

SOME

**PARENT
HANDBOOK**



Kent Education Center and Nursery School

CT License #12349

6 Bridge St. / Post Office Box 594

Kent, Connecticut 06757

860.927.1294

Kecns1@gmail.com

Revised August 2018



Kent Education Center and Nursery School
6 Bridge St.
Post Office Box 594
Kent, CT 06757
860.927.1294
Kecns1@GMAIL.COM

Serving the community since 1968

Dear Parents,

Welcome to KECNS! We are excited to begin the new school year, offering the important benefits that only a small, traditional nursery school and education center can provide.

The required enrollment and admissions forms for all students have been posted on our website at kecns.org. Please contact the school if you are unable to access these forms or if you would rather receive them via regular mail. Just leave a message at **860.927.1294** or Kecns1@gmail.com. Also feel free to communicate any other questions you may have regarding admissions. **Please note: CT State regulations require that the medical information, including up-to-date health exam results, be submitted in order for your child to be allowed to attend school. All KECNS parents should please adhere to the time frames for these submissions.**

Included on our website is essential information as you prepare your child for the new school year. As you scroll down below, you'll find a full copy of the **KECNS Parent Handbook**, which outlines our school's program, policies, and procedures. Please read carefully the other attachments, too, especially **Expectations for Parents**. You will also find a copy of KECNS's **Child Abuse and Neglect Policies**.

It's going to be a great year! There are many opportunities to get involved, and we look forward to working together to keep KECNS running smoothly. Please don't hesitate to contact Ms. Patti Leo or Mr. Anthony Anzalone (TJ), if have any questions about the website information or the program in general.

Yours truly,
KECNS Board of Directors

History

Kent Community Nursery School (KCNS) opened its doors in September of 1968. The Kent Children's Center (KCC) has served the area since 1976. Both schools have brought the best developmental child care to the children of our community just one mile apart from each other, and 2015 brings an exciting merger of the two programs that would beneficially serve the interests of the children, their families, and the community as a whole. The Town of Kent welcomed the Kent Education Center and Nursery School (KECNS) in 2015!

Licensed and operated in accordance with standards set by the State of Connecticut, the school is administered by a volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of parents and members of the community. The school's Director and Staff adhere to the developmentally appropriate practices and policies of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Mission Statement

At Kent Education Center and Nursery School, our mission is to provide the children of our community with a safe, caring environment for exploration and growth in a consistent teaching environment. Opportunities for play will be combined with music, art, literature, and science in daily school activities. Community awareness will extend beyond school through field trips and special program presentations, with parent participation welcomed. Students will complete our program with pre-reading and mathematics skills, a respect for others and themselves, and an eagerness to begin kindergarten.

Program

The school employs qualified, professional instructors and takes advantage of various community resources to achieve its goals. The preschool program is designed to foster the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth of each child, with emphasis on the development of self-reliance in a group situation. The daily schedule includes both free playtime and structured activities, seeking to stimulate the child's creative and cognitive capabilities through art, music, craft projects, puzzles, and active games. An introduction to reading and mathematics is offered informally through songs and games which incorporate counting and word or sound recognition skills, thus providing a foundation for later learning.

Before and after school care for school aged children is offered in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Afternoon snack is available and a quiet room to do homework is provided. A qualified staff member is available to assist students. Time on the playground with friends is a great way to end the day.

Please refer to the "Daily Schedule" posted on the white board in the hallway by the cloakroom for a detailed breakdown of the day. A monthly calendar will be distributed in each child's mailbox with a clear schedule of the month's themes and activities.

The school maintains an "open-door" policy. Parents are always welcome to visit at any time and share in their child's day at the school. Our professional staff is responsible for developing and implementing the educational program as well as regularly attending ongoing educational programs and workshops to further their knowledge and skills. KECNS also hosts an Open House in October/November, when the children share their school interests and activities with their families. Being a non-profit organization,

KECNS depends on parents' participation to help with field trips, celebrations, fundraisers and other school events. The involvement and help of parents are essential to the School's success.

