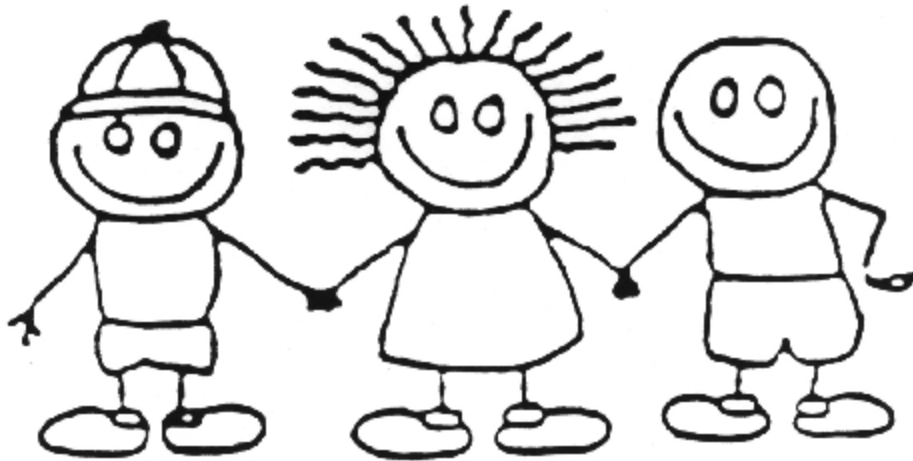


Babes on the Square

Preschool and Childcare Center



1818 Delaware Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19806
302-777-5007

Parent's Handbook

Revised November 30, 2009

Table of Contents

Welcome to *Babes on the Square*

Philosophy	3
Vision & Mission Statement	4
Parents Right to Know	4
Governing Body	4

General Procedures

Ages of Children served	4
Hours of Operation	4
Center Calendar	5
Enrollment Policy	5
Tuition, Payment schedule and Additional fees	6
Change in Enrollment Status	6
Vacation	6-7
Inclement Weather	7
Drop off /Pick Up	7
Parking	7
Signing In/Out	7-8
Releasing children	8
Late Pick Up	8
No Smoking Policy	8
Parent Participation	8
Lost and Found	8
Physical Environment Safety and Sanitation	8-9

Program

Daily Schedule	9
Curriculum	9-10
Themes and Lesson Plans	10
Outside Time	10
Nap/Rest Time	11
Field Trips and Guests	11
Summer Program	11
Evaluation, Observations and Parent Conferences	11-12
Child Ratios and Primary Caregivers	12
DVD/Video Use	12
Computer Use	12
Special Needs	12-13
Toilet Training	13
Transitions	13
Program Initiatives	14
What to Bring	14
Illness	14
Medication Administration	14-15
Positive Behavior Management	15
Emergencies and Injuries	15-16
Food Service	16

About the Staff

Qualifications	17
Mandatory reporting Laws	17
Continued Education	17
Babysitting Policy	17-18
Contact Us	18

School Philosophy *Babes on the Square* was designed for the children who will be spending much of their parent's workweek with us. We understand that it isn't always easy for small children to be away from their homes and the comforts that Mom and Dad provide. Our staff is dedicated to the concept that each child be made to feel an important and vital part of our center.

Our staff believe that children benefit most from exposure to a variety of stimulating experiences and materials. We believe that all children, especially those under six years of age, require nurturing and age appropriate expectations. While it is a goal to ready your child to enter grade school, we recognize that pre-school aged children require a comforting atmosphere and a home-like approach to their daily activities.

Every child at *Babes on the Square* will be exposed to a variety of pre-school programs taught and directed by a qualified and experienced teacher. Throughout the day your child will stay with their teacher and their group of peers. This familiarity encourages bonds to form and creates a sense of stability and assurance.

We would like our center to be a home away from home for your child. We have 3 classrooms. Each classroom has 1 teacher and there is at least 1 assistant teacher to float around to all classrooms. We maintain a low teacher/child ratio.

Each morning and afternoon we hold open activities for all of the children in the center. This allows socialization and interaction amongst children of different ages. Mixed age interaction replicates family structure and creates camaraderie, which is comforting to small children. In addition, exposure to younger or less developed students encourages nurturing and use of leadership skills. Interaction with more developed students allows your child to advance their own skills and abilities by patterning and emulation.

We recognize that these are your child's formative years. We recognize that your child will be learning from our staff and from one another just as if they were at home. We strongly believe that good manners, common courtesy, and consideration for others will serve a child well throughout the course of their life. We strive to practice those virtues at all times within our center. We will try to encourage your child toward compassion by being compassionate ourselves.

We hope that our center can suit your needs in finding the special care your children deserve.

Babes on the Square welcomes children of all races and religions. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, and Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

School Vision *Babes on the Square* acknowledges that children under the age of 5 are a precious resource, and that most of their crucial learning happens in these early years. *Babes on the Square* provides an environment wherein children from ages 18 months through five years will have maximum opportunity to develop independence, self-confidence, respect for self and others, and a positive attitude toward the pleasures of intellectual activity and learning. *Babes on the Square* staff are an extension of your child's family and home.

