



Parent Handbook

40 Sutton Place

37 East 63rd Street

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Garden House School.

Our goal is to provide a positive first school experience, which will lay the foundation for your child's future.

Carefully read through your Parent Handbook. This should answer questions you may have regarding school procedures and policies. Please share the information contained in this booklet with all persons involved in the care giving of your child. We do expect caregivers to follow the same guidelines established for parents.

The relationship between School and parents is an essential aspect of a child's educational experience. Garden House School values the partnership it establishes and maintains with the family during the student's enrollment in our program.

A functional and constructive partnership between Garden House School and parents is rooted in professionalism, and includes basic tenets such as mutual respect and trust. The School's Kindness Code is for all to follow. All interactions with faculty, staff and other members of the community must be regardful, and in accordance with the philosophy and values of The School.

Concerns, issues and/or questions regarding School Policies, Procedures and the student's experience should be communicated directly with The Director.

We are licensed and regulated by The NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) as a Group Childcare Program. We are required to adhere to their guidance, policies and regulations. If found not to be in compliance, violations and closure may result.

Please note that the information in this document does not reflect the temporary changes that have been made to our daily operations due to the NYS, DOH and CDC guidelines and regulations in response to COVID-19. Said information is available via COVID Policy Manual & Waiver.

Kindly complete and sign the last page once you have read the information and return to the school office by **September 6th**.

Sutton Place

Phone: (212) 421-3282

Fax: (212) 826-0272

Park Avenue (63rd Street) Phone (212) 421-5095

Fax: (212) 421 - 5097

Thank you,

The School Office

Young 2s Program

Age: children need to be 2 years old by July 31st

2 or 3 days a week (2 hours per session).

AM session 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. **PM session** 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Class size – 5 to 7 children: 2 teachers

- Socialization is our primary goal during this first school experience.
- A structured day & schedule is followed including craft, circle time, free play, music, story
- time, and snack.
- Cooperation with peers is encouraged.
- Communication – using “words” to express feelings is modeled and taught to the Young 2s Program.
- Children do not have to be potty trained when they begin school.
- We encourage play dates outside of school with classmates.
- Music is offered once a week.

These students will join the Junior class upon completion of this class (at the same location and session where the older sibling began). Students who do not meet the age criteria for the Junior Program will join the Toddler class.

PLEASE NOTE that children born in August will be Toddlers the following academic year. Children who start in January (due to their DOB) will also be Toddlers in the Fall.

Phase In/Separation Program For Young 2s

Phase-In is a process in which the length of time for the class is gradually increased to normal schedule during the first 3 weeks of school. The idea is that the children will be eased into the routine of going to school, as it may be their first and only schooling experience.

During Phase-In please remember that your child is observing your actions. If they sense that you trust their teacher, they will feel comfortable and secure. The Phase-In process requires your transference of trust so that your little one knows that he/she is in good hands.

Our teachers will not take your child away from you. It is helpful to talk to your child about school and separation each day before arrival.

If a problem with separation persists beyond a reasonable time period we will ask parents to meet with the Director and teachers to discuss how to best proceed in order to maximize the benefits for the child and class.

If your child has separated well, we will encourage you to wait outside of the room.

HALF DAY Toddler Program (2.6 – 3 years old)

Age: children need to be 2 years, 6 months of age by September

5 days a week (2 .5 hours per session)

AM session 8:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. **PM session** 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Class size – approx. 10 children: 2 teachers

- Socialization is our primary goal during this first school experience.
- A structured day & schedule is followed including craft, circle time, free play, music, story time, ballet, and snack.
- Cooperation with peers is encouraged.
- Communication – using “words” to express feelings is modeled and taught to Toddlers.
- Children do not have to be potty trained when they begin school.
- We encourage play dates outside of school with classmates.
- Music and ballet are offered once a week (starting after Phase-In).

Phase In/Separation Program For Toddlers

Phase-In is a process in which the length of time for the class is gradually increased to normal schedule during the first 3 weeks of school. The idea is that the children will be eased into the routine of going to school, as it may be their first and only schooling experience.

