



Handbook

Cape Elizabeth Community Services
343 Ocean House Road
Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107
207-799-2868



ABOUT

Cape Care is a child care program that has been a part of the Community Services and the Town of Cape Elizabeth since 1986. It is licensed by the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services to provide care for children aged 3 to 12 years old.

MISSION

To provide an environment that lays the critical foundation for young children's success in school, work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Our programs build self-esteem and problem-solving skills while fostering respect for themselves and others based on each child's individual physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development.

VISION

To offer preschool and care-based programs that inspire curiosity, independence, and a lifelong love of learning and to help children become contributing members of our community in our diverse world.

Designed to meet the developmental needs of all children ages 3 - 12, Cape Care aims to provide children with a structured part of their day to give them time to socialize with friends, as well as participate in fun, active, and educational extracurricular activities.

GOALS

The primary goal of Cape Care is to provide a loving, safe, and stimulating environment for your child. It is necessary for us to work together as partners and to be comfortable discussing your child's needs. We all look forward to a long and rewarding friendship with your child and family.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring to review students' achievements and developmental progress. The classroom teacher sends a weekly or monthly newsletter with information, events, activities, and classroom academics. Throughout the year, individual classrooms schedule events for families to attend. Volunteers are welcome to help with classroom projects at special events and must complete the [Volunteer Training Protocols](#). Enclosed is everything we need you to know that governs our agreement. Please read through it as it contains policies and procedures relevant to the care of your child. If you have any questions or need clarification, please ask before signing. The content of this contract and all forms required for enrollment are non-negotiable.

COMMUNICATION

Good communication is of the utmost importance. When families start their preschool experience with us, we like to be sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that

may arise. It is important to have a similar childcare philosophy between the center and the parent/guardian. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented toward a positive outcome for the child(ren). Sensitive issues will be discussed in private at a mutually beneficial time. The best way to communicate classroom issues to the teachers is to email them directly.

PROGRAMS

Preschool ages 3 - 4

Half-Day 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Full-Day 8:30 am - 2:30 pm

(minimum 3 days)

Public Pre-K ages 4 - 5

Full-Day 8:30 am - 2:30 pm

Before School Care Preschool-Grade 4

7:15 am - 8:30 am

After School Care Preschool-Grade 4

2:30 pm - 5:30 pm



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

This program targets three and four-year-olds. We strive to provide a high-quality, stimulating early childhood experience and create a safe, nurturing, and developmentally age-appropriate environment where children can learn and grow.

Children are involved in daily activities, which allow them to gain experience in social, physical, emotional, and cognitive skills. Activities are based on monthly academic units of study, a weekly letter focus (i.e. the letter A), social skills themes (i.e. friendship) as well as themed book days. Children are introduced to multidisciplinary experiences including literature, dramatic play, puppet shows, listening center, arts & crafts, science discovery & nature, cooking, sensory activities, music & singing.

Children are encouraged to explore problem-solving through the use of manipulatives, develop early math concepts, and nurture fine and gross motor development. Swim lessons are offered in conjunction with the pool staff during certain times of the year, as well as music and movement classes.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The full-day Pre-K experience will help students succeed by nurturing their academic, social, and emotional development. The curriculum is designed to actively engage students in their learning, and provide regular opportunities for hands-on activities and outdoor experiences.

This program is eligible for students turning age four by October 15th and students who have not yet turned five on or before October 15th. Both child and family must reside in Cape Elizabeth. Cape Care can accommodate up to 30 students (15 per classroom). Students who qualify for special education services and or are economically disadvantaged may make up 1% of the student population and current Cape Care preschoolers have priority.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of spaces a lottery drawing will be held. Those we are unable to accommodate will remain on a waiting list for the upcoming school year in the order by the date the application was received.

ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

[Kelly Phinney](#), Cape Care Coordinator

[Verna Gordon](#), Preschool Teacher, [Jenny Allen](#), Ed Tech III

[Martha Pulsifer](#) Pre-K Teacher, Casey Williams Ed Tech II

[Ellen Weaver](#), Pre-K Teacher, [Jen Murphy](#), Ed Tech III

Karen Holmes, Ed Tech III

ELIGIBILITY

To attend preschool, before and after school care, your child must be three by October 15th and fully potty trained.

To attend pre-kindergarten, your child must be four years old and cannot be five years old on or before October 15th. Both child and family must reside in Cape Elizabeth.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Children entering preschool are required to be fully and completely toilet trained. Before starting Cape Care, students must be able to function independently while using the bathroom.

To be considered completely toilet trained, students must be able to:

- Recognize the need to use the toilet without frequent reminders.
- Be able to remove the necessary clothing to use the toilet.
- Clean private areas with toilet paper after using the toilet.
- Dress themselves before exiting the bathroom.
- Wash hands after using the toilet.

The use of a “pull-up” or similar underwear is not a substitution for being toilet trained. Please let us know if there is any reason your child needs to wear a “pull-up” during the school day.

In the event of an accident, the following procedures will occur:

- The child will take their change of clothes into the bathroom to put on using the plastic bag for their wet clothing.
- If a change of clothes has not been provided, the child will wait in the office for someone to bring them a change of clothes.
- In an accident involving feces, you will be required to change the child as we do not have the proper facilities to clean them thoroughly.
- If accidents are frequent, we would ask that you re-evaluate your child's readiness to be enrolled in preschool. Your child's teacher can help you in that decision-making process.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

The following forms are needed before Cape Care will assume responsibility for your child. The information must be updated annually or sooner if needed. Please inform us immediately of any changes. The accuracy of this information helps us provide your child with the very best care possible and satisfies the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services licensing requirements.

Here is the list of requirements needed before your child's first day.

- [Cape Care Application](#)
- [2024-25 Enrolled Student form](#)
- Immunization Records must be provided within 30 days of enrollment.
- [Authorization for Automatic Payment \(monthly or weekly\)](#)
- [Authorization to Dispense Medication](#)

DAYS OF OPERATION

Cape Care is open Monday – Friday and follows the Cape Elizabeth School Department [Academic Calendar](#).

The [Cape Care Calendar](#) includes Special Care Days offered on Early Release Days, Staff Days, Teacher Conferences, and during School Vacation Weeks (K - 4). Registration is required, and additional fees apply.

ABSENCES/LATE ARRIVAL

Please email the [Cape Care Coordinator](#) if your child is going to be late or absent. The enrollment agreement reserves your child a seat whether they attend or not. Tuition is due regardless of absence due to illness, personal vacations, appointments, or any other reason.

Please let BOTH your child's public school teacher AND Cape Care know of any schedule changes.

FEES & PAYMENTS

Before School Care	7:15 am to 8:30 am	\$ 12.00 per day
After School Care	2:30 pm to 5:30 pm	\$ 24.00 per day
Preschool Half Day	8:30 am to 12:00 pm	\$ 250.00 per week
Preschool Full Day	8:30 am to 2:30 pm	\$ 300.00 per week
Public Pre K	8:30 am to 2:30 pm	No Charge

Please complete the [Automatic Payment Authorization Form](#) if you would like your tuition paid automatically.

Starting September 1st, monthly payments are due and will continue until June 1st. Weekly payments are due the Monday before the first week of school. Late and past-due payments may be grounds for suspension or termination of care until the account is current.

- Insufficient Funds

You are responsible for all charges the Town of Cape Elizabeth may incur from the bank resulting from insufficient funds. You are responsible for the due amount plus a \$25 administration fee. Cape Care may suspend services until paid. If you are on an automatic payment plan, please ensure sufficient funds are available.

- Change Fees

Any hours, in addition to contracted hours, must be approved and will be at an additional cost. A \$10 administrative fee applies to all changes.

