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Dear Parents,

Welcome. This manual explains the rationale behind our policies with the underlying reason always being the same: to provide a safe, nurturing environment for your child. Quality group care requires extensive organization and planning. The policies in this manual are the result of collaboration with the New York City Department of Health, teachers, and parents. Occasional amendments to the Parent Manual will be distributed. These will be considered part of the manual until a new edition is published. Your suggestions and comments regarding this manual and all aspects of the Nursery North centers are appreciated. The masculine pronoun is used throughout this manual for convenience only -- no offense is intended. If you have any questions about the contents of this manual, please feel free to ask.

Sincerely,

Lenore Levy Lupie  
Executive Director

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## PHILOSOPHY

Nursery North specializes in infant and toddler care and cultivating healthy development for preschoolers. Everything we do is designed with the express interest of nurturing your child when you are not available.

Our program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. We provide experiences that challenge and support each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical and creative development. During the course of the day at Nursery North each child has opportunities to create, explore the environment, develop personal interaction skills and learn problem solving skills and concepts through hands-on experiences. We encourage exploration and involvement.

Our staff members are positive role models. They are supportive, nurturing, warm and responsive to each child. We respect the parent as the primary and most important person in the child's life. We try to complement your role by allowing the children to feel secure and enjoy themselves when they are in our care.

## DAILY PROGRAM

### Infant (1:4 adult to child ratio)

The infant rooms have a very flexible routine. Because each child's schedule is so different at this age, it is not in their best interest to have any specific routine as a group. The infant program is designed to foster your baby's awareness and natural curiosity about the world around him. There are a variety of toys available for infant stimulation and development. Caregivers provide daily activities when appropriate for each child including singing, reading stories, and a variety of experiences to stimulate their senses. Babies who have begun to scoot, crawl, or walk move freely about the room, exploring toys independently. The children are taken outside when weather permits. The infant rooms are shoe free to keep them as clean as possible.

### Mini-Toddler (1:5 adult to child ratio)

In the mini-tod rooms we still follow the child's schedule and the daily routine encompasses each child's own needs. The children begin to focus on developing independent skills such as learning to use a cup, eating using a plate and utensils, and using generally accepted table habits. Children in this program begin to explore their environment more freely. Caregivers put toys away where they belong when the children are done playing with them to help establish the concept of object permanence (knowing that things exist even though you cannot see them.) Activities in the mini-tod program include coloring with crayons, hands-on sensory activities such as finger painting and water play, as well as learning songs, reading stories and working on language acquisition. At this age, children begin to establish relationships with each other.

### Toddler (1:6 adult to child ratio)

In the toddler rooms we have a basic routine throughout the day but the schedule is flexible. A primary focus is on self-help skills such as dressing themselves and choosing activities. Toilet training often begins at this stage. Both individual and group play is beneficial to your child.

Children often engage in parallel play (playing next to each other but not necessarily interacting), and gradually move towards more interactive types of play. During center exploration, children can use any of the materials in the classroom and may play with each other if they choose. Children are not required to participate in any activity (except meal time, nap time and going outside) if they do not want to. We guide each child through the transition from “mine” to “ours” and encourage them to consider others as part of a caring and sharing philosophy. Group play includes: stories, dance, music, art, dramatic play, etc. Teachers introduce learning activities including recognizing colors, shapes, letters of the alphabet and the numbers 1 through 10. We do encourage participation, but we do not insist upon it. Speech enrichment focuses on constructing sentences and broadening vocabulary. Children eat their meals and snacks together and must be seated at the table. We encourage children to put toys away when they are finished with them. We go outside every day, weather permitting.

