

Puckihuddle Preschool

“To Gather Together With Friends”



at

6 Main Street
P.O. Box 432
Manchaug, MA 01526
508-476-2939

Family Handbook.

Revised 8/26/2015

PUCKIHUDDLE PRESCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

Welcome to Puckihuddle Preschool! Puckihuddle Preschool was established in 1981. Our program provides children and their families a high quality early childhood experience. Our classes are led by dedicated professionals who through guidance, patience and understanding will motivate, encourage and inspire each child's desire to learn.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Our school philosophy is to provide programs for young children that meet their social, emotional, physical and educational needs at an age appropriate level. Our environment is supportive of the developmental needs of each child and provides challenging and creative learning experiences.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Puckihuddle Preschool is open to children between the ages of 2 years 9 months and 7 years of age regardless of race, religion, cultural heritage, parental political belief, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

TEACHING STAFF

Our teachers are our most valuable resource. They respect each child's individuality and provide opportunities for children to question and test ideas on their own. Our teachers are trained in early childhood education and are selected not only for their experience, but also for their sensitivity to the needs of young children. All teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR, and also participate in many hours of professional development each year.

Lead Teacher: Noelle Buffone holds a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education. She is Director II certified through the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) and has taught preschool and kindergarten for over fifteen years. Noelle has been with Puckihuddle since 2006.

Lead Teacher: Joei Palumbo was a nanny, infant/toddler teacher, and a preschool teacher at Head Start in Worcester before coming to Puckihuddle. She is Lead Teacher-qualified through DEEC, and has been with Puckihuddle since 2008.

Lead Teacher: Kristin Morway has a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education, and is Director II certified through the DEEC. She taught for many years in a large childcare setting and joined our Puckihuddle team in 2014.

Assistant Teacher: Angela Draper has a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education. She taught preschool and kindergarten before staying at home with her children. She is a certified Lead Teacher through the DEEC, and has been with Puckihuddle since 2008.

Assistant Teacher: Deena Gramstorff has a Bachelor's Degree in Business from Bryant University. She is Preschool Teacher-certified through DEEC and runs a summer business teaching swimming lessons. She joined our Puckihuddle team in 2010.

Assistant Teacher: Cristina Couture studied Portuguese and French at UMass Dartmouth and worked in the insurance industry for over 25 years before joining our Puckihuddle team in 2012. She is currently pursuing her EEC Preschool Teacher certification.

Assistant Teacher: Liz Keyes has a Master's Degree in Psychology, and also works as a counselor running therapy groups for children who are experiencing anger, stress, and anxiety issues. She is Preschool Teacher-qualified through the DEEC and joined our staff in 2014.

They can all be contacted at puckihuddleteachers@gmail.com or (508) 476-2939.

LEADERSHIP

Director, Peggy Stienstra has been working with children for almost 30 years, starting as a parent volunteer then a classroom aide, substitute teacher, lead teacher, and eventually as the lead teacher/director of the Milford Head Start satellite classroom for over ten years. Most recently, she was the director at Precious Ones Childcare in Uxbridge. Peggy earned her degree in Early Childhood Education from Becker College in addition to a degree from Bryant College in legal secretarial skills. She is Director I certified through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC), and joined our Puckihuddle team in 2015. Peggy is responsible for the overall operations management of Puckihuddle, as well as the development and expansion of new programs.

