



Giocare Playschool

279 18th Street

Brooklyn, NY 11215

Giocare Playschool Policy Manual

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PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPROACH

Giocare Playschool is a licensed developmentally appropriate home-based 2, 3, and 4 year old playgroup gently introducing the preschool routine and encouraging physical, language and social/emotional development. As the name suggests, the program has a particular emphasis on play for young children. The program runs 5 days a week from 8am to 6pm, but many children choose a shorter or more part time schedule.

The program will follow what NAEYC defines as developmentally appropriate practice for children of this age group. Toddler and Preschoolers are rapidly developing physically and socially and their language is exploding. This program will serve specifically to support these areas of development. Understanding that these children will be moving from toddlerhood to preschoolers to getting ready for prekindergarten over the course of the program, we will gently introduce the ideas of following a routine giving long blocks for choice time and stimulating their interests and senses. We will offer activities that stimulate their pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills and help them progress with the skills needed to be successful in Kindergarten.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Children will attend 2, 3, or 5 days a week with a schedule as short as 9am to 12pm and as long as 8am to 6pm. As per our regulation, classes will have a maximum of 6 children total with one teacher or 12 children total with 2 teachers. All teachers and substitutes will be screened by the NYC Department of Health including fingerprinting and background check before working with children.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Admission for the Toddler and Preschool classes begin in October when the new schedules and pricing are posted. The application deadline is January 15th with notices sent on February 15th and confirmation of acceptances due March 15th. Children are then admitted on a rolling basis. Open Houses will be scheduled in the fall and then as needed. Admission will be granted primarily on a first-come-first-served basis with priority given to those that were in the program the previous year and siblings.

Giocare Playschool is a licensed group family daycare program which means we have gone through all the necessary steps to be deemed safe and appropriate for working with children. Therefore, all required paperwork must be filled out for children to attend (Medical Form, Day Care Registration form, and Admission Form, Nap Arrangement form).

PAYMENT PROCESS

Preschool Time

There is a 10% nonrefundable deposit due at the time of confirming your acceptance into the program. The remaining balance may be paid in one, two or 10 installments. If electing one payment, the payment is due on September 1st, if electing 2 they are due on September 1st and February 5th and if electing the 10

monthly payments, they should be made on September 1st and then the 5th of the month from there on out through June.

We will accept cash, checks and credit cards. All checks are payable to Giocare, LLC.

IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Please remember that learning in programs for these age groups looks a little different from learning in elementary school. Children's work is their play and is essential for their development and learning. Children learn through trial and error experiences facilitated by their teachers. Through play, children learn to negotiate, take risks and work at a level that suits them. With teacher interaction, a child's play is extended and becomes more complex thus furthering their development and learning.

Any artwork, drawing or writing that children bring home is a demonstration of what they learned, so please respect it accordingly. For example, if a 2- or 3-year-old draws a line or a circle, understand that this is the beginning of the writing process. If they show you a piece of paper with "fringes" that they cut around the edges, this indicates a great deal of motor planning and fine motor skills. It is important for both your child's self-esteem, as well as his/her educational experience, for you to look at it, comment on it (i.e. "I see you cut short lines around the paper."), take it home, keep it in a special folder or box, and/or hang something on the wall or refrigerator.

TYPICAL DAY

9:00-9:25 – Table Toys/ Drawing/Fine Motor Activities

9:25-9:40 – Circle Time

9:40-10:10 – Learning Centers

10:10-10:15 - Toileting/hand-washing

10:15-10:30 – Snack of fresh fruit and vegetables

10:30-11:00 – Outside time

11:00-11:05 – Toileting/Wash hands

11:05-11:30 – Small Group Project Time 11:30-12:00 - Lunch

12:00 – Dismissal for half day

12:00-12:15 - Clean-up/ quiet reading/read aloud

12:15-2:00– Rest Time/nap time

1:00-1:45– Project Time (for prek class and those children not napping beyond 1pm)

1:45-2:00 – Snack Option

2:00-2:30 – Music & Good-bye circle – recap day's activities

2:30 – Dismissal

Early Drop Off (8:00am-9:00am)

At early drop off, children will have space to finish eating or eat any breakfast they bring with them and will have access to puzzles and games and art activities.

Extended Day (2:30 to 6:00pm)

2:30-2:45 – Afternoon Meeting

2:45-3:45 – Outside Time

3:45-4:00 – Toileting/Wash hands

4:00-4:15 – Snack Option

4:15 – 4:30 – Read Aloud

4:15 – 6:00 – Choice Time

EXPLANATION OF ROUTINE

Table Toys will consist of various items such as play dough (which children could make with teacher), puzzles, beads to string, stamps and crayons or other age-appropriate manipulatives. This time allows children to become engaged in an activity and transition toward separating from their caregivers.

