

Early Childhood Development Center  
**Kaleidoscope**

---

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

---



**2026 – 2027**

480 Stratford Road, Brooklyn, NY 11218  
(917) 652-4422  
ecdckaleidoscope@aol.com  
[www.ECDCKaleidoscope.org](http://www.ECDCKaleidoscope.org)

## Dear Families,

---

Welcome to Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) Kaleidoscope!

Our 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 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 partnering 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**

Founder and Director

# Philosophy and Mission

---

## Mission

At Kaleidoscope, our mission is to nurture and inspire young minds by creating a diverse and inclusive environment where children can explore, discover, and thrive. Through play-based learning, inquiry-driven exploration, and a deep appreciation for the arts and sciences, we aim to cultivate a lifelong love of learning, foster social and emotional development, and prepare our students to be compassionate global citizens.

## Philosophy

At Kaleidoscope, we believe that the early years are foundational for a child's growth and development. Our philosophy is rooted in the following principles:

### Play-Based Learning

We recognize that children learn best when they are actively engaged and enjoying themselves. Our play-based curriculum is designed to stimulate natural curiosity and support overall development through fun and interactive activities.

### Inquiry-Driven Exploration

We create a stimulating environment that encourages children to ask questions, investigate, and find their own answers. By fostering a sense of wonder and critical thinking, we empower our students to be active learners and independent thinkers.

### Appreciation for the Arts and Sciences

We integrate the arts and sciences into our daily activities, providing children with a well-rounded understanding of the world. Creative expression and hands-on scientific exploration are central to our approach, helping children develop both their imaginative and analytical skills.

### Diversity and Inclusion

We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of our families, who speak different languages and come from all over the world. Our inclusive community enriches the learning experience, teaching children to appreciate and respect different cultures, traditions, and perspectives.

### Global Citizenship

We prepare our students to be thoughtful, empathetic, and responsible global citizens. Through multicultural education, we instill values of cooperation, empathy, and social responsibility, equipping our students with the skills needed to navigate and positively impact an interconnected world.

*Join us at Kaleidoscope, where we embrace diversity, foster a love for learning, and prepare the next generation of thinkers, creators, and compassionate leaders.*

## Programs

---

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

### **In the 2026–2027 school year, Kaleidoscope will have:**

- One classroom for Two's: 12 students with 1 teacher and 1 assistant teacher
- One classroom for 3K: 15 students with 1 teacher and 1 assistant teacher
- One classroom for Pre-K: 18 children with 1 teacher and 1 assistant teacher

## Curriculum

Our program provides children with a broad range of opportunities to expand their thinking, language, fine and gross motor, and problem-solving skills. Children participate in hands-on activities and learn through art, creative movement, and music. Learning in whole-group and small-group meetings, exploring and experimenting during choice time, and 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.

## Administration Team

---

Oksana Grebenyuk is the founder, executive director, and educational director of Kaleidoscope. She holds advanced degrees in childhood education and educational leadership, and is currently in her third year of doctoral study in Educational Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, where she is working toward her dissertation defense. Oksana leads the program's educational vision, oversees all classroom activities and teaching staff, and has guided Kaleidoscope's growth since founding the school in 2009. Her deep commitment to early childhood education is at the heart of everything we do.

Pavlo Bouniatian (Mr. Pasha) holds a bachelor's degree in business and finance and serves as Deputy Director of the preschool. Mr. Pasha oversees all financial operations, including tuition, extended day, mini camps, and summer program accounts. He processes monthly attendance and enrollment documents, manages vendor and facility payments, and coordinates the maintenance and cleaning of the facility in accordance with state and local standards.

Catherine Bouniatian (Miss Catherine) holds a Master of Education from Harvard University and is working toward her early childhood teaching certification. In addition to supporting our communications and daily operations, Catherine serves as a classroom teacher and is a key collaborator in curriculum development at Kaleidoscope. Families will find her at the heart of our community — welcoming children in the morning, leading enrichment clubs, and working alongside our teaching team every day.

# Registration

---

## Two's Program

### Eligibility

Children must turn two years old on or before the second Monday in July to be eligible to attend the Two's program. This requirement is in accordance with New York State licensing regulations.

### Open House

For safety reasons, we do not conduct tours while the school is in session. Each December, Kaleidoscope hosts an Open House for families considering our Two's program for the upcoming school year. Attendance at the Open House is required as part of the admission process. The exact Open House date will be posted on our website in late October.

### Application Process

Following the Open House, families may submit an application for the Two's program. Registration for the 2027–2028 school year opens on January 11, 2027. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until the class is full.