During Phase-In please remember that your child is observing your actions. If they sense that you trust their teacher, they will feel comfortable and secure. The Phase-In process requires your transference of trust so that your little one knows that he/she is in good hands.

Our teachers will not take your child away from you. It is helpful to talk to your child about school and separation each day before arrival.

If a problem with separation persists beyond a reasonable time period, we will ask parents to meet with the Director and teachers to discuss how to best proceed in order to maximize the benefits for the child and class.

If your child has separated well, we will encourage you to wait outside of the room.

FULL DAY Toddler Program (2.6 – 3 years old)

Age: children need to be 2 years, 6 months of age by September

5 days a week (6 hours, 15 minutes per day)

8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday & 8:45 am - 11:30 a.m. on Friday

Class size – approx. 10 children: 2 teachers

- Socialization is our primary goal during this first school experience.
- A structured day & schedule is followed including craft, circle time, free play, music, story time, ballet, and snack.
- Cooperation with peers is encouraged.
- Communication – using “words” to express feelings is modeled and taught to Toddlers.
- Children do not have to be potty trained when they begin school.
- We encourage play dates outside of school with classmates.
- Music and ballet are offered once a week (starting after Phase-In).

Junior Program (3-4 year old)

5 days a week

AM session 8:45 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. **PM session** 12:30 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.

Extended days are available from 9:00 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. two to three days a week.

Requests are granted based on availability.

Class size – approx. 13/14 children: 2 teachers

- Garden House School's Early Reading and Writing program is introduced – children begin to write letters, their name and numbers utilizing the LWT Program.
- Reading is introduced phonetically. A is “ahh” as in apple.
- Reading is introduced on an individual basis as children progress at his/her own pace. They typically practice 2-3 letters/words, which are sent home 2-3 times a week.
- French, Ballet, and Music are taught once a week by our specialists.
- A thematic approach to learning is utilized. Children discover a theme such as Farm Animals and will investigate math, science, and art projects around the chosen theme.
- 2 Field trips are taken each year – one in the Fall, one in Spring.
- Weekly group meetings and Show and Tell to encourage standing in front of peers.

FULL DAY Junior Program (3-4 year old)

5 days a week

8:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 8:45 a.m. - 11:40 a.m. on Friday

- Class size – approx. 8/10 children: 2 teachers
- Garden House School's Early Reading and Writing program is introduced. Children begin to write letters, their names and numbers utilizing the LWT Program.
- Reading is introduced phonetically. A is “ahh” as in apple.
- Reading is introduced on an individual basis, children progress at his/her own pace.
- Juniors typically practice 2-3 letters/words, which are sent home 2-3 times a week.
- French, Ballet, and Music are taught once a week by our specialists.

- A thematic approach to learning is utilized. Children discover a theme such as Farm Animals and will investigate math, science, and art projects around the chosen theme.
- 2 Field trips are taken each year – one in the Fall, one in Spring.
- Weekly group meeting with Show and Tell to encourage standing in front of peers.
- Gym 2 times daily
- Lunch Monday-Thursday 11:30-12:00
- Rest Monday-Thursday 12:00-12:45

Half Day Senior Program (4-5 years old)

5 days a week

AM session 8:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. **PM session** 12:30 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.

Class size – approx. 14/15 children: 2 teachers

- Reading and Writing continues from where the child left off the previous term.
- French, Ballet, and Music continue to be taught once a week by our specialists.
- 2 Field trips each year – one in the Fall, one in the Spring.
- A thematic approach to learning is also used with the Seniors.
- Artist of the Month is a creative study of various artists.
- Weekly Journal
- Poem of the Week
- Survey Question of the Day
- Science Journal

All Day Senior Program

5 days a week

Monday through Thursday 8:45 AM – 3:00 PM and Friday 8:45 AM - 11:45 AM

Class size: 10-18 (Park) children: 2 teachers

- The curriculum is the same as the Half Day Senior Program
- Yoga once weekly
- Gym twice daily
- Lunch: Monday-Thursday 11:30-12:00
- Rest: Monday-Thursday 12:00-12:45

If there are more requests than spaces available, children are selected via lottery.

