



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Over the Moon Enrichment (Toddler-PreK)

The Academy at OTM (Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd Grade)

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“Beginnings Matter!”

We are delighted your child is starting theirs with us.

Dear Families:

Welcome to Over the Moon! I am honored you have chosen Over the Moon for your child’s educational enrichment. At OTM, our faculty, staff and I look forward to providing years filled with exciting and rewarding experiences for you and your child.

This handbook has been prepared especially for you; the parent/guardian of a child enrolling in our school. You will find all our policies and procedures explained here. The information provided in this handbook will help you gain an understanding and appreciation of what we aim to accomplish and how we plan to do it.

Our mission is to provide the essential and critical foundation for your child’s physical, social, emotional, and cognitive wellbeing. In our private school setting, we endeavor to make each child’s first or transitional experience with school a successful and joyful one. We boast a student centered, developmentally appropriate program. It is designed to serve children with a wide range of abilities. Our teachers, specialists, and support staff provide an atmosphere in which our students can triumph and flourish.

Whenever you have questions, comments, or concerns our faculty and I are always available to help. Please feel free to make an appointment to come in, call or email. At Over the Moon, we look forward to enriching your child’s life!

Warm regards,
Suzanne Russell, Founder/CEO

SRussell@otmenrichment.com

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I. OUR SCHOOL

▪ HISTORY

Over the Moon was founded by Suzanne M. Russell in 2010. Seeing a need in the community for activities, education, and enrichment for children under five, Suzanne opened Over the Moon. For five years, OTM was located at 61 Main Street in Pine Bush. Responding to the success brought by an outstanding reputation, in July 2017, Over the Moon purchased the building located at 89 Boniface Drive, Pine Bush, New York. In 2020, in the face of the pandemic, Over the Moon continued its expansion with the addition of a second 10,000 sq. ft. campus in the Town of Wallkill.

▪ VALUES & PHILOSOPHY

At OTM, we pride ourselves on providing a safe, healthy, educational, and nurturing environment for all our students, while also offering classes and support for parents and caregivers. Over the Moon is rooted in values and beliefs which support a positive and collaborative learning environment:

- ❖ We believe that a high-quality educational environment is a safe, respectful, responsive, and positive place to learn and grow.
- ❖ We believe that children should be nurtured in a way that respects their families' own cultural and familial beliefs.
- ❖ We believe the participation of parents in their child's learning experience will make for a more successful student.
- ❖ We believe that experiences are the most impactful form of learning.
- ❖ We believe in teaching and implementing "green" life and environmental practices.

“Beginnings Matter!” is our motto. To us, this means, children's first experiences in a school environment is crucial to their love and respect for learning. It is never too early to provide your child or family with a stable and enriching environment in which they can thrive.

Our philosophy is based on a two-pronged approach where we value academics and the social emotional development of the child. The implementation of our curriculum is designed to enhance the whole child in a positive atmosphere of warmth and compassion. Through our focus on development and consistency, our goal is to meet the social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and intellectual needs that are unique to each child.

▪ REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

- Registration: New York State Education Department (NYSED), Licensed & Accredited Non-Public Private School
- Licensing: NYS Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS), Licensed Daycare
 - A copy of the OCFS regulations can be found hanging in the entryway of each school.
 - If you wish to make a complaint, call the childcare complaint line: 1-800-732-5207
- Accreditation: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- Child Care Aware of America: Accredited to serve our Military service members.

▪ HOURS OF OPERATION

Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm, enrolling students 2 years -2nd Grade.

Our half day program runs 9:00 am - 11:50 am and our full day program runs 9:00 am - 2:50 pm. Any hours outside of that are before or after care attendance hours. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of their day.

II. FACULTY & STAFF

Our school structure consists of two components: the administrative staff and the faculty who work together to ensure our mission, values, and philosophy are being met. All employees are selected based on their excellence and credentials in education and business, their commitment to students and families, and their dedication to our school's mission.

