



# **Parent Handbook**

Welcome to Pear Tree Explorers Home Child Care, Inc.

We are delighted that you have chosen Pear Tree Explorers as your childcare provider. It is our goal to meet and exceed your expectations for childcare.

The information included in this packet is designed to keep you informed throughout your childcare experience with Pear Tree Explorers.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that we provide a secure foundation with optimal learning experience for your child.

Please be sensitive to the fact that your child is in a new environment and each child will adapt quicker than others. Your participation in implementing our policies and procedures will help to ensure their best possible experience.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to directly contact Sekima Sanders, Child Care Director, at 718-219-0402.

## **Pear Tree Explorers Home Child Care, Inc.**

is located at:

118-50 Cross Island Parkway  
Cambria Heights, NY 11411

Email: [contactus@peartreeexplorers.com](mailto:contactus@peartreeexplorers.com)

Website: [PearTreeExplorers.com](http://PearTreeExplorers.com)

Phone/Fax: 718-219-0402

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## **A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER**

“My family moved to our home in 1983. My brothers and I were truly blessed to have been raised in a loving and beautiful environment in Cambria Heights, New York. We were afforded the space and natural resources to run, play and learn so much about the earth and nature.

From watching radiant red cardinals fly or the cutest lady bugs crawl, to chasing colorful butterflies and feeding wandering kittens, our home has always been a fascinating place to grow up. Our home had always appealed to so many children in our extended family as well as our neighborhood friends.

My vision for Pear Tree Explorers Home Child Care was rooted in my desire to share my fun learning experiences with rising learners who have the passion for exploring as myself and my brothers did when growing up in our home.

In our front yard is a pear tree which is how the name of our organization began. Children and passing pedestrians often collect pears from our tree. They are able to enjoy healthy and truly organic pears grown from the soil of our home.

Just like our pear tree, as a child-care provider, I am committed to serving children in my community with a safe, healthy, fun learning environment and valued life-long memories.

-Sekima Sanders, Founder & Owner of Pear Tree Explorers Home Child Care, Inc.

## **I. MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to provide an environment that fosters to the needs of free thinking and compassionate future leaders. We encourage our children to play and learn as well as challenge themselves as they prepare for school years. As caregivers and teachers, we believe that children develop social and emotional skills when in a loving space that celebrates their uniqueness, provides them with tools to express themselves, and allows them to interact collectively with their friends.

We are delighted to be of service in our community by supporting families. It is our goal to work toward rebuilding our economy.

## II. CORE VALUES

- **Humility:** When dealing with children, it is essential to exhibit love in our behavior. Kindness, courteousness, generousness and friendliness toward children and fellow workers, are strongly encouraged. We are always the examples to the children we care for, therefore our actions toward them as well as outside of the scope of employment must always model that of high humility and integrity. Patience helps us to accept things about others that we sometimes do not understand. Therefore, we work in a spirit of joy, laughter and love as well work collectively and harmoniously.
- **Honor:** It is a privilege for each of us at Pear Tree Explorers to work with growing children during their tender years of their lives. With the wealth of knowledge that we have acquired throughout our lives, we are in the position to “pay [our best] forward.” As leaders at Pear Tree Explorers we understand that it is not our right but a privilege to provide our BEST care and teach the wonderful children who will one day impact the world. Therefore, it is our duty to provide quality care.
- **Respect:** We are esteemed to embrace variety. Our differences are what make us all unique and together when we apply all the great things that we know, we can build toward greater things. This is why we feel it is of great importance that every person respects one another.
- **Safety:** Our staff members are required to have NYS Health and Safety Certification, First Aid and CPR. In the event of emergencies or evacuations, we are equipped to confidently and diligently secure the safety and well-being of every single person in our care.
- **Professionalism:** As industry leaders, our competences and skills as professionals is what sets us apart. Our punctuality, our conduct, our professional appearance, our business handling, and our overall business structure is what we want to be remembered by, so that we can continue to deliver high quality of service.
- **Associate Recognition:** At Pear Tree Explorers, we understand the importance of celebrating outstanding work and teamwork. We are against favoritism on any level and all recognition will be to those who have earned it. Celebrating is such a fun way to encourage and support the very backbone of our organization and therefore it is a delight for us to give incentives for eligible associates.
- **Community Involvement:** At Pear Tree Explorers, we ‘explore’ various ways to offer community outreach in order to help strengthen our community. Without our community, we have no place.
- **Environmental Awareness:** We encourage our children and staff to support our environment by being mindful of how we use paper, how we discard trash, how we conserve energy as well as how we recycle.

