



Purchase Community, Inc. • 3095 Purchase Street • Purchase NY 10577 • T. 914.949.2636 • F. 914.949.0955 • [www.purchasehouse.com](http://www.purchasehouse.com)

# Purchase Children's Center



# Parent Handbook

# **WELCOME TO THE PURCHASE CHILDREN'S CENTER!**

3095 Purchase Street  
Purchase NY 10577  
(914) 949-2636

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Purchase Children's Center Inc., located in the landmark Purchase Community House in Purchase, New York, provides developmentally appropriate programs for children ages two to five.

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The Purchase Children's Center, Inc. provides an atmosphere where children can explore and learn about their environment, are free to question and experiment and to reach new levels of growth.

The Purchase Children's Center, Inc. creates an environment that allows children to enhance themselves socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively. These goals are achieved through the building and sustaining of a bond between the child, the parent and the teacher.

## **STANDARDS**

The Purchase Children's Center established in 1980 is licensed by the New York State Office of Child and Family Services. The Purchase Children's Center complies with all the standards that have been set forth.

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## ADMISSION POLICY

The Purchase Children's Center believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

At the Purchase Children's Center equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion and disability or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Education programs are designed to meet the needs of all students.

## PROGRAMS AND HOURS

**TWO YEAR OLDS:**                   **Hours:** 9:00am – 11:30am  
**Eligibility:** Children who will be 2 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup>  
**Enrollment Options:** 3, 4 or 5 days  
Optional extended time until 1:00pm offered beginning in January

**HALF DAY PRESCHOOL:**       **Hours:** 8:45am – 11:45am  
**Eligibility:** Children turning 3 & 4 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup>  
**Enrollment Options:** 3 or 5 days per week.

**EXTENDED DAY:**               **Hours:** 8:30am – 1:00pm or 9:00am - 1:30pm  
**Eligibility:** Children turning 3 & 4 years old by December 31<sup>st</sup>  
**Enrollment Options:** 5 days per week

**LUNCH BUNCH:**               **Hours:** 11:45am - 12:30pm or 11:45am - 1:15pm  
**Eligibility:** Children turning 3 & 4 by December 31<sup>st</sup>  
**Enrollment Options:** Available 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 days per week

**ENRICHMENT CLASSES:**      Fun filled hands on programs that will enhance your child's interest and curiosity. Offered in three sessions, Fall, Winter & Spring. Classes vary.

## CURRICULA & LEARNING

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas, social, emotional, cognitive, physical as well as creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem solving, responsibility, independence and reasoning.

## **TWO YEAR OLD PROGRAM:**

### **MUSIC, GYM AND LIBRARY**

The Two Year Old Program incorporates these disciplines utilizing the teachers in the classroom. Movement and Motion, a physical education program for 2's will be held twice a month.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Halloween - The children participate in a pumpkin party (NO COSTUMES). Parents are invited to join their child for snack.

December Holidays - The children engage in holiday games and songs with parent participation.

(April) Month of the Young Child - parents/grandparents/siblings are invited to read to the class.

Art Show - Various projects that are created during the year are displayed. Projects from all the children in the school are displayed.

Moving Up Party - An end of the year get together to say goodbye to children and parents.

## **HALF DAY AND EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS:**

**MUSIC** - The music teacher meets with the children once a week to provide an interactive program of age appropriate songs, rhythms and movement. A special holiday program is presented in December. The Graduation performance in June is a culmination of the year's activities. All children are urged to wear sneakers on Music Days.

**GYM** - The gym teacher meets once a week with the children to help them develop their gross motor skills, upper body strength, cooperation and sportsmanship. Sneakers are required on gym days.

**LIBRARY** - The children are taken to the library, which is housed in the Purchase Community House, once a week where they help select books for classroom use and participate in a story time.

**NATURE AND YOGA** - The Nature of Things and Yoga Program will visit our school once a month.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

During the course of the year we will celebrate many special events. Some of our annual ones are as follows:

Halloween - the children participate in a variety of activities with a Halloween theme. Parent helpers are welcomed.

Thanksgiving - the children prepare a Thanksgiving feast. Parent helpers are welcomed.