- **Founder/CEO:**
 - Suzanne M. Russell: SRussell@otmenrichment.com
- **Head of Schools/Middletown Principal:**
 - Kimberly Abatangelo: Email: KAbatangelo@otmenrichment.com
- **Director of Education/Pine Bush Principal:**
 - Lindsey Faulkner: LFaulkner@otmenrichment.com
- **Director of Campus Operations:**
 - Ashley Dolan: ADolan@otmenrichment.com
- **Pine Bush Campus Coordinator:**
 - Kelly Edmunds: KEdmunds@otmenrichment.com
- **Middletown Campus Coordinator:**
 - Megan Larson: MLarson@otmenrichment.com
- **Education Advisory Board:**
 - Dr. David Hegarty, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, Licensed Mental Health Counselor

III. OUR PROGRAMS

Over the Moon Enrichment Center and The Academy at OTM provide an enriched learning environment which has helped countless students learn, develop, and grow. Our innovative curriculum and teaching methods help our students take on their future with confidence while instilling a love of learning and excitement for each step of their educational journey.

Since our inception, we have used **Responsive Classroom** as a basis for how we manage our school, classrooms, and staff. Our curriculum is created by OTM EDventures, Inc. and our Curriculum Advisory Board. It is comprised of experience-based lessons implemented through developmentally appropriate practices.

Whether your child enters our school at 2 years or just before 2nd Grade, each student is treated as an individual and encouraged to grow at his/her own rate and skill level. We use the NYSED curriculum as a guideline in our school, so those who may enter our school and then enter public school are on pace (at minimum) with their peers. We implement and execute that curriculum in a way specific to Over the Moon using a more experience-based approach. We offer themes, manipulatives, and specials (art, music, etc.) to further bring our instruction to life.

All our classrooms follow a multi-age approach, which is documented extensively as being a dynamic approach to learning. Through our multi-age classrooms, students are given the opportunity to learn from and teach their peers, while simultaneously strengthening their social skills, increasing their self-confidence, and developing empathy and patience for those around them. With our multi-age classroom approach, our students have an opportunity to learn from each other. When they are exposed to inclusive environments starting at an early age, they learn acceptance of other people and that each person has unique abilities.

Through their daily experiences and routines, the children learn to make decisions, carry out responsibilities, express themselves creatively and discover friendships. Our students are exposed to music, movement, art, science, literacy, math, dramatic play, life skills, indoor/outdoor play, and manipulative experiences. A daily schedule helps to provide a familiar flow to each day. Our school balances active and quiet play with child and teacher directed activities within various learning programs.

Please note that our school does not have the quantity of staff necessary to provide extra resources/care for children who require or would require consistent one-on-one support. If your child receives extra support while in school for behavioral or physical needs or has trouble participating in large groups, we ask that you carefully consider their fit at Over the Moon. School should be an enjoyable experience, but if children do not have the support/resources they need, it can be a very stressful place for both students and staff as well as you, the parents/guardians.

▪ **EARLY PRIMARY (Toddler, Preschool, PreK)**

- **Petite Pioneers** (Toddlers 2 - 3 yrs.) Ratio is 1:5, 1 Lead Teacher, 1 TA
- **Little Explorers:** (Preschoolers 3-4yrs.) Ratio is 1:7, 1 Lead Teacher, 1 TA
- **Little Explorers:** (Pre-Kindergarteners 4-5 yrs.) Ratio is 1:8, 1 Lead Teacher, 1 TA

All our early primary classrooms boast the following:

- Dramatic play area for role playing.
- Block center for dexterity and pre-math concepts.
- Manipulative games and puzzles for dexterity, cognitive growth, and developing fine motor skills.
- Library for early literacy and language skills
- Geography & Science for discovering our world.
- Math concepts & manipulatives
- Practical Life skills - self-help abilities (i.e., dressing, washing hands), pouring, folding, preparing food, maintaining a clean environment (i.e., sweeping, mopping, cleaning a table, putting materials away)

- **PRIMARY (Kindergarten - 2nd Grade)**

- **Pathfinders:** (K-2nd) Ratio is 1:20, 1 Lead Teacher, 1 TA (when necessary)

All our primary classrooms boast the following:

- Music & Movement for dexterity and pre-math concepts
- Manipulative games and puzzles for cognitive growth and developing fine motor skills.
- Library for literacy and language skills
- Geography & Science for discovering our world.
- Practical Life skills - buttoning, pouring, folding, preparing food, or cleaning a table.