Preschool (1:10 adult to child ratio)

In the preschool room, your child’s day will be filled with many wonderful learning and fun experiences. This is accomplished through a balance of: (1) structure and choice; (2) teacher-directed and child-directed activities; and (3) group and individual exploration. We not only help get your child ready for school, we help them get ready for life with mastery of self-help skills such as dressing themselves and taking responsibility for their actions. Another example is fine tuning their dexterity by buttering their own bread and pouring their own milk. The day starts with the Morning Meeting at which the preschoolers routinely welcome one another, go through the daily schedule, and participate in calendar math activities, and share ideas and experiences as a class community. Later in the day we have Circle Time which focuses on learning through large group instruction followed by related enrichment activities for small groups and individuals in the various learning centers. Afternoons still have some structure, but are more open-ended, with different activities for your child to choose from.

In the classroom, the learning centers invite your child to explore and imagine while developing school readiness skills. Learning centers include Language Arts, Library, Math, Science, Art, Dramatic Play and Blocks. The Block Area is an excellent example of how children learn through play. Blocks help develop math concepts by grouping, problem solving, adding, subtracting and eventually multiplying. Blocks are used as a learning tool to foster growth in many other domains of learning as well. They are used to develop socialization skills and vocabulary as they learn to describe sizes, shapes, and positions. Blocks help with gross and fine motor skills and increase hand-eye coordination. They are used to create early experiments with gravity, stability, balance, and geometry. Block plays helps children understand different perspectives (skills that will help them to read maps and follow directions later on) and develop skills in design and representation (an extension of Dramatic Play) as well. You will learn more about the different learning centers as you talk to your child and his teachers throughout the year.

#### MOVING TO THE NEXT ROOM

Children move to the next room based on development, not age. Changes will be discussed with the parents. However, to manage Nursery North in everyone's best interest we will consider all the classrooms in which other children are moving, leaving or waiting to enter. Children will spend a few hours a day in the new room the week prior to their move. Typically

an infant transitions into the mini-tod room at about 12 months and when the infant can steadily walk on his or her own. A mini-tod transition into the toddler room at about 24 months and when the child is able to feed himself, use a sippy cup, participate willingly in classroom activities and are able to comprehend some simple directions. A toddler transitions to the preschool room at about 3 years, when he is using complete sentences and is capable of sharing. He also must be completely toilet trained.

#### BEDDING, CLOTHING and GROOMING

Children should arrive in clean clothes. Clothing should be easy to change without an excess of buttons, suspenders, or other features that will prolong changing and toileting. We change many children at a time. Simple clothing helps.

Children must dress appropriately for the weather. Clothing should fit properly and allow for easy and full participation in all activities. Please include hats, mittens, and scarves in cold weather. We go outside daily, except in the case of very severe weather.

Children must have a complete set of spare clothing left at the center. We do not have extras. Please label all clothes with your child's first and last name. We have a permanent marker if you need it.

When you pick up your child please check his cubby, remove any soiled clothes, and replace them the next day with clean clothing.

Jewelry is strongly discouraged at the center. We are not responsible for lost or damaged jewelry.

Each child needs a crib-sized sheet. Infants, 12 months and under are no longer allowed to have heavy blankets according to New York City Department of Health, children older than 12 months can have blankets. Infants should have an extra sheet in their cubby. Pillows are not allowed by the New York City Department of Health. All bedding should be taken home once a week to be washed and returned on Mondays.

#### ITEMS FROM HOME

We prefer that you do not bring toys from home, so that the children learn that all items are community property as they learn to share. You may bring comfort items that children use for nap time and other times as needed. The staff and center will not be responsible for items lost or damaged. All such items should have your child's first and last name on them. If your child has a toy that you would recommend we buy, feel free to suggest it to us.

#### TOILET TRAINING & LEARNING

Teachers will work with parents and children on toilet training once readiness signs have been demonstrated in school. Readiness signs will be the child's ability to tell the teacher about a soiled diaper, showing signs of discomfort while in a soiled diaper, and expressing an interest in using the toilet. A child is likely to exhibit these signals at home and not at school.

