

Early Childhood Development Center
Kaleidoscope

PARENT HANDBOOK



2023 - 2024

**480 Stratford Road
Brooklyn, NY 11218**

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Dear Families,

Welcome to Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) Kaleidoscope's 15th year!

The preschool embraces a diverse group of teachers, students, and staff who are dedicated to helping children reach their full potential and be ready for lifelong learning, discovery, and exploration! Through hands-on activities and games, we expose children to arts, language, mathematics, science and social interactions, music and movement, drama, and sports.

We believe that play is child's work. Young children learn through interactions with other children, with adults and within an appropriate nurturing and stimulating environment. Play lets children build trust, friendships, and their understanding about the world. These early lessons form a solid foundation for future academic success and foster a desire for life-long learning. We embrace our flexible learning environment as it offers plenty of time to explore, to develop own interests, and to interact with peers.

We also believe that you are your child's most important teacher. Our leadership and teaching teams will build relationships with you to provide meaningful opportunities and resources that support children's emotional, intellectual, physical, and social skills development.

We are looking forward to partner with you in your child's education and are eagerly awaiting your child's arrival.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to send an e-mail or call.

With shared excitement,

Oksana Grebenyuk, M.S. Ed
Director



Philosophy and Mission Statement

ECDC Kaleidoscope was created in 2009 to nurture children’s creative expressions; promote social/emotional, physical, and cognitive development; build a strong foundation for school readiness and life-long learning.

Our goal is to increase children’s exposure to positive social interactions, arts, language, mathematics, science, music and movement, drama, and sports.

Our philosophy is “learning through play”, which we believe is essential in child development.

Programs

Early Childhood Development Center Kaleidoscope offers programs for Two’s, 3K, and Pre-K for All. We welcome enrollment to all children regardless of race, religious affiliation, national origin, or gender.

In the 2023-2024 school year, Kaleidoscope will have:

One classroom for Two’s	12 students with 1 teacher and 2 assistant teachers
One classroom for 3K	15 students with 1 teacher and 1 assistant teachers
Two classrooms for Pre-K for All	18 children with 1 teacher and 1 assistant teacher in each class

We are actively working on adding a class for children 12-24 month old for the 2024-2025 school year beginning in August 2024.

Curriculum

Our program provides children with a broad range of opportunities to expand their thinking skills, language development, fine and gross motor skills, and problem-solving skills. Children participate in hands-on activities and learn through art, creative movement, and music. Learning in whole and small group meetings, exploring and experimenting during choice time, discovering and practicing outside at our own playground, are important components of our program. We provide a balance of active and quiet, group and individual, teacher-directed and student-selected activities. Our programs build a solid foundation for children’s future education.

- Kaleidoscope incorporates the Creative Curriculum by Teaching Strategies Gold for Two’s program;
- Creative Curriculum for Preschool and Everyday Mathematics curriculum by McGraw Hill for 3K and Pre-K;
- Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies social studies curriculum for Pre-K;
- Get Set for School by Learning Without Tears writing curriculum for Pre-K .

Leadership and Teaching Teams

The preschool was founded and is led by Oksana Grebenyuk. Mrs. Oksana is the executive and educational director of the preschool. She holds a bachelor's degree in business and financing, a master's degree in childhood education, and is currently attending University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education for her second master's degree in education. She oversees teachers and classroom activities, hires and trains staff and teachers, develops policies and procedures that meet state requirements and communicates them to staff and teachers, manages and prepares budgets, creates curricula that supports educational excellence, and works with staff on family and students communication.

Pavlo Bouniatian (Mr. Pasha) holds a bachelor's degree in business and finance. He is the deputy director of the preschool. Mr. Pasha is responsible for accounts receivable to Kaleidoscope (i.e. such as tuition, extended days, mini camps, and summer program) and accounts payable within budget (i.e. bills, meals and snacks, classroom materials, janitorial supplies, etc.), processes monthly attendance and other enrollment documents, drafts and distributes monthly tuition statements to families, coordinates the maintenance and cleaning of the facility according to state and local standards.

Catherine Bouniatian (Miss Catherine) is the marketing manager. She is finishing her bachelor's degree in business and marketing. Miss Catherine promotes the preschool in our community. She is responsible for creating documents and flyers, managing basic website tasks, posting pictures on social media, managing special events, etc. Miss Catherine may answer the phone, greet parents and students in the morning, help teachers in the classroom, print curriculum items for teachers, etc.

Vasyl Gres is the chef. Mr. V. is responsible for preparing nutritionally balanced meals for the children, maintaining high standards of quality food production and portion control using standard recipes and also for appropriate quantities of food needed to meet menu requirements. Mrs. Oksana, Mr. Pasha and Mr. V. possess Food Handler Certificates, following all guidelines set forth by Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

The ECDC Kaleidoscope teaching teams are made up of highly qualified individuals who have been hired based on their education, experience, and dedication to working with young children. Our 3K and Pre-K teachers hold Master's degree and are certified in early childhood. Our Toddlers' class teachers hold Associate degree in early childhood, and our teacher assistants hold high school diplomas (or college education from their home countries) and countless hours of professional development in early childhood.

Two's Schedule and Tuition for the 2023-2024 preschool year (for children born in 2021)

School Year	Regular Day 8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Extended Day with Enrichment Program 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Mini Camps 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
July 31, 2023 – August 30, 2024 and August 4, 2024 – August 29, 2025	14 equal payments of \$1,512	\$15/day- planned or \$20/day - unplanned	\$100/day

Two's program will follow the 3K and Pre-K yearly schedule and will be closed on Federal holidays, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Presidents' week (Winter Camp), Easter week (Spring Camp), and in July. Two's program offers 232 instructional days.