School Mission *Babes on the Square's* mission is to provide the best developmentally appropriate curriculum based on the following domains: Language Development, Mathematics, Science, Creative Arts, Emotional and Social Skills Development, Physical Health and Approaches to Learning. We will provide the children enrolled in our center with the most competent and trained staff available in compliance with Office of Child Care Licensing guidelines. *Babes on the Square* will maintain the best program possible by being involved with local initiatives such as the Delaware Stars and 5-2-1... Almost None programs. Every child deserves a high quality early learning experience.

Parents Right To Know The Office of Child Care Licensing performs an annual (usually in July) visit to *Babes on the Square* for licensing purposes. We are required to maintain the minimum standards as noted in the Delaware Regulations. A copy of the current regulations can be found in the office in a white binder marked Delaware. Please feel free to review any policy and regulation at any time. You may also contact the Office of Child Care Licensing to review our file or speak with our specialist. Please feel free to visit their website at www.state.de.us/kids/occl/occl.shtml or contact them by phone at (302) 892-5800. We also encourage open lines of communication between parents and *Babes on the Square* staff. Please do not hesitate to speak directly to a staff member involved with the direct care of your child if you have any concerns about the care provided. Again, open communication is the key!

Governing Body *Babes on the Square* is owned and operated by Andria Keating. Andria's main office is at *Babes on the Square, Too*, however she maintains daily contact with the Trolley Square director and visits the center on a regular basis. Each center has an administrative chain of command starting with Andria. There is a program director/curriculum coordinator that oversees daily operations, staffing and the curriculum at both locations. The assistant director at *Babes on the Square* is responsible for all day-to-day operations.

General Procedures

Ages of Children Served *Babes on the Square* offers full and part time care to children ages 18 months to pre kindergarten. We can make accommodations for a kindergartener that is attending Highlands Elementary School for the afternoon program.

Hours of Operation *Babes on the Square* serves its families Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. All children must be signed in and out of the center every day. No child will be admitted before 7:00 a.m. All children must be picked up at or before 6:00 p.m.

Babes on the Square requests that children arrive to the center by 9:00 AM. This is the beginning of our educational day and we would like to have as few disruptions as possible. Occasional lateness due to emergency situations, doctor appointments, etc... is acceptable. If such a situation should arise please notify us as soon as possible so that we may plan accordingly.

Calendar *Babes on the Square* will follow the same schedule of holiday observance as the public school calendar. We will be closed eleven (11) days throughout the year in observance of the following holidays:

- New Years Eve
- New Years Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day and the day after

Tuition is to be paid in full; there is no change in tuition rate due to holiday closings.

We will also be celebrating every holiday and every child's birthday in the center. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will observe it and be closed Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will observe it and be closed Monday. If there is a holiday you observe that we are not aware of, please let us know. Feel free to bring in any material on the subject so we can share it with everyone. If you are opposed to your child celebrating any holiday or birthday, we ask that you not bring your child in that day. A monthly calendar will be sent home to keep parents informed of special events.

Enrollment Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis. When families contact the center to make enrollment plans, a time will be arranged for parents to bring in the deposit and have a parent orientation with our Administrative Assistant in order to go over our Parent Handbook and Contract and receive the enrollment packet to be completed prior to your child's first day. This deposit is non-refundable and will be applied toward the child's last week of care providing the following conditions are met:

- Two (2) weeks advance notice of withdrawal IN WRITING
- There are no late fees or tuition due

There are no cash refunds for any reason. Failure to follow this withdrawal procedure results in forfeiture of the deposit.

Babes on the Square does not charge a registration fee

It is required by the State of Delaware Office of Childcare Licensing that we request a yearly updated physical for your child. At the time of enrollment you have up to 30 days to return a health appraisal form, including an immunization record, which must be completed by a physician. The physical and immunization record must be completed fully, including results of a lead screening and TB screening by 12 months of age. Any incomplete vaccinations must be accompanied with a doctor's note and a letter from you with plans and time line of how you will update immunizations. You will be given a notice yearly to let you know when it is time to get your physical records updated. If your appointment is past the 12-month date from the previous physical record, we must have a written document of the next appointment. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a suspension or termination of care.

On your child's first day the office must have all enrollment and emergency forms completed. All children must have a completed file within 30 days of enrollment. Included in the file will be the application, Sick policy, Emergency card, photo consent form, contract, Parents' Right to Know form, and a complete health appraisal and immunization record. Please take a few minutes to acquaint the staff with your child. This includes any allergies, and special needs, your preferences for feeding, napping, potty training, etc... as well as general goals that you may have for your child's development and learning.

Tuition, Payment Schedule, and Additional Fees

Tuition is due every Monday morning upon arrival at the center for morning drop-off. The only exception is if your child does not typically attend on Mondays or if your child is absent on Monday. In this case tuition is due the first day of the week that your child attends. Tuition rates may be increased annually. 30 days notice will be given should there be any change in tuition.

The center will accept cash, money orders and personal checks made out to *Babes on the Square*. Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, there will be a twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) handling charge. Subsequently, the center will be unable to accept payment by personal check. The center will supply a receipt, when requested.

If payment is not received by the end of the business day, a ten-dollar (\$10.00) late fee will be assessed for each day it remains unpaid.

