

Puckihuddle Preschool Family Handbook

PUCKIHUDDLE
PRESCHOOL



"TO GATHER TOGETHER WITH FRIENDS"

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

Revised 8/1/2023

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Puckihuddle Preschool! We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your children.

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.

Many students will be embarking upon their first preschool experience. Some children will adjust quickly, and for others, the first few days will be a bit overwhelming. We hope our orientation day in September will help ease your child's adjustment to school.

If you have any questions about your child or Puckihuddle Preschool, please feel free to call or email.

The school phone number is (508) 476-2939. We have voicemail on this number. If you want to call the school before or after hours, please use this number and leave your message. This number can also be used for calling when children are sick and will not be in school. I can also be reached via our email address: director@puckihuddlepreschool.com as well as through the Brightwheel App.

To help you become more familiar with Puckihuddle Preschool, we have prepared this handbook of our policies and procedures. Please read through the book, sign the parent acknowledgement on the last page, and return it with your child's forms.

Puckihuddle Preschool is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Early Education and Care.

***Please note, all policies and procedures are subject to change per order of the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Any changes will be brought to your attention in a timely manner.

I'm looking forward to a great year at Puckihuddle Preschool!

Sincerely,

Alison Sutkaitis
Executive Director, Puckihuddle Preschool

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY & STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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. 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.

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.

Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES & PHYSICAL

The following enrollment paperwork is required by the Department of Early Education and Care. **This paperwork MUST BE COMPLETED/UPDATED YEARLY.** You will need to ask your child's pediatrician for a School Health Form which should include the date of your child's last physical, all vaccinations received to-date, as well as documentation of the required annual Lead Screening Test for children ages 1 – 3. The Department of Early Education and Care requires that this Lead Screening Test be done yearly and many doctors do not complete this test without families asking. **Returning students will be notified monthly when their up-to-date physical is due. All these forms must be on file 30 days prior to the first day of school or your child will not be able to start.**

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

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

Assistant Teacher MWF: 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 Monday- Friday: Karen Samson, from Sutton, has a Bachelor's Degree in English and Elementary Education from Assumption College. She taught second grade for seven years before staying home with her two children, both Puckihuddle alumni. She worked as a substitute teacher at Puckihuddle for two years, and officially joined the team in 2019. Karen is Preschool Teacher certified through DEEC

Assistant Teacher Monday – Friday: Angela Draper has a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education. She has taught in daycare, kindergarten and first grade before becoming an assistant teacher at Puckihuddle. Angela also tutors Chinese Students online. She is a certified Lead Teacher through the DEEC.

Assistant Teacher MWF: Becky Nichols has a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services from Endicott College. She has most recently worked as a manager of a retail store. She has one son and loves to share her joy of reading with him. She began her career with Puckihuddle as a substitute teacher in 2021 and then officially joined the team in 2022. She is very passionate about Special Education.

Assistant Teacher TUTH: Joanna Johnson has a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree in health management with a focus in children’s health programs. She spent many years at Tufts Health Plan before deciding to stay home full time with her three children. Her passion for children has led her to years of nannying for local families. In addition to that she became a substitute teacher at Puckihuddle in 2022 and officially joined our team in 2023. She is currently pursuing her EEC preschool certification.

Teachers can all be contacted at director@puckihuddlepreschool.com to their attention, through our Brightwheel app, and by calling (508) 476-2939.