3K and Pre-K for All Wrap Around Services and Tuition

	Regular Day 9:00 am – 3:20 pm	Extended Day Morning Playgroup 8:00 am – 9:00 am	Extended Day with Enrichment Clubhouse 3:20 pm- 4:00 pm	Winter and Spring Camps 8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Summer Programs 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
3K and Pre-K	Free	\$15/day – planned \$20/day - unplanned	See club descriptions below	\$100/day	June 24 – June 28; \$500/week July 29 – August 30 - \$2,000 + extended hours if needed

Summer Program and Mini Camps

The Winter 2024 camp will run from February 20 through February 23.

The Spring 2024 camp will run from Monday, April 22 – April 26.

The 2024 Summer Program for incoming 3K, Pre-K students, and current graduating Pre-K for All will run on June 18 – June 28 and July 29 through August 30, 2024.

Mini Camp and Summer Program Extended Hours are 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm and are \$15/day.

3K and Pre-K Extended Day Clubhouse and its Payment Schedule

Extended Day Clubhouse begins on Monday, September 11, 2023.

The Clubhouse activities are designed to give students an additional stimulating environment where they continue developing and practicing problem solving through visual and performing arts, building self-confidence, and improving physical, cognitive, and communication skills. The clubs include various enrichment activities followed by outdoor play.

Create your own aftercare schedule! Families may choose to register for one, two, three, four or five clubs, register for daily open play, and add outdoor playtime.

Clubs' registration and payment

Registration forms will be e-mailed to families on or shortly after August 7, 2023.

If you register your child for a club (Sports, Art, Music and Creative Movement, Book), the tuition must be paid upon registration. If you choose two or more clubs, the tuition may be divided into three equal payments. Contact Mr. Pasha for more information.

Open Play and Outdoor Play time days are chosen and paid for one month ahead based on the number of days of attendance.

In the 2023-2024 school year we offer:

Extended Day Clubhouse

Kaleidoscope's enrichment clubs expand children's minds, bodies, and spirits, while also developing their personal and social skills.

Morning playgroup is an open play in our classrooms' discovery centers. After school extended day consists of two parts: 40 min of indoor activities and 60 min of outdoor play. Families may choose to sign up for 3:20 pm – 4:00 pm (one class) or 3:20 pm – 5:00 pm (a class and playground time).

Morning Playgroup

September 11 – June 18

Mondays – Fridays

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Cost: \$15 per day

Children play in classroom centers. Register your child a month ahead on a need basis.

Indoor Open Play

Monday – Friday

September 11 – June 18

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$10 day

Children play in classroom centers. Register your child a month ahead on a need basis.

Playground

Monday – Friday

September 11 – June 18

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Cost: \$15/day

Outdoor play provides children with an additional chance to advance their gross motor skills. Kids will start developing a habit of being active and practicing social and emotional skills with other children. This includes problem solving, turn taking, encouragement, self-control, safe risk taking, and developing empathy.

Register your child a month ahead on a need basis.

Sport Club

For 3K and Pre-K, Kaleidoscope's Sport Club will concentrate on outdoor Soccer and indoor physical games in three sessions – Fall, Winter, and Spring. Register your child on a session basis.

Fall Session: Outdoor Soccer Games

September 11 – November 29

Mondays and Thursdays

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$20/class x 21 classes = \$420



Children will enjoy being involved in soccer games that build strength, perfect simple motor skills, improve hand/eye coordination, and encourage social interactions. Soccer games will help children grow such key skills as running, jumping, turning, kicking, and balancing.

Winter Session: Indoor Themed Movement Games

December 4 – March 27

Mondays and Thursdays

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: 20/class x 28 class = \$560

During cold winter months, children will keep on building strong bodies while balancing, climbing, jumping, juggling, and playing fun physical games indoors. In the club, kids will improve core strength and gross motor skills, develop new ways to challenge themselves, get better in such life skills like teamwork and problem solving, get terrific physical conditioning, and enjoy being active!

Spring Session: Outdoor Soccer Games

April 1 – June 17

Mondays and Thursdays

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: 20/class x 20 = \$400

Just like in our Fall session, children will continue having fun playing soccer games, building strength, perfecting simple motor skills, improving hand/eye coordination, and practicing social interactions. Soccer Games will help children develop such key skills as running, jumping, turning, kicking, and balancing.



Music and Creative Movement

Tuesdays

September 12 – June 18

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$20/class x 38 classes = \$760

In this class, students will sing, listen, move, and play musical instruments. They will develop balance, control, and coordination through activities that are fun and challenging; explore abstract concepts at an experimental level; develop self-awareness; emphasize give-and-take social interactions through play and creative movement; express activities and feelings of everyday life; tell a story through movement; and find out how parts of the body feel while moving to the music.

Register your child for the entire school year.



Art Studio

Wednesdays

September 13 – June 12

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$20/class x 36 classes = \$720

In this literacy-based club, children will explore collections of art from around the world: Africa, Japan, Australia, Europe, North and South America, and create projects inspired by them.

The media children will work with include:

- Cardboard, Styrofoam, fabric, and clay
- Pencils, permanent markers, felt-tip pens, and ink
- Wax crayons, chalks, and oil pastels
- Watercolors and acrylic paint
- Different size brushes, sponges, straws, toothpicks, cotton swabs, and pipe cleaners

The club will give students an environment in which they will express their feelings through art, practice problem solving, build self-confidence, and improve fine motor and communication skills.

Register your child for the entire school year.



Book Club

Fridays

September 22 – June 14

3:20 pm – 4:00 pm

Cost: \$15/class x 35 classes = \$525

Besides building a love of reading, the Book Club will develop an abundance of literacy skills: the ability to use comprehension strategies; to compare and contrast authors, themes, concepts and ideas; the ability to understand how reading teaches about the world; and plant a seed for being a good writer.

After reading and discussing a book, children will continue building relationships and have book-related games, arts and crafts, or act the books out.