### The complete application includes:

1. A completed and signed application form.
2. **Why Kaleidoscope?** In 500 words, please respond to the following prompt:

*“Tell us why you chose Kaleidoscope and what you hope your child's year here will look like.”*

1. A non-refundable \$200 processing fee and first tuition installment, submitted upon signing the Letter of Acceptance.

*Acceptance letters are e-mailed approximately one week after we receive the completed application. The signed Letter of Acceptance, along with the processing fee and first installment, must be submitted to confirm your child's seat.*

### What We Are Looking For

Kaleidoscope is a community built on deep partnership between families and educators. We are looking for families who are genuinely excited about our philosophy and approach to early childhood education — families who wish to be active participants in their child's learning journey and who are committed to the full Kaleidoscope experience.

The “Why Kaleidoscope?” response is an important part of our review process. It helps us understand your family’s values, hopes, and vision for your child’s early education, and ensures that Kaleidoscope is the right fit for your family.

### **3K and Pre-K Registration**

3K and Pre-K programs at Kaleidoscope are funded through the New York City Department of Education. Families apply for 3K and Pre-K through a single application process that allows them to review full-day program options and rank up to 12 choices. Students receive a single offer from the NYCDOE to their highest possible program choice.

#### **Students are placed based on the following priority structure:**

- Priority Group 1: Current students enrolled at Kaleidoscope matriculating from our Two’s, 3K, 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.

### **Withdrawal and Refund Policy**

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.

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the center after commencement of classes, a written 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 by e-mail.

#### **Payment schedule notes for the Two’s program:**

- 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 each month.
- 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 absences due to illness or vacation.
- A \$50 fee will be charged for returned checks.

For current tuition rates and payment schedules, please refer to the separate Tuition and Fees Schedule provided at registration.

## Extended Day Programs

---

### 3K and Pre-K Wrap-Around Services

Kaleidoscope offers a full range of extended day options for 3K and Pre-K families. The 3K and Pre-K regular day program (9:00 am – 3:20 pm) is free for eligible families through the NYC Department of Education.

#### Morning Playgroup

Morning Playgroup runs from 8:00 am to 9:00 am, Monday through Friday. Children explore different classroom centers, including building blocks, art stations, and sensory tables. This unstructured playtime allows them to make new friends, develop social skills, and transition smoothly into their day.

#### Afternoon Playgroup

Afternoon Playgroup begins right after the regular school day and runs until 4:00 pm, 5:00 pm, or 6:00 pm, depending on the family's choice. Children play outside, have a snack, engage in creative play, building, drawing, and interaction with peers in a relaxed and supportive setting.

We understand that every family has different schedules and needs, so our Morning and Afternoon Playgroups are designed to be flexible. You can choose how often your child attends.

### Enrichment Clubs

Extended Day Clubs provide students with an additional stimulating environment where they continue developing problem-solving skills through visual and performing arts, building self-confidence, and improving physical, cognitive, and communication skills. Clubs include enrichment activities followed by outdoor play.

Families may choose to register for one, two, three, four, or five clubs, and/or register for daily open play. Registration forms are e-mailed to families in the second half of August. If you register for two or more clubs, the tuition may be divided into three equal payments. Contact Mr. Pasha for more information.

#### Sports Club

Sports Club concentrates on outdoor ball games and indoor physical games in three sessions — Fall, Winter, and Spring. Register on a session basis. Children develop coordination, teamwork, and physical fitness through fun, age-appropriate ball activities including soccer, tennis, volleyball, and beach ball games. In winter months, children keep building strong bodies through balancing, jumping, juggling, and indoor physical games.

#### Musical Theater

Step into the spotlight! Children explore the enchanting world of musical storytelling through a combination of music, dance, and drama. They express themselves creatively, discover the magic of the stage through mini-productions, and explore costume creation and stage design. Register for the entire school year.

### **The World of Art**

In this literacy-based club, young artists explore the art of various regions including Africa, Japan, Asia, Mexico, Europe, and South America. Working with acrylic paint, clay, cardboard, beads, pipe cleaners, and Styrofoam, children experiment with color, form, and texture, learning to express their feelings and ideas visually. Register for the entire school year.

### **Stories and Rhymes**

Children embark on a literary adventure around the world, enjoying poetry, fables, legends, myths, and short fiction stories from different cultures. They explore story elements and have the opportunity to create and publish their own poems, legends, and short stories. Register for the entire school year.

## 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 on file at the Center by the first day of 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, and parochial schools, as well as 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, parents or guardians must also show they have scheduled appointments for all follow-up doses.

