

2021-2022



## Key Element Learning Parent Handbook

Key Element Learning  
338 Grove Street  
Jersey City, NJ 07302  
[info@keyelementlearning.com](mailto:info@keyelementlearning.com)

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Curriculum**

Preschool is one of the building blocks that will have a direct impact on the rest of your child's educational process. Our goal is to provide a safe, fun, and loving environment that is filled with creativity and excitement about learning. We use the state-approved and award-winning curriculum The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool by Teaching Strategies. The Creative Curriculum is an early childhood curriculum that focuses on project-based investigations as a means for children to apply skills. This curriculum addresses four areas of development: social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. These research-based and research-proven curriculum resources help us create a high-quality and creative learning environment that enables every child to become a creative and confident thinker. While developing school readiness, and lasting friendships, our students come to our school with an eagerness to learn through a variety of hands-on curriculum.

One of the great assets of our school is that we have families from all over the world and many of our children are bilingual, bringing a lot to our community and curriculum. We encourage them to use their French, Mandarin, Spanish and Italian, for instance, in the classroom. Children also have an exciting environment to learn a new language through classroom and their peers. Children at Key Element Learning are very accustomed to hearing different voices and different languages and this is a powerful feature of our program.

### **Language arts**

A fun and creative way to introduce preschoolers to Reading, Writing, and English Comprehension topics. Language and Literacy focuses on the basics of a child's development of personal and interpersonal communication skills and learning actively to listen and speak.

Literacy will involve an introduction to storybook reading, storytelling, poems, rhymes, phonics, and recognition of letters and sight words, writing letters, journaling, and the growth from the ability to identify pictures in books to reading comprehension. Literature will often be used to introduce themes that will be carried through all of our daily learning. Our language arts are integrated with songs, games and hands-on activities to keep the learning environment fun.

### **Math**

Math is everywhere and is easily brought to life for children through real-world examples, interactive play, manipulatives, and teacher-led exercises. Our goal is to introduce our early learners to the idea that math is a powerful tool to help us understand the world.

Math concepts that will be introduced include: days, months, years, numbers, and recognition of shapes, and the sorting and writing of numbers. Additionally they will explore: problem-solving and other basic concepts of math, including shapes, graphing, quantity and counting, money, weight and measurement.

## **Specialty Classes**

Specialty classes are offered to enhance your child's learning experience. Each specialty class is an extension of our preschool curriculum and provides a fun and diverse learning experience.

### **Art**

Art is a creative way for students to express themselves and learn the basics of colors, lines, shapes, textures, art materials and artistic concepts. Students will also begin to learn about featured artists, art history and art techniques. Art is used as a medium for learning and self-expression throughout our entire program and is taught daily during choice time and once a week guided by the art teacher. It reinforces multi-step processes, and encourages each student to focus and finish the task at hand. Through art, children will have opportunities to express themselves, experiment and make connections to early academic concepts.

### **Music**

Music is infused throughout our program to enforce skills taught throughout their class time for language arts, math, and motor skills.

Children are exposed to live and recorded music, sing common children's songs, and hear and learn classical and global music. They learn about tempo, rhythm, beat, repetition, sequencing, elementary musical note reading, and about different instruments and their sounds.

### **Spanish/French /Chinese**

If a child learns multiple languages at a young age, he/she will develop a life-long love of communicating with others. When they learn about the structure of other languages, their ability in English is enhanced, and they will achieve a more native grasp of both grammar and pronunciation in the second language. Their brains automatically compartmentalize each language correctly. Young children have the ability to learn many languages without getting them confused. Teaching infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, foreign languages will provide them with invaluable advantages, both now and for the future.

Mandarin Chinese, Spanish and French are taught daily by our Early Learning Specialists and provides children with a unique exposure to a second language early in their lives.

The ability to understand daily routines and speak words in Mandarin Chinese, Spanish and French will be facilitated through song, movement, and conversation.

### **Movement**

Through obstacle courses, free play, and child appropriate exercises, movement helps children learn concepts such as balance, coordination, and rhythm. It is also an important tool for developing self-esteem and body awareness. Movement teaches children about the health of their own bodies, the space around them, and their other classmates.