IV. ENROLLMENT & TUITION

Enrollment at Over the Moon is open year-round. Acceptance into our program is limited by space availability and completion of all necessary paperwork, interviews, and assessments. Waiting lists are routinely updated, checked, and revised to assist parents in placement of their child/children in the appropriate classroom.

- **STEPS FOR ENROLLMENT:**

- Take an optional tour of your desired campus.
- Admissions assessment for every student.
- Parent Interview
- Complete an online application.
- Complete all registration packet materials including current Physical, Immunizations & Birth Certificate
- Enrollment Fee received - \$100.00 per child, non-refundable.
- Security Deposit - \$100.00 per child, refundable (if applicable)
- First month's tuition payment

- **TUITION**

Tuition is based on the **yearly** cost of continuous enrollment, for one student, for the 10-month school year. As a courtesy, we can break down payments into an affordable payment plan. For those paying monthly, tuition is due on the 1st of the Month. **If tuition is not paid by 4:00 pm on the 4th of the Month, there will be a \$35 Late Fee added to your tuition bill.** If we still do not receive the tuition and late fee on the 9th of that month, **your child will not be able to attend until tuition is paid in full.**

Generally, a student will miss a few days of school each year due to illness, vacations, etc. We do not credit back unused days and we do not permit "day swapping." **No fee adjustments will be made for absences OR weather closures, as the child's space is reserved while he or she is absent. When a child is going to be absent, please notify the office.**

We accept the following forms of payment:

- Personal Check: Make checks payable to "Over the Moon"
- Cash, Cashier's Check, Zelle or Money Order (In a marked envelope, loose cash will not be accepted)
- Credit Card (www.myprocare.com) **Please note there is a service charge.*

- **DISMISSAL & EARLY WITHDRAWALS**

We reserve the right to dismiss any student or family whom, in the opinion of the staff and the Head of Schools, will not benefit from OTM's instruction. This can be done immediately or within 30 days, depending on the circumstance.

If it is necessary for *you* to withdraw your child, you are required to submit a notice IN WRITING using our withdrawal form 30 days in advance, to the Head of Schools. **No verbal notice will qualify as notice. Any monies owed in that 30-day period are still due. If 30 days' written notice is not received, you will forfeit your security deposit and any other monies already paid. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

V. **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- **ARRIVAL (Drop Off) & DEPARTURE (Pick Up)**

The smooth flow of our programs depends in large part on the children's **prompt** arrival and departure. It is important for each child to arrive on time and be picked up on time. The designated pick up and drop off area is at the front entrance of our school. We practice a "kiss & go" procedure. We also ask that you are sure to park in a designated parking space and avoid parking on the grass or in the center of the lot, as this causes unnecessary congestion. **A fee of \$5.00 will be charged for late pick-ups after the first 5 minutes and \$1 for each additional minute. If you are going to be late, please call prior to dismissal to make us aware.**

Change(s) in Pick up or drop off:

It is important you inform the school (in writing) of any arrangements you have made for your child to be picked up by someone other than their parents. **If a time sensitive matter arises, you MUST call.** A class list will be made available if you would like to talk to other parents about carpooling. If someone new will be picking up, please make sure they have their ID on them.

Lateness:

We believe any time spent learning is beneficial, if your child must be late for any reason, we still encourage you to bring them to class. If possible, please let us know of any expected lateness and expected time of arrival so we can prepare for an easy transition. A primary student is considered late for school if he or she is not in the classroom by 9:10am. No call or notice needs to be given prior to that time. **Please do not bring a child to school after 10:30am unless it has been previously discussed and scheduled with an Administrator.**

Absences:

Please take the time to reach via phone or email to notify us if your child will be absent. This allows us to inform our teachers so they can plan accordingly. It also allows us to take any extra precautionary measures if illness is involved. If possible, please notify us in advance if there are to be any upcoming absences that you know your child will have due to vacation, doctor's appointments, etc.

*****For those students in our Primary Grades (K-2nd), students must not miss more than 18 days of school within the year (excused or unexcused absences) to receive full credit for the school year attended. This is as per The New York State Department of Education.*****

A few additional notes:

- Please do not attempt to sneak away without saying goodbye to your child.
- Give your child a goodbye hug or kiss and explain that it is time for you to leave and you will return later.
- As difficult as it may be, make your good-bye short and sweet, even if your child is crying. The longer the goodbye, the longer the child will be upset. Do not linger around after you have said goodbye, this can confuse your child and prolong the difficulty of transition.
- Teachers are trained to handle these difficult, but normal occurrences. They will comfort your child and involve him/her in an activity.