### **III. OPERATIONS AND ROUTINES**

#### **A. Hours of Operations**

Monday-Friday: 8:00 am through 6:00 pm

For 3K Students: 8:00 am through 2:20 pm

**Drop off cut off time: 9:00am**

## **B. PROGRAM CALENDAR 2021-2022**

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL	SEPTEMBER 13 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	OCTOBER 11 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	OCTOBER 29 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
VETERAN'S DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	NOVEMBER 11 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
HALF DAY for 3K (Dismissal at 11:10am)	NOVEMBER 12 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
THANKSGIVING RECESS	NOVEMBER 25 <sup>TH</sup> -26 <sup>TH</sup> , 2021
WINTER RECESS	DECEMBER 24 <sup>TH</sup> -31 <sup>ST</sup> , 2021
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	JANUARY 17 <sup>TH</sup> , 2022
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	JANUARY 21 <sup>ST</sup> , 2022
LUNAR NEW YEAR <b>CLOSED</b>	FEBRUARY 1 <sup>ST</sup> , 2022
MIDWINTER RECESS	FEBRUARY 21 <sup>ST</sup> -25 <sup>TH</sup> , 2022
HALF DAY for 3K (Dismissal at 11:10am)	MARCH 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2022
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	MARCH 25 <sup>TH</sup> , 2022
SPRING RECESS	APRIL 15 <sup>TH</sup> -22 <sup>TH</sup> , 2022
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	MAY 15 <sup>TH</sup> , 2022
MEMORIAL DAY <b>CLOSED</b>	MAY 30, 2022
LAST DAY OF SCHOOL for 3K	JUNE 23 <sup>RD</sup> , 2022

**Catastrophic closings due to emergencies including natural disasters, inclement weather, communicable disease spread, etc. will be communicated by phone call, text or email.**

## **C. Supply Lists**

### **Infant Supply List (Ages: 6 Weeks to 18 Months)**

1. Diapers/ Pull-ups
2. Diaper Rash Ointment
3. Wipes
4. (2) Bottles
5. Formula / Breast Milk
6. Baby Food
7. (2) Changes of Clothing (including socks)
8. (1) Blanket
9. (1) Fitted Pack and Play Sheet
10. Box of Tissues

### **Toddler Supply List (19 Month-2.5 Years Old)**

1. Pull-ups
2. Wipes
3. (1) Fitted Pack and Play Sheet
4. (1) Blanket
5. (2) Change of Clothing
6. Box of Tissue

### **Pre-Schooler Supply List (2.5 Years Old to 4 Years Old)**

1. (1) Blanket
2. (1) Fitted Crib Sheet
3. (2) Change of Clothing
4. Box of Tissues



**D. Daily Schedule**



**Toddler & 3K Daily Schedule**

8:00am	Drop off
9:00am	Drop Off Cut-off Time / Flash Cards
9:15am	Leisure Play
9:30am	Potty Time
10:00am	Circle Time
10:15am	Activity #1
10:30am	Activity #2
10:45am	Leisure Play
11:30am	Group Story Time
11:45am	Potty Time
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Nap Time
3:00pm	Potty Time
3:30pm	Snack
4:00pm	Leisure Play
4:30pm	Dinner
5:00pm	Potty Time
5:30pm	Independent Reading Time

**IV. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**A. Disciplinary Policy**

Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be re-directed to another activity with teacher assistance. In the event that 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. A method of discipline which frightens, demeans, and/or humiliates a child is strictly prohibited.

1. Examples of Unacceptable Behavior

<b>Physical Harm to Others</b>
Hitting
Biting
Yelling or Screaming
Kicking
Throwing of Objects
Climbing on Furniture
Grabbing or Pulling of Hair
Scratching
Pushing or Shoving
Tackling
Fighting
<b>Emotional Harm to Others</b>
Bullying
Teasing
Taunting
Use of Profanity
Disrespect
<b>Breaking of Classroom Rules</b>
Disruptive Behavior
Destruction of Property
Consistent Incomplete Homework

## 2. Behavioral Management Protocol

Parents of children who exhibit excessive behavioral issues must follow the behavioral management protocol listed below.