In this class children learn that that being physically active is an important part of being a balanced person. In movement, children actively participate in a class that focuses on the development of age-appropriate gross motor skills, teamwork and sportsmanship. The class will include an introduction to nutrition as a part of a healthy active lifestyle, dance, sports skills, group games, and yoga.

## **World Discovery**

Social Studies and Science are introduced to children through our World Discovery.

At these young ages, children are just beginning to discover and understand who they are and the world in which they live. World Discovery begins with a child learning and sharing who they are in the world, their interests, and how and what they like to play with, and extends to understanding our family, our school, our community, city, state, and country and the larger world, holidays and important historical figures. We also examine our world with an introduction to learning about our bodies, the environment, seasons, weather, the earth, planets, geography, geology, plants, and animals.

## **Curriculum Principles and Seven Multiple Intelligences Theory**

At Key Element Learning, we follow the following curriculum principles:

- Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning.
- Social-emotional competence is a significant factor in school success.
- Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning.
- The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.
- Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning.

we also follow the seven multiple intelligences theory when designing our lessons and teaching our students.

- Linguistic – verbal/think in words;
- Logical/Mathematical- reasoning;
- Spatial – images/pictures;
- Kinesthetic – somatic sensation;
- Musical – rhythms and melodies;
- Interpersonal- bouncing ideas off other people/cooperative groups;
- Intrapersonal – deeply within themselves.

## **REGISTRATION POLICY**

### **Admissions and Registration Policy**

Parents must fill an application form prior to admission. Parents wishing to enroll their child are advised to tour our school prior to enrollment. If your child is admitted to Key Element Learning, you will have three days to fill out and return the completed registration package and pay all the related fees.

The Student Registration Form must be filled out completely in order to validate your child's enrollment. Your child's enrollment will be secured upon receipt of the completed forms and a non-refundable registration fee of \$100.00 and security tuition deposit equal to one-month tuition.

### **Returning students**

Parents must complete a re-enrollment form for a new academic year and submit the required tuition deposit by the due date for their child's space to be reserved. If parents would like to enroll siblings, they will be given priority over other applicants. All enrollment forms must be signed and tuition deposit paid in order to reserve a space for a student.

## **TUITION POLICY**

### **Monthly Tuition Payment**

Key Element Learning Tuition Policy requires payment of tuition whether or not your child is absent, on vacation or it is a school holiday.

Monthly tuition payments are due on the last Thursday of the preceding month for the following month by checks, Chase Quickpay or bank wire. All credit card payments will be charged a 3% convenience fee for all preschool tuition payment.

- Checks: Please make the check payable to: Key Element Learning
- Chase QuickPay: Recipient: Key Element Learning;  
email: [info@keyelementlearning.com](mailto:info@keyelementlearning.com)
- Key Element Learning Bank wire instruction can be requested from the school.

### **Security Deposit**

A deposit equal to one month's tuition is required at the time of enrollment. This security deposit is nonrefundable and can only be applied to your child's last month of attendance if notice of withdrawal is submitted in writing one calendar month in advance of withdrawal date. Tuition cannot be pro-rated. If you choose to increase the number of days your child attends Key Element Learning, an additional security deposit equal to your current tuition will be required.

### **Late Pick-up**

\$35.00 per every 10 minutes or any part thereof per child.

### **Returned Checks**

Checks returned by your bank, payment must be replaced in cash along with a penalty charge of \$50.00. Upon notification of a returned check, you will have 24 hours to replace the payment in cash. If this amount is not paid after 24 hours a cumulative late payment fee of \$10 per day will be added as service charge.

### **Service Charge**

Daily charge of \$10 per day will be added to monthly tuition for all payments received after the 1st of each month and for all outstanding balances.

### **Withdrawal**

One full calendar month written notice is required prior to withdrawal. Tuition will not be prorated for early &/or mid-month withdrawal regardless of notice given. Written notification must be submitted by the 1st of the month. If notification is submitted after 1st of the month, the following month will be considered the first full month's notice of withdrawal. In the event that you do not given proper notice by the first day of your last month, you will be responsible for payment of the full tuition for the following month in accordance with the tuition schedule.