Admissions

To be eligible, a child must have reached his or her third birthday by December 31st of the current year. A child turning three after December 31st is eligible to join KECNS on his or her birthday if space is available. Children who are still completing toilet training are still eligible for admission. The number of children in the preschool class is limited to twenty, with a teacher to student ratio of 10:1.

Applications for admission, accompanied by a \$45 application fee, are accepted beginning with the spring Open House held in April.

Tuition and Enrollment Requirements

Children can attend KECNS for one, two, three, four or five days a week. Refer to www.kecns.org for the breakdown of packages available at KECNS. An installment plan is available over a period of 10 months. Please note this is not monthly tuition; it is installments of the year's tuition, which is expected in full.

Tuition payments for September and June, along with the registration fees, are due at August 1st. In addition, the following forms must also be completed and returned to the school prior to enrollment:

- a **Physical Examination** form which includes the child's date of birth and is signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse documenting an examination **completed within (1) year prior to enrollment, and that includes a screening for risk factors for tuberculosis; also note that flu immunization is also required by the CT DPH**
- a signed and dated **KECNS Emergency Preparedness Plan** card;
- a signed and dated **KECNS Emergency Card**; and
- a signed **Use of Photos** form.

All children's physicals must be updated yearly, and immunization records must be maintained per State of Connecticut requirements. No child may be allowed to attend school without up-to-date, current forms. Please note that all forms may be accessed from our school's website at kecns.org.

In months other than September and June, tuition payments are due to the Treasurer on the first of each month. If not paid by the 15th, families will also have a \$25.00 late fee attached to their bills. If not paid in full by the last school day of the month the children will not be able to return to school until the bill is paid in full. Payments may be mailed to KECNS or dropped in the tuition box at the school. Tuition will not be refunded in case of illness or other absence without prior consent of the school.

KECNS does not have a provisional enrollment period. It is the policy of KECNS to work through any problems with parents and appropriate consultants, rather than expel children.

Financial assistance is available as needed. For information, call the Admissions Director. Such aid will be held in strict confidence.

Parent Participation

As the school is a non-profit organization firmly believing in the benefit derived from volunteer parental participation, parent support of the program is essential.

It is hoped that parents will volunteer services such as driving on field trips. We encourage parents to participate in area where they are qualified (i.e. craft demonstrations, visits by professionals such as dentists, doctors, firemen, etc.). Substitute teachers on a volunteer basis are needed – this is an excellent opportunity to explore your child’s school day.

Fund raising is necessary to keep tuition affordable. Parents are expected to help with fund raising projects throughout the year. For further economy, parents will be asked to contribute monthly to the school’s snack pantry. Teachers provide sign-up lists, which are posted each month. Please remember that KECNS is an allergy-aware facility. Do not bring any products containing peanuts or tree nuts into the school.

Opening and Closing Time Policy

- KECNS follows the annual calendar for Region 1. KECNS will be open during Region One Teacher Professional Development (TPD) days and PK-8 Teacher Professional Development half days for an additional daily charge, if applicable. KECNS will also be open for various holidays that Region 1 is closed. Parents will be notified of these dates in the beginning of each year since the dates will vary year to year. Refer to www.kecns.org for the TPD rates for KECNS and yearly calendar.
- School begins at 8:30 a.m. Please do not arrive more than ten minutes early (8:20am). Late arrivals are disruptive to the classes, which begin at 8:45am. The school day ends at 1:00 p.m. Please be prompt.
- With the addition of PM PreK at KCS, KECNS offers a morning KECNS experience from 8:30am to 11:55am. A Region 1 bus will transport students from KECNS to KCS for the PM PreK.
- KECNS offers before and after school care. Refer below for before and after school care:
 - Before School Care - 7:30am to 8:30am (3-12 years of age)
 - After School Care:
 - 1:00pm to 3:30pm (3-5 years of age – Bused over from KCS AM PreK)
 - 1:00pm to 5:30pm (3-5 years of age – Bused over from KCS AM PreK)
 - 3:15pm to 5:30pm (3-12 years of age – Bused over from KCS)
 - Please refer to www.kecns.org for further details pertaining to the packages offered at KECNS.
- Parents assist their children in the cloakroom and with hand washing prior to bringing them to the Welcome Room.
- Please write a note and inform the teachers if someone else is to pick up your child other than the usual arrangement.
- It is the parents’ responsibility to let the teacher know where to reach him/her if they will not be at home.
- Make sure that one of the teachers sees you leave with your child.
- Please call if you are going to be late or absent. Leave a message if there is no answer.
- If a child has not been picked up within twenty (20) minutes of our closing time, attempts will be made to contact parents or a designated alternate. State law requires us to notify the police after 30 minutes if these attempts fail. Two staff members will always remain with the child. A written warning will be given after the first offence. A monetary penalty will be applied on any future infractions.

