



FAMILY SCHOOL



SALT BOX SCHOOL

The Family School The Salt Box School **PARENT HANDBOOK**

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Philosophy and Mission Statement

The Family Schools, Inc. is a response to adults everywhere who seek to raise stable and loving children. Families are the most unique and effective teachers of their young children. Therefore, all of our programs support, endorse and strengthen each family's teaching. All our faculty work with each family in the art of child nurture, enhancing the lives of families and their young children by sharing professional skills, and by reinforcing leadership from families in the teaching of their children.

The Family School is a licensed private school for children 8 weeks to 5 years of age, offering infant, toddler, nursery & pre-kindergarten learning programs to children throughout the school year. (It is also a licensed school through the Nauset Regional System.) A Resource Teacher is part of our faculty. Other professionals are on call. These year round programs are located in the schoolhouse.

The Salt Box School is a licensed private school for 4 and 5 year old children, offering Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten full day programs. These programs also reflect and continue the values of the Family School. The Salt Box Programs follow a school calendar and are located in the Salt Box building.

Brewster Day Camp is a licensed, fully integrated, day camp inviting campers ages 3 through 16 years to pursue and achieve personal growth through group challenges and individual success. The Camper Leader Program offers work skills to teens in the early high school years. BDC campers learn to embody the camp motto through sharing - **Courage, Hope, Good Spirit and Peace!**

All school and camp policies serve as guidelines accurately reflecting our philosophy. All teaching programs are designed for each child's individual needs and updated every 6 months. When the needs of a child are in conflict with a school or camp policy, parent and teacher are free to design policies for a period of time that suit the needs of the individual child. Parents are always encouraged to come to the school and to the camp to observe, to help and to enjoy. The Directors of both the school and the camp are always open to suggestions, ideas and contributions from families.

The Family Schools, Inc. in all its programs embrace diversity in staff, students, families and curriculum. Differences in race, sex, sexual preference, culture, age, toileting ability, religion, political beliefs, marital status, ability and gender are encouraged and valued.

Faculty Communication For Family Support

Daily: Family members are encouraged to communicate any significant happenings in their lives to the faculty on a daily basis. Parents may expect a daily written and a verbal report from the school as a child leaves. When a child's teacher/counselor is not with the class or the group, communication is via the daily note sheet. Written observation notes are made daily by the faculty for parent information.

The school asks that you sign your child in and out noting the times on the classroom clipboard. When leaving your child for the day, please say "Good Bye" directly to your child and reassure him/her about your return or who the pick up person will be. Administrators and/or teachers are available for individual, specialized plans for incoming and leave taking when needed.

Monthly: The school newsletter is delivered to each family by email. Please read it critically and give us your feedback as well as your contributions. It is meant to contain some of our shared news, wisdom, needs, support, art work and humor. Each classroom also sends home a curriculum snapshot monthly. The Brewster Day Camp newsletter, *Waves*, is delivered to each family, monthly in the winter and weekly in the summer.

Yearly: Written observations of a child's total development are made three times yearly for toddler and preschoolers and Pre K and four times a year for infants. A mid- year family conference is held to review the child's written observation and development.

Curriculum Nights: Each classroom hosts a Curriculum Night for families at the beginning of the school year. This is an opportunity for teachers to offer an overview of the curriculum plan in the classroom. Teachers present Classroom learning materials, examples of classroom planning, teaching tools, the structure of classroom learning and time to discuss family questions. A printed curriculum packet is also offered at this time and includes sign language information.

Home Visits: Each child will be visited by his/her teacher in his/her own home. This is an exciting chance for a child to be host/hostess to the school folk and bring school and home close together in another important way.

School Visits from Others: We encourage families to extend their good relationships and teachings to the school setting by visiting and dropping by. In order for relatives, friends, or professionals of any nature other than parents to visit, a child must have written permission on the daily note sheet. The visitor must stop in the school upon arrival to sign in and receive a name tag.

All School Celebrations: Fall, Winter and Spring social events take place almost monthly, on the school campus or in nearby community buildings. These celebrations give children the experience of hosting their families and give teachers and other friends the time to relax together, quite often with children's songs, stories, art, and drama a focus for the events.

On-Going: A written school year education plan will be done by family and teacher, kept in the classroom and updated. The first plans are available by October and updates written after the mid-year observation is completed in February. At this meeting ed plans and curriculum goals are adjusted to reflect the results of the mid year observation with family input.