### **Change in Start Date or Program**

As a courtesy, parents are allowed one postponement of their original anticipated start date. This postponement cannot exceed 30 days from the original start date. If the child is unable to start within this period, the security deposit is forfeited. Parents who wish to change their child's current program (days/times of attendance) at Key Element Learning must submit a written request at least one full calendar month prior from their desired date of the program change. The school Director will notify the family in writing if the new schedule is available and of any tuition/fee modifications required.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **Enrollment Policies**

Please provide the following items for your child:

- a. A pair of indoor shoes that will remain at school (preferably athletic shoes.)
- b. An extra change of clothes, including socks and underwear (if worn). The extra change of clothes should be sealed in a large Ziploc bag and labeled with your child's name. These items will remain at school and they will be returned at the end of the semester.
- c. If needed, please provide us with at least a week's supply of pull ups. (with Velcro side opening for easy opening and closing.)

- d. A package of wipes.
- e. Any outstanding enrollment/ agreement forms that were given to you.  
(Please bring those forms on your child's first day of school)
- f. Immunization records and Universal Health Record.

**All items brought to school must be clearly labeled with the child's full name**

**Reminders for every day:**

- Front door will be closed at all times. The door will only open during drop off and dismissal times.
- If your child is a full day student, please remember to send breakfast, lunch and snacks.
- If your child is enrolled in a full day program and stays for afterschool programs, please send afternoon snack for your child.

**Home folders**

Home folders are an essential part of Key Element Learning in making sure all your child's projects, work, paper work or documents are kept together and shall be picked up by the family on Friday. After reviewing and emptying the contents, the home folders shall be returned back to school the following week. The home folders are used between staff and the parents.

**Strollers**

- At this time, we are limited in space with the amount of strollers we can accommodate in all of our facilities. We ask parents to be courteous, bring in a standard simple umbrella strollers and and fold strollers.
- KEL makes every effort to have a designated employee available to help manage strollers. However, please help keep our entrance clear and safe. Parents assume all liability for loss or damage to strollers and other personal items left on KEL premises.

**Clothing and Shoes**

Please dress children in clothing that make it easy for them to use the bathroom independently. **No belts, suspenders, overalls, onesies or other one piece items please.** Pull-on pants are recommended. For young children, shoes should be slip-on or have Velcro closures so that the child can put them on and take them off independently. **Shoes that have laces are not permitted unless the child can tie the shoes without adult assistance.**

**Diapers and potty training**

Parents who have children in the 18 months through two year old class **MUST** provide KEL with enough diapers for each day. We suggest at least 4-5 diapers/pull ups per day. If you send pull ups, please send the ones with side openings so your child can keep his/her pull up on if it is dry and we don't waste them. Please note that KEL is NOT permitted to apply powder or cream on your child unless you have completed a "Medicine Authorization Form" that can be picked up at the front desk.

As many children are new to using the toilet or in the process of being potty trained, please provide Key Element Learning with a change of clothes to be kept in your child's cubby. KEL **requires** that children who are not potty trained by the age of 30 months wear "pull ups" with Velcro side openings rather than diapers. This will help children with the potty training process.

### **Outdoor time and gross motor play**

Children enrolled in the preschool program will have an outdoor activity every day (weather permitting.) When children cannot go outside due to the weather, teachers will provide indoor energetic physical activities.

### **School Safety**

The safety of all children at our school is our primary focus and we do everything in our power to ensure that we provide a hazard free environment. In order to do so, we have established the following policies:

- Always have an adequate number of adults to supervise every group of children, whether in the classroom or at the playground. No child is ever left alone without supervision.
- Every classroom and playground area is inspected regularly to eliminate or correct any equipment or situation that may cause injury to the children.
- When a child is involved in an accident requiring medical intervention, the parent or guardian will be notified promptly. If the parent is unable to come to the center to transport the child, a staff member will accompany the child to the medical facility indicated on the child's information form. If help is needed immediately, the nearest response team will be called.
- An incident report form will be filled out by the attending teacher and the director. One copy will be placed in the child's file and the other given to the parent. The director and staff will review the incident and determine whether some preventive actions need to be taken.