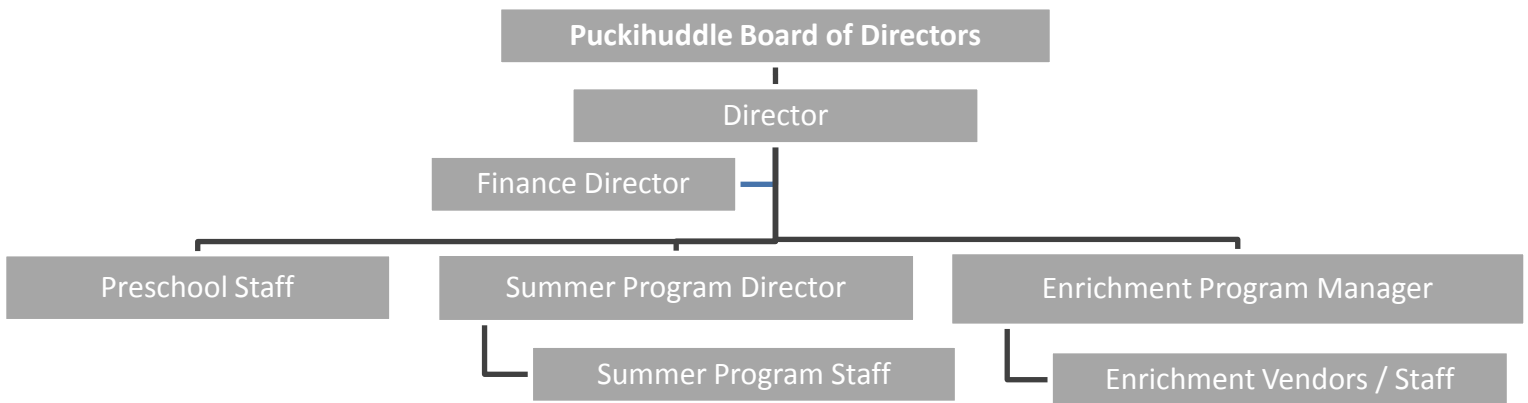
Samantha Kallio has over ten years of business management experience and worked for a large childcare center as their business administrator before coming to Puckihuddle in 2011. Samantha served as the Director of Puckihuddle from 2011 – 2015, and will now be acting as the organization’s Finance Director, working with Peggy to support the areas of business planning and budgeting, financial reporting and forecasting, human resources administration, and IT.

Puckihuddle is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which oversees the non-profit business in an advisory role. The Puckihuddle Board of Directors meets regularly to review alignment of vision, strategy and policy. We are always accepting member nominations for individuals with certain expertise in accounting, corporate or non-profit business, human resources, customer service, marketing, and team leadership, as well as past experience, knowledge and skills related to serving on a non-profit Board.

| 2014 – 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| George Watson, Chair | - son, Liam, MWF DOWNSTAIRS class |
| Amy Jankins, Treasurer | - daughter, Hannah, MWF DOWNSTAIRS class and TUTH UPSTAIRS class |
| Michelle Granger, Secretary | - alumni; position will be open |
| Andrew Smith, Member | - alumni; position will be OPEN |

All board members can be reached at puckihuddleboard@gmail.com.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We provide an age-appropriate curriculum with developmentally appropriate materials and practices for optimum learning experiences using a combination of child-directed and teacher-guided activities. Children are encouraged to socialize with others and learn through imagination, discovery and exploration. We ask open-ended questions that promote language and problem-solving skills. We encourage creativity and independence. Children learn to communicate, share and develop their own personality at Puckihuddle Preschool. Your child’s growth and development are our best reward.

Your child's daily schedule will include, but not be limited to, the following: free play time (children are free to choose among a variety of activities including imaginative play, blocks, fine motor activities, self motivated activities, and creative experiences), teacher-directed activities, circle time, snack time, story time, and gross motor activity indoors and / or outdoors.

PROGRAMS / TUITION

Puckihuddle Preschool offers a Tuesday / Thursday program for children ages 2 years 9 months through 4 and a Monday / Wednesday / Friday program for children ages 4 through 7 years. The minimum age requirement for the Tuesday / Thursday program is 2 years 9 months and the minimum age requirement for the Monday / Wednesday / Friday program is 3 years 8 months by August 31st. Our school year starts the week of Labor Day and ends the week before Memorial Day. New registrations for the current school year are accepted until January 1st.

| Sessions & Fees | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------------|--|
| Program | Days | Age | Time | Annual Tuition |
| 2-Day Program | Tuesday / Thursday | 2.9 – 4 years old | 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | \$1850 |
| | | | 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. | \$3090 |
| 3-Day Program | Monday / Wednesday / Friday | 4 – 5 years old (3.8 years at teacher's discretion) | 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | \$2260 |
| | | | 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. | \$4270 |
| Early Drop-Off | available every day | open to all registered students | 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | \$5 per day (free for extended-day students) |
| Lunch Bunch | every Wednesday | MWF students | 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. | \$300 per year |
| Lunch Bunch | one Thursday per month | TUTH students | 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. | \$80 per year |

Payments

You can choose to pay your annual tuition in full at the beginning of the school year, or in installments. If you choose to pay the ten equal installments, these payments are due on the first of each month starting in August and ending in May. Please put your tuition payment in the lockbox located near the coat hooks in each classroom or in your child's home/school communication folder.

Tuition is due in full regardless of school holidays, absence due to illness or vacation, or weather-related closings.