Frequent late payments will result in termination of care.

We understand that family dynamics are not all the same. Please be aware that the parent(s) or guardian(s) who sign the *Babes on the Square* Child Care Contract are fully responsible for all tuition payments.

Babes on the Square accepts Purchase of Care and Purchase of Care Plus participants as space allows. Please ask your center Director for an information sheet regarding *Babes on the Square* POC/POC+ policies. All participants must sign and return the POC Policy form.

Please be aware that any tuition or fees that are not paid will result in civil and/or criminal action. Late fees will also continue to accrue until all payments are made in full. Any fees incurred in the process of collecting monies due to *Babes on the Square* will also be added to the total amount due this includes but is not limited to any court costs and legal fees incurred. Small Claims court will take appropriate legal action to recoup any and all fees and tuition due.

Changes in Enrollment Status

Schedule changes: *Babes on the Square* requires a Change in Enrollment form (available from the office) if you want to request a schedule change (part time to full time, full time to part time or change of days). This form needs to be returned to the office at least two weeks prior to the needed change. A confirmation notice will be sent home letting you know if we are able to accommodate your request, if not and why, and change of tuition information.

Termination: Two weeks written notice is required when leaving the center. If proper notice is not given, your deposit will be retained to offset the cost of the vacancy created by your child's absence. Upon exiting the program, we ask parents to complete an exit survey in order to better assist the center in serving families in the future. Should a parent ask, we would provide copies of recent evaluations and information pertinent to the child's development. *Babes on the Square* reserves the right to terminate any child at any time with or without two weeks notice.

Vacation Policy *Babes on the Square* allows each child one (1) week vacation from the center with unpaid tuition per contract year if the following two (2) criteria are met:

- Y Families are enrolled in our year round academic program
- Y Families do not have any balance due

Vacations must be taken in one week increments Monday – Friday (for example not Wednesday – Wednesday) Parents must give written notice of vacation two weeks in advance. If two weeks notice is not given, you will be charged for the week. Failure to pay for this week will result in termination for care. If you take a leave of absence from the center for any reason, you are no longer eligible for the free vacation week. Families who are not enrolled for our year round program will not receive a week vacation.

Families who are enrolled school year only: Please be aware that it is not guaranteed that your position will be available when you are ready to return in the fall. With proper notice and planning we will make every effort to have your spot available.

Families who are enrolled for summers only: If your child will be involved in other camps that will result in time away for weeks at a time you could be excused from paying tuition if the dates your child will not be attending the center is given to administration in writing upon enrolling at the center.

Inclement Weather *Babes on the Square* is within the Red Clay Consolidated School District. As a general rule, if the district closes for inclement weather, we close. If they open late, we open late. The director will make the final decision. If one or more staff members are able to transport themselves safely to the school we will open. However, it is recommended that if the school district is closed you keep your children home. Tuition is not discounted due to inclement weather closings. A decision will be made no later than 6:00 am if the center will close or open late. This information will be available on our voicemail, you can call the center to hear a message. If Administration has a current email address, you will be notified via email as well. You may also view <http://schoolclosings.delaware.gov> web site for school closings or below is a list of radio and television stations that will broadcast inclement weather information.

WSTW	WJBR	WDEL	WNRK	WILM	KYW
ABC (6)	NBC (10)	CBS (3)	Fox (29)		

Drop Off/Pick Up For the safety of all please be sure that you do not leave your car running when you drop off or pick up your child. Children should be accompanied by their parent, or guardian, from door to door. When dropping off your child please be sure that you bring your child all the way into the center and into their classroom and sign them in. Please be aware that if a staff member or other parent witnesses a child being left in a car unattended or without a car seat they have the right and responsibility to contact the police. A child left unattended or without a car seat is considered neglect. (Delaware Code 16 Ch. 9: level 3 abuse and neglect section 10.1.13. Title 21 Ch 48 Section 4803: Child restraint and motor vehicles) All personal items should be labeled and stored in your child's cubby. Please notify your child's teaching staff when you come to take your child home. Once the teaching staff has been notified, the child becomes your responsibility.

Parking Limited short-term parking during drop-off and pick-up times is available behind staff cars in the small parking lot outside the playground door. To park for longer periods of time, please park along the street. Please park so that 4 cars can fit into the parking lot.

Signing in/out Children must be signed in and out on the sign in sheets, which are conveniently located near the main entrance. If children are not signed in and out there will be a \$2 charge per child per occurrence (maximum \$4 per child per day). Please notify your child's teacher when you come to take your child home. Once the teacher has been so notified, the child becomes your responsibility. Please keep an eye on them. Please remember that by signing in

you are formally releasing your child into our care and this is the record of you doing so. Also, by signing out you are relieving us of the responsibility of caring for your child.

If someone other than you will take the child home that person is responsible for signing your child out.

Releasing Children Parents will designate in advance to whom their child should be released. If someone other than you will take the child home you must notify the office staff. The office in turn will inform your child's teacher. Only the authorized person will be permitted to take the child. Persons unknown to the staff will be required to show identification. Please remind your pick up person to bring photo identification, as a child will not be released without proper identification. If a person arrives to pick up a child and the person is not on the authorized list or a parent has not notified us, the child will not be released to that person. In the event of custody situations, please be sure that we have on file any court orders regarding authorization to pick up your child. In the event that a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up a child, the custodial parent will be notified.