### **Naps**

We are required by the state of NJ, Department of Children and Families to provide opportunities for daily rest to any children under the age of five who it is at school for four or more consecutive hours. If your child is not asleep within a half hour, an alternative quiet activity will be provided. Please note we will not force a child to sleep nor stay up.

We require a crib size bed sheet and a blanket. All items must be labeled with your child's name. We will send the bedding home every Friday to be washed over weekend before they are returned to school.



### **Health Forms**

Every child must have an A-45 and Universal Health Form completed and signed by a physician and kept on file in the center. We must also have a copy of all the up to date vaccinations given to the child. These documents are required to be updated yearly.

## **POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

Each child must be signed in and out at the front desk .There are absolutely no exceptions.. This rule is for the safety of our children. Please don't forget to do that before and after you pick up your child.

Only people over the age of 18 years or older may pick up a child. Parents must fill out a form prior to pick up with the authorized person's name, telephone number and a clear copy of their identification must be provided. The designated person must provide a picture identification that matches the name on file. If there's an emergency and the person who usually picks up the child is unavailable, please give us a call and email confirming that the child will be picked up by another authorized person. **(Please make sure this person brings phone ID with them)**

In the instance of custody disputes, please understand that Key Element Learning cannot refuse a legal parent access to the facility or the child, unless we have legal court orders documents on file.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access, to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that:

- 1) The child is supervised at all times;
- 2) Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
- 3) An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the center shall ensure that:

- 1) The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
- 2) Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
- 3) If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the 24- hour State Central Registry Hotline 1-877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

**ALL PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS NEED TO SIGN IN AND OUT** All students need to be signed out by the authorized person. Children will be released only to the person authorized in writing with no exception. At dismissal time, parents/caregivers are requested to wait outside the school until the child has been signed out and is expressly released to them.

**DOOR** The front door will be locked at all times. We will open the door at 8:00 am for drop off, 12:00 pm for drop off and dismissal, 12:00 pm for dismissal and 3:30 for dismissal and afterschool programs. **Please don't ring the bell unless you are late more than 10 min.** Please say "good bye" to you child before they go inside the facility. We will assist your child with shoes, coats, etc.

**LATE ARRIVAL** Please bring you child on time for class. It is essential for your child to participate in play time before class. We have a play time of 15 min for every preschool program. All children are expected to be at KEL no later than 9:00 a.m for circle time. Please keep in mind that when you bring you child late, it disrupts the class. If you are running late or have an emergency, please give us a call or notify KEL through the BRIGHTWHEEL app.

**LATE PICK UP** Parents are expected to pick up their children promptly after class. Parents should be aware that we have a daily schedule for students and staff members. Late pick up is unfair to the staff members and disrupts the school's routine. Please call if you know you are going to be late. After a 10 min grace period, parents will be charged \$35 every 10 min they are late. Payment is due in cash at pick up time. If a child's caregiver does not arrive by 6:30pm we will call the primary contact number. If the person is not accessible by phone, a staff member will call the emergency contact. If the emergency contact cannot be reached and it is beyond school closing time, the local police and the state licensing must be contacted at 1877-NJ-ABUSE (1-877-652-2873)

## **PARENTS COMMUNICATION POLICY**

## **COMMUNICATION WITH THE STAFF**

During arrival and dismissal times, staff members are responsible for the care of the children and must focus on them. **If you wish to speak with a teacher, please email the administration office or the classroom teacher directly.** The teacher or the school administrations will call you to make an appointment.

## **BRIGHT WHEEL APP**

KEL uses bright wheel app for electronic reports and communications with parents such as daily check-in, communication, and photos. You can check the daily report for each week and pictures. Daily reports will be uploaded at 1 pm, 4 pm and 7 pm.

### **How to Create an Account:**

- Install the brightwheel app from the Apple App Store or Google Play.
- Create a parent account and enter your parent invite code. ( we will send the invitation code the week before the first day of class)
- By entering your invite code, your account will automatically be linked to your school & child.

You can also create an account online. Visit [www.mybrightwheel.com](http://www.mybrightwheel.com), and select sign up. Check-in code Schools have the option for parents to use a numeric four digit check-in code during drop off and pick up. Your check-in code will be emailed to you after you create your account. You can change your check-in code anytime within your profile settings.