December Holidays - the month is dedicated to Hanukkah, Christmas and celebrating the holiday traditions. Parent participation is welcomed. A Holiday sing-along culminates the month's activities.

Chinese New Year - the children prepare a Chinese feast and participate in Chinese New Year customs. Parent helpers are welcomed.

(April) Month of the Young Child – parents/grandparents/siblings are invited to read to the class.

Art Show - various projects that are created during the year are displayed. Projects from all the children in the school are displayed.

End of year goodbye - each class celebrates this special event with a party.

Graduation - A special ceremony to celebrate this milestone for the children entering Kindergarten.

## **TUITION**

Tuition is figured as an annual fee. It may be paid in full or in seven equal monthly installments beginning with August and ending with February. There are no refunds of deposits or tuition and it is understood that there will be no make-up time for loss due to illness, holidays, inclement weather or damage caused by same.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

A scholarship program is available. All applicants will be reviewed without regard to race, religion or national origin. Each applicant must demonstrate a need for financial assistance. A W-2 form must accompany the application. No applicant will receive 100% financial assistance in an approved scholarship. The exact amount of tuition to be paid by the applicant is to be determined in an interview with the Directors. All decisions on approval or denial of the application are solely the responsibility of the Directors. All applicants will be formally notified of the status of their scholarship request. Applications received and accepted in the program can be cancelled without penalty should the scholarship request be denied.

## **ABSENCE PROCEDURES**

If your child will be absent from school you can call before 9am and leave a message or email us at [preschool@purchasehouse.com](mailto:preschool@purchasehouse.com).

If your child will be absent for 3 days or more, please notify your child's teacher.

If your child has a communicable disease, please call to notify your child's teacher as soon as he/she is diagnosed so that we may notify the parents of the other students in that class.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL**

### **ARRIVAL**

- Please arrive on time - not too early and not too late.
- Park your car in areas designated for your child's class. Park your car, TURN IT OFF, and walk your child to his/her classroom. Please do not leave small children in the car unattended. Do not leave a child unattended in a classroom, please wait for the teacher to arrive.

### **DISMISSAL**

- Please arrive promptly for pick up. A parent who is consistently late picking up his/her child is adding to the insecurities most children have during their first school experience.

- Please pick up your child in the area the classroom teacher has designated as the dismissal area. Wait for the teacher to dismiss your child and make sure that the teacher knows you are taking your child.
- Your child will only be released to only to those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick up your child, you must notify us in advance. Your child will not be released with prior authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pickup person of this policy.
- Do not allow your child to run in the parking lots.

**TWO YEAR OLD PROGRAM:**

Arrival and dismissal will be by the back door. A teacher will be stationed by the door for dismissal.

**AM I PROGRAM:**

Arrival and dismissal will be by the classroom door.

(Under the rainbow) A teacher will be stationed by the door for dismissal.

**EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS:**

Arrival and dismissal will be through the main door.

**CARPOOLS AND SAFETY**

Please give a written carpool schedule to your child’s teacher.

Be sure to notify the teacher if there will be any change in your schedule.

A CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANYONE ELSE WITHOUT A WRITTEN NOTE OR PERMISSION.

We will ask for ID from anyone we do not know, including fathers, mothers, caregivers and grandparents.

*For safety’s sake*, when dropping off your child at school - PARK YOUR CAR, TURN IT OFF AND WALK YOUR CHILD TO HIS/HER CLASSROOM. Please do not leave small children in the car unattended.

REMINDER: ALL CHILDREN UNDER 4 YEARS OLD MUST BE TRANSPORTED IN A CAR SEAT. CHILDREN 4 YEARS OLD AND OLDER WHO WEIGH 40 POUNDS AND ARE TALLER THAN 40 INCHES MUST BE IN A BOOSTER SEAT WITH A LAP AND SHOULDER BELT.

**SECURITY PROTOCOL**

Our security protocol in place at the Purchase Community House is a “buzz in” system for entry to the building during the day.

Please read the following to facilitate entry into the building.

