

Harbor City School

Parent/Guardian Handbook



2016-2017

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Statement of Purpose Harbor City School Philosophy & Mission

Harbor City School (HCS) is a non-profit, independent preschool located in the heart of East Boston. Created by a small group of dedicated local moms in 2010, HCS aims to provide a year round nurturing and stimulating environment for up to 35 children aged 2.9 to 6 years old. While traditional preschools are only half day, HCS also offers a full day option in order to suit the needs of full time working families in our community. For families who wish to actively participate in their child's preschool experience, we are also a cooperative school, with co-op responsibilities for families both in and out of the classroom. Families have the option to not participate in the classroom co-op portion of our school, but instead pay a monthly non-participation fee. HCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, family structure or toilet training status.

Harbor City School is excited to celebrate the diversity that is evident in our local neighborhoods. While we are still considered a part of the greater city of Boston, we are separated by the Boston Harbor and are fortunate to have vast green spaces just outside our doors with playgrounds, sprinkler parks, bike paths and community gardens, all the while just a T stop away from being in downtown Boston. HCS celebrates the diversity of our families served and by making connections between families, we make connections to the community at large that continue well beyond the preschool years.

HCS staff believe in providing a nurturing, safe and educationally appropriate environment for all our children. We use a child-centered, play-based curriculum and follow the developmental model of education, encouraging academic and social growth through exploration, cooperative problem solving and critical thinking. Children develop social and educational relationships with supportive adults. Activities are age appropriate and with positive and consistent guidance, designed to foster the cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of all children while still meeting the individual needs to children within the group. When planning classroom curriculum teachers use the Massachusetts state frameworks as a guide.

Statement of Values

Harbor City School operates in adherence with our founding values of respect and honor of the diversity of human beliefs, experience and expression, without adherence to any organized system of belief or faith. We strive to develop an environment in which each child's unique interests, learning styles, and mode of self-expression is cultivated. At Harbor City School, children will develop an understanding of what it means to be a member of a community; that they are responsible for their actions and the effects they have on those around them. We teach against all forms of discrimination, intolerance and injustice in the world and in our interactions with each other. As members, children will develop ways to contribute to the classroom and value the contributions of others. We recognize and value our differences as opportunities to learn from one another, as well as celebrate our similarities and common goals. Harbor City School is a place in which all families feel valued, represented, and welcome to contribute to the school environment, regardless of race, sex, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, family structure or toilet training status.

Parent/Guardian - Teacher Partnerships

It is through parent/guardian-teacher partnerships that we develop relationships of mutual respect, equality and sensitivity. Family structures are very diverse in nature and we respect families of all races, cultures, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, socio-economic status and lifestyles. It is our goal for children to have respect for each other; with this in mind, we as adults must model respect for differences in individual opinions. While we may not always agree, it is important that we still work together with your child's best interest in mind. The objective of our partnerships with parent/guardians is to encourage a sense of belonging and to develop a strong community within the school.

Home Visits

The partnership among the parent/guardians and teachers begins when your child's teacher first makes contact to schedule a home visit. Home visits occur a few weeks prior to your child's start date. This is an opportunity for your child to meet his/her new teacher in an environment that is most comfortable for him/her. It also gives the teacher a glimpse into your child's life outside of school and introduces the School to your child's personality and interests. Children are often excited about showing teachers their bedroom and their favorite toys as well as introducing the teacher to siblings and family pets. During the home visit, your child will also receive his/her individual fabric "pattern". This pattern will become a comfort on the first day of school, as your child will be able to identify his/her belongings because they will recognize the "patterns." Home visits are also a good time to ask questions and discuss any concerns you may have. Participating in a home visit is not a requirement to attend HCS; if you wish to not host a home visit, please inform the Director. Parent/guardians who may not feel comfortable hosting a home visit in their home, but still wish to introduce their child to his/her new teacher, may request a meeting at an alternate location to be mutually decided on by the family and participating teacher.

Fabric Pattern

One unique aspect of Harbor City School is the use of individual fabric patterns to identify each child. This special pattern is introduced during your child's home visit and will stay with them throughout his/her HCS experience. The patterns are used to identify all of children's classroom belongings, including their cubby, artwork, jobs, snack baskets and circle time pillows.

Most children of preschool age are not yet able to read; some may recognize their own name but few can recognize the names of all their classmates. By using a fabric pattern system, children learn to "read" patterns and as you will see, quickly learn to identify or "read" all the patterns of their classmates. Using individual patterns gives children ownership of their unique pattern and the ability to easily identify all of their belongings and those of their peers.

Parent/Guardian - Teacher Communication

Strong communication among parent/guardians and staff is an essential part of making you and your child's experience at Harbor City School successful. Teachers communicate with families in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Forms of communication may include messages written on a dry erase board or email. Teachers will send home individual notes as needed to inform parent/guardians of specific issues or to ask for certain items that may need replacing (i.e. extra clothes, diapers, etc.). All teachers will make a concerted effort to speak with each parent/guardian/caregiver at pickup to touch base about your child's day.

Parent/guardians are asked to voice any questions, concerns or feedback to their child's teacher or the Director. We will work together to resolve any issues as quickly as possible. It is also encouraging to hear feedback about what you feel is working well and your child is enjoying. Quick questions and daily schedule changes can be addressed to your child's teacher at drop off/pick up. Other concerns or questions that may require a lengthy conversation can be left via voice mail, email (Directors@harborcitykids.org) or a note in the comment/suggestion box. The teacher will then make a point of arranging a mutually agreed upon time to meet with you. In order to maintain confidentiality as well as to provide continuity of care for the children, these meetings will be held outside of the classroom. If at any time there is an issue that you do not feel comfortable discussing personally with a teacher or Director, there is a drop box located near the stroller storage downstairs where you are free to leave comments and suggestions that will remain completely anonymous.

Harbor City School will update the website and blog weekly to keep you abreast of what has been happening school-wide. We will also send home words to songs, poems and finger plays periodically so you may sing along with your kids.

Parent/ Guardian Participation

Parent/guardians are encouraged to participate in the classroom as well as in school-wide activities. Feel free to come in and read to the class, give a talk or presentation about a family or cultural tradition/custom, teach the class about your occupation or simply stop by to have lunch in the classroom with your child. Please make arrangements in advance with the lead teacher so they can plan their curriculum and day accordingly. Parent/Guardians are also encouraged to participate in parent/guardian-teacher conferences and any fundraising activities; your ideas are always welcome. *Partnership* and *participation* are not viewed in the same manner. While parent/guardian-teacher *partnerships* are essential for quality early childhood experiences, we recognize that *participation* will vary from family to family. Partnerships do not rest on participation in the program, but rather on communication, decision-making systems and daily interaction. If you are able and wish to participate more actively in your child's program, we offer a variety of ways in which parent/guardians can get involved.

Enrollment & Tuition Information

Student/Teacher Ratios

Harbor City School has a licensed capacity of 35 children. We have 2 classrooms. Our first floor consists of one classroom with 15 children and a shared gross motor space. Our second floor classroom can provide care for 20 children at a time. Our student/teacher ratios meet and/or exceed the Department of Education's requirements of one teacher for every ten children.

Application & Enrollment Procedures

Harbor City School accepts applications throughout the year. If you are interested in having your child attend HCS, contact us via phone or email and we will email you information about the school and an application form. After reading through the material, if you feel the school would be a good fit for your child and family, we ask that you schedule a tour of the facilities and meet with the Director. We invite visitors to tour Harbor City School year round by appointment. This is a good time to ask questions, talk about concerns and see the curriculum in action. If you are unable to bring your child for the initial tour, you may schedule a second visit during which your child can participate in the classroom. HCS encourages this second visit as an opportunity for you to see your child socializing with peers and becoming more secure in the school environment before regular attendance begins. Harbor City School hosts semi-annual open houses in the fall and spring.

A \$50.00 **non-refundable** application fee is due at the time your application is submitted. Once all of our available spaces have been filled, the Director will compile an optional waiting list. Age eligible applicants from the list are notified by telephone and email when placement becomes available. Three attempts are made at notification before the space is offered to the next child on the list. Children are removed from the waiting list if we are unable to contact you or if an opening is refused. Priority is given to children already enrolled in our program but wishing to change their schedule and then to siblings of currently enrolled or alumni families. If a child on the waiting list is not yet of age to attend HCS, the child's name will remain in its position on the list, but the slot will go to the next age appropriate child.

Harbor City School does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, family structure or toilet training status.