Register your child for the entire school year.

Enrichment Activity for Two's

Sing and Dance with Me



Included in the preschool regular tuition.

Sing and Dance with Me will take place three times/week during children's regular day (8:00 am – 4:00 pm) .

In this class, toddlers will learn through sound exploration and movement. They will sing, chant, move, dance, listen, create, and play simple instruments – a full spectrum of musical mix that allows them to be active and have fun.

2024 - 2025 Registration

Preschool Tours

For safety reasons, we do not conduct tours while school is in session. We conduct tours in December for the families that are looking for a day care for the upcoming school year. The exact tour dates will be posted on our website in late October.

3K and Pre-K for All Registration

Families will be able to apply for 3K and Pre-K in both district schools and NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEEC) that offer 3K and Pre-K through a convenient single application.

The single-application process will allow parents to easily review the City’s high-quality, full-day program options in the directory and rank up to 12 choices. Based on the admissions, priorities for district schools and NYCEEC, students will receive a single offer from the NYCDOE to their highest possible program choice in early June. Students will automatically be waitlisted in programs they ranked higher than the program to which they were matched.

If you would like your child to attend a program at Kaleidoscope, please mark Kaleidoscope as your first choice. Students ranking programs on their application will be placed based on the following structure:

- Priority Group 1: Current students enrolled at Kaleidoscope matriculating from two-year-old, three-year-old, and Summer Programs
- Priority Group 2: Siblings of current students enrolled at Kaleidoscope
- Priority Group 3: Students whose families currently receive services from the organization
- Priority Group 4: Students speaking a native language other than English that Kaleidoscope specializes in serving (Russian)
- Priority Group 5: All other students

Two’s Program Enrollment

Year of Birth	School Year	Registration Begins
Must be two years old by August 1, 2025	July 29, 2023 – June 31, 2024	January 9, 2023

We are actively working on adding a class for children 12-24 month old for the 2024-2025 school year beginning in August 2024.

Procedure Registration for Toddlers and Summer Program for 3K and Pre-K students

The application form must be filled out and submitted to us. Shortly after we receive your application form you will receive the Acceptance Letter which must be signed and returned to ECDC Kaleidoscope together with a non-refundable registration fee in the amount of \$200 and your non-refundable first payment.

Withdrawal and Refund of Fees Policy

- a) The first installment is due at the time of registration. This installment is non-refundable and is applied to the last payment of your Registration Agreement.
- b) If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the center, **after commencement of classes**, a notice of withdrawal must be submitted to the center **30 days prior to the date of withdrawal (the first of the month)** with tuition paid through that month.

We kindly ask that any withdrawal from the preschool be made at your earliest convenience to allow others who may be waiting for a space at the school to enroll. Please notify the school in writing at: 480 Stratford Road, Brooklyn NY 11218, or simply e-mail us your notification of withdrawal.

Payment Schedule for Toddlers' Programs

Monthly installment plan: 1/14 of the tuition is due at the time of registration and is applied to the last payment of your Registration Agreement. Subsequent payments are due by the first (1st) of the month starting on June 1.

If the payment has not been received, a late fee of \$35 will be assessed every three days after the payment is due.

No make-up days or discounts will be given for your child's absences due to illnesses or vacations.

A \$50 fee will be charged for returned checks.

Immunization Requirements

All children enrolled in our programs must have a current physical examination, all State required immunizations, and a complete and current health form must be on file in the Center by the first day of your child's attendance. Physical exams are current for one year (from the date of the exam) and must be updated as required to remain current. A child whose physical exam is not current will be asked to remain out of class until seen by a physician.

As of June 13, 2019, public, private, parochial schools, and child care programs in New York can no longer accept requests for religious exemptions from school immunization requirements. All prior religious exemptions granted to students are now invalid.

Students who have not received all required immunizations must receive the first dose in each immunization series within 14 calendar days after the first day of school or enrollment in child care. Within 30 calendar days of the first day of school, parents or guardians of such children will also need to show that they have scheduled appointments for all follow-up doses.

Kaleidoscope continues to accept medical exemptions. For instructions on how to apply for medical exemptions, visit <https://infohub.nyced.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/medical-exemption-process-for-immunizations.pdf> Only valid medical exemptions will be approved by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Attendance Expectations and Policies for Absences and Lateness

How do students do well in school? They go every day! Students may miss school for illness, emergencies, or for religious reasons, but we want to see every student in school every day. Did you know that a student with 90% attendance has missed one month of school by the end of the year? Students with less than 90% attendance are more likely to have lower test scores and not graduate from high school. Therefore, it is important for families to bring their children to school on time each day, and plan vacations, trips, and appointments when school is not in session.

Attendance Expectations

Students attend 3K and Pre-K for All a full day schedule (6 hours and 20 minutes, 5 days a week).

Two's program students attend a full day schedule (8 hours/day, 5 days/week).

If families request flexibility in their child's schedule at the beginning of the school year, we will work with the family to develop a schedule that meets the needs of the family and child. We will also work with the family to help the student attend a full day schedule.

Child's Absences and/or Vacations

If your child will not be attending preschool due to an illness or other reasons, please let us know as soon as possible.

3K and Pre-K for All Record Keeping

Attendance is a required and an official record

Daily attendance is recorded for each student on his or her Attendance Card. 3K and Pre-K attendance records are entered into the Department of Education electronic system and become your child's permanent record.

A Daily Attendance Record Form is filled out and includes the student's name, their arrival and departure time, and caregiver's signature.

Every Absence Counts

A student who is not in school is marked absent, even if the absence is excused. Excused absences include:

- Student illness. Any student who is out for three or more days due to illness must provide a note from a physician.
- Family emergencies. A written letter should be provided to explain the emergency.
- Transportation or weather emergencies.