Late Payment / Returned Check Fees

If your tuition payment is not received by the tenth day of each month, you will be charged a \$10 late payment fee. Also, if any check is returned to us, you will be charged a \$25 service fee.

Prorated Tuition

If you register to start after the beginning of the school year, your tuition will be prorated based on the number of weeks remaining in the 38-week school year (Labor Day until Memorial Day). Example: Suzie will start in the TUTH class on the first Tuesday of November. There are 30 weeks remaining in the year. The annual tuition of \$1800 is divided by 38 weeks, and then multiplied by 30 weeks, resulting in an annual tuition of \$1421.10. You can opt to pay this in 7 equal installments of \$203.01.

Extended-Day Program

The extended-day will run until 2:30 p.m. There will be time for lunch, rest, outdoor recess, independent exploration of the classroom centers, and extended story time and literacy activities.

Children will be provided with a cot, blanket, pillow, sheet, and pillowcase. All soft items will be labeled with your child's name and will be stored in a standard-sized pillowcase (provided by the parent) and kept at the school. The bag will be sent home at the end of each week so the items can be laundered. Please be sure to return the items to school the following week.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will be 60-minutes of lunch (brought from home), learning, and fun! Lunch Bunch will be offered every Wednesday for the MWF children and one Thursday per month for the TUTH children starting in October. It is optional and in addition to our regular preschool half-day program. This is a great opportunity for your child to learn proper mealtime manners, to eat lunch in a reasonable amount of time, to learn how to open lunch boxes, containers, juice boxes, etc., and to socialize with peers.

The cost for the entire year (October through May) is \$300 which can be paid in total or divided into monthly payments and added to your tuition payment. Even if you choose not to join Lunch Bunch in October, you will be able to sign up at the beginning of any month for the remainder of the school year (cost will be prorated). If you would like to be added to Lunch Bunch (for the remainder of the school year), please email the Director at least one week prior to the start of the new month. **Payment for Lunch Bunch is due in full regardless of school holidays, absence due to illness or vacation, or weather-related closings.**

Early Drop-Off

We also offer Early Drop-Off every day! You do not need to sign up in advance; you can pay on the day you use it, or add your payment to your monthly tuition payment (either in advance or after the month is complete). The cost is \$5 for drop-off anytime between 8:30 a.m. and when school starts at 9:00 a.m. Early Drop-Off is free for extended-day students.

VACATIONS, HOLIDAYS, CLOSURES

The Closing Calendar outlines vacations, holidays and no-school days. School vacations include two weeks in December and one week in April. Holidays and other days off will follow the Sutton Public School's schedule. We will **NOT** close early on days when the public school has a half-day.

When Puckihuddle has a scheduled field trip in the morning, we will **NOT** be open in the afternoon for the extended-day program.

If Sutton Public Schools are canceled due to inclement weather, we are also canceled. It will be announced on WSRS 96.1 FM, WTAG 580AM or by watching WBZ 4, WCVB 5, WHDH 7, or the Public Access Channel. Delays of one (1) hour or more will mean our classes are canceled for the entire day (**even the extended-day program**). This makes it easier for us to make up full school days at the end of the year

Weather-related closings will be made up at the end of the school year up until the Friday after Memorial Day.

HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

One of our main priorities is to keep you as informed as possible as to what we do each day so you can share in your child's preschool experience. A weekly Curriculum Web and a monthly calendar of events will be sent home to keep you updated on classroom activities, special events, curriculum, etc.

Parents are always welcome to visit the classroom. If you have any suggestions or comments about a Puckihuddle policy or procedure, you are welcome to contact your child's teacher, the Directors, and / or our Board of Directors.

If you need to reach us during class time, please call us at (508) 476-2939. If we can't get to the phone in time or are outside, please leave a message. If you need to speak to us immediately, please feel free to keep trying until one of us is able to answer the phone.

The best time to call is just before 9:00 a.m. or just after 12:00 p.m. This is a great time to call for those "non-emergency" questions, or to set up a time to meet with your child's teacher.

Please place your two-pocket folder in your child's backpack for home/school communication. This helps to protect paperwork and projects that we send home, as well as a secure place for you to put important information or tuition payments to be retrieved by our staff.