If you or the person regularly responsible for picking up your child will not be available by phone in the event of an emergency, please write down an alternate phone numbers and/or names of persons who can be called in the event of an emergency.

Children may not be released to persons displaying obvious signs of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or otherwise incapable of bringing the child home safely. Center staff will attempt to contact other parent or adult to come pick up the child. If necessary, the proper authorities will be notified.

Late Pick Up Should an emergency preclude a parent from picking up their child by 6:00p.m, the center must receive a telephone call apprising us of the situation. The late fee is \$1.00 per minute after 6:00p.m. It is to be paid in full in cash that evening upon your arrival to the teacher on duty. If this should occur repeatedly, upon the third incident, you will be asked not to return your child to the center. There will be no reimbursement of paid tuition.

No Smoking Policy *Babes on the Square* allows no smoking on the premises at any time. This includes the playground, parking lot, and front porch areas. Our staff does not smoke on the premises and we expect all visitors to respect this policy.

Parent Participation *Babes on the Square* has an open door policy. Parents are welcome to visit and/or call to check in on their child. We also would like to invite you to volunteer in your child's classroom as often as you are able or would like. We will provide times for parents to join and or participate in the classroom for activities such as holiday parties, field trips, career day, etc. We also plan exciting events such as a Blue Rocks game, the annual Spaghetti Dinner, and holiday gatherings. Parents are invited to conferences throughout the school year to keep involved. Parents are welcome in the classroom as a parent helper as well. Please feel free to discuss times that you may be able or willing to join us with your child's teacher.

Lost/Found There is a box in the parent center for all lost/found items in the facility.

Physical Environment Safety and Sanitation Staff are responsible for daily upkeep of their classrooms. Each classroom cleans and disinfects toys, walls, cubbies, and

mats/cots weekly. Child bathrooms are cleaned and disinfected twice each day (during nap and at end of day). We use a commercial grade disinfecting solution that is approved by Public Health. The center floors are vacuumed and mopped each night. Tables and chairs are cleaned daily. Carpets and tile floors are commercially cleaned quarterly.

Diapering and hand washing procedures are posted in each appropriate area and are followed as required by Public Health. Staff changing diapers are required to wear latex (or latex free substitute) gloves on each hand while changing diapers. Each child is wiped clean and a fresh diaper is put on. Gloves and diapers are disposed of in an appropriate container. Children and staff wash hands after each diaper

Staff wear food gloves when serving and preparing food. Hands are washed before and after handling food for both staff and children.

General safety precautions are used on the playground. There is a fall zone of at least 6 inches of approved materials. Equipment is observed daily to ensure there are no broken pieces or unsafe areas. The playground is locked and not accessible to outside public while children are outside at play.

Babes on the Square has created an emergency procedure manual and will follow it in case of any emergency. Fire drills are performed each month as required by the Fire Marshall. If there is a fire within *Babes on the Square*, the staff have been trained to move the children outdoors immediately. All rooms have a posted evacuation plan.

Program

Daily Schedule

This is a tentative schedule and may vary slightly from class to class.

7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Arrival /Open activities.
8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Potty. Wash hands. Snack.
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Group time. Circle time and structured activities
10:30 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.	Outside play.
11:25 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.	Clean up. Potty. Wash hands.
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Lunch. Clean up.
12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Nap time or rest time.
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Potty. Wash hands. Snack
3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Open activities. Pick up

A monthly calendar posted in the parent center.

Curriculum At *Babes on the Square* we take pride in our dedication to education. We feel that we have the dual responsibility of creating a safe environment to care for your child while you are working, but also to provide an educational base preparing your child for public or private school. Since your child spends the majority of their day with us we need to assist you, the parent, in encouraging and fostering learning from the earliest years.

To accomplish these goals each class is required to create and implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum. The curriculum incorporated is based on the Delaware Early Learning Foundations, which is a curriculum framework designed by the Delaware Department of

Education to help prepare children for Kindergarten. The curriculum will include experiences in seven domains: language and literacy, mathematics, science, physical health, emotional and social, and approaches to learning. Activities will be planned and implemented based on the current Delaware Early Learning Foundations for each age group as well as observations and assessments of the individual children in the classroom. There will be a daily schedule posted in each classroom. The daily schedule includes time for group and individual learning, centers, outdoor play, quiet play, a.m. snack, lunch, p.m. snack, rest time, structured and free play. The environment encourages sensory motor development and enhances the child's own natural abilities. Some activities are designed to help the child learn how to care for him/herself and his/her environment. The curriculum is designed to meet each child's individual needs - no child will remain a step behind if he/she is emotionally, socially, and academically ready - and no child will be rushed forth unless he/she is ready to take the next step. Each child is allowed to advance logically from one concept to the next at his/her own rate and his/her own time.