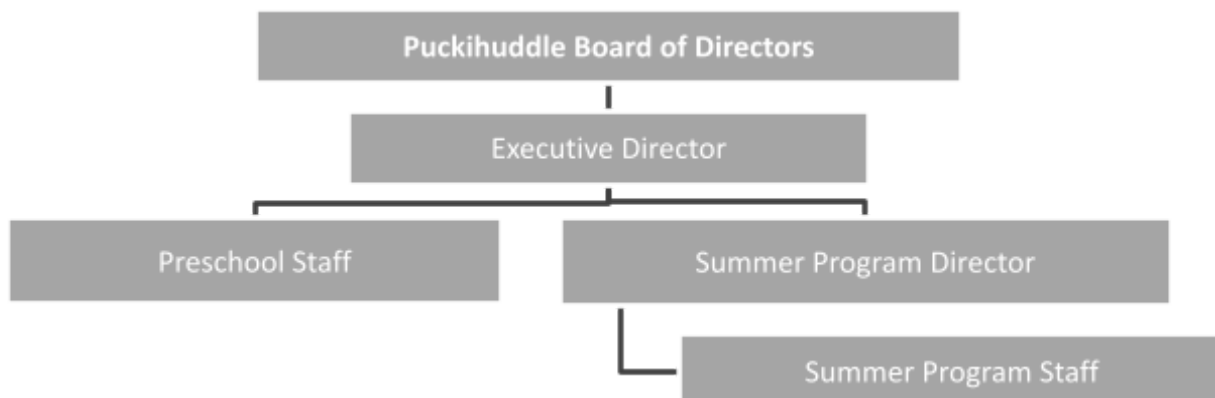
LEADERSHIP

Alison Sutkaitis joined the Puckihuddle team in 2022. She lives in Douglas with her husband and three children. She has a Bachelor’s degree from Framingham State University concentrating in Human Services and is Director I and Director II certified through Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Alison has been teaching for fifteen years and still gets excited to learn with each age group. For the past 9 years Alison had worked at KinderCare Learning Centers. She was a lead teacher, program specialists, Assistant Director and then a Director. Alison also has experience working in early intervention. Alison is thrilled to be part of the Puckihuddle team. Alison is responsible for the overall operations management of Puckihuddle, as well as the development and expansion of new programs.

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, early childhood education, human resources, customer service, marketing, grant writing expertise, and team leadership, as well as past experience, knowledge and skills related to serving on a non-profit Board.

2023 - 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
Bonnie Flink, Chair	- Daughter & Son, Alumni
Matt Gautrea, Treasurer	- Daughter, Alumni
Laura Minor, Secretary	- Daughter, Alumni, Son, T/TH Program
Marc Champeau, Member	- Daughter, Alumni -
Shauna Gisone, Member	- Son, MWF Program

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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 3.8 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.

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.

Program	Days	Age	Time	Annual Tuition
2-Day Program	Tuesday / Thursday	2.9 – 4 years old	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	\$2700
			9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	\$4200
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.	\$3300
			9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	\$5800
Early Drop-Off	Available every day	open to all registered students	8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	\$5 per day
Lunch Bunch	Available by signing up	MWF students	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	\$15 per day
Lunch Bunch	Available by signing up	TUTH students	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	\$15 per day

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 pay your tuition on our Brightwheel app or put your tuition payment in the lock mailbox outside the front door or in your child's home/school communication folder.

Tuition is due in full regardless of school holidays, absence due to illness, vacation, extended leave 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 **\$25** late payment fee. Also, if any check is returned to us, you will be charged a **\$25** service fee. Any payment not received 30 days past the 10th of the month payment is due, will result in your child not coming back to school until payment has been received.

In the event of an outstanding balance at the end of the school year, your child will not be allowed to participate in graduation or the ice cream social for his/her classroom unless payment is received prior to the date of either event.

Withdrawals

If a student is withdrawn during the school year at the request of the parents, the school must receive 1 month notice.

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 learning activities. Children will be provided with a cot, sheet and blanket. Parents provide a pillow, and a large pillowcase. All soft items will be labeled with your child's name and will be stored in a standard-size pillowcase labeled with your child's name and kept at the school. The bag will be sent home occasionally so the items can be laundered. Please be sure to return the items to school the following week.

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch provides 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. All half day students are welcome to join us for Lunch Bunch. All students will be required to sign up for Lunch Bunch via Sign Up Genius. Lunch Bunch will be offered as a 60-minute extension of your child's day. Each month a Signup Genius will be sent through e-mail to register your child.

The cost is \$15 per day and you will be invoiced monthly on the Brightwheel app for the days your child attends Lunch Bunch.

Early Drop-Off

We also offer Early Drop-Off every day! You do not need to sign up in advance; you will be billed at the end of the month through Brightwheel. 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.

TRANSPORTATION AND FIELD TRIPS

Puckihuddle offers no transportation for your child. Care of your child is your responsibility from the time you get your child out of your vehicle until you or a teacher escorts your child into the building. Your child is also your responsibility when a teacher dismisses your child back to you. For safety reasons, no child should be left unattended in your vehicle unless you are standing outside your car in the drive-through lane. **Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot at all times.**

We take 1-2 field trips during the year that require participation from the parents. Parents are asked to bring your child to and from the destination and remain present for the duration of the field trip. When field trips are scheduled, sometimes the time and duration of the field trip will be different than your child's regular class time. Permission slips will be sent home well in advance to inform you of dates, times and destinations so you can best determine if you are able to participate. Most field trips allow younger siblings. Please note that there is no school on field trip days.

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 June. 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 peanut & 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.

VACATIONS, HOLIDAYS, CLOSURES

The Calendar outlines vacations, holidays and no-school days. School vacations include two weeks in December and one week in February 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** 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 580 AM or by watching WBZ 4, WCVB 5, WHDH 7, the Public Access Channel, Puckihuddle's Parents Facebook page and through Brightwheel. Weather Delays will mean our classes are delayed for (1) hour beginning at 10:00 am. The first week of snow days (3 for MWF and 2 for TUTH) are not made up. Any additional snow days will be made up not to exceed one week (3 days MWF and 2 days TUTH) at the end of the school year.