Tuition & Fees

Once your application and fee have been received and your child's slot has been confirmed by Harbor City School's Director, he/she will send out a notification of acceptance and enrollment contract outlining your monthly tuition rate. Tuition rates are calculated at the start of each new school year and is billed monthly based upon a ten month school year. This means that although there are some months with weekly school closures, the tuition for that month will remain the same as all other months of the school year. Tuition is based on days scheduled regardless of attendance. Summer tuition (July & August) is also billed monthly.

Families may withdraw from HCS for the summer months of July & August and still be guaranteed Fall enrollment as long as HCS is notified of their intent to do so by the date specified.

You must submit your signed enrollment contract accompanied by one month's tuition at least 30 days in advance of your child's first day of attendance. This **non-refundable** deposit completes your registration process and secures a space for your child in our program. This tuition deposit will be applied toward your last month of enrollment.

<u>Tuition Costs</u>	
Early Drop Off (8:00-8:30am)	\$5 per day
Full Day (8:30am - 5:30pm)	\$60 per day
Half Day (8:30am - 12:00pm)	\$33 per day
Extended Afternoon (12:00 – 5:30)	\$44 per day
Lunch Bunch (12:00-1:00)	\$10 per day

Monthly Tuition Rates

	2 days/week	3 days/week	5 days/week
	Tuesday/Thursday	Monday/Wednesday/Friday	Mon. – Fri.
Half Day	\$264	\$396	\$660
Extended Afternoons	\$352	\$528	\$880
Full Day	\$480	\$720	\$1200

All subsequent tuition payments are due on or before the 1st of the month. Other payment schedules are also available; please speak with the Director to set up an alternate schedule. No credits or substitutions are given for missed days. If school is closed for a scheduled holiday, your child is home sick, or you are on vacation during the first of the month, you are responsible for paying your tuition in advance of the 1st of the month. If you pay by check, please write your child's name and the month in the memo section of the check. A fee of \$30 will be charged for all returned checks. This charge must be paid immediately upon notification. After three returned checks, you must pay in cash only. For your convenience, Harbor City

School gladly accepts checks delivered through any bank's automatic bill payment system. Please speak with the Director for assistance in setting up this convenient payment system. Please ensure that checks are sent and will be received by HCS on or before the 1st of the month. Harbor City School reserves the right to change tuition rates on a yearly basis, but must notify parents of all tuition increases at least one month in advance of the change.

Scholarships

Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, Harbor City School will offer partial tuition assistance. Current families are eligible to apply. To do so, we ask that you submit a completed Harbor City School Financial Aid Form by May 1st. Awards will be determined by July 1st. The amount of a scholarship will be determined by the following factors: amount of funds requested, the number of requests, the part or full time status of the child, and the availability of monies in the scholarship fund. Harbor City School will provide 25-50% of tuition coverage. The Directors will review the applications and recommend awards as monies allow. The awards will be approved by the Directors and the Financial Aid Committee of the Board of Directors. The confidentiality of families will be protected at all times.

Families will be asked to reapply for financial assistance every school year. If monies allow, financial assistance will be provided on an emergency basis during the year and we welcome you to contact us during the year if tuition becomes burdensome. Conversely, if you receive tuition assistance and you find that you do not need it anymore, we encourage you to let us know, so that we can ensure that scholarships are supporting families in most need.

Field Trip & Materials Fee

An **annual** field trip & materials fee of \$75.00 is due with your **first month's tuition**. Please see the field trip section of our handbook for a more detailed explanation of this fee.

Late Payment Policy

Tuition payments are essential to the functioning of Harbor City School and the effectiveness of its budget. Payments not received by the 1st of the month will be given a grace period of 5 business days. After the grace period expires, any payments not yet received will be assessed a **\$25 late payment fee**. Payments will continue to be assessed a \$25 late payment fee for every week they are late.

Chronic late payments jeopardize the budgetary health of the program. If you are billed for late payment fees in six separate months within a school year (September-August), you will be dis-enrolled from Harbor City School. If you fail to make payments for 3 consecutive months, you will be dis-enrolled from Harbor City School.

Bi-weekly payment plans are available. Please speak to the Director if you would like to take advantage of an alternative payment plan.

Sibling Discount Policy

Harbor City School is proud to offer a discount for families with multiple children enrolled simultaneously.

Families with multiple children enrolled simultaneously will only be responsible for the co-op duties associated with one child. Parents will only be asked to volunteer one morning in the classroom per month, as opposed to one morning per child. In addition, families will only be asked to select one out-of-classroom job, contribute to the production of one fundraiser, and participate in one cleaning event or pay one annual cleaning fee. The annual materials fee remains the same per student.

For full-time enrolled children (5 full days per week), we offer a monthly tuition discount of \$20 per additional child.

For part-time enrolled children (2-5 half days or 2-3 full days per week), we offer a monthly tuition discount of \$10 per additional child.

Parent/Guardian Co-op Participation & Guidelines

Harbor City School is proud to be a parent/guardian cooperative (co-op) preschool. Co-op participation consists of three components:

- “Family Co-op Job”
- Monthly classroom participation
- Assist and participate in fundraising events

Co-op participants can select a family co-op job that best suits their talents and resources and have this duty approved by the Director, or you can have a duty assigned to you during the fall parent meeting. These duties are designed to take roughly 12-20 hours per year. Examples of administrative duties include participation on the board of directors or other committee, grocery shopping, center-based laundry, cleaning, coordinating volunteers, bookkeeping and other administrative tasks. If you feel you can provide a specific resource as co-op participation, please speak to the Director. Due to the increased time commitment, Board members are only required to participate in the classroom on a quarterly basis. Failure to complete your designated family co-op job will result in a fee.

Families are required to assist in the classroom once per month. Before beginning in the classroom, co-op parents will be required to attend a brief orientation which is typically held during our first family meeting in September. The participating parent/guardian will be asked to arrive at school at 8:25 in order to be briefed on the days’ activities and will be required to stay until 1pm. Please be advised that **all** parent/guardians who participate in the classroom will be required to submit to a CORI and to attend a brief orientation program.

Participation in the co-op aspect of the School is not mandatory, however there is an additional fee for families who are unable to participate or choose to opt out of the classroom element of the program. Co-op non-participation fees will be billed on a monthly basis and will be applied to tuition the first week of every month. If you fail to appear on your scheduled co-op day and do not reschedule by the end of the month, you will be billed automatically. It is your responsibility to re-schedule should you miss your co-op day.

The co-op non-participation fee is a flat fee of \$50 per month.

Families who elect to opt out of the regularly scheduled co-op participation are still required to assist with family administrative jobs and fundraising events. Please see the Co-Op Handbook for additional information.

Parent Meetings

Harbor City School has **two mandatory parent meetings a year**. The first meeting will be held the first Sunday in October at 4 pm. The second meeting will take place on the first Monday in March at 7 pm. We ask that at least one parent be present at the meeting.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms must be on file **before** your child begins school:

(*Required by Massachusetts State Law)

(**Consent is optional and does not affect your child's enrollment)

- Application Form*
- Enrollment Form*
- Physicians certificate providing evidence of recent physical/lead screening/immunization record*
- Developmental History Form*
- First Aid & Emergency Medical Care Consent Form*
- Transportation Plan & Authorization*
- Oral Health Non-Participation Form**
- Walking field trip permission slip**
- Photography Release Statement**
- Authorization & Consent Forms (sunscreen, email address, etc.)**
- CORI form* (background check for anyone who will be participating in the classroom)
- Asthma Action Plan* (for any children with an asthma diagnosis)

Checklist of Items Needed for First Day of School

Extra Clothes

- T-shirt/Long sleeve shirt (seasonal)
- Shorts/Pants (seasonal)
- Socks
- Underwear (panties)
- Sneakers (optional)

Blanket & Comfort item for nap/rest-time

Diapers & Wipes (if necessary)

- One package of diapers
- One container of wipes

Toothbrush & Toothpaste (full day & extended afternoon only)

Re-Usable Water Bottle

*** Remember to label *everything* you send to school with your child's name; Harbor City School is not responsible for lost items***

*** Preschoolers get messy; it is part of their job as students. Please dress your child comfortably in "play clothes" and not clothing that must be kept neat and clean.***

Please replace any extra clothing that is worn home as soon as possible. Extra clothes are kept in individually labeled boxes in the bathroom.

Teachers will send a note home when diapers and wipes are running low.

Please replace your child's toothbrush after any illness.

Daily outdoor learning experiences are an important element of the curriculum at Harbor City School. Please dress your child appropriately and send appropriate seasonal clothing. These items include: sunhats, jackets, rain pants, raincoats, rain boots, snow pants, hats, gloves/mittens, etc. For safety reasons, jackets or sweatshirts may not have drawstring hoods or must have drawstrings removed. Flip Flops are also not to be worn during school hours.