We recognize the following skills as indications that a child is ready to manage toileting:

1. The child can, and does, tell the teacher he has to use the toilet.
2. The child is able to pull down his own clothing.
3. The child uses the toilet independently.
4. The child can and does pull his own clothing back up.
5. The child wakes from nap dry.

Parents need to communicate to teachers what words they are using with their child while toilet training. Children who are toilet training require a supply of diapers and training pants, as well as, three sets of extra clothing and an extra sheet. Pull-ups are not recommended because it gives the child the 'satisfaction' of wearing underwear because they can pull them up and down. But it does not allow the child to feel and learn from the wet feeling that will encourage them to want to stop using diapers. If a child has three toileting accidents a day, we may need to return him to diapers at school until he is ready to try again.

#### DIAPERS AND WIPES

Parents are responsible for checking to see that your child's diapers, wipes, and creams are sufficient. We do not keep extras at the center. Diapers are not borrowed from other children. Large packages of diapers may be left at the center provided we have space.

#### BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

The best way to teach young children good behavior is by being role models. When a child does something that is not safe or beneficial for him or others, we redirect the behavior by gently guiding him toward positive alternatives. If there is a situation that requires stronger action, we explain to the child why the behavior is unacceptable and give him a time-out of one minute per year old. We never raise our voices to the children or spank them.

#### DROPPING OFF and PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

This is an educational environment; please use appropriate language when you are on the premises and at all times around the children.

When you bring your children in you should bring them to their classroom and help to get them settled. This includes taking off their outer clothing, putting their supplies in their cubby, food in the fridge and changing any dirty or wet diapers or clothing. The child should be "class ready" not needing any immediate change that will require the teacher to leave the larger group. This transition period can be stressful for children, therefore it is important for you to leave time and not be rushed. It is helpful for you to touch base with the teachers about anything that may be going on for your child, for example: how last night's sleep was, how breakfast was, any major family changes, etc. We prefer you bring everything your child needs for the day in the morning at drop off. If you forget something and need to bring it later, please leave it in the office. **Please remember to label everything with your child's first and last name.**

Infant parents please remember to put shoe covers on yourself and anyone else whoever joins you in the classroom.

When children arrive late it can disrupt the morning routine. Your child's group may have left the premises for their morning outing. Therefore all children should arrive at Nursery North no later than 10:00 am.

When you pick up and drop off your child please sign him in and out respectively. Once a child is signed out, we are no longer responsible for him. Children will be released to parents only, unless written permission is on file for another individual. Persons unknown to staff, but who are authorized to pick up a child at the center will be asked for photo identification before a child is released. *Please make sure they know this.* If someone is under 18 years of age and is coming to pick up your child, we must have written consent in your child's file before we can release him to the individual.

If there is a mix-up in who will be picking up a child, we will not release the child until the mix-up has been resolved and appropriate people contacted.

It is our policy at 6:05 pm to call all late parents to inform them that their child is still in here. This prevents the possibility of a mix-up of who will be picking up your child.

Once a child has been signed out please watch them. They are your responsibility.

NOTE: To keep Nursery North as clean as possible, when you enter the building please use door mats to wipe your feet. Roll your stroller back and forth a few times to bring a minimum amount of dirt into the center. We try to keep Nursery North as clean as possible. Please do not give your child any juice or snacks in the hallway wait until you are out of the center.

#### PARENT COMMUNICATION

On occasion and as needed, parents should take the time while they are at the center to chat with the teachers in the classroom. This casual communication is often the best way to keep abreast of how your child is doing. Sometimes many parents are here at the same time and teachers cannot have extensive conversations. Please keep this in mind and try not to monopolize the teacher's time if other parents are waiting to speak with the teacher. Also remember that the teachers are still responsible for watching other remaining children. If you feel a need to have additional time with the teacher we will try to schedule a specific time for you.

Please call the center each day your child is going to be absent.

Parents are responsible for reading posted information at the center. Important notices are posted on the information board in the center.

Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time. If you want to see how your child is doing please call during nap-time (1-3 pm) when the teachers can more easily speak to you.

We may call you during the day to ask a question or mention something to you. Please do not get alarmed when you receive a call from us.

We are always interested in your feedback, positive or negative. Although we do our best to manage the center sometimes parents are aware of things that we are not. If you have any suggestions or concerns please bring them to our management team.

NOTE: Remember to update all contact information and phone numbers. We need to be able to get in contact with you or someone authorized to pick up your child in case of emergency.

#### FOOD

Parents are responsible for providing lunch. Children should have breakfast at home. If you are an early drop off, you may bring breakfast by 9:00AM because the teachers start activities. If some children are eating they will miss out on important and fun parts of the day. Food is never used as a reward or punishment for behavior at the center.

LUNCH: Teachers will microwave a meal if it has been properly placed in a microwavable container. Teachers will not open cans, cook, or in any way prepare food. Food should be cut into bite size pieces for your child's needs.

You should include a beverage to have with lunch. Children will be given tap water upon request unless you tell the teachers not to. We do not have the room to store large bottles, please leave only what your child will drink each day.

Baby bottles, food containers (tops and bottoms), and lunch boxes must be labeled with your child's first and last name on each part. Do not send glass. Baby bottles must have covers.

Please also send 1-2 bibs depending on your child's needs and remember to label them with your child's first and last name.

Food may not be left at the center. Food not taken home at the end of each day will be discarded. Lunch boxes and dishes are not washed or sanitized at the center. Parents must wash them daily.

We are not allowed by Department of Health to wash any of your child's utensils, bowls etc. because we do not have a commercial kitchen since we do not prepare meals. If you can provide your child with a pack of plastic spoons, it may be easier than remembering to bring a clean spoon daily.

Do not send the following foods (or only in specific forms) for safety reasons. We prefer to err on the side of caution. (Recommendations by the NYC Bureau of Day Care)

NUTS of any kind. This includes nuts in cereal or baked goods.

PEANUT BUTTER, in any form

RAW CARROTS, in any form

HOT DOGS/SAUSAGES link style or cut in circles. They will be served only if diced.

POPCORN, CHIPS, SODA, CANDY, and PRETZELS are never served (except at parties).



FRESH GRAPES are never served. In fruit cocktail, you must remove or cut the grapes.  
HARD BOILED EGGS are served only if they are peeled and cut into quarters.  
FRESH FRUIT must be peeled, pitted, and cut. One exception: bananas.  
CHERRY TOMATOES will be served only if they are quartered.  
OLIVES will be served only if pitted and halved.  
SEAFOOD is a common allergen. If there is anyone in a class that has this allergy you may be asked not to bring seafood.  
MEAT or CHICKEN must be removed from the bone.

#### TUITION and FEES

Many centers do not provide care for infants and toddlers because of the required high staff-to-child ratio which results in a high cost of providing care. Nursery North operates on a tight budget based on full enrollment. That is why some of the policies may appear to be rigid.

The tuition is for a 52 week year without reduction or credit for vacation (ours or yours), absence, illness, holidays, or failure of parents to comply with the Department of Health regulations. Monthly tuition is due by the last day of each month for the next month

A non-refundable application fee is payable at the time of enrollment.

For each student you must submit a security deposit equal to one month of tuition.

Written withdrawal notification is required from parents one month in advance of the anticipated withdrawal date. The security deposit will be applied to the final month if one month written notification has been received, and all tuition and fees are paid.

You will be charged additional fees (as per your contract) for picking up your child later than the scheduled time. This policy is to discourage you from being late and to cover the costs of the center remaining open. Parents picking up children after 6:00 P.M. will be charged \$5.00 for each 5 minutes. Nursery North CLOSES at 6:00 PM. You should be here in time to dress your child and gather his things together so that you exit the center by 6:00 PM. Late fees are due before your child is permitted back for further care.

NOTE: Family Fees are to be paid EVERY Friday for the following week.