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 emailed to keep you updated on classroom activities, special events, curriculum, etc.

Please purchase and place a sturdy 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. Please also check Brightwheel and your email regularly as we try to utilize paperless communication often.

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 or visit the classroom by appointment with the director.

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 Director, 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.

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.

TRANSITIONS

Puckihuddle Preschool assists children and families in their transition to kindergarten (or next year of preschool) by performing two assessments, conducting one parent/teacher conference, releasing program information (with parent's written permission) to the child's new school or teacher, and/or meeting with the principal of the new school to discuss individual children's strengths, weaknesses and social relationships. By sharing this information, Puckihuddle Preschool can assist families by providing opportunities to ask and answer questions, providing important feedback and creating individual transition plans, when necessary. In addition, these strategies assist the new educators in getting to know the child faster and help prepare them to meet the child's individual needs.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

You have access to your child's records. The center must provide access within two (2) business days, unless we have your permission to take longer. You have the right to add information, comment on data, or add any other relevant materials to your child's records; you also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in your child's records. Such requests 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 records, you have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make your objections known.
2. The licensee shall, within one (1) week after the conference, give you a decision, in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in your favor, he/she shall immediately take steps, as necessary, to put the decision into effect.

Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give you your child's records or transfer them to any other person that you identify. Puckihuddle Preschool will ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the records.

EVALUATION FOR SERVICES

When a child demonstrates learning or behavioral difficulties, it is up to the classroom teacher to closely observe and document the child's difficulties and/or behavior. In order to support the child who is having difficulties, the Lead Teacher and team will attempt to adapt the activities and environment to meet the child's learning or behavioral needs. The Lead Teacher and team will also enlist the help of the child's parents as they are the primary source of information concerning the child. The Director can help with additional family and community outreach to support the child's needs. Although our staff is trained in early childhood development, sometimes it is necessary to consult with other specialists about concerns we may have about a student. We are fortunate to have an excellent working relationship with the Sutton Public School System, and other surrounding towns. If a teacher has concerns about a particular student, we will ask the parent to sign a Consent Form allowing a specialist (speech, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.) to come to our school to specifically observe that child. If at any time you suspect your child is having difficulty in any developmental area, please share that information with us and we will help you contact the appropriate resources.

The presence of challenging behaviors or learning difficulties may or may not indicate that a child is deemed eligible to receive special education services. Puckihuddle will utilize preschool intervention and referral teams from surrounding school districts to help preschool staff modify children's challenging behaviors and/or learning difficulties (i.e., physical, social, language, emotional) that block successful participation in a general preschool classroom through development and implementation of intervention plans. Intervention plans will address a variety of behaviors (i.e., a child who hits, a child who doesn't have any friends, a child with separation anxiety from the caregiver, a child who stutters, a child unable to learn new concepts, a child who cannot eat independently with utensils, a child who does not speak).

Parents will be notified before and after all evaluations have taken place and must sign a consent form for an outside evaluation. Classroom teachers and the Director will be involved in the process and ready to implement accommodations or referrals for outside services when needed.

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.

The MWF volunteers will start in October and the TUTH volunteers will start in November. 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 reminders will be sent out during the year. We have found that parents/grandparents are anxious to have a turn volunteering. If you have had an opportunity to come in to volunteer, please check the sign-ups and check with your child's teachers before signing up for another turn.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Parking Lot Safety

Please do not unload your child/ get out of your car until you are one of the first cars in line and a teacher is available to greet you. (typically we say the first 3 are safe to unload). Once it is your turn, please make sure you are holding your child's hand until their teacher is able to take over. Safety is our number one priority while we have our children and families in the parking lots. 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.

Drop-off

Please pull all the way up to the orange cone and wait till a teacher is available to escort your child(ren) into the building. 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. (please refer to the attached diagram for further clarification.)

Early Drop-Off will always be held in the downstairs classroom. Feel free to park in the drive-through lane and come to the door where a teacher will greet you.

Pick-up

At pick-up time, please wait in the drive-through lane for a teacher to dismiss your child to you. Half-day dismissal starts at 12:00 p.m. Extended day dismissal at 2:30p.m.

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 \$3 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 please message through Brightwheel 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.

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 go outside as often as we can. Please be sure to label all snow gear and pack 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. PLEASE PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON THE INSIDE OF HIS/HER BACKPACK.

PLEASE BE SURE TO LABEL EACH PIECE OF YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING WITH HIS/HER NAME OR INITIALS.

TOILETING & DIAPERING

Children are allowed to use the bathroom whenever they need to and will wash their hands afterwards with soap and running water, using individual paper towels to dry their hands. We find it very helpful if you encourage your child to use the bathroom when you first arrive at school in the morning.