Circle time will consist of a participatory hello song, talking about the daily schedule and sharing ideas or happenings from the previous day, then choosing a center for choice time.

Choice time/Project time will vary the most depending on the day. At times, it will consist of a typical preschool choice time where children can play in a kitchen area, puppet area, with an easel or art center, or blocks. On other days, special projects or activities could be one of the choices such as making play dough, playing instruments and making music, cooking, or doing a science experiment. The program may also utilize the outside space available with the water/sand table or target gross motor skills with tricycles, balls and outdoor games. This will vary based on the age, interest, and developmental level of the children on any given day.

The time for *toileting and washing of hands* is approximately one hour into the class. All children will be offered to try the bathroom, and all children will wash their hands before snack. Children do not need to be potty trained to attend, but we will assist you in this if you are working on it at home. Please let us know.

Snack time is a great time for children to socialize with each other and learn life skills. During this time, children will pass and share items, work on pouring water into cups and drinking out of them, and connect with their peers. Oftentimes some of the best conversations in toddlers and preschoolers can be overheard at snack time. Children will be provided fruit and vegetable snacks only but may bring other snacks from home.

Each day will end with a *read aloud* of a story and our *goodbye song*. Children will also be asked to share their favorite part of the day.

ARRIVAL

The program begins at 9:00am. All families are expected to arrive on time for class. By arriving promptly, you enable your child to participate fully and set a positive example for their first school experience. Families are invited to spend

time in the classroom until 9:15. Please understand that late entry is a distraction to both teacher and students. Children often become upset when they recognize that they have arrived late and missed the first activity.

Additionally, in accordance with Department of Health, it is a requirement that children wash their hands prior to starting an activity in the classroom. Hand washing is the number one way to control the spread of germs. Upon arrival, please assist your child to put his/her belongings away in the designated area and then wash up in either the classroom sink or the bathroom sink.

DISMISSAL/PICK UP

It is mandatory that parents (and caregivers) arrive on time to pick up their child at the end of the program so we can safely dismiss the class. We suggest “buddying up” with another parent in the class (once you meet fellow parents) in case you or your caregiver are running late. Your parent “buddy” can wait with your child for your arrival. Please be sure to add your buddy to the authorized pick up list.

Only an authorized person can pick up a child at the end of the day unless the child’s parent has given specific permission in writing for someone else to pick up. We must have an authorized pick-up list for each child. If someone arrives to pick up a child that is not on the authorized pick-up list, the child will NOT be released to that person. If someone arrives to pick-up a child that we are not familiar with, that person will be asked to show ID in order to verify that they are listed as an authorized pick-up person.

CLOTHING

Please remember to dress your child in appropriate play clothes/jackets for indoor, as well as outdoor activities. Sweatpant style is easiest for the age range of the children. For your child’s safety, please be sure that s/he wears well fitted, closed casual shoes or sneakers that are appropriate for walking, running, and climbing. All clothing should be labeled with your child’s name, especially jackets, hats, scarves, gloves/mittens. Mitten clips are very helpful for your child.

In addition, we request that you bring a change of clothes and any diapering materials (we have wipes, but pack anything special your child requires) necessary for your child. If you are coming consistently, feel free to leave a ziplock bag or clear box with these materials at the program making sure it is clearly marked with your child's full name.

SIGN-IN SHEETS

When the children arrive in the morning, it is mandatory that the parent or caregiver of the child to sign the child in on the sign-in sheet. It is also very important that you write the correct time that the child arrived at the program and any special information in the comment box. For example, you may write that your child is going to have a play date with another child in the class and is going to be picked up by someone else. If something changes, all last minute

changes must be in writing, please e-mail Ellen at ellen@giocareplayschool.com or Dinelle at dinelle@giocareplayschool.com.

At the end of the day, when the program is over, the parent or caregiver should sign the child out as well. Again, the time must be accurate. We are very serious about the safety of your child, and request that you comply with these procedures.

It is essential that you keep us updated with any change in phone numbers, emails and home addresses.