■ CHILD PROTECTION & SAFETY

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. Child abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional. Neglect happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, or other basics for a child.

The Department of Social Services' protective services most often begin with a report of abuse or neglect made to the Child Abuse Hotline. Anyone may report suspected child abuse or neglect. However, state law mandates that workers in certain professions must make reports if they have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect. Most reports are initiated by calls from mandated reporters. Once an investigator has collected information from the people involved, a decision must be made by the investigator. The investigator can make one of two findings: a report can be **'unfounded'** when there is no credible evidence that the child was abused or neglected, or a report can be **'indicated'** when there is credible evidence that child was abused or neglected. Credible evidence means that the facts gathered by the investigator would lead a reasonable person to believe that a child has been abused or neglected.

Once Over the Moon is aware that protective services are in place for a particular child or children, we will take necessary steps to protect that child from the indicated person or abuser. All Over the Moon Staff are considered Mandated Reporters by the State of New York and must report any suspected abuse.

If the indicated person or abuser attempt to contact the subject child or children in our care, we will immediately take the following steps:

- (a). Our staff will protect the confidentiality of the subject child.
- (b). Our staff will notify the local DSS.
- (c). Our staff will call the Town of Crawford/Town of Wallkill Police Department for assistance.
- (d). We will keep that child under direct supervision of staff members and ensure that the indicated person or abuser does not have access to that child.

Child Day care center staff must personally make, or cause to be made, an immediate report to the statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment by telephone, followed by a written report with 48 hours, in the form (LDSS 2221) or manner prescribed by the Office to the child protective services of the social services district in the county in which the child resides (most likely Orange County but it could be another county)

▪ CHILD SUPERVISION

In compliance with New York State Child Supervision regulations, no child will be left without competent direct supervision at any time. This includes staff coverage for nap times, staff meetings, training, lunch breaks and mixing of age groups. No person other than the Head of School, Principal, Campus Coordinator, Receptionist, Lead Teacher, or Assistant Teacher, may supervise a group independently even for brief periods of time.

A person who is qualified to perform the duties of an absent staff member will be provided when needed to comply with the applicable staff to child ratios. When the school is in operation, an adequate number of qualified staff will be on duty to ensure the health and safety of the children in care. The state minimum ratios of staff to children are as follows:

- 18-36 months: 1:5
- 3 Years Old: 1:7
- 4-5 Years Old: 1:8
- NYSED: 5-10 Years Old: 1:20 between the hours of 9am-3pm

Our buildings are monitored via video surveillance as a safety and security measure for all our students, staff, and facilities. The cameras are only accessible to administrative staff and only view the exterior of the premises.

▪ CLASSROOM & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

➤ CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Our teachers provide a warm, nurturing environment for each child. All staff are involved in professional development to enhance "best practice" quality care and remain sensitive to each child's needs. Our philosophy is to foster positive self-esteem throughout school to encourage children to feel good about themselves, their classmates, and their caregivers. We use the "Responsive Classroom" methodology to guide our best practices.

➤ BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

We make every effort to have a discipline policy which practices positive reinforcement by praising good behavior and teaching self-control. If a child's behavior indicates he/she may harm themselves or others or seems to be taking away from the educational opportunity of others, he/she will be temporarily removed from the immediate group to redirect their behavior. We refer to this as "Calm Down" time. This will only be for a short time to help the child settle down and reflect on his/her behavior with the teacher's guidance so they can rejoin the group. We also practice a "logical consequence" or "you broke it, you fix it" mentality. Here we help guide the students to understand what the issue was/is, what a better choice could have been, and how we can now turn our original choice into a positive choice.

We believe discipline should be an opportunity to train the child in love. If a child has a continuing problem, the parent will be contacted for a conference so we can work on the problem together and maintain consistency. Our behavior management goal is to guide and teach, and help the child develop the internal controls to behave appropriately. Our staff use positive behavior management techniques to help children understand adult expectations for behavior, to anticipate possible conflict situations and to intervene in a

timely manner to prevent problems from occurring or escalating. Teachers circulate, and strategically place themselves within full view of the room and outdoor areas, and use humor, imagination, redirection, and consistency to assist the children in developing self-control.

