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HANDBOOK

„Tell your child that he is good, that he is capable, that he can.“

Janusz Korczak

Inspiration

While living in Poconos and working at local daycares and Polish school in Stroudsburg, we have watched as the Polish community has grown over the past few years. Seeing more and more families with young children sparked an idea.

Polish parents should have a choice: Polish or American preschool. Could a primarily Polish speaking program be an alternative to the only English one?

For parents who are asking themselves this question, PocoNoski is the answer!

About us

Hanna Czuma - Working with kids is the joy of my life. I have over 25 years of experience in teaching children. Before co-founding PocoNoski, I worked at a local preschool. I believe that play-and-learn is the best way to educate children. Hanna is mom of Marta. She holds M.A. in Education.

She has been a director at the JP II Polish School in Stroudsburg since 2012.

Klara Golab - I have a passion for art and have spent over 20 years working with children. Before co-founding PocoNoski, I worked at a local preschool. I believe in developing sensitivity, creativity, and a sense of beauty in children. I am mom of Tobias.

Our goals

Our goal is to maintain warm and family atmosphere at our preschool. Trusting in the individual abilities and skills of each child, we pursue methodology of Maria Montessori. Kids are taught to value friendship and respect, which will help them in their journey to social and emotional maturity. By making kids responsible for their small everyday activities, we teach self-reliance. We encourage children to use their imagination and creativity, as we believe it boosts their self-esteem. Plenty of outdoor activities at our garden show children how to commune with nature.

PocoNoski daycare is a safe, cozy, and friendly place - just like home!

1. HOURS OF OPERATION, REGISTRATION

PocoNoski Preschool is open Monday to Friday from **7:00 a.m.** to **6:00 p.m.**

The preschool year runs from September to June, except for the holiday/vacation days listed below.

Registration for the upcoming year will be accepted beginning in January. Because space is limited, we recommend that you register earlier rather than later.

During the summer months we will offer a special summer session.

Center is always closed last week of August (the week before ESASD school year starts). Free of charge.

Drop off and pick up policies

Children should arrive **by 9:30 a.m.** at the latest. We want every child to have the opportunity to participate in a full-day program and arriving late is extremely distactive for all groups in the center. Exceptions are doctor appointments and other emergency circumstances.

If your child will be late or absent, we require notification through telephone or e-mail by no later than 9:00 a.m. that day.

Parents are expected to accompany their child into the center. The teachers are glad to assist you and your child at your drop-off time. Teachers, however will not assume direct responsibility for your child until you are ready to walk out of the building. It is important for the teacher to keep a watchful eye on all the children in his or her care.

Parents are expected to assume full responsibility of their child once they enter the classroom. *For your child's safety please do not allow your child to touch the exit door handles or open the doors and/or play yard gates.*

We work very hard at teaching the children not to touch the exit doors/gates.

In the case that neither parent is available to pick up their child, we ask that you please inform us in advance. Only the individuals listed on the *Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form*, or on a written permission note from the parent, will be allowed to leave with a child. The individual picking up your child must be an adult. The picture I.D. will be requested from any unfamiliar person (including grandparents).

Your child has waited all day to see you and is excited when you walk in the door. At pick up please **put away your cell phone** and give your full attention to your child.

PocoNoski reserves the right to cancel service on any day due to health and safety concerns, severe weather, natural or man-made disasters. These days are not exempt from charges.

2. HOLIDAY CLOSURES

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day (Thursday & Friday)
- Christmas Eve (December 24th)
- Christmas (December 25th & 26th)
- New Year's Eve (December 31th)
- New Year's Day (January 1st)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4th)

If any of the above holidays fall on a weekend, the closest Friday or Monday will be selected.

Regular tuition is expected.

We will observe both American and Polish holidays in our program.

Children's birthdays will be celebrated, and it is possible for parents to provide pizza, cake, or other pastries.

3. ENROLLMENT AND TUITION

Children between the ages 16 months and 5 years are eligible for enrollment at PocoNoski Child Care.

The rate for a full time (5days/week) is **\$180/week** (children 2-5 years old)

\$190/week (infants- 2years old)

\$40/day (attendance 2-4/days a week children 2-5 years old)

\$42/day (attendance 2-4/days a week infants- 2years old)

\$50/day (attendance for only one day/week)

This includes three meals: breakfast, morning snack, and afternoon snacks and drinks. Art materials and supplies are included.

We do not trade a scheduled day for another day.

Parents may request an added day. We will check our schedule and will let you know if an opening is available.

If you change your mind and you need to cancel you have to do so **no later than day before additional attendance day by 6pm** (Friday 6pm for attendance on Monday) otherwise **you will be charged and you will be responsible** for a payment for that added day.

An administrative, **non-refundable registration fee** of **\$50** applies annually . \$30 for each additional child that a family registers.

A 10% discount is offered to families with more than one child enrolled. This applies to full-time (5days a week) enrollment only.

Deposit- in addition to the **first payment**, a deposit is also required equal to two weeks payment.