According to the DEEC guidelines, no child will be punished or humiliated for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet. If a child does have an accident, we make as little fuss as possible, and if needed, help the child change into clean dry clothes (a change of clothes should always be available in the child's backpack). Soiled clothes will be double-wrapped in plastic bags and sent home.

Puckihuddle Preschool realizes that not every child will be completely toilet-trained and we do have accommodations for assisting your child with accidents. Parents will need to supply pull-ups or many changes of underwear and extra clothing. If your child is in the process of being toilet-trained, we will work with you and your child to achieve that goal by:

- Having the child wear pull-ups or underwear that is easily pulled up and down independently
- Encouraging the child to use the toilet independently
- Encouraging your child to redress him/herself Assisting in any way necessary

SNACK GUIDELINES

Your child will need to bring a lunch box or bag with a HEALTHY snack and drink (water bottle) 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 PEANUT & NUT-FREE!

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 our students to open their own containers, juice boxes, yogurts and then encourage them to clean 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
Cucumbers, Peppers etc.	Vegetables with Hummus
Goldfish, Trail Mix (without nuts)	Yogurt

Please note that we have very limited refrigerator space. Please provide snacks that do not require refrigeration, or pack your snack or drink in a cooler with an ice pack. Staff does not heat food for the children. Please put hot food items in a thermos container.

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.

ALLERGIES

Allergies will be identified by parents. An allergy list is posted in view where the children eat their snacks and lunches and in the children's file. All staff are made aware of allergies.

All children with food allergies have an individualized health care plan in place. This plan will provide detailed instructions about which food(s) the child is allergic to and a plan of what to do if an allergic reaction occurs.

All staff are required by the Department of EEC to be trained on the signs and symptoms and how to respond in the event of anaphylaxis reaction.

Children are not given foods that they are allergic to, are kept from chemicals that cause allergic reactions and from other materials to which they are allergic.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS

In accordance with EEC regulation 7.11 (3), every child with a diagnosed chronic condition (ex. asthma, allergies or any medical diagnosis requiring regular medication or reactive medication) must have an Individual Health Care Plan on file that includes the following: diagnosis, symptoms, medical treatment plan, potential side effects and potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. If your child has a chronic condition, please complete an Individual Health Care Plan for him/her. When necessary, a parent, under their physician's authorization, will provide training to necessary staff on the implementation of their child's health care plan (ex. use of inhaler, epi-pen or insulin injections).

REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

If a child with disabilities enrolls in the program, Puckihuddle Preschool will meet with the parents, health care consultant and, if necessary, the child's physician to create an appropriate plan for care. This plan will require that all appropriate measures be taken to ensure the necessary health requirements for this child.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication, **it must be handed directly to the director** and will be stored in a secure location. **Prescription and non-prescription medication may only be administered to a child with the written or electronic order of a physician and parental authorization.** You may request an Authorization Form from the director if needed. If a child requires medication, we prefer that the parents administer it prior to the beginning of the school day. If that is not possible, certain designated staff members can administer the medication if the following guidelines are met:

- Please note: Puckihuddle Preschool staff **CAN NOT** administer the first dose of any NEW medication to a child except under extraordinary, life-saving circumstances.
- The medication (both prescription and non-prescription) must be accompanied by an Authorization for Medication Form. This authorization will be valid for no more than a year from the date it was signed.
- The medication **must be in its original container.** Prescription medication must have the prescription label attached with the name of the medication, the child's name, dosage, expiration date, and the name of the physician.
- No medication will be administered beyond its expiration date.
- Parents are responsible for informing Puckihuddle Preschool if the medication needs to be refrigerated.
- Topical, non-prescription medications such as ointments or lotions do not require a physician's authorization, as long as applied in accordance with the label's instructions.
- Parents will be notified in writing each time an emergency medication is administered to your child, with the exception of topical, non-prescription medication which will be communicated verbally.
- If your child is on medication that does not require dosage at school, we ask that you still inform your child's teacher. Some medications may affect your child's behavior and general health or may require special care. For example, amoxicillin can cause an upset stomach and loose stools; Bactrim or other sulfur drugs can cause children to be sensitive to the sun.
- All staff will be trained in "The 5 Rights of Medication Training." Staff will be evaluated annually of the ability to administer medication and will be trained in identifying potential medication side effects.

SICK POLICY

Please have your child stay home if they seem too ill to participate in activities or if they may spread illness to classmates. If your child has been sick, we ask that you honor the following timetables for his/her return to school:

- Your child has been symptom-free of vomiting or diarrhea for **24 hours and can tolerate a typical diet.**
- Children should be **fever-free without fever-reducing medication** for 24 hours before returning to school.
- your child can return to school 24 hours after medication has been started, as long as there is no fever from ear infections, pneumonia, strep throat and conjunctivitis

If a child has been evaluated by a medical source and is said to be of no serious health risk to others, that child shall be admitted back to school with written notification by the physician.