Drop-In Days

On occasion, you may wish to send your child to school for an extra day, or drop-in care. Please submit a written request at least 24 hours in advance to the Director. The Director will then look at the classroom ratios to make sure that we can safely accommodate your child on that day. Our ability to accommodate drop-in days may vary and is not guaranteed. Drop-In Days will be granted on a first come, first served basis.

Attendance

All children should arrive at HCS **by 9 am**. Please contact the school by 9 am if your child is not going to attend for the day or will be late for any reason. We ask that you inform us of any absenteeism due to illness so that we may record and post a note outside the classroom when necessary. The state requires HCS to notify families when certain contagious illnesses have been present in the classroom. Please notify the Director if your child will not be attending for an extended period of time (one week or more) due to family vacation.

Reduction or Withdrawal from Harbor City School

In the event that you decide to reduce your child's schedule or withdraw from our program, all changes must commence on the 1st of the month. You must provide notice at least **30 days prior to the date of change**. Please put your request in writing and submit it to the Director. With proper notification (30 days) your tuition deposit will be applied to the last month of enrollment. Without 30 days' notice, no refunds will be given for deposits or tuition already paid.

Vacation/Holidays/School Closings

Harbor City School is open year round with the exception of a few holidays and two 1-week long professional development/school maintenance closures in September & December. We will distribute a school year calendar, which will also be available on the school website. In the event of a weather emergency HCS will follow the late opening/closing procedures of Boston Public Schools, unless otherwise noted. Please refer to your local television stations for a list of school closings. The following is a list of scheduled school closures; please note that these days are subject to change on a yearly basis.

- Labor Day week
- Columbus Day
- Veteran' Day (Professional Development for Staff)
- Thanksgiving – noon dismissal for all students the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, closed the Friday after
- Christmas Eve & the week between Christmas and New Year's
- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Good Friday (Professional Development for Staff)
- Patriot's Day (Professional Development for Staff)
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

Drop Off/Pick up Procedures

Harbor City School opens at 8 am for children enrolled in our early drop off program, and promptly at 8:30 am for all remaining students. Children will not be allowed on the premises before this time. All students should arrive by 9am so as not to disrupt the flow of the day. When dropping children off, please walk your child to their cubby and check in with a teacher so they know your child has arrived and they can assume responsibility for their care. All 1st floor parents are asked to drop off lunchboxes and other personal items downstairs **before** proceeding upstairs for drop off. Teachers will use a clipboard with a class roster as a means of taking attendance and keeping track of which children are present in the building in the case of an emergency evacuation. Please communicate any changes in your child's schedule (i.e. play dates, someone other than parent/guardian/caregiver picking up) at drop off. Upon pick up, you resume all responsibility for your child's care. Please remember at the end of the day

to check children's cubbies for all of their personal belongings and artwork. NOTE: Your child **may not** be picked up by anyone other than those listed on your enrollment forms. Any additions to the list of authorized release persons must be made in writing and signed by a legal guardian. Persons picking up may be asked to show photo identification.

The school day ends promptly at 5:30pm. Parents permitted to pick children up at any time, but are asked to arrive no later than 5:20 so that conversations and transitions for children are finished by 5:30. If late pick-ups (after 5:30) become a habit, HCS will issue a warning, after which a late fee of **\$1 per minute** will be assessed. Chronic lateness may be cause for dismissal from the program.

Toy Policy

Sharing toys at school is difficult for young children to do. Toys brought from home may become the root of disagreements between children. Harbor City School asks that you leave toys at home unless otherwise instructed by a teacher for a "special occasion". Children may bring in a stuffed toy or comfort item that will remain in their cubbies until naptime.

If children wish to bring in a book to share with the class, we welcome and encourage this. Parents are asked to give books directly to the teachers so they may place books in a safe location until it is time to read them. Please remember to put your child's name in the book before sending it to school.

Outdoor Playtime

Outdoor playtime is an important part of the curriculum at Harbor City School. We strongly believe that being outdoors is essential to the health and development of children. It is Harbor City School's policy that if a child is not well enough to be outside in the fresh air for 20-30 minutes, that child is not well enough to be at school. Only in extremely inclement weather will children remain indoors. This means that *yes*, we **do** go outside in light rain and snow. Please bring appropriate clothing for outdoor weather. This includes: raincoats, rain pants, boots, snowsuits, snow boots, mittens/gloves, and hats. Families are free to bring an umbrella to use coming and going from school, however due to safety concerns, children will not have access to them during the school day. Upon entering the school, umbrellas can be left at the bottom on the stairs with stroller storage.

Nap/Rest Time

In the best interest and health of the children, all full day children will have a nap/rest period each day. Rest time is required by the Department of Early Education and Care. During this time, children will listen to music while teachers spend some quiet time with each child. Children who need to sleep will be allowed to do so and will be given the amount of rest time they need. Children who do not nap will be offered books or other quiet activities after a 45-minute rest period. Parent/guardians are asked to bring in a blanket and comfort item from home to be used for nap/rest time.

Birthday Celebrations

Children who wish to celebrate their birthday at school are welcome to do so. Celebrations are usually scheduled for the morning time; please discuss birthday plans with your child's teacher a few days in advance so they have time to plan the day accordingly. Parent/guardians may bring in a special snack (i.e. cupcakes, muffins, popsicles, cookies) to share with the class. Healthy options such as fruit are also welcome. Please remember to check for any food-based allergies in your child's class. We ask that you do not pass out birthday or other party invitations during the school day.

Field Trips

In addition to community-based excursions, the Harbor City School curriculum plans 3 to 4 major educational outings per year. Information about these field trips will be presented in advance so that parents may determine if their children will attend. All children are welcome to attend field trips, even if trips do not occur on their regularly scheduled days, with proper adult supervision. Parents may schedule a full drop-in day or may elect for their child to attend only the field trip, provided that space is available. HCS staff will request parent participation as chaperones in order to maintain a safer child-to-adult ratio. **If you do not wish for your child to attend a field trip on his/her regularly scheduled day, it is your responsibility to arrange for alternative care arrangements on that day, as there will not be sufficient staff present at the School to be considered responsible for the care of children under state licensing laws. Tuition will not be credited.**

Progress Reports

Individual progress reports are prepared every six months and are based on observations and documentation of a child's progress in a wide range of activities over time and include samples of children's work. Progress reports address the growth of children in developmental domains including but not limited to: social/emotional, cognitive, language, fine/gross motor and life skills. Educators use progress reports to adapt the curriculum to children's individual strengths, interests and needs and to maintain ongoing communication with families. A copy of progress reports will be given to parents and also maintained in children's records.

Parent/Guardian/Teacher Conferences

Yearly conferences with your child's teacher are scheduled at the time of your child's 6-month progress report. Parent/guardian conferences with classroom teachers may occur at anytime throughout the school year. Please contact the Director or your child's teacher if you would like to schedule a conference for any reason.

Snack Program

At Harbor City School, we believe that teaching opportunities exist well beyond direct instruction time in the classroom, and our snack program is designed with that in mind. With the snacks provided at school, we aim to demonstrate a food culture that is healthy for our bodies as well as our planet.

Whenever possible, we strive to offer snacks that are:

- Organic
- Whole grain
- Free from high fructose corn syrup
- Have fewer than 9 grams of sugar per serving
- Offer less than 10% daily value of sodium
- Distributed in packaging that minimizes our garbage production

In addition, we are proud to supplement our snack program with fresh produce from our plot at the Bremen St. Community Garden. Students participate in the planting, tending, and harvesting of our garden and are always proud to see the fruits (and vegetables!) of their labor. We encourage them to try each fruit or vegetable many times, with or without dip, and talk about how our taste buds change as we grow up. Over time, we've seen many students change their minds about a few foods!

We welcome and appreciate any donations to the snack program. Please confirm with the Director to avoid any allergy risks.

Lunch Box Suggestions

All allergies must be documented in your admissions information. Teachers will have a posted list of class and school allergies, but you are encouraged to make sure that you have personally informed your child's teachers.

Please do not send children to school eating breakfast or snacks, as it is unfair to the rest of the children in the classroom, as well as a safety precaution in case of allergies. Children who are staying for lunch are required to bring their own nutritious lunch and drink. Teachers may heat up items in the microwave, however we ask that you do not send frozen meals as we only have a limited amount of time for heating up meals. Please consider heating your child's lunch at home and sending it in a thermos or insulated lunch bag. If you send items that require refrigeration, please put an ice pack in your child's lunch box. We do not have enough refrigerator space to store lunch boxes. Please **do not** send candy, soda or sweets in your child's lunchbox. Harbor City School will provide a back-up lunch in case of emergency.