Kaleidoscope continues to accept medical exemptions. Only valid medical exemptions approved by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will be accepted.

# Attendance Expectations and Policies

---

How do students do well in school? They go every day! Students may miss school for illness, emergencies, or religious reasons, but we want to see every student in school every day. 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 academic outcomes. 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.

Please refer to the School Year Calendar for all scheduled closings, holidays, and breaks.

## Attendance Schedule

- 3K and Pre-K students attend a full day schedule: 6 hours and 20 minutes, 5 days a week.
- Two's program students attend a full day schedule: 8 hours per day, 5 days per week.

If families request flexibility in their child's schedule at the beginning of the school year, we will work with them to develop a schedule that meets the needs of both the family and the child.

## Child's Absences and/or Vacations

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

Unless a family has notified us in advance of an absence, we will call within 1 hour on the first day of the absence and on each additional day. If we fail to reach a family by phone, we will email, text, and/or write a letter to try to contact them and, when necessary, their emergency contacts. A log is kept of all communications made to families regarding absences.

## 3K and Pre-K Record Keeping

Daily attendance is recorded for each student on their 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 student who is not in school is marked absent, even if the absence is excused.

### Excused absences include:

- Student illness. Any student 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 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 support is needed. Support may include assisting the family in accessing health care, finding reliable transportation, or accessing community resources.

## **Recurring Absenteeism**

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 these thresholds, we will report the case to the Department of Education and request a Discharge Review Conference with a Department of Education social worker to determine next steps.

# Arrival and Dismissal

---

## Arrival

Please arrive at the beginning of your child's day, sign your child in, and bring your child directly to his or 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. Children who arrive during Circle Time disrupt the entire class. Children who are late may also have trouble transitioning into activities and miss an important part of the school day.

## Pick-Up

All students are dismissed by their teachers at the preschool's front doors when their program is over. All students must be checked out by their parent or an adult authorized by their parent. Parents must leave promptly with their child to ensure a smooth transition for children staying for after-school programs.

## 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 late fee of \$5 for every 5 minutes will be charged to anyone who remains after their scheduled 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.

## Entrance and Dismissal Procedures

Please do not stand, stop, or park on the crosswalk at Coney Island Avenue next to the preschool. Cars that stand on the crosswalk prevent pedestrians — many of them children and families with strollers — from crossing safely.

For safety, strollers, scooters, tricycles, and bicycles cannot be brought inside the preschool. You are welcome to secure these to the fence on the Coney Island Avenue side. The preschool is not responsible for theft or damage to belongings left outside.

Please do not leave children in strollers unattended. Our staff is not permitted to watch babies or children in the lobby or outside while you are dropping off Kaleidoscope students.

Preschool parents must accompany their child into the classroom, check in at drop-off, and check out at pick-up. Please allow ample arrival time to ensure 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 persons authorized to pick up your child must be on the Pick-Up form. These persons should be prepared to show proof of identity. If there is concern about the individual picking up your child, we reserve the right not to release the child and will phone the parent for confirmation.

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

*Be advised that employees of Kaleidoscope are prohibited from accepting additional employment Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm while the preschool is open. Kaleidoscope employees who babysit current students while the preschool is open will be terminated immediately upon discovery.*

## **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 separated from a parent. It is important to make the separation as pleasant as possible. 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 sense of security will help build that same 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 children's self-confidence and a sense of independence. All children should be dressed in comfortable clothing that can be easily manipulated by them. 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.

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

We play outside daily, weather permitting. Please dress your child in layers so that 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 and spills do happen. We recommend sending a full change of clothing (including socks and underwear) in a labeled zip-lock bag. 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, the classroom bulletin board, and Google Classroom.

### Meals and Snacks Standards

- Meals and snacks are nutritious and 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.

### Beverages

- Water is available during each meal and snack time and throughout the day.
- Low-fat unsweetened milk is served at least twice per day.

*Students who are lactose intolerant must present a written note from a physician specifying what they are permitted 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 your child will have difficulty handling alone. Please do not give your child cookies, potato chips, candy, chocolates, juice, or sodas for lunch. Uneaten food is placed back in the lunch box so parents 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 below).
- A minimum of two teachers participate in all physical activity sessions.
- Staff act as a child's physical activity partner to encourage participation.
- Various types and tempos of music are used to encourage movement during indoor physical activity sessions.

### Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Play

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

#### Heat Recommendations

Temperature / Heat Index	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

#### Cold Recommendations

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

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

## Nap Time

---

Every effort is made to accommodate the individual needs of all children regarding daily naps. 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 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.