You may receive a variety of communication from us throughout the school year. The teachers may send something home about daily or weekly activities, or requests for classroom items, such as paper towel tubes or tissues. The Directors might send home

curriculum information or tuition statements. The PPG will send out flyers about upcoming family events or seeking volunteers for fundraisers or committees. Finally, our Board of Directors might send out parent satisfaction surveys or information about the future direction of Puckihuddle. Watch for emails from these people:

Directors: director@puckihuddlepreschool.com

Teachers: puckihuddleteachers@gmail.com

Board of Directors: puckihuddleboard@gmail.com

Puckihuddle Parent Group: puckihuddlepreschool@gmail.com

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES

You will be invited to sign up for a Parent/Teacher conference in early December after your child's first developmental assessment is completed. Another developmental assessment will be done in April, and you may schedule another conference in May if you have any questions or concerns about your child's development. We are happy to meet with parents whenever there is a concern. Please discuss with one of the teachers to set up a time. Parental input is always welcome. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please let us know.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We are always excited to invite parent volunteers into the classroom. You might read to the children, lead a special craft, share a special hobby/talent, help with a party or take pictures – whatever you are comfortable doing! You can volunteer once or as many times as you would like.

Party volunteers will be used for Halloween, Holiday, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. There will also be ongoing parent volunteers; the MWF volunteers will start in October and the TUTH volunteers will start in January. This will give the children a chance to get settled into the daily routine and allow them to better enjoy the experience of a special visitor. There will be sign-ups available online and in the classroom and reminders will be sent out during the year.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Please see the Parking Guidelines handout for specific information about parking. **Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot at all times.**

Drop-off

At drop-off, please wait outside or remain in your car until one of the teachers opens the door. The doors will be opened exactly at 9:00 a.m. Please be prompt as it is important for your child to have a chance to settle in with his/her classmates before starting the day.

You have two options when dropping your child off in the morning – you can either escort him/her into the building and help him/her get settled in or you can use the drive-through drop-off and your child's teacher will escort him/her into the building and help him/her with his/her backpack, jacket, etc.

Early Drop-Off will always be held in the downstairs classroom. Please follow the parking and drop-off guidelines for the upper level parking lot. It may not always be possible for a teacher to meet you at your car if you use the drive-through lane; feel free to park in the drive-through lane and come to the door where a teacher will greet you (you may need to ring the doorbell).

Pick-up

At pick-up time, please wait outside the door or in your car in the drive-through lane for a teacher to dismiss your child to you. Half-day dismissal starts at 12:00 p.m.

Please do not allow your child to run on the grassy hill by the road. There are drainage rocks that are unstable with a concrete retaining wall at the bottom. Also, the road is very busy and cars cannot see around the bend when entering onto Main Street from Manchaug Road. **The playground will be open from 12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. for those families who wish to linger and socialize. If you plan on staying, DO NOT park in the drive-through lane in the lower lot.**

Lunch Bunch will always be held in the downstairs classroom, so please follow the parking and pick-up guidelines for the lower level parking lot.

Late Pick-up Fees

In consideration of your child, the staff and the daily schedule, please be prompt for pick-up. If you are late picking up your child more than three times, you will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute. Thank you for your cooperation and consideration; these procedures will help to avoid any traffic congestion in the parking lot and interference with the time the teachers have for cleaning and preparation for the next day.

Authorized Pick-ups

We must be notified if your child will be picked up by anyone other than yourself. This person's name must be on your authorization form and he/she must show a driver's license or other type of photo ID. Please understand that this is for your child's protection. We understand that last minute changes occur in everyone's schedule. For this reason, you may also use our Communication Notebook located near your child's cubby to let us know of a change in dismissal plans or you can call the school to notify us of the change. Please DO NOT rely on email for last minute notification because the teachers do not check their email during the school day and the Director may be out.

SNACK GUIDELINES

Your child will need to bring a lunch box or bag with a HEALTHY snack and drink every day. If your child is staying for Lunch Bunch or for the full-day program, he or she will also need to bring a lunch and an optional afternoon snack. Please label the components inside the lunch box if possible (using a sharpie on Ziploc baggies or writing on masking tape on other kinds of containers). It is very common for children to want to eat their sandwiches at snack time!

ALL SNACKS MUST BE NUT-FREE! We have very serious, life-threatening allergies in all classrooms and we must all do our part to ensure the safety of these children. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Prior to snack time, all children must wash their hands with soap and running water. During snack time, we encourage the children to be self-sufficient and allow the opportunity for pouring, spreading, passing, and then cleaning up after themselves. Because this is such an important social time, the children will also practice many important mealtime manners.