### **Next Steps**

- Login and make sure your contact info and your child's info is up to date.
- If you have additional kids at this school or another school using brightwheel, you can enter additional invite codes.
- Add additional guardians to brightwheel within your child's profile. For example, a nanny or friend who has your approval to pick up your child from school, or a grandparent that would like to see daily photos on brightwheel.

### **Questions?**

Please contact the brightwheel team at [help@mybrightwheel.com](mailto:help@mybrightwheel.com) or visit [www.mybrightwheel.com/support](http://www.mybrightwheel.com/support).

## **EMAIL AND PHONE COMMUNICATIONS**

KEL confirms classes and sends all communications about enrollments, scheduling, calendar changes, session dates, programs and emergency notices via email and/or phone calls. Parents agree to facilitate receipt of KELJC emails and phone calls. The KELJC is not responsible for lost communications if its emails are unopened, unread, diverted, or the recipient unsubscribes or blocks KEL emails.

KEL uses bright wheel app for electronic reports and communications with parents such as daily check-in, communication, and photos. You can check the daily report for each week and pictures. Daily reports will be uploaded at 1 pm, 4 pm and 7 pm.

In case of an emergency, KEL staff will notify parents over the phone:

- If a child sustain a head or facial injury including when a child bumps his or her head, when a bite breaks skin or when a child falls form a height greater than the height of the child
- If there is a fire or emergency at the school or its surroundings
- If the teacher or administration staff believes is necessary

### **Cellphone Usage**

Cellphones are prohibited at school, KEL staff will carry their cellphone only when we go for a walk, to the park and the playground. In case of a family emergency teachers can be contacted at 201-200-1160. Parents should never contact KEL staff outside the school or to their personal cellphones Key Element Learning has gone through significant financial and temporal expense in recruiting and training its personnel. Parents will NOT directly or indirectly induce an employee of Key Element Learning to leave that company, and will not engage the services of anyone who works or had worked at Key Element Learning

### **Class Cancellation**

KEL makes every effort to notify parents of cancellations via email or telephone.

### **Holidays**

Please check the calendar that will be given to you at the time of Tours/Registration and according to the program that your child attends.

### **School Closings**

We will notify our parents via email regarding unexpected school closings due to natural disasters/ inclement weather. Key Element Learning will also record a message on our school VM advising of any delays or closings. Parents may also call the Jersey City/Hoboken Public Schools for closing/delay information, as we follow the same guidelines.

***Parents are responsible to pay for full program tuition regardless of early withdrawal, holidays, inclement weather and/or student absences. KEL reserves the right to make changes to the academic school calendar in the event of an unexpected occurrence, including but not limited to inclement weather.***

### **Parent Involvement**

Communication between Key Element Learning and our families is the foundation of your child's school success. Parents are a vital part of the community and we encourage your involvement throughout your child's school experience. We keep our families informed through weekly and monthly newsletters, class calendars, parent teacher conferences and ongoing workshops.

At KEL, families are encouraged to participate in a variety of classroom activities. If you would like to volunteer your expertise as a "guest presenter" and talk to the children about a favorite topic, teach us a song or help or lead us through an art project, please contact us for such arrangement. Please be sure to keep an open flow of communication with your child's teacher in order to arrange a class visit.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held upon request of either party. Requests should be submitted via email or written form. Parents should provide at least 3 available days/times for the proposed meeting on said request. Once their child's teacher receives their request, he/she will confirm a specific day/time with the parent. The meeting will be scheduled based on the availability of both the teacher and the parent.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

**KEY ELEMENT LEARNING** has based its IPAD use policy following the recommendations established by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the state of New Jersey Department of Children and Families. **Children under the age of two** will not have access to television viewing, which includes watching videos, or DVDs, playing with video games, and using the Ipad. The use of an Ipad shall be limited to educational and instructional use, shall be age and developmentally appropriate, and shall not be used as a substitute for planned activities or for passive viewing. **For children who are older than two**, screen time will be limited to 1 minute per child's age. So if the child is 3 years old, the screen time shall be limited to no more than 3 minutes.