- Late Fees

We depend on you to drop off and pick up your child at the scheduled times. Please call 799-2868 to alert the staff if you are running late.

Failure to pick up your child on time from After School Care will result in a late fee of \$25 beginning at 5:40 p.m. and a fee of \$5 every five minutes following. Please make every effort to be on time.

If tardiness is a recurring issue, a meeting will take place with the Cape Care Coordinator to adjust your program schedule. Continued tardiness may be cause for termination.

If you terminate our services, a new application is required if reapplying more than 90 days after termination.

BEFORE SCHOOL

Students enrolled in Before School Care should use the entrance closest to Route 77 for drop-off. Students will have morning free play before being walked to school by a staff member.

AFTER SCHOOL

Staff members will meet the students enrolled in an on-campus Community Services after-school activity or enrolled in after-school care. After taking attendance, a staff member will escort them to their after-school activity or after-school care (Community Center/Cape Care playground).

A staff member will meet students after their afterschool activity and escort them to the Community Center. Any After-school activities ending later than 4:30 pm must be picked up by their parent/guardian.

Students may be picked up at any time and must sign their children out.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP POLICY

State licensing rules require that students are signed in and out each day. Sign-out sheets are provided daily.

Students are released only to parents/guardians or someone on the Authorized Pick-up List.

Please provide advance notice if someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up the child. You can give us a verbal notice on the day if the person is on the authorized pick-up list, but if not, a written notice is required. If we are not familiar with the person, we will ask for identification as a precaution.

DROP OFF		PICK UP	
7:15 am	Before School Care	Noon	Preschool Half Day
8:30 am	Preschool & Pre-K	2:30 pm	Preschool & Pre-K Full Day
		5:30 pm	After School Care

CLOTHING

Please provide a pair of slippers or indoor shoes and a clean change of clothes (labeled with the child's name) to be kept in their cubby at school. Children should arrive dressed for play. We like to have fun! Having fun involves engaging in sometimes messy activities both indoors and out. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate. We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits and temperatures are not below 10 degrees.

LUNCH & SNACKS

Preschoolers will need to bring snacks and lunch from home. After-school care students are provided with a snack.

Pre-K students will have the options of school breakfast/snack & lunch. Weekly choices will be sent out.

Students enrolled in Cape Care on Special Care days will need to bring their lunch and snacks.

LET'S GO! 5-2-1-0

Let's Go! 5-2-1-0 is a nationally recognized childhood obesity prevention program.

As a program participant, Cape Care:

- Limits unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations
- Provides only water as a beverage
- Do not use food as a reward
- Provides opportunities to get physical activity every day
- Limits recreational screen time

INCLUSION

Inclusion ensures that children of all abilities have equal access to participate meaningfully in childcare programs. Children will not face discrimination based on race, culture, ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, national origin, special health care needs, developmental, behavioral, or mental health concerns, or identified disabilities. Children may require support to reduce or eliminate barriers so they can learn and fully engage in experiences with their peers. The services for special needs children comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We reserve the right to deny services based on Cape Care's inability to ensure the safety and good health of a child due to special physical, mental, behavioral, or emotional conditions, and because of the limited resources available within our program. The staff is adequately trained

and/or has sufficient experience to meet the needs of all children for whom they are responsible.

At Cape Care, we have staff from various ethnic backgrounds. Our primary language of communication is English, but if you would prefer to communicate in another language, please inform us. We will make every effort to ensure that our materials and communications are accessible to you in your preferred language if available.

RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

Children suspected of having a disability will be referred for an evaluation to determine if they are eligible for early intervention/special education services. Cape Care partners with Child Development Services (CDS), the Cape Elizabeth School Department, and parents/guardians to provide case management and direct instruction for families. Teachers will discuss individual students' progress and make recommendations for families. CDS information can be found on this [website](#).



