



Harris Family Children's Center
Phillips Exeter Academy

Mission Statement

The Harris Family Children's Center provides a safe and nurturing environment where young children can feel good about themselves, secure enough to take risks, and have opportunities to discover their talents. Like the Harkness teaching of the Academy's older students, the Children's Center teachers encourage their students to question assumptions, make independent judgments, and test hypotheses.

The program is committed to supporting children's development by respecting individual differences, by helping them learn to live and work cooperatively and by promoting their self-esteem. The Center's curriculum educates children in the process of discovery through observation, through hands-on experimentation, and through individual and group exploration.

We place great value on children's ability to socialize, receiving their affection and trust, and satisfying their needs and desire to learn. These strategies contribute to the formation of creative intelligence, free thought, and individuality. Parents, educators, and the environment must all work together to create a secure foundation. Our goal is a sustained apprenticeship in humanity that will last a lifetime.

Welcome

An open, cooperative partnership between parents and teachers ensures a quality educational experience for your child. Children's Center teachers need to be able to reach parents (or an alternate) at all times to ask questions about care, routines, behaviors, feedings and medications. We encourage parents to talk with teachers about any questions or concerns as they serve to help us better explain the program and help us to better understand your expectations and your child's experience. We encourage parents to speak with teachers frequently about changes in their child's development they have observed at home and about any changes they have made in their child's care routine.

Arrival and Departure

Children are very good at reading what parents are feeling and it is important that your child senses your confidence in the professionals that care for and teach your children. When needed, plan to take time at drop-off so as to ease your child's transition into the classroom and to share information with your child's teacher. When it is time to say good-bye, it is best to keep it short and sweet. Tell your child that you are leaving, resist the urge to sneak away as it is important that your child knows that when you leave you do return. If your child gets upset as you leave we suggest that you depart as planned. The teachers will comfort your child and help him/her settle into activities when he/she is ready.

The teachers ask that families with multiple children at the Center drop off the oldest first. Due to the size and energy level of older siblings their play may be unsettling to the younger children.

Transition

Upon initial entrance into our child care program, we encourage your child's sense of security by providing a time of transition. For example, a child may begin with one hour on the first day, two hours on the second, half-day on the third, and so on. Teachers, in collaboration with the parent, will determine the length of transition that is needed for each child.

Sign in sign out

To create a safe environment for the children we require that parent's use their proxy key and sign their children in and out of the Center. Each room will have a designated area and a place to record time in and out as well as any special instructions that day. We also require notification if there is a different person dropping off or picking up a child.

Parent mailboxes

The Center provides mailboxes that are conveniently located in the vestibule. All pertinent information will be dispersed including notices of scheduled closings, upcoming events, and seasonal newsletters.

Parent Involvement

We encourage parent involvement at the Harris Family Children's Center and realize that this can come in many forms, whether it be chaperoning on a field trip, providing presentations in art, science or nutrition or simply by contributing to our monthly snack. We strive to include parents in their children's time at the Center and do so through different avenues of communication. Teacher/parent conferences will take place through the school year and will vary with each classroom.