Responding To Student Tardiness and Absenteeism

If a student accumulates a high number of latenesses and/or excused absences, we will work with the family to determine if additional supports are required to enable the student to attend on a regular basis. Supports may include assisting the family to:

- Access health care, including counselling services
- Find a more reliable source of transportation
- Access community resources

We will discuss the following with the family:

- The nature of the students' irregular attendance
- Actions to be taken by the family
- Actions to be taken in the event the attendance problem continues

- The time of the next meeting to review the progress of attendance.
- How the family can coordinate with other families in the program who can share the responsibility of pick-up and/or drop-off

Parents must notify the program prior to their child's scheduled arrival time, but no later than one hour after the scheduled arrival time, that a child will not be attending the program that day.

Unless a family has notified us in advance of an absence, we will call his/her family:

- Within an hour on the first day of an absence
- On each day of additional absences.

If we fail to reach a student's family by phone, we will email, text a message, and/or write a letter to try to contact the family and, when necessary, emergency contacts. A log is kept of all communications made to families regarding absences.

Visit attendanceworks.org for tips and guides, including research about how attendance in Pre-K predicts later academic progress.

Recurring Absenteeism and Discharge Review Conferences

In 3K and Pre-K, recurring absence is defined as:

- 10 consecutive non-excused absences
- 20 non-excused absences in a 4-month period

If a student's absences reach recurring absenteeism thresholds we will:

- Report the case of recurring absenteeism to the Department of Education with the reason for absences and with our efforts to determine the reasons for absence.
- Request that the family come for a Discharge Review Conference with a Department of Education social worker present to determine if the student should be removed from the program in order to permit a student on a waiting list to be registered and enrolled in his or her place.

Arrival

Please arrive at the beginning of your child's day, sign your child in and bring your child directly to his/her classroom.

Punctuality helps set the tone of the day and reduces confusion in the classroom.

Circle Time is an important part of the children's day. If children come in during circle time, the entire class is disrupted. The children's ability to concentrate is compromised when their attention is diverted away from the group activity to the late arrivals at the door.

Just as importantly, children who are late may have troubles transitioning into the activities and miss an important part of the school day.



Pick-up

All students are dismissed by their teachers at the front doors of the preschool when their program is over.

All students must be signed out by their parent or an adult authorized by their parent. Parents must leave promptly with their child. This ensures a smooth transition for the children who are staying for after school.

Late Pick -Up

Please be prompt at pick up time. Children become anxious when parents are late. Please call us if you will be detained due to an emergency.

A child who is left at the center after his/her scheduled pick up is considered late. **A late fee of \$5 for every 5 minutes will be charged to anyone who remains after their pick-up time.** All fees must be paid in cash before the child's next day.

Please have a backup plan for days you are running behind or stuck in traffic.

Be advised that employees of Kaleidoscope are prohibited from accepting additional employment from Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm (while the preschool is open). Kaleidoscope employees that babysit current students of Kaleidoscope while the preschool is open will be terminated as soon as the situation is discovered.

Entrance and Dismissal

Please **do not stand, stop, or park car(s)** on the crosswalk (at Coney Island Ave) next to the preschool. Cars that stand on the crosswalk do not allow pedestrians (many of them are children and families with strollers) to finish crossing safely through the flow of heavy Coney Island Avenue traffic.

All children will enter and exit the preschool at a designated preschool entrance that will be communicated to the

families shortly before the school year begins.

Due to safety, strollers, scooters, tricycles, and bicycles cannot be brought inside of the preschool. You are welcome to secure these means of transportation to the fence outside of the preschool. The preschool is not responsible for theft or damage to the belongings left outside.

Please do not leave children in strollers unattended. Due to safety, our staff is not permitted to watch babies/children in the lobby while you are picking up Kaleidoscope's students.

We hope to resume Pre-COVID drop off policies in the 2022-2023 school year. Preschool parents must accompany their child into the classroom, sign in at drop-off and sign out at pick-up time. Please allow ample arrival time to assure a smooth, comfortable, and unhurried transition for your child. Parents are encouraged to help their child remove outerwear and put clothing in the proper place. Please label all clothes with your child's name.

All the names of persons picking up your child must be on the Pick-Up form. These persons should also be prepared to show proof of identity. If there is concern or question about the individual picking up your child, we reserve the right to not release the child and phone the parent for confirmation.

If you will be picking-up your child early for any reason, please let the teacher and the directors know.

Please wait outside until we open the door. We will dismiss the children one by one to ensure all are with a parent or caregiver.

Preschool First Days of Classes

The first day of the Two's program in the 2022-2023 school year is Monday, August 1, 2022. The first two days of school are partial days. This is to help provide a smooth transition into new surroundings, a new routine, and a gradual adjustment to new faces. For details and times, please refer to your class Welcome Letter that will be e-mailed in June.

Summer Program for incoming 3K and Pre-K children also begins on Monday, August 1, 2022.

3K and Pre-K for All First Day of Classes

The first day of 3K and Pre-K for All programs is Thursday, September 8.

Adjusting To School

We want to work with you to help your child make a smooth and enjoyable transition from home to preschool. Children may become anxious when they are separated from a parent. It is important to make the separation as pleasant as possible for your child. Usually a loving, quick good-bye, assuring the child of your later return, is the best method. Lingering only causes the child to suspect that you are insecure about the separation. Seeing your confidence and acknowledgement of security will help build that sense of security in your child. Feel free to call and check on your child later in the morning.



Clothing

One of our goals is to develop in children's self-confidence and a sense of independence. Therefore, all children should be dressed in comfortable clothing that can be easily manipulated by them. This will cause less frustration for children as we help them work toward independence. Shoes should be comfortable with non-skid bottoms and covered toes. Tennis shoes are preferable. Dress-up shoes with slick soles, oversized rain boots, sandals, and flip-flops are dangerous and inappropriate for active play.

