



# **Parent Handbook**

**(revised August 25, 2017)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The intent of this handbook is to acquaint you with O.K. Kids, Inc., and to explain its daily operations. Please keep this handbook for your reference.

O.K. Kids, Inc. is a parent -managed, non -discriminatory, not-for-profit organization, dedicated to providing quality care for school-aged children, grades K-6, in the Ichabod Crane Central School District. It operates 1 before-school program, 2 after-school programs, and vacation programs at two school sites. Although O.K. Kids, Inc. uses space in district buildings, it operates independently of the Ichabod Crane Central School District.

Enrollment in programs operated by O.K. Kids, Inc. is available to families without regard to race, color, sex, religion or national origin. Parents should meet with the Program Director to discuss a child's special needs prior to submitting a registration form. The program is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

O.K. Kids, Inc. is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which in turn is led by an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The remaining members of the Board of Directors are parents of children enrolled in the program and community representatives. Program parents interested in serving on the Board of Directors or a Board Committee (e.g., finance, personnel, or program development) should contact the Program Director.

## **STAFF**

The Program Director manages and oversees each of the programs. O.K. Kids, Inc. is registered with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services as a school-age childcare program. Our agency meets mandated requirements regarding staff/child ratios and staff qualifications. The Program Director, Assistant Director, Site Supervisors, and Counselors staff each site.

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **Communications**

The telephone number of the O.K. Kids, Inc. program is 758- 9528. Questions regarding enrollment status, fees, payments, etc., should be addressed to this number. In addition, the Program Director has a mailbox at the Middle School site. Please feel free to place questions, suggestions or concerns in this box. If you include your name and telephone number, the Program Director will get back to you. **O.K. Kids, Inc. has a Facebook page that will update parents on upcoming events, school closings and early dismissals. The program also uses the Remind App to send out group texts and will send out email blasts to get announcements out quickly.**

### **Parent Mailboxes**

Mailboxes are set up for each family enrolled at a site. Mailboxes should be checked daily for information regarding program activities, newsletters, registration forms and other important information.

### **Hours of Operation**

The hours and location of operation are as follows:

**Before School (Primary School): 7:00 AM -8:30 AM**

**After- School (Middle School Cafeteria):** School Dismissal -6:00 PM  
**After-School (Primary School Cafeteria):** School Dismissal-6:00 PM

## **Transportation**

Transportation for the after-school program (Middle School) and any planned field trips will be provided by the Ichabod Crane School District. The Ichabod Crane School District must follow all requirements from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles and the New York State Department of Transportation. If there are any changes in the transportation plan, parents will be notified. Children will not be transported in personal vehicles.

## **Late Pick -Up Fee**

Children must be picked up by the end of the program day. **Parents will be charged \$15.00 for the first 1- 15 minutes past 6:00 PM, and \$1.00 for every minute thereafter.** This fee must be paid to the Program Director in cash. **The program site clock determines time.**

## **Before- School Program**

**Adults must accompany children to the site and sign them in each day.** Failure to accompany children to the before-school site and to sign them in will result in temporary suspension of services for this child (3-day suspension, after which the child may return to the program). Children will be released to their classrooms when the school day begins. *It is not necessary to notify the program site if your child will be absent from the Before-School Program.*

## **Unscheduled School Opening Delays**

If the Ichabod Crane Central School District delays the time of school opening, such as a delay for snowy or icy roads, the before-school program of O.K. Kids, Inc. will operate in accordance with the delay of the school district. For example, a 2-hour school delay will result in the program opening at 9:00 AM rather than 7:00 AM.

## **After- School Programs**

Parents and others authorized to pick up children are obligated to inform a staff person when they arrive to sign out their children. **Parents must sign out when they pick up their children.** Children will only be released to a parent or other adult previously authorized to pick up their child.

Authorization for pick up was indicated on the Authorization Form at the time of registration. Changes in authorization must be in writing and may be changed with the Program Director. Please adhere to this procedure, as it is designed to protect the children.

Any person not known to staff members will be required to provide proof of identification (driver's license). **Only people listed on a child's release authorization will be allowed to pick up a child, unless the program receives a note from parents stating that someone else will pick up their child.**

**It is imperative that parents notify the After-School Program if a child will be absent (see Absentee Policy below).** If a child does not arrive and the program site has not been notified of his/her absence, the Program Director will take the following steps:

1. Contact school office / bus garage

2. Call parent(s)
3. Call the child's home
4. Log the above steps in the site phone log.

### **Absentee Policy**

In the event of illness, vacation or other absence (Scouts, dance, intramural, etc.), the After-School Program site must be notified. **Notifications to the school are not passed on to O.K. Kids, Inc.** The parent must call the program site no later than 3:00 PM, and leave a message. Do not call the school office.