Themes and Lesson Plans Each classroom at *Babes on the Square* operates under a flexible schedule based on themes or core topics to be covered during the year. Teachers post weekly lesson plans on their parent boards. The Curriculum Coordinator, in collaboration with the teachers, develop themes yearly. We welcome any information from your family that you would like to share regarding native languages, cultural foods, clothing, music, etc. that can extend our curriculum, please see your child's teacher if you are able to contribute! All lesson plans are created by the classroom teachers to encompass the developmental needs of each child in the class.

Daily sheets are sent home to keep you informed of your child's day and progress. Please take a few minutes to review the information the teachers are sending home.

Babes on the Square provides specials to enhance the curriculum. These specials rotate quarterly. Each week we invite into the classroom a trained teacher in one of the following: music, gym, Spanish, or computers into the classroom to enhance our curriculum. We also provide the opportunity for parents to enroll their child in a soccer class and continue with the computer class for a small fee. These specials are for children 2 years and older.

Outside Time All children will be provided outside time at least twice per day. To help promote healthy development and physical activity, *Babes on the Square* plans daily outside activities for all infants and children. Children can and are encouraged to go outside when the temperature is above 20° (F) with the wind chill. Outdoor time will be limited to 20 – 30 minutes when the temperature is 21° – 32° (F). To help develop a love for physical activity, please dress your child in shoes that are flexible and allow infants and children to run and move freely (e.g. sneakers or no heel sandals).

During the heat of the summer months, if the forecast contains a 'warning', 'watch' or 'heat advisory', Administration will determine whether the children will be allowed to go outside. If Administration determines it is safe for the children to be outside during a 'warning', 'watch' or 'advisory', they will be allowed to be outside for 15-30 minutes in the morning. However, they will not be allowed outside in the afternoon.

Children will not be outside if it is thundering and lightening.

If a child has a doctor's note stating specific temperatures and weather conditions or any other reason for not being able to go outside, every effort will be made to keep that child inside.

Nap/Rest Time As required by the Office of Child Care Licensing, all children are required to rest during the day. Each child has a mat that is assigned to them that they will use for rest time. Parents are to provide a sheet and blanket weekly, taking home all bedding on Friday (or last day child is here for the week) to wash and return Monday. All children are asked to lie quietly for at least 30 minutes so that their friends can sleep. After resting quietly for 30 minutes we will provide children with a quiet activity in order to allow friends who need more sleep to get it.

Field Trips and Guests The curriculum coordinator will plan field trips periodically through the school year based on themes or time of year. Suggestions from parents are welcome. Children may attend field trips if they are 3 years or older and potty trained. Children also occasionally walk to the local park about two blocks away. Permission is given to take children on these walks in the application packet.

Field trip ratios must be maintained and are as follows:

Children 3 – 4 years old 4 children: 1 adult

Children 5 years and older 8 children: 1 adult

We do ask for parent chaperones to help maintain safe ratios on field trips. Space may be limited to first come first serve. More information about chaperoning will be available before trips. Teachers are required to take a completed Child Emergency card on the trip just in case of emergency. This form must be completed and given to your teacher before the trip. Children are transported from *Babes on the Square* via school bus, which is rented for the particular trip. School buses may not be equipped with seat belts.

On occasion we will invite storytellers, puppeteers, and other special guests to visit our center. We feel that this provides the children with a stimulating change of pace. The activities are scheduled at various times throughout the day as to allow parents to attend on occasion.

Summer Program *Babes on the Square* provides a Summer Camp Program. The curriculum will vary slightly from our school year program to include more visitors, trips and extra activities. Teacher will still review skills and concepts introduced during the school year while following summer type themes. Each class will have a water day and a park visit once per week, weather permitting. We will also continue special classes such as Spanish and karate each week during the summer program. Our camp program is divided into lower camp and upper camp. Lower camp is for children under 3 who are not potty trained. Since these children do not go out for trips, special visitors are brought to their classrooms. Guests may include: traveling zoo, puppeteers, storytellers, etc... Upper camp children will take trips to such places as Ashland nature center, zoos, orchards, X-Bos, etc... To cover the cost of the extra activities we will do fundraisers throughout the year. There may be an additional fee charged if enough money is not raised during fundraisers. Each child will receive a *Babes on the Square* t-shirts. T-shirts are to be worn on park days and field trip days.

Evaluations, Observations and Parent Conferences We strongly believe that family involvement plays a crucial role in your child's life, therefore, at the beginning of our Academic School year (September) the teachers will assess your child in order to create individualized goals for learning. In January and May we will complete a developmental checklist to evaluate your child and offer parent teacher conferences.

Regular observations will help us to evaluate your child to see where they stand in their developmental milestones for their age group. Observations also help to create classroom and individual goals to be used in curriculum planning. The teachers will perform observations of your child's abilities throughout their time in class. The teachers will observe how your child is

developing in the following domains: Language, Emotional/Social, Science, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Physical Development, and Approaches to Learning. Teachers will document the observations and periodically will put aside some of the work done in class to support the observations and evaluations to be discussed in parent conferences.

