

Keansburg Pre-Kindergarten

PARENT HANDBOOK

2016-2017



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Port Monmouth Road Pre-K Site: ext. 5721
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www.keansburg.k12.nj.us/pmr

WELCOME TO PRE-K

This Parent Handbook has been designed to answer some common questions, familiarize you with our classroom policies and describe our need for your support and cooperation. Please read this handbook carefully and partner with us to provide the very best Pre-K education for your child.

We anticipate that you will have specific questions regarding what and how children learn in a HighScope classroom. Know that we are always available to discuss any concerns you may have on any subject. We will make you aware of additional information, if necessary.

All of the teachers at Keansburg Pre-K follow the HighScope educational model, and while there are many consistent practices throughout the program, each teacher implements the program in their own way.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Keansburg Pre-Kindergarten Program believes that every child is entitled to a high-quality developmentally appropriate school experience that includes many active learning opportunities in an inclusive environment which respects and supports individual differences. We are committed to creating partnerships among families, community members and colleagues to ensure the success of every child.

1. WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM CHILDREN?

- We expect children to be children—to be curious, creative and active.
- We expect children to be individual in their personalities, strengths, challenges, learning styles, rates of learning and overall development.
- We expect that children will need guidance while learning to function in a group setting--sharing attention with adults, learning to take turns in conversation and dealing with conflict.
- We expect that, in time, children will behave in socially appropriate ways, according to the limits set by the adults, in order to maintain a safe learning environment.
- We expect and encourage children to develop a sense of self-reliance, independence and responsibility by doing things for themselves—dressing, toileting, pouring drinks, cleaning up and performing specific jobs in our classroom communities.
- We expect children to become part of our classroom community, caring about and respecting themselves, the other members of the group, the classroom staff, classroom materials and space.

2. WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM FAMILIES?

- We expect families to send their children to school every day they are well enough to attend. Children that attend our program regularly have greater success in Kindergarten.
- We expect families to call the Pre-K office if your child is sick. The phone numbers are: 732-787-2007, ext. 5821 for Caruso Pre-K; or ext. 5721 for Port Monmouth Road Pre-K.
- We expect families to bring their children to school on time. We start promptly at 7:45 a.m. Young children need routines. They are uncomfortable when they come to school and do not know what is happening because they missed part of the daily routine.
- We expect families to pick up their child on time at dismissal. Regular dismissal is 2:15pm. *Early dismissal is 12:20pm.*

- We expect families to be involved in the education of their children. There are many activities that are offered both during the day and in the evening. If school is important to you, it will be important to your child.
- We expect families to immediately notify the school of any allergies or other medical information related to your child's safety.
- We expect families to feel comfortable as members of our school community. When school personnel and families work together, children reach their potential.

3. DOES MY CHILD NEED TO HAVE EXTRA CLOTHING?

- Your child needs to have extra clothes stored at school (pants, shirt, underwear, socks) in the event of a spill or an accident.
- PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING, including COATS, HATS, MITTENS, SCARVES, so that we may identify to whom the articles belong.
- We will send the soiled or wet clothing home in a plastic bag so that it can be washed.
- Remember clothes must be returned, as soon as possible—preferably the NEXT day.
- Please send in new clothing, periodically, according to the following schedule, so that the clothing is appropriate for the season and the articles fit your growing child:

September / December / March / May

4. WHY DOES MY CHILD HAVE A FOLDER?

- Your child has been given a folder that has his/her personal symbol or letter link and name.
- The purpose of the folder is to provide a safe means to transport important notices, lunch menus, notes from home, etc.

- The folder will go home with your child even if there is no correspondence in it. Place any notes, money* or other correspondence you may send to the teacher in the folder.
- Please send the folder to school EVERY DAY. Missing folders make it more difficult for us to manage our notices.
- Please take care of these folders. Children take ownership of their folders and are disappointed when all of their classmates have folders in class and they don't.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:**

When sending MONEY, please insert it in an envelope, marked with:

- 1). your child's name
- 2). the amount enclosed
- 3). what the money is for - "BOOK ORDER", "LUNCH MONEY," etc.