### **Program Site Telephone: # 758- 9528 (best number to call)**

No provision can be made for tuition reimbursement due to absence, as overhead and staff costs are fixed.

### **Wait List**

The after-school program has a wait list for families wishing to enroll their children. Families are initially listed on the wait list according to the date they applied for registration into the program. Once a family has been offered a position in the after-school program, the family can take the spot or decline the spot. If the family chooses to decline the spot, their name will go to the bottom of the wait list and the next eligible family will be offered the spot. Each Family is given 3 days to respond to the offer. If they do not respond within 3 days, we will move on to the next family. Each family on the wait list will receive a phone call periodically to inform them as to where their child is on the wait list. Families are put on the wait list when the program has received a registration form and a check for \$25.

### **Emergency Early Dismissals**

School closing and emergency early dismissals will be announced on the following stations:

**WHUC AM 1230 FM 93.5**

**WGY AM 810 FM 99.5**

**WFLY FM 92.3**

**WPYX FM 106.5**

**WQBK AM1300 FM 104.5**

**WROW AM 590 FM 95.5**

**WPTR AM 1540**

**WTRY AM 980**

**Television channels 6, 10 & 13**

**O.K. Kids, Inc. will not open on days that the Ichabod Crane Central Schools are closed due to extreme weather conditions or other emergencies. During vacation club weeks, O.K. Kids reserves the right to close the program due to emergency situations (either weather related or infrastructure related) or for regulatory reasons (no phone, running water, etc.). If we need to close the program during a vacation club week, the program will refund the tuition for that day. The closing of the program during vacation club weeks will be at the Program Director's discretion.**

In the event of early dismissal from school due to inclement weather or other emergency, children who are regularly scheduled to attend O.K. Kids, Inc. After-School Program will be bused home, as O.K. Kids, Inc **WILL NOT OPERATE** that day. It is the responsibility of the parent to obtain in advance from the school, the bus route number that their child(ren) must take home in such a circumstance.

**PLEASE NOTE: Arrangements for emergency care are the responsibility of the parents. The O.K. Kids, Inc. staff will attempt to notify parents if the school district decides to close early. However, parents must have an emergency dismissal plan on record with the child's school.**

## **Visitations**

O.K. Kids, Inc. has an open door policy. Any parent or guardian may observe the operation of the program. Parents/guardians of children in O.K. Kids, Inc. care are allowed unlimited access to program premises and to their children at any time, whether visits are scheduled or unannounced. We are always happy to answer any questions, and encourage you to share your comments or concerns with the Program Director. Regular communication with the Program Director is one way in which you can contribute to the quality of your child's care.

## **Discipline Policy**

O.K. Kids, Inc. strives for each child to have a safe and enjoyable time while at the program. To help our staff achieve this aim, reasonable limits for behavior are established. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the child, and consider health, safety and the rights of the individual, as well as the needs of the group. A positive approach is used to guide children. Methods include: redirection, logical and natural consequences, limit setting, modeling, providing choices, anticipating situations and recognition of appropriate behavior.

### **All children are expected to adhere to the program-wide rules listed below:**

- Children and staff are to treat one another with respect and courtesy;
- Show respect for school property and the property of others;
- Use acceptable language ...no yelling, swearing, or name calling;
- Fighting is not allowed. ..keep hands, feet and other objects to yourself;
- Walk in the building ...running is acceptable in the gym and on the playground;
- Cooperate, share with others, follow directions and obey the staff.

Every effort will be made by staff to integrate a child into the program. However, a child who is chronically disruptive to the functioning of the program will be dismissed. In this circumstance, the Program Director will confer with the child's parent(s) and provide five school days notice prior to dismissal.

A chronically disruptive child is defined as a child that hampers the smooth flow of the program. A child with disruptive behavior may exhibit the following characteristics: require constant one-on-one attention, inflict physical or emotional harm on other children, physically or verbally abuse the staff, or be unable to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program.