Cell Phones Off: This is a cell phone free campus. Beginning in the parking lot, cell phones must be off. Your children anticipate a strong, focused and loving connection to you at school at the beginning and end of their day. Please give them your attention. They depend on it.

Conferences: Any time and for any reason, you may request a conference/family meeting with your child's teacher and/or the School Director. Home visits and daily communication are on-going conferencing with families. Brief family conferences are scheduled in February to review the results of the mid year observation.

Observations/Classroom Visits: Please come to the Schoolhouse Welcome Office and let your destination be known when you are visiting on campus. Families are welcome to observe. We wish to preserve the peace of the children and teachers/counselors. You may quietly join a group. Introduce yourself to the teacher/group leader. Please do not establish eye or voice contact with any children for some period of time. When you have a feeling for what is happening in the classroom and if you wish to interact, simply join the area of greatest interest to you and wait to be invited by the children or their teacher. If you wish time to speak with a teacher, or director, please make an appointment ahead.

Circle Time: Our daily programs usually begin with all the children and teachers/counselors seated together. In the school year, all sit on a circle. We use this time to introduce and enhance curriculum plans and learn from each other, to teach each other and to share ourselves as we reinforce our classroom group. Please help your child contribute to this learning time by allowing him/her to bring things from home, by helping your child recount a story of importance, or staying through circle for a visit. Circle meetings before lunch provide time for morning review, quiet songs and stories.

Friday Morning Assemblies: Weekly, Family School and Salt Box School and Brewster Day Camp meet together as a community. Each class reflects the current classroom curriculum in song, dance, art or drama. Assembly is an opportunity for the children to practice manners at a performance and being part of a presentation as a group and see themselves as a school community. Following the class performances, birthdays are celebrated and a short story is told. Assembly good byes are sung in varied languages and prompted by the children. FAMILIES ARE INVITED AND WELCOME!

The Programs

The Schoolhouse

Child to Staff Ratios: All of our classroom ratios are based on the National Academy for the Education of Young Children and Mass. Department of Early Education Care standards and are as follows:

Infant (ages 8 weeks to 15 months): 1 teacher to 3 children; 2 teachers to 7 children

Toddler (ages 15 months to 2 years 9 months): 1 teacher to 4 children; 2 teachers to 9 children

Preschool (ages 2 years 9 months to 5 years): 1 teacher to 10 children; 2 teachers to 20 children

Often our classroom teacher ratios exceed required standards.

Infant Program: The Infant Program provides warmth, love and nurturing to parents and their very young children. A careful continuation of home decisions is extended to the “class” in the quiet end of the Schoolhouse. Skilled teachers enhance infant development with careful planning for each individual child’s growth. This teaching is reflected to the family daily in writing

Daily Routine: Completely individualized and flexible scheduling is provided according to each child’s needs and parents’ desires. These favored children play, sleep, visit, eat and exercise under the loving supervision of their teachers.

Toddler Program: Children are taught in two suites on the first floor of the Schoolhouse. The group sizes are small so that the children may learn easily and feel safe. These happy children grow in appropriate toddler curriculum plans and group play while literally satisfying their curiosity in leaps and bounds.

Daily Routine:

7:30 - 9:15	Incoming, Hand Washing, Free Play and greetings
9:30	Welcoming Circle
9:45	Snack
10:00	Circle Time
10:30	Curriculum Time
11:00	Exercise Indoors & Out
11:45	Stories and Lunch Circle
11:50	Lunch
12:30 -1:00	Individual Play/ Re-connecting to Parents & Leave-taking
1:00 - 3:00	All campus Quiet Time
3:15	Circle
3:30	Snack Offered, Quiet Play
4:00 - 5:00	Exercise indoors & out
5:00 - 5:30	Quiet Stories, parent connection and leave taking

Pre-School Program: Children learn in two classroom groups on the ground level in the Schoolhouse. A large group (average 18) and a smaller one (average 10) offer children diversified learning experience in which to pursue their own curiosity and growth. (See “Curriculum”)

Daily Routine:

7:30 - 9:15	Incoming Hand Washing, Free Play and Greetings
9:15	Welcoming Circle
9:30 - 11:00	Curriculum Time (snacks available)
11:00	Exercise Indoors and Out
12:00	Lunch
1:00 - 1:15	Leave-taking or Quiet Play
1:15 - 2:30	All campus Quiet Time
2:45	Circle
2:45 - 3:30	Workshop and Snack
3:30 - 4:30	Free Play indoors and out
4:30 - 5:30	Leave-taking and parent connection, daily review