<b>Incident</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Incident	Initial Contact with Parents
2 <sup>nd</sup> Incident	Meeting with Parents – Action Plan
3 <sup>rd</sup> Incident	Written Notice
4 <sup>th</sup> Incident	Potential Loss of childcare

## **B. Emergency Procedures**

**If your child is ill while at childcare:** We will call you, if you cannot be reached, your emergency contacts will be notified and asked to pick up your child. Please advise your emergency contact persons of this responsibility. Please always update any changes to your contact information. Children with communicable diseases **MUST** be picked up immediately (no more than 1 hour).

**If your child is injured while at childcare:** Basic First Aid will be performed. In the event of a serious emergency, a parent will be notified and with permission from the parent, the child will be sent to the nearest Medical Center, which is Northwell Hospital at Valley Stream North Emergency Room by ambulance. If parent has any special requirements, he or she will advise our staff member.

**In the event of a fire or catastrophic emergency requiring children and staff to vacate the premises;**

- P.S 176 located at 120-45 235th Street, Cambria Heights, NY 11411; or
- Saint David's Episcopal Church located at 117-35 235th Street, Cambria Heights, NY 11411

### **C. Financial Policy\***

Tuition is due on each Friday (holidays included) by 6:00p for the week following.

Tuition is required even when you keep your child home when sick, for holidays or on vacation.

When there are holidays that we are closed, the full week's cost of tuition is still required.

If your child or household member(s) tests positive for COVID-19 and is/are required to quarantine for 14 days, tuition is still required to be paid.

Tuition can be paid either by QuickPay by Zelle or Google Pay.

Below please find two options for you to access our bank in order to send funds through QuickPay by Zelle or Google Pay.

**EMAIL:** [contactus@peartreeexplorers.com](mailto:contactus@peartreeexplorers.com) or

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 718-219-0402

Late fee for late payments will be \$25 for any payments made after 6pm on the Friday prior to childcare with no exceptions. \$25 late payment fee must be paid prior to admittance to childcare on the Monday following.

**Consistent late payments will result in loss of childcare.**

## **D. Food Policy**

Please inform childcare provider of any food allergies prior to care, as soon as observed or when made aware of by child's physician.

Should you have any special dietary requests (ie, vegan, no-pork, no-red meat, etc.), please bring this to the attention of your childcare provider and you must provide the food you require.

## **E. Health Policy**

**Our program is registered with  
New York State Department of Health  
to provide care only for well children.  
(Please see Health Care Plan LDSS-7021)**

**We do not administer any form of medication  
(including ointments/ creams) to children in our  
care.**

When a child is brought into childcare, the parent is obligated to inform the child's caregiver of all health concerns (mental or physical), injuries, or disabilities that may affect the child's ability to walk, run, or play. Failing to inform childcare provider of such health concerns, injuries or disabilities is a breach of the childcare contract and could result in termination of childcare.

## **Daily Health Check**

Staff will perform a daily health check on each child upon drop off every morning and at pick up in the afternoon.

The daily check will examine whether or not the child has fever, elevated body temperature of 100 degrees, Skin rashes or unusual spots, marks, abrasions, cuts, scratches or bruises.

Should there be any visible injuries of concern, an incident report will be completed and will require your explanation and signature. We are each child's advocate and caregiver, therefore when there is suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect, we are mandated to report this to the State Central Registry at 800-635-1522.

Signs/symptoms of disease including: Severe coughing, sneezing, breathing difficulty, discharge from the nose, ears or eyes, diarrhea or vomiting.

Should any of these symptoms present themselves the child will be excluded until a medical evaluation allows inclusion. A doctor's note must be submitted stating that the child is not contagious and indicating the date that they can return to daycare.

In order to minimize the spread of illness among children, it is important that parents have arrangements available for alternative care whenever your child shows signs of illness. The following symptoms will necessitate exclusion from Pear Tree Explorers:

### **Fevers**

A temperature of 100° F or higher is reason for exclusion from childcare program. A child who has been sent home with a fever of 100° F or higher may return to Pear Tree Explorers after being fever free for 24 hours without medication.