When multiple children hand us loose money in the morning, it is not only confusing but time-consuming. We must log how much each child has brought and what it is for. We have had children hand us \$5.00, not knowing whether it was intended to be lunch money or for the Book Fair. At arrival, our attentions need to be elsewhere--Greeting children and families and preparing for Breakfast. Thank you for marking any money you send in to school appropriately. This saves us confusion when record keeping and could keep you from being charged incorrectly for school meals.

5. WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR A SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL?

The Pre-K program offers courtesy busing. We encourage families to participate in the courtesy busing system. The Port Monmouth Road Pre-K Site shares the parking lot with Keansburg High School, making this a heavily trafficked area for our youngest students. All numbered spaces are reserved for faculty and staff. To ensure a safe and orderly process, parents are asked to use our curbside dropoff on Titan Trail. Staff members will be curbside to escort students safely to class. Please make sure that any supervising adults dropping off students know the child's teacher and room number to expedite the curbside parking process. School starts promptly at 7:45. a.m. After 7:50 a.m. please report to the office in Room 6 to sign your child in late. Security will bring your child to his/her classroom. **It is illegal and unsafe to make U-Turns on Titan Trail.**

YOU MUST GO AROUND THE ONE-WAY DRIVE WAY TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THOSE FAMILIES THAT ARE WALKING.

Parking at the Caruso Site is anticipated to be a heavily trafficked area due to the opening of the Joseph C. Caruso Elementary School. For safety's sake, please remember not to park in the middle of any road adjacent to the Caruso Modulars or block resident driveways. Student in classrooms 1-7 can easily gain access to their classroom exterior doors from the gate on Frances Place. Students in classrooms 8-11 can easily gain access to their classroom exterior doors from Manning Place. **The front gate is used for loading and unloading of the bus students ONLY.** All others are asked to report directly to their classroom doors using the side gates indicated above.

Students will be released only to adults listed on the child dismissal form. Teachers are obligated to refer to the child dismissal form before releasing a child to an unknown adult. You are free to add additional adults as well as remove adults as necessary, to the child dismissal form as the year progresses. Please inform anyone on the dismissal form that they must have a photo identification when picking up children. We **will not release** children to anyone that does not have a photo identification available.

*Please note that dogs are not permitted on school property.

*Smoking is absolutely prohibited on school property.

One Session dismissal days for PRE-K only is 12:20 p.m.

School will be dismissed on a One Day Session (Half day) schedule on the following dates throughout this school year:

September 6, 7, 13	October 31
November 23	December 5, 6 23
March 1, 2	June 16 - 22

Delayed Start arrival days for PRE-K only is 9:55 a.m.

September 14	December 14
January 11	February 15
March 15	

District-Wide Professional Development Days ~ Schools closed.

September 1, 2	January 27
March 31	June 2

6. WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD IS LATE, OR I MUST PICK UP EARLY?

If you arrive later than 7:50 a.m., you must sign your child in at the office. If a student arrives after 10:00 a.m., a doctor's note is requested. Our security guard will take your child to class so that the class is not disrupted. We appreciate your cooperation.

If you must pick up your child prior to 2:15 p.m., please go to the main office to sign your child out for the day. Please send in a note to inform your child's teacher and the office staff. Thank you.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:**

*Certainly, there are occasional circumstances that cause tardiness, and that is understandable. However, please be aware that chronic lateness not only disrupts our classroom routines, but also your child's understanding of those routines. If your child is late everyday, he/she will most likely miss Greeting Time, an important time of the day during which much learning occurs. Please be on time. Thank you!

7. WHAT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY REGARDING MEALS?

- There are numerous studies that link the quality of a child's nutrition to his ability to learn. That is why we offer a free nutritious breakfast every morning.
- If you choose to send in breakfast and lunch foods for your child, please mark the breakfast with "B" and the lunch with "L." Your child can learn that these letters stand for "breakfast" and "lunch", and it makes it easier for him to discriminate between the two meals.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Please be selective when sending in foods for meals.