Salt Box School

Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten: Located on two floors of the Salt Box, small individualized groups challenge children to pursue , in depth, The Family School curriculum. Weekly field trips on school buses to local settings provide for close interaction between community, class routine and curriculum connections. The individualized academic program challenges each child to learn thoroughly through the basic skills, and the arts and sciences at his/her own pace and level. See the “Salt Box Curriculum” under the separate cover. Physical challenges come from daily hikes in Nickerson State Park and other coached activities such as swimming and hiking. One Class meets five days per week. The second classroom offers a varied day schedule.

Daily Routine:

8:00 - 8:30	Arrival and Hand Washing, greeting
8:30 - 9:15	Walk
9:15 - 10:00	Circle
10:00 - 12:00	Curriculum Time (Snack Available) Individual and Cooperative Activities
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch and Outside Play
1:30 - 2:00	Individual Work (Quiet Time)
2:00 - 2:15	Leave-taking

Curriculum

Family School Curriculum Goals:

Goal 1: To promote Academic Development. We seek to develop specific academic skills within four broad concepts:

- Space and time (mathematics)
- Symbolization (language)
- Energy transfer (physics and science)
- Creativity (fine arts, music, the performing arts)

Goal 2: To promote Physical Development. We seek to support a child's physical health by offering exercise, good nourishment, rest and a sense of well-being. We seek to teach a child about his/her own body, how it functions and how to maintain it in good health.

Goal 3: To promote Social/Emotional Development. We seek to help a child identify and express his/her feelings appropriately so that emotional growth may flourish within a sense of personal safety. We teach children to appropriately express their needs and desires so that we may help them meet their needs.

Goal 4: To promote Spiritual Development. It is our intention to help a child grow in healthy relationships, within limits, between himself/herself and others; their family, peers and community. We believe these connections represent for a child a sense of a loving, happy and supportive care. We encourage and promote justice, care, respect and love between all ages of people; a flow of "positive energy." We sing Family School grace before the lunch meal.

Our classroom materials are based on the exploration of these concepts.

The Learning Process

The Family School, The Salt Box School and the Brewster Day Camp use a process of teaching that is similar to the early childhood schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. This integrated curriculum process permits a child to examine a subject for a long period of time using a variety of materials. In this manner all learners find materials to pursue their curiosity, to share and expand their perception.

Teaching Objectives:

We teach our four curriculum goals through conversation, work and play. Some Curriculum introduced and taught may include the following:

- Understanding Myself, my Family, My Birth and Growth
- Caring for Others Who Care for Me and Teach Me at Home and at School
- My Body...What's in it?...What Makes Me Move? My Energy
- Body Parts and Moving Them in Space
- Energy Sources for Me
- Physical Sources: Food & Rest
- Spiritual Sources: Love, Hugs & Care
- Resting Easy and Dealing with Stress
- Marking the Seasons and all family celebrations
- My Family Caring for Me through Work
- Family Work a Cooperative Effort including visits from family members to explain their work
- Visits to work sites; understanding trading efforts for goods and cash; banking and stores in the classroom, basic economics
- Outdoor play and observations of the transformations of life and energy eg. tadpoles in nearby ponds and butterflies
- Understanding of other people, the same but sometimes different in culture, race, and ways of living and customs
- Celebration of accomplishments, out to play and enjoy swimming skills in our campus olympic pool
- Curriculum reflects a theme each week in concert with Brewster Day Camp

Demonstration of Competency: In addition to the routine school curriculum, The Family School/Brewster Day Camp staff has made available a series of training, exploration and competency programs which older aged children may choose to complete in their programs. Specialty areas include, among others, archery, nature, canoeing, sailing, swimming, art, field sports and earth keeping. Children may choose to earn awards for demonstrating competency in sub-levels of each specialty.

The Family School teaches children to care about others by combining ages (the age spread being 18 months to 2 years) in a group, allowing each child the opportunity to help and be helped; by providing time and place for role playing and behavior modeling in each class; by inviting into our school and camp a true representation of the children in our community and seeking out artistic, religious and cultural differences.