SAFETY

We foster a warm, loving, and safe environment for students. To help them as they explore, learn, and experience many different things. Some features that help ensure your child's safety include:

Indoor Play

- A variety of age-appropriate toys so children do not become bored.
- Electrical outlets are covered.
- Knives and sharp scissors are kept out of reach.
- Cleaners and chemicals are out of reach.
- Medications are out of reach.
- A well-stocked first-aid kit is kept nearby.
- Providers are CPR and First Aid certified.
- Fire drills are practiced with the entire school as well as classroom mock drills monthly.
- Staff members trained by the CEPD to follow district-wide Crisis Procedures.

Outdoor Play

- Safe grassy areas to play.
- The playground is free of splinters and harmful objects.
- Safety-approved play equipment and toys.
- Children do not play outside unsupervised.

Weather

- When the temperature is above 90 degrees children will only be allowed to play in shady areas and must wear sunscreen.
- We do not go outside when the temperature is below 10 degrees.
- Insect repellent will not be applied to children.
- We will coordinate indoor activities if the conditions permit the group to go outside.

SNOW DAY & SCHOOL DELAY POLICY

Cape Care is closed if the Cape Elizabeth Schools cancel due to weather. If there is a two-hour delay Cape Care will open at 9:15 am for Before School Care. School-aged children will be walked to school which begins at 10:35 a.m. Preschool will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Please look for cancellations or delays on area television channels (WCSH 6) and listen to local radio stations. Closures and delays will be posted on our [website](#) and social media. If time allows, we will send an email notification.

Cape Care will add one snow day (if needed) at the end of the year. If we have more than one Cape Care Preschool, Pre-K, Before and After School Care will not be made up.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

As soon as any staff member becomes aware of any situation with the potential for significant violence or danger, the staff member shall immediately notify the Coordinator/Director as soon as possible.

The Coordinator will:

- Call 911 with your location, your name, and the situation.
- Notify the Director and the office: 207-799-2868.
- Once given instruction from the Director or the office, notify members of your staff. Give them clear directions on what the procedure will be.
- Staff: Once given this information, stay calm and keep students calm.

On-Site assessment:

The Director will proceed to the crisis scene or to the best location to provide an on-site assessment of the crisis. This person will establish ongoing communication with the police. The Director will help with this task, and keep the rest of the staff informed of the situation. The Community Services Director will make a decision based on the severity of the crisis to a) keep the program at the current status, b) evacuate all or part of the building, or c) lock down the building. Once the police have arrived, they become responsible for this decision.

Site Evacuation Plan: If the decision has been made to move the students to a safer part of the building or area, please follow this procedure. When possible keep students in a single line and assigned in groups.

- The Director and the Coordinators will notify the groups where the students will be evacuated (Gym, Turf Field, Parking Lot, Community Center, etc.)
- Bring your attendance list
- Shut doors and check bathrooms on the way out
- One-on-one Counselors are to stay with the child's regularly assigned group
- The Director, Coordinators, along any other Community Services Department staff on-site will make a final sweep of the area to make sure all students and staff have evacuated the building/area
- Once at the designated area, staff will take attendance of students under their supervision and report any injuries or concerns to their Coordinator.
- The Director will notify any emergency personnel on hand of the results of the attendance and injury report (all children/staff accounted for, no injuries, etc.)

Off-Camp Evacuation Site: If the situation warrants moving the students to another building, the following guidelines are applicable:

In most situations, when an off-campus evacuation needs to occur, children will be bussed to St. Bartholomew's Church and a plan of action (cancel the program, resume the program at CECS) will be made at that time.

- Students are to remain with their teachers/staff and in assigned groups until further notice from the Director or designee.
- Once at the new site, counselors are to take attendance and report this to the Coordinator
- Phone use is limited to emergency only
- Bathroom access will be limited with students being escorted and accounted for at all times
- Announcements to remind students and staff that school rules and policies are still in effect (respect people and property, etc.)