Fevers are also a common sign of COVID-19. This novel virus is extremely contagious, therefore we reserve the right to exclusion from childcare when a child's temperature is above 99 degrees Fahrenheit. Also, if your child (or anyone in your household) exhibit signs of COVID-19, a note from his or her doctor which states that child is clear to return to school is required.

### **Severe Colds**

Colds with symptoms of excessive coughing, sneezing, nose drainage that is yellow or green and that interferes with a child's ability to eat, sleep or play are reasons for exclusion.

### **Diarrhea**

Bowel movements that are extremely loose, watery and frequent are reasons for exclusion. A child should be free from diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to Pear Tree Explorers.

Diarrhea in children can be extremely contagious. Bowel movements that cannot be contained in a diaper or a toilet pose a high risk of contagion. Young children, especially infants, may have frequent or loose stools regularly or in response to a variety of conditions, but these are different from diarrhea. One or two meals should be eaten during the “24 hours free from diarrhea” (overnight with no meals eaten should not be considered 24 hours free from diarrhea). Secondary symptoms of crying, pain, refusal to eat, etc., must be considered.

### **Vomiting**

Vomiting is a reason for exclusion. As with diarrhea, 24 hours should pass (with at least one meal eaten) without an episode of vomiting before a child returns to Pear Tree Explorers.

Infants can spit up or throw up for many different reasons. With no other symptoms present we would wait to see if an infant threw up a second time before calling the parent to pick up the child.

### **Rashes**

Rashes must be physician diagnosed and cleared in order for a child to be in attendance at Pear Tree Explorers.

### **Mouth Sores**

Mouth sores with drooling are reason for exclusion, unless your child’s pediatrician provides documentation that your child is noninfectious and is clear to be around other children and adults.

### **Conjunctivitis**

Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye is reason for exclusion. A child may return to Pear Tree Explorers 24 hours after medication is begun.

## **Teething**

Teething is not a reason for exclusion. Teething can cause low-grade fever (under 100 F), crankiness, loose bowel movements and a clear, runny nose. Teething does not cause the exclusionary conditions described above.

## **Symptoms of Contagious Childhood Disease**

Symptoms of contagious childhood diseases are reason for exclusion. Pear Tree Explorers however, adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act in the application of its disease policies.

Parents should notify us if their child has been exposed to Measles, Chicken Pox, Roseola, CoVid 19, Conjunctivitis (pink eye), Impetigo, Pediculosis (head lice) RSV, Bronchiolitis, Strep Throat, Ringworm and Coxsackie. Exposure to contagious disease is not reason for exclusion as long as child does not exhibit signs of any of the diseases.

## **Signs of Possible Severe Illness**

Signs of possible severe illness, including unusual lethargy, undefined irritability; persistent discomfort, excessive crying or difficult breathing are reasons for exclusion.

## **Absence**

Generally, as a courtesy, please inform Pear Tree Explorers when you decide that your child will be absent. Please explain why you decided to keep your child home. Any illnesses (including fevers, diarrhea, etc.) must be disclosed IMMEDIATELY, so other parents can be informed in case their child was exposed to any infectious diseases. Please send a text or email with that information to 718-219-0402 or [peartreeexplorers@gmail.com](mailto:peartreeexplorers@gmail.com) In order to be readmitted into the daycare, we require:

1. A note from the doctor (if child was seen by his/ her physician) stating (a) a diagnosis (b) the date that your child may return to group care. Your child will continue to be excluded if the appropriate note is not received before the child is brought to school.
2. The most recent time and temperature of child prior to coming to school.



## **Health Law Requirements**

A complete physical examination is required by state law. It must be within 30 days prior to enrollment if the child is over 6 months old and within 15 days if the child is under 6 months old. An updated physical examination is required yearly, on the expiration date of the current physical. Your child will be excluded if their physical has expired until an updated physical has been submitted.

NYS Department of Health sets the following minimum required immunizations for school attendance in Nursery, Pre-K, Daycare, as:

3 Diphtheria Toxoid, 3 OPV, 1 Measles, 1 Mumps, 1 Rubella, 3 Hib as age appropriate.

It is required by law that we report some illnesses to our local health agency. In the event of a contagious illness in our childcare, we will call and/or send an email to inform all parents or guardians.