- If the children are on the playground when you arrive, pick your child up at the gate. Only children enrolled in KECNS are allowed on the playground. The use of the playground by siblings and friends presents a considerable liability risk for the school, as well as supervisory problems for the teachers. Also, St. Andrew's Church requests that you do not allow your children to play on the unfenced grassy areas or parking lot during pickup and drop-off times. Again, this is a liability and supervisory concern.
- KECNS encourages communication between you and your child's teachers. If you wish to speak with them at length or in private, arrange a time to meet with the teacher.

Attire

- Dress your child in clothes appropriate for active play and painting/gluing projects.
- Outdoor play is part of the daily schedule. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather, especially for winter play. This must include hats, mittens or gloves, winter coat, snow pants and snow boots.
- An extra change of clothing with the child's name labeled on the clothes should be sent to school the first day.
- Please avoid sending your child to school in flip-flops, cowboy boots, clogs, jellies, and other non-tread footwear. These are unsafe on our climbing equipment.
- Please label all outdoor wear with the child's name or initials. This will prevent mix-ups.
- For quiet time, your child would be required a blanket, pillow and cuddly toy.

Notices/Communication

- Check your child's mailbox daily.
- General notices are posted on the whiteboard by the cloakroom.
- Child assessments are completed twice a year for children attending the Nursery School program only. These assessments will be placed in your child's mailbox and all parents will have the opportunity to schedule a parent teacher conference following the receipt of each assessment.
- The state license and other official notices are posted at the school.
- New snack donation lists are posted in the classroom at the beginning of each week. Please notify the teachers in advance if you wish to send in refreshments for birthdays and holidays. Please remember that we are an allergy-aware facility. All foods that come into the school must be peanut and tree nut free. This includes snack donations and your child's lunch.
- Communication with teachers can be conducted in person, by phone, or email. As noted, the phone number for KECNS is 860.927.1294 and email is kecns1@gmail.com. Head teachers and assistant teachers may carry their personal cell phones during work hours but are only permitted to use them for emergency reasons and during their scheduled breaks. If you need to speak with a teacher during the day for any reason, please call the school's main phone line.

Field Trips

The Head Teacher shall carefully plan and provide for the safety of the Nursery School children during an entire trip. Trips are scheduled regularly.

- A permission slip stating the date and nature of each trip must be signed by a parent for a child to participate in an event.
- Available parents are sometimes asked to transport the children in their cars, if necessary.

- Volunteer drivers must give a copy of their valid car insurance, vehicle registration, and driver's license to the Head Teacher before driving on a field trip
- Should a field trip require a bus, there may be an additional fee for each student.

The following car safety rules should be read and practiced by all drivers:

- All children must always wear a seat belt when riding in a car.
- All doors must be locked once the children are in the vehicle.
- Windows near the children should be kept closed.
- Children must remain seated during the entire trip.
- Children must be reminded to remain in the vehicle once it is stopped and exit only after the driver gives permission.

Please inform the teachers if you have any suggestions for resource people to contact or places to visit which would be of interest to the children.

Behavior Management Techniques

The staff shall manage child behavior using techniques based on developmentally appropriate practice, including positive guidance, redirection, and setting clear limits that encourage children to develop self-control, self-discipline, and positive self esteem.

At the beginning of each school year, the Board will organize a meeting with the parents to discuss the behavior management techniques used by the school. Post meeting, parents will have to sign a form noting that they agree and understand the Behavior Management Techniques policy.