Please bring a crib-size blanket for your child's rest time. Due to limited classroom storage, please do not bring pillows unless your doctor recommends them. We provide each child with a clean sheet that we wash and sanitize weekly.

## What to Bring to School

**Please ensure that all items your child brings are clearly labeled.**

- Diapers (if your child is not toilet-trained)
- Disposable bed mats (if your child is not toilet-trained or may have an accident while napping)
- Two packs of flushable wipes
- Plastic bags for disposing of diapers (if your child is wearing diapers)
- One shirt (replace seasonally or when needed)
- One pair of pants or shorts (replace seasonally or when needed)
- One pair of underwear (more if potty training)
- One pair of socks
- 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, or uncontrolled coughing.
- Diarrhea, defined as an increased number of stools with increased water content 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 determined to be due to a non-communicable condition.
- Persistent abdominal pain continuing for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever.
- Mouth sores associated with an inability to control saliva.
- Rash with fever or behavior change until a physician has determined the rash to be non-communicable.
- Purulent conjunctivitis (pink eye) — pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge.
- Infestation such as scabies or head lice, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Tuberculosis, until a physician or 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 fever-free for 24 hours.
- Varicella, until 6 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (whooping cough), until 5 days of appropriate treatment have 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.
- Child is unable to participate comfortably in the program.
- Care for the child requires greater attention than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

*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.*

## Communicable Diseases

Parents must report to the center within 24 hours of absence due to: chicken pox, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, diphtheria, food poisoning, hepatitis, impetigo, measles, meningitis, mumps, pertussis, rubella, salmonella, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, or any other disease or condition which may be a danger to the health of other children. Your child's identity is protected.

## Medication

*At ECDC Kaleidoscope, we do not administer medications to children.*

## Preschool Head Lice Policy

---

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

- NYC schools have a “No Head Lice” policy. Students with live head lice are not allowed to attend until they are lice-free. Students with nits are allowed to attend.
- Students may return the day after treatment as long as there are no live lice.
- Students will be re-inspected by a school worker after treatment.
- Head lice spread requires direct head-to-head contact. Head lice cannot swim, fly, hop, or jump.
- The best prevention is for families to regularly check their own heads.
- Instruct children not to share hats, combs, or brushes, and to avoid touching an infested person’s clothing or bedding.

## Diaper Policy

---

It is the parents' responsibility to provide diapers, small plastic bags for disposing of diapers, flushable wipes, and diaper cream for your child. It is also the parents' responsibility to check periodically whether your child needs more supplies. Each child has their own clearly labeled diaper bin in the classroom.

Diapers are checked frequently and changed every two hours or more often if required. Diapers containing solid waste are changed immediately. The diaper-changing table is cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change, and handwashing for the teacher or assistant and the child is performed after each diaper change.

# Toileting

---

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

We are 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, and flushable wipes. Children will be allowed to come in cotton training pants or underwear after they have been accident-free for at least two weeks in pull-ups. Communication between parents and the center is essential for a successful transition.

## Child-Friendly Language at Kaleidoscope

We use the following age-appropriate words consistently throughout the center:

### For Urine and Urination

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

### For Defecation

- Poop
- Doo-doo
- Number 2

### For the Room

- Bathroom
- Restroom
- Toilet

### For Body Parts

- Bottom
- Pee-pee
- Front and back

### Action Words

- Accident
- Wipe
- Clean
- Wash

## **Facilities and Safety**

- Each classroom has its own children's bathroom available at any time.
- Bathroom doors do not close completely, allowing teachers to ensure appropriate use.
- Toilets and sinks meet ADA requirements and are installed at child-appropriate height.
- Children are taught to wipe, pull up their pants, flush, and wash and dry their hands before exiting.
- Each classroom has one teacher and one teacher assistant at all times.
- Each classroom is equipped with cameras covering the classroom and bathroom entrances. Cameras do not show toilet space or changing tables.
- All staff assisting with toileting or diapering follow Universal Precautions: wearing disposable gloves and washing hands afterward, and using bleach and water solution to clean soiled surfaces.

# 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 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:

## For Younger Students (4 Steps)

**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 and 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 in the area and must 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 (5-Step Conflict Mediation)

**Step 1:** Cool down. The teacher calms all parties and sets the scene for mediation. Children may be temporarily separated as a cooling-off period, not as punishment.

**Step 2:** Identify the problem. Children put the problem into words and agree on the course of their disagreement.

**Step 3:** Brainstorm solutions. Children 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 teacher encourages, monitors, and if necessary guides the children’s words and actions.

With practice, children move from teacher-led mediation to resolving conflicts independently. This is one of the most valuable life skills we help them build.