One week prior to Parent teacher conferences, the teachers will send home a copy of your child's developmental checklist for you to review. Parent teacher conferences will be offered during a one-week time period two times per school year. Should you choose to not attend a conference you must sign off on the Parent Teacher Conference form that you have opted out. During the parent teacher conference the teachers will be able to go over the developmental checklist, review observations and share samples of your child's work with you. During this time you and the teacher can elaborate on the next set of learning goals for your child and ways to reach them at home and at school. You will sign off on the Parent Teacher Conference form that you attended the conference.

Ratio of Staff to Children, Primary Caregivers The State of Delaware mandates the ratio of staff members to children for each room. These guidelines are located in the Director's Office and can be reviewed upon request. If for any reason, *Babes on the Square* is short personnel in a given room, staff will be moved around as needed. In mixed groups the ratio is determined by the age of the youngest child in the group.

Toddler Rooms (18-30 months) 1:6
Preschool Room (2 ½ -3 ½ years) 1:8
Pre-Kindergarten Room (3 ½ -5 Years) 1:10

Primary caregivers will be used in classrooms with more than one staff. Primary caregivers are assigned a small group of children to be responsible for each day. Primary caregivers will provide 75% of the care provided to the children in their group.

DVD/Video Viewing Parents must sign a permission slip for their child to view age appropriate and/or educational DVDs or videos. Children under 2 years of age are not permitted to watch DVDs or videos. Children will watch no more than one hour of television per week. Any DVD or video that is shown to the children will require a follow up or extension activity to be incorporated into the curriculum. The television will not be used to fill time or as a babysitter.

Computer Usage Parents must sign a permission slip for their child to view and play age appropriate and/or educational computer games. Children under 2 years of age are not permitted to use the computer. Children will only use the computer under direct supervision. Children have no access to the Internet. Computer use will not exceed one hour per child per day.

Special Needs *Babes on the Square* will embrace a developmentally appropriate inclusion approach wherein diversity, individualism, and the rights of all children to live in the community are valued. Including children with special needs or that are differently abled is a natural extension of our program philosophy and mission.

Children who are differently abled or have special needs will be together in a classroom with typically developing children in order to support and enhance all children's opportunities for learning. The Delaware Early Learning Foundations used for our lesson plans incorporates and

allows us to meet the needs and abilities of all children. All staff will have knowledge and training in best practices for inclusion and the ability to meet the unique need of all of the children in their care. Specialists are welcome to collaborate and consult with staff regarding special needs of each child. *Babes on the Square* will make necessary accommodations in order to implement a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). *Babes on the Square* will work closely with the families of all children. Having honest and explicit communications beginning with the time of enrollment, occurring frequently and including all persons involved with care of the children is a priority to the center.

If your child has an IEP/IFSP to please share it with Director and teaching staff in order to assist you and your child in accomplishing the goals set forth in the IEP/IFSP. These activities will be documented on the weekly lesson plan.

Toilet Training When you notice that your child is returning home in dry diapers, it may be time for big boy/girl underwear. Please talk with your child's teacher for readiness at school as children are distracted more and tend to ask less to use the potty while here. Toilet training usually starts around 18 months of age. Children are encouraged each time their diaper is changed to sit on and use the potty. *Babes on the Square* staff uses a positive reinforcement system. Food or candy will never be used as a reward. Children who express an interest in going to the toilet independently will be encouraged to do so with proper supervision. Please provide for your child when initially in underwear, at least three complete changes of clothing, including socks and an extra pair of shoes that should be kept in his/her cubby. It is helpful for the child's clothes to have an elastic waist so that the child can easily learn to dress him/herself. Please refrain from dressing your child in onesies, overalls, belts etc., as these items make independent use of the toilet very difficult. We have found that pull-ups are very difficult to change (and are required to be changed every time we check to see if it is wet/dry regardless of if it is wet or not). If your child is truly ready, put underpants on and use pull-ups at night.

Classroom to Classroom Transition When a child has met the age and developmental milestones appropriate to move to the next classroom and space is available in that classroom, the following guidelines will be used:

- a) The teacher will formerly observe the child for emotional, physical, and cognitive abilities.
- b) Once a child has been observed to be ready to move into the next classroom, the teacher will discuss this with the Administrator. If mutually agreed upon, a letter will be given to the parents advising them that their child is "observed" to be ready for graduation to the next level classroom.
- c) If the parents agree, the child will be moved from his/her present classroom using a transitional period spending increasing hours throughout the week in the new classroom. If the transition goes smoothly, the permanent move will be made the next week.
- d) If the child experiences anxiety or undue stress with the change in the classroom, a decision will be made between the parent, Director, and present teacher as to whether the child should move on to the next classroom, postpone the move for a few weeks and try transition again at a later date, or continue to transition for longer periods of time each day until comfortable.
- e) If transition is successful, the child will be assigned a new "cubby" and instructions for food, clothing, etc. will be given to the parents one week in advance of the move.

Transitions out of the Program Two weeks notice is required when leaving the center. Upon exiting the program, we ask parents to complete an exit survey in order to better assist the center in serving families in the future. Should a parent ask, we would provide copies of recent evaluations and information pertinent to the child's development while here at *Babes on the Square*.