SEPARATION/FIRST DAY OF PROGRAM

For some children, especially younger ones, the first few days of the program will be difficult. They will be in a new space and will see new faces. They may have a very hard time saying goodbye to their parents or their caregiver. We hope to make separation as seamless as possible and offer these suggestions to parents:

- Talk to your child about the fact that school is where he/she will go to be with his/her friends and teachers. Grown ups do not go to school with their children.
- For a child who is having separation anxiety, s/he needs to develop a level of recognition and trust in the teachers before the parent can leave. In order to build this trust, encourage your child to ask a teacher for something they might need. After the first day, parents may be asked by the teachers to remain outside (or inside) the classroom or in the neighborhood, depending on the needs of the child during the first week or two.
- Remember that the child's biggest fear is that you will not come back for them so reassure them that you will be back at a specific time. Once they start to realize the routine, they will feel much safer about being in school by themselves.
- When it becomes appropriate to leave your child, please remember to say "good-bye" before you go and then leave the room. Lingering after saying "good-bye" indicates a certain (understandable) ambivalence, which your child may interpret as insecurity.
- There may be tears (mainly for our younger 2's), so please be prepared for this. Usually the tears stop soon after the parent has left the classroom. If there is a child having an especially difficult time, the teacher will contact the parent.
- When parents and teachers work together to ease a child's separation anxiety, a comfortable transition will be provided for all.

INCLUSION

Please remember that we are a program that welcomes the diversity of all children from a variety of backgrounds and abilities. This often requires some patience and time for the children to become accustomed to the program and to create a classroom community. Teachers, families and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports a child's inclusion and success.

Sometimes the program may have related service providers such as a speech therapist or a SEIT (Special Education Itinerant Teacher). These professionals are sponsored by the New York City Department of Education to provide additional support for a child who may be experiencing a delay. Although they are assigned to a particular student, they may be working with that child and other children from the group, as is mandated by the DOE. Please understand that these teachers are credentialed and screened.

If you have a question or concern about your child's development, please speak with us. We are here to support you, to answer your questions, and to provide you with information about outside resources, if needed.

INFECTION CONTROL POLICIES

At some time during the year, your child may become ill. This document outlines our program policies.

If the illness falls under the guidelines below, we ask that you NOT bring your child to class. These guidelines are determined by the Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and the Medical Committee of the Day Care Council. We are not permitted to deviate from these guidelines. If a child falls under one of the following guidelines and comes to class, we must send the child home.

Our goal is to prevent the spread of illness to healthy children. Also, if your child is not feeling well, they may endure difficulty transitioning throughout the day. Every parent is depending on the cooperation and good health policies of all the families in the program.

PLEASE...

- If your child develops a highly contagious disease, an email will be sent to the rest of your class to inform them of exposure, but will not identify the child. Ask for a doctor's note, indicating the diagnosis and the date of return.
- We may need to contact the physician, if additional information or clarification is needed.
- Maintain your child's immunizations and schedule regular check-ups.
- Keep all of your emergency telephone numbers at the program up to date.

IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS ARE PRESENT, YOUR CHILD IS TOO ILL TO ATTEND THE PROGRAM:

- 1) Fever- (before the use of fever reducers) 100 degrees
- 2) Diarrhea – (not secondary to antibiotics)
 - Change in amount of bowel movement
 - Change in consistency/frequency of bowel movement
 - Grey or White stool
 - 2 Episodes within 24 hours or 1 episode with any other symptom
- 3) Runny Nose- Green or yellow mucus discharge

- 4) Vomiting-2 episodes within 24 hours or 1 episode with any other symptom
- 5) Sores or rashes-excluding the diaper area or if a physician confirmed allergic reaction
- 6) Severe coughing-
 - Child gets red or blue in the face
 - Child makes high-pitched, croupy or whooping sounds
 - Persistent cough that interferes with the child's activities
- 7) Eye irritation- discharge of pus, swelling, redness of eyelid lining

****Children must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to the program. ****

Our program is licensed by the Department of Health. Besides the common cold, we report all communicable disease to them and follow their recommendations.

It is imperative that we strictly enforce our sick policy. If a child develops a fever while in our care, the family will be contacted and requested to have their child picked up as soon as possible. Please remember that he/she may not return to the program the next day (24 hour policy).

If your child will be absent from the program, please contact us to report the absence as well as his/her symptoms.

Besides keeping your child home when sick, the best line of defense is hand washing. Therefore our teachers will be vigilant with our hand washing policy (arrival time, before meals, after sneezing, coughing, wiping noses etc.)”

2013-2014 CALENDAR

The program begins on September 9th. We will follow the NYC Public Schools calendar for holidays and vacations. The following is a preliminary list of dates that the program will be closed. During the longer breaks, a holiday camp may be in session for \$50-\$80 per day. This will be dependent on enrollment and staff availability.