In the case of a child who presents persistent discipline problems, the Director will implement the following steps:

1. Logging the child's inappropriate behavior and completing a discipline report.
2. Following three (3) discipline reports, a child will be suspended from O.K. Kids, Inc. program's for five (5) days. Prior to a child's return to O.K. Kids, a conference between the child's parents / guardians and the Program Director must be held.
3. Following a child's return to O.K. Kids, Inc. any further discipline reports will result in the child's dismissal from O.K. Kids, Inc.

In cases of imminent danger, the Program Director/ Board of Directors retains the discretion to remove a child from O.K. Kids, Inc. programs.

A count of discipline reports, begins in September effective the first day of the school year and ends on the last day of the academic year. **O.K. Kids, Inc. will not grant refunds for time missed due to a suspension for disciplinary issues.**

### **Child Abuse and Maltreatment**

In accordance with the provisions of Section #432 of the New York State Social Services Law, the staff and directors of child care centers are mandated to report to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or maltreated. Any person, official, or institution required by law to report abuse, that fails to do so, may be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

### **Program Conduct**

While on the site of any O.K. Kids, Inc. program, it is expected that all adults, children and staff will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. People are treated with respect
2. Property is treated with respect
3. Program rules are followed
4. Language is courteous and appropriate
5. Hostile and aggressive behavior is avoided in all interactions.

**All incidents or concerns regarding the behavior of children enrolled in the program, must be addressed to a staff member. It is the policy of O.K. Kids, Inc., that discipline/ behavior issues are handled by our staff.**

Concerns regarding ongoing behavior/discipline issues should be addressed to the Program Director or his/her designee in a timely manner.

## **ACTIVITIES**

O.K. Kids, Inc. is committed to fostering in children a sense of autonomy, cooperation, self-control and choice. Creating a safe environment that permits freedom within set limits is a priority. This is accomplished by providing children with a variety of activities that include opportunities for artistic creativity, organized group play and provisions for relaxation and independent activities.

### **Outdoor Play**

According to the Department of Social Services Regulations, O.K. Kids, Inc. must provide a period of supervised outdoor play (20 to 30 minutes) for all children, every day, except during periods of inclement weather or when otherwise instructed by a physician, parent, guardian or legal custodian. Inclement weather is defined as when it is raining or when the temperature is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit (either a thermometer reading or reading combined with a wind chill factor). **Parents should ensure that their children are dressed appropriately for the weather. This should include wearing a hat, gloves, boots and snow pants, when necessary.**

### **Schedule for Average Day**

Before-School Program:

**7:00 AM to 7:55 AM -Arrival, interest areas set up for children to do individually  
7:30AM to 8:25 AM -Group activities in the Gym or program room**

## **8:25 AM to 8:30 AM -Clean up and dismissal to classes**

After-School Programs:

**2:15- 3:00- Dismissal from Middle School/Elementary School/Primary School(3:00)**

**2:15- 3:30- Homework, Snack (MS/Elem.), and various activities at different interest areas**

**3:30- 3:45- Snack for Primary Students**

**3:30-4:00- Outside time for Grades 4-6, Homework and free play and homework for Grades K-3**

**4:00- 4:30- Outside time for Grades K-3**

**5:00- 5:20- Small group activities, crafts**

**5:20-5:30-Clean up**

**5:30-6:00-Group games**

### **Homework Policy**

Within the confines of maintaining required staff / child ratios, children may opt to do their homework during program hours. Parents who would like their child encouraged to do homework during program hours should speak with the Program Director. Our staff will remind children that homework may be done, but will not force a homework time upon any child.

### **Snacks**

Every day, after arrival from school, children are served a snack with 100% juice, milk, or water at the After-School Program site. Types of snacks include: fresh fruit, vegetables and dip, crackers and cheese, pretzels, etc. If necessary, a special diet can be provided, but only in accordance with a physician's order. This can be arranged with the Program Director.

**Please avoid sending in any foods containing tree nuts or peanuts! We have children with severe allergies!**

O.K. Kids, Inc. does not offer a morning snack. If you are interested in having your child participate in a breakfast program, please contact your child's school.

### **Lost and Found**

Help us keep track of your child's possessions by clearly labeling all items with your child's name. A box of lost and found articles will be set up at each site and should be checked regularly by parents. All items left behind when the school year ends will be donated to an appropriate charitable organization.

Please be aware that O.K. Kids, Inc. does not accept responsibility for toys that children bring to the program. We cannot guarantee that toys will return home in the same conditions in which they arrived. O.K. Kids, Inc. reserves the right to have children put away toys they bring from home if we feel the nature of the toys is inappropriate for use at our program.