Please remember that children must change outside shoes and wear slippers or indoor shoes at school. Children must change into these each morning.

We play outside daily, weather permitting. Please dress your child in layers so that additional clothing can be added or removed as necessary. Snowsuits, hats, mittens, and boots will be necessary for the winter months. Please dress your child in comfortable and practical clothing. Accidents or spills do happen, and cause distress and embarrassment for the children. We recommend that you send in a change of clothing for your child. Please include a full change (socks and underwear) in a plastic zip-lock bag with your child's name on it. A change of clothing should be left with your child's teacher at all times. Please make sure all clothing is seasonally appropriate and clearly labeled.

Meals and Snacks

Early Childhood Development Center Kaleidoscope's nutrition and physical activity policy is built upon the Health Department's childcare center regulations.

Each day, the children have fun social time together around the tables as they eat. Eating time teaches patience, manners, independence, language development, and nutrition.

The menu is posted on the Parent Information Board, at the classroom's bulletin board, and e-mailed to the families monthly.

Mealtime Environment

- Meals are served family style (3 years old and older children serve themselves with limited help).
- Food is never used as a reward or punishment.
- Staff displays a positive attitude towards all foods served.

- Children are encouraged but never forced to eat.
- When children eat less than half of a meal or snack, the staff helps determine if they are full before removing the plate.
- Staff sits and eats with the children.
- Meals and snacks are provided at regular hours and appropriate intervals.
- Staff creates a pleasant eating environment.
- Staff encourages children to help in simple meal preparation, such as setting the table and cleaning up.

Meals and Snacks

- Meals and snacks are nutritious.
- Food is served in appropriate portions.
- Fresh fruits and vegetables are served daily.
- Whole grains are included in meals and snacks.
- Food items are low in added sugar unless they provide significant nutritional value.

Beverages

- 100% juice is served three times/week.
- Water is available during each meal and snack time and throughout the day.
- Low-fat unsweetened milk is served at least twice per day every day.

STUDENTS WHO ARE LACTOSE INTOLERANT HAVE TO PRESENT A WRITTEN NOTE FROM THE DOCTOR TELLING US WHAT THE STUDENT IS ALLOWED TO DRINK

Children may bring their own healthy cold lunch. Please note that we do not have refrigerators in the classrooms. Containers should be safe and labeled with your child’s name. Please peel, hull, shell, and slice foods that your child will have difficulty handling alone. Please do not give your child cookies, potato chips, candy, chocolates, juice, and sodas for lunch. Dessert will be saved for last if the child finishes the meal. Uneaten food is placed back in the lunch box to let the parent know what the child ate.

Physical Activity and Screen Time

- There is no television viewing in the center.
- Children play outdoors every day for at least 60 minutes (refer to Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Play that follows)
- A minimum of two teachers participate in all physical activity sessions.
- Staff act as a child’s physical activity partner to encourage children to participate.
- Various types and tempos of music are used to encourage movement during indoor physical activity sessions.
- We suggest parents to incorporate physical activity opportunities offered by the local communities such as soccer, tennis, and dance classes.



Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Play

Each child has the right to play outdoors. When a child is healthy enough to attend school, he/she is healthy enough to participate in playground and/or physical education activities in and outdoors. A child may be exempted from physical education and /or outdoor play due to injury or illness with a physician's note for a specified period of time.

Recommendations for HEAT:

Temperature/Heat Recommendations	Outdoor Policy
Between 25- 89 degrees Fahrenheit	Regularly scheduled outdoor play
Between 90-95 degrees Fahrenheit	Outside for 15-30 minutes or less
Heat index greater than 95 degrees Fahrenheit	No outdoor play time

If the heat index is 90 to 95 degrees, or if there is a heat advisory in effect, children should only be outside for short periods of time (15 -30 minutes or less). Time is based on the children's appearance and behaviors. If the children are running around and playing and do not exhibit any signs of heat illness, they can be out on the longer end. However, if children are sitting or standing around in the shade, the staff brings them inside. When the heat index is 95 degrees or higher, this is considered to meet the definition of "extreme" weather conditions. On these days it would be expected that children would not go outside at all.

Recommendations for COLD:

Temperature/Wind Chills	Outdoor Policy
Between 89-25 degrees Fahrenheit	Regularly scheduled outdoor play time
Between 25-23 degrees Fahrenheit	15-20 minutes maximum
Between 23 degrees Fahrenheit and below	No outdoor play time

All children must wear winter outerwear such as a winter coat, hat, gloves, weather appropriate boots, and weather appropriate leg wear each day during the winter season.



Nap time

Every effort is made to adjust to the individual needs of all children regarding a daily nap. Children are allowed to take a stuffed animal to their cots at the beginning of nap time. After at least 30 minutes of quiet rest, children still awake will be able to play **quietly** (so not to disturb napping children) under the supervision of the teachers. Parents may provide their child with a special book or a stuffed animal (that does not make sounds) for naptime. Because of the limited storage in the classroom, please do not bring pillows (unless your doctor suggests it). We provide each child with a clean sheet that we wash and sanitize weekly. Please bring a crib size blanket for your child's rest time.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL:

Please ensure that all items your child brings along are clearly named.

1. Diapers (if your child is not toilet trained)
2. Disposable Bed Mats (if your child is not toilet trained **or may have an accident while napping**)
3. Two Packs of Flushable Wipes
4. Plastic bags for disposing diapers (if your child is wearing diapers)
5. One shirt (replace seasonally or when needed)
6. One pair of pants or shorts (replace seasonally or when needed)
7. One pair of underwear (more, if potty training)
8. One pair of socks
9. One pair of clean, soft, **breathable** indoor shoes to wear inside

Illness Policy

For the health and well-being of your child and of others at the center, keep your child home for the following reasons:

- Fever, $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$
- Signs of possible severe illness, including unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, uncontrolled coughing.
- Diarrhea, defined as increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water and/or decreased form.
- Blood in stools not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stools.
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain continuing for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
- Mouth sores associated with an inability of the child to control his or her saliva.
- Rash with fever or behavior change until a physician has determined the rash to be non-communicable.
- Purulent conjunctivitis, defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye.
- Infestation (e.g., scabies, head lice), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated (head lice) or completed (scabies).
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health authority states the child is non-infectious.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated, and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours.
- Varicella, until 6 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.