The Family School teaches religious and cultural awareness and acceptance of cultural differences by using every opportunity to celebrate life in the manner of different countries and people..

The Family School helps a child toward a healthy self-esteem by providing the child an opportunity to learn about his/her family and other families, his/her body and how it functions, feelings and their healthy expression, the effects of work in all communities and in their own lives and families, the trading and bartering system of goods and services for money and the transformation of different energies, i.e., seeds to flowers, trees to earth, electricity to motors, gasoline to energies, and food, rest and nurture to healthy lives.

Evaluations of Child's Development: We observe children to learn about their individual growth and screen for potential problems. We use the knowledge we've gained to communicate and consult with families and arrange for further teaching objectives. We realize fully that measuring a child's growth is like measuring a river; when the river flow is stopped for accurate measure, the river is changed. However, recognizing the limitations inherent in the observation process, we believe the observation useful in order to communicate with families and promote a child's well-being. Using the results of parent and teacher observations we seek to offer what each child's curiosity and skills require, not what we may more haphazardly guess a child to need. An extensive checklist is used for parent and teacher to comment on curriculum items during the month of January. Each family is invited to a conference with the child's teacher to review this checklist. Updates to this report are added in June and August. Infant development is reported every three months. We find this form of evaluation more helpful and informative than any other "test" we have encountered to date. All information about individual children is kept confidential and shared only at the direction of the parents.

Samples of a child's work is often saved to create a portfolio of development over the course of a year. Video tapes and a photo selection of the year's classroom photos, may be added to this collection for parent review.

School Policies

Business and Safety: Children at Work, Rest and Play

Absences: Notifying school in the event of a child absence supports our ability to serve our families appropriately each school day. You may leave a message at anytime on our school phone.

Accident or Serious Illness: A parent is notified when an accident, however minor, has occurred. If a parent cannot be reached, and the accident is judged to be a minor by our Red Cross trained teachers and Directors, the incident is recorded in the child's daily notes, on an accident report and a parent is informed as soon as possible or at pickup. If additional medical consultation is needed, the on campus administrator will call 911 for immediate, additional medical services. When deemed necessary by the rescue squad, the child will be transported by the Brewster Rescue Squad to Cape Cod Hospital. The child's teacher or a school administrator will remain with the child until the parents can join him/her.

Additions: Parents may always make changes, additions and comments on a child's record and are encouraged to do so.

Allergies: All children's allergies are listed in the classroom for use by the classroom teachers.

Application: Families interested in placing their children in the school or the camp may make interview appointments with the Director or the Assistant Director for the campus tour and interview.

Arriving at School/Camp: Parents bring children to their teacher/counselor, help them to get settled as needed, give a brief verbal or written report to the greeting teacher/group leader and sign their name and arrival time on the daily sheet for the child's group. As part of the incoming with your child, please take him/her to the bathroom and wash his/her hands to begin the day. Practicing good hygiene contributes to preserving good health for all of us. When leaving your child for the day please say "good bye" directly to your child and reassure him/her about your return or who the pick up person will be. Anytime additional help is needed teachers will plan with families as appropriate. Children who write may sign themselves into their programs. Remember to help them note arrival and leaving times.

Back to Sleep: In keeping with the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics and our licensing agencies, we put infants to sleep on their backs. This is the healthiest, safest way for infants to sleep.

Bottle and Pacifiers: Thanks to in utero pictures taken with ultrasound, we know that infants suck their thumbs before birth. We also know through Dr. T. Berry Brazelton's work that a newborn infant quiets by sucking. Some parents offer a pacifier in preference to a thumb. Some offer a bottle with water, juice or milk. Older children who are given juice or milk freely during the day and at sleep, often experience immediate spontaneous gum line cavities. This happens frequently enough to be frightening. Large amounts of juice or milk given at bedtime can cause teeth to decay quickly, and contribute to obesity. Please let us know your plan for your child at home.

Calendar: Our annual calendar shows the days school and camp are open, is included in our August mailing and is on our website. Extra copies of the calendar are always available in The Schoolhouse Office.

Campus Visitors: We encourage parents and offer friends to visit children on the campus, especially for lunch. NO ONE MAY TAKE A CHILD FROM THE CAMPUS WITHOUT PERMISSION AND NOTIFICATION FROM EITHER OR BOTH PARENTS. A child may not leave the campus with anyone until we are certain that the responsible parent(s) has notified the school or is notified and consulted. The responsible parent is considered to be the parent who signed the registration form for the current year. Faculty delegate pick up responsibility to the Director when they are unsure of the pick up person.