## 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 activity (reading your child's favorite book, singing songs, etc). 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 unless you have one for every child in the room.

# Healthy Food and Beverage Guidelines

---

To support the health of our children, we ask that staff, parents, and caregivers bring 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 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 (string, sliced, or cubed)
- 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

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

ECDC Kaleidoscope does not allow the following at the center: soda water, water ices (except those containing fruit or fruit juice), chewing gum, and 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 transition time and returned to the child's cubby after the child is settled into the school routine.

## Lending Library

---

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 has opened a Lending Library. The Lending Library allows children to borrow books to read at home with their parents, extending learning beyond the preschool.

Every Monday, a parent volunteer will bring a cart full of books for children to borrow. We kindly ask that you help your child return borrowed books each Friday (or Thursday if we are closed on Friday or your child is not in attendance). We will discuss with students why it is important to return books and how to care for them at home.

Students and parents will be given a plastic bag to carry borrowed books and paper for your child to reflect on their favorite story through a drawing, collage, or painting.

# Emergency Procedures

---

We conduct monthly fire drills, Shelter-in-Place drills (twice per year), and Lockdown drills (twice per 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 children will be assembled together, and each child will be accounted for.

**The designated shelter location is:**

- Cortelyou Library, 1305 Cortelyou Rd., Argyle Rd., Brooklyn, NY 11226
- Tot Lot Playground across the street

We will provide aid, snacks, and comfort as needed. We will stay with your children until you or your designated emergency contact arrives for pickup.

# Parent-Teacher Communication

---

We have many ways of communicating with parents. Listed below are our primary channels:

- Center Tours: The Education Director shows you through the center and answers any questions.
- Parent Questionnaire: Getting to know your child is very important to us. We ask you to fill out our questionnaire to help ease your child's initial transition to school.
- Parent Orientation: We introduce the staff, discuss the Parent Handbook, and answer any questions.
- Curriculum Meeting: Teachers introduce and review our Preschool and Pre-K Curriculum.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences: Held in the fall and spring, these conferences are a great way to assess how each child is doing.
- Parent Meetings: Informal get-togethers held according to the needs and wishes of parents.
- The Parent Information Board: Located in the center, it serves as a place to post the center's credentials and important notices.
- At the entrance of each classroom, parents may find a monthly Newsletter, monthly menu, and weekly classroom activities.
- Family Days: Parents are welcome to come to our classrooms and spend quality time with the students.
- Monthly Family Projects: Involve families in their child's education and encourage creative collaboration at home.

*If you have any requests, suggestions, queries, or changes, or if your child will be absent, please let us know. Your comments and suggestions make our school better!*

## Parent Participation

---

We encourage parents with special talents — artists, musicians, firefighters, police officers, doctors, dentists, and others — 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 welcome it. Please speak with your child's teacher if you are interested.

### Please Tell Us If...

- Your child had a bad night's sleep
- Your child was ill recently
- Something upsetting or fun and exciting happened
- Your child has been exposed to a contagious disease
- Your child verbalizes feelings about the center or staff
- 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 had an unusual behavior
- If your child got upset about something
- Anything else we feel you should know about your child's day

### Pre-K Walking Trips

Children are constantly learning through hands-on experiences, and our walking 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 trips. In the event of an offsite 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.

## Volunteer Guidelines

- As a parent volunteer, you are obligated to keep all situations you witness confidential, for the protection of the children and their families.
- Please honor the commitment you have agreed upon. If something interferes with your scheduled visit, please call as soon as possible so we can make other plans.
- Volunteering entails working with all of the children. Please discuss with your child in advance that you will be focused on the whole class, not just on them.
- If any disciplinary issues arise while you are volunteering, please let the teacher handle them.

## Parent Involvement Opportunities

### Classroom Coordinator

Organize responses when there are significant life events for classmates and their families (births, hospitalizations, etc.), help with teacher birthdays and appreciation, and organize class events such as interactive read-alouds and guest speakers.

### Lending Library Organizer

Check in, check out, and re-shelve books teachers and children have used in the school library each Monday.

### Classroom Volunteer

Spend 1–2 hours per day in a classroom (other than your child's) during choice time, outdoor recess, or rest time. Activities include reading books, making art, and building games.

*To volunteer, please ask us for a Volunteer Participation Form, Fingerprinting Form, Health Form (including immunizations and TB test), and Statewide Central Register (SCR) form. All forms must be submitted prior to volunteering at Kaleidoscope.*

---

**Thank you for reading our Parent Handbook.**

*Should you have any comments or suggestions, 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

*Established in 2009*