Lock Down: If the decision is made for full or partial lockdown, directions will be given through the Director and/or designee. All students are to remain in their current classroom/activity with their teacher/staff who is assigned to them at that given time. All students are to stay out of visible sight, sitting on the floor with lights OFF. Close window shades and listen to the teacher/staff for further instructions.

- Teacher/staff keep attendance information, write down the names of all children in your care
- Lock the door
- The custodian and Director will make sure all exterior doors are locked

Communication: The Director, CECS Department Staff, and/or Local Police will, upon assessment of the situation, direct staff to do the following:

- Contact the parent/guardian of students directly involved

- Parent/guardian of other students — the Director will be responsible for notifying parent/guardian concerning student pick up (if early or at another site)
- Media—The CECS Department Director is the designated media spokesperson

Crisis Follow-up: The Director will meet with CECS Department Staff, along with local Police Department personnel if necessary.

- Debrief
- Plan next steps

PROCEDURE FOR EMERGENCIES IN THE BUILDING:

In the event of an emergency -- fire, bomb threat, or other -- the fire alarm will sound. We all must get out and away from the building in a calm and orderly fashion. Staff will remain calm, and tell the children to quietly line up and go to the nearest exit. Once outside the building, the group will go far enough away from the building to the designated meeting spot at the IGA parking lot or back parking lot of CECS, and children will sit with their group until further instruction. Classes will not re-enter the building until the Director has given permission.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Maine State Law requires all students to present a certificate of immunization or evidence of immunization or immunity against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox).

Non-immunized students shall not be permitted to enroll in school or to attend school or school activities unless the parent/guardian there is a medical reason.

1. All Children in care must meet the following requirements:

a. The Child Care Facility must have a current record of immunization on file for each Child, which documents each Child's present immunization status based on the Department's Day Care Immunization Standards (available at [Childcare Immunization Standards](#)), within 30 days of the Child's first admission to the Child care and updated as needed thereafter or,

b. A blood test documenting immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella (chickenpox), is placed in the Child's record and updated promptly.

c. Children must be immunized as set forth herein and exemption from immunization requirements are **limited to medical reasons**. The Child's physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant must provide documentation that immunization is medically inadvisable.

2. Unimmunized Children and Child Care Staff Members. The Child Care Facility must maintain a list of all unimmunized persons, regardless of age. In the event of a disease outbreak as defined by CDC reporting standards, a Child not immunized must be excluded from the Child Care Facility by CDC guidance or until the Child receives the necessary immunization or proof of immunity is on record.

3. Immunization records. The Child Care Facility must make immunization records available to the Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, upon request.

ILLNESS AND INCIDENTS

First Aid in-service training is provided annually for all staff. New staff members will be oriented in first aid policies and procedures. Latex gloves and bandages will be available in each classroom, with complete first aid supplies.

In the event a child becomes ill or is injured while in our care, at least one qualified staff member will administer first aid.

If a student is being sent home due to illness, the parent/guardian will be contacted as soon as possible. The child will be kept in a safe area with a familiar staff member until the student is picked up. A staff member shall first determine if a responsible adult is available to pick up the child. The parent/guardian or other responsible adult called for the sick child shall provide proper supervision in seeing that the child is escorted safely home.

Parent/guardian and state licensing staff know children are active, and no amount of child-proofing and supervision can prevent all injuries. Reporting injuries can help prevent them in the future by identifying injury patterns specific to the childcare environment and/or with a child who may need help with difficulties associated with balance, vision, or foot positioning.

In the event of an injury requiring the attention of a physician, the following procedure shall be followed. The determination shall be made by the designee as to the severity of the emergency.

All serious injuries, death of a child, or illnesses, as well as licensing violations, will be reported to DHHS. A copy of the Incident Report will be placed in the child's file and must be signed by the parent/guardian.