▪ SPECIAL NEEDS, SERVICES, & ASSESSMENTS

When it becomes evident that a child has learning, behavioral, or social difficulties which the teachers believe require professional assistance, a diagnostic assessment and, if needed, intervention by an outside specialist will be recommended by the building Principal. We will work closely with parents to find the appropriate specialist for diagnosis and will work with the specialist to help the child meet his/her goals. Over the Moon reserves the right to require parents to seek an alternative school placement if we feel we cannot meet a student's needs or when those needs lie outside the scope of OTM's classroom. This situation may arise when a student's special education needs are beyond those which we can provide or support in our educational programs.

▪ COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA

Over the Moon welcomes feedback and encourages our students, parents, and community to directly ask questions and provide comments to the appropriate person. Below we have listed several ways in which you can successfully communicate with us.

- Phone: 845.524.4411(option 1 for Pine Bush) & (option 2 for Middletown)
- Email: info@otmenrichment.com
- To make a formal complaint you may contact OCFS at 914-801-3224.

***All time-sensitive issues MUST be communicated to the school by phone or email including Absences/Sickness, Pick-up changes, 24-hour mandatory reporting of highly infectious communicable illness (e.g., pink eye, flu, lice, etc). Please DO NOT post these issues on our Facebook group, Facebook messenger, or any other app or forum.

***We also request 24 hours' notice to sign-up for before/ aftercare and day extension per diem needs.

➤ CONFIDENTIALITY

In our setting, all staff have a 'confidential relationship' with families. It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and careers, while ensuring they access high quality early years care and education in our setting. We aim to ensure that all parents/guardians can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children. There are record systems in place that meet legal requirements; means of storing and sharing that information takes place within the framework of the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

➤ E-MAIL

Please feel free to email us anytime, as we are very email friendly and will respond as promptly as our schedule allows or on the next open school day. Messages must be constructive, courteous, and concise. We use email as a frequent way to disperse important information to our students and their families. Please make sure you have provided us with an up-to-date email address. Remember email is a public record.

***Please use the phone or face-to-face conference for confidential, sensitive issues.

➤ PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

One formal parent/teacher conference is held each year (February). This and other conferences (virtual, zoom, phone, etc) offer parents the opportunity to speak individually with their child's teachers, to hear about the child's progress and the teachers' goals for the child. Conferences are an opportunity for parents to give teachers additional information about their child. Please check the school calendar for the exact dates and keep this time available. We generally email a Signup Genius link that will allow you to schedule a specific date and time for you to meet with the teacher during Parent Conferences.

➤ SOCIAL MEDIA

We encourage all Facebook members to like our business page: Over the Moon. We also invite you to join our Closed Group, Over the Moon Family and then their child's private classroom group: PB: Petite Pioneers; PB: Little Explorers (Preschool or PreK); PB: Pathfinders; MT: Petite Pioneers; MT: Little Explorers; MT: Pathfinders. It is here that we share videos, pictures, and information for our students and their parents. Please let us know if you DO NOT have Facebook. We also have a business Instagram account that we encourage you to follow, search @otmenrichment.

It is the policy of Over the Moon to ensure the privacy, safety, and well-being of its students, families, and staff. Electronic transmittal of photos, texts, prints, or related methods of students, staff, and family members is prohibited. No other form of social media transmittal will be tolerated without the written consent from the involved parent, staff, or legal guardian. Any person who has knowledge of such behavior should be reported to the Head of School. **Please note our staff is prohibited from accepting, initiating, or engaging in any social media, communications or otherwise with students or parents enrolled in our school outside of the OTM Facebook groups.**

➤ STUDENT FOLDER

The blue folder provided to you as your child's welcome packet is to remain in their backpack for the year. It is \$5 for a replacement folder. Please make sure to check and empty your child's blue folder daily/regularly. Please do not use it as storage.

▪ EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The staff is trained annually in emergency preparedness and safety procedures -- specifically, how to prepare for an emergency or natural disaster and how to deal with the aftermath. In addition, each teacher has a fire safety manual compiled specifically for the site, which is updated each year. The basic information is summarized below; a copy of the manual is in the office, available for parents to review.