- Monday, September 9th First Day of School
- Monday, September 9th & Tuesday, September 10th – Separation Schedule
- Wednesday, September 11th – Early Drop Off and Extended Day begins
- Monday, October 14, Columbus Day Observed
- Tuesday, November 5, Election Day
- Monday, November 11, Veterans Day Observed
- November TBA, Parent-Teacher Conferences (school in session)
- Thursday & Friday, November 28 & 29 Thanksgiving Recess
- Monday-Wednesday, December 23-January 1 Winter Recess
- Monday, January 20 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Monday-Friday, February 17-21 Midwinter Recess
- Monday-Tuesday, April 14-April 22 Spring Recess
- April TBA, Parent-Teacher Conferences (school in session)

- Monday, May 26, Memorial Day Observed
- Friday, June 13, Last Day of School

SNOW DAYS/EMERGENCIES

For snow days/emergencies, we will follow the schedule of New York City Public Schools.

SNACK/NUTRITION

The program will provide a fruit and vegetable snack each day, and children may bring their own snack to supplement. Additionally, all children will pack their lunch. Please be mindful of sending your child with a healthy lunch. It is important to ensure we know of any allergies or food sensitivities so we can accommodate each child.

MEDICATION

The staff in this program is not trained or equipped to administer any medication. Exceptions to this are things like over the counter topical creams such as a diaper cream or sunscreen.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PLAN

Our local hospital is New York Methodist Hospital located at 506 Sixth Street (7th Ave.) Brooklyn, NY 11215-----718-780-3000

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be contacted. After calling 911, parents will be contacted by the teacher. The child will be accompanied at all times by one of his/her teachers. In the event of a transfer to the hospital, the teacher will stay with the child until a parent arrives. The teacher will bring the child's medical, emergency treatment consent and parent contact information. An alternate provider or substitute will always be in direct supervision of remaining children.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In accordance with the Department of Health, the program has monthly fire drills.

In the event of an emergency, where evacuation is necessary, our primary evacuation site is PS 295 located at 330 18th Street or the adjacent NYC public park on 6th Avenue between 18th and 19th Street. If we need to leave 18th Street, our secondary evacuation site is the YMCA Sports Complex at Park Slope Armory located at 361 15th Street. The teachers will perform head counts before, during, and after the evacuation walk. The teachers will take an emergency bag that contains emergency contact and release info for each student, medical forms, and first aid supplies. Once we have safely evacuated, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their children as soon as it is safe to do so. Communication to the families will be dependent on the emergency conditions, however communication may take place in the following ways:

- signs will be posted on the front door

- a program wide email
- individual phone calls by the teachers

STROLLERS

In the best interest of your child's safety and security, we request your compliance with our stroller policy. Strollers must be left outside in the front area of the 18th Street location. Please consider securing your stroller with a lock of some kind and taking all valuables out of the stroller before leaving it. While we don't anticipate any issue with theft, we cannot be responsible for keeping watch over the strollers during the program hours. At the 23rd Street location, there will be hooks available to hang a ***folded umbrella stroller only***. We will not be able to accommodate any other type of stroller sitting in the hallway, as that is a fire hazard. There is not room in front of the building at the 23rd Street location.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS/LOST AND FOUND

Children should not bring toys from home because things can easily get lost or mixed up with other toys in the program space, and children then become very upset. An exception to this would be a lovey or transition item that helps a child separate. Please put your child's name on every item that belongs to them (clothes, hats, gloves, etc.). If you lose an item, please check with us to see if something has been found.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become involved in our program. Through coordination with the teachers, parents are welcome to read to the children, lead a cooking or art activity, share something from their family tradition or culture, or accompany the class on a field trip to name just a few. We will make every effort to send out important dates well in advance so parents have the best chance of attending.

PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers will communicate with you in a variety of ways, i.e. email, phone calls, notes sent home. Monthly newsletters and class websites will help to keep you up to date on classroom activities. We will create a Shutterfly account that will house a monthly newsletter as well as photos of your children. This will be a password protected site that only families who attend the program will be able to access.

Teachers will also keep parents apprised of their child's development and progress. Information will be exchanged through discussions in person, by telephone, or by email. Parent teacher meetings may be scheduled whenever necessary. If you have any questions or concerns, please see us. We also welcome your suggestions.

CONFIDENTIALITY

While we encourage frequent communication and discussions, please remember that any conversation, medical information or written communication about a

child is absolutely confidential.

***WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOUR FAMILY AND
MAKING THIS A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL!***