1. If life-threatening or dangerous and needs medical attention, rescue will be called, and then the parent/guardian notified as soon as possible.
2. If medical attention is required, the parent/guardian will be called.
3. Students will be transported via Cape Elizabeth Rescue under the following circumstances:
 - Head trauma with loss of consciousness
 - Neck/back injury
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Multiple broken bones
 - Shock
 - Severe external bleeding

- Blunt trauma to the abdomen, back, or chest
- Any other extreme circumstance deemed necessary by Cape Care administration.
Report to be filed: Reportable Incident DHHS

The parent/guardian shall be responsible for any fees associated with rescue transport. When an injury requires further medical treatment or there is a possibility of CECS liability, an accident injury report will be completed, and copies sent to the appropriate persons' Children with minor illnesses may attend Cape Care at the provider's discretion. It is important to realize that if a child is unable to participate in the normal routine, or needs more care than we can provide without neglecting the others in our care, that child must stay home. We all agree there are times when a child needs to be with the parent/guardian for both physical and emotional comfort. There are also some illnesses that by law exclude the child from attending childcare.

Some of these illnesses include but are not limited to:

- Infectious Conjunctivitis
- Scarlet Fever
- Ringworm
- Chicken Pox
- Hepatitis A
- Impetigo
- Infectious Diarrhea
- Lice
- Strep throat
- Scabies



If a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program, all parents/guardians will be notified and the non-immunized child will be excluded from the classroom immediately and kept comfortable until pick up.

When a child has certain symptoms, the student MUST be kept home.

Some of these are:

- Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally, or 102°F taken rectally. (A child needs to be fever-free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to Cape Care, which means the child is fever-free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever-reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools or two or more loose stools within the last four hours
- Vomiting: Two or more times in 24 hours. Note: Please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking
- Continuous coughing

- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears
- Frequent scratching of the body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm
- The child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety, or well-being of the other children in our care

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS

Cape Care acknowledges that it may be necessary for a student to have medication administered to them while in attendance. If there are no other options, it is recommended that the first dose of a newly-prescribed medication be given at home.

The following procedure must be followed for any prescription medication to be administered for more than 14 days to a student under a healthcare provider's order. Such an order must be obtained from a medical/health practitioner who has a current Maine license with a scope that includes administering medication.

The parent/guardian shall obtain, complete, and return a copy of the Authorization to Dispense along with the medication:

1. In the original container (and in the case of prescription medications, appropriately labeled by the health care provider or pharmacy);
2. Include no more than the amount of medication necessary to comply with the health provider's order.
3. Medication no longer required (or remaining at the end of the school year) must be removed by the parent/guardian or the student with parent/guardian permission.
4. Students may not be permitted to transport medication to/from school.
5. A new Authorization to Dispense Medication Form must be completed if there is a later change in the medical order (such as a change in dose, frequency, or type of medication),
6. Medication orders should be renewed annually.
7. Cape Care disclaims all responsibility for the diagnosis, prescription of treatment, and administration of medication for any student.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Cape Care recognizes that food allergies can pose a significant threat to the health of some students. We work with students, parents/guardians, staff, and medical personnel to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students.

As an educational institution, it is our responsibility to increase awareness of all students, including:

1. their needs;
2. the dangers they face;
3. preventative measures to be taken;
4. signs of allergic reactions; and

5. the medical response should a student have an allergic reaction.
6. Emergency Care Plan Form

We will also solicit voluntary cooperation from parents/guardians, students, and staff toward avoiding food-allergic students coming in contact with or in proximity to foods that cause their particular allergic reactions in school or at school activities. Bans on particular foods, by classroom or the whole school, will not be enacted. District guidelines will provide details for the implementation of this policy. These guidelines will be reviewed on an annual basis.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT MANDATE

Cape Care staff is mandated to report any suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment on the part of an employee, parent/guardian, or volunteer. Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise is prohibited. Any means of corporal punishment will not be tolerated. Additionally, withholding or using food, rest, or sleep as a punishment is prohibited. If any type of abuse or neglect is suspected, it will be reported to the Maine Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-452-1999.