- Pertussis, laboratory-confirmed or suspected because of symptoms of the illness or because of cough onset within 14 days after face-to-face contact with a laboratory-confirmed case of pertussis in a household or classroom, until 5 days of appropriate chemoprophylaxis (currently erythromycin) has been completed.
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until 1 week after onset of illness or until after passive immunoprophylaxis (currently, immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff in the program, as directed by the responsible health department.
- Child is unable to participate comfortably in program.
- Care for the child requires greater attention than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

If a child becomes ill while at the center, a parent or authorized person will be contacted. It is our policy to send any child home that displays one or more of the above symptoms after arriving for the day. Please make arrangements to pick-up your child immediately if contacted.

If a child has been sent home due to illness, they may not return to preschool until they have been symptom free for 24 hours. This is to allow ample time to recover and to stop the spread of illness to the other children.

Communicable diseases. Parents must report to the center within 24 hours of absence due to: chicken pox, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, diphtheria, food poisoning, hepatitis, haemophilus influenza type b infection, impetigo, measles, meningitis (all types), meningococcal disease, Methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA), mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), poliomyelitis, rubella (German measles), salmonella, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, or any other disease or condition which may be a danger to the health of other children. Such disease or condition shall not include acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Your child's identity is protected.

Medication

At ECDC Kaleidoscope, we do not give medications to the children.

Preschool Head Lice Policy

Early Childhood Development Center Kaleidoscope adopts the New York City Department of Education Policy.

Can my child go to school with head lice?

- NYC Schools have a “No Head Lice” policy. Students who have live head lice are not allowed to go to school until they are lice-free. Students with nits are allowed to attend.
- Students may return to school the day after treatment for head lice as long as there are no live lice.
- Students will be re-inspected by a school worker after the treatment to make sure there are no live head lice.

Are head lice contagious?



- Anybody can get head lice by coming into contact with an infected person, but **spread of head lice requires direct head to head contact**. Head lice can't swim, fly, hop, or jump.
- Head lice can be spread as long as lice or eggs remain alive on the infected person's clothing.
- Head lice are generally caught from close family and friends in the home and community, and not from the school.

Can head lice be prevented?

- The best way to stop a head lice infection is for families to learn how to check their own heads. This way, they can find any lice before they have a chance to breed.
- Instruct children not to share hats, combs, and brushes. They should avoid touching an infested person's unlaundered clothing and bedding.

For more information, please visit <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/staying-healthy/head-lice>



Preschool Diaper Policy

It is the parent's responsibility to provide diapers, small plastic bags for disposing diapers, flushable wipes, and diaper cream for your child. It is also the parent's responsibility to check periodically to see if or when your child needs more diapers, wipes, and cream. Each child has his or her own clearly labeled diaper bin in the classroom. Diapers are checked frequently, and changed every two hours or more often if required. Diapers containing #2 are changed immediately. The diaper changing table is cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change, and hand washing of a teacher/assistant and child is performed after each diaper change.



Toileting

Students enter preschool at varying stages of proficiency in toileting. Assisting children in meeting their toilet needs and developing the capacity to use the bathroom independently supports their emotional and physical growth.

We are more than happy to encourage potty training as long as the child is ready (typically between 2 and 3 years old). The initial start needs to be done at home for at least two weeks with success before it can be effectively started at the center. Parents will be required to supply pull-ups, plastic bags for disposing diapers, and flushable wipes. Children will be allowed to come to the center in cotton training pants/underwear after they have been accident free for at least two weeks in pull-ups. Communication between parents and the center provider is imperative for a successful transition from diapers to the toilet.

Toilet-Related Potty Words used at Kaleidoscope while potty training and toilet assisting.

Child-friendly potty words for urine and urination:

- Pee, or pee-pee
- Wee, or wee-wee
- Tinkle
- Number One

Child-friendly potty words for defecation:

- Poop
- Doo-doo
- Number 2

There are also words for the room where the toilet is:

- Bathroom
- Restroom
- Toilet

- Private Room

Child-friendly potty words used at Kaleidoscope when referring to body parts:

- Bottom
- Pee-pee
- Front and back

Toilet-related action potty words we use:

- Accident
- Wipe
- Clean
- Wash

Other practices related to toilet training/use:

Each classroom has its own children's bathroom for children to use at any time they feel the need.

Each bathroom has a half door or a full-size door that does not close completely for teachers to make sure that children use the toileting area appropriately (e.g., refraining from playing in the toilet, etc).

Toilets and handwashing sinks meet all American with Disability Act requirements and are installed at a height and position that allows children to use them without assistance.

Children are taught and reminded to use toilet paper to wipe, pull their pants up, flush the toilet, wash and dry their hands (or are assisted if unable to do it independently) before exiting the bathroom.

Each classroom has one teacher and one teacher assistant at all times.

Each classroom is equipped with cameras. Cameras show the classrooms and the entrances to bathrooms. They do not show toilet space and changing tables.

Teachers take precaution and ensure that a child's privacy is not compromised in the classroom. Clean-up and diapering take place away from other students.

All staff members assisting with toileting or diapering follow the Universal Precautions:

- Wear disposable gloves when assisting children with toileting or changing children's clothes or diapers and wash hands after.
- Use bleach and water solution to clean up soiled surfaces.

