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**STEWARD STATION LIMITED**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2022 - 2023**

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Steward Station Ltd. is a non-profit corporation organized under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 180, which was formed to meet the need for school age childcare. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors which is responsible for financial and policy making decisions. Parents of children registered to attend programs during the school year are automatically voting members of the corporation. It has tax-exempt status pursuant to IRC § 501 (c) (3).**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

**Steward Station’s purpose is to provide a safe, accessible and affordable, before and after school programs for children in kindergarten through 6th grade. It offers varied educational and enrichment activities designed to meet the child’s developmental, social and emotional needs in a warm, caring atmosphere.**

**NON DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

**Steward Station will not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, cultural heritage, national origin, marital status, religion, political beliefs, disability and sexual orientation.**

**STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY TO OPERATE**

**The Board of Directors is composed of at least three parents of children enrolled in**

**Steward Station.**

**They are elected annually at the June meeting of the parents of the children attending the program, all of whom are automatically voting members of the corporation.**

**They are responsible for establishing policies and procedures concerning finance, personnel, and the general operation of Steward Station. Members of the board serve on various committees, which are responsible for specific areas of the operation. Officers and directors of the board for the 2016-2017 school year are as follows:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **President:** | **Jen Caruso, 46 Kinsman Lane, JenniferLpepe@gmail.com** |
| **Vice-President:** | **Laura Peet, 63 Howlett St, llmd@gmail.com** |
| **Treasurer:** | **Vanessa Christie, 274 Perkins Row, vanessa.christie87@gmail.co RRow,vanvvanevanessa.christie87@gmail.com**  **eevangelinedukasking@gmail.com** |
| **Secretary:** | Jill Francisco, 8 Ipswich Rd, jlobrien13@gmail.com |
|  |  |

**FINANCIAL STRUCTURE**

**Steward Station, Ltd is self-supporting and funded through and by tuition fees, grants, donations and other fund raising activities to be carried out throughout the year.**

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** | |  |
| **PROGRAM DIRECTOR** | |
|  | | **Before/After School Site**  **Coordinator** | |
|  | | **Group Leader** | |
| **Assistant Group Leader** | |

**The Program Director is hired by the Board of Directors and reports directly to them every month. The Program Director is responsible for the day to day operation of the program, including supervision of all other staff. Although the Board of Directors is available to review and discuss administrative decisions and has final authority with regard to behavior policy, administrative and special financial considerations, the Program Director has on site discretionary power to handle such matters, as he/she deems appropriate.**

**PROGRAM PLANS**

**Steward Station provides school age child care services for children in Kindergarten through Grade 6 at the Steward School, 261 Perkins Row, Topsfield in a program known as Steward Station Limited.**

**The program is a single-site licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care 01843 under regulations as set forth in 102 CMF 7:00, Standards for the Licensure or Approval of School Age Programs. The Department of Early Education and Care is located at 360 Merrimack St. Bldg. 9 3rd Floor, Lawrence, MA 01843. Phone number is 978-681-9684. Parents/guardians may contact EEC for**

**information regarding our program’s regulatory compliance history.**

**While the importance of planning and structure are recognized and valued, Steward**

**Station also encourages flexibility and creativity of the staff in order to provide an**

**overall enriching experience for children. Therefore, long-range plans may change on occasion in order to accommodate a spontaneous activity, such as going outside to play in the snow.**

**Before School Program**

**The Program at Steward Station opens at 7AM. Children are brought to Steward Station by a parent or other designated adult. An adult must escort their child/ children to our room 201. The designated adult will sign in the child in the Before School Arrival Log book. The log will include the date, the time, child’s name and signature of designated adult. During morning hours, children are encouraged to read, play quiet games, use craft materials and if necessary eat a snack or breakfast brought from home. Weather permitting, children are allowed to go outside for recess.**

**At 8:25AM, children attending Proctor School will be escorted by a staff member to board school bus #25 from the Town of Topsfield.**

**At 8:30AM, children attending Steward School are escorted to the designated school area where they are met by school personnel to begin their school day.**

**After School Program**

**At 3:05 PM children attending Steward School are dismissed to the cafeteria and met by a staff member and then escorted to the appropriate program space, room**

**201. The Proctor School children will take bus #25 to Steward School. They will be met by a staff member and escorted to room 201.**

**After group time, snack (snack & water bottle to be brought from home) and playtime, staff determines activities. During a month themes are used to enrich and challenge the children. Generally they have a choice of craft type activity, games, open ended activities, projects and free choice.**

**5PM is established as a quiet time; the children read books, do homework, color & write. It’s a time to “settle down” before parent pick-up.**

**Card games, board games, sports equipment, manipulative play, sand table, water table, blocks, house/dress up area, quiet area & arts & crafts are among some of the choices of supplies and equipment that is available on a daily basis.**

**At departure time the designated adult is required to sign the child out in the After School Departure Log Book. Please shut your vehicle off, take other children out of the car and come into room #201 to sign your child out. Please refrain from cell phone use at this time.**

**ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

**Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the Program Director to visit the facility with the child prior to enrollment. This visit will allow both the parent and the child to become familiar with the program and the facility. A visit can be set up by phone or email;. All necessary information and permission forms must be on file prior to enrollment.**

**SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN**

**Children with special needs will be accepted into the program, providing that staff qualifications and abilities are such to be able to provide the necessary service and that their attendance causes no undue hardship to the program**.