- All doors will be locked at 9:15am.
- Entry into the building after 9:15am will be thru the front door only.
- Please ring buzzer and allow up to 30 seconds for a response before ringing again. (Staff need time to get to the buzzer)
- If no one responds after the second attempt, please call 949-2636 and someone will come to the door to let you in.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION & CLOSING DUE TO EXTREME WEATHER**

Occasionally severe weather or other conditions (i.e. floods, loss of power, loss of water) may prevent us from opening on time or at all. Families can find delay and closing information in the following manners:

Check your e-mail for information regarding school delays and/or closings.

**OR**

Check the Purchase Children's Center Website ([www.purchasechildrenscenter.com](http://www.purchasechildrenscenter.com)) regarding school delays and/or closings.

**OR**

You may call the Purchase Children's Center at **914-949-2636** and listen to the message. This message will provide information regarding each program at the Purchase Children's Center.

**A decision on delays and closings is usually made by 7AM.**

The Purchase Children's Center has an emergency disaster plan in place, including an alternate safe location. Staff members are First Aid and CPR certified. You will be notified via cell phones or email if there is a need to relocate the children.

## **FIRE DRILL EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

- Fire Drills will occur monthly.
- Teachers will be advised of day – not time
- Attendance and Head count will be done before exiting building and upon arrival to safe area.
- Staff will wait for O.K. to return to building.
- If we cannot return to the building, parents will be contacted and advised where relocation area is for pick-up.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is the process of gathering information about children in order to make decisions. Assessment can serve many different purposes.

- To support learning
- To identify special needs
- For program evaluation and monitoring trends
- To assess program and school accountability

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Children's records are open only to the child's teachers, the Directors, the child's parents or guardian and an authorized employee of a licensing agency. Children's records will not be released to anyone other than the aforementioned without written permission from the child's parent or guardian.

## **CONFERENCE DAYS - TEACHER/PARENT COMMUNICATION**

There will be two scheduled conferences between each child's teacher and parents. You will be notified when they occur. You will receive a written progress and planning report at that time. Other avenues of

communication are daily communication when dropping off your child, bulletin boards, newsletters, email and classroom visits.

Our teachers will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since school days are devoted to caring for the children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

Do not hesitate to consult with your child's teacher or with the Directors if a special problem arises. The school will help you find appropriate special services if there is a need. Children are better served when both teachers and parents work as a team.

### **PARENT CONCERNS**

Parents with concerns about their child's classroom experience should attempt to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. We urge you to discuss your concerns with the Lead Teacher. If your concerns are not resolved, please make an appointment to speak to the Director(s).

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

A current list of support services available for children and families is located in the Purchase Children's Center office. We will share and assist in locating, contacting and utilizing these resources.

### **TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT**

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Directors to decide to discontinue a child's enrollment. This decision will be based on the best interest of that child. Options will be exercised to correct a situation before a final decision is made. Termination may be the result of the following:

- school's inability to meet the child's needs
- disruptive behavior
- abuse toward other children, staff or property

### **CHILD'S ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL**

Prior to your child's first day of school you will have the opportunity to meet with your child's teachers and communicate any anticipated concerns. We will work with the parent and child to make your child's adjustment as smooth as possible; however, at times family and home situations have a tremendous effect on your child's adjustment. If there is a change in the family situation or an event that could be upsetting to your child, please inform your child's teachers so that they can be sensitive to it. All information will be kept confidential.

### **CELL PHONE USAGE**

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone anytime while visiting the center.



## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

We will administer over the counter topical ointments, lotions, creams and sprays including sunscreen products and topically applied insect repellent. In the case of administering, epinephrine auto injectors, Diphenhydramine in combination with the auto injector, asthma inhalers and nebulizers, these medications must be in its original bottle accompanied by a note from your doctor on how to administer the medication. We must also have on file a signed permission slip from the parent (available from your child's teacher). Children may not give themselves their own medication.

If this procedure is not followed we will not be able to administer the medication.

### **ALLERGIES**

Please notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us with a letter detailing the symptoms, reactions, treatment and care.

If your child has a food allergy you must notify us so that we can make appropriate substitutions.

### **ILLNESSES**

If your child has any of the following symptoms, either in the morning or from the night before, DO NOT send him/her to school: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, eye discharge, lingering cough, greenish nasal discharge or general fatigue.