## **SOCIAL DISTANCING AT PEAR TREE EXPLORERS** **DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

We reserve the right to utilize precautionary measures in order to prevent and minimize the possible spread of COVID-19 among children, staff and residential occupants.

Effective Immediately,

1. PICK UP TIME MUST BE DOCUMENTED ON SIGN-IN SHEET WHEN DROPPING CHILD OFF.
3. ALL PICK UP PERSONS ARE REQUIRED TO TEXT 718-219-0402 5 MINUTES PRIOR TO ARRIVING FOR PICK UP.
4. MASKS MUST BE WORN BY ANY PERSON WHO ENTERS IN TO BUILDING (COVERING MOUTH AND NOSE).
5. DROP OFF AND PICK UP PERSONS MUST NOT ENTER THE SCHOOL BEYOND FOYER AREA. [SORRY BUT NO USE OF BATHROOM FOR DROP OFF OR PICK UP PERSONS.]
6. CHILDREN AGES 2 YEARS OLD AND OLDER MUST BRING A FACE MASK WITH THEM TO SCHOOL. (PLEASE LABEL).

## **F. General Inquiries By Email Only**

Please understand that we will do our best to attend to your general questions and concerns when possible. You can however find many of your answers right here in the Parent Handbook.

Our greatest priority is the safety and well-being of the children in our care. Therefore, our availability to address your non-urgent concerns during the day is limited.

If you call or text with a non-urgent matter during times when we are closed, we will reply on the next open day of business.

**When there is an emergency during closed hours, please text your concern and we will respond as soon as possible. [Please begin your text with the word “EMERGENCY”]**

All questions and concerns will be answered at our earliest convenience. We reserve the right to use our discretion when determining what translates as an urgent and non-urgent call or text message.

## **G. Photo Policy**

We love to capture our fun moments throughout the day with photos when we feel it is safe and feasible to do so. We also like to share these photos so that you and our neighbors can see how much fun we have at Pear Tree Explorers. However, in order for us to do so, it is required that each child’s parent signs the Photo Consent Form which will authorize our team to take a photo, send photo by text, or to print or publish photo. Please be sure to sign Photo Consent Form.

## **H. Pick-Up Policy**

It is a very high priority for us to protect and secure our children’s safety and well-being (both physical and emotional). Therefore, we enforce a very strict policy with regards to dismissal of all children in our care.

Authorized pick-up person’s name MUST be written on “Pick-Up Authorization” Form prior to the date and time of pick-up. Regardless of relationship to child, if the person’s name is not on the Authorization Form, the child will not be released. Proper identification MUST BE provided by all authorized pick-up persons.

Phone calls, emails or text messaging will NOT be acceptable in the event of an unforeseen occurrence preventing the authorized persons to come. Please make note

of this and be mindful to include all pick persons' names when filling out and updating the authorization form. Should there be an unforeseen occurrence which will force the authorized pick up person to be late, the child will be retained and you will be responsible for a late fee of \$1.00 per minute late after.

Ample street parking is available. Parking on or blocking the car port is strictly prohibited.

**Late Pickups:** \$1 per minute fee will be applied to the parent's account which must be paid before the next Monday of childcare. Excessive late payments will result in loss of childcare.

### **I. Potty Training Policy**

By age 36 months old, all toddlers are expected to be fully potty trained. By 36 months old, when your child soils his or her clothing, you will be required to pick your child up immediately. This policy will be strictly enforced with absolutely no exceptions.

### **J. Tardiness Policy**

Please understand that our goal is to provide structure for all of the children in our care. We must adhere to our program and daily schedule (attached) as also a requirement set by OCFS (Office of Child and Family Services). Therefore, we reserve the right to refuse admission into childcare after 9:00am, with only the exception that it is pre-arranged and approved by a qualified staff member.

### **L. Visiting Policy (TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED DUE TO COVID)**

We encourage parents and loved ones to observe their child in childcare during their stay. We would love for parents to come in to spend time when it can be arranged. Since structure, routine and safety for ALL of the children are very important, we require that all visits be pre-arranged in 30-minute intervals. All visits MUST be scheduled prior to the visit.

By Signing This Form, I agree to adhere and abide by the operations, routines, policies and procedures of Pear Tree Explorers Home Child Care, Inc.

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Parent or Guardian Signature

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Parent or Guardian Name Printed

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Date: