

## Philosophy

The primary goal of the Hellenic American Preschool Program is to provide children with a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment which complements the home by promoting optimal cognitive, social, and emotional development for the young child.

Our social and educational goals are to present children with an enriching environment that encourages the development of self-confidence and positive attitude. We believe children should grow at their own developmental level whether it is separating from home, sharing toys with other children, or learning a new task.

The focus of our preschool program is on the learning process. The child will learn through play, individual and group activities, as well as one-on-one and hands-on instruction. Experienced and caring staff members communicate with parents in a partnership to provide the most age appropriate curriculum for each child.



## Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of the Hellenic American Preschool Program include the following in order to facilitate children's development to its maximum potential:

- Creating an atmosphere that encourages respect for the feelings, opinions, and personal property of others.
- Promoting fun and adventure through games and creative activities.
- Promoting cognitive development through constructive play.
- Promoting good manners in the use of appropriate language and behavior.
- Promoting good health and nutrition.
- Seeking to increase children's social and emotional development through cooperative learning activities.
- Developing children's motor skills through physical activities.

A child must be 2.9 years by September 1 (Effective Fall ) and fully toilet trained. All children that are enrolled MUST be fully toilet trained. Pull ups, rubber pants or diapers are not allowed. We do understand that children occasionally have accidents and we ask that you supply a change of clothing in the child's backpack for such an occasion. If your child consistently wets or soils their clothing, the child's enrollment will be terminated.

**Teacher/Child Ratio:** 1:10 approximately

We provide a part-time and/or full-time program to suit your needs.

Morning/Half Day  
8:15 am - 11:30 am

Full Day  
8:15 am - 2:15 pm



- A 2-day minimum enrollment is required in order for your child to attend the HAA Preschool.
- The Hellenic American Preschool Program follows the HAA school calendar for the year.
- The preschool daily schedule is attached to this handbook.

### **Drop Off/Pick Up**

The staff at HAA cares deeply about the safety of your child. One important responsibility that we hold and take very seriously is the dropping off and picking up of your child from school

- **Drop off** time is from 8:00 am - 8:15 am.
- **Pick Up** time for half day is 11:30 am, full day 2:15 pm.

Drop off will be in front of the school on Broadway St. Parents should drive up Worthen St., turn right onto Broadway and pull up to the Cultural Center. A teacher will be waiting to greet or dismiss your child. Pick up for parents or anyone designated to pick up Pre-K and/or Kindergarten should proceed by the front of the school and right on to Dummer Street. Parking is available on Dummer Street and in Demoulas Park. If a Pre-K or Kindergarten student has an older sibling they will go to the Cultural Center also. This policy is to provide the safest method of drop off and pick up for the children.

Dismissal for half day preschoolers will be at the Cultural Center lobby door.

Parents are asked to notify the school in writing if someone other than yourself will be picking up your child.

## Enrollment Procedure

The Principal and the preschool teachers will arrange an Open House day and time whereby the Preschool Program will be explained to parents. At this meeting, any questions/concerns about the program can be discussed. If a parent decides to enroll the child to the program, a \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee will be taken. The following forms will need to be completed before the child begins.

- Registration Form
- Developmental History Form
- Valid Birth Certificate
- Massachusetts Immunization Form
- Photo Consent Form
- Tuition Agreement
- Emergency Form



## Withdrawal Policy

The HAA requires a two-week notification of any withdrawals from the program or parent will be charged for that period.

## Attendance

- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each day. Parents are asked to call the school if their child will be absent.
- If you register your child for certain days, this time block is reserved for your child.
- There are no tuition fees for winter and spring vacations.
- Monday holidays, Thanksgiving holiday, other holidays, and any other cancellations are not reimbursed.
- If your child is absent due to illness, contagious disease, etc., tuition is **not** waived or refunded.
- Snow days are **not** refunded or rescheduled.
- Lunch money will **not** be refunded in the event of snow days or cancellations for other reasons.

## Change of Address/Phone Numbers

Information on each student is maintained in an emergency binder in the main office. It is imperative that this information be kept current. If at any time during the school year, home and/or work numbers change, and/or addresses change, please notify the main office immediately.