The Department of Early Education and Care recommends the following list of healthy lunch box suggestions:

- Milk
- Water
- Cold Cuts (roast beef, turkey, etc.)
- Cheese Sticks

- Yogurt
- Fruit (bananas, strawberries, pineapple, raspberries, blueberries, apple, fruit cups, etc.)
 - o Please send all fruit peeled, cut, or otherwise prepared to your child's preference
- Vegetables (green beans, carrots, peas, broccoli, cucumbers, etc.)
- Tofu
- Pastas or Macaroni & Cheese
- Chicken Nuggets
- Fish sticks
- Whole grain breads

*** Please be advised that nuts, raw carrots, grapes, and hotdogs are choking hazards. Please cut these foods lengthwise into halves or thirds before sending them to school. ***

Confidentiality of Records

Harbor City School will keep a permanent file containing information relating to your child. This file includes: admission information, emergency contacts, personal information, medical records, all consent forms and permission slips, progress reports, IEPs, medication forms, accident reports and any written correspondence between parent/guardians and the school. Information contained in our records is confidential. Harbor City School will not release a child's record to anyone who is not authorized by the enrolling parent or legal guardian. HCS will also keep a log of who has had access to the child's file. If at any time you would like to view your child's file, including after departure from the program, you are welcome to do so. Please inform the Director and give two days' notice.

Transportation Plan

Parent/Guardians/Caregivers are responsible for transporting children to and from school each day. The mode of transportation will vary by family. Children are the responsibility of their parent/guardians/caregivers until they are checked into the classroom each morning and immediately upon pick up at the end of the day. For families who use a stroller to walk to school, there is limited designated space in which to store your stroller. If you wish to store your stroller during school hours please ask a Director to assist you. Harbor City School recommends the use of umbrella-style or other collapsible strollers.

If an emergency situation should arrive at school where a parent/guardian or emergency contact person cannot be reached, children will be transported by ambulance to the nearest appropriate hospital. A teacher or Director will accompany the child at all times until a parent/guardian has arrived.

In the event of a class field trip that is beyond walking distance, we may require the use of alternate transportation. Should HCS hire a bus service, the bus will be equipped with child safety seats.

Annual School Satisfaction Survey

In order to better serve our families, we will send home a school wide satisfaction survey at least once a year. Please rest assured that the survey will remain completely confidential. Harbor City School would like to use the survey to get feedback from families about what is working well within the school and where we can make improvements. Your specific, clear feedback will help us to make changes in order to make the school a better place for you and your children. Results of the annual school satisfaction survey will be reviewed by the HCS Directors and the Board of Directors. A summary of the findings will be made available to all families upon request. We appreciate your participation in our annual school satisfaction survey.

Termination & Suspension

Harbor City School reserves the right to suspend or terminate a service for irreconcilable differences. These differences may include, but are not limited to: refusal to pay tuition owed, lack of parental/guardian cooperation, excessive biting, physically or verbally abusive behavior towards teachers/peers, or the School's inability to meet the needs of the student.

Termination and suspension are a last resort. School staff will make all efforts to resolve conflicts in a timely and professional manner. If the staff determines that a child's position at Harbor City School may not suit the needs of the group at large, the Director will notify parents/guardians verbally to schedule a conference. At this conference, the Director will present documented evidence to support the staff's decision. Local services or agencies may be called in to provide services to the child; support, education and training to the staff; or to assist in the development of an intervention plan to be carried out between the School and in the home. If parents decline the referred services, HCS reserves the right to terminate childcare services. The Director will notify parent/guardians verbally if termination or suspension is to occur. This will be followed by a written notification. For further information please read the "Referrals" section of this handbook.

Open Door Policy

HCS has an open door policy. Unannounced classroom visits by parent/guardians are permitted and encouraged at any time while your child is present. If you would like your visit to include a curriculum component, such as a presentation or reading a story to the class, please consult with your child's classroom teacher to ensure that your visit does not conflict with the scheduled events of the day.

Teacher Qualifications and Ongoing Training

All staff members of Harbor City School possess the qualifications required for their positions in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care regulations. Many teachers at HCS have education and experience that exceeds the state's expectations. All Lead Teachers hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in education or related field and are certified in Early Childhood Education by the State of Massachusetts. All staff members hold current certifications in CPR and First Aid and have been trained in the administration of medication as well as the use of Epi-Pens.

Harbor City School is dedicated to the continual learning process of its teachers. On and off site training with local professions is regularly scheduled throughout the year. Each full time teacher is required to complete a minimum 20 hours of continuing education annually, 5 hours of which is designated to the area of diverse learning.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

HCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, cultural heritage, national origin, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, family structure or toilet training status.

Special Needs and Services

Harbor City School seeks to provide access to high quality education for all children. HCS will make every effort to accommodate any child with a documented special need, including offering referral services, cooperating with all off-site professionals to provide consistent care and education for the child, and providing professional development for School staff.

In determining whether we can safely provide service for a child with a disability, the Director, with parental consent, may request information pertaining to the child from local educational agencies such as Early Intervention, or other health/service providers. Based on the information and with the parents' input, the Director and teachers will identify in writing any specific accommodations necessary to meet the needs of the child including, but not limited to:

1. Change or modification to child's participation in typical center activities
2. Size of group to which the child is assigned and the proper staff/child ratio.
3. Any special equipment or physical accommodations, materials, ramps and aids.

The Director will notify the parents, in writing, within thirty days of receiving the information. The Director will outline the reasons why a determination has made that the school cannot meet the child's needs without undue burden to the school. This notification will specify that the parents may contact the DEEC to determine the school is in compliance with the regulations. If every effort, including physical, financial or educational has been researched, yet a hardship for the school exists, the written communication will inform the parent/guardian of its efforts and the facts gathered which resulted in this finding. A meeting with the parent/guardian will be suggested by the Director to discuss the findings and to further discuss the means by which the school may be helpful in providing all necessary observations, documentation, available information and referral for other services that parents may request.

The school will keep a copy of this notification in its records. (Toilet training may not be used as an undue burden). The factors listed below as issued by the DEEC will be used as a basis for determining if the school can accommodate a child with a disability.

1. The nature and cost of accommodations needed to provide appropriate services to the child at

the program.

2. The ability to secure funding for of services from other sources.
3. The overall financial resources of the school.
4. The number of persons employed by the school.
5. The effect on expenses and resources or the impact otherwise of such action upon the school.

Admitting a Child with Special Needs

After admitting of a child with diagnosed disabilities, the School, Director, and staff, with parents' permission, will cooperate with Early Intervention, health or other specialized service providers or consultants to plan an individual educational program (IEP) for the child. The lead teacher assigned to the child's room will be designated as the liaison for the child and will coordinate communication and services with other organizations as needed. Any child receiving services provided by personnel other than HCS teachers must have the parent/guardian sign a written consent form so that Harbor City School staff may consult with any agencies or specialists in order to review, develop and/or revise plans and services for the child. Using the parent questionnaires, progress reports, and conferencing, teachers and families will work together to provide the best setting and strategies for the education and care of the child. HCS offers support for families in the form of referrals to agencies that can provide consultants, but the ultimate choice belongs to the families. The School does not pay these consultants. Many of their services, including transportation, may be free to families as they are offered by the town or through the Community Partnership for Children.

Progress reports will be written every three months by the outside agency and the school staff. Teachers will attend evaluation meetings with specialists as requested or needed, to support families and children, and discuss the services being provided.

Organizational Structure of HCS

Harbor City School is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. Parent/guardians are welcome to contact the DEEC for information regarding Harbor City School's regulatory compliance history.

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care
1250 Hancock St.
Suite 120-S
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 472-2881

Harbor City School Lines of Authority & Supervision

Board
Director
Lead Teachers
Assistant Teachers
Substitute Teachers

Copies of the Harbor City School bylaws are available for those interested in obtaining additional information regarding the organizational structure of the school.