On-Going School Admissions

Near the end of your child's Junior year, the On-Going School Process begins with an informational meeting (usually in April). Each family is encouraged to have an individual meeting with the Director of Exmissions to discuss their child and school choices. The Director of Exmissions and Director will act as liaisons with the On-Going School Admissions Directors and will provide guidance for families graduating from GHS.

On-Going Schools Admission Guidelines

Parents partaking in the On-Going Schools admissions process will be required to review the guidelines on how the process is handled at Garden House School. Guidelines will be discussed and reviewed at meetings with the Director of Exmissions and the Director.

Kindergarten (5-6 years old)

5 days a week

Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 3:25 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m.- 11:45 a.m.

Class size: approx. 4-6 children: 1 teacher

- Children will continue with the Reading and Writing Program.
- Children will have handwriting, math, science and art on a weekly basis.
- French, Ballet, Music, and Yoga are also offered to this group by our specialists.
- Thematic approach to learning continues to be utilized.
- Short, local field trips are taken often with 2 major field trips each academic year- one in the Spring and one in the Fall.
- A Smart Board is utilized.
- Lunch: Monday – Thursday 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Rest: Monday – Thursday 12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.
- Gym twice daily

Enrollment & Re-Enrollment

Garden House School accepts children from every race, religion, ethnic and economic background. In December (of the current enrollment year), you will be asked to notify the school of your plans for the following year. **All families will be offered the same placement they currently have unless a written change request is received and space allows for such change. If you are not planning to return, we request a letter in writing.**

Kindly note the following:

- **The School's policy is to keep the children with their classmates as they move forward each year.**
- **Requests for specific classmates are not accepted.**
- **A move to the AM session is dependent on availability.**
- **Requests for specific teachers are not accepted.**

- Initial contract deposits are **not refundable**. We are unable to give you a tax donation letter for this deposit.

Re-Enrollment occurs annually during the month of December & January (as per ISAAGNY guidelines). Families will receive a contract for the upcoming academic year when we return from our holiday break.

- No requests for change will be accepted if the family is applying out.
- Extensions will be granted to families who are applying to ISAAGNY Ongoing Schools.
- If a child (Junior) is eligible for K in an Ongoing School, he/she will be considered for GHS K or Seniors.

Applying To Other Preschool Programs

We understand that you may want to apply to other preschools after your child's Young 2's, Toddler or Junior year. The Director will handle each family in this situation on an individual basis. As a member school, we adhere to ISAAGNY rules and regulations. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please speak to the Director. **Please note that ISAAGNY reports and/or recommendation letters will not be sent until all financial obligations have been met.**

Sibling Policy

All siblings are welcome. Please speak with The Director regarding applying. Tours are not necessary, but play dates will be scheduled in the Fall. Siblings have priority for scheduling (AM or PM). Siblings of children who have already graduated from GHS will also be given priority over the regular applicant pool.

Siblings who have an older brother or sister enrolled in our Junior, Senior or Kindergarten program will be given priority with scheduling as well, so that both children will attend school at the same (AM or PM) time (**if possible**).

Children must be 2 years 0 months old by the end of July to attend the Young 2s Program and 2 years 6 months for the Toddler Program.

Tuition

Payments should be paid promptly. Please follow the payment schedule as indicated on your contract. Reminders will be sent when each payment is due.

As per the contract, “Registration is for the full School year and the undersigned parents(s) or guardian(s) are obligated for the full year’s tuition. As class sizes, teacher placements and related staffing are adversely impacted by enrollment changes, long term absences and/or non-attendance, no reduction or refunds will be for cancellation, absence, illness or withdrawal of the Child for any reason whatsoever.”

Annual Teachers’ Holiday Fund

In December, parents are able to contribute anonymously to the annual Teachers’ Holiday Fund. Contributions are submitted to The Office; usually \$150.00 per family. The total amount is totaled with a percentage being taken out for specialists. The balance is divided equally between all the teachers at both locations. The school strongly discourages individual gifts from families during the Holidays.