Please do not send a sick child to school. If your child is too ill to remain in school, you will be notified to pick him/her up. No child who has left school will be permitted to return that day.

We have a part-time nurse on staff. If you would like to discuss your child's illness with her, please speak to one of the Directors.

### **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

Immunizations in accordance with the New York State Public Health Law (PHL) are required. In addition, submission of a written medical statement signed by a health care provider, verifying that a child is able to participate in preschool and currently appears to be free from contagious or communicable diseases is required prior to attending the Purchase Children's Center.

New York State regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to medical reasons are followed.

### **INJURIES**

First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g. scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting state regulation.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Please inform your child's teacher if an injury has occurred at home (bruise, scrape, bump, etc.) so the teacher is aware of where it happened.

## **SNACK**

Snack and drinks are provided daily; however, we do welcome contributions from home. Please no candy.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays may be celebrated in school. You may bring in a special snack for your child's class. Please let your child's teacher know in advance if you will be celebrating your child's birthday at school.

We will only hand out invitations if everyone in the class is invited. If you wish to invite only a few children, we suggest you mail the invitations.

## **CLOTHING**

Please dress your child comfortably and according to the weather. Children should be dressed in washable clothes, clothes they can manipulate themselves and that will not cause them to worry if they "dirty" themselves. Sneakers are required on gym days. Mittens are easier to put on than gloves. Children should bring shoes to school when boots are worn. Do not overdress children in winter. The building is well heated, and the children do not go outside if the temperature is below 32 degrees. All clothing should be labeled to ensure the return of clothing.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

**Your child should have a labeled bag to transport his/her belongings to and from school.**

**Please label all bags, clothing and items sent to school.**

Check with your child's teacher as to when their Show and Tell days are. If an item is too valuable or irreplaceable it is better to keep it home. Do not send in anything breakable. Toy weapons (guns, swords, fighting and action figures) are not permitted in school.

## **CHILD OF THE WEEK**

Each 3, 4, and 5-year-old child will be Child of the Week once during the school year. This is an opportunity for each child to be the "star" of the group.

## **PARENT VISITORS**

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular school hours. Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked after 9:15am. Please notify your child's teacher in advance so she may plan accordingly.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

During the course of the school year there will be opportunities for parent participation. In addition, the school and staff appreciate and welcome any special skill or interest you may like to share with us or we may call upon you to share an aspect of your profession with us. Please notify your child's teacher if you are interested.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family concerns.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The developmental appropriateness of an early childhood program is most apparent in the interaction between adults and children. Developmentally appropriate interactions are based on adult's knowledge and expectations of age appropriate behavior in children, balanced by adult's awareness of individual differences among children.

The purpose of these guidelines is to help the children develop a healthy self-esteem and the life skills they need to be effective, happy, contributing and respectful members of school, family and society.

- Adults provide many varied opportunities for children to communicate.
- Adults facilitate a child's successful completion of tasks by providing support, focused attention, physical proximity and verbal encouragement. Adults recognize that children learn from trial and error and that children's misconceptions reflect developing thought.
- Teachers are alert to signs of undue stress in children's behaviors and aware of appropriate stress reducing activities and techniques.
- Adults facilitate the development of self-esteem by respecting, accepting and comforting children regardless of the child's behavior.
- Adults facilitate the development of self-control in children. Children learn self-control when adults treat them with dignity and use discipline techniques such as:
  - Guiding children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior.
  - Valuing mistakes as learning opportunities.
  - Redirecting children to a more acceptable behavior or activity.
  - Listening when children talk about their feelings and frustrations.
  - Guiding children to resolve conflicts and modeling skills that help children to solve their own problems.
  - Patiently reminding children of rules and their rationale as needed.

## **BITING POLICY**

Biting is a behavior that is very disturbing to all concerned. It frightens the child who is bitten and alarms his parent. It also worries the parents of the child who bites—and often scares the biter as well. Although most children do not bite, especially after the age of 3, biting is by no means rare in groups of young children. When it does occur, biting cannot be ignored.

Children bite for different reasons. Sometimes they feel frustrated or threatened, in other cases, they get a sense of power over others. We try to help children recognize their feelings and learn words to express them.