Schedule of Daily Activities *

8:00- 8:30	Early Drop off
8:30-9:30	Arrival & Free Play
9:30-9:40	Clean up
9:40-10:00	Morning Meeting
10:00-10:30	Snack & Hand washing
1030-11:00	Small Group Activity/Project Time
11:00-11:15	Bathroom
11:15-12:00	Outside/Gross Motor Activities
Noon	Morning dismissal/Extended afternoon arrival
12:00-1:00	Lunch, Bathroom & Teeth-brushing
1:00-3:00	Rest Time
2:00-3:00	Small Group Projects/Wake up
3:00-3:30	Hand-washing & Snack
3:45-4:15	Circle Time/Small Groups
4:15-5:00	Bathroom & Gross Motor/Outside
5:00-5:30	Free Play, Clean-Up & PM Pick-Up

* Daily schedule subject to change based upon classroom visitors and local field trips

Free Play Choices (available every day, but most are changed weekly)

Painting
Sensory table
Art Table
Writing table
Dramatic play
Blocks
Manipulatives
Science
Reading/Listening Area

Biting Policy

All incidents of biting will be documented via an incident report. As educators we understand that there are several reasons why children may bite (ie: teething, frustration, etc.), however, to ensure the safety of all children, biting is not permitted at Harbor City School. Parent/guardians of both the “biter” and

“bite-ee” will be notified immediately. The incident report will be signed by a parent/guardian of the biter and a copy will remain in the child’s file. The incident report will describe the situation when the biting occurred in factual, non-judgmental language. Teachers will closely monitor the biter and provide positive reinforcement and redirection to prevent another situation from occurring. Every effort will be made to help children resolve biting issues, however, if after all reasonable efforts have failed, services will be subject to termination. Termination is a last resort and would only occur in extreme situations. Parent/guardians and educators must work as a team in order to remedy an excessive biting situation.

Substitutes, Student Interns & Volunteers

Harbor City School has a small group of substitute teachers that can be called upon in the event that a teacher is absent. All substitutes are counted in the teacher/student staffing ratios. HCS maintains a file for each substitute that contains all information required by the state including but not limited to: current physical, background records check (CORI), and resume. Additionally, there may be times when students from local high schools or colleges volunteer or intern at the School. Student interns and volunteers are not counted in the teacher/student staffing ratio, are never left alone with children, and are supervised by staff at all times. All student interns and volunteers must provide a current physical, submit to a background check (CORI), and have proper documentation from their sponsoring school before they will be allowed to interact with children. All substitutes, interns and volunteers will act as teacher’s assistants and must follow the policies and procedures discussed during their orientation process and listed in the Employee Handbook.

Transitions

Children transition within the classroom at various times throughout the day. Transitions between activities are completed in a safe, timely, predictable and unhurried manner. Teachers use visual, verbal and auditory cues to support children’s transitions. Daily activities are planned and organized in advance to avoid wait time. Children are informed about transitions prior to their occurrence. Transitions between activities are smooth and flexible and children are not always expected to move as a group from one activity to another.

There will come a time when children will transition to Kindergarten or a different school. It’s sad for us to see them leave but exciting to see children start a new chapter in their young lives. Teachers will work with children and families to help ease the transition into a new school.

Before children transition to an offsite location, a teacher will complete a face-to-name roll call, visually and verbally ensuring that all children are present. After a roll call is completed, the teacher will perform a head count and verify that the number of children present matches the number of children listed on the current class roster. An additional teacher or the Director must verify this roll call and head count before the children may leave Harbor City School. Once the children have transitioned to the offsite location, a teacher will perform another face-to-name roll call and head count. When transitioning back to Harbor City School, the same procedures are repeated before leaving the offsite location and upon

returning to the School. An additional teacher or the Director must verify the returning roll call and head count as well.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures

Emergency Health Care Procedures conform to The Department of Early Education and Care requirements. Each classroom is supplied with a first aid kit, list of allergies, emergency numbers, evacuation procedures, and a copy of the health care policy. Harbor City School also employs a Health Care Consultant who has guided us in the development of all health related policies and procedures. All teachers are certified in First Aid and CPR, and can administer Epi-Pens.

Teachers are responsible for maintaining a safe indoor and outdoor environment. All first aids kits, Epi-Pens, toxic substances, sharp objects and other hazardous materials are kept out of children's reach in childproof cabinets. The location of First Aid kits in all areas of the School is indicated by the Red Cross sign. The Director is responsible for maintaining the contents of First Aid kits. Indoor equipment and materials are checked frequently and removed or repaired as necessary. Teachers do a visual sweep of playgrounds before children are allowed access to them. In the event that children are leaving school grounds for any type of trip (bus or walking), the teacher will carry a First Aid kit, cell phone and list of emergency numbers for each child. At the start of the school year, children are educated on the safety rules for both the classroom and playground.

Harbor City School is a smoke free school. Please consider the health of the children and do not smoke anywhere in the building or near the front entrance to the School.

Emergency Information

Harbor City School: (617) 418-5146
196 Putnam St. (2nd floor)
East Boston, MA 02128

Police/Fire/Ambulance: 9-1-1

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

Emergency Health Care Facility: (617) 569-5800
East Boston Neighborhood Health Center
10 Gove St.
East Boston, MA 02128

Health Care Consultant: (617) 569-5800
Dr. Thomas J. Silva
Medical Director East Boston Neighborhood Health Center

Illness Policy

Children may not come to school if they have a fever (100° or higher), diarrhea, or have vomited in the last 24 hours. The Harbor City School illness policy is designed in accordance with recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics to prevent the spread of germs. HCS staff recognizes the effect illnesses have on working parent/guardians; therefore we have developed the following policy in hopes of minimizing the number of illnesses within the facility. Please refer to this policy when determining whether or not your child should attend school. The decision to dismiss children from school due to illness is the sole discretion of HCS teachers and staff and is made with the health and safety of all children in mind. If a child should become ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the other children and made comfortable with liquids, a snack, a rest mat and quiet activities. The Director will then notify the parent/guardian or caregiver. Please support our efforts to contain the spread of any possible contagious illness with a speedy pickup. State regulations mandate that all contagious illnesses (chicken pox, strep, conjunctivitis, etc.) be reported to the Director or a teacher, so that we may alert other parents/guardians to the signs and symptoms of the contagion. A sign will be posted outside the classroom to inform parent/guardians/caregivers if someone has been diagnosed with a contagious virus, but the confidentiality of the ill child will be respected and no personal information (i.e. name) will be posted. For the protection of all children and staff, your child should be kept at home or will be sent home if he/she displays any of the following symptoms:

Chicken Pox: All scabs must be dry, with no oozing before the child can return to the center. The time span for this is different for all cases.

Conjunctivitis: Defined by a combination of green or yellow discharge accompanied by eye pain or redness of eyelids. If both eyes are running clear, it is likely a virus. When one eye is running yellow or green and caked on creating crust, it is indicative of conjunctivitis and requires a doctor visit. The child may not return to school until 24 hours have elapsed since the medication began.

Diarrhea: As defined by loose watery stool, formless stool that is different from usual stooling pattern, two or more. The only exception to the policy is seen as a side effect from antibiotics. Teething will not be recognized as an exception. Children need to remain home for 24 to 48 hours after the onset of diarrhea and until a general sense of wellness has returned.

Fevers: Temperature taken orally or by ear 100° or greater. Please realize if your child has a true fever during the night or in the early morning before school, it is unfair to your child and to the others in the class to send him/her to school. Please do not treat fevers with Tylenol and send the child to school. In this case you are only masking the symptoms. The chances are very high that you will be called and asked to pick up your child from school once the Tylenol wears off. Children need to remain home until 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal.

Fifth Disease: Defined as a mild rash illness. "Slapped cheek" rash on the face and a lacy rash on the trunk and limbs accompanied by a low-grade fever, malaise, and cold like symptoms. Once the rash appears, the person is no longer considered contagious and does not need to be isolated.

Hand, Foot & Mouth: Defined as a common viral illness of infants and children which causes fever and blister-like eruptions in the mouth and/or skin rash. Infection is spread from person to person by direct contact with infectious virus and is highly contagious. Hand-foot-and-mouth disease does not usually need treatment. Most cases go away in 7 to 10 days. Child can return to school after all blisters have dried up.

Impetigo: Defined as a highly contagious skin infection. Appears as red sores on the face, especially around the nose and mouth. Child can return to school within 24 hours of starting antibiotic treatment.

Lice: Children with lice must receive a treatment at home of Nix and cannot return to school until all of the mites and nits (eggs) have been removed from their head.

Pertussis: More commonly known as “whooping cough.” Pertussis is a highly contagious bacterial infection characterized by severe coughing fits which produce a high-pitched “whoop” sound when children inhale after coughing. Children may return to school 5 days after the start of treatment. Unimmunized persons should not have contact with those infected for 14 days.

Rashes: Any undiagnosed rash with or without a fever; the parent/guardian will be notified with M.D. referral recommended. If the child has a fever or behavior changes the child will be sent home.

Scabies: Children must visit their doctor and get the recommended prescription treatment and can return 24 hours after treatment.

Strep: Documented strep infections and related rashes prohibit the child from attending school until 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotics was given.