Program Initiatives

Babes on the Square strives to provide the best care possible and enhance the quality of services provided to families and children. Currently we are participating in the Delaware Stars for Early Success Quality rating system. Please see the Delaware Stars board located in the entranceway for current status and more information. We are also participating in the 5-2-1... Almost None program. This program encourages good nutrition and physical activity for the children.

What to Bring On your child's first day at *Babes on the Square* please bring with you:

- At least one full change of seasonal clothing including under garments
- Smock for painting or messy activities
- Crib sheet and blanket for nap time (please do not bring sleeping bags or comforters we are unable to store them)
- Diapers and wipes for children who are not potty trained

Parents are required to bring their child's bedding home and clean it on a weekly basis. Please make sure that all possessions brought to the center are labeled with the child's name in permanent marker.

We ask that toys be left at home unless it is a scheduled show & tell day or there has been a special request made by your child's teacher.

Illness

Babes on the Square shall not permit a child who has any of the symptoms of illness specified on the sick form to be admitted to, or remain at the Center until the child has been symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication, or unless written documentation from a health care provider, or verbal with written follow-up, states the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to the child or to other children. This includes reportable communicable diseases as specified by the Division of Public Health. It will be at the discretion of the staff as to whether a child should be in attendance. Low-grade fevers, diarrhea, vomiting, lice, scabies, or any contagious virus will not be accepted. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will try to separate him/her from the other children until someone arrives to pick your child up. We ask that you arrive as quickly as possible. We feel that a No Sick Policy is in the best interest of all children and staff, including the child that is ill. As part of the application packet you will be asked to review and sign a copy of our No Sick Policy.

Tuition will not be discounted for sick days when your child is not in attendance. If your child is not in school on a Monday due to illness, tuition is due the day the child returns. No late fees will be charged in this situation.

Whenever a communicable disease outbreak occurs, a note will be posted in the applicable classrooms and a written notice will be sent home when required.

Medication Administration

Medicines will be administered by those staff that have passed the medicine course provided by the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families, our state-licensing agent. A parent must give written permission for all medications to be administered whether it is prescription or over the counter medication. The medication form records the parent's telephone number for daytime hours, the name of the medication, the medication dosage, the route of administration, as well as the time and dates to be administered. The staff that administered the medication will sign the form and note the time and date that the medicine was administered, as well as any adverse effects observed. All prescription medication must be in its original container, properly labeled, and authorized by the

child's health care provider. Medications, which do not need to be refrigerated, will be kept in the medicine cabinet in the office. Refrigerated medicines will be kept in the kitchen refrigerator in a marked container with lid. Medication may only be given to the child whose name appears on the prescription. Siblings may not share prescriptions. All non-prescription medication has to be in its original container, properly labeled with the directions for administration. Please label the container with your child's name. If a child is under the specific weight or age on the manufacture's container, a physicians written statement is also required before administering any medication.

All medications must be taken home when no longer needed and every Friday. If medication will be needed the following week they need to be brought back in and new forms completed. We cannot keep medications for extended periods of time. The only exception will be a nebulizer and albuteral if needed for emergency. In this case, a new form must be completed monthly.

A separate release needs to be signed for the use of diaper creams and sunscreen. This release is included in your application packet. The lotions will be applied when necessary provided the parent brings the diaper cream or sunscreen to the center in its original container and clearly labeled.

This medication policy must be followed, if parents do not follow the policy correctly, children will not receive medication. Medications must be given to Shelly or Michelle upon drop off. Forms must be completed by parent and left on the clipboard near the office. A slip will be completed by the staff person receiving the medication and given to the child's teacher to serve as a reminder that medication needs to be given.

Positive Behavior Management *Babes on the Square* ensures that all staff use positive age- appropriate methods of discipline and guidance. These methods will encourage self- control, self- direction, self- esteem, and cooperation. Praise, rewards, and encouragement, rather than punishment, shall be emphasized. We encourage consistency in the discipline techniques between home and school. It can be very confusing if there are different rules and consequences at home and at school. If these methods are unsuccessful in obtaining a desired behavior, a time-out or removal to the office will be used as a last resort. Children who become physically abusive to others or become out of control will be removed to the office. If staff is unable to bring that child under control the parent/guardian will be called and asked to come and pick up their child. After the third occurrence of uncontrolled behavior the parent will be asked not to return the child to the center for 24 hours. Every effort will be made to work with a parent and the child's teacher to create a behavior modification plan. *Babes on the Square* reserves the right to terminate care of a child who is not able to conform to appropriate behaviors.

Emergencies and Injuries Each parent is asked to sign the application forms authorizing permission for initiation of medical emergency procedures and transportation if necessary.

Emergencies An emergency telephone number must be on file in *Babes on the Square*, and names of persons to whom your child can be released. We will ask that emergency forms be updated annually. Please be sure to notify the office if any contact information should change. If someone other than you will pick up your child, please notify *Babes on the Square* either by telephone or by writing a note.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, you will be notified first, immediately followed by the paramedics or rescue squad. If the child does not have a pulse or respiration CPR will be administered until paramedics arrive. As per Office of Child Care Licensing *Babes on the Square*

is required to complete an incident form for any child taken from our care to receive medical attention. Please provide the office with information needed in such an event.

