that the lunches are nutritious and an educational experience, but most of all enjoyable.

#### SNACKS

Royal Oak furnishes snacks for the children each morning and afternoon. Snacks are used as a part of the curriculum, often related to the unit topic, and as an experience in tasting. Parents are asked to provide their children with breakfast before coming to school.

With advance notice children may bring special treats for their birthday or any other time during the year. If a child is allergic to fruit juices, milk, etc. please speak to the Directress regarding substitutions.

#### BIRTHDAYS

These are celebrated once a month (third Friday of each month) for all the children whose birthday falls within that month. A cake with candles is provided by the school and each birthday child receives a small gift. Cake and ice cream is the snack for the day.

#### SHOW AND TELL

The toys used in the school have been purchased to enrich the program with certain values. Do not encourage your child to bring toys to school. We do have a Show and Tell day (first Friday of each month) and toys are permitted then. However, books, science and nature items, and objects of unusual or educational interest are preferred and may be brought to school at any time.

## HOME PARTIES

Please send all invitations to the child's home and not have them hand-delivered to the school. This is of the utmost importance as it can be very upsetting to children not invited.

## CAR SAFETY RULES

No transportation is furnished by the school, but a car pool is easily arranged at the Parents' Tea. This can be a great convenience, but it is also potentially very dangerous. Here are some important rules:

1. Children will not be released from the school to the car until all traffic stops
2. Drivers should put the car in park and apply hand brake when receiving children.
3. Should the driver need to leave the car, please turn off the engine and apply the hand brake.
4. Windows should be open no more than a few inches and no hands, arms or heads out.
5. Send a note if anyone other than the car pool driver or the parent is to pick up your child.  
Teachers should meet both parents early in the year.
6. In returning children home, stay until you see that the child can get into his house and preferably see the adult in charge.