Kaleidoscope's staff ensures a safe and healthy learning environment that supports positive experiences for children.

Guidance and Discipline

We work hard to provide an environment that encourages growth in self-control and respect for others. Positive discipline techniques are used involving redirection, anticipation and elimination of potential problems, encouragement of appropriate behavior, and logical consequences applied in problem situations.

Children who are motivated and engaged in activities throughout the day rarely pose major discipline problems, but minor conflicts may periodically arise. If a child is behaving in a way that is potentially harmful to self, others or property, adults will intervene. We use the following guidelines to provide clear boundaries and guidance for our younger students:

Step 1: Stop the behavior. Use a gentle look, shake of the head, or words to indicate the behavior is inappropriate.

Step 2: Describe appropriate behavior. Remind the child of the consequences. For example, “Move the sand carefully. If you throw sand, it may get in someone’s eyes. You will have to leave the sand area if you throw sand.”

Step 3: Warn only once. If the behavior continues, kindly remove the child from the situation.

Step 4: The child loses the privilege of working/playing in the area. The child has to choose a different activity. If behavior problems persist, the teacher will discuss them with the child’s parents. Together we will work to resolve the situation.



For older students, we use a five-step problem-solving model of conflict mediation when two (or more) children have a disagreement with one another.

Step 1: Cool down. If necessary, the teacher calms down all parties and sets the scene for the mediation process. We may temporarily separate or remove children as part of this step - but only as a cooling-off period that leads to mediation, not as a punishment.

Step 2: Identify the problem. The children (with help from the teacher as needed) put the problem into words and agree on the course of their disagreement.

Step 3: Brainstorm solutions. The children (again with the teacher’s help as needed) come up with possible ways to solve the problem.

Step 4: Agree on a solution. The parties decide on one solution and try it.

Step 5: Follow up. The children try the solution. The teacher follows up by encouraging, monitoring, and if necessary, guiding their words and actions.

The real-life benefit of using conflict mediation is that with practice, children move from mediation, led by the teacher as a third party, to negotiation, where they resolve the conflict themselves.

Birthdays



Birthdays are a special time for every child. We would love to have you come in and join us at snack time with a special healthy treat. Please tell the teacher one week before your child's birthday which day you would like to celebrate and what you will be bringing in to share. Possible treats should be individually wrapped. Feel free to bring a favorite book to read to the class or you may pick one from our classroom library. Please do not bring party invitations to the center to be passed out by the teacher or put into cubbies unless you have one for every child in the room.

Healthy Food and Beverage Suggestions

To support the health of our children, we ask that staff, parents and caregivers bring into the center only foods from the approved Healthy Food and Beverage List for snacks and celebrations. If you would like to bring in a food or beverage that is not on this list, please speak with our director.

Everyday foods requiring no preparation

- Fresh fruit, such as berries, bananas, oranges
- Fresh vegetables, such as snap peas and string beans
- No sugar added fruit cups
- Unsweetened apple sauce
- Unsweetened dried fruit
- Low-fat cheese
- Low-fat string, sliced or cubed cheese
- Low-fat yogurt with no artificial sweeteners and 30 grams sugar or less per 8 ounces
- Whole grain cereal with 6 grams sugar or less per serving and at least 2 grams fiber per serving
- Sparkling water, low-fat or non-fat milk and unflavored milk alternatives
- Whole wheat crackers with low-fat cheese or hummus

Everyday foods requiring some preparation

- Fresh cut-up vegetables, such as cucumbers, baby carrots or grape tomatoes
- Fruit or vegetable kabobs using soft fruit or vegetables and coffee stirrers
- Parfaits using low-fat yogurt and fresh fruit
- Bite-sized sandwiches with lean meats, low-fat cheese and whole grain bread

Occasional foods requiring no preparation

- 100% juice
- Sparkling water with 100% fruit juice
- Low-sugar cereal or granola bars
- Graham crackers
- Light popcorn
- Pita or bagel chips

Occasional foods requiring some preparation

- Mini bagel with low-fat cream cheese
- Rice cakes with low-fat cream cheese
- Celery with low-fat cream cheese
- Frozen 100% juice on popsicle sticks

To prevent choking, cut food into pieces no larger than one-half inch. Slice grapes and cherry tomatoes in half. Slice baby carrots lengthwise.

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value

Early Childhood Development Center Kaleidoscope does not allow bringing to the center and serving foods of minimal nutritional value:

(1) Soda Water; (2) Water Ices-- except for water ices which contain fruit or fruit juices;

(3) Chewing Gum; (4) Candy

Toys from home

The center requests that your child **does not** bring toys from home. A naptime toy may be used but only during naptime. Occasionally, toys are used during the transition time and returned to the child's cubby after the child is settled into the school routine.



Lending Library (paused because of COVID)

To spark a love of reading in students at an early age and encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education, our preschool opened a Lending Library! The Lending Library project allows children to borrow books to read at home with their parents and extend learning beyond the preschool.

Every Monday, a parent volunteer will bring a cart full of books for children to borrow to read at home with their families. We kindly ask you to help your child(ren) return the borrowed books each Friday (or Thursday, if we are closed on Friday or your child is not in attendance). We will discuss with the students why it is important to bring books back and how to take care of books at home. We also ask you to help your child take good care of the books he/she borrows.

Students and parents will be given a plastic bag to carry the borrowed books and a piece of paper for your child to reflect (to make a drawing, a collage, a painting) on his/her favorite story.

Emergency Procedures

We conduct monthly fire drills, Shelter-in-Place (twice/year), and Lock Down drills (twice/year) at the Center. The children are taught to listen to the teachers' directions.

In the event of an actual emergency, the children will be evacuated, as they have practiced. All the children will be assembled together and each child will be accounted for.