## **POLICY ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

In an effort to remain connected to families at all times, **KEY ELEMENT LEARNING** has established a Facebook and Instagram account. Our pages are public and accessible to even those who do not possess a Facebook and Instagram account. Our page will be used daily to keep families connected and serve as a school resource.

**FACEBOOK:** <https://www.facebook.com/key.element.learning.center/>

**INSTAGRAM:** <https://www.instagram.com/keyelementlearning/>

Additionally, children's names will never be posted or referenced. The safety and security of our students and their families is paramount to us and for this reason our page is limited to being used as a resource for families. Any specific or personal reason our page is limited to being used as a resource for families. Any specific or personal communication between the school and parents will be conducted face to face, via a phone call, or a private email. Below please find a list outlining the types of communication that can be found on our public page:

- School reminders
- Emergency closures
- Community events
- Early Childhood articles and information of general interest.
- Recipes, activities and other general fun children's information

**Please note the following:**

- Staff will use the iPad for daily reports on the bright wheel app
- The iPad usage will be monitored by the head teacher or teacher assistant.

Parents are prohibited from posting to their personal social media pages photographs or videos of any child other than their own without the consent of the other child's parents. In addition, staff members are also prohibited from posting to their personal social media pages photographs or videos of any child enrolled in the school.

**Photos**

To respect the privacy rights of other families and reduce disruption to the class, no photos or video recording is permitted during class. All photos taken during the course of activities by KEL staff are the property of Key Element Learning and can be used as deemed necessary.

**School Protocol**

**Cell phone use during class is unacceptable.** These classes incorporate both moving and seated activities. Caregivers visiting the school must participate by guiding and encouraging their child to participate.

**GUIDELINES FOR POSITIVE DISCIPLINE**

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. Methods of positive discipline shall be consistent with the age and developmental needs of the children, and lead to the ability to develop and maintain self-control.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

KEL staff uses positive discipline by planning ahead:

- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems.
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults.
- Have a well-planned daily schedule.
- Plan for ample elements of fun and humor.
- Include some group decision-making.
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone.
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has had some positive impact on the group. Provide the structure and support children need to resolve their differences.
- Share ownership and responsibility with the children. Talk about our room, our toys.

KEL staff uses positive discipline by intervening when necessary:

- Re-direct to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior.
- Provide individualized attention to help the child deal with a particular situation.

- Use time to calm down by removing a child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self-control. (One minute for each year of the child's age is a good rule of thumb).
- Divert the child and remove from the area of conflict.
- Provide alternative activities and acceptable ways to release feelings.
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior.
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options.
- Criticize the behavior, not the child. KEL DOES NOT USE wording such as "bad boy" or "bad girl." Instead KEL staff redirects the children to let them know the rules of school for example "That is not allowed here."

KEL uses positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:

- Catch the child being good. Respond to and reinforce positive behavior; acknowledge or praise to let the child know you approve of what he/she is doing.
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior.
- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism.
- Overlook small annoyances, and deliberately ignore provocations.
- Give hugs and caring to every child every day.
- Appreciate the child's point of view.

Positive discipline is NOT:

- Disciplining a child for failing to eat or sleep or for soiling themselves
- Hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment
- Using abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children
- Engaging in or inflicting any form of child abuse and/or neglect
- Withholding food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest or sleep
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for an inappropriately long period of time

Positive discipline takes time, patience, repetition

### Behavior Redirection

Redirection, reflection time and positive discipline are the techniques Key Element Learning uses to help children solve problems. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. If a child is destructive or physically harmful, dismissal from Key element learning by contacting the parents may be necessary. If a child's behavior is harmful to others, KEL reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment in the program.

### Childhood biting:

There are specific guidelines in place to protect the health and well-being of children from biting. When a child is learning how to verbally communicate, often they communicate in



many non-verbal ways. Screaming, biting and crying may be some ways they communicate. Most uses of non-verbal communication do not pose a potential risk to the well-being of children and/or team members. Biting, however, does pose a significant risk for the child who bites and the child who is bitten. The following is our biting policy designed for the protection of all:

### **Biting that result in broken skin**

If a child bites another child and skin is broken, both parents will be notified. The child who has done the biting will be watched closely for the remainder of the day.