Child's records: A child's class file will normally contain his/her health records, enrollment forms, current and past observation forms, education plans, parent meeting notes and a history sheet. The history sheet notes teachers/counselors and dates of the programs a child has attended with us. These records are confidential and only made available to other schools with parent request and permission.

Clothing: Indoors -- children learn best through all five senses. It will be awhile before their minds take in new knowledge through eyes and ears only as adults often do. We encourage the children to feel, smell, and in some cases, taste, as well as see and hear an object to learn about it. Please allow the children to wear clothes in which they can move freely and be messy without fear of a scolding from home. Quiet shoes such as sneakers or soft slippers are preferable for classroom use, play shoes and/or boots for outdoors.

Communicable Diseases: Any child suffering from routine communicable diseases shall be kept at home. The parents of other children in the group shall be notified, when communicable diseases are present. Children with chronic disease judged by their physicians to be non-communicable may apply for admittance. The Director shall determine whether the child's admittance is appropriate for the school, the child, and the family.

Communication Skills: Children are not able from the earliest ages to recognize the facts, perceptions, feelings and intentions of all involved in any dispute. Teachers model good communication skills for children and teach them carefully to arbitrate, and celebrate differences and similarities.

Confidentiality and Release: The parent(s) whose signature(s) appear on the child's current registration form may have access to his/her child's record and give direction as to its use and disclosure. A parent may read his/her child's record at any time. Records will be released to parents at their request. At the time of record release to the family, a parent shall sign the history sheet to indicate that they have taken the child's records and do not require the school/camp to keep the information for the state-mandated five years. Should a parent request information sent to another school, the request must be in writing and dated.

Current Parent Information: PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD'S RECORD UP TO DATE REGARDING WORK SITES, PHONE NUMBERS, HOME ADDRESSES, EMAIL ADDRESSES AND HEALTH YEARLY UPDATES. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR CHILD ON THIS CAMPUS. WE MUST KNOW WHERE AND HOW TO REACH YOU OR YOUR DESIGNATED FRIEND.

Diapering and Diapers: Children wearing diapers must be provided with diapers and wipes for use at school. Our changing procedure is posted over the changing table. Please let us know if your child needs different care. See diapering policy.

Discipline: Our goals in disciplining a child at The Family School and The Brewster Day Camp are four:

1. Retain and support a child's positive sense of self.
2. Foster a child's developing sense of self-government, self-evaluation and self-control.
3. Permit freedom to express feelings while creating and maintaining the structure of fair and consistent rules.
4. Preserve respect for the child, for the adults and for the school/camp relationships and materials.

To do this we speak freely to a child about inappropriate behavior, NOT about being a "good" or "bad" boy or girl. We help a child to recognize appropriate behavior. We accept mistakes as ways to achieve new understanding, and we keep the rules as clear and consistent as possible at school/camp and between school/camp and home.

We speak to a child about what we want accomplished, NOT about what he/she is doing wrong. We reward appropriate and desired behavior with recognition, praise and hugs.

In our programs we seek to promote a child's sense of self-evaluation so that the highest praise may be, "I feel good about this work," rather than, "What do you think about this work, teacher?" in hopes of pleasing the teacher. We recognize all children as good, though sometimes capable of doing inappropriate things and/or making mistakes...like most adults!

When a child is removed from a classroom to restore him/herself to balance, he/she will always be under the visual observation of a qualified staff person and be away for a period not to exceed 10 (ten) minutes. When other measures are taken it is at the direction of the child's parents, with a written specific plan attached to his/her file. A parent's individual request must comply with the Office for Early Education and Care. Should the child choose to continue to play alone, he/she may do so at the discretion of the teacher and parent, always in sight of a teacher, teacher aid or qualified person. Parents will be immediately contacted in the case of a child's emotional outbreak that poses a danger to him/herself or other children and a plan for a parent/school meeting is immediately set up. We recognize Early Education and Care as our Licensing Agency.

Emergency Closings: Suspended programs for any reason such as severe storms, will be announced on television channels 4, 7 and 38, sent to each family by email and over local radio stations WCOD, WPXC, WQRC, WXTK. We do not follow The Nauset School System for closing. We make the decision based on our best service to families always taking into consideration the safety of our school community. We rarely close and are usually operative even when others are not. We do not refund tuition or exchange days for suspended programs.