Young children need fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy products and protein in order to grow and to stay healthy.

We encourage the children to eat healthful foods by eating healthful foods at the table with them. Since research shows that sugary foods can affect your child's mood, energy level and behavior, which in turn affect his learning, we encourage families to limit sugary foods in order to support a good example in the classroom.

On occasion, some children may have extraordinary food allergies that can be potentially life-threatening. In the event that severe allergies are evident in your child's classroom, you will be notified of the allergen and what precautions are necessary to keep all children safe and healthy. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in keeping all of our students safe.

Students may bring lunch to school or utilize our school meal programs. You will receive a monthly lunch menu in your child's backpack. Student meal prices are as follows:

Breakfast	Free
Lunch	\$2.30 full price \$.40 reduced price

Your child will be asked in the morning what he/she would like for lunch. It is important to let the teacher know if you do not want your child to receive school meals *so that you will not be mistakenly charged*.

Parents can pay for meals daily, weekly or monthly. The payments will be added to your "cafeteria account." If your child is absent you will not be charged for that day. We ask that you pay for meals regularly (**cash or money order only**). **There is also a link on our school district's web page www.keansburg.k12.nj.us under the "parent information" tab "district menus" to make payments.** If your account is not up to date you will receive a bill from Food Services, and your child will not be allowed to order the 'hot meal' option. Food Services may be reached at 732-787-2007 ext.2470.

All students will receive an application for free and reduced price meals. Please return this form to school as soon as possible (one per family please – send in with your youngest child) to apply for free or reduced lunch. The district receives State funding based on the number of lunch applications that are returned. Please return the lunch application form even if you do not want to be considered for free & reduced meals. Please put student's name on the lunch form, along with "not applying", and initial the application. All

applications are kept on file. The application may take up to several weeks for processing. If you order a school lunch, you will be required to pay full price until the lunch form is processed and 'free' or 'reduced' status is applied. If you do not want to be charged, we suggest that you provide lunch from home daily and notify the staff that you will be doing so.

8. WHAT ABOUT BIRTHDAYS?

- We are open to different ways to celebrate your child's birthday, as long as they are simple and meaningful.
- You may send in special treats for birthdays. We ask that you are respectful of any students with potentially life threatening allergies. You will be notified prior to the start of school if this affects your child's classroom.
- Sending in treats is not the only way to celebrate a birthday.
 - ✓ Loved ones may come to school and read their child's favorite story, donating the book to the class in the child's name.
 - ✓ Loved ones may come to school and do an art project with the class.
 - ✓ Loved ones may put together a photo story of his/her child's life and come to school to share it with the class.
- Please give us ample notice of your plans so that we may work them into our daily schedule.
- Summer birthdays will be celebrated by teaching staff. Please discuss with your child's teacher when these celebrations will occur.

9. DOES MY CHILD HAVE TO REST?

- In a full day program, 3 and 4 year-olds, by law, must have Rest Time in the daily schedule.
- Your child will have a personal mat with his/her name marked on it.
- Mats are vinyl, so for optimum comfort, please provide a crib sheet to cover it, a small blanket (e.g., receiving blankets) and a small pillow (travel size). Remember these items must fit into a small cubby, so please, no bulky comforters or pillows.

*ANSWERS TO COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT REST TIME:

- *Does my child have to sleep?*

No, but your child will be required to stay quiet during this period out of respect for those children who do fall asleep.

- *If my child doesn't sleep, could he look at a book or play with a toy?*

We create an atmosphere in which children can fall asleep—a darkened room with soft, restful music. Children usually need time to “settle down,” so for the first half of the period, they will be required to lie on their mats. In fact, for the first month or two, while children are adjusting to the routine, we will require that they stay on their mats for the entire period so they understand that rest time is not a play time. If it becomes apparent that certain children have difficulty resting after this adjustment period, they can quietly look at books on the mat. Remember, it is important that your child learn to respect others' need for sleep.