1. If the child bites a second time in one day (breaking the skin), then the child will be sent home and may return on their next scheduled day. **Please note:** If the child bites again (breaking the skin) after returning to school from the two initial bites described above, then the parents of the child who has done the biting will need to meet with the child's teachers and/or the Director to come up with a behavior plan to help the child learn other non-verbal communication methods.

2. If the child does not bite a second time in that same day (breaking the skin), the child will be monitored to see if biting is a reoccurring behavior or if this was an outlier in their behavior. If seven days of attendance elapse without any further instances of biting (that result in broken skin), then the child will require no further direct monitoring for biting. The "biting guidelines" outlined above will reset and the child will start again at the beginning. If the child does bite again within seven days (breaking the skin), then the parents will be asked to meet with the teachers and/or the Director to develop a behavior management plan for the child. The child does not need to be sent home on this day unless he/she bites twice in this same day (resulting in broken skin).

3. If the team and the parents are working together on a behavior management plan and the child bites for a third time (breaking the skin), then the parents will again be asked to meet with the team to discuss modifications to the plan. If the child bites a fourth time (breaking the skin), he/she will be **dis-enrolled** from the program.

### **Biting that does not result in broken skin**

For a child who habitually bites (biting daily or at least three times per week) without breaking the skin, team members will closely monitor this child and provide an Incident Report to both the child doing the biting and the child being bitten (after each instance of biting). After the child has accumulated ten Incident Reports of biting another child, the parents will be called and a meeting will be held to develop a plan to help the child learn other non-verbal skills. If the child continues to bite (resulting in five additional Incident Reports of biting) after developing a plan of positive reinforcement to end the biting, the child will be di-enrolled from the program. If biting ceases for a six month period, the child's record will be internally cleared and prior instances of biting will not be taken into account when abiding by the above guidelines. All instances of biting are detailed in Incident Reports and placed in a child's folder. Challenging Behavior Exclusion from the program may also be necessary for any challenging behavior. Challenging behavior is defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children as any behavior that:

(1) interferes with children's learning, development and success at play,



(2) is harmful to the child, other children, or adults  
(3) puts a child at high risk for later social problems. Examples of challenging behavior: **Physical aggression (hitting, biting, shoving, hitting with toys), relational aggression (“you can’t play with us,” verbal bullying), tantrums, whining, testing limits, and refusal to follow directions or observe classroom rules.**

## **FOOD**

### **Allergies**

If your child has food allergies, please make sure you have verbally informed the director. Parents of students with allergies must provide a snack in a bag/container that is clearly labeled **WE HAVE CHILDREN WITH SEVERE PEANUT,EGG,SESAME and TREE NUTS ALLERGIES. NO NUTS OF ANY KIND ARE PERMITTED IN THE SCHOOL. Any items containing these ingredients are strictly prohibited at Key Element Learning. Please note that many snacks contain sesame/sesame oil or are made in facilities where nuts are present so please check labels before sending snacks to school.**

**We are asking your help to provide students with a safe school environment. Any exposure to NUTS,EGGS, SESAME AND PEANUTS for children with a severe food allergies may cause a life-threatening allergic reaction that requires emergency medical treatment..** Children eat in such close proximity at school; and the chance of an inadvertent reaction is much higher in the school setting than elsewhere.

If you would like to bring food for special events, we can only accept store bought items with proper allergen information written on them. Home baked goods are not safe because they are likely to contain traces of allergens from previous baking even if they don't contain ingredients with NUTS.

If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please make sure your child's hands and face have been thoroughly washed before entering the school.

### **Birthdays**

KEL celebrates each child's and teacher's birthday with fruits or veggie treats only. **Please do NOT send cupcakes or candy.**

### **Lunch**

Parents provide lunch for their child. Providing lunch includes providing utensils. Poland Spring water is available for the children at school at all times. Lunch must arrive with the student in the morning. School activities are disrupted when parents deliver their children's lunch at an alternative time. Please do not send candy or soda to school.