The manual covers procedures for immediate action and longer-term activity in the event of an emergency. Contact information for help, as well as evacuation routes and location of water/gas turn-off valves, is provided. There are guidelines for communication within the school, between school and emergency agencies, and between school and parents. In addition, fire drill procedures are listed. We have at least two fire drills each month, some announced, some unannounced. We also practice with the students our emergency exits during fire drills. Shelter in Place drills are also practiced two times a year. We do not have a nurse on staff at Over the Moon. However, all teachers and teacher assistants are CPR and First Aid certified.

For health-related emergencies, our plan is as follows:

1. If necessary, due to a medical emergency, 911 will be called followed by a parent and then OCFS.
2. Isolate ill or injured child with a teacher or administration.
3. Facilitate First Aid if necessary.
4. Contact parents or guardian immediately if serious.
5. Record all illness and injuries immediately.
6. Call OCFS within an hour of the emergency.

Practicing how to handle an emergency is a great way to be proactive in keeping our staff and students safe. To do this we practice fire drills and shelter in place drills. If we are to do any of these drills, we will notify parents using our app, parent teacher log or Facebook page. During the entirety of a drill, the drop off or pick up of children is not permitted until the drill is complete.

▪ **HEALTH, ILLNESS & INJURY**

Over the Moon has a Health Care Plan that details all health & safety policies and procedures that are followed in our day-to-day operations. The Head of Schools also consults with our designated Health Care Professional when necessary. If you have questions related to your child's health & safety, please do not hesitate to speak to the Head of School/Principal. Some of our Health Care policies include:

➤ **MEDICAL FORM**

New York State requires that all children entering school must have a record of a current physical and up-to-date immunizations. Prior to admission to the Program, a medical form must be completed with current immunizations and signed by your child's physician.

➤ **SICK CHILD POLICY**

It is in everyone's best interest if children stay home if they are not feeling well. We rely on a parent's judgment on whether to send their child to school. If your child shows any of the symptoms below, he/she is required to remain out of school until fully recovered. Please remember to be considerate of other families and staff members.

- A contagious or communicable disease
- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher within 24hrs.
- Heavy nasal discharge; yellow or greenish in color
- A persistent cough
- Draining eyes, ears, nose, or any open sore
- Diarrhea or vomiting within 24hrs.
- Lack of proper immunizations
- Cannot participate in play both indoor and outdoor.
- Strep throat- child must be out of school for a minimum of 48 hrs. and using prescription medication.
- Unknown questionable rashes and impetigo, measles, chicken pox, etc.
- Highly infectious conditions will require a physician's written approval before returning to the center.

➤ **DAILY & DEVELOPMENTAL HEALTH CHECK**

Upon entering our school, our staff will make a "well child" check of each child as they enter the classroom. This is to check for wellness and any potential "booboo's". We then document everything, each day. The child must be symptom free and can participate in the day's activities to remain within our program that day. It is our policy to take children outdoors/nature walk frequently (weather permitting).

➤ **ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

If your child becomes ill at our school, we will call for you or a designated adult on your Emergency Contact List to pick up your child as soon as possible. The child will be provided with a safe, quiet place to rest, away from other children until you arrive. We prefer and it is recommended that all students who are being sent home ill or injured are picked up within **30 minutes** from the time contact was made with the parent/guardian. Upon pick-up a "Student Illness Form" will be provided that further explains the student's approved return date or if any further doctor clearance is needed.

➤ **CONTAGIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS/DISEASES**

To maintain a healthy and positive atmosphere for all children and staff, children who are ill or who are becoming ill must be kept at home. If, for example, your child has vomited or had fever or diarrhea in the last 24 hours, keep him/her at home for an additional 24 hours. If your child has been ill and seems well after beginning a series of antibiotics, she/he may return to school with the doctor's permission. Children who become ill while at school will be kept apart from other children, and their parents will be called to pick them up. When a child is diagnosed with a communicable illness or condition, it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school, so that all families can be notified appropriately. **We will request that a doctor's note stating the reason for the visit and a clearance date is presented for the student to return.**

➤ **MEDICATIONS**

As per New York State Office of Child & Family Services (NYSOCFS) regulations children may not be given ANY medication while in our Center. **Exceptions:** Sunscreens and topical lotions may be applied as needed with parental instructions. Emergent medications such as an epi-pen, may be administered. Any emergent medications must have the child's name, prescription listed on it, and specific directions on how it is to be administered.