#### HEALTH POLICIES

These policies are mandated by the City of New York and are written to ensure a healthy environment for all children. Failure to comply with them jeopardizes other children and our license to operate. Therefore, children not in compliance with the Department of Health regulations will not be allowed to attend.

We do everything in our power to keep your children safe when they are in our care. During the course of play it is normal for children at this age to get some bumps and bruises. We will call you if your child has an accident so you are not taken by surprise when you pick him up. Please do not get alarmed when we call. Ninety-nine per cent of the time it is minor. Nursery

North has liability insurance in case of an emergency. However, we expect that you will use your family health insurance first in the case of injury.

All children are required to have mandatory medical examinations in a timely manner. A chart indicating required immunizations, screening tests and exams is available from the office. A child may not start or continue at the center without complete medical records on file. Children are required to have an updated medical at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months and again at each birthday. This is what most pediatricians do anyway so always ask us for a blank medical form when you are going to a "well check." New York City requires a full physical, so a copy of the immunization card only is NOT sufficient.

All immunizations must be up to date. If there is a delay, a letter from the doctor must be on file at the center stating the reason and when the child will be immunized. Children who for physical reasons, have not been able to follow the required immunizations schedule, must have written proof from a physician on file at the center.

The Department of Health will not accept medical examination forms signed by the child's parent even though that parent may be a physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant.

All children in attendance at the center will be considered healthy enough to participate in all activities. This includes water play and outdoor activities year round. The children use local parks when the weather permits and take neighborhood walks. If your child is sick, he should stay home.

If your child becomes ill during the course of the day, we will contact you. In that event you must pick up your child as soon as possible. We cannot give a sick child the additional care he needs and still give optimal care to the rest of the group. The presence of a sick child puts all the other children at risk. NOTE: If you are not going to be able to be reached at your regular phone numbers, remember to leave an alternate number with us. Remember to always update all contact information for everyone who is authorized to pick up your child.

Children with a fever of 101 or more will be sent home. This child must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to the center. Children with a fever of 101 whose parents (or emergency contact person) cannot be reached within 30 minutes may have to be taken to the hospital emergency room. We expect you to arrange for your child to be picked up immediately.

Children with three bouts of diarrhea (which is highly contagious) in one day will be sent home.

Because of the danger of contagion, all instances of communicable disease must be reported immediately to the director, as well as the New York Department of Health, so that center parents can be notified.

### COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Disease	To return to school the following conditions must be met
Chicken Pox	After all the lesions are scabbed
Cold/Upper Respiratory Infection	After 3 days if no severe coughing, sneezing or running nose (mucous should be clear)
German Measles/Rubella	After rash is gone
Impetigo	After all lesions have disappeared
Measles	Six days after rash disappears
Mumps	After swelling has disappeared
Pediculosis (Head Lice)	Doctor's note stating child is under treatment and is cleared to return to school
Pinworm	Doctor's note stating child is under treatment
Ringworm of Body	After rash is gone
Ringworm of Scalp	Doctor's note stating child is under treatment
Roseola	As soon as child's temperature has been normal for 24 hours
Scabies	After rash is gone
Scarlet Fever or Strep Throat	As soon as child's temperature has been normal for 24 hours
Coxsackie	7 days after diagnosis
Pink Eye	After discharge has dried up

### MEDICATIONS

By state regulation, day care centers are no longer permitted to dispense medication of any kind (including Tylenol for teething or on-going medications such as asthma medication or antibiotics). We are sorry for this inconvenience.

### MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS for RELIGIOUS or PHYSICAL REASONS

Parents who choose not to follow the Department of Health required immunizations schedule for religious reasons may do so by completing the proper Department of Health form. In accordance with the Department of Health regulations, these children will be excluded from

attendance whenever anyone at the center contracts a contagious disease. The period of exclusion will be the incubation period for the specific disease.