We do not allow children to share lunches. We will attempt to return anything uneaten to you at the end of the day to give you an idea what you child ate. **NO NUTS OF ANY KIND ARE PERMITTED IN THE SCHOOL.**

### **Snack**

Snack time is part of the preschool learning experience. Parents must provide a snack for their child. Key Element Learning has back up snacks (such as cheerios/pretzels)to provide

**ONLY** in a situation where the child does not have any snack or something happened to their snack. (for example, spilling the snack on the floor.)

## **ILLNESS**

Some illnesses have to be reported to the school. Under New Jersey law, all children enrolled at the school and their parents are subject to the Policy in the Management of Communicable Disease ( N.J.A.C. 10.122-7.11)

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend the center. If such symptoms occur at the center, the child will be removed from the group, and parents will be called to take the child home.

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Lethargy
- Severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Stiff neck

**At the discretion of the Director; if a child is dismissed because of any of the previous illnesses, a doctor's note will be required for child to return to school.**

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the center unless contraindicated by local health department or Department of Health.

## **EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

A child or staff member who contracts an excludable communicable disease **may not** return to the center without a health care provider's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others. These diseases include respiratory, gastrointestinal, and contact illnesses such as Impetigo, Lice, Scabies, and Shingles.

Note: If a child has chicken pox, a note from the parent stating that all sores have dried and crusted is required.

If a child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, parents will be notified in writing.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTING GUIDELINES**

Some excludable communicable diseases must be reported to the health department by the center. The Department of Health's Reporting Requirements for Communicable Diseases and Work-Related Conditions Quick Reference Guide, a complete list of reportable excludable communicable diseases, can be found at [http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable\\_disease\\_magnet.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf).

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

If a child is taking the medication for the first time, we ask the first dose to be given to the child at home and under the direct supervision of the parent (s) in case an allergic reaction occurs.

Medication will only be given when ordered by the child's health care provider and with written consent of the child's parent/legal guardian. A "Permission to Give Medication in Child Care" form is attached to this policy and will hereafter be referred to as Permission Form. All information on the Permission Form must be completed before the medication can be given.

"As needed" medications may be given only when the child's health care provider completes a Permission Form that lists specific reasons and times when such medication can be given. Medications given in the center will be administered by a staff member designated by the center director and will have been informed of the child's health needs related to the medication and will have had training in the safe administration of medication.

Any prescription or over-the-counter medication brought to KEL must be specific to the child who is to receive the medication, in its original container, have a child-resistant safety cap, and be labeled with the appropriate information as follows:

- prescription medication must have the original pharmacist label that includes the pharmacist's phone number, the child's full name, name of the health care provider prescribing the medication, name and expiration date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated, and dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions for its administration and/or storage.
- Over-the-counter (OTC) medication must have the child's full name on the container, and the manufacturer's original label with dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions for administration and storage, and expiration date must be clearly visible.
- Please note that the medication must be given directly to the Director and is never to be the responsibility of the child. Please **NEVER** leave medications in a child's lunch box. The item must be given in person to the Director.

Key Element Learning's policy is never administering any medicine without a doctor's note. When a child is involved in an accident or emergency requiring medical intervention, the

parent or guardian will be notified promptly. If the parent is unable to come to the center to transport the child, a staff member will accompany the child to the medical facility indicated on the child's information form. If help is needed immediately, the nearest response team will be called.

## **EXPULSION POLICY**

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center.

### **IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION**

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff member.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children

### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION**

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the Child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff

### **CHILD'S ACTION FOR EXPULSION**

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

### **SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION**

If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center. The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period and the expected behavioral changes required in order for the child or parent to return to the center. The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows the parent sufficient time to seek alternate child care (approximately one to two weeks' notice depending on risk to other children's welfare or safety). Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

### **A CHILD WILL NOT BE EXPELLED IF A PARENT/GUARDIAN**

- Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements.
- Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center
- Questioned the center regarding policies and procedures

### **CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION (CPSC)**

Please find the list from CPSC regarding unsafe products at [www.cpsc.gov/recalls](http://www.cpsc.gov/recalls) or call 1800-638-2772

### **NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

KEL is an equal opportunity provider of early childhood and preschool services. We are a non-sectarian, non-discriminatory school and all applications are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law. All programs, privileges, rights, and activities are available for all children, families and people.