TUITION FEE SCHEDULE

You will receive for tuition price in your registration packet.

If you will be changing your schedule, you need to do so prior to the start of the program.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Parents must notify the Program Director in advance if a child will not be attending Steward Station on a scheduled day. This includes sickness, physician’s visits or early dismissals for any reason. Please email to the Program Director @ stewardstation@gmail.com It is imperative to email on each such occasion; otherwise the staff loses valuable time tracking down an absent child. The school main office must be notified, also, of any changes in a child’s schedule.**

**PAYMENT POLICY**

**Our tuition is based upon an annual fee divided into ten equal payments, payable on the first day of the month. The monthly tuition fee is non- transferable/non-refundable. An annual non-refundable registration fee of $50 per family will be due upon registration. Your prompt payment of your fees is appreciated. Tuition Express is used to collect monthly tuition. This automatic payment system allows tuition to be deducted from your account on a monthly basis.**

**EXTRA/ADDED TIME**

**Days or time blocks may be added on an “as needed, if space exists” basis and prior approval of the staff is obtained. A separate fee schedule has been adopted for this service. Payment is due at the time of service. All fees are non-transferable/non- refundable.**

 **Before School Drop-In Fee: $16.50**

 **After School Drop-In Fee: $24.20**



**LATE PICK UP POLICY**

**Steward Station has a late pick up fee policy, which will be enforced. The parent MUST call to notify the staff. A fee of $1 for every minute will be assessed. Payment is due at time of pick up.**

**If a parent is tardy more than 3 times, the Program Director may suspend the child for an appropriate length of time. The parent may appeal this suspension to the Board of Directors, but the child will remain suspended until a hearing with the Board of Directors has taken place within ten days of the parent’s appeal.**

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Students already within the school building are dismissed directly to Steward Station. A staff person will accompany all children whenever traveling from one place to another in the building.**

**Parents transporting a child to school must enter the school and escort the child to Steward Station. If you need to enter the school for any reason during school hours of 8:30AM to 3:00PM, please sign in at the main office before coming to Steward Station.**

**A child arriving from Proctor School to attend the after school program will take**

**Bus#25 to Steward School to attend Steward Station. A staff person will greet the bus and escort the children to room 201**

**Parents are responsible for their children until their arrival at the program. Children must be escorted and signed into to the program. All children must have in their file a transportation plan the Department of Early Education and Care Transportation Form #7.09(3) and 7.12(1).**

**EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION**

**If an emergency arises and a child must be transported to or from the program, or be provided transportation elsewhere, a staff member may use their own vehicle to provide such. Insurance coverage for this is provided for by Steward Station’s liability policy.**

**If an injury or illness necessitates, in the opinion of the staff, emergency medical attention, the Topsfield Police Department will be called upon to provide ambulance transportation to the nearest medical facility.**

**CHILD’S HEALTH**

**Please use common sense and courtesy towards others enrolled when sending a child into the program with an illness. Steward Station will follow the same guidelines the Topsfield School System regarding sending children with an infection or disease:**

**Temperature should be normal for 24 hours.**

**Three days have elapsed since the onset of a cold (no temperature, sore**

**Throat or severe cough).**

**Child is ready to participate in all activities, including gym/outdoors play. Isolation periods of common communicable diseases:**

**COVID is the same as the school per CDC recommendations**

**Chicken Pox is one week from appearance or eruptions. German measles (rubella) have no restrictions.**

**Mumps is one week from onset of disease or until swelling has subsided.**

**Strep Infections is one week without drug therapy (penicillin or like) or 24 hours of antibiotic therapy, providing therapy is continued for 10 days.**

**Please notify the Program Director if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease. Parents will be notified if and when a child needs to be kept home. All parents will be notified if a child in the program has been reported to have a contagious disease. Notices will include information on symptoms and other general information on the contagion.**

**If a child must take medication while at school or Steward Station, a physician shall provide written orders and the parent shall provide a written request. Medications**

**must be brought to staff in a container labeled by the pharmacist or the physician and will be store in a locked cabinet.**