- Physically harming a child (beyond spanking reasonably)
- Sexually abusing a child
- Exposing a child to substance use, domestic violence, or other unsafe conditions
- Failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care
- Exposing a child to unsafe or unsanitary living conditions
- Threatening to harm a child
- Chronic name-calling or putting them down

CHILD CARE BEHAVIORAL GUIDANCE

Cape Care staff will use only positive and constructive methods of guidance that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, communication of wants and needs, and cooperation with others. Child guidance must meet the individual needs of each child.

Rules, expectations, and limits will be clearly and consistently applied and carried out in a manner that reflects a child's developmental ability.

This may include but is not limited to, interventions such as:

1. Conflict resolution
2. Encouraging the use of language skills
3. Redirecting
4. Providing choices
5. Using praise or positive reinforcement
6. Recognizing a Child's strengths
7. Allowing Children to take supervised breaks away from the group when needed
8. Reminding Children of expectations using positive, clear language
9. Teaching self-regulation
10. Modeling appropriate behavior
11. Allowing for individual differences

Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be instructed to calm their body with the help of a teacher, if that does not help, they may be redirected to another activity with teacher assistance. If a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others, or property, or seriously disrupts group interaction, the child may be separated briefly from the group.

The child will be taken to the office to sit with an administrator until they can gain enough self-control to rejoin the group. The child will always be left in an area where they are in full view and can be supervised and supported by a staff member. Interaction between the child and a staff member will take place immediately following the separation to guide the child toward appropriate group behavior. A method of discipline that frightens, demeans, or humiliates a child is strictly prohibited.

HEALTH & HYGIENE

Handwashing

Children's hands are washed:

Before eating.

After using the toilet.

When coming in from outside play.

After coming in contact with a sick child and/or runny nose.

After completing messy crafts or projects.

Provider's hands are washed:

Before preparing food.

Before and after giving medications.

After assisting a child using the toilet.

After touching body secretions.

And about 100 other times during the day.

Hands are always dried with single-use paper towels.

Additionally,

- Smoking is prohibited on all town property
- Health policy is strictly adhered to
- Current immunizations are required
- Good hygiene is stressed at all times
- Favorite blankets or sleeping toys may be brought but kept for rest time. They are not shared with the other children and will be kept out of the daycare room.
- Children do not bring personal toys from home.
- Every attempt is made to keep toys and play areas sanitized.
- Napping is done on individual mats and cleaned daily.
- Food preparation is done safely and hygienically.
- Snacks follow 5-2-1-0 nutrition program guidelines.





Note: We advise that toys from homes should stay at home. They create problems with sharing, as well as broken hearts when that toy gets lost or broken. Small toys also create a hazard to our smaller children. We are not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen objects that are brought from home.

RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Children receiving care at Cape Care have the following rights.

1. Children must be free from emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
2. Each child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.
3. Each child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
4. Each child must be provided child care services without discrimination based on race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex, or family composition.
5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the childcare facility.
6. Each child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the childcare facility.
7. Each child has the right to developmentally appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to childcare facility policies and practices.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

At Cape Care, you can always be assured that the door is open to you. Please feel free to drop in and check on your child, however, keep in mind a child adjusting to a new environment will want to leave with you when you pop in for a visit. These early drop-ins should be made when it is appropriate for you to take the child with you, or when you can visit unnoticed to not interrupt your child's day. A child going through separation anxiety will most definitely react to a parent/guardian coming into the facility and not taking them with them when they depart.

You are also invited to call and check on your child during the day. You may also communicate any information to kelly.phinney@capeelizabeth.org who will relay the information as soon as she receives it to your child's classroom teacher.