Injuries Minor cuts or bruises are evaluated by the staff and appropriate treatment such as ice, washed with soap and water or band-aids are administered. You will be notified of these types of injuries at pick-up time by an accident report placed in your child's cubby. Director or Acting Director will evaluate the injury. You will be immediately notified only if the injury is of a more serious nature. Parents will be contacted by phone should their child receive an injury located from the shoulders up or if the child is bitten.

Food Service *Babes on the Square Too* provides a breakfast (approximately 8:30 am until 9:00 am) and lunch (approximately 11:30 am until 12:00 am), and an afternoon snack (approximately 3:00 pm until 3:30 pm) for all children. Menus are posted in the front lobby on the Menu Board. All meals are catered from Delaware Gourmet Catering service. Meals are prepared fresh daily and delivered just before lunch. All meals served are in accordance to the current USDA/Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements, which are adjusted accordingly by the age of the child. If for any reason a child may not have certain foods due to medical reasons, please notify your child's teacher and provide a note from your child's physician's office stating the medical reason(s) why. Please provide substitutions we can serve in place of the restricted food. If your child may not have a certain food due to religious reasons, notify your child's teacher and provide us with a letter of the food your child may not eat, state that it is due to a religious reason, and provide substitutions we can serve in place of the restricted food. Parents are encouraged to bring supplemental food for their child if they have severe or multiple food allergies. We are a Peanut Free Center. For families that provide supplemental food items, please feel free to speak to someone in administration about your options of storing your child's food.

Babes on the Square is committed to your child's health and is participating in the 5-2-1... Almost None program that encourages nutrition and physical activity for children. We support your child's healthy food choices by gently encouraging children to try fruits and vegetables and giving positive reinforcement when they do. Staff will role model positive behaviors and are encouraged to follow the same healthy choices in the presence of the children. We will provide nutrition education for staff, children and families. A menu will be posted each month. Milk served will be Whole milk for children under the age of two and 1% milk for all children over the age of 2 years. Children who cannot have milk must provide their own supplement. To assist us in promoting good habits for your child we have implemented the following policies:

- We ask that no candy be sent in.
- To support children's healthy eating habits, hunger and fullness cues will be observed and supported.
- High sugar or fat snacks will not be served to the children in our care.
- Water will be clearly visible and available to children at all times, inside and outside.

We have special lunches (such as pizza or potluck for holidays) on occasion for children in the toddler classrooms and up. There may be an extra fee. More information is provided in monthly newsletters.

Staff Qualifications *Babes on the Square* provides an ongoing program of age appropriate activities, which meet the emotional, social, physical, and intellectual needs of the children in our care. In order to ensure this, the administration at *Babes on the Square* will carefully select staff that are the most qualified, meeting at least the minimum requirements for Office of Child Care Licensing as well as our current Delaware Stars level. All staff undergoes a

ninety-day provisional period and is then evaluated by the Director. If the staff member achieves a satisfactory evaluation, then they are accepted as permanent employees. Staff bios are posted in the lunchroom on the “Our Stars Board”.

Mandatory Reporting Laws As per Delaware Code Chapter 9, staff at *Babes on the Square* are required to report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect. We will document any suspicions and contact the Child Abuse Hotline if we feel that the child is in danger. As per 906 of this chapter, staff participating in good faith are immune from any liability that might exist resulting from such report. Our staff has been trained in the detection of indicators of physical, sexual and or emotional abuse. To aid in the protection of your children all staff has had a criminal background check.

Continuing Education Standards All staff at *Babes on the Square* must meet the continuing education requirements set by the State of Delaware---18 hours of annual training in the areas of early childhood development and education. Parents are welcome to attend as well! *Babes on the Square* provides in house trainings four times each year in different areas concerning children and current trends in childcare. Staff also attend additional trainings for Delaware Stars.

Babysitting By Staff Member *Babes on the Square* requires that a release form be signed by any parent/guardian who employs a staff member to babysit their child/children or for any other reason. Should you chose to employ one of our staff as a babysitter, or for any other purpose, this arrangement is completely between you and the staff member. *Babes on the Square* assumes no responsibility or liability for the staff member’s performance. Employment by *Babes on the Square* is in no way a recommendation of the staff member.

Contact Us *Babes on the Square* has a variety of ways for parents to contact us, by phone, fax or email information provided below. Should you have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Babes on the Square
1818 Delaware Ave
Wilmington, De 19806
Phone: (302) 777-5007
Fax: (302) 777-5208
Email: bots1@verizon.net

Babes on the Square, too
1411 Foulk Rd
Wilmington, De 19803
Phone: (302) 477-9190
Fax: (302) 477-9150
Email: bots2@verizon.net

Open communication is the key and we ask that you provide us with your e-mail address on the application form during enrollment. We will use email to relay reminders, inclement weather information, or just general information. We will check for incoming e-mail every couple of hours throughout the day. We will respond as soon as we can. If you have a message for a teacher we will pass it along and they will respond as soon as they can get coverage for their room.

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child at *Babes on the Square*. We look forward to your child starting with us. We hope that you and your family find it an educational and happy experience. Feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Andria V. Keating
Owner/Administrator

Michelle Spencer
Director