If you suspect that your child may have or has been exposed to: COVID, herpes simplex (cold sores), impetigo, conjunctivitis head lice, or other communicable disease we request that you **DO NOT** send your child to school. If your child shows symptoms or illness during class, the director or teacher will contact you to make arrangements to have your child picked up early. Please contact us and let us know if your child will be absent.

Symptoms which require exclusion from the rest of the class are fever, chicken pox, lice and/or nits, impetigo, measles, mumps, rubella, vomiting, skin rash, diarrhea, scabies, pertussis, conjunctivitis, strep throat, tuberculosis, ringworm, excessive coughing, discharge from eyes, pinworm, meningitis, fifth disease, sores that are oozing, and mucosal secretions that are green in color indicating infection. If your child has been in contact with any infectious diseases, please notify the school, so that we can warn other parents to be on the lookout for symptoms. Notification to the parents (without specific child's name) will be sent home in writing or via email.

Please note that Puckihuddle has a NO NIT policy. A child who presents with lice and/or nits will be isolated from the other children together with his/her personal items and kept busy with an activity until a parent or emergency contact arrives to pick up the child. If lice and/or nits are discovered at home, please do not send your child back to school until your child has been treated and is nit free. Please notify the school immediately in order to alert other families as a precaution. All names will be kept confidential. Your child must be evaluated by the Director and/or a trained staff member upon his/her return.

CLEANLINESS POLICY

Handwashing is the most effective form of infection control. Frequent handwashing will reduce the likelihood of illness and spreading illness.

- Staff and children will use running water with liquid soap and friction. Hands are dried with individual paper towels.
- If running water is unavailable or impractical, alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be available as an alternative.
- Handwashing is required by staff when entering the school, before eating, preparing or serving food, after using the bathroom, before and after administering medication, after coming into contact with bodily fluids such as when wiping noses, and after performing cleaning duties including emptying trash.
- In addition to wearing gloves, handwashing is required by staff after each diaper change/toilet training, after cleaning up bodily fluids such as vomit, after taking care of cuts and whenever blood is involved.
- Children are required to wash hands when entering the school, before eating, after each diaper change/toileting, and after water play. All children will also be required to wash their hands AFTER eating lunch in an effort to reduce cross-contamination of food allergens.
- The following equipment will be washed and disinfected after each use: mops used for cleaning bodily fluids and thermometers. The following will be washed at least daily: toilets, sinks, faucets, water table, water play equipment, tables, smooth non-porous floors, and mops used for general cleaning. In addition to the normal cleaning routines, the school will have a deep cleaning during all school vacation weeks.
- The disinfectant solution is an All-Purpose Cleaner with Bleach which has been approved by the Dept. of Early Education and Care.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Physical Address: 6 Main Street, Sutton, MA, 01590

Phone Number: 508-476-2939

Emergency Numbers: Police, Fire, Ambulance:	911
Poison Control Center:	(800) 222-1222
Health Care Consultant, Patricia Ahearn, R.N.	9508) 808-3736
UMASS Memorial Emergency Room	(508) 334-3511

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE (DEEC)

Puckihuddle Preschool is licensed under the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). A copy of the Early Education and Care Regulations is available on the web at <http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/eec/regs-policies/20100122-606-cmr.pdf>. The Department of Early Education and Care can be contacted about Puckihuddle Preschool's regulatory compliance at any time.

Our licensing specialist is Sharon and her contact information is:

Sharon Vogel
Sharon.Vogel@mass.gov
Department of Early Education and Care
1441 Main Street, Suite 230
Springfield, MA 01103
Direct line: 413-881-1547
Main Line: 413-788-8401
Cell: 413-262-0541

FIRST AID EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND PREVENTION

All Staff who give direct care to children will be First Aid and CPR trained within six (6) months of being hired. Daily monitoring of the classroom and playground is done by all staff. Any potential hazards that could cause injury are reported to the director. Any items that are broken will be removed and repaired or discarded.

An incident log is maintained by Puckihuddle Preschool; this is kept in the office area in a three-ring. This log will be referenced to determine patterns or consistently hazardous areas/equipment. All toxic substances, first aid supplies, medications or any other substances that could be hazardous to children are kept in a secure place, out of the children's reach.