Donations

Annual Cocktail Benefit

- Each class produces a class project which is auctioned at the event.
- Parents can donate special auction items.
- Parents can underwrite the party as an annual gift, the excess of which will be dispersed into the teachers' tuition reimbursement fund, yearly classroom special projects and building improvements.

Class Session Times

Young 2s Half days 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Toddlers Half days 8:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. or 12:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Full days 8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

Juniors Half days 8:45 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.
PM Extended Day 8:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.
Full days 8:45 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. Monday – Thursday &
8:45 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. Friday

Seniors Half days 8:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. or 12:30 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.
Full days 8:45 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday &
8:45 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. Friday

Kindergarten Full days 8:45 a.m. – 3:25 p.m. Monday – Thursday &
8:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Friday

Afternoon Session Placement

Once you have accepted a place in our PM session your child may remain in that session for your time at GHS. An opportunity for an AM session may be available during Re-Enrollment.

Emergency Procedures

All children enrolled at Garden House School must submit the Cumulative Health Record before the first day of school. The information on this form is crucial in the event of an emergency and we must have your signature authorizing us to seek medical attention for your child.

(See Emergency Plan for details.)

Medical Information

The New York City Department of Health requires the school to maintain a medical record for each child. **Children will not be permitted to attend school without a completed health record.** Children must have a physical examination within three months prior to admission and once a year thereafter. **Please submit the medical form before the first day of school.** Your physician should complete this form. Updated health records are required after the date of expiration. The School Office will provide new forms (usually after your child's next birthday). **ALL Immunizations, including the annual influenza vaccine, MUST be current as required by the Department of Health.**

Children diagnosed by a medical physician with a chronic condition such as asthma, allergies, or anaphylaxis should contact the school immediately to set up an appointment with our Healthcare Consultant.

Illness

If children come to school when they are not feeling well, they will be more vulnerable to infection. It is in the best interest of the child, the other children and the staff to keep sick children at home. If the teacher suspects that a child is not feeling well or has visible symptoms such as a runny nose, fever, diarrhea or vomiting they will notify the office so that the parent or guardian can be contacted to pick up the child. If your child is sick or will be absent, please notify the school. We also need to know if your child has a contagious disease

(i.e. strep throat, chicken pox, etc.). **Children should not attend school until 24 hours after being free of symptoms of fever, diarrhea or vomiting (without medication).**

Lice

Children with confirmed cases of head lice must be treated by a professional lice treatment organization. Proof of treatment must be submitted to the main office upon the child's return to school.

The School will conduct lice checks in September, January and April (and after a confirmed case(s) in a classroom).

Medications

Garden House cannot administer medication to your children.

Accident Reports

All accidents are to be reported, documented and filed in a log in the School's Office. Parents will be notified at the time of the accident depending on the severity. Parents will be notified immediately (by phone) when a head injury occurs.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year; once in November and again in May. School will be closed for the children on those days. Forms will be posted in the classrooms for parents to sign up for a 15-minute time block to meet with both the Head Teacher and the Assistant Teacher.

Arrangements for additional conferences can be made with the teachers when necessary. Please do not try and hold a discussion with teachers during arrival and dismissal times. Your child is important to us and we cannot give the undivided attention you deserve at those times.

Uniform

The Uniform is available through Flynn O'Hara 718-863-7561 or their website at www.flynnohara.com/school/NY451. The GHS code is NY451

Young 2s, Toddlers, Juniors, Seniors and Kindergarten students are required to wear the full uniform. **Please make sure that all items are clearly labeled with your child's name.**

Occasional accidents do happen and necessitate that an extra set of clothing be kept in your child's cubby AT ALL TIMES. Please include underclothes, socks and shoes. If soiled clothes are sent home, please send an extra set of clothing the next day. Please remember to change these clothes according to the season. **These clothes do not need to be the uniform outfit. Please make sure that all items are clearly labeled with your child's name.** We are not responsible for lost items.