**Electronics, such as cell phones, ipods, portable DVD players, and hand- held gaming systems will not be allowed at O.K. Kids, Inc.**

## **SUMMER PROGRAM**

A full time summer program is available to children. The Board of Directors on a yearly basis determines the price, number of children accepted, length and location of the program. The program offers full day supervision and a multitude of activities. Contact the Program Director for additional information.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a non-profit organization, O.K. Kids, Inc. runs on a tight budget. Salaries, activity costs and overhead expenses require a timely cash flow. Hence, the following policies must be strictly followed to maintain fiscal responsibility. The monthly rate is based on the school calendar. The fee is divided into equal monthly payments; therefore, the monthly fee is the same regardless of the number of school days in a particular month or the number of days a child attends. O.K. Kids, Inc. Board of Directors will evaluate on an annual basis the possibility of a potential increase in tuition. Parents will be notified of any increases 60 days prior to enforcement.

### **Registration Fee**

A NON-REFUNDABLE registration fee of \$25.00 per family is required and must accompany the registration form.

### **Tuition**

Tuition for each month, as specified in the registration agreement, is due by the 20th of the month preceding the month for which you are paying. Payments are payable to O.K. Kids, Inc, and may be mailed to: O.K. Kids, Inc, P.O. Box 107, Kinderhook, NY 12106. Payments may also be delivered to the Program Director at the program site, when a child is being picked up or dropped off. Tuition should be paid by check, unless requested to pay in cash. All families are expected to sign a tuition agreement.

A family discount of up to 10% per additional child may be applied.

### **Tuition is non-refundable.**

A fee of \$30.00 will be charged for all returned checks. Two returned checks will necessitate that all subsequent payments be made by cash or money order.

### **Late Payment Fee**

**If monthly payments are not received or postmarked by the due date, a late fee will be charged.** Failure to make timely payments (two consecutively missed) may be cause for dismissal of your child from the program. The following amounts will be charged when a tuition payment is late:

- ❖ **\$10 for the first 3 days late (21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup>)**
- ❖ **\$20 for 4 through 7 days late (24<sup>th</sup> through 27<sup>th</sup>)**
- ❖ **Additional \$5 added on after 7 days late**

### **Vacation Fee**

O.K. Kids, Inc. provides care during the December, February and April vacation weeks. This care is not included in monthly tuition. The fee is \$27.00 per day (sibling discounts are applied) and advance registration is required, as space is limited. Parents in good financial standing with the program will be given preference over those with overdue bills.

### **Half Days**

When the Ichabod Crane Central School District has a scheduled half-day, (e.g. staff development or conference day), care is provided for after-school children, and is included in their monthly tuition. Care is provided for before-school children if there is enough space for them. In the event that a before-school child is able to attend on a half day, there will be a \$10 charge for care.

### **Tax Credit**

The Child Care Tax Credit, originally enacted in 1978 and significantly liberalized in 1991, allows parents who incur childcare expenses in order to be gainfully employed to reduce their federal income tax payments by a portion of the qualifying child care expenses.

### **Dependent Care Account**

Many parents are enrolled in a "Dependent Care Advantage Account." This allows parents to put aside pre-tax dollars in order to pay for childcare. If you have enrolled in this kind of program, you will be required to fill out a form with our tax identification number. *Our tax id number is 14-17-87088.*

### **Donations**

Donations are an integral part of any non-profit agency. Monetary donations are always welcome and are tax deductible. Program participants, who would like to donate items such as toys, games, furniture, etc., should contact the Program Director to make arrangements.

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **Full Time / Part Time**

O.K. Kids, Inc. does not accept part-time enrolled children in the after-school program. Part-time care is allowed for the before-school program only. During the school year, more than one permanent change in your child's enrollment status will result in a processing fee of \$15.00 for each subsequent change.

### **Withdrawal**

**The parent must notify the Program Director, in writing two weeks prior to the next month to withdraw from the program. Failure to do so will result in billing for that month.**

## **Sibling Enrollment**

Parents wishing to add another child to the O.K. Kids, Inc. program must make a formal application to the waiting list. Priority will be given to existing members on a space-available-basis by calling the Program Director.

## **Updating Information**

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to inform the Program Director of any change of phone number, address, pick-up authorization, custody and/or visitation arrangements, etc. These changes must be in writing. Your child's safety in the event of an emergency may depend upon the accuracy of this information.