TERMINATION

We reserve the right to terminate or suspend a child for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up your child
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parent/guardian cooperation
- Failure of a child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Serious illness of child

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when terminating care, and will give the same courtesy in return. Parents/guardians are required to give two weeks written (email) notice when they decide to terminate care. The two weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance. Anyone who terminates care and has an outstanding balance will need to have the account settled within 30 days.

We will give a two-week notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. The provider reserves the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

As providers, we reserve the right to make changes in the childcare environment without advance notice to parent/guardian as long as any change remains within state licensing requirements and regulations. There may be updates to this handbook occasionally. We will give you a separate addendum as the need arises.

Communication is the key; please feel free to discuss your concerns with any of the staff members. Thank you for your interest in finding the best possible care for your child.



Additional Information

PERSONAL ITEMS

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, videos, etc.). Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite sleepy toy for nap time only, and toys may be brought for show-and-tell activities. We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be marked with the child's name.

REST TIME

As required by Maine State Law, children enjoy story time/rest time/quiet project time each afternoon. They are not required to nap, but many do. Understand no child is allowed to be excluded from rest time. Children awaken early and have a very active day. Quiet activities are provided for those who wake early from rest time. Blankets or sleep companions may be brought for rest time. We ask that the items be in a bag and go home weekly for washing.



DAILY SCHEDULE

Daily schedules will vary from class to class and day to day but are similar:

- Arrival
- Morning Gathering/Calendar
- Free Play
- Bathroom /Handwashing
- Snack
- Recess
- Story Time
- Lunch
- Quiet/Rest Time
- Learning Centers
- Dismissal

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Creating a supportive learning environment requires time, reflection, and planning. The supportive classroom environment provides an important source of consistency for children. A supportive environment is well-organized, dependable, and flexible.

Supportive environments send children a variety of positive messages about their learning such as:

1. This is a good place to be.
2. You belong here.
3. You can trust this place.
4. There are places where you can be by yourself when you want to be.
5. You can do many things on your own here.
6. This is a safe place to explore and try out your ideas.

2024-2025 CAPE CARE CALENDAR

Subject to Change.

FIRST AND LAST

September 3	First Day of School for Grades 1- 4 Before and After Care begins for Grades 1- 4
September 5	First Day of Preschool, Pre-K & Kindergarten Before and After Care begins for Pre, Pre-K and Kindergarten
June 16	Last Day/Half Day of School if no storm days are used

CAPE CARE HOLIDAY CLOSURES

September 2	Labor Day
October 14	Indigenous Peoples' Day
November 11	Veteran's Day
November 27-29	Thanksgiving Break
December 23 - 1/1	December Break
January 20	MLK Jr Day
February 17-21	February Break
April 18-25	April Break
May 26	Memorial Day
June 19	Juneteenth

CAPE CARE PRESCHOOL & PRE - K No School Days

October 11	Pre /Pre-K no school
November 8	Pre /Pre-K no school
February 3	Pre /Pre-K no school
March 26	Pre /Pre-K no school Parent Teacher Conferences
April 18	Pre /Pre-K no school

SPECIAL CARE DAYS (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

October 11	Gr. K-4	Full Day	8:30 - 5:30
November 8	Gr. K-4	Full Day	8:30 - 5:30
December 13	Gr. K-4	Half Day	12:00 - 5:30
February 3	Gr. K-4	Full Day	8:30 - 5:30
March 14	Gr. K-4	Full Day	8:30 - 5:30
March 26	Gr. K-4	Half Day	12:00 - 5:30
April 17	Gr. K-4	Half Day	12:00 - 5:30
May 9	Gr. K-4	Half Day	12:00 - 5:30

VACATION CAMP (REGISTRATION REQUIRED) Kindergarten - 4th Grade

December 30 - 31	Monday & Tuesday	\$65 per day
February 18 - 21	Tuesday - Friday	\$260.00
April 22 - 25	Tuesday - Friday	\$260.00