Shoes

The girls are required to wear red shoes and the boys are required to wear black, brown or navy blue shoes. All shoes must have rubber soles and either have a Velcro fastener or be a slide-on shoe. No sneakers.

Diapers

If your child is not toilet trained, it is your responsibility to keep an ample supply of diapers, baby wipes and ointment in your child's cubby (please label these items). Please check and change your child's diaper before dropping him/her off at school.

Toilet Trained Students

Once children have been toilet trained a teacher will accompany them to the bathroom. Teachers will not be expected to wipe children's bottoms for them during the Junior, Senior and Kindergarten years unless they have an accident that requires an undergarment change. Teachers

will demonstrate for children how to wipe their bottom but we expect the children to take responsibility for their own hygiene. We encourage independence at GHS.

Lunch and Rest Period (Full Day Toddlers, Extended Day/Full Day Juniors, ADS & Kindergarten)

Children in a Full Day program (8:45 – 3:00/3:25) will need to bring a lunch and drink from home. Please keep the lunch simple and healthy, one that requires minimal preparation.

Full day children are required to rest for 45 minutes every day. The school will provide a rest mat for each child, but you may want to send a blanket from home. Please do not send pillows as they are prohibited by the Department of Health. It sometimes takes children time to adjust to their new schedule, especially if they are not accustomed to napping at home. Therefore, please do not worry if your child expresses negative feelings towards nap initially. We do not require children to sleep during this time, but they must rest quietly or look at a book on their own rest mat.

Toys, Candy and Valuable Items

We discourage children from bringing toys, candy and gum, and valuable items to school. Each classroom teacher will establish guidelines for “Show and Tell” day when toys and objects may be brought to school. Items representing weapons are not permitted.

Library

Garden House School libraries exist in both locations, Sutton Place and Park Avenue. Junior, Senior and Kindergarten children are eligible to check out one book per week. Toddler children have access to the collection, but are not eligible for check out privileges.

Arrival Times

All adults shall accompany children to the classroom at scheduled arrival times and assist with the removal of outerwear. **We expect children to be on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the entire class and can be very upsetting to the children. Once the children have settled in, we ask that you make your good-byes brief.** Activities will start at their scheduled times.

Children will be encouraged to greet the administrator at the entrance to the school and shake her/his hand.

Dismissal Times

At 63rd Street all children will be dismissed from the first floor entrance hall. Please wait at the entrance of the School. The children will line up against the (interior) wall and will be dismissed individually to the parent or authorized adult.

At Sutton Place children will be assembled in the entrance. Parents will wait outside behind the barrier and the children will be dismissed individually to the parent or authorized adult.

Children will be brought to The Office if no one has come to pick up after 10 minutes. Parents will be contacted. Please come to The Office for your child if you are late.

Please notify The Office, in advance of any pick up changes. We will not release your child to anyone we do not know or that does not have prior authorization. Please do so in writing. Teachers are not permitted to bring children home from school.

In addition, any NEW person that arrives to pick up your child should have (proper) identification as we will ask to see it.

Strollers

Leaving strollers is prohibited at both locations. We ask that if you must utilize a stroller that you bring it home with you after drop off.

At both locations the school can take no responsibility for damaged or stolen strollers. We also ask that you not leave bicycles or razors.

Play dates

Please plan playdates prior to school. Playdates planned at dismissal are upsetting to the children and often cause hard feelings among those not invited. Families involved in the playdate must notify The School prior to dismissal authorizing us to release your child to the other family. The School cannot be involved in making playdate arrangements.

Birthday Celebrations

The School is happy to cooperate with parents in organizing a special snack to celebrate your child's birthday. Classroom birthday celebrations must always be planned in conjunction with the classroom teacher. Please keep parties simple; just an extension of snack time. **Invitations for private parties may not be distributed in school.** Parties will not be scheduled the last week of each semester as there are many end of session events already planned.

Other Parties

Parties given to honor teachers by parents make it uncomfortable for both the teacher and his/her colleagues. Parents cannot host parties for our staff.