Vomiting: One incident of vomiting accompanied by a fever, or two incidents of vomiting with no fever present or if the child has vomited twice in a 24-hour period indicate that your child must stay home. This child may not return to school until 24 hours has elapsed from the last vomiting episode.

Dispensing of Medication

As mandated by the MA Department of Early Education & Care, all medications must be administered in accordance with the consent and documentation requirements specified below:

Type of Medication	Written Parental/Guardian Consent Required	Health Care Practitioner Authorization Required	Logging Required
All Prescriptions	Yes	Yes, must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature; missed doses must also be noted along with the reason(s) why the dose was missed
Oral (non-prescription)	Yes, renewed annually	Yes, must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature
Unanticipated Non-Prescription for Mild Symptoms (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, Antihistamines)	Yes, renewed annually	Yes, must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature
Topical, Non-Prescription (when applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	Yes, must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature
Topical, Non-Prescription (not applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually	No. Items not applied to open wounds or broken skin may be supplied by HCS with notification to parent/guardians of such, or parent/guardians may send in preferred brands of such items for their own child(ren)'s use	No, for items used solely for prevention, such as sunscreen, insect repellent, and chap stick

A lead teacher or Director will administer medication that is prescribed by a doctor provided it is in the original container with the label and dosage information clearly legible. Staff will not administer medication contrary to the directions on the original container, unless authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care practitioner. Any medications without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a written physician's or pharmacist's descriptive order. No Director or teacher shall administer the first dose of any medication to a child, except under extraordinary circumstances and with parental/guardian consent. Daily permission slips will be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian to ensure correct time and dispensing of proper dosage. All permission slips will be kept in children's individual files. Medications are to be provided by the child's parent and given directly to the teacher or Director upon the child's arrival at school. The medication will then be placed in a secure cabinet, out of children's reach. If refrigeration is required, it will be placed on the top shelf toward the back of the refrigerator, out of children's reach. The refrigerator will maintain a temperature between 38F and 42F. Each time medication is administered the administering teacher will document in the child's record the name of the medication, the dosage, the time and method of administration. All unused, discontinued or outdated prescription medication will be returned to the parent/guardian and such return will be documented in the child's record. When returning medication to the parent/guardian is neither possible nor practical, the medication shall be destroyed by a Director in accordance with the policies of HCS and the Department of Public Health Drug Control Program.

Written parental consent is required for HCS staff to administer sunscreen, insect repellent or any other topical ointment (i.e. creams/lotions used for diaper rash or skin treatment).

Sun Screen & Insect Repellent

If you would like your child to wear sunscreen and/or insect repellent, it must be applied before arrival at school each morning. If parent/guardians wish to have either reapplied after rest time, authorization forms must be completed and kept on file. Parent/guardians are responsible for providing sunscreen and insect repellent.

Allergies

All allergies **must** be listed on children's enrollment forms. A list of allergies will be clearly posted in each classroom but not in a way as to embarrass or draw attention to a particular child. Although Harbor City School is not a peanut free school, we will do our best to make accommodations based upon each group of children. This means that we reserve the right to make HCS a nut free school **at any time**. Upon admittance of a child with a life threatening peanut allergy, all nut products will be immediately prohibited from entering the school building. If any enrolled child requires the use of an Epi-Pen, one will be immediately available in each classroom as well as in the first aid kit accompanying teachers whenever they leave the school building. Epi-Pens must be provided by the parent or guardian of the child to whom it is prescribed. No child will be administered an Epi-Pen that is not prescribed to him/her.

Evacuation & Emergency Preparedness

Individual evacuation plans are posted in each classroom at each exit. Evacuation plans include a primary evacuation route as well as a secondary evacuation route to be used in the event that the primary route is rendered unsafe or unavailable. Evacuation drills are conducted on at least a monthly basis at various times of day. The Director or assigned administrator notes the dates, times and effectiveness on file. During evacuation procedures, teachers will lead their classes calmly and quietly to the nearest exit. A head count will be taken before evacuating the classroom to ensure that all children are present. The teachers will then lead the group to an assigned meeting place (our plot at the Bremen St. Community Garden). Once all children and teachers have evacuated, the Director or assigned administrator will perform a final sweep of the center to ensure that no children or staff remain in the area. Attendance will be taken at the assigned meeting place to ensure that everyone is accounted for.

Harbor City School will follow all recommendations from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). Emergency updates will be obtained from the MEMA website or by phone by dialing 2-1-1 or 9-1-1. In the event of an actual emergency, the Director or assigned administrator will be responsible for notifying parents/guardians. The Director will call all families to inform them of the emergency status and the evacuation location for pick-up. If the situation is such that staff and children

cannot safely return to the school building, they will proceed to the YMCA located on Bremen St. A sign will be posted on the door of the school informing parent/guardians of the location for pick up.

Minor First Aid

Minor first aid for ailments such as a scrape or cut will be treated by the staff of Harbor City School. The affected area will be washed with soap and water and covered with a sterile bandage. All staff will wear disposable gloves when coming in contact with blood or other bodily fluids. Any child who receives a blow to the head shall be treated with an ice pack applied to the affected area, parent/guardians will be notified and children will also be observed for any changes in behavior. Whenever an accident occurs, the staff who treated the child will fill out an accident report. One copy of the accident report will be sent home, while another copy will remain in the child's file. Accidents will also be recorded in a school-wide accident log. This log will be reviewed by the Director to identify any possible problem areas.

Major Medical Emergency

In the event of a major medical emergency while in school or on a field trip, one staff member will remain with the child while another will call 911 and then attempt to contact the parent/guardians. If a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the staff will contact the next name on the list of emergency numbers contained in the affected child's file. A member of the staff will accompany the child in the ambulance, stay with the child and make any necessary decisions until a parent/guardian has arrived. It is essential for parent/guardians to keep all medical records and contact information up to date in the event of an emergency.

Alleged Child Abuse by Parent/Guardian

If there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child in our care, the teachers/Director are mandated to report it to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Family Services. A 51A (Chapter 119, Section 51A of Massachusetts General Law) form will be completed prior to calling DCFS. Immediately after HCS hears or is notified that a 51A has been filed, the Director will notify The Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC). The school will cooperate in all investigations of abuse and neglect. Prior parent/guardian notification is not required.

Alleged Child Abuse by Staff

Harbor City School staff operates its program in ways that protect its students from abuse or neglect. Any form of abuse or neglect of children while in HCS care is strictly prohibited. Any staff member who is accused of abusive or neglectful behavior will be removed from direct care of children. Educators are responsible for abuse or neglect if the educator admits to causing the abuse or neglect, the educator is convicted in criminal proceedings, or the Department of Early Education and Care determines based upon its own investigation that there is reasonable cause. The Director will notify DCFS and file a 51A, and the staff member will be prohibited from working directly with children until the DCFS investigation

is completed, or for such further time as the DEEC requires. The Director will also notify the Department of Early Education and Care. If DCFS supports the decision that abuse or neglect has occurred all staff members involved would be terminated from HCS. If DCFS findings do not support the claim of abuse or neglect, all staff involved will be allowed to return to their duties.

Infection Control

As mandated by Massachusetts Law, all children must be immunized in order to minimize the spread of infectious diseases. A copy of each child's immunization record must be on file before the first day of school.

All educators are trained in infection control procedures and in the use of universal precautions. Teachers will educate children about, and promote proper hand washing procedures and health precautions.

All staff and students are required to wash their hands with liquid soap and running water at various times of the day. These times include but are not limited to: upon entering the school building, before eating or handling food, after toileting or diapering, after handling animals, after water play and after coming into contact with bodily fluids. In addition teachers must wash hands before and after medication administrations and after performing cleaning tasks, handling cleaning products or handling trash. Teachers will monitor hand washing. Children will be reminded to dispose of used tissues and to cover their mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing. Classroom and bathroom surfaces will be washed and disinfected with a solution consisting of 1/2 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water.

Proper Hand Washing Procedures

1. Use warm running water and liquid soap.
2. Rub hands vigorously for about 60 seconds (sing the song "Happy Birthday" twice as you wash your hands) including the following areas:
 - Backs of hands
 - Wrists
 - Between fingers
 - Under fingernails
3. Rinse well.
4. Dry hands with a disposable paper towel.
5. Turn off the water with a paper towel, not clean hands. Throw the towel away into a lined, covered step can.
6. Use hand lotion, if necessary (Staff only).