Fire: The buildings are equipped with sensitive smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. In case of fire we will take the children, contact lists and cell phones to the assembly area next to the Salt Box School or in serious situations to the Cape Cod Bible Alliance Church. Families will then be contacted

First Aid: First Aid will be administered by fully trained teachers/ counselors in each child's program and noted on the child's daily note sheet. When additional help is needed 911 will be called, and then the parent will be notified.

Food: We believe that foods containing excessive fats and sugars, salt and any artificial colors and additives are contributing to poor health in many children. We provide water as a beverage for snack, teaching children the value of drinking water daily. We encourage children to eat a variety of wholesome, fresh foods and reduce consumption of “empty foods”, that is, foods which provide calories but not nutrition. We encourage tooth brushing and include tooth brushing after lunch daily. The child will brush his/her teeth with water and the toothbrush is returned to the sterilizer for storage.

Hours of Operation: All programs are by reservation. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:30 to 5:30. You may add half or full days on a one-time basis to your regular schedule as space permits. Please reserve through the Assistant Director or the Schoolhouse Office. Children who are registered but not enrolled in a scheduled program may use the campus programs on a drop-in basis as space permits.

Illness: If your child becomes ill while on campus we will isolate him/her in the office with a teacher/counselor or the Directors and telephone family or “emergency” friend (as designated on registration form) to come and get your child. A sick child usually is unable to participate in the daily schedule and needs his/her own home and bed. We do not call unnecessarily.

Leaving the School/Camp: Children leave campus only with adults about whom we have received written information from parents. Without written permission from parents, either on the daily sign-in sheet or by phone, we will keep the child until a parent can be contacted.

Late at the End of the Day: The good health of our teachers depends upon their work day terminating at 5:30. Please take care of your teachers and counselors. Be on time! according to your child's schedule. When you arrive after 5:30 our school is closed and you are arriving late. You will find your child ready and waiting in the Schoolhouse Office. We will always provide for your child after that time and there is a cost to that care. The first time you are late you will be given a written warning to notify you and subsequent late arrivals will be charged at \$50.00 per occurrence payable when the child returns to school.

Licensing Agency: The Family School recognizes the Department of Early Education and Care as our licensing and regulatory agency. If parents have questions they may call DEEC at 508-8285025.

Lunch: Lunch is a nurturing time both physically and emotionally. Please pack lunches reflective of thoughtful nutrition. Pack in a well-labeled lunch box and send beverages in a well-labeled thermos. This makes for easy handling for all of us. Lunches are stored in the refrigerator in the morning. We do not encourage children to trade or give away their lunch food and we will generally send home what is not eaten so you will know. Sample menus: protein servings: beans in salad or soup, slices or chunks of chicken/turkey, peanut butter, cheese, yogurt, hard boiled egg; vegetable & fruit servings: carrot, celery, green pepper sticks, fresh fruit, canned fruit, applesauce; carbohydrate servings: crackers, breads, rice cakes, muffins, rolls. There are microwave ovens accessible to each classroom where food may be warmed according to parent instructions. Children brush their teeth after lunch.

Loveys/Teddy: Children are sometimes vastly helped in balancing themselves and restoring equanimity to their lives if they can see, touch or carry a beloved object. The beginning of a new experience is not a comfortable time to leave their pacifier, blanket or bottle at home. We will help you do the weaning you would like to accomplish. We do not want to help your child adapt to unfamiliar territory and people while giving up his most cherished object “cold turkey” at the same time. It is too difficult for him/her and for us. Please allow the favorite teddy, pacifier, bottle or blanket to come to school/camp and we will agree on a pattern for its use.

Medication: Will only be given by a trained Director from a doctor's prescription and parent permission. All medications are stored and distributed from written instructions by the parent in The Family School Medication Book. Parents bring medications with prescription to the School House Kitchen where this log book is kept.

Over the counter medications are stored, and distributed in the same manner as prescription medications and require the same signed permissions.

Natural Disaster: In the case of natural disaster we will seek and take direction from the Brewster Police Department. The cell number to use for The Family School/Salt Box School in case of land line failure is 774-212-1714.