1. Each classroom contains at least one First Aid Kit filled with bandages, gauze, gloves, cold packs, tweezers, thermometer, tape, CPR face shield, and alcohol wipes. The First Aid Kits are always stocked and up-to-date. The First Aid Kit is always brought onto the playground and on field trips. There are four First Aid Kits in the school – downstairs in the red backpack hanging by the rear exit, downstairs on top of the white cabinet above the classroom sink, upstairs on the top shelf in the bathroom, and upstairs in the red backpack hanging near the front exit.
2. Staff will discuss minor incidents with parents at dismissal. For Example a skinned knee on the playground.
3. In the case of an injury that requires more than basic First Aid, the parent will be contacted and informed of the problem. A few examples of such instances are any head injury and a cut that looks like it needs stitches. If the parents cannot be reached, then the emergency contact will be notified. An injury report will be filled out and parent signature will be required.
4. If a severe emergency occurs, 911 and parents will be contacted simultaneously. If it is necessary for the child to be transported to the hospital before the parent arrives at the school, the director or a teacher will go with the child to the hospital along with the child's Puckihuddle Preschool file. **It is for this reason that permission forms, medical examination forms and immunization records need to be kept up-to-date in the child's file. An injury report will be filled out and parent signature will be required.**

SECURITY MEASURES

The following measures will be taken every day:

1. All doors will remain locked whenever children are in the building.
2. Cameras at doorways/ parking lots will allow us to monitor the outside of the building at all times.
3. Staff will have keys to the building with them at all times.
4. Staff will keep their personal cell phones with them if possible (on silent or vibrate).
5. All cordless phones will be kept on or near their chargers so they are easy to locate in the event of an emergency.
6. Staff will conduct head counts of all children during all transitions into and out of the classroom.
7. All visitors must ring the video doorbell prior to being admitted into the building. A sign is posted at each entrance directing unexpected visitors to call into the school to speak with a staff member regarding the purpose of their visit.

SAFETY DRILLS & EVACUATION PROCEDURE

Evacuation drills will be held at least every month and will be recorded in an Evacuation Drill Log. The date, time, exit route, number of children and effectiveness of the drill will be logged. These drills will be held at different times of day and will use alternate escape routes in order to ensure readiness. A copy of each classroom's Evacuation Plan is posted by all doorways in each classroom. One teacher from each class is responsible for taking the daily attendance sheet, First Aid Kit and the children's information sheets and emergency contact phone numbers.

We will also hold "shelter-in-place" practice at least once per year with each class. These practices will be done in a very calm, non-threatening way just to ensure the children are familiar with the procedures and the terminology we would use in case of a breach of security.

Puckihuddle Preschool recognizes the importance of being prepared in case of an emergency. In addition to site-related emergencies, the school will rely on the local police department or fire department to notify us if there becomes a need to evacuate for our own safety. In the case of a true emergency requiring the evacuation of the building, the children will walk to the Manchaug Mills building across the street and parents will be called.

1. The children will line up with one teacher at the front of the line and one at the end of the line. In the upstairs classroom the children will either line up behind a teacher at the front door (main entrance) or at the side door. In the downstairs classroom the children will either line up behind a teacher at the playground exit door or at the main entrance side door. The last teacher will check for stragglers, clear the bathroom and count all of the children.
2. The teacher at the front of the line will take their class backpack containing the daily attendance record, emergency contact forms, and First Aid Kit. The last teacher will be sure all children are in line and will take a cell phone if easily accessible.
3. The upstairs class will walk to the end of the black fence. The downstairs class will walk across the parking lot to the Parks and Recreation Building.
4. Headcounts will be taken before leaving the classroom, intermittently while proceeding outside, and upon arriving at the destination.
5. In the case of a true emergency requiring the evacuation of the building, the children will walk to the Manchaug Mills building across the street and parents will be called. Utilizing staff cell phones.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Puckihuddle Preschool recognizes the importance of being prepared in case of an emergency. If an emergency occurs, the school will rely on the local police department or fire department to notify us if there becomes a need to evacuate for our own safety. Staff will utilize their cell phones to be sure communication is available. In the event that the school needs to be closed for more than a week, all Tuition will freeze until the building reopens.

Loss of Power – In the occurrence of a loss of power at school, there is plenty of natural light in the classrooms. If power were out for an extended period of time such that it would affect heat loss, parents would be called for early dismissal. If we are aware of a power outage before the opening of school, parents would be notified and school would be closed.

Loss of Heat – If, upon arrival in the morning, the staff discovered the loss of heat, parents would be notified and the school would be closed. If there were heat loss during school hours where the temperature fell below 65 degrees Fahrenheit, parents would be called for early dismissal.

Loss of Water – If, prior to the arrival of the children, the school was experiencing a loss of water, we would need to cancel school for the day. If school were already in session, parents would be called for early dismissal.

Fire – In the event of a fire in our building, we would immediately evacuate the building, according to our Evacuation Procedures, and proceed to the Manchaug Post Office or Manchaug Mills, whichever is the safer option. After contacting the fire department, we would determine whether or not school should be closed. If instructed by the fire department to close the school, parents would be notified for early dismissal. Parents would be notified of the fire even if the school does not need to close and the children return safely to their classrooms.