10. WHAT MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO KEEP MY CHILD SAFE AND HEALTHY?

- We seek to maintain the highest health standards in our classroom.
 - ✓ We wash hands regularly-before meals, after sneezing, coughing or blowing a nose, messy play etc.
 - ✓ We choose healthful foods.
 - ✓ Tables and chairs are disinfected daily.
 - ✓ Toys and furniture are washed as needed and on a rotating schedule regularly.

Often families ask when it is appropriate to keep their children at home. Our school nurse has identified the following guidelines for families:

- If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, has had vomiting or diarrhea during the previous 24 hour period, please do not send him or her to school.

- Be sure your child's fever, vomiting or diarrhea is gone for 24 hours before he/she returns to school *without* fever reducing medication
- If your child is given an antibiotic, he/she should complete a full 24 hours of medication before returning to school.
- All viruses (flu, stomach viruses and viral sore throats) are contagious and the child should stay home until he/she is fever free and without significant symptoms.

Current emergency phone numbers are essential and must be listed in case we are unable to contact the parents. *It is of paramount importance to the safety of our students that parent and emergency phone numbers be kept updated during the year.* Forms will go home during the school year to help ensure information is updated. Please return them right away.

Fresh air and gross motor play are very important to a growing child. Every day (weather permitting) your child will be outdoors running, jumping and climbing on the playground. *During the warmer weather when jackets are not needed, we highly suggest sending your child to school wearing sunblock to prevent sunburn. Some students have a severe reaction to the sun. If your child needs additional application of sunscreen during school hours, please submit written permission and a doctor's order with the sunscreen of your preference to the school nurse.* Additionally, all classes receive physical education with a specialist each and every day.

Preschoolers should wear shoes that are appropriate for active play. Shoes with rubber soles are the best choice. Safety is our primary concern, *and children wearing flip-flops or sandals/shoes with high heels WILL NOT be permitted to join with their classmates during playground/gross motor activities.*

11. WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS MEDICATION WHILE AT SCHOOL?

If your child is on a short term medication, such as an antibiotic, please schedule the dosage so that he receives a morning dose and the remaining doses when he returns from school in the afternoon.

If under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take medication during school hours, the following procedures shall be followed:

Medication shall only be administered by the school nurse, or other authorized personnel, after all the following have been received:

1. A written statement from the parent giving permission.
2. A written order from the attending physician which shall include:
 - a. Child's name
 - b. Name of medication
 - c. diagnosis
 - d. dosage/ frequency of dosage

Medication must be in its original container. Ask your pharmacist to divide your child's medication between two labeled containers...one for home and one for school.

The parents of the child shall assume responsibility for informing the school nurse of any change in the child's health or change of medication.

Children are not permitted to bring their medication into school. All medication must be brought into school by an adult and delivered to the health office. Thank you for your cooperation.

12. HOW ARE DISCIPLINE AND SOCIAL CONFLICTS HANDLED?

- The ultimate goal of discipline is to help a child to develop self-control.
- In the interest of safety and respect for others and materials, clear limits are stated to the children.
- If a child does not adhere to the limits set forth within the classroom, or on the playground, we use "I" statements. Ex. "I am worried that someone will get hurt. It is unsafe to poke people with a paintbrush." If the child continues to engage in the unsafe behavior, we will respond by giving a choice: "You can paint with the brush, or you can pick another material to play with like play dough."
- We strive to help the children to make positive decisions for themselves that will allow them to develop self-discipline and appropriate social skills.
- Children are guided and encouraged to solve social conflicts on their own. HighScope, our curriculum, uses consistent problem solving steps to teach children how to solve their own problems. The adult *approaches calmly, acknowledges the feeling* of the children, *gathers information* as to what

has occurred and *re-states the problem*. Once the problem has been described, the teacher *asks the children for ideas* to try together, and the group *chooses one to act upon*. The teacher *stays in close proximity to the group to support them* in following through with their plan.