Discipline Policy and Program Adjustment

The goal of discipline is to help the child develop inner controls so that he/she may move toward appropriate social behavior. Methods for resolving conflicts are:

- Positive guidance
- Setting clear limits
- Redirection

When disputes arise among children or between a child and teacher, the teacher will encourage a talking out process among those involved. The goal of this talking out process will be to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using children's ideas whenever possible.

A child who may be overly aggressive or is repeatedly destructive of other children's work may be asked to make an activity choice in another area if talking things through has not resulted in better self-control. If this child's behavior persists for a period of time, a meeting with the KECNS Board, the head teachers and the child's parents will be scheduled to discuss the said behavior and develop a plan of action. Most plans of action will be set for 30 days. If after the set period, the child's behavior does not improve, the child's parents may be asked to remove their child from KECNS.

Staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions.

Staff will not be abusive, neglectful, or use physical, corporal, humiliating or frightening punishment under any circumstances. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of that child or another child or adult.

KECNS's Child Abuse and Neglect Policies and Procedures are posted at the school. A copy of the school's policy is also posted on the school's website @ kecns.org.

Cancellations/Delays/Early Dismissal/Half days/Days off

KECNS follows the Region 1 snow cancellation and delay schedule. Snow days will be made up, as Region 1 calendar dictates. Cancellations/delays are announced on local Connecticut television and radio stations as well as online. The announcement will be listed under "Region 1."

CANCELLATIONS

No School (due to inclement weather):

In the event Region 1 closes KCS due to inclement weather, KECNS will also be closed for the day.

DELAYS

Delayed Opening Schedule (due to inclement weather):

In the event that Region 1 has a delayed opening, the following programs will be impacted:

Before School Program: **CANCELLED** - Parents will be responsible to getting their children to KCS.

Nursery School/Modified Day: The nursery school program will run from 9:30 am - 1:00 pm. The modified day program will run from 9:30 am – 3:30 pm.

Extended KCS Pre-K: Parents can bring their children in at 9:30am.

After School Program: Runs as normally scheduled.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early Dismissal (due to inclement weather):

In the event that Region 1 closes KCS early due to inclement weather, KECNS will close at 2:30 pm. Parents will be responsible for picking their children up from KECNS at that time. Please be prompt for our teachers need to return home safely as well.

HALF DAYS

Region One Half Days:

When KCS has a scheduled half day due to holidays or parent conferences, KECNS will remain open for the entire day. Children attending KCS and enrolled at KECNS will be allowed the opportunity to attend KECNS for an additional charge. Please notify the school ahead of time if you will be utilizing this service.

DAYS OFF

Region 1 Days Off:

KECNS will be closed on days that Region 1 schools are closed. Please plan accordingly for childcare.

Occasionally the Head Teacher may find it necessary to close school when public school is in session. This happens very rarely, and all parents are notified of such closings by phone.

Also, there may be days when KECNS is open, but traveling for you may not be safe. Therefore, you should use your own judgment in deciding whether to bring your child to school.

Illnesses and Emergencies

- Please inform the teachers if your child contracts a contagious disease.
- If in the last 24 hours, a child has had any of the following, he/she may not attend school: vomiting, diarrhea, draining ears, draining eyes, lice or nits, unknown rash, fever, colored nasal secretions, or any communicable disease.
- Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Children who have a fever over 100.00 degrees or have experienced vomiting or repeated diarrhea in a 24-hour period must not attend school. (Source: KCS Handbook, www.kentcenterschool.org)
- Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such a condition, the child must be fever-free (temperature under 100.00 degrees) without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptom free for 24 hours. Parents may be required to submit medical documentation that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others. (Source KCS Handbook, www.kentcenterschool.org).
- If a child becomes sick during the school day, the parent will be contacted immediately to pick up the child. The child will be separated from the rest of the class and watched over by a staff member at all times.
- If your child becomes ill or is injured at school, first aid will be administered immediately. All teachers are trained in first aid. The parent or designated party (as indicated on the KECNS Emergency Card) will be contacted. In the event that the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, or an emergency situation exists, the school has permission for the teachers to act on behalf of the parent to secure proper treatment through the designated KECNS physician or hospital.
- If needed, Kent Ambulance will be called at 911.
- In the event that a child must go by ambulance to the hospital before the arrival of a parent or guardian, one teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and a local parent will be notified to come to the school to substitute.