**Children who use an inhaler for asthma may, with written parental consent and written physician authorization, carry their inhaler to use as needed without direct staff supervision.**

**Steward Station staff trained in first aid procedures will administer ordinary first aid measures. In case of serious illness/injury, emergency procedures as outlined on the parent release form will be followed.**

**Steward Station's complete health care policy is posted at Steward Station. If you prefer you may request your own copy by contacting the program director.**

**CHILD’S SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY**

**Steward Station’s procedure for transitioning a child or children between**

**classrooms and programs per EEC Regulation7.03 (7) (d) is as follow:**

**1. The Child’s Schedule Change Form will be completed by the parent/guardian when their child/children attend another program in the same school building before or after their scheduled Steward Station program. This form needs to be completed if your child will be attending Girl/Boy Scouts, Horizon programs, Sports Programs or similar activities prior to arriving or departing to/from Steward Station.**

**2. Transition collaboration and information will be shared with the educator involved in the classroom or program.**

**CLOTHING/PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

**All clothing and personal belonging should be clearly labeled with the child’s name. Children may bring toys, games, etc., but please remind them that things can get broken with many children playing with them. Valuables and “precious possessions” probably should remain at home.**

**Please keep in mind the ever-changing New England weather and send your child dressed appropriately. Children should wear, or bring to change into, clothing appropriate to active and outdoor play. Before/after school children can keep extra clothing in their backpacks.**

**CONFERENCES/PARENT VISITS/CHILD’S ANNUAL REVIEW**

**Steward Station has an open door policy. Parents are welcome to drop in at any time to observe the program and activities which the children participate in.**

**Parents are encouraged to schedule time with the Program Director to discuss issues that are not appropriate to discuss in front of a child or require more in-depth conversation.**

**Per EEC regulation 7.06(3) (a, b, c), a written progress report will be prepared annually at the midpoint of the current school year on the progress of each child in all programs. The program will offer parents/guardians a conference to discuss the content of the report. The original report will be given to the parent/guardian and a copy will be kept in the child’s file.**

**Please do not hesitate to let us know of your concerns, or anything else that affects your child, no matter if “too small to bother with”. If parents have concerns or complaints that they feel cannot be handled with a conference with the director or staff; parents are advised that they should contact a member of the Board of Directors. Members of the Board of Directors are listed in this handbook.**

**BEHAVIOR POLICY**

**Steward Station will take every effort to avoid suspension and termination of a child from any of our programs due challenging behaviors. We will provide the**

**following:**

**Provide an opportunity to meet with the parents/guardians to discuss options other than suspension or termination.**

**Offer referrals to parents/guardians for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services.**

**Pursue options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training.**

**Develop a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.**

**Children are expected to act in a courteous and friendly manner while under the jurisdiction of Steward Station, Steward School and the personal belongings of other children in the programs and in the school. There are many factors and varieties of experiences, events and extraneous circumstances that my affect a child’s behavior. It is for these reasons the following guidelines have been established.**

**The staff person responsible for the group will speak to the child at the time.**

 **The problem will be identified and age appropriate solutions and/or consequences such as loss of privileges will be offered to help correct the behavior.**

 **Depending on the child, their age and the behavior they may be asked to remove themselves from the situation to a quiet and safe area to regain control.**

 **If the behavior persists, the staff person will request that the Program**

**Director intervenes.**

**Minor Infractions**

**These actions, for the most part, are all that will be necessary. If a certain behavior continues a "Behavior Concern" form will be sent home to the parent/guardian. Infractions include teasing, exclusion/abusive comments toward a child, physical contact, destruction of property, inappropriate language, disrespect and inappropriate articles brought from home. The staff member and the child will complete the form. The parent/guardian will review the concern with the child and return the signed form to Steward Station. Five infractions per school year will initiate a conference with the parents/guardians and the director to determine a plan of action.**

**Serious Infractions**

**It should be understood that the wellbeing of all children would be a top priority of the program. Therefore, if a child’s behavior becomes a constant disruptive factor, endangers other children, verbally threatens a staff member/child, inability to control ones physical actions and deliberately hits a staff member/child the following action will be put in place.**

 **The first infraction will result in a three-day suspension from the program.**

 **A second infraction will result in a week suspension from the program.**

 **A third infraction will result in permanent removal from the program.**

**These actions will occur after a parent/guardian conference has taken place with the director. The parent/guardian will be notified in writing with the reasons for suspension or termination from the Board of Directors. After suspension and upon returning to the program the Program Director/Board of Directors will prepare a Re-entry Plan for the child, which the parent/guardian and child will sign. If a child must be suspended or terminated from the program, the Program Director shall prepare the child for such action in a manner consistent with the child’s ability to understand the action being taken.**