- We teach children to use their words to communicate what they want and how they feel.
- We do NOT teach children to hit back if someone hits them.

13. CAN MY CHILD BRING TOYS FROM HOME?

In general*, we prefer that children DO NOT bring toys from home for the following reasons:

- Our classroom is well-stocked with toys and materials selected to provide specific key experiences. It is truly unnecessary to bring toys from home.
- Toys from home can get broken due to use by many children. When children bring toys from home, it also causes disruption to classroom routines because other children want to use the special toy.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:**

On occasion, we may ask children to bring a specific item or toy from home, if it helps us to support an interest the children have in class. At those times, we will notify you with a note, requesting the item.

14. HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

1. PARENTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN OUR CLASSROOMS. We ENCOURAGE parent participation. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher if you would like to schedule a classroom visit beginning in October.
2. If you have a special talent to share—painting, music, sewing, woodworking, cooking, anything—feel free to speak to your child's teacher about working it into their program.

3. Inevitably, there will be special events, such as celebrations, field trips and family picnics to which you will be invited. On occasion, your child's teacher may request volunteers for special projects.
4. You may also participate by volunteering to be a class parent, working on PTA projects or participating in fund raising.
5. Family Fun Nights are held throughout the year. These fun filled evenings provide parents and children with an opportunity to "play" together within a central theme. We encourage ALL families to participate.
6. Monthly parent support groups are held in the Pre-K with our school social worker and school psychologist. Please call Jeff Johnson at the J.C. Caruso main office at ext. 5833 for specific information.
7. Parent Participation begins in the home. If you want to help your child to learn to read, the single most important thing you can do is to read to him every day. Read alphabet books, picture books, chapter books that you continue over a period of time, poetry, nonsense rhymes—even articles from the newspaper if the article would be of interest to your child. Be a reader and your child will be, too.
8. We would especially like to hear any other ideas you may have regarding ways you can participate. It is our goal to make the program the best it can be for your children!

15. WILL I HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH MY CHILD'S TEACHER?

The Pre-K teachers and their assistants reach out to families to schedule home visits. These visits are encouraged as a way for teachers and parents to build partnerships. Home visits allow teachers to see children in their homes where they are the most comfortable and to learn about the things they particularly enjoy. In addition, during home visits parents are able to share their values and desires for their children. Partnerships between teachers and parents are an integral part of student achievement. Formal parent conferences are scheduled twice a year.

As a reminder, these dates are one session days:

Dates for 2016-2017 conferences are:

December 5, 2016 – Evening conferences (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

December 6, 2016 – Afternoon conferences (1:00-3:00)

March 1, 2017 – Afternoon conferences (1:00-3:00 p.m.)

March 2, 2017 - Evening conferences (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Parents are welcome to schedule conferences at other times during the school year by contacting your child's teacher by note or by calling the school office.

16. WHAT SPECIAL SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE PRE-K PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN?

It is our goal to help each and every preschooler achieve their potential. Each child develops at his or her very own pace. Each child learns a little bit differently. Most importantly, each child deserves the very best education. We are certain that your child will receive an individualized program in our Pre-K Program. To make sure that occurs there are a variety of services available to children in need of specialized programs.

We have a Pre-K Intervention Team to support teachers in developing tailored educational programs for children with extraordinary needs. This team is comprised of teachers, an administrator, a Master Teacher, the Pre-K Nurse, a Speech Therapist and a School Psychologist. Services can be offered through the Pre-K Intervention Team such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and counseling.