We clearly label biting as unacceptable and explain the reason in words that the child can understand. After first comforting and caring for the child who was bitten, we say something like this: “Biting hurts. I do not allow other people to hurt you and I will not allow you to hurt other people by biting them. You may not bite anyone.”

If biting happens again, we remove the child from the other children. We will explain that she can play with the other children only if she does not bite. We make it a major priority to prevent further biting. To curtail biting, we assign an adult to monitor the child who has bitten, ready to jump in and prevent a bite. Of course, we also talk with the child’s parents to ensure that we’re all responding consistently – at home and at school. In addition, we want to see what parents notice about the biting, such as cues that the child is about to bite or observations about situations in which biting seems to happen.

We want all parents to know that we take prompt, determined action to eliminate biting in our classroom. In the past, our methods have worked. Biting has been brought to a quick stop.

**If a 3, 4 or 5-year-old child bites for a second time**, the child will be sent home for the day. Strategies to eliminate the biting will be discussed with the parent. If the biting continues after the teachers have tried different strategies, the Purchase Children’s Center will ask the parents to seek outside evaluation and guidance to eliminate the biting.

**Toddlers** will be handled in a manner which will be individualized for their stage of development. These strategies will be discussed with the parents. If the teachers have tried different techniques and they are not successful, the Purchase Children’s Center will ask the parents to seek outside evaluation and guidance to eliminate the biting.

## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse and neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The Child Protective Services Agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child’s needs are met. The Purchase Children’s Center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse and neglect.

New York State Office of Children and Family Services – 845 708-2400

Mandated Reporter Hotline – 1 800-342-3720

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

### Social Services Law 418.19(a) - (d): 418.19 Child abuse reporting and protection of children.

**(a)** In accordance with the provisions of sections 413 and 415 of the Social Services Law, the staff and directors of day-care centers are to report to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused or maltreated child. This must be done in the following manner:

(1) Center staff must report such information to the director of the center or his/her designee.

(2) The director of the day-care center or his/her designee is then responsible for making or causing to be made an immediate report to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment by telephone (800-342-3720), followed by a written report within 48 hours, in the form and manner prescribed by the department, to the child protective service of the local department of social services in the county in which the child resides.

**(b)** The director or operator of the day-care center is responsible for implementing procedures which ensure the safety and protection of any child named in a report of child abuse or maltreatment involving a situation which occurs while the child is in attendance at the center. Immediately after making or causing to be made a report pursuant to subdivision (a) of this section, the director or operator of the center must take such appropriate action as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of the children involved in the report and, as necessary, of any other children in the care of the center. This action must include notifying, as soon as practicable, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child(ren) named in the report that the report has been made to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and of the steps being taken to ensure the health and safety of the children in the center. The director or operator must also take all reasonable steps to preserve any potential evidence of abuse or maltreatment. Insofar as possible, any action taken under this subdivision must cause as little disruption as possible to the daily routine of the children in the center.

**(c)** In the event the director is notified of or becomes aware of the existence of a report of child abuse or maltreatment naming a child in attendance at the day-care center and involving a situation which occurred while the child was in attendance at the day-care center through information provided by a person or persons other than staff of the day-care center, the director or operator of the center must, insofar as is practicable, comply with the provisions of subdivision (b) or (c) of this section, except that the director or operator will not be required to notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child(ren) named in the report.

**(d)** In meeting his/her responsibilities under subdivision (b) of this section, the director or operator of the day-care center may, consistent with any appropriate collective bargaining agreements, or any applicable provisions of law, take one or more of the following actions with regard to staff of the center relevant to a report of child abuse or maltreatment involving a child while in attendance at the center:

(1) dismissal, suspension or transfer of any employee, volunteer or other person who is the subject of a child abuse and maltreatment report.

(2) increased supervision over a person who is the subject of a report

(3) provisions of instruction and/or remedial counseling to a person who is the subject of a report;

(4) initiation of appropriate disciplinary action where applicable; and/or

(5) provision of appropriate training to and/or increased supervision of staff and/or

volunteers pertinent to the prevention and remediation of child abuse and maltreatment.

In the event that the Director is the person being accused of allegations of abuse, the second designated person in charge at the Center should be notified at once.