#### DISCONTINUANCE of SERVICES

It is our goal to work cooperatively and constructively with each family. However, sometimes problems arise that cannot be resolved. If this occurs the director shall reserve the right to discontinue child care service where:

- Fees are not paid
- Medical records are not up to date
- A child has special needs that cannot be met by the center
- There is a major disagreement between family and center regarding center policies
- There is a serious failure of communication between family and center
- There is discourteous treatment of staff
- Center policies are not adhered to

#### STROLLER POLICY

As a courtesy we have provided stroller storage. All strollers must be placed inside the bins or stroller room. We require that you use a compact stroller to allow for as many people as possible to leave their strollers at the center. We are not obligated to let you leave a huge stroller. You may want to consider getting an umbrella stroller bringing here. When you drop off your child you should fold your stroller as tightly as possible and latch it. If you have a stroller that can be hung please hang it over the bar on top. Do not leave excess covers or bags in it that cause it to take up extra space. These items may be in your child's cubby. Strollers may not be left outside the designated areas. Doing so is a fire hazard and against the FDNY regulations.

We reserve the right to refuse any stroller, which is not stored properly or is so big that it prohibits others from taking advantage of this courtesy. Please label your stroller so there aren't any mix-ups if someone else has the same stroller you do.

#### MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

BIRTHDAY PARTIES may be held for the children. We ask that you supply a healthy snack for all the children in the class. You are welcome to invite a few close relatives but limit the number of guests because the room will get crowded and it could be overwhelming for the children teachers. We remind you that we are still responsible for all the children in the classroom.

NO SMOKING: There is no smoking allowed in the center. This includes childcare providers, parents, and visitors who are dropping off, visiting, lunching, or picking up children.

Nursery North accepts children from ages 2 months until 5.11 years of age.

Nursery North Too accepts children from 6 weeks until 3.3 years of age.

According to our licensing regulations children may not be here outside of those age ranges. Please make childcare plans in advance so you do not get stuck.

Nursery North admits children of any race, color, national or ethnic origin.

## HOLIDAY and EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

We are closed on national holidays. On some occasions, depending on when a holiday falls, we may close an extra day. Nursery North will be closed the first week of August every year. We hope that this is a convenient time for your family vacation. Unfortunately, we cannot reduce the tuition when we close because we have to meet monthly costs and pay staff for holidays. These closings are factored into the annual tuition rates. Teachers need their holidays to avoid burn-out and to be at their best when they are working with your child. To allow for staff to fully enjoy their December holidays we will attempt to close early on Christmas and New Year's Eves. We will inquire about your holiday schedule so that the staff may plan accordingly. If you do require our services for the full day we may combine classrooms so that we can have a limited staff. We will be closed on the following days:

### HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day and Eve	Summer Vacation (first week of August every year)
Martin Luther King Day	Labor Day
Presidents' Day	Columbus Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Holiday (including Thursday and Friday)
Memorial Day	Christmas and Christmas Eve
Independence Day	

Snow or other emergency closings will be announced on our answering machine, Fox 5 TV, and their website: [www.myfoxny.com/subindex/weather/closings](http://www.myfoxny.com/subindex/weather/closings). We generally follow the NYC Board of Education.

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Lost Child Plan: Call the police immediately.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures: Walking children are lead out by their teachers. Babies are placed four in one evacuation crib and are rolled out. All extra staff help evacuate. Emergencies that last more than 30 minutes the children will go to the designated emergency locations. (See below)

**Nursery North** designated emergency location is the NYC public library 115<sup>th</sup> Branch. The address is 203 West 115<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10026. The number is (212) 666-9393.

**Nursery North Too** designated emergency location is P.S. 194 Countee Cullen. The address is 244 West 144<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10030. The number is (212) 690-5954.

Fire Safety: Emergency evacuation plan is posted on the walls near the fire pull boxes. Drills are held at least once a month and a log is kept in the office that is available for inspection to anyone who asks.