This deposit covers the last two weeks of preschool, and at the end is adjusted in payments.

The cost varies depending on the number of days in that week or month the child attends preschool.

The fee is established in advance.

At the beginning of each month, parents receive the calculated amount to be paid.

The fee is fixed and is due no later than the morning of the first day of the month.

A \$15 fee is charged for late payment on the 10th day of the month and additional **\$5** per each day beginning on 11th day of the month.

Special payment arrangements (bi-weekly or weekly) may be made in advance with the owners. The payments must be received on the first day of the service. If payment is not received on the time late fee \$5per day will apply.

Cash or checks made payable to **PocoNoski** are accepted.

If a check is returned to us for insufficient funds, there is a charge of \$35.00 for each check.

If this happens, checks will no longer be considered an acceptable form of payment.

Children enrolled on a part-time basis are expected to be picked-up at the agreed upon daily time. The parent or guardian of a child not picked-up until after the agreed time, or past closing (6:00 p.m.), will be charged a late fee of \$10 for every 15 minutes. All late fees are expected by 6:00 p.m. the following day. This fee applies per family. Payment should be given directly to the staff member.

Tuition is expected for days your child may be absent due to illness, family emergencies, doctor visits, hospitalizations, vacations*, weather related closings (e.g., snow days, storms), or closings due to a situation beyond our control (electrical outage, no water service) or holidays (listed above at 2.HOLIDAY CLOSURES), emergency related closings mandated by the state/local government/DHS, like a pandemic or any other reason. Please note that tuition rates do not change in the event of a week including a holiday. After extensive research, we have found our policy to be consistent with other schools and child day care centers. Because our costs remain the same throughout the year, we rely on the specified tuition to be paid each month in order to

meet our expenses. Consequently, as much as we might like to, we cannot make allowance for any days missed in your regular attendance schedule.

It is understood that there may be an annual increase each August/September at the start of the fiscal year.

If you plan a longer vacation than one week and your child will be absent for more than 5 consecutive days up to 4 weeks, a fixed fee of \$20 per day applies (applies only for 3 or more days/week attendance, 1 and 2 days/week attendance still pay regular fee). Written note is needed at least two weeks before planned absence. This fee is considered a reservation for your child's place in the program.

If you decide to take an extended leave of absence, we can only hold your child's spot by paying a 25% per month fee. The extended leave of absence also applies to those who choose to not send their child to school after the reopening from a forced closure, like a pandemic or emergency-related forced closure.

If you decide to withdraw your child from the center due to a forced closure your deposit will be used as a payment to cover the period of two-week notice required for any schedule change.

Cancellation/ Refunds

There are no refunds for absences for any reason.

Two-week notice required for any schedule change (days or hours of attendance, as well as canceling classes).

Parents have the right to cancel the agreement and receive a full refund within two weeks of trial period.

The registration fee is non-refundable whether cancellation occurs during the trial period or after regular service has begun.

PocoNoski childcare/Learning center reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at his/her discretion, or for the following possible reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments of tuition and fees. Deposit shall be forfeited and covers the arrears.
- the child's conduct threatens their health and safety or that of the other children.

4. CURRICULUM AND SCHEDULE

The curriculum is modified according to the needs of the child or group. We accept children 16 months to 5 years of age. They are then divided into two groups: older toddlers and preschoolers

Our program offers: fun outdoor activities, art classes, music, and reading books in both Polish and English. We prepare children for Kindergarten (colors, shapes, and numbers, identifying letters in both languages and pre-writing skills). A schedule will be distributed at the beginning of each month. We also plan on taking various field trips.

Schedule

7:00 - 8:00	Arrival
8:00 - 8:30	Breakfast
8:30 - 9:30	Independent play
9:30 - 10:00	Morning snack
10:00 - 10:30	Circle-time in Polish and English and morning gymnastics
10:30 - 11:00	Arts and crafts
11:00 - 11:45	Outdoor or inside play (according on the weather)
11:45 - 12:00	Story time
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch and potty time and, brushing the teeth before naptime

1:00 - 3:00	Naptime
3:15 - 3:30	Afternoon snack
3:30 - 5:30	Outdoor play, or themed games and activities, educational and artistic
5:30 - 6:00	Departures

In general, the curriculum does not include playing on the computer or watching TV. If, for teaching purposes, we want to use a computer or TV, parents will be notified.

5. FOOD AND ALLERGIES

The schedule includes time for four meals, three of which are included in the program fee. We want our preschoolers to be healthy and full of energy, so we only offer natural, wholesome food and drinks. We will use both Polish and American foods. For breakfast, children have a choice of oatmeal or cereal with milk. Morning snack is a choice of cereal, pancakes, waffles, bagels, or toast - each day a different type. In enrolling their child in PocoNoski, parents agree to prepare lunch for their children each day they attend. There will be a microwave and toaster grill available. Food should be brought in the appropriate containers and be portioned so that the child can easily eat the food. Children who are not able to eat independently will be given help. For afternoon snack there is a choice of: jello, pudding, raisins, homemade cookies, bread sticks, and crisps, fruits, vegetables, or yogurt

Because of frequent allergies to peanuts and tree nuts, please do not pack sandwiches or any food and snacks that include peanut butter. We are nuts free facility. Please report any food allergies that your child may have immediately.