Behavior Management Policy

Harbor City School has developed basic behavioral guidelines for the health and safety of all children. The classroom environment is arranged to minimize problem situations. HCS employs an age-appropriate approach to behavior management that is focused on meeting the developmental needs of

all children, encouraging positive behavior, and minimizing frustrations for children. Teachers receive training in positive approaches to discipline and use a variety of strategies to deal with challenging behavior. When applicable, children will participate in establishing school rules and policies. These rules are centered around three objectives: safety, listening to each other, and respecting each others rights to be individuals. Rules for the class will be written and posted in the classroom.

Educators and assistants are aware of children's activities in the classroom and strive to intervene before a problem arises. If an issue occurs, the educator will redirect the child or assist with problem solving. Whenever possible, teachers supervise children resolving issues on their own. Acceptable choices and alternatives will be provided for those children who are having difficulty arriving at solutions.

Harbor City School prohibits spanking and other corporal punishment. Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as isolation, humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment is not practiced or tolerated. At no time will a child be force-fed or deprived of snacks and meals. Toilet training will not be treated as a behavioral management situation. Children are not disciplined for soiling clothing or not using the toilet, nor are they forced to remain in soiled clothing or subjected to any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

Diapering & Toileting Policy

Students are accepted to HCS without regard to toilet training status. Children are toilet trained in accordance with the requests of their parent/guardians and consistent with the child's physical, emotional and developmental abilities.

Children who are toilet trained are asked to try to use the bathroom at various scheduled times throughout the day and are free to use the bathroom whenever they feel the need. Children are required to wash their hands after using the bathroom.

Toileting Procedure:

1. All children are allowed to use the toilet when needed.
2. Children are supervised during toileting, but allowed as much privacy as is appropriate.
3. No child is punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
4. Children wash their hands with soap and running water after toileting and before snacks, meals, or meal preparation.
5. All educators wash their own hands after assisting a child with diapering/toileting.
6. Individual paper towels will be used to dry hands.
7. Disposable gloves are used whenever cleaning feces, urine, blood, or vomit.
8. Contaminated areas are cleaned and sanitized with a DEEC-approved bleach to water solution.

Diaper changing occurs at regular times throughout the day and is performed on a soft mat that is protected with a disposable covering of adequate size to prevent the child from coming in contact with the changing surface. Both teachers and children wash their hands following each diaper change.

Teachers inform parents at the end of each day whenever a topical medication is applied to a diaper rash.

Diapering Procedure:

1. Wash hands and put on disposable gloves.
2. Gather necessary supplies. Cover diapering surface with disposable paper towel.
3. Place child on covered diapering surface and remove soiled diaper. Clean child's bottom from front to back with disposable wipe.
4. Fold all contaminated disposable items into the soiled paper, place the disposable items into a plastic bag and discard into lined covered trashcan.
5. Apply clean diaper and dress child.
6. Assist the child in hand washing.
7. Clean diapering area with paper towel and disinfectant solution. After each use the changing table will be bleached.
8. Wash hands thoroughly. Return supplies to child safe storage area.

Health Care Consultant

The state of Massachusetts requires that all licensed preschools utilize a health care consultant. The role of a health care consultant is to be a resource for the School as needed. Answering any health care questions, assisting in the creation of and approving the school health care policy, and assisting with training in first aid and awareness of communicable diseases. Our health care consultant also approves our first aid training and medication administration for staff. Harbor City School is fortunate to have Dr. Thomas J. Silva as our health care consultant. Dr. Silva is the Medical Director of the Department of Pediatrics at East Boston Neighborhood Health Center.

Individual Health Care Plans

IHC Plans will be created for all children with a chronic medical condition that has been diagnosed by a licensed health care professional. This plan will include a description of the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while in the care of HCS, possible side effects of that treatment and potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered or if the plan is not followed. With written permission from the child's health care practitioner, parent/guardians will be permitted to train staff in the implementation of their child's IHCP. Educators may administer routine, scheduled medication or treatment with written parental consent and licensed health care practitioner authorization. In addition any unanticipated administration of medication/treatment for a non-life threatening condition requires that the educator make a reasonable attempt to contact the parents/guardians prior to or at the beginning of the administration. If parents cannot be reached in advance they will be notified as soon as possible after such medication or treatment is given. Written parental consent to administer medication or treatment is valid for one year (unless withdrawn sooner) and must be renewed annually. In the interest of all children at HCS whenever an IHCP provides for a child to carry his/her own medication in their school bag, the bag will be moved to a higher location out of reach of children upon entering the school building. HCS must be given &

maintain an on-site backup supply of the medication for use as needed. Staff will document **all** medication and treatment administration.

Referral Services

In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, HCS has a written plan describing procedures for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services, including but not limited to dental check-ups, vision and hearing screening. If Harbor City School feels an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child, the following procedures will be followed:

If a teacher suspects that a child may exhibit a physical, cognitive, social, or emotional delay, he/she must document the observed behaviors and notify the Director. After notification, the Director will observe the child a minimum of three times at varied times of day and document these observations. Together, the teacher and Director will determine if the child may benefit from additional services.

After a consensus has been made, the Director will notify the parent/guardian of the School's concern in writing, and a referral form will be sent to the parent/guardian regarding the observed behaviors. The letter will include the reason for the referral and any attempts already made by the School to accommodate the child's needs. Some modifications that the teacher may use include but are not limited to: change in the physical space, limiting the child's participation in typical centers, changing the group size to which the child is assigned and the use of special equipment (materials, aids, ramps, etc.). The Director will provide a list of appropriate agencies or professionals to consult. The parent/guardian will be informed of their right to choose consultation as well as their right to refuse aid completely. The child's safety and wellbeing are of utmost concern to the School. Within 30 days of receiving the letter, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make an appointment with a specialist. If the parent/guardian does not seek the attention of a professional or agency, Harbor City School reserves the right to terminate services if it believes the school is unable to ensure the safety and interest of the child.

It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to record all observations and place them in the child's file along with the letter of recommendation and referral form.

At any time during the referral process, a meeting can be requested by the parent/guardian with the Director and teacher to confer on the observations and seek any clarification of recommendations. The School will work with any agencies or professionals regarding the child's needs with written consent from the parent/guardian.

Referral Agencies:

Harbor Area Early Intervention Program (under 3 years): Contact Person Indira Meza; East Boston; (617) 569-6560

East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (General health, Vision & Hearing Testing, Dental Testing); East Boston; (617) 569-5800

East Boston Counseling Center (mental health services); East Boston; (888) 294-7802

Department of Children and Family Services; Boston; (800) 792-5200
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary; Boston; (617) 523-7900
Children's Hospital; Boston; (617) 355-6000
Logan Dental Care; East Boston; (617) 569-0006
East Boston Public Schools, Special Needs Department; (617) 635-8599
Home for Little Wanderers, Preschool Outreach Program (mental health services); Jamaica Plain;
Julie Mumford Queeney; (617) 232-8610

Learning Guidelines for Preschool/Pre-K

Language Arts

Language

- Observe and use appropriate ways of interacting in a group. (i.e. take talking turns, ask questions and wait for response, etc.)
- Participate actively in discussions, listen to the ideas of others and ask and answer relevant questions.
- Communicate personal experiences or interests.
- Listen to and use formal and informal language.
- Engage in play experiences that involve naming and sorting common words into various classifications using general and specific language.

Reading & Literature

- Listen to a wide variety of age appropriate literature read aloud.
- Develop familiarity with the forms of alphabet letters, awareness of print and letter forms.
- Listen to, identify, and manipulate language sounds to develop auditory discrimination and phonemic awareness.
- Link letter sounds in play activities.
- Engage actively in read aloud activities by asking questions, offering ideas, predicting or retelling important parts of a story or informational book.
- Listen to several books by the same author or using the same illustrator.
- Listen to, recite, sing and dramatize a variety of age appropriate literature.
- Relate themes and information in books to personal experiences.
- Recognize and supply rhythm and rhyme in poetry.
- Listen to, recognize, and use a broad vocabulary of sensory words.

Composition

- Use their own words or illustrations to describe their experiences, tell imaginative stories, or communicate information about a topic of interest.
- Add details or make changes to published or class-made stories.
- Use emergent writing skills to make letters in many settings and for many purposes.
- Arrange events in order when dictating a story.
- Generate questions and gather information to answer their questions in various ways.

Mathematics

Number Sense

- Listen to and say the names of numbers in meaningful contexts.
- Connect many kinds/quantities of concrete objects and actions to numbers.
- Use positional language and ordinal numbers (first, second, third) in everyday activities.

- Use concrete objects to solve simple addition and subtraction problems using comparative language (more than, fewer than, same number of).
- Observe and manipulate concrete examples of whole and half.
- Examine, manipulate and identify families of US coins in play activities.