## **Registration for Following School Year**

In June of each school year, enrollment information for the following September will be distributed. Registration forms and one half of the total tuition due for September will be due on or before June 20th. The remainder of September's tuition will be due on or before August 20th. Failure to make these payments in a timely manner will forfeit your child's enrollment status in the O.K. Kids, Inc. program.

## **HEALTH POLICY**

### **Physicals**

The NYS Department of Social Services mandates that a child has a physical exam 90 days prior to admission to the program. O.K. Kids, Inc. requires a yearly physical and record of immunizations from each enrolled child.

### **Medication**

O.K. Kids, Inc. staff will not administer prescription or over the counter medication without a written order from a physician. The medication must be in the original child-proof container. All over-the-counter medication must have the child's first and last name on the container. Prescription medication must have the following information on the label:

- child's name
- authorized prescriber's name
- pharmacy name and telephone number
- date prescription was filled
- name of the medication
- dosage
- how often to give medication
- date the medication is to be discontinued, or the length of time in days, the medication is to be given

If the following items are not on the pharmacy label, they must be provided in a separate insert with the medication:

- child's name

- licensed prescriber's name, telephone number, and signature
- date authorized
- name of medication and dosage
- frequency the medication is to be given, or the conditions the child care provider must observe that would necessitate the need for the medication
- method of administration
- date the medication will be discontinued or the length of time the medication will be given in days
- reason the medication will be administered, unless confidential
- common side effects
- special instructions, or considerations (allergies, interactions)
- circumstances in which the medication should not be administered

All medications must be given to the Program Director by the parent/guardian.

**NO EXCEPTION TO THIS POLICY CAN BE ALLOWED. Please see the Director for medication forms. This policy will be posted at the program sites.**

#### **Illness:**

Parents will be contacted by the Program Director if their child becomes ill and is unable to participate in regular activities. The child must be picked up immediately, as O.K. Kids, Inc, does not have provision to care for sick children. All children that have been sent home with a fever over 101 degrees, conjunctivitis, or with vomiting, must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the program. Parents are requested to notify staff when their child is ill with a communicable disease, (measles, chicken pox, head lice, etc.).

#### **Medical Emergency**

Each parent signs a form authorizing emergency medical treatment in the event of an accident or injury. In the event of such an occurrence, staff will first attempt to contact the parent / legal guardian. If the emergency is such that immediate emergency medical treatment is required, 911 will be notified, and an ambulance will be requested to transport the child to a hospital. Parents are responsible for any medical or hospital expenses incurred on the child's behalf. O.K. Kids Inc. maintains Student Accident Insurance that is secondary to a family's insurance policies.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **Child Care Regulations**

To obtain a copy of the School-Age Child Care regulations and complete information on licensing, please contact the NYS Department of Social Services, 40 North Pearl Street, Albany, NY 11243. You may also call the licensing bureau at (518) 432- 2772.

#### **Dismissal from Program**

O.K. Kids, Inc. reserves the right to dismiss families from the program if they fail to comply with the program procedures. Such dismissal is at the discretion of the Program Director.

### **Liability Statement**

O.K. Kids, Inc. bears no responsibility for the activities of its employees outside of working hours, including paid or unpaid services provided by employees to families of enrolled children by private arrangement.

## **O.K KIDS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Michelle Haag, *President*  
Tom Eldering, *Vice President*  
Francis McKearin, *Treasurer*  
Nicole Cairns, *Secretary*  
Jessica Gabriel, *Member at Large*  
Jeanine Millar, *Member at Large*  
Patricia Westover, *Member at Large*

Meetings of the Board of Directors are once a month, unless special arrangements have been made.

Information regarding monthly meetings of the Board of Directors is available from the Program Director.

## **Receipt of Handbook**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received, read, and understand the policies and procedures in the O.K. Kids, Inc. Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by these policies and procedures as listed in this handbook.

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Signature of Parents/Guardians

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Date

## **Refusal to Use Photos**

O.K. Kids, Inc. will periodically take photos of enrolled children participating in different activities while at the program. Occasionally, we will use some of these photos for newsletters, activities, promotional materials, the O.K. Kids, Inc. Facebook page, and the O.K. Kids, Inc. website. If you **DO NOT** wish for O.K. Kids, Inc. to use your child's photos, please sign this form and return it to the Program Director immediately.

I do not wish to have my child's photos used for O.K. Kids, Inc. promotional materials, activities, newsletters, the O.K. Kids, Inc. Facebook page, or for the program's website.

Child's Name\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_