The Department of Early Education & Care requires that daily snacks be as nutritious as possible. Drinks should be 100% fruit juice (diluted), water, or milk. Thank you for your cooperation!

| Snack Suggestions | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Apples, applesauce | Muffins (mini or small) |
| Bananas ,Orange Slices | Crackers (Ritz, Townhouse, etc.) |
| Fruit Salad | Crackers with Jelly or cream cheese |
| Cheese & Crackers | Vegetables with Dip |
| Animal Crackers, Graham Crackers | Celery sticks w/Cream Cheese |
| Carrot Sticks, Cucumbers, etc. | Pudding |
| Goldfish ,Trail Mix (without nuts) | Yogurt |

Please note that we have very limited refrigerator space. Please provide snacks that do not require refrigeration, or, if possible, pack your snack or drink in a cooler with an ice pack.

Please be aware of food choking hazards. If you include any food that is round and could be swallowed whole (grapes, carrot sticks, hot dogs, etc.) please cut in half lengthwise.

BIRTHDAYS

At Puckihuddle Preschool, we love birthdays! We will be holding one monthly celebration to honor all birthdays that fall in that month. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate in May. You will have the opportunity to sign up to bring in something special for the celebration. Remember that something special does not have to mean food, but if you do bring in food, it **must be nut-free**. The children will wear birthday crowns, receive a special card from their teacher, and the class will sing Happy Birthday to their friends.

SHOW AND TELL

Your child will have the opportunity to bring in a Show and Tell item several times during the course of the year. When it is your child's turn for Show and Tell, please help your child select one item that can fit in his/her backpack (please no violent toys – guns, swords, etc.). Your child will get to share his/her special item with the class – it could be a toy, a book, souvenir, etc. – and will have the opportunity to answer questions from his/her friends. This is a valuable opportunity for your child to stand up in front of his/her peers and talk about something that is important to them.

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Please dress your children in comfortable clothes for physical activities and art/craft projects. Play is a child's work and we use paint, water, sand, and/or other messy materials daily, so you can expect spills and sometimes stains.

Outdoor Clothing

We go outside as much as we can. Please dress your child accordingly and provide the appropriate outdoor clothing. During the winter months, we will let you know if we are planning to go outdoors so you can send snow pants, hats, mittens, and boots. We will assist the students in putting on these articles of clothing and also give the students opportunities to practice and master their dressing skills throughout the year.

Extra Clothing

Please keep a complete set of extra clothing in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name on it in your child's backpack in case of an accident (water table, etc.). If your child uses this change of clothes or the season changes, please remember to replace it. If your child is still potty-training, please send extra pull-ups in his or her backpack.

We also recommend that you purchase a **LARGE BACKPACK** so their change of clothes, show and tell, artwork and parent notices will fit into it easily.

PUCKIHUDDLE PARENTS GROUP / FUNDRAISERS

Puckihuddle Preschool has the best parents! Our Puckihuddle Parents Group (PPG) is a flexible group in which we encourage parents to participate. Since we are a very small non-profit preschool, our success depends largely on the support of our parents. Organizing fundraisers, volunteering in the classroom, shopping for party supplies, and coordinating a family event are just a few different ways you can help make our school stronger.

Puckihuddle Preschool holds a variety of fundraisers throughout the year. These events are organized by the PPG and need parent participation to make them successful. Most of the fundraisers we do are fun family events (movie night, magic shows, pizza night, etc.) and not direct sales of a product. The one exception is our fall fundraiser which is our largest fundraiser of the year. This year's fall fundraiser will be a Yankee Candle Sale. The funds enable us to provide special events for the families and children, as well as pay for new classroom furniture, playground equipment and learning materials. We hope that you will pick and choose the ones that fit your needs and your budget. Please know there is no obligation to participate in any of these events. If you have any fundraising ideas, please email the PPG coordinator at puckihuddlepreschool@gmail.com.

Be sure to check out the PPG bulletin board in your child's classroom for more information!

WISH LIST

There are a few items that are always on our wish list, and any donation of these small items makes a big difference to us. If you are able, please consider donating the following items to our school: ziploc bags (all sizes, especially gallon), paper towels, liquid or foaming hand soap, magic erasers, baby wipes, saltines, tall trash bags, disinfecting wipes, and stickers. Also, check out the Parent Page on our website for updated wish list items. Thank you!!!

We are pleased that you have chosen Puckihuddle Preschool for your child's early learning experience and we welcome you and your child to *our* family!



PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

(Please sign and return this page to school)

I have read and understand the information contained in the Puckihuddle Preschool Family Handbook.

Print Name

Signature

Date