Drinks - Water is the healthiest and will always be available. Additionally we offer milk, juice (no sugar) and fruit syrup.

If the child still uses a bottle or pacifier, we will (with parental consent) begin to wean the child off of these items so that they can begin using cups and glasses.

6. BACKPACK

On the first day of attendance, the child's backpack should include:

- A change of clothes (appropriate to the weather, and to remain at the preschool). Everyday clothes should be comfortable and without excessive buttons or belts

We spend a lot of time outdoors so please bring appropriate outer garments for the weather (jacket, hat, scarf, gloves, appropriate shoes etc)

- A change of comfortable indoor shoes, which will remain at the preschool (slippers, sneakers, etc.)

- At the beginning of each week, please bring a blanket and sheet with your child's name on it. On Fridays, for sanitary and hygienic purposes, these items will be sent home to be washed. It is mandatory that bedding be laundered before returning the next week

- A toothbrush and toothpaste with your child's name on it

- Once a month, please bring a box of tissues, a roll of paper towels and a roll of toilet paper.

All clothing, including coats and boots, must be labeled clearly with your child's name.

Toys

Due to the pandemic situation no toys or unnecessary personal items from home will be permitted at this time. Valuable games and toys should be left at home.

Toilet training

Children who do not know how to use the bathroom independently and are in the process of toilet training will get help and support at every stage. If this is the case, please supply your child with a few extra changes of clothing. All soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. If a child uses diapers or pull ups, please provide these early in the week.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The safety of the children at PocoNoski is top priority. Our goal is to teach children how to anticipate situations and demonstrate creativity in solving problems. It is crucial to a child's development that their preschool be safe and free of any factors that may contribute to any accidents, and it must exhibit prudence and caution in every situation in order to predict and prevent injuries and accidents. We are trained to provide first aid and CPR in emergencies. We will do everything to give your children a sense of absolute security in the building and at the playground. Children in our preschool have exclusive use of the playground. We are always ready to provide first aid or call an ambulance and notify parents. If the intervention of a doctor or a hospital visit is necessary, we reserve the right to be free of any financial responsibility.

Hygiene

Toys and household items at the end of each day will be properly disinfected and cleaned. We want our nursery to be a clean, friendly place for children.

PocoNoski is a completely smoke-free facility.

We'll teach children from an early age to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet, and to clean their teeth after eating meals.

8. ILLNESSES

At the time of the application, parents need to fill out a medical form for their children and let it sign and confirm by child's pediatrician. Please return this form within 30 days.

Only healthy children may attend preschool.

Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, puss/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e. ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) **will not be admitted** to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our facility. If your child appears to be sick or has any of the above while at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within 30 minutes of notification from PocoNoski childcare/Learning center.

The child will be permitted to return when his/her temperature is **normal for 24 hours without aid of fever reducing medication**. Your child must have any prescribed medication, such as antibiotics, in his/her system for at least 24 hours before returning. In the event your child is sent home with one of the above health concerns, they will not be permitted back to PocoNoski childcare/Learning center without a doctor's note. The doctor's note must be written on their letter head and read that the child can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.

COVID 19

If a child is showing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) OR if you've been in close contact with a person or child testing positive for COVID-19, we ask you to keep your child home. They must be isolated

for a minimum of 7 days after symptom onset, and 72 hours after their fever resolves without fever-reducing medicines. (For example, if symptoms and fever resolve on day 7, the person can return on day 10.) For most, this will be 14 days after the household contact with COVID-19.

We ask that all parents and staff let us know of any potential exposure immediately. A potential exposure means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 10 minutes. The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic. If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the childcare center, we will inform OCDEL and our parents along with the Department of Health (DOH).

Medication

Permission for a child to be administered medicine in the school must be approved by the Physician and parent. The medication must be given to the teacher in its original bottle, which contains the pharmacist's directions and labeled with the child's name. The medication log must be signed by the parent at this time and will be kept on file. Children will be given their medication according to the prescription specifications only. Non-prescriptive medication (Tylenol, cough drops, nose drops, etc.) will not be administered at the center unless written recommendation from a child's doctor. Children may not carry any type of medication in their backpacks under any circumstances.

9. A FINAL NOTE

We want to provide our children the best conditions for play and development. We try to use materials, toys, and teaching aids to meet our goal of maximum learning and development. We will be grateful for any donations that will support our efforts (art supply, cleaning supply, etc). Please note that this is absolutely not mandatory. Thank you in advance.

The fees, procedures, and policies stated in this handbook are subject to be changed at the discretion of the center owners.

This POCO NOSKI childcare/Learning center Handbook Revised: **June 2020**.

For any questions or suggestions, please contact us directly or by telephone at (570) 223-5002 or by e-mail: info@pocoNoski.org