Hurricane or Flood – It would be an unlikely occurrence for us to be in session during a hurricane or flood due to the technology in the weather industry. The warning of a hurricane or flood is so far advanced that school would in all likelihood be canceled.

Tornado – In the event of a forecasted tornado, all children would be contained in the basement level of the building with the teachers where they would be protected by the foundation walls. If there were damage to the building, parents would be called for early dismissal.

Chemical Spill – If the spill were in our building, we would immediately evacuate the building, according to our Evacuation Procedures, and proceed to the Manchaug Post Office. After contacting the police or fire department, we would determine whether or not school should be closed. If the spill is nearby, we would stay inside and contact the police or fire department to find out how we should proceed. If instructed by the police or fire department to evacuate and close the school, parents would be notified for early dismissal. Parents would be notified of the spill immediately even if the risk were deemed minimal.

In the case where shelter is intact but the nature of the emergency requires the closing of school (loss of power, water or heat), the children will remain in the building and parents will be notified for early dismissal.

BREACH OF SECURITY BY SUSPICIOUS PERSON(S)

If a staff member notices suspicious activity in close proximity to our school, he or she will immediately use the internal phone system to notify the Director, the other classroom, and/or call 911. All staff and students will remain inside the building, or come in from the playground, and continue to monitor the situation.

If the situation escalates, staff will decide whether to evacuate, stay in our “Safe Place”, or hide in our “Hiding Rooms.” Every effort will be made to remove the children from the premises (see Evacuation Procedures below) however evacuation will only occur if it is deemed safe.

If evacuation is not possible, we will stay in our “Safe Place.” Staff members will clear the bathroom, grab the phone, and gather all children in our Safe Place (the colorful rug). Staff and children will sit or lie down on the floor and staff members will move or tip furniture to obstruct the view of children from exterior doors and windows. Teachers will gather objects to be used against an intruder if the need arises.

If the suspicious person is trying to get in the building and emergency personnel have not yet arrived, we will move the children into two “Hiding Rooms” (the bathroom and storage closet, director’s office). At this point, the staff will strive to preserve and protect life, reduce emotional trauma, and minimize personal injury. Staff will utilize any available classroom objects to distract, disorient, and disarm the intruder.

MISSING CHILD

If a child goes missing from the school or playground:

- Doors and gates will be checked to see if there has been a breach of security enabling a child to wander out.
- The director will search the building and grounds thoroughly.
- Attendance will be checked to make sure no other child is also missing.
- The director will talk to staff and other children to establish what happened.
- If the child is not found, the parent will be contacted and it is reported to the police.
- If the child is found, the parent will be notified immediately of the incident.

PREVENTION OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

We do all we can to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing program for your child. All preschool personnel must have two written or oral character references and verified employment records on file. The state mandates that a criminal records check be performed on each staff member. All child care staff are required to attend regular training sessions related to child safety, discipline and abuse.

All children will be exposed to various safety procedures, including how to protect themselves from harm.

- Puckihuddle Preschool staff will protect children from abuse and neglect while in the school's care or during a program-related activity.
- All doors to the building are kept locked during program hours. There are door alarms to notify staff if there is someone waiting at the door, as well as to notify staff if a child opens a door from the inside.
- All staff have been trained on how to recognize signs of abuse and neglect.
- Educators are mandated reporters and must, by law, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the director or Department of Children and Families at (508) 929-2000. If it is reported to the director, the director will immediately report it to the Department of Children and Families. The director will also notify the Department of Early Education and Care at (413) 788-8401.
- All staff must report any other staff member whom they suspect is abusive or neglectful to a child in our care to the director or Department of Children and Families. The director must also notify DEEC when a 51a report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity.
- The Board of Directors will be notified of any allegations of child abuse by a staff member. Staff members, the director, and/or the Board of Directors will cooperate fully with any investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect by a staff person. The staff person will not be allowed to have direct contact with children until the Department of Children and Families investigation is completed and/or until further time set by DEEC.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Puckihuddle Preschool believes in a positive approach to discipline and is committed to providing an environment where children feel safe and comfortable. Behavior management policies shall be followed in order to protect the safety of all children and staff persons.

Staff shall ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of behavior. Common rules that emphasize classroom safety, listening to peers and teachers, and being helpful to others are reinforced throughout the school. These rules are reviewed frequently with children and, whenever possible, children are involved in the addition of rules for their classroom. Fair and consistent limits are set within each classroom as teachers use a variety of developmentally appropriate, positive discipline strategies to help children learn the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Children are encouraged to practice those skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and have their needs met without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviors.

Clear expectations, individual attention, encouragement and modeling of positive behaviors provide a positive framework to support appropriate behavior. When situations occur, children will first be encouraged to make choices and find solutions independently. If a teacher is required to intervene, the teacher will help the child identify the problem and problem-solve possible solutions. The incident is addressed in a calm, clear and consistent manner. The method of guidance is always designed to reinforce positive behavior and develop conflict resolution strategies, rather than to punish.

If a child is displaying persistent, unacceptable behavior, the staff will take steps to help the child gain self-control. When problem-solving and other conflict resolution strategies are ineffective in addressing a child's behavior, or when a behavior is extreme or puts others at risk, a teacher will seek assistance from the other classroom teacher and/or the Director. If the problem persists, a staff member will contact the child's parent for suggestions on how to extinguish the behavior. The goal is to help the child strengthen his/her skills of self-control. Separating the child from the group is a final step that would be taken after other measures have been tried; however, staff reserves the right to make an immediate decision on behalf of the classroom if safety is a factor. Puckihuddle Preschool will make every effort to de-escalate situations; however, if it is determined that a child is a safety risk to

themselves, other children, or staff, we reserve the right to immediately move to the step of having a parent pick up the child, up to and including, having the child removed from the program.

All incidents resulting in the destruction of school property or injuries to another person will be reported to parents through a written Incident Report (required by The Department of Early Education and Care) which must be signed by the teacher, parent and Director. A copy will be held in the child's file.

The following practices are prohibited:

- Spanking or corporal punishment; cruel or severe punishment, including humiliation; verbal or physical abuse; neglect or abusive treatment; physical restraining; denial of food; force feeding; disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or for not using the toilet. Excessive time-out is prohibited.

TERMINATION / SUSPENSION

Circumstances for termination and/or suspension:

1. Non-payment of tuition or in arrears **more than 30 days**.
2. Failure to have up to date immunizations and/or health forms, except for medical or religious exemptions.
3. Behavior that puts other children or staff at risk or which is unreasonably disruptive
4. A change in a child's needs to the point that the program is no longer appropriate.
5. Parents or family members act in a disruptive manner regarding staff, program or other children.
6. Parents do not follow scheduled arrival and/or departure time.

Notification:

1. Puckihuddle Preschool will notify the parents in writing stating the specific reasons why the child may be suspended or terminated.
2. Puckihuddle Preschool will meet with the parents to discuss the problem, the possibility of termination and/or suspension and discuss the Support Plan.
3. Puckihuddle Preschool will determine if the circumstances warrant a suspension or termination. There will be a written plan regarding steps necessary to avoid the suspension or termination, and the steps necessary to be reinstated after a suspension.
4. The teacher or director will write a letter of suspension or termination with referral, if appropriate and help prepare the child for suspension or termination according to his/her ability to understand.

Plan to Avoid Suspension and Termination

Puckihuddle Preschool aims to support the social and emotional well-being of each child. When disruptive behaviors become prevalent within the classroom, resulting in disruptions to the classroom and safety concerns for all within the classroom, the staff is required to follow Puckihuddle Preschool's Support Plan. The Support Plan assists the staff in identifying the causes of problems, helps to develop an individual support plan and works with the family to assist the child in learning more positive adaptive behaviors in order to succeed within the classroom and at home. If Puckihuddle Preschool has been working with the parents, the child, and the staff on addressing the needs of the child and mitigating specific behaviors, then Puckihuddle Preschool expects full cooperation from the child's family both inside and outside of school to help ensure the success of the Support Plan.

Puckihuddle Preschool Support Plan

1. Puckihuddle Preschool will provide an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination from the program.
2. Puckihuddle Preschool will pursue and offer referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services to assist the child and family.
3. Puckihuddle Preschool will pursue options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training.
4. Puckihuddle Preschool will assist in developing a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.

Puckihuddle Preschool recognizes that some children have individual needs that require adaptations on our part for success. We will support the implementation of any accommodations that are reasonable for our school setting. However, termination will be a realistic option if we feel that through all of our efforts, we cannot support the unique needs of a child. Ultimately, it is our mission for all children to achieve their full potential.

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 (a non-profit preschool) holds a variety of fundraisers throughout the year. These events are organized by the PPG and need parent participation to make them successful. 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. Please know there is no obligation to participate in any of these events. If you have any fundraising ideas, please email the PPG coordinator c/o director@puckihuddlepreschool.com. Be sure to join the Puckihuddle Parent facebook group.

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, magic erasers, baby wipes, glue sticks, Scotch brand double-sided permanent tape, Scotch brand masking tape, tall trash bags, disinfecting wipes, tissues, newspaper, and seasonal stickers. Also, check out the monthly newsletter for updated wish list items. Thank you!!!

Puckihuddle Preschool has the maximum discretion permitted by law to interpret, administer, change, modify, or delete the rules, regulations, procedures, and benefits contained in this policy at any time with or without notice. No statement or representation by any other employee, whether oral or written, can supplement or modify this policy. Changes can only be made if approved in writing by the Board of Directors.

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.

Student Name _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____