**The program will also inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other services if so requested.**

**Children and staff are expected to be respectful of one another and to act courteously. All measures taken to ensure this behavior are to be consistent, responsible and appropriate to the child’s understanding and needs. No child shall**

**be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including: any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body; punishments which subject a child to verbal abuse, ridicule, or humiliation; denial of food, rest or bathroom facilities, punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, or punishment related to hearing or not eating food.**

**Whenever possible or feasible, children shall be encouraged to participate in the**

**establishment of the program’s rules and policies regarding behavior.**

**CHILDREN'S RECORDS**

**An individual file will be maintained on each child enrolled in Steward Station. All records are confidential and will not be released without the written consent of a parent or guardian.**

**Parents may view a child's record by scheduling an appointment with a staff member. Parents will be required to sign a log whenever information from a child's record is released. Parents may have information added or deleted from a child's record according to a prescribed procedure, which may be obtained from the administrator. Records may also be transferred upon written request of a parent. The program may not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in the child's record.**

The records are made available to the Department of Early Education and Care, but may not be removed from the premises.

**NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

**Steward Station will inform/notify parents/guardians when:**

**Immediately of any injury of a child which requires any medical care beyond first aid.**

**Immediately of any allegation of abuse or neglect involving their child/ren while in the care of the program.**

**Prior to or as soon as possible following any change in educators. At the end of the day regarding any minor first aid administer. In writing within 24 hours of any incident as described.**

**Whenever special problems and significant developments arise.**

**Whenever a communicable disease or condition has been identified in the program. In writing seven days prior to the implementation of any change in program policy**

**or procedures.**

**Prior to the introduction of any pets into the program. Of the use of any herbicides or pesticides.**

**Whenever the program deviates from the planned menu. NUTRITION**

**The program does not provide snack, please send a nutritious snack & a refillable water bottle. Some of the nutritious snack items might be fruit, vegetables, or choices from the basic food groups that meet the USDA requirements for a nutritionally adequate diet. All Steward Station snacks should be peanut free.**

**ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY**

**In order to insure the well-being of the children in our care, our staff has a continuing duty under state law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, to the Department of Children and Families, and to cooperate in any investigation of such possible neglect or abuse (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51 A). Staff are mandated reporters and do not have discretion in this matter, but must make such referrals wherever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child might be harmed by anyone, including non-family members, and may be subject to criminal penalties for failure to report such possible harm.**

**PROGRAM CANCELLATION DUE TO WEATHER/EMERGENCY**

**If Steward/Proctor School are closed due to weather/emergency then Steward**

**Station will be closed. If there is a delay, there will be no AM session**

**If Steward/ Proctor Schools closes during the school day due to weather/emergency, the children who attend the before/after school programs will follow their school’s emergency plan. The after school program will be CLOSED. The child will be sent home according to their transportation plan. Please make sure you have an emergency plan.**

**CHILD RELEASE POLICY**

**The importance of making sure that an authorized person picks up a child cannot be over emphasized. This is for the SAFETY of your child. Other than parents, only the designated persons listed on the Transportation Plan and Authorization**

**Forms are allowed to take a child from the program. This being said, you should include anyone you think may ever pick up on this form. Any newly authorized person must present adequate identification in order for us to release your child. Children are not allowed to leave the program unless accompanied by an approved adult.**

 **A child may be released to a person not on the list only if the parent has provided a written note with signature, date, and time of pick up.**

 **Before release of a child to someone other than parent, a staff member will check their driver’s license to be sure that it matches the authorization form or note.**

 **If written authorization is not available, we will accept a dated email authorization by the parent.**

 **If a parent or authorized person appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs the staff person in charge will determine if the child can or cannot be safely transported home. If the staff person determines the child will not be safely transported home, they will:**

**- Suggest some else come for the child.**

**- Offer to make other arrangements for safe transportation.**

- **If the parent or the authorized person insists on driving we will explain to the person our intent to call the police and DCF due to our concern for the child's SAFETY.**

- **If the parent or authorized person becomes argumentative or threatening we will call the police.**

**In cases involving custody disputes, a child will only be released to the non-custodial parent after contacting the custodial parent.**

**It is imperative that we have all legal documentation at the start of the school year regarding custody.**

**Steward Station is a safe environment. The staff and I work very hard at making the children feel safe & comfortable. If at any time a parent becomes argumentative or threatening, the police will be called. The board will be notified and your child will not be allowed to attend Steward Station. If you have any concerns, please make an appointment to meet with the director during non- program hours. The staff needs to devote its full attention to the children. Brief communication at the start and end of the day is appreciated. At the sign in desk, there are communication forms. Fill them out & the director will get back to you**

**Thank you for your understanding in this matter.**