Parents Association

The Parents Association (PA) includes the entire parent body of Garden House School. We ask for 1-2 class parents to volunteer to be PA representatives for their class. Parents may volunteer for any of our committees, which include the Annual Benefit, Book Fair, Mentor, Library, Spring Fair, Toy Drive, Logos, Used Uniform and Yearbook.

Field Trips

The Junior, Senior and Kindergarten classes will be taking field trips. Parents will receive a field trip permission form in advance that must be signed and returned to the classroom teacher prior to the trip. The number of chaperones will vary according to the field trip and class. Usually, the ratio of children to adults is 2:1. **Parents are asked to refrain from using their cell phones and other electronic devices while serving as a chaperone.**

Curriculum

A broad curriculum is covered using the thematic unit approach. The objective of the unit is to help children learn basic facts and skills in a method that relates to the children's world and needs.

In addition to the themed units, we have an Early Reading and Writing Program. We welcome support from the parents in the application of the Program. The Junior, Senior and Kindergarten children will practice their letters and reading with their teachers 2-3 times per week. Letters or reading material will be sent home 2-3 times per week for parents to review with their child. The letters and reading material must be brought to school the day after it is sent home. Please try not to lose the cards and books.

Discipline Policy

Children learn best through experiences. The teachers will guide and redirect the children to help them learn to cooperate with their peers and to have a positive educational experience. As a last resort children may be asked to sit for a few minutes. Here they will be asked to think about what they did and discuss with the teacher what might have been a better way to interact with the other children or materials. Punishment is never used at Garden House School.

Biting

Children who bite will be sent home for the remainder of the day. Human bites are very serious and we want to impress upon the children that biting is not an acceptable behavior.

Children with Special Needs

We do not have Special Education teachers onsite at Garden House School. If a situation arises whereupon a child requires additional services, we will meet with both parents and the teachers to decide how to best serve the child and his/her needs. This may require the child to be evaluated for early intervention. Garden House School does reserve the right to ask a family to find another school for their child if we believe the child is unable to handle the curriculum presented. Garden House School abides by all laws that we are bound to, but may not be equipped with the necessary resources to provide extended services for all children with special needs. We only want what is best for the child during the brief time they are preschoolers.

Parents will be required to submit documentation regarding the child's special needs in order for us to accommodate the child to the best of our ability. We need to be updated with the most recent documents throughout the child's enrollment at Garden House School. These documents may include the following (as determined by the needs of the child):

- IEP (Individualized Education Program)
- Speech evaluation
- Occupational therapy evaluation
- Physical therapy evaluation
- Neuropsychological evaluation
- Psychoeducational evaluation

- Early intervention documentation

Confidentiality Disclaimer: Each situation will be handled discreetly and confidentially. All documents parents submit pertaining to the child's special needs are solely for the purpose of the child's service providers at the Garden House School. The documents will be kept confidential and will only be shared with the child's current teachers and the Garden House School administration. No information will be shared with any other entity such as the parent body or ongoing schools.

Emergency Medical Plan

If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, children will be taken to:

New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center
526 East 68th Street, NYC 10021
(212) 746-5454

Emergency Plan

1. School Cancellation due to severe weather: An email will be sent home to parents from The School office. You may also phone the main office at (212) 421-3282 to check the outgoing message.
2. Early Dismissal due to severe weather:
Should a severe weather watch occur during the school hours, Garden House School will operate on an early dismissal schedule. The parent will first be notified to pick up their child. If we cannot reach the parent or legal guardian, we will call the emergency contact person indicated on the child's records.
3. Evacuation due to emergencies at each location:

In this event, Garden House School would need to evacuate the building and the children will be taken to:

- Park Avenue School: The Entrance to the Central Park Zoo (East 64th Street and Fifth Avenue)

- The Sutton Place School: Will file out onto the sidewalks and walk to the Park on 57th Street and Sutton Place (York Avenue).

We must have telephone numbers on file where you can be reached at all times. Please give the office your cell phone numbers. Answering machines and services are not acceptable numbers for emergencies.