The designated shelter place is the **Cortelyou Library** at 1305 Cortelyou Rd., Argyle Rd. Brooklyn, NY 11226 or the **Tot Lot Playground** across the street.

We will give aid, snack, and comfort as needed. We will stay with your children until you or someone of your choice that you designated on your Emergency (Blue) Card can arrive for pick up.

Parent-Teacher Communication Systems

We have many forms of communicating with the parents. Listed below are a number of ways.

1. The Center Tours: The Education Director shows you through the center and answers any questions you may have.
2. Parent Questionnaire: Getting to know your child is very important to us. In an effort to comfort your child and ease the initial separation from home and family to a new environment filled with change and new, exciting experiences, we are asking you to fill out the questionnaire form. It gives us some insight to make the start of school a comfortable adjustment. You may also share concerns about your child with us, tell us what you expect from the program, etc.
3. Parent Orientation: We introduce the staff, discuss the Parent Handbook, and answer any questions you may have.
4. Curriculum Meeting: The teachers introduce and go over our Preschool and Pre- K Curriculum.
5. Parent-Teacher Conferences. These conferences are very useful for the teachers and the parents. They are a great way to assess how each child is doing in the center. The conferences are held in the fall and in the spring.
6. Parent Meetings. These informal get-togethers are held according to the needs and wishes of the parents.
7. The Parent Information Board. The parent information board, located in the center, serves as a place to post the center's credentials.
8. At the entrance of each classroom, parents may find a monthly Newsletter, monthly menu, and weekly classroom activities.
9. Family Days: Parents are welcome to come to our classrooms and spend quality time together with the students.
10. Monthly Family Projects: Involve families in their child's education and encourage them to work together creatively at home.



Parent Suggestions. If you have any requests, suggestions, queries, changes, or the child is going to be absent, please let us know. We will try to accommodate the suggestions. Your comments and suggestions make our school better!

Parents Participation

We encourage parents with special talents such as artists, musicians, fire fighters, police officers, doctors, dentists, etc. to come and visit our center during the year.

If any parent would like to bring in a special activity to do with their child's class, we'd welcome it. It can be any activity such as storytelling, arts and crafts, drama, music, etc. Please speak with your child's teacher if you are interested.

Please tell us if...

Your child had a bad night's sleep; he/she was ill recently; something upsetting happened; something fun or exciting happened; your child has been exposed to a contagious disease; your child verbalizes feelings about the center or staff, or if your child's behavior or mood is different than usual.

We will tell you...

About your child's play; if your child didn't eat normally, didn't sleep well, or was out of sorts; if your child has an unusual behavior; if your child got upset about something, or anything else we feel you should know about your child's day.



Pre-K Walking Trips

The experiences children have in preschool last a lifetime. Children are constantly learning through hands-on experiences and our field trips provide an easy way to teach valuable lessons outside of the classroom. At Kaleidoscope, we offer both in-school field trips and occasional offsite field trips. In the event of an offsite field trip, you will be sent information regarding the trip and must sign a permission slip for that particular event.

Volunteering

Volunteering at your child's preschool is a wonderful way to support children's learning. When parents and teachers act as a team, everyone benefits. The key is communication. Follow the teacher's lead so you're providing the help she needs.

Parent Volunteers Guidelines

Objectives of being a volunteer

- To enhance the learning experience of the children
- Create an optimal learning environment for all the children
- Provide more one-to-one teaching to help reinforce and improve learning



Guidelines for Volunteers Confidentiality – As a parent volunteer in the preschool, you will be obligated to keep all situations you may witness confidential. This is for the protection of the children as well as for their families.

We will need to keep the commitment you have agreed upon. If something interferes with your plan to come to the class as scheduled, please call to let us know as soon as possible. We can then make other plans and inform the children of the change. As we all know, children need structure and routine and some children will depend on your attendance. We would like to keep them from being disappointed as much as possible.

Volunteering in the classroom would entail working with all of the children. As you can imagine, your child may want a lot of your attention when you are in the classroom. Please discuss this matter with your child, and we will also reinforce this in the classroom. You will need to make other arrangements for your other children on the day you volunteer.

If any disciplinary issues arise while you are volunteering, please let the teacher know. It is best for us to handle these situations.

Parent Involvement Opportunities

Classroom Coordinator Organize response (by class), as needed, when there are significant life events for the classmates and their families (i.e. births, holidays, hospitalizations), as well as help with classroom teacher birthday's, teacher appreciation, etc. Coordinators could also organize class events, like interactive read alouds and inviting guest speakers (children's book writers/illustrators, children's musicians, firefighters, police officers, librarians, etc...) inside the school setting.

Lending Library Organizer This job entails checking in/out and re-shelving books teachers and children have used in the school library on each Monday.

Classroom Volunteer 1-2 hours/day in a classroom other than your child's. Volunteering could be needed during choice time, outdoor recess, or rest time. Activities include but are not limited to reading books, making art, and building games.

A schedule of volunteers will be made each month ahead of time for planning purposes. Please let the classroom teacher know if you cannot make it at the time scheduled for you.

If you agree to the volunteer guidelines, and you are available at the needed times, please ask us for a Volunteer Participation Form, Department of Investigation (DOI) Fingerprinting Form, Health Form to be filled out by your physician (including immunizations against measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, tetanus diphtheria and acellular pertussis, and test for tuberculosis infection), and Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). All volunteers have to submit the above forms prior to their volunteering at Kaleidoscope.

We appreciate helpfulness in the classroom and hope it will benefit all the children. In keeping with this goal, we are available if you have any questions.

Please remember to be on time. We encourage you to try to “blend in” without disturbing the class, when you arrive.

Thank you for reading our Parent Handbook. Should you have any comments or suggestions about anything in this book, please let us know.

We look forward to a wonderful year with you and your child!

Oksana Grebenyuk

Executive and Educational Director

Pasha Bouniatian

Deputy Director