➤ **ALLERGIES & CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Parents must also provide a list of "Do's and Don'ts," regarding students (e.g., approved list of foods that are okay and those that are not, indicating if they can be around anyone eating foods that they are allergic to, etc.) If your child has a food allergy, you must provide a daily snack for your child that can be brought to school or kept in the classroom.

➤ **ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS**

Children sometimes receive bumps and bruises as part of their daily routine. They may also be involved in various "incidents" worth documenting, such as disruptive or destructive behavior. You will be notified of these events through an "incident report" which we will have you sign at dismissal. Your signature is required and lets us know you have been aware of your child's accident/incident. The report is then filed in the

individual child's file, and you will be provided with a copy to keep. The staff will use basic First Aid procedures to care for bumps and bruises. If more care is needed for the injury, we will ask that the parent follow up with a physician's visit or seek emergency medical care. In the case of incidents, either party may request a conference to discuss further strategies in dealing with future incidents.

➤ **When a parent does NOT need to be informed right away:**

- When a child has a minor fall and no ensuing obvious injury.
- When a child has a minor bump and an ice pack is applied for relief, and they are fine after 10 minutes.
- When a child wants an icepack for any number of reasons but is fine after 10 minutes.
- When a child has a very minor "injury," like a paper cut, but would like a band-aid because it makes him/her feel better.

➤ **TOILETING/DIAPERING**

The bathroom is always open to the children. Special attention is given to toileting during transition times such as: going outside, before and after meals, rest time etc. Children learn to respect each other's privacy.

Self-help skills and **proper hygiene** are emphasized. Children are encouraged to clean themselves, and **never made to feel "bad" about accidents**. The bathroom is disinfected several times a day.

**Please note that students in Pre-K and above are required to be independent in the bathroom.*

▪ **DRESS CODE & CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS**

All children should wear comfortable clothes, so they will be free to enter to play. Girls wearing dresses are required to wear shorts or leggings underneath to remain modest when on the playground or during circle time. We go outside for walks and other activities, please make sure to dress your child in appropriate clothing for the weather. A seasonally appropriate change of clothes should always be kept in the child's backpack. Please check their backpacks daily to make sure they have all the necessary items.

It is essential for the convenience of everyone that all articles of clothing, slippers, and shoes be clearly marked with the child's name or initials. This will help everyone keep track of clothing and help minimize the contents of our lost and found bin (located in the lobby).

Please bring the following items to school for your child:

- A 1 gallon labeled Ziploc bag containing 1-2 extra sets of seasonally appropriate clothing (including pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) all labeled with your child's name to be kept in their backpack.
- Slippers to be left at the school. We send them home at the end of **each week** to be laundered. Please refrain from slippers with animal heads, or protruding characters.
- **Sneakers only!** Please do not send your child to school with Crocs, sandals, flip flops, or slip-ons. If your child does not know how to tie laces, please send them with Velcro shoes. All shoes must be able to be put on and taken off by the child. We are always there to assist.

- **NUTRITION: Snacks & Meals**

We believe in children being exposed to as little sugar as possible in their diet. We only provide filtered water as a drink. Our low-sugar policy holds true throughout the school, no matter what age the child. We ask for your compliance in this matter. **Holiday celebrations and birthday celebrations are exceptions to this rule; however, parents are asked to send nutritious and low-sugar treats for these occasions, no cupcakes or cake please.** A snack will be provided by the program with assistance from parents/guardians. Children with special dietary needs are asked to have a snack provided from home.

**Please keep in mind of any allergies that may be noted to you.*

- **SNACK SHACK**

To keep tuition costs down, Over the Moon's Snack Shack program is a combined effort between the parents and the school. We will select one parent weekly to bring in snack items for the month. A list of items will be provided to you 1 week before it is your turn. We appreciate your assistance in helping us provide healthy and nutritious snacks for the children.

- **LUNCH**

Lunch for full day children must be supplied from home and brought to school in a lunch box.