Administering Medications

Connecticut state law requires a physician's written order and parent or guardian authorization for a center to administer prescription or non-prescription medications. Medications must be in a pharmacy prepared container with name of child, name of drug, dosage, method of administration, frequency, physician name and address, and original prescription date. Over the counter medications must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name.

Only trained staff members may administer medications, receive medications from parents, and return medications to parents.

All medications will be locked in a cabinet or the locked box in the refrigerator. Emergent, first line of defense medication will be stored unlocked but in a safe manner and inaccessible to children, allowing for quick access in an emergency. Non-prescription medication will be allowed to be stored in the locked containers with signed permission by parents. The topical medications must be stored "inaccessible" in the original container and be labeled with the child's name and directions for administering.

The school will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered. Included in the documentation are:

- The date the medication was administered
- The time it was administered
- The dose that was administered
- The signature of the staff administering
- Any comments

Parents will be notified when/if a child has been administered any medication. Staff is trained in the administration of medication. This training is renewed every three years. Training for injectibles is repeated once per year. At no time is an untrained staff member allowed to administer medications.

Emergency Procedures

Medical:

Please see the “Illnesses and Emergencies” section above for details of our medical emergency procedures.

Fire/Other Evacuations:

In the event of a fire or other evacuations, evacuation from the building will be through the closest first exit. Staff will be responsible for supervising the children under their care and leading them to the first exit. The KECNS attendance book will be taken by staff on the way out of the building. Please note, the attendance book will include a list of all emergency personnel and associated cell numbers. Staff will be responsible for taking the attendance book, first aid bag, phone and emergency files.

Classroom groups (staff and students) will walk to a safer location. Once inside, staff will record attendance and immediately text all emergency personal listed within the attendance book if anyone is missing from the classroom group. Texting is a quicker means of communication and affectively maintains a record of such communications.

Our primary evacuation location for fire and other evacuation types is the Kent School Annex located at the rear of 25 North Main Street. Please note, emergencies are fluid situations and the children might move to a different location. Parents will be notified where to pick up their children. Two staff members will remain until all children are picked up.

To help familiarize the children with fire emergency procedures, the staff will do the following:

- Each nursery school class will participate in monthly fire drills during the school year.
- The Head Teacher(s) will determine two exit routes to be used by both classes and hold practice drills for both routes.
- The children will be required to exit from the building in a quick, but quiet manner.
- The children will be required to walk a safe distance from the building and remain there until the Head Teacher advises them to reenter the building.

Weather Evacuations:

Please see the “Cancellations/Delays/Early Dismissal/Half days/Days off” section above for information about “snow-day” school closing and delays. In the event conditions require our program to shelter children, we will have additional resources (flashlights, water, radio, food, clothing, etc.) available.

In the event of a serious weather emergency, such as a tornado, staff and children will remain indoors and move into the central hallway away from windows and doors. Parents will be notified after the immediate danger has passed.

If the school is evacuated and the Head Teacher(s) determines it is unsafe to return, the children will proceed with both teachers to the Kent School Annex, however as noted, emergencies are fluid situations and the children might be moved to a different location. The undercroft in St. Andrew’s church is the backup evacuation site. Parents will be contacted when and where to pick their up children. Two staff members will remain until all children are picked up.

Volunteer Positions

Substitute teachers are needed. Please inform the Head Teacher if you wish to volunteer as a substitute teacher. The Assistant Teacher assumes the position of Head Teacher in the event of the Head Teacher’s absence. If a parent is no longer able to serve on the substitute teacher list, he/she should please notify the Head Teacher immediately.

Parent representatives and alternates are asked to serve on the KECNS Board of Directors.

- The parent representative acts as a liaison with the teachers, KECNS Board, and parents.
- Parent representatives are asked to attend monthly Board meetings.
- The parent representative notifies an alternate to attend a meeting if she/he cannot attend.
- Parent representatives and alternates are considered voting board members.
- Parent representatives are formally nominated and elected by the Board of Directors at the September meeting.