Outdoors: We will go out every day that we can. Please send appropriate clothing. If you would like your child to remain inside, leave word with the teacher/counselor. Remember though, fresh air can be a restorative to good health.

Parking Lot: Children must come and go firmly attached to a parent or other adult. No child may be outside the fence, in the parking lot, or in a car without an adult. Please use the paths around the parking lots rather than walking through them with children. PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR ENGINE WHEN LEAVING YOUR CAR. Keep our playground safe and our air clean.

Referral Policy: Family School teachers are mandated reporters in cases of suspected neglect or abuse. When a teacher at the Family School has any concern regarding a child's social, emotional, cognitive or physical health, the teacher first speaks to the parents regarding her concern. Together the teacher and parents set a meeting with the resource teacher and the School Director for the purpose of addressing concerns. Availability of services, parental support and recommendations are shared with the family and individualized plans are made to serve the child. Progress and results are written and monitored by the school, parents and referral agencies.

Registration: In order for your child to join our school or camp, he or she must have the following files and materials:

1. A completed application/registration form, signed annually, and a child history sheet for children under six. Parent(s) signing the registration form are responsible for school/camp tuition payments.
2. A health form, medical permission form and developmental history (for children under 6) completed by a physician and parent within 1 month prior to his/her beginning in a program. ALL AGE APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS INCLUDING LEAD POISONING TEST (signed by physician) MUST BE RECORDED ON THE HEALTH FORM.

Rest: A parent may determine whether a child shall sleep or rest or work during afternoon quiet hour. Children not wishing to sleep are offered a lighted, quiet space for work and quiet play during this time. If a child chooses to sleep, we will allow him/her to sleep until he/she awakes. This applies most often to children under 6. Families may request a wake up call if they desire.

Snack: Our snack consists of a snack size (as per American Academy of Pediatrics) serving of protein, carbohydrate, and a fruit or vegetable. We serve peanut butter, nuts, cream cheese, and water daily, crackers or baked goods from home. Any and all snack donations are gratefully received and happily shared by the donating child. Sharing gifts of food is one of the best ways to connect school and home. The snack menu is posted daily.

Smoke Free Campus: PLEASE set a good example! DO NOT SMOKE anywhere on our campus or in our parking lot. PLEASE make sure there are NO cigarette ends available for our children to pick up anywhere on our campus or parking lot.

Swimming: A young child participating in any of our swim programs usually wear a pool suit provided by school/camp for swim. This team/pool suit is well paired with a sun protective swim shirt. Please bring a labeled towel and clothes to change into after swimming.

Suspension and Termination Policy: The Family Schools seek always to support a child in his/her development even at times of struggling development. We strive to make appropriate plans with parents, school teachers and outside professionals. In extreme cases the following is our process. When a child at the Family School/Salt Box School exhibits behaviors that show he/she cannot manage his/her group, the school rules and expectations, or has an outburst that can be hurtful to him/herself or others or is destructive to materials or the building we call the parents and have the child go home for the day. The child may return to school the following day after a meeting with the child's teacher, parent and/or administrator to assess and support the child's needs at that time. A written plan is put in place for the child's teacher to keep daily notes and to share the information with the parents.

At the second outburst a planning conference will be held with parents and teacher/counselor to arrange for discharge of the child. Termination will be no longer than two weeks after the planning conference is held and future plans for the child's care are made, and usually more immediately. Parents are given, in writing, the reasons for dismissal and any conditions offered for the child to return to the programs and other program options for the child. This policy provides for a campus where all people feel safe.

Toilet Training: We encourage a child of toddler age to request being changed when needed and talk about soon using the bathroom, the way older friends or Mom and Dad do. We follow a parent's desire in initiating any other form of training. Frequently this is all the training that is required. Completion of toilet training for the child is not a requirement of our programs.

Transitions Classroom to Classroom: Usually children move from one classroom to another at the beginning of the school year (September). Preparation for changing classrooms begins in January of each year when we invite parents to visit the classrooms appropriate for their child/children. As part of the discussion process Teachers, Directors and Parents are available to weigh in on placement decisions. Children are prepared for the move by visiting the classrooms as a group for a tour and visit. On the day before school opens in September children and families are invited to visit their new classroom and tour together, providing a comfortable adjustment time for all.