## Snow Emergencies

Hellenic American Academy makes the judgment on school cancellations. Announcements will be made on Boston's channels 4, 5, 6, 7, and on WBZ radio and WCAP (980) Lowell by 6:00 am. At times, the Academy may seek a delay. In the event of a delay, school start time is as follows:

- (a) 60 minute delay - school drop off will be at 9:30 am.
- (b) 90 minute delay- school drop off will be at 10:00 am.

There will be no refunds for school cancellations or delayed openings.



## Fire Drills

Several times each school year, practice fire drills are conducted. These are held to familiarize students with the locations of the nearest exits and the procedure for evacuating the building, should there ever be an emergency. The fire drill exit routes are clearly marked in each area of the building.



## Smoking and the Use of Tobacco Products

Hellenic American Academy recognizes its responsibility to provide a healthful school environment and to protect and promote the good health, safety and well being of students, staff, and school visitors. To this end, smoking and the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, in school facilities, or on school grounds by an individual is prohibited.

## Safety of Students/Staff

Safety of students and school personnel are a top priority at the Hellenic American Academy. To ensure the safety of our students and school personnel, the following measures are in place at HAA:

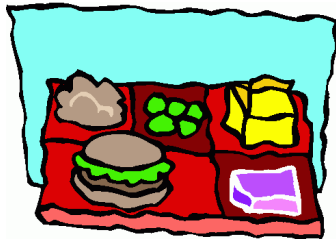
- All doors are locked and the back gate chained and locked. Entry must be made through the front door by ringing the bell.
- All parents and other visitors must check in at the main office. **NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO ROAM THE SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS.**
- No student is dismissed to any person other than his/her parent or guardian without special parental permission. A custody file is kept on children so identified.
- During arrival/dismissal times and recess periods, students are monitored carefully by the staff.

## Tuition

Tuition is to be paid by the first of the month. If tuition is not received by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, a \$25.00 late fee will be assessed. If tuition is more than 6 days in arrears the child will not be able to attend preschool. A tuition payment plan is to be discussed when enrolling into the program. For returned checks, there is an automatic \$50.00 charge, payable immediately in cash. If lateness of tuition payments repeatedly occurs the school committee may take further legal action to settle the issue.

## Lunch and Snack

Parents are responsible for providing healthy snacks, beverages, and lunch. Snacks and beverages will be on hand in the event that a child is not prepared with one. No gum, candy, or soda is allowed. It is also helpful that parents cut and peel all fruit and sandwiches according to their child's preference. If children attend all day preschool, children may join the lunch program.



## **Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to visit the preschool program after they arrange a visiting time with the classroom teacher. The staff recognizes the importance of working closely with parents to help make the child's school experience a positive and exciting one.

Parents are encouraged to share comments and concerns about their child. These issues may be discussed during a scheduled parent/teacher meeting. The HAA preschool staff is always available to meet with parents upon request.

## **Progress Reports**



At a minimum of every 6 months, parents will be provided with a progress report of their child's progress. This report will be maintained in the child's records.

## **Records and Confidentiality**

All records are confidential. Only the parent/guardian and HAA staff is given access to a child's file. Parents can receive copies of any information in a child's file. Any information from a child's file may be sent to any school or agency only with written permission of the parent/guardian.

When information is requested from a child's file, a written log will be kept in the folder recording the information released and to whom it was released. The log shall include the name and signature of the person to whom the records are released, date, a list of the released records, the purpose of such release, and signature of the person who releases the records.

## **Referral Services**

The HAA staff member who is working with the children will observe and document a child's file with any concerns in the areas of speech, language, hearing, vision, physical, cognitive, or social and emotional development. If the preschool teacher, in consultation with the principal, identifies a child as being in need of an evaluation or additional services, the principal or preschool teacher will provide to the parent a written statement that will include:

- Reasons for recommending a referral for additional services.
- Summary of observations related to the referral.
- Citations of any efforts by the HAA to accommodate the child's needs.

The principal or the preschool teacher shall assist the child's parents in making the referral but shall have written parental consent before any referral is made. The principal or preschool teacher will follow-up the referral, and with parental permission, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services, the principal and the child's teacher shall review the child's progress at the HAA every 3 months to determine if another referral is necessary. The HAA will maintain a written record of any referral, including the parent conference and results.



### **Meeting with Parents**

The HAA shall assure that the preschool teacher shall meet with the parents/guardians prior to admitting a child to the preschool.

- At the meeting the preschool teacher shall provide to the parents/guardians the HAA Parent Handbook.
- The HAA shall provide the opportunity for parent/guardians to visit the preschool classroom at the time of the meeting or before the enrollment of the child.

### **Behavior Management**

- No child shall be denied food, rest, or bathroom privileges as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
- No child shall be punished for eating or not eating.
- No child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect.

The plan for discipline at HAA is in accordance with the Office for Children regulations stated above. In all cases, discipline will be directed towards maximizing the development and growth of the children and toward protecting the children within the program. The following guidelines will be used:

1. Rules of the classroom will be developed and reviewed with the children.  
The rules will be simple and clearly stated in positive terms.

2. Children being disruptive in one area will be redirected to another area or activity. If the child continues to be disruptive, the teacher will speak to the child about his/her actions and have the child sit aside in a chair or other quiet area. This is also known as “Time Out” and will not exceed a period of 5 minutes.
3. Staff members will explain rules and reasons for their actions. They will check with the child to ensure he/she has a clear understanding of why his/her behavior is being corrected.
4. Staff members will speak to the child about his/her actions, always trying to ensure that the child maintains his/her self-esteem.
5. Children’s feelings will be accepted and respected. Staff members will assist children in finding healthy, non-hurtful ways of expressing their feelings.



## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

### **Introduction**

It is the policy of the Hellenic American Academy to maintain a respectful public service environment. All employees regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, or handicap, or sexual orientation have the right to an environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassing conduct. The Hellenic American Academy will not tolerate and prohibits sexual harassment and/or offensive behavior by or towards any employee/student.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, this policy is neither designed nor intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment, which is illegal, can consist of a wide range of unwanted and unwelcome sexually directed behavior, and is defined as:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or
  2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used to impact employment decisions or
  3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

These definitions are intended to broadly interpret and include any sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work place environment that is hostile, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers.

Certain behaviors are not consistent with the principles and values of the Hellenic American Academy and are prohibited by this policy such as but not limited to: unwelcome sexual remarks or compliments, inquiries into one's sex life; sexual jokes or horseplay, offensive flirtations, advances or propositions, the display of sexual suggestive objects, pictures or written materials, lewd nicknames, sexually suggestive facial expressions and sexual conduct. These are examples of conduct that may, depending on the circumstances, constitute sexual harassment.

Each employee is expected to conduct himself/herself in a respectful manner. Each employee is expected to cooperate in an investigation of a complaint of harassment or sexual harassment by providing any information he/she may have concerning the matter.

## **Complaints Procedure Policy**

If classroom related, the first step is to speak with the teacher via an appointment after school, made through the office. **Please note: ANY complaints MUST be made within 10 school days.**

### **Formal**

Should any concerns arise regarding your child's education at the Hellenic American Academy **the proper protocol** is as follows:

1. If not classroom related, discussion with appropriate party that is, teacher, principal via written letter, phone call, or appointment.
2. Should results be unsatisfactory, the next step is a formal written request to the principal for a meeting with the principal. The written request must state the issues of concern.
3. If there are any doubts about where to direct the complaint a letter should be written to the Principal, who will then make the necessary arrangements or advise what steps to take. Complaints about the actions of individual teachers should, in the first instance, be taken up with the Principal. Complaints about the actions of the Principal should be taken up with the Chairman/President of the School Committee.

We trust that your children are happy at this school however, over a period of time an odd problem may arise. The following procedures dealing with complaints of any kind must be followed:

1. The matter should be broached with the classroom teacher.
2. If a satisfactory conclusion is not achieved then an appointment should be made with the Principal through the school office.

Should the parent feel further dialogue is necessary the parent shall write a letter to the School Committee Chair requesting to be included on the agenda of an upcoming meeting. The letter must state the concerns. This letter should state the dates of prior meetings and copies of prior correspondence. No meeting will take place without an appointment or a written request.