Patterns & Relations

- Explore and describe a wide variety of concrete objects by their attributes.
- Sort, categorize, or classify objects by more than one attribute.
- Recognize, describe, reproduce, extend, create, and compare repeating patterns of concrete materials.

Shapes & Spatial

- Investigate and identify materials of various shapes, using appropriate language.
- Explore and identify space, direction, movement, relative position, and size using body movement and concrete objects.
- Listen to and use comparative words to describe the relationships of objects to one another.

Measurement

- Use estimation in meaningful ways and follow up by verifying the accuracy of estimation.
- Use nonstandard units to measure length, weight, and amount of content in familiar objects.

Data Collection & Analysis

- Organize and draw conclusions from facts they have collected.

Science & Technology

Inquiry Skills

- Ask and seek out answers to questions about objects and events with the assistance of interested adults.
- Make predictions about changes in materials or objects based on past experience.
- Identify and use simple tools appropriately to extend observations.
- Record observations and share ideas through simple forms of representation such as drawings.

Computer Skills

- Coordinate using a mouse to move the cursor on the screen.
- Manipulate items on the monitor using the mouse.
- Listen to and follow directions from computer programs.
- Begin to practice reading printed text on the screen, recognizing the connection between the printed text, written text and spoken words.
- Begin to practice typing text, recognizing the connection between the printed text, written text, and spoken words.
- Practice problem-solving and following steps in a series using age-appropriate computer games.

Earth & Space Sciences

- Compare and contrast natural materials such as water, rocks, soil, and living organisms using descriptive language.
- Explore and discuss what air is or does.
- Identify the characteristics of local weather based on first hand observations.
- Explore sunlight and shadows and describe the effects of the sun or sunlight.
- Observe and describe or represent scientific phenomena meaningful to children’s lives that have a repeating pattern (i.e. day and night).

Life Sciences

- Observe and identify the characteristics and needs of living things: humans, animals, and plants.
- Investigate, describe, and compare the characteristics that differentiate living from non-living.
- Observe and describe plants, insects, and animals as they go through predictable life cycles.
- Observe and describe ways in which many plants and animals closely resemble their parent/guardians in observed appearance.
- Describe or represent living things that inhabited the earth years ago, as children express interest.

Living Things & Their Environment

- Use their senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste to explore their environment using sensory vocabulary.
- Observe and describe seasonal changes in plants, animals, and their personal lives.
- Observe and describe how natural habitats provide for the basic needs of plants and animals with respect to shelter, food, water, air and light.

Physical Sciences

- Manipulate a wide variety of familiar and unfamiliar objects to observe, describe, and compare their properties using appropriate language.
- Explore, describe and compare the properties of liquids and solids found in children’s daily environment.
- Investigate and describe or demonstrate various ways that objects can move.
- Explore and describe various actions that can change an object’s motion such as pulling, pushing, twisting, rolling and throwing.
- Experiment with a variety of objects to determine when the objects can stand and ways that objects can be balanced.

Technology & Engineering

- Explore and describe a wide variety of natural and man-made materials through sensory experiences.
- Demonstrate and explain the safe and proper use of tools and materials.
- Explore and identify simple machines such as ramps, gears, wheels, pulleys and levers through play experiences.
- Observe and describe ways that animals, birds and insects use various parts of their bodies to accomplish certain tasks and compare them to ways people would accomplish a similar task.

History & Social Sciences

- Discuss and identify the order of daily routines.
- Discuss and use vocabulary related to time in relevant activities.
- Identify and describe cause and effect as they relate to personal experiences and age-appropriate stories.
- Engage in activities that build understanding of words for locations and direction.
- Construct and describe simple maps of their immediate neighborhood.
- Discuss examples of rules, fairness, personal responsibilities, and authority in their own experiences and in stories read to them.
- Talk about the qualities we value in a person's character such as honesty, courage, courtesy, willingness to work hard, kindness, fairness, trustworthiness, self-discipline, loyalty and personal responsibility.
- Discuss classroom responsibilities in daily activities.
- Discuss roles and responsibilities in daily activities.
- Discuss roles and responsibilities of family or community members who promote the welfare and safety of children and adults.
- Observe and discuss the various kinds of work people do outside and inside their homes.
- Observe, discuss and dramatize basic economic concepts such as buying and selling, producing and consuming.
- Observe some US national holidays and discuss how and why we celebrate them.
- Observe and listen to important American symbols including the American flag and its colors and shapes, the melody of the national anthem, the picture and name of the current President and the words to the Pledge of Allegiance.

Multi-Cultural

- Recognize and respect the physical, social, and emotional differences between members of both the classroom community and the community at large.
- Explore through authentic experiences elements of cultures, including food, language, and traditions, that are different from their own.
- Develop listening and speaking skills in English as well as other languages spoken by families in the program, including Spanish, German, and Russian.
- Promote fair and equal treatment of all classroom and larger community members, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, or family structure.

Health Education

Physical Development

- Listen to and use appropriate language describing the names and functions of parts of the human body.
- Build body awareness, strength and coordination through locomotion activities.

- Discuss various aids and accommodations used by people for the activities of daily life.
- Build awareness of directionality and position in space.
- Use both sides of the body to strengthen bilateral coordination.
- Alternate the left and right sides of the body and cross the midline of the body.
- Build upper body strength and stability to gain controlled movement of shoulders.
- Strengthen hand grasp and flexibility.
- Use thumb/forefinger in pincer grasp.
- Use a variety of tools and materials to build grasp-and-release skill.
- Build finger dexterity.
- Use eye-hand coordination, visual perception and tracking, and visual motor skills in play activities.
- Discuss nutritious meals and snacks and the difference between junk food and healthy food.
- Practice personal hygiene and safety measures.
- Discuss gender and growth in age-appropriate ways.

Social & Emotional Health

- Recognize and describe or represent emotions such as happiness, surprise, anger, fear and sadness.
- Talk about ways to solve or prevent problems and discuss situations that illustrate that actions have consequences.
- Talk about how people can be helpful/hurtful to one another.
- Practice independence and self-help skills.
- Describe members of their family and discuss what parent/guardians do for their children to keep them safe and healthy.

Safety & Health Care

- Discuss strategies to prevent injury and illness, control the spread of disease and promote cleanliness.
- Talk about the common symptoms of illness and injury and what they should do when they hurt or don't feel well.
- Discuss tooth care and dental health including brushing, flossing and healthy foods.
- Discuss rules for safety in a variety of settings including fire safety, weapons safety, bus safety, seat belt use, playground safety, as well as safety at home and in the community.
- Talk and listen to stories about safe, unsafe and inappropriate touch and ways to protect themselves.
- Talk about what to do when someone gets hurt and the rules for universal precautions.
- Identify and distinguish between substances that are safe to be taken by mouth.
- Describe the purpose of medicines and how they can be used or misused and what to do in an emergency.
- Talk about some basic ways they can keep their environment clean or take care of it.

Arts

Movement & Dance

- Explore activities and vocabulary related to movement, balance, strength and flexibility.
- Respond to a variety of musical rhythms through body movement.
- Participate in simple sequences of movements and dance to various kinds of music.
- Express themselves freely through movement.
- Use props to explore space and movement.
- Act out ways that movement and dance can show feelings or convey meaning.
- Develop audience skills by observing performances or artists at work in various aspects of the Arts.

Music

- Sing a variety of songs within children's vocal range, independently and with others.
- Sing expressively.
- Sing songs with repetitive phrases and rhythmic patterns.
- Listen to various kinds of instrumental music and explore a variety of melody and rhythmic instruments.
- Play instruments using different beats, tempos, dynamics and interpretation.
- Listen to, imitate and improvise sounds, patterns and songs.

Theatre Arts

- Listen to storytellers and watch puppet shows.
- Use dramatic play, costumes and props to pretend to be someone else.
- Create characters through physical movement, gesture, sound, speech and facial expressions.
- Create scenarios, props and settings for dramatizations and dramatic play.

Visual Arts

- Explore a variety of age-appropriate materials and media to create two- and three- dimensional artwork.
- Observe the safe and appropriate use and care of art materials.
- Explore and experiment with wet and dry media in a variety of colors including black and white.
- Explore how color can convey mood and emotion.
- Explore various types of lines in artwork and in nature.
- Experiment with the use of textures in artwork.
- Use basic shapes and forms of different sizes to create artwork.
- Explore concepts of pattern and symmetry in the environment and artwork.
- Create artwork from memory or imagination.
- Choose artwork for display in the classroom, school or community or for a personal book, class book or portfolio and explain why they chose it.