Children moving out of our school and into Kindergarten and First Grade are prepared with a visit to the elementary school, a practice bus ride and lots of conversation about what to expect in the larger school settings. Here teachers are aware of the children's reactions to changes and are supportive to the children moving on. Some local school systems send administrators and teachers to visit prospective children headed to their public schools. Written information, for the family, accompanies the visit from the public school.

Trip/Transportation: Older children will often take field trips into the community around us, especially to visit parents at work, other children's homes, museums and libraries. We engage commercial transportation companies, school buses with drivers, for group travel. On our trips teachers monitor children on the bus and provide safe transportation. The Salt Box curriculum provides for 7-10 field trips per year. Some field trips are financially supported by the Foundation for Family Education and for others there may be a nominal fee for each child. If there is a problem for a family to pay this fee please be in touch with the Director. Our younger children will not travel.

Violence and Gun Play: No guns, real, imaginary, or toy, will be used as play materials at school/camp. Gun play is not usually caring, creative, or loving and encourages a type of relationship between children that we do not condone at school/camp. For the same reasons, we routinely discourage imaginative play that involves "super-heroes."

Holidays

We strive to honor the substance of the holiday rather than the show of it. Here is a brief description of how we celebrate. In all our celebrations we try to keep food healthy and simple.

Birthdays: We understand birthdays as a time when each of us may celebrate ourselves and our lives. Birthdays at school are designed by each child who has the opportunity to let us know how, or if, the school should help celebrate. Helpful suggestions for parties at home; one guest for each year of the celebrant's age, serve few sugar foods, and make sure presents are given to all, in order to maintain equanimity. It is usually the birthday child who is first to become overwhelmed by the day's excitement. His or her siblings are the next most fragile. Please be prepared with hugs and good discipline.

Halloween: This is a real children's holiday, one in which adults frequently participate. We help children to make their own costumes and parade for each other and enjoy singing around our 'campfire' on campus. We talk about the special excitement of visiting friends at night. Halloween can be truly frightening for small children and we hope to make it less so, more understandable and less directed towards sweets.

Thanksgiving: We decorate our school when we sit down to harvest snack and give praise and thanks for the growing season just passed. A traditional puppet show is offered the gathered school. November is the month of our birthday, so we also give thanks for our school and celebrate our existence.

Winter Solstice, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Ramadan: Less physical light has presented mankind with the need and opportunity to create spiritual light in the "dead" of winter. The Family School names this the Season of Love. We celebrate this season with a simple present for children, a party on the solstice day and retelling the stories of love that we call Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas. We take note of Santa Claus as a symbol of gift-giving and talk about all of us becoming Santa when we give gifts of love. We help the children plan their presents to loved ones. Kwanzaa is an African-American holiday that was created to remember our ancestors and to give thanks for living and working together. There are seven days for Kwanzaa, with a principle for each one. (1) UMOJA (Unity); (2) KUJICHAGULIA (Self-determination); (3) UJIMA (Collective Work & Responsibility); (4) UJAMAA (Cooperative Economics); (5) NIA (Purpose); (6) KUUMBA (Creativity); (7) IMANI (Faith). Our Annual Celebrations Party retells the seasons stories through children's songs. We gather for a light pot luck supper at an off campus site.

Business Organization

The Family School, The Salt Box School and Brewster Day Camp are wholly owned by The Family Schools, Inc. The business management is carried on at the school offices. The school and camp financial records are reviewed annually by Sanders, Walsh and Eaton of Chatham, Michael Walsh. CPA.

HISTORY

The Family School opened in the Crosby Barn, Brewster, in November 1980, renting space from Cape Cod Sea Camps. On October 1, 1983, all programs moved to our 4-acre, 2 building campus located at 3570-3672 Main Street, Brewster, adjacent to Nickerson State Park. The original school faculty of 3 has expanded to 30, serving a population of 100 families and children.

ACCREDITATION AND LICENSES AND HONORS

The Family School was approved as a private school as of December 15, 1982, by the Nauset Regional School Committee. This was updated in March 1989. National Academy status was first achieved in 1988. In June of 2010, the programs were honored as one of the Top Ten Schools of Diversity in the USA by NAEYC. We hold a current state license and our state licenser is the Office of Early Education and Care.

EMBRACING DIVERSITY

The Family Schools, Inc. and The Foundation for Family Education and all their programs seek to embrace diversity in staff, students, families, and curriculum. Differences in race, gender, sexual preference, culture, age, religion, political beliefs, toileting ability, marital status and ability are valued and welcomed.