In the event that you have concerns regarding your child's development, your **first** conversation is always with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher is a professional that has been trained to work with young children. Most often the classroom teacher can give you all the assistance that you need! We encourage you to form a partnership with your child's Pre-K teacher. Members of the Pre-K Intervention Team can be reached by calling the main office @ 732-787-2007 ext. 5400

Deborah Silva	Pre-K Nurse-Caruso	ext. 5870
Patricia Klemm	Pre-K Nurse-PMR	ext. 5770
Bonnie Walling	Pre-K Psychologist	ext. 5827
Shannon Kemp	Pre-K Psychologist	ext. 5832
Jeff Johnson	Pre-K Social Worker	ext. 5833
Jacqueline Janik	Master Teacher	ext. 5834
Colleen Dubrow	Master Teacher	ext. 5725
Janice Carfi	Speech Therapist	ext. 5835
Jessica Hansel	Speech Therapist	ext. 5727
Anne Hazeldine	Spvsr. of Early Childhood	ext. 5820
John Panassidi	Occupational Therapist	ext. 5400
Roni Pluskalowski	Physical Therapist	ext. 5400

17. HOW WILL I KNOW IF SCHOOL IS CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER?

The Keansburg School District notifies families of delayed openings, early dismissal and closures via phone blasts, social media postings, updated information on the district webpage and notifying local news outlets.

The following information will assist you in determining if the Keansburg School District will have a delayed opening, early dismissal or if school will be closed due to inclement weather:

Delayed Openings - School will open at 10:00 a.m.

Early Dismissals – 12:20 p.m. at both the PMRS and Caruso preschool sites.

Schools Closed - Closing, early dismissals and delayed openings of school because of extremely bad weather or other severe emergencies will be announced on radio, t.v. stations and social media outlets as follows:

<i>FM 94.3 FM (The Point)</i>	<i>WCBS (Channel 2)</i>	<i>Fox 5 New York TV</i>
<i>FM 101.5</i>	<i>WNBC-TV (Channel 4)</i>	<i>WABC TV (Channel 7)</i>
<i>News 12 New Jersey TV</i>		

www.facebook.com keyword search: Keansburg School District

www.twitter.com Keansburg SD @KBURGSchools

District Policies and Information

Please read the following district policies carefully and sign the attached form to indicate that you have read this information.

Attendance policies and procedures for the Pre-K Program

Consistent attendance is essential in order for a child to reach his/her learning potential. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to send their children to school daily. Young children thrive on consistent routines.

According to school policy, a parent/guardian must call either the Caruso site (ext. 5821) or the Port Monmouth Road site (ext. 5721) on the first day of their child's absence to provide the school with the reason and length of absence. In addition, parents/guardians are required to send in a note/doctor note following any absence from school. If there will be a disruption in your child's routine, please notify the office in advance for proper attendance reporting.

On the third consecutive day of a child's absence, the child's teacher will phone home to check on the progress of the child's recovery.

A parent/guardian conference will be requested upon the tenth (10) absence.

Upon your tenth (10) consecutive absence, with no notification to the school, your child will be removed as a student in the Keansburg School District.

***Please be advised that students will not be permitted to attend evening activities if they have been absent from school for the school day that event occurs.**

Bus Policy for the Pre-K Program

All Pre-K children are entitled to busing to and from school.

Busing is provided as a courtesy and is subject to the following regulations:

1. An adult must be present at the bus stop when a preschool student is picked up and dropped off. Children will be returned to school if an adult is not present at the bus stop.
2. Children are expected to remain quietly in their seats during the bus route. Children are expected to follow the directives of the bus driver and the bus aide. Children that are consistently disruptive or refuse to stay safely in their seat, buckled in, may have their bus privileges revoked.
3. If a family member fails to meet their child at the bus, a warning letter is sent to the family for the first offense.
4. If a family member receives a letter for their second offense, they will immediately be removed from the bus for two weeks (14 calendar days). The child's parent/guardian must then contact the Supervisor of Early Childhood immediately to set up a conference appointment. Bus privileges will be revoked until the Supervisor meets with the family member. At the conference, the family member will discuss the situation and a plan will be created to ensure that students are picked up from the bus. In addition, the family member will commit to meeting the bus at the scheduled time.
5. If there is a third offence, the student will be permanently removed from the bus for the remainder of the school year.