**Items can be reheated for no more than 1 minute, but we will not cook items.*

In our **Middletown** Location: We offer a hot meal option from the Healthy Deli, M-F. Please provide a note with your child's lunch option on it as well as exact cash in a sealed envelope with your child's name on it. A form with hot lunch options will be presented at the beginning of the year.

- **REST/QUIET TIME**

After lunch, students have a period of rest/quiet time. This is for at least 30 minutes as required by the NYSOCFS. After the 30 minutes of rest/quiet time has ended, any Early Primary students still asleep may remain sleeping and continue to be supervised by a staff member. Any awake Early Primary students will be provided with appropriate individual or small group learning activity as well as having outside time if weather allows. For our Primary Students they have scheduled outside time and planned group learning activities throughout the rest of the afternoon.

- For our **Early Primary** students this is a period in which the students will lay down quietly.
 - For our **Primary** Students this is a period in which students can quietly read or work on other designated quiet activities. Primary age students are not required to but have the option to lay down if they wish.

We provide nap cots for the students to rest on. Please send in a pillow, fitted crib sheet, and blanket for your child to rest with. We will be sending the pillow, sheet, and blankets home weekly to be washed. Please remember to send them back the next day your child attends school.

**Please note that we cannot allow students to use rest mats or sleeping bags with zippers on them.*

- **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Parents play a vital role in the ongoing success of their child in school. Research has shown that children who have parental support at home are more likely to experience success at school. Children thrive when school and

homework work together in harmony. For this reason, we encourage parent/teacher partnerships and offer the following guidelines for parents.

➤ **VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM**

We encourage parents to contribute to their child's school by assisting with special projects and sharing their time and talents. Parents are invited to share holidays and other cultural traditions with the children. If you are interested in cooking or baking, reading stories, we encourage you to volunteer your time and energy. Any contributions of time, talent, energy, class snacks, new and used toys and equipment, are always gratefully received. We will be planning fundraising projects each year. In the future, the success of these fundraisers depends on parents' participation, and we invite your suggestions for future projects. If you would like to contribute additional time and energy to our school, volunteers are always welcome. Please contact your students' school via email or phone to schedule your time in the classroom.

➤ **PARENT VOLUNTEERING & FEEDBACK**

Parent volunteering in your child's class is welcome after the first 6 weeks and before the last 6 weeks. This may be scheduled with your campus coordinator. We ask parents, as we ask all classroom visitors, to respect the rights of the teachers and the students. If any questions come up because of the visit, parents are invited to speak to the Head of Schools or their building Principal at that time or via email or phone any time. Parent questions and comments are valued by the teachers and administration.

▪ **SPECIAL EVENTS**

➤ **HOLIDAYS**

Over the Moon celebrates a variety of holidays as a way of expanding a child's awareness of other cultures. However, we are sensitive to the beliefs of all families. Please notify us, in writing/email, if you do not want your child participating in any celebrations or festivities. We will communicate with parents well in advance of a celebration to let them know how they can participate or opt-out.

➤ **BIRTHDAYS**

Your child's birthday may be celebrated at school by requesting a date with your child's teacher who will confirm with the Campus Coordinator. Parents may provide a special treat to share during our snack time, which is in the morning. We request healthy, low-sugar refreshments are provided. If a sugary treat is provided, we will pass it out at the end of the day for the students to enjoy at home. Special paper products or favors for the class may be sent in but are not necessary. If you are having a birthday party for your child and wish to send invitations to school, please only do so if all the children in the class are invited. Please do not post birthday information or the like in our school's Facebook group.

➤ **FIELD TRIPS/MEET UPS**

Over the Moon will provide field trips or "meet up" opportunities at different times throughout the year. They will be communicated to parents through our monthly calendars and emails.

- **CALENDAR**

Over the Moon is a private school and as such we have our own calendar for our school that runs very similarly to the school district in which our Campus is located. **See our website for our 2024-2025 calendar.**

- **WEATHER, CLOSINGS, ETC.**

Incident weather notifications will be specific to each campus and the school district in which it is located. We will also post on our Facebook page and message in Procure any delays, closures, or early dismissals.

Pine Bush Campus: Pine Bush School District

Middletown Campus: Goshen School District

**Please note if your child receives bussing, they will be subject to the delays of the school district in which you reside.*