### **Communication**

You will receive a response within five working days.

## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

The Hellenic American Academy is committed to promoting understanding of the principles and practices of equality and justice.

### **Aims**

Our aim is to equip pupils with an awareness of our diverse society and to appreciate the value of difference. This will be achieved by adherence to the following principles;

- Discrimination on the basis of color, culture, origin, sex or ability is not acceptable.
- The primary objective of this school will be to educate, develop, and prepare all our pupils for developing a tolerance of diversity.
- Pupils and teachers will further this objective by contributing towards a happy and caring environment and by showing respect for, and appreciation of, one another as individuals.

### **Managing Equality in Practice.**

#### **1. Admission**

The school follows the Boards Admission Policies that do not discriminate against sex, race, color, ethnicity, or religion.

#### **2. Registration**

Pupils' names will be accurately recorded and correctly pronounced. Pupils will be encouraged to accept and respect names from other cultures.

#### **3. Discrimination**

Any type of discriminatory behavior is unacceptable. Racist symbols, badges and insignia on clothing and equipment are forbidden in school. Staff should be aware of possible cultural assumptions and bias within their own attitudes. All forms of discrimination by any person within the school's responsibility will be treated seriously.

#### **4. Language**

The school views linguistic diversity positively. Pupils and staff must feel that their natural language is valued.

#### **5. Resources**

The school's aim is to provide for all pupils according to their needs, irrespective of sex, ability or ethnic origin. Equality of opportunity permeates the whole curriculum and will be reviewed regularly.

### **Child Protection Policy**

The Hellenic American Academy recognizes that the classroom teacher is the first stage in the pastoral care of the child in the school. Teachers are well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behavior or failure to develop or thrive. Categories for concern are:

#### **Neglect**

The persistent or severe neglect of a child that results in serious impairment of the child's health or developments.

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical injury to a child - reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

The involvement in sexual activities to which the child was unable to give informed consent.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection.

#### **Grave Concern**

Children whose situations do not currently fit the above categories but for whom there is significant risk of abuse are of prime concern to faculty and administration. If a teacher becomes aware of abuse s/he will notify the Principal of the school immediately. The Principal will investigate so far as is possible and involve the relevant agencies (parents, foster-parents, social services, police, etc.) Dependent upon the investigation, the Principal shall ensure that a case conference is arranged involving the above agencies. The outcome of

this will depend upon the individual case but it could result in the child's name being entered onto the child protection register. The Principal will keep the class teacher up to date with developments. Every attempt will be made to offer support for the child while at school and it is hoped that the school will provide an environment in which s/he can relax and spend the school day in complete confidence and safety.

### **Allergies**

Parents should inform the preschool teacher at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter if appropriate of any dietary restrictions and/or allergies to food, medication, etc. All allergies will be posted. The HAA will follow any physician's orders for any special dietary requirements to children.

### **Excused Absence/Sickness**

If a child has any of the following signs of illness, parents are asked not to bring their child to the school:

- Fever over 100 F
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Inflammation, redness or discharge of the eye
- Abscess or draining sores
- A rash, unless determined to be not contagious ( A doctor's note is strongly recommended here.)



If a child becomes ill during their day at the HAA, he/she will be isolated from the other children and encouraged to rest quietly. Parents will be immediately contacted and asked to take their child home. Parents should notify the school if their child contacts a contagious disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, conjunctivitis, etc. The school will then alert the staff and parents.

## **Medication Policy**

- 1) The school nurse shall be the supervisor of both prescription and non-prescription medication administration.
- 2) Medication both of a prescription and non-prescription nature will be administered to a student only by the school nurse. In the absence of the nurse, a parent/guardian only may administer any necessary medication.
- 3) No self-administration of medication with the exceptions of inhalers and Epipens as directed by a physician and with the approval of the school nurse will be permitted. Written instructions for medications by physician or parent/guardian must include but may not be limited to:



- Student's name
  - Name & signature of licensed prescriber & telephone number
  - Name of medication
  - Dosage and frequency
  - All specific directions for administration
  - Possible side effects
  - Required storage conditions
  - Duration of prescription
- 5) All medications must be delivered to the Hellenic American Academy in original pharmacy/manufacturer labeled containers. Expiration dates must be checked by parent/guardian.
  - 6) Parent/guardian may retrieve medication from school at any time.
  - 7) No more than a 30-day supply of medication will be stored at the Hellenic American Academy.
  - 8) All outdated/expired medications shall be returned to parent/guardian or discarded by school.
  - 9) Record of medication administered shall be kept by school nurse and available to school secretary in the event of the nurse's absence.

## **Health Requirements for Children**

The HAA shall only admit a child if provided written documentation from a physician indicating:

1. The child has had a complete physical examination and lead test within 1-year prior to enrollment or will obtain one prior to beginning school. Physical exams must be updated yearly. In order for the child to remain enrolled, the physician must fill out a new physical form annually.

2. The child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the Department of Health's recommended immunizations schedule. Results of the above will be kept in the child's file.
3. Such screening shall not be required of any child whose parent states in writing that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.

### **Injury Prevention/Reporting**

Minor accidents occur from time to time. First aid will be administered and the teacher will notify the child's parents. The HAA will inform any parents immediately of any injury that requires emergency care beyond minor first aid. An injury reported will be maintained in the child's file in case of a serious accident.

### **Lead Paint Notification**

Parents should be aware of the dangers of lead paint. Massachusetts State Regulations require that parents have their children tested for lead paint poisoning by a physician or appropriate clinic before attending school.

### **Infection Control/Personal Hygiene**

No child shall be punished, verbally abused, or humiliated for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet. Children must be supervised in the bathroom areas at all times.

Staff and children must wash their hands with soap and running water using friction at least at the following times:

- Before eating or handling food
- After using the restroom
- After being exposed to body fluids and discharges
- After handling HAA animals or their equipment
- After cleaning

Staff members must also wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting themselves. Individual towels shall be used to dry hands. Soiled clothing will be "doubled bagged" in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items. The bag will be labeled with the child's name and returned to the parent at the end of the day. A change of clothes shall be available for each child. Parents must provide an additional set of clothing to be stored at the HAA.

## **Transportation**

Transportation is not provided by the HAA. Parents are responsible for bringing their child /ren to and from the school. Buses will be provided to and from a field trip. In an emergency, an ambulance will be called.

## **Napping/Quiet Time**



Rest mats for naptime are available for purchase. Parents are also encouraged to leave a blanket and a small pillow at the school for their child's use during naptime. Naptime is conducted daily for about 1 hour in the afternoon. If a child chooses not to sleep, he/she is required to engage in a quiet activity on their mat.

## **Terminations**

The HAA may suspend or terminate a child from the program for any of the following reasons:

1. Persistent behavioral problems of the child, which have been documented by the school and shared with the parent.
2. Late payments or nonpayment of tuition.
3. Refusal of parent/guardian and/or child to comply with any of the written policies described in this handbook.
4. Refusal to give a 2-week notification of intent to withdraw from the school. Whenever there is a potential situation, which might lead to termination, the teacher will discuss the situation with the parent so an attempt to solve the problem is reached before a warranted termination. A written statement will be provided by the Principal and the School Committee to the parent/guardian explaining the reasons for termination and appropriate transition will be arranged to accommodate the parents and children.

## Preschool Medical Policy

To help insure the health and well being of all the children at the Hellenic American Preschool and in conjunction with school policy, we must use the following guidelines in dealing with common illnesses:

Conditions under which a child should not attend school or parents will be called to take a child home

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Conditions under which a child will be permitted to return to school

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Fever of 100 F or above

Temperature normal (fever free) for 24 hours

Diarrhea

No longer occurring

Vomiting

No longer occurring

Chicken Pox

Spots have scabbed over

Conjunctivitis

On medication for 24 hours

Strep Throat

On medication for 24 hours

Ear Infection

On medication

Head Lice

Has completed treatment and child is lice and nit free

Unexplained Rash

Doctor has seen the child and determined the cause of the rash