

Preschool Family Handbook

2021-2022



Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech

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Director

Updated 9/15/21

Title IX Notice of Nondiscrimination

Clarke Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in admission, administration of its educational programs or activities or employment. Clarke Schools is required by Title IX and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 not to discriminate on the basis of sex in admission, administration of its educational programs or activities or employment. The Chief Human Resource Officer, Karen Katsanos, MA, MBA, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, 45 Round Hill Road, Northampton, MA 01060, telephone number 413-582-1155, has been designated as the employee responsible for coordinating Clarke Schools efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 to Clarke Schools may be referred to Karen Katsanos or to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, at 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100, telephone number 800-421-3481.

Important Note: All staff, student teachers and interns at Clarke School are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect and may make a report without first contacting the parents, per NYS reporting requirements.

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech reserves the right to revise, delete or supplement any provisions of this parent handbook (the "Handbook") as necessary. Policy changes will be communicated to parents through email and/or written notification. Any reproduction in whole or in part of this handbook is prohibited without prior written approval.

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July 2021

Dear families,

Thank you for choosing Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York for your child's education! This handbook provides you with our school goals, expectations, policies, and procedures. In addition, other resources on our website provide information on covid specific policies.

Clarke New York is one of five campuses along the east coast of the renowned Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech. In 1867, the Clarke School for the Deaf was founded in Northampton, MA, where Clarke still maintains a location. The mission in 1867, and today, remains the same – to provide children who are deaf or hard of hearing with the listening and spoken language skills to reach their full potential and to be able to learn in schools in their community alongside their peers.

Clarke's NY campus opened in 1999. Our preschool program welcomes children who are deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing from NYC and Westchester. Our school has two floors, a lower level and the first floor, which include 5 preschool classrooms, speech therapy rooms, a sensory gym, audiology booth, and a library. Our students enjoy playing in the newly renovated playground at Carl Shurz Park, two blocks away. Our highly trained teachers lead classes with favorable student-teacher ratios. Three of our classes enroll only children who are deaf or hard of hearing, while the other two classes enroll children who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as children with typical hearing. Children are grouped according to age, listening and language levels, developmental levels, and IEP mandated placement to maximize language learning opportunities and overall development in both structured and semi-structured activities.

By choosing Clarke New York, you have already made the very important decision to help the child(ren) in your life develop listening and language skills on par with their cognitive potential. Clarke New York uses a strong listening and spoken language-based approach to prepare children who are deaf or hard of hearing to mainstream into the public or private schools of their choice, learning alongside their typical hearing peers. At Clarke, you will find a specialized learning environment, which has been designed to maximize each child's skills and prepare them for grade-level, mainstream academics, while learning and working with them in a "whole child" approach. At Clarke, we help each child develop a foundation made up of confidence, love, sense of self-worth and pride.

You have entrusted us to partner with you to provide the child in your life with the best possible education. As we embark upon a new school year working together as a team, may the spirit of cooperation, support, and encouragement lead to a wonderful and successful year Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech!

Sincerely,

Meredith Berger, MEd. SBL/SDL
Director, Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech
New York

Clarke admits children who are deaf or hard of hearing, and hearing, providing services to our families regardless of race, color, gender, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, or marital status

Calendar, Hours & Attendance

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York follows the NYC Department of Education calendar to the greatest extent possible. Please see the current calendar for specific information regarding vacations, breaks, holidays, conference days, etc. As the calendar is updated, a copy of the updated calendar is sent home to you and is available on our website.

Current Calendar: [2021-2022 Preschool Calendar](#)

Program Dates for 2021-2022

Program	First Day	Last Day
Summer 2021	Tuesday 7/6/21	Friday 8/13/21
Academic/School Year	Thursday 9/9/21	Friday 6/24/22

For children approved by the DOE for the summer program, children are expected to be in attendance for the entirety of the summer session

School Hours

Preschool program school hours are Monday-Friday, from 8:30 am to ~~2:30 pm~~.



For the summer and academic schedule, the day will end at 2:00, based on covid restrictions that impact nap/rest time. We will notify parents when this changes.

General staff hours are 7:30-3:30 or 8:00am-4:00 pm.

Transportation, Arrival and Departure

We take the safety of all children very seriously. While children are in the care of our staff, they are carefully supervised. It is important for parents to follow and enforce Clarke safety rules when picking up their children. Therefore, we ask that when picking up their children, parents (or other authorized adults) supervise their children once they are picked up. Please do not let your children run around the lobby, scream (even for fun) or do other possibly unsafe behaviors. While we acknowledge and encourage the fact that our parents might enjoy socializing together, we ask that once a teacher hands off your child, you leave the front area at your earliest opportunity, so that other parents will have sufficient room to pick up their children, and any commotion will not interfere with the remainder of dismissal.

COVID Precautions:

Parents are not permitted to enter the building. Parents or caregivers who are bringing their child in or picking them up must wait outside of the building, and distant from each other. Children must separate from parents before entering the vestibule, where their temperature will be checked. Parents and caregivers must wait for their child to be checked before leaving. A child who has a temperature and/or any signs of illness will be sent home with the parent or caregiver.

Notification of Absence

Parents are required to notify Clarke at least an hour before school starts if a child will be late or absent. Clarke will send a reminder message if your child does not arrive at school, to ensure you are aware.

Bus: Selby Transportation 718-617-7141

Bussing: Arrival: 8:30 Departure: ~~2:30~~—Covid adjusted time: 2:00

- The bus company provides Clarke with the lists of children on each bus and the approximate times for pick up and drop off.
- Clarke maintains a roster for each route and uses it to note the time of arrival and attendance information.
- Change of address for pickup/drop off takes about a week. The change of address form must be

completed and submitted to Denise Nunez.

- If your child will be absent or late notify Selby so that the bus does not wait in front of your home with other children on the bus.
- **SELBY Procedure:** If a parent or caregiver is not home when the bus arrives, Selby's procedure is We to call the NYC Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT). OPT will provide instructions on what to do. OPT might direct the bus to continue the route, with the student on the bus, to drop off the other students. At the same time, OPT will try to reach the parents/caregiver. If the parent/caregiver cannot be reached, while OPT tries to locate the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, OPT will contact law enforcement. (Don MacNeil, 8/29/21)

Issues with DOE provided busing

For NYC students with IEPs, bus transportation is provided by Selby Transportation for the NYC Department of Education. Selby does NOT work for Clarke. When a child is approved to come to Clarke and has bussing, Clarke confirms the days and times of our program and Selby makes the bus routes. Please let us know if there is a problem with the bus so that we can try to help resolve the issue. At the same time, parents should, if appropriate:

1. Talk to the driver/matron.
2. Call Selby.
3. Call the NYC Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) and file a complaint: **718-392-8855**

Parent/Caregiver Transport

- Children are expected to be at Clarke by **8:30**.
- Children are signed in and out by Clarke staff.
- Parent/caregiver must stay with their child until a Clarke staff member checks them in.
- If late, the caregiver must wait with their child outside until a Clarke staff member is available to check the child in, including checking to make sure the daily health screening was completed.
- Parent/Caregiver should arrive at Clarke by 1:50 to insure they are on time to pick up their child.
- Only approved caregivers-those listed by parents on the dismissal form- are allowed to sign a child out. Caregivers should be prepared to show picture identification to pick up a child.

A special note about chronic lateness

Parents who bring their child to school each day or have a caregiver do it for them must plan to be on time. It is a burden on staff to have children arrive late and it affects a child's ability to learn routines, acclimate to the classroom environment, and learn/practice language, self-help and social skills with their peers. In addition, children may miss scheduled services, such as speech, if late. If children with IEPs, who are eligible for busing, are frequently late, the child will have to use the DOE provided bus service to insure the child arrives on time.

Early pickups

- Parents are asked to notify the school prior to early pick up.
- Parents should be on time-arrive for pick up at the time told to Clarke.
- The staff will have the child packed up and ready for the parent's arrival.
- Clarke staff will sign the child out to a parent or approved caregiver. Other caregivers must be on the approved pick-up list and show id.
- Parents who arrive for an early pick up without notice will have to wait until staff are able to pack up and prepare the child without jeopardizing the supervision and safety of other children in the class.
- Children who are picked up early, particularly without notice, may miss a speech, ot, or pt session scheduled for that time.

Stroller, bicycles and scooters

Due to space constraints and Fire Department regulations, neither strollers nor bicycles for preschool students can be left at Clarke during the school day. Scooters that fold up can be left in the vestibule area but they must fold up and be taken home each day. In addition, Clarke cannot be responsible for the scooter, therefore it is left at the owner's risk.

Attendance

Students are expected to come to school every day unless they are not healthy or the family is observing a religious holiday.



- ✓ **Parents are required to complete a daily health survey for their child each day before the child leaves home.**



- ✓ If a child is home due to covid symptoms or quarantine, Clarke must review covid test results and situation before a child can be approved to return to school.



1. If your child has been ill with something highly contagious (for example, pink eye) or out for surgery, parents must send Clarke a doctor's note that says the child is medically cleared to return to school without restrictions. The note must be sent to Clarke for review before a child can return to school.
2. If your child needs medication like Benadryl or Tylenol in the morning to be "fine," he or she must stay home that day.
3. Family vacations should be scheduled during school vacation times.
 - Longer or frequent absences will affect a child's placement at Clarke.
 - Clarke is required to report absences of 5 consecutive days, non-consecutive absences of 20 days in a short period of time and poor attendance to the school district.
 - The school district will then decide if a child's enrollment should end.
 - Even if Clarke is authorized to keep an absent child on its roster, your child's class, teacher, therapist, and therapy times will not be guaranteed.

COVID related attendance procedures

[English-Health and Safety Plan](#)

[Spanish-Health and Safety Plan](#)

Parent Completed Health Screening for Students

1. Parents receive a reminder text each morning.
2. Parents will be required to submit the screening for their child by 7:00 am (before putting the child on the bus or leaving home to come to school)
3. If a child has a covid symptom, has been exposed to someone with covid, needs to quarantine for travel or lives with someone who needs to quarantine for any reason, the child must stay home from school.
4. If a child arrives on the school bus who has not had a health screening completed, or who has temperature of 100.0 ° or higher:
 - Parent will be called to do the survey immediately, either over the phone with the staff member or by completing the digital version
 - Staff will isolate and observe the child until the screening is done.
 - If screening or temperature are not normal, the child will remain isolated until the parent picks up the child.

Notifications

Parents are required to notify Clarke at least an hour before school starts if a child will be absent.

- The parent must tell us the reason for the absence and must send a note, an email, or a doctor's note explaining the absence and the reason.
- Clarke is required to contact families of children who are absent without notice.
- If your child is transported to school via a bus, parents must also phone the bus company to cancel transportation for any day your child will not be attending school.

Note: It takes a significant amount of staff time to monitor and make sure all students have a health screening every morning before the buses arrive. When parents/caregivers do not complete the health survey on time, it means staff use precious time calling and emailing the parent to do it. This risks the health of all students and staff and wastes precious time that would be better used helping children come in from the buses and start their day. It is very important that this is done every morning by 7 am.

Learning and Curriculum

Listening and Spoken Language Approach

At Clarke NY, our goal is for children who are deaf and hard of hearing to develop listening and spoken language on level with their peers, which requires:

- The use of hearing aids, bahas or cochlear implants that provide optimal benefit to hear the full range of speech sounds
- Wear of hearing aids/bahas/cochlear implants more than 10-12 hours per day, *every day*
- Their family and their school team to work together to target listening, language, and developmental goals
- Children to be exposed to a rich language environment at home

Using a diagnostic learning approach, data is collected throughout the day to inform intervention and planning and to monitor progress. When a child is not making, at minimum, one month's progress in one month of time, the reasons are analyzed, with their families, so that barriers to progress can be removed. If the barriers cannot be removed, or if the child has too little time left at Clarke, other school options will be discussed and recommended.

Curriculum Requirements and Tools

Using a theme-based approach, content is taught with intentionality and is integrated across the academic content areas and developmental domains. Children have opportunities to make choices, engage in child-centered learning activities that reflect their interests and their unique learning needs, and that cover a wide range of experiences and celebrate each child's successes. The curriculum reflects consideration of children's linguistic and cultural backgrounds, with materials chosen to reflect the diversity of the school community and of the city and world in which all students live.

Clarke New York follows the NYS required [NYS Early Learning Standards \(Spanish edition\)](#) and [Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core](#), in addition to a child's IEP goals, developmental functioning level and listening and spoken language needs. Our curriculum aligns with the NYS Prekindergarten Learning Standards, which address all the domains of learning:

- ✓ Approaches to Learning
 - ✓ Social and Emotional Development
 - ✓ Physical Development and Health
 - ✓ Communication, Language and Literacy
 - ✓ Cognition and Knowledge of the World
-
- **Hightscope Curriculum** which has a strong focus on development of executive function, a foundation of learning and later success in life and is aligned with the NYS Prekindergarten Foundation and the domains of learning. Elements of the Hightscope day are morning meeting, small group, large group and work time-which includes Plan, Do, Review.
 - **Learning Without Tears** (formerly known as Handwriting Without Tears) is used to support pre-literacy and pre-writing.
 - Social/Emotional Skills and Function are supported using **Second Steps Social/Emotional Learning, Conscious Discipline and the Pyramid Model**.
 - **CASLLS**, both a curricula tool and an assessment tool developed for use with children who are deaf and hard of hearing, allows each child's listening and language skills related to development of spoken English to be monitored and targeted ongoingly.
 - Auditory, speech and language support are embedded into the curriculum and instruction in addition to being targeted during Speech/Language therapy sessions.

Clarke Library

Clarke's library is located on our lower level and is equipped with a host of resources and materials. We encourage parents to spend time in it! We'll continue to add brochures, pamphlets and other materials throughout the course of the year and hope to hear suggestions from parents regarding any additional information/resources that should be added. We encourage families to have their children check out books each week from our library. Parents may also check out books at any time but may borrow their books for 2 weeks before returning or renewing. If books are lost or damaged, families will be assessed a replacement fee. Please help us keep our library in usable, child friendly shape by cleaning up after you use the library or after your child pulls books off the shelves.

Progress Reports and Monitoring

Children who are deaf or hard of hearing are expected to make a minimum of one month of progress in one month of time in their listening and spoken language skills. That ratio is considered the typical rate of learning. In areas a child has delays, one month of progress in one month of time would mean the child has made progress but continues to have delays compared to other children their age, in that area. If the goal is to catch up and function on the same level as other children their age, more than 1 month of progress in one month of time must happen. Using a diagnostic learning approach, data is collected throughout the day to inform intervention and planning and to monitor progress. When a child is not making, at minimum, one month's progress in one month of time, the reasons are analyzed and identified, with their families, so that barriers to progress can be removed.

Ongoing Assessment:

CASLLS: a child's listening and spoken language development and progress are guided by the Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language and Speech.

- Initial enrollment or new class: Children's listening and language are observed by their teacher, assistant teacher, speech therapist and other members of the school community, who record/document language samples of what the child says spontaneously or what they respond to when others in the class speak to them.
- The initial language samples are analyzed by the child's team and plotted in CASLLS. This provides information about the child's listening and language functional level and allows the team to select targeted goals to address over the coming weeks. These goals are sent home to families, with examples, so that the family can also target these goals and provide feedback to the team.
- The team then observes and documents samples of the child using or demonstrating the targeted language.
- The team meets 1x every 1-2 weeks to analyze the samples and discuss progress towards the goals.
- Monthly, the team assesses and selects new goals to target.
- The rate in which a child achieves targeted goals helps to identify the rate of learning.

Observation and Performance: Anecdotal information is collected through observation of a child during structured activities and informal activities. This may include observing and documenting a child's interactions with other children, the type of play they engage in, their knowledge of certain topics, their ability to perform specific skills, their response to models, directions, and routines, or their response to certain experiences.

Progress Reports are completed for each child quarterly (December, March, June, August) and shared with parents. Information in the progress report includes a child's progress in meeting their IEP goals and comments on different aspects of their development and learning. For children with IEPs, testing is completed in November and May to assess progress based on standardized testing. In addition, information from CASLLS as well as observation of progress in areas related to overall development, learning and social skills is shared through the progress report. These reports are also used for a child's

Annual Review meeting for their IEP and for the Turning 5 process, as a child begins the transition from preschool to kindergarten, the year they turn 5.

Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy

Children receive Speech/Language, OT and PT services based on the approved frequency on their IEP. These services are typically provided individually. While this is typically done outside of the classroom, at times, the therapist may “push-in” to the classroom activity to support carryover of a skill into the larger environment.

Audiology

Role of Clarke’s Audiologist in Preschool

Clarke does have a full-time audiologist. The audiologist’s role in the preschool program is different than in the EI program. For preschool students, the audiologist is an educational audiology role. All children should have a primary audiologist outside of Clarke.

- Clarke’s audiologist will train staff on new hearing aids, cochlear implants and remote microphone technology, including operating functions and troubleshooting.
- Within the classroom, the teacher, assistant and SLP are responsible for daily listening checks, trouble shooting, and communicating with parents about issues or problems.
- When a hearing aid or cochlear implant is having issues that cannot be fixed with simple trouble shooting, parents need to call their primary audiologist at the hospital or clinic their child is followed by and make an appointment to bring the equipment in to be checked.
- Clarke’s audiologist will coordinate with the district audiologist regarding obtaining, setting up or returning FM/DM systems.
- Clarke’s audiologist will make sure school professionals have the information about new technology.
- Clarke’s audiologist, may, on occasion, conduct a hearing/equipment assessment or middle ear check if there is a sudden change in a child’s responses to sound. Formal hearing evaluations are done by your child’s primary audiologist, every 6-12 months.
- Clarke also a licensed hearing aid dispenser on site who is available to make earmolds/fit them to the hearing aid. Clarke does not take insurance therefore parents would have to pay privately for this service, in advance.

Current Audiology Information

Parents must provide copies of current aided audiograms and unaided audiograms, at least once a year. This testing should be done by the primary audiologist. For children who use cochlear implants, we also ask that parents obtain a copy of the **detailed program** at the time of each program visit as well as any routine evaluations that are conducted.

It’s important for Clarke School staff to be kept informed regarding changes to the children’s processors and to have on file the programs your child’s implant audiologist recommends that your child use. Also, we encourage parents to ask their audiologist about harnesses or undershirts with processor pockets for their children’s body-worn processors or controllers, critter clips, huggies and other tools to aid your child in keeping their cochlear implant on.

Spare Parts and Batteries for Cochlear Implants and Hearing Aids:

In preschool, parents are responsible for providing this equipment to the school to insure a child always has full auditory access.

- Children should wear their hearing aids or cochlear implants all waking hours * research shows that children need to wear their technology (hearing aids, baha, cochlear implants, etc.) at least 10 hours per day to develop age-appropriate listening skills.
- Please send a supply of these replacement parts and batteries to be left at school.
- Please call or email Clarke in the morning if a child's hearing aid or implant processor did not work prior to the child getting on the bus.
- Parents must notify their child's primary audiologist or implant center when replacement parts are needed. Please have at least one spare for each external component of a child's implant and a 3 month battery supply at home.
- If your child is sent to school without his/her hearing aids or cochlear implants, parents will be called to bring the device to school immediately.
- Parents may be called to pick up their child to bring them immediately to their audiologist, especially if not having amplification creates a safety and health concern for your child.

Special Note About Continued Placement for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Clarke is a listening and spoken language program. To benefit from this program, deaf or hard of hearing children must

- have full auditory access to the range of speech sounds using hearing aids, cochlear implants or bahas.
- have their amplification equipment in good working condition and they must use it each day, every day for more than 10-12 hours a day to develop language on level with their cognitive potential.
- be seen by their primary audiologist regularly to make sure their amplification equipment works and that their unaided hearing loss hasn't changed.
- immediately see their audiologist when there is a problem with their equipment or responses to sound.
- have learning needs that can be met in a class of 12-14 children
- Parents must be actively involved in their child's education and willing/open to collaborating with the educational team.
- benefit from supports and interventions for behavioral and management needs that allow their language and development to grow. While children with delayed language and/or insufficient auditory access or skill may demonstrate age inappropriate behavioral, behavioral issues that interfere with their language learning and do not respond to interventions and support or reduce as the child develops more language may indicate that the child has an additional learning challenge, the class size is too big for them to benefit, or that they may need visual language, such as sign.

If children are not making language and developmental progress, despite the many different ways they are supported, the discussion with the family and the child's team about continued placement will look at:

- ✓ Frustration with inaccessible communication
- ✓ Language delay and confusion about what is happening in the classroom or with peers
- ✓ Under use of amplification (hearing aids, bahas or cochlear implants)

- ✓ Inappropriate/insufficient amplification (hearing aids, baha or cochlear implants), such as not being strong enough or appropriate for the child to hear the full range of speech sounds and to develop spoken language
- ✓ Their amplification being often broken or not working
- ✓ A child not seeing their audiologist enough for their devices to be programmed and managed appropriately
- ✓ Rate of progress and trajectory-is it sufficient to provide them with appropriate language to match their developmental level or needs
- ✓ Time left in preschool- limited time left in preschool and not enough time to overcome the gaps in listening and language for kindergarten
- ✓ Impact of poor or inconsistent attendance
- ✓ Class size: is the class size/ratio is too large for their learning needs
- ✓ Is there is a secondary learning challenge that would be better supported in a different type of program or with a different language approach.

Parents, Clarke staff and the school district will discuss the specifics of each child's case to determine if additional evaluations or services are needed, if there are other professionals who can assist or if changes in amplification might help, if a change to a sign language-based program or another type of program would be more appropriate and other issues. Based on a variety of factors, Clarke may recommend a change in placement.

Special Note About Continued Placement for Neighborhood Students

Children enrolled privately through our neighborhood preschool program are part of the integrated program that is approved and regulated by the NYS Department of Education. Those children cannot be admitted for this program if they have an IEP or if they have learning or behavior challenges that would be considered outside of the range of typical for their age. Every effort will be made to communicate and collaborate with families whose children may benefit from specialized services or supports in a different program and to identify programs that may better fit the child's unique needs.

Family Communication and Involvement

Clarke School staff members want to hear from parents and families- often! If there are any changes in your child's life at home, any special events, new accomplishments, stressful situations - anything that might be important to the understanding of your child's moods, feelings and behaviors - please let us know.

Parent Custody and Sharing Information

Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech is obligated to abide by custody/divorce agreements and court orders regarding the sharing of information with other family members, guardians, or court appointed officials. Please make an appointment to discuss the specifics of your child's situation, should there be important information that would help us in working with your family.

Phone Interpreter

For families who communicate through a language other than English, Clarke uses an interpreter service to call and speak with families or to meet with families at the school.

Phone

phone:(212) 585-3500 FAX:(212) 585-3300

When to Speak with Staff

Arrival and dismissal times can be hectic. Teachers, assistants, and therapists are actively supervising children to ensure everyone's safety. Please do not engage in conversations about your child at this time that would divert their attention or that should be done in a more private location. You can leave a note or message with Denise, Jackie G., Meredith or Nell for your child's teacher for anything time sensitive.

- The best time to speak with a staff member is 7:30-8:15 am or 2:15-4:00 p.m. You may leave a message at any time with the office manager (or on voice mail,) and your call will be returned as soon as possible.
- Teachers and therapists will not leave class or therapy to speak with a parent unless it is a *genuine emergency*.
- If a message is left early in the morning, after work hours, on weekends, or over vacations, staff will respond to messages, when they are back at work. Please be patient and wait for a response. If it is a true emergency, please contact a program administrator or leave a voice message.
- Please do not call repeatedly, hang up and call again.

Email

Staff may also be reached via e-mail:

First initial, last name@clarkeschools.org Example: Jin Rodriguez: jrodriguez@clarkeschools.org

Consent to communicate via email with parents or other professionals must be given in writing. To ensure that the staff at Clarke School may always reach you, parents must notify the administrative assistant when work, home and cell phone numbers change. Also, please let us know when emergency contacts change for us to keep those phone numbers updated.

Blackboard Connect

Clarke sends out text messages, emails and phone calls to families using a mass notification system. Important alerts about weather emergencies, school closing, schedule changes, and reminders for events and activities will be sent through this system.

Class Dojo

Each class has its own class page and there is one for the school. Information on class activities, pictures, special events, reminders, and school closings are shared through Class Dojo. Children whose parents

have not submitted the media consent document or who have declined to give consent will not have their pictures posted on Class Dojo, though the parent will still have access to the class and school pages.

Communication Notebook

Notebooks may be used for communication between the parent and speech-language, occupational and physical therapists. We encourage parents to use the book to let your child's teachers and therapists know about events that occurred outside of school: visiting a friend, baking cookies together, a movie your child went to see, a family vacation, etc. It's exciting for children to be able to share with their families what they did at school and to share with staff activities they participated in with their families. Some parents have gotten very creative by sending in drawings, pictures and engaging descriptions of activities and events outside of school. It's exciting to see the children's faces light up when the staff talks with them about events at home and it's important that children know that their teachers and families communicate with one another.

School Visits

Non-Covid Policy: Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to come and observe their child. Observations typically start after 9:00, to allow the students to transition into the morning routine and end by 2:00. Typically, observations do not occur during lunch or rest time. Parents are welcome to wait in our lobby. Children whose parents are frequent participants in therapy and in the classroom typically make greater progress than children whose parents do not. For that reason, we have adopted a Parent Participation Expectation.



Covid Policy: While concerns about covid continue, Clarke will not have an open-door policy. Parents will be able to observe and participate in the classroom and therapy virtually, when arranged in advance.

Parent Participation Expectation

All parents are expected to observe classroom activities and participate in therapy sessions **at least once monthly**, although more frequent observations are welcome. If a parent's work or home schedule does not allow for 1 x month observations, a family schedule will be worked out. Clarke will report back to you each quarter how many times a family member did participate and observe during that time period.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are held several times per year. Conferences are scheduled at the convenience of the parents, when possible, with preference given to afternoon. Parents and/or Clarke School staff may request additional conferences at any time. Parent conferences are always offered to review progress reports.

Parent Meetings

Clarke School schedules parent meetings/workshops based on different topics, such as sleep issues, toilet training, transition to kindergarten, etc. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings, as well as make suggestions for meeting topics. More information about dates and times will be sent separately.

Parent Involvement

There are many ways preschool parents can be involved in the Clarke community. Parents can volunteer to read to their child's class, to come in to talk about their culture during international studies or by chaperoning a class trip or by helping with holiday parties and special events. Please speak to your child's teacher about the ways you or your family members can get involved.

Accessing Your Child's Records

Parents may at any time request to review their child's records. All requests shall be made in writing. For parents who have difficulty writing the request, Clarke will assist in writing the parent's request. An appointment will be made during normal business hours. A Clarke staff member will be with the family at all times. The appointment will be set up as early as possible but will be dependent on Clarke's ability to provide a staff member for the time the parent has requested. Parents may ask for copies of items in their child's file. Typically, there is no fee for making copies of individual reports. If the parent request includes significant amounts of reports, entire files or is requested through a lawyer, Clarke reserves the right to charge a per page fee as allowed by NYS regulations. A parent may request to have his or her child's record amended if the parent believes the information contained within the record is incorrect, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the child. Clarke encourages parents to share with us that we will be receiving a request from a lawyer or SSI for records. Since the release sent to us may be of poor fax quality or difficult to read, we may delay sharing information until we have verified that the parent did indeed make the request. All requests to review, copy, or amend records must be made in writing.

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech receives a request for access.
- Parents or eligible students should submit to the school director a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
 - Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Clarke School to amend a record should write the Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed.
 - If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.
 - Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
 - One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.
 - A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board.
 - A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

SCHOOL HEALTH POLICIES AND MEDICAL ISSUES

Children should only be in school when they are healthy. When your child is absent, please let us know why your child is absent. If your child is sick, has symptoms of illness, or is diagnosed with a specific illness, Clarke is required to get from parents specific details. We are required to report to the Department of Health any vaccine preventable illness or illnesses that are highly contagious. These health policies are part of Clarke's written safety plan, available for review. In addition, Clarke cooperates with NYC Department of Health related to the prevention of COVID and reports all possible or confirmed COVID cases to the Contact Tracing office in the Department of Health.

[Covid protocols](#) Please see Clarke's most up to date protocols for COVID 19 on our website.

Due to the serious nature of covid and the high risk of transmission, all symptoms of illness that could be covid are taken very seriously. Parents, caregivers and staff are expected to follow all policies and procedures for the safety and health of all children.

Symptoms of Illness

Children exhibiting the following COVID-possible symptoms should not be sent to school:

Vomiting Sore throat Headache Fever Cough Muscle pain or body aches
Diarrhea Stomachache Fatigue/exhaustion Loss of taste or smell Shortness of breath
Nasal congestion or runny nose

Children should not be sent to school with other symptoms of illness, such as

- Red, teary, swollen eyes
- Rash or bumps on skin
- Scalp itching
- Pain when eating

If the Clarke School staff feels your child is not well enough to be at school for any health reason, we will phone you to pick up your child ***within the hour***. An emergency contact will be phoned if we cannot first reach a parent. Sick children will be supervised in the isolation room until a parent or caregiver

Return to School

A child must be cleared by Clarke's Health and Safety Manager to return to school for symptoms that could be covid and must also be cleared by Clarke's general policies requiring children to be healthy and have no symptoms of illness and to be able to participate in activities throughout the day without the need for medication to reduce symptoms or fever.

A doctor's note to return to school is required for illnesses which are highly contagious, such as pink eye. Clarke may also ask for a doctor's note before allowing a child to return to school for other health related situations.

Following an illness, a child returning to school should feel well enough to participate in all activities and daily routines (including outdoor play and field trips). Children must **be fever/symptom free for 24 hours** without taking medication to control the fever before returning to school.

**Children who need to take medication in the morning, such as Tylenol or Benadryl, to be well enough to go to school should not be in school.

Daily Health Inspections

Each morning, as the children arrive, staff document any observable health concerns, or any unusual or new marks they observe on a child. If a mark on the child is unusual, serious or of concern, staff will

contact the family to inquire how the injury occurred. Parents are strongly encouraged to write a note or call and leave a message about any injuries. If medical care was provided, parents should send in a doctor's note.

Lice

Lice is not an illness but is both common and highly communicable in childcare settings. The presence of nits(eggs) suggests lice will hatch soon or already did therefore children with live eggs or live lice are not permitted to be in school. The bus company will be notified, if needed, to allow them to clean the bus. Many times, other family members also have eggs/lice. If everyone in the family is not checked and treated, the lice will re-infect the child. We suggest that parents take their child to specialized salons, such as Hair Fairies or Licenders, to have their child checked. Many of the salons will check the child and other family members free of charge. The pediatrician may be able to prescribe specialized shampoo or treatments.

To return: The parent must bring the child to school for a Clarke staff member to check the child's hair. If Clarke staff sees live louse or live eggs the child will have to leave and will not be cleared to return until all live eggs and lice are gone.

Annual Physicals:

The New York City Department of Health requires that each child have a yearly physical examination by a physician. Children are required to have current physicals (under a year old) and up to date immunizations prior to starting at Clarke. The child must have a new physical each year after enrollment. Immunizations and lead testing must be documented and up to date. The immunization schedule is determined by the Department of Health and must be followed by any child enrolled at Clarke. Please make sure that this section of the Health Form is complete and accurate.

Families in Temporary Housing: Please let us know if you/your child are in temporary housing, such as a shelter. There are special regulations to support your child in enrolling in school and providing more time, if needed, to get some of the health requirements to us.

Influenza/Flu Vaccine:

NYC DOH requires that all children enrolled in Clarke's preschool receive the flu shot between by December 31st of each year.

- Children will not be allowed to return to school after the December break without documentation of this vaccination.
- Based on the holiday/vacation schedule, proof of influenza immunization must be received by fax, mail or hand delivered by 9 am on the Friday before the December vacation.
- Any child without documented of the flu shot by 9 am on the last day of school before the December vacation. Any documentation received after this deadline time will not be checked until school reopens in January.
- If the documentation is not received by that time, the child will not be picked up by the bus when school reopens in January.
- If a parent is bringing documentation in January, they must bring their child to school, with the documentation and they will have to wait until all late documentation is reviewed.
- For new students starting between January-June 30, the NYC Department of Health requires documentation of the flu shot for the most recent season.

Exemptions: For a medical exemption, a physician licensed in NYS must certify that a specific immunization is detrimental to a child's health, what the detriment is, and when it will no longer be a detriment, if applicable. The form is submitted to the NYC Department of Health, who will determine if

the medical request for a waiver is approved.

Lead Testing: New York State law requires blood lead levels tested at ages 1 and 2 and an annual lead risk assessment conducted for all children up to six years of age.

Diagnosis: Make sure your child's pediatrician knows and understands your child's hearing loss diagnosis. Many pediatricians do not mark it or mention it on the Health/Physical form. At times, this does create a problem when a parent is requesting services based on that diagnosis.

Allergies

Required form: Individual Health Care Needs Form.

Many young children have allergies. It is required for your child's pediatrician to include that information on his/her medical form. In the event of an allergy, such as to peanuts, that may require medical treatment, a doctor's note indicating the allergy, possible reactions and course of treatment must be provided to Clarke. With the parent, the doctor and the staff, a plan will be developed based on the child's needs. EpiPens can be used, when prescribed by a doctor, by staff trained in its use. Because Clarke does not have control over all food brought into the building, we cannot guarantee that the building is completely nut free.

Children who are prescribed EpiPens cannot be in school without an unexpired EpiPen onsite.

Medical Clearance for OT and/or PT Services

If a child is approved to receive OT or PT services on his or her IEP, the pediatrician must provide a prescription before these services can be provided. There is a specific form NYC DOE requires to be used for this purpose. This "script" must indicate that the child is recommended for that service and how frequently it should occur. The doctor cannot write "OT" or "PT" recommended as needed. Scripts should contain: your child's name, date of birth, diagnosis code (ICD-10 code), the doctor's NPI #, the doctor's original signature (not a stamp), the type of therapy, and how often/for how long/per week the therapy should be provided.

Medication

Policy: Clarke School is not authorized to administer medication. We ask that you plan to give your child any necessary prescription or non-prescription medications at home before and/or after school. If a child is cleared by Clarke to be in school but requires a medication, the parent can come to Clarke to administer the medication. Clarke will have to document the medication, dosage, purpose, date/time, and the parent's name.

Epinephrine Auto Injectors

As of 9/1/2018, Clarke has non-patient specific epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens) on site.

Clarke is required to administer this medication to any child demonstrating signs of severe allergic reaction, even if the child has no previous history of an allergic reaction.

Parents CANNOT opt out or decline this medication.

Staff who have been trained in the signs of severe allergic reaction and administration of an epinephrine auto-injector can and will administer a dose of epinephrine to a child showing signs of a severe reaction. Either another person or after administering the medication, they will call 911.

After 911 has been called, the parent will be called and directed to the hospital

Any child who is administered epinephrine must go to the hospital.

Emergency Medical Plan

Required form: "Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment"

This form must be completed before enrollment. The emergency care provided by Clarke School staff is limited to simple first aid procedures (e.g., disinfecting cuts and abrasions, applying bandages, placing

ice on small bumps and bruises, etc.). Parents will be notified of injuries on the day that the injury occurs.

For anything that might have the potential to need more than simple first aid, 911 will be called. Please be aware that because we are not the parent and because we do not have a nurse on site, Clarke will call 911 for injuries or illness that parents might not consider an emergency. Although many staff have received First Aid/CPR training, we are not medical professionals and therefore will call 911.

1. Once the ambulance arrives, the EMTs are required to take any child 5 years old or younger to the emergency room. If a parent is at Clarke when the ambulance arrives, the parent has the right to refuse medical care. Clarke *cannot* refuse care. An ambulance will transport the child, with a staff member (unless the parent is there) to the nearest hospital. There are several hospitals close by the school-we will request:

NY Presbyterian Hospital (on York Avenue and 68th Street.)
525 E 68th St, New York, NY 10065

(212) 746-5454

A Clarke staff member will stay with the child until a parent arrives.

2. The administrative assistant or director will call the child's parents; if the parents are unavailable, an emergency contact will be phoned.

Medical and Audiological Appointments

All doctors and audiological appointments should be scheduled outside of school hours whenever possible. When not possible, it is strongly recommended that appointments are scheduled early in the morning or later in the afternoon so that children may attend school for part of the school day.

Reminder: Please send a copy of any hearing tests that are done so that your child's team has the most accurate information to work with your child. Each child must have a current audiogram on file.

EMERGENCY AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Fire and Other Emergencies

Clarke Schools is housed on two floors- the ground floor level and the lower level (or basement) at 80 East End Avenue. Each of the floors has one emergency exit, while the ground floor level has a main entrance/exit, as well. The doors to the stairwell, which connect the two levels, are kept closed and free of obstructions at all times.

- Five wall-mounted, glass-encased and one un-encased fire extinguishers are housed within the school. Four are on the lower level and two are on the upper level.
- Fire alarms and alarm pull stations are located throughout Clarke School
- Drills are covered routinely, varying the day of the week and time of day.
- Clarke's written safety plan is available for review.

Emergency Relocation

In the event of an emergency that leaves our building unusable, we would relocate to the Chapin School on East End Avenue between 84th and 85th street.

Evacuation Routes

Main entrance/exit- The northwest corner of East End Avenue and 83rd Street

1. Exiting from the Main Exit to the designated meeting place:
2. Turn left out the front door, walking north on the sidewalk to the southwest corner of 84th and East End Avenue

Emergency Exit (ground floor)

1. Walk upstairs between pantry and children's bathroom, through emergency exit door, through the public corridor to the street
2. Turn left out the front door, walking north on the sidewalk to the southwest corner of 84th and East End Avenue

Emergency Exit (lower level)

1. A.D.A. accessible ramp for non-ambulatory children and adults
2. Walk to the rear emergency exit past the open play area, upstairs to the public corridor
3. Turn left into the parking garage, through garage to 83rd Street
4. Turn left onto 83rd Street, left again onto East End Avenue, walking north on the sidewalk to the southwest corner of 84th and East End Avenue

On occasion, our phone service, which is internet based, is interrupted. In the event of a prolonged outage, we would use our fax line to receive phone calls. That number is 212-585-3300. All messages left on our main phone number are sent as email to the director's email. In the event of an emergency or phone outage, leaving a voicemail is still encouraged.

Important Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Medical Personnel/Ambulance/EMT	911
NYPD 19th Precinct 153 E 67th St, New York, NY 10065	Phone: (212) 452-0600
FDNY Engine 22/Ladder 13/Battalion 10	159 E 85th St, New York, NY 10028
New York Presbyterian Emergency Room 525 E 68th St, New York, NY	(212) 746-5454

Storms/Inclement Weather/Emergency Situations

- Clarke follows the NYC DOE decision on closing for inclement weather.
- Clarke makes independent decisions on early dismissal based on factors such as weather forecast, timing of storm system, availability of caregiver to pick up the child from Clarke or the bus, etc.
- Thunderstorms: Remain inside. If flooding is forecast, discussion with the bus company about timing of dismissal for safety would occur.
- Tornado warnings: all staff and children would relocate to the lower level, with flashlights, water and food.
- Hurricanes/Windstorms: Clarke follows emergency instructions from NYC Office of Emergency management and would consider early dismissal, closure, or late dismissal. Children would remain indoors, away from windows.
- Area Floods: Clarke is on higher ground, above the level of the east river. Should the area around Clarke flood, making transportation dangerous, and in consultation with the bus company, and the parents, Clarke staff would remain at the school with children until the parents could safely pick up their child.
- Snow/Blizzards: Clarke follows the NYC DOE decisions on closures. If schools are open but local roads are unsafe or had the potential to be, parents are encouraged to make the decision to send their child to school or keep them home based on those conditions.
- Heat Waves: Clarke's facilities are air conditioned. Clarke follows the NYC heat/air quality/ozone alert warnings. Depending on the conditions, children might remain indoors, in the air-conditioned building, or take an easy walk in the neighborhood first thing in the morning, prior to the heat of the day. Children would be monitored to insure water consumption and for signs of distress.
- Citywide emergency: based on availability of information, administration would make a decision about staying onsite or moving to the relocation site.

Supervision

Line of sight supervision is maintained through all activities. Staff communicate verbally to insure a child moving from one adult/area to another are being supervised by the other adult (s). Staff are trained and review active monitoring and using verbal confirmation strategies. Children must be escorted from their classroom to their bathroom. Class ratio is regulated by the NYS Department of Education and the NYC Department of Daycare.

Playground: Clarke uses the public playground 1 block north of the school, in Carl Shurz Park.

Head count- prior to leaving the classroom, a head count occurs and then again before leaving the building. If the children are going to the playground, they are counted before play, during play and prior to leaving the playground. If a therapist brings a child to the classroom or playground or removes a child, they notify the lead adult to ensure that clear communication about all children occurs.

Lost Child Plan

Should a child be missing, all available adults would look thoroughly through the rest of the playground. The teachers and assistants from the other classes would watch the other children, positioning themselves at the two entrances to the playground and notify the main office/director. The child's teacher and assistant would begin a thorough search of the playground. The director and all other available staff (SLPS, IEP Coordinator, Assistants, OTs/PTs etc.) would immediately report to the playground to help. If the child was not found, the police would be notified, then the parents.

- If the child is found after a prolonged search and the child demonstrates signs of shock, trauma or physical interaction, 911 will be called to take the child for an evaluation at an ER.
- If a child is missing within the building, a code alert would be made and all available staff would secure exits and participate in the search.

Special Events/Class Trips

We will keep you informed in advance of special activities planned at Clarke School for your child and your family. Such events include open houses, holiday celebrations, field trips, our annual Family Picnic, etc.

The Trip Coordinator plans for all aspects of the trip to insure a safe and fun experience. Parents are often invited to attend class trips. They will be provided information on the trip plan and safety considerations. When a parent does come, it is expected that the parent will be responsible for their child and any siblings that also come. Many of our trips require significant support from parents for us to be able to go. This is especially true if we are using public transportation. Please consider volunteering to chaperone a school trip. In some cases, without enough volunteers, your child's class may not be able to go.

Parental Consent/Approval: Parents must sign consent for trip attendance on a form specific to that trip. Children without written permission cannot attend trip.

Lost Child Plan for Trips

Upon a report that a child is missing, the trip coordinator will:

1. Designate the person who will conduct the preliminary search and reassign that individual's children to another group and chaperones.
2. Concurrently notify security guards at the site to lock down the facility and facility staff join search.
3. If the parent was chaperoning a trip and both the child and parent are gone, the lead teacher will call the parent to ensure that the child is with the parent.
 - If the child and the parent are nearby, the teacher will have the parent return and sign out their child.

- If the parent does not have the child, the parent will be informed that the child is missing.
- 4. If, after the preliminary search the child is not found, all staff members not required for the immediate supervision of the other children must be called together and given information as to the lost child's last whereabouts. The entrances exits and insides of buildings must be checked, as well as the surrounding area.
- 5. If the above-mentioned search is unsuccessful, the trip coordinator or designee must notify the police, giving full description of the child: clothes, height, weight, hair color and when last seen.
- 6. The trip coordinator should notify the director, who will call ACS and notify the parents. Any available staff at the school will go to the venue to assist. The police will be onsite at this point and will direct the search. All other staff and children will begin to return to the school. The trip coordinator, director and other available staff will remain and continue to search.
- 7. If the child is found immediately, the trip coordinator will assess the child's emotional state and physical state to determine if medical evaluation is needed.
- 8. If the child is found after a prolonged search and the child demonstrates signs of shock, trauma or physical interaction, 911 will be called to take the child for an evaluation at an ER.
- 9. If the child does not need medical care, he or she will rejoin the group or return to the school with the trip coordinator.

Clothing

Children must wear comfortable play clothes and sneakers or shoes to school each day to allow them to move about freely in the classroom and at the playground. The footwear listed below may **not** be worn to school unless a child has a change of sneakers or shoes at school:

- Flip flops, Slippers, Heels on shoes, Open-back shoes
- Restrictive or too-tight clothing

Some classroom activities are messy, and the children may get dirty. Please send an at least one extra set of clothes for your child to leave at school. Include underwear, socks, shirts and pants, **all clearly labeled with your child's name.** Please remember to replace these clothes when sent home for laundering. "Accidents" may happen and children feel more secure when they have a fresh change of clothing of their own.

Children need to be dressed appropriately for the weather. The only time we do not go outside is when the temperature dips below 32°F or when it is raining. If your child wears boots to school in the winter, sneakers or shoes will need to be left at or brought to school to wear during classroom activities. **In the cold weather months, be sure to send your child to school each day with a hat and mittens or gloves.**

Bringing Items from Home

- We discourage children from bringing their own toys to school, as they might be lost, misplaced or broken. In addition, it is often difficult for children to share their special possessions.
- Sometimes children need a "transitional object" to help them through the transition from home to school. A book, a favorite stuffed animal, a photo of your family or a blanket could all serve as transitional objects. We welcome these objects but will have the children leave their special items in their cubbies during class time. Parents can help by assuring your child that while it is fine to bring a reminder of home to school, blankets or toys will stay in cubbies during class time.
- If your child brings home something that does not belong to them, please send it back. If the child is wearing "spare" clothes because of an accident during the day, please wash the clothes and then send them back to school.

FOOD, SNACKS & NUTRITION

School Snack

Clarke provides some snacks but ask for parents to send snacks in to share with the class. Your child's teacher will ask for parents to volunteer to provide peanut free, health snacks for the class. Water is also offered to the children.

- Please remember that **Clarke is a nut free school**. No snacks or lunch can be sent that have peanuts or peanut butter.
- Several families keep Kosher or Halal. If you are sending in a store-bought snack to share with your child's class, please check to make sure it is labeled as a kosher.

Lunch

Clarke is a nut free school. This includes almond butter, any tree nuts and Nutella.

Preschooler children bring lunch from home. Clarke does not prepare lunch for the students. Clarke does not heat food sent from home. **Lunches must be sent in a lunch box, labeled with your child's name.** We encourage parents to send in nutritious and well-balanced meals. Student's lunches are either stored in their cubbies or in a community refrigerator. Lunches are not heated prior to mealtime. Foods that need to be served warm should be sent in a thermos. Although many children eat peanut butter at home, Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York is **a nut free zone** due to the high occurrence of nut allergies in young children. Please do not send lunch or snack foods that contain nuts.

LUNCHABLES are not recommended- the sodium and fat content of these packaged lunches is very high, and they do not provide children with necessary nutrients.

Birthdays

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please notify your child's teacher **several days in advance**.

- Birthday celebrations are usually held in the afternoon.
- The party must be reasonable for a school environment.
- NO: Face painting, balloon art and other similar activities are not permitted due to the potential health risks to children.
- You may bring in fruit, cupcakes or a birthday cake, cookies, ice cream, juice, etc. in limited quantities. Consider bringing a healthy snack, containing fruit.
- No soda is allowed
- No NUTS
- Some parents want to give the a goodie bag to the students. Consider giving each child a book instead.

Behavior and Discipline Policy

Clarke School considers behaviors as part of learning.

Conscious Discipline and the Pyramid Model are used to determine the level and type of support a child may need to develop appropriate social and learning behaviors. Parents and other family members play an important role in collaborating with the school team to address behaviors that may be interfering with a child's learning. Examples of strategies that may be used include problem solving to work through conflict, picture schedules to support transitions, modeling language of behavior, empathetic listening by identifying how a child feels, making changes to the schedule that support the child in transitioning from one activity to another. At times, for safety, a child may be removed from a situation if there is a

concern that the child or others could be hurt. The teacher will communicate with parents about general or specific concerns about behavior. Clarke will partner with parents to develop a plan to support a child that can be used consistently at home and school. On rare occasions, Clarke School staff may telephone a parent to pick up his or her child if a child's behavior is particularly inappropriate or dangerous or if an immediate meeting is required. Either the teacher or an administrator will let a parent know as soon as possible following a behavior that:

- results in the child, another child or a staff member being injured;
- lasts for a significant amount of time and/or requires the child or other students to be removed from the environment for safety reasons;
- was dangerous, even if no one was injured.

Corporal punishment is not permitted in our school.

Parent/Adult Conduct and Behavior

Clarke families and staff come from a range of cultures and backgrounds, with different parenting, personal and communication styles. To ensure that parents, children and staff benefit from an environment that is respectful, safe and secure, Clarke does not allow:

- Physical or verbal punishment of a child
- Physical or verbal punishment of other children
- Threatening, harassing or otherwise disrespecting staff, other parents or other children
- Swearing/cursing or threatening/obscene gestures
- Quarreling with other parents or staff
- Making negative or disparaging comments regarding the school, staff, children, or other parents to staff, parents or anyone other than Administration (including outside of school).
- Ignoring school policies

Clarke administrators will attempt to resolve any concerns about a parent's behavior through direct discussion with the parent. On a case by case basis, either before or after discussing it with the individual involved, the individual may be barred from entering the building immediately.

Should any parent have a concern about another parent or a staff member, they should immediately contact: Meredith Berger mberger@clarkeschools.org or Nell Rosenberg nrosenberg@clarkeschools.org

Visitors

COVID CHANGES: Visitors will be limited to those with scheduled appointments only.

Parents and bus staff will not be allowed to enter the building to use the bathrooms.

EI families will be allowed to have one parent with the child. Any other family members or caregivers will wait outside the building. All visitors must complete the Visitor Health Screening.

- Visitors must be buzzed in by the office manager or another staff member.
- Currently: A video camera monitors the front door, which is recorded and retained for 10 days, and the lower level exits.
- Visitors must sign in/out. If the visitor is unfamiliar to the staff, photo identification must be shown. Caregivers who are dropping off or picking up a child at arrival/dismissal do not need to sign in or out because they are signing for the child.
- All staff are trained to question unfamiliar visitors as to who they are and their purpose in the building.

Unauthorized individual in the hallway

- Staff are trained to ask unfamiliar adults who they are and why they are in the building
- Should an unauthorized adult be in the building, the staff member would approach the adult and escort them either to the lobby to sign in or to leave. In the event the person refused, an all call to shelter in place or evacuate would be called and the police would be called.
- For an intruder, staff will be alerted via a code to either shelter in place or evacuate. As soon as safe, 911 will be called.

Research, Fund Raising, Publicity and Observation Policies

From time to time Clarke School participates in research projects with other institutions. When such projects arise, we will seek your permission for your child's participation and will provide detailed information regarding the nature of the research study.

Clarke is a member of OPTION Schools and uses the Listening and Spoken Language Data Repository (LSL-DR) to gather data on the listening and spoken language outcomes of the children we work with at Clarke.

Please see attachments for more information about the LSL-DR project in English and Spanish.

Fund Raising and Publicity

Clarke depends on the support and generosity of those in our community, who know how crucial the work is that we do with young children, to continue this transformative program. Clarke School's Development Associate for New York, in conjunction with Clarke's Development Office, located in Northampton, MA, conducts necessary fundraising and publicity for school programs. If you would like to become more involved with efforts to support fundraising and Clarke's long-term sustainability, please contact Clarke's Development Associate, Christina Danese: cdanese@clarkeschools.org.

Observations and Student Clinicians

Included in Clarke School's mission is training future professionals, such as teachers and speech-language pathologists, to work with deaf and hard of hearing children.

- College students and professionals often visit Clarke for the opportunity to observe and learn more about the work we do. Such observers are not allowed to have direct, unsupervised interaction with any child enrolled in this program.
- Graduate student clinicians, typically Speech/Language Interns or Student Teachers - are often accepted for placement at Clarke, as they complete a required component of their professional training. They come from a variety of colleges and universities, such as Fontbonne University, Columbia University, Brooklyn College, NY Medical College, and the CUNY schools. All student interns and student teachers, undergo the same rigorous background checks that employees go through. You will be notified if your child's teacher or SLP will be mentoring a student clinician.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these policies, or any information contained within Clarke School's handbook, please contact:

Meredith Berger, Director
mberger@clarkeschools.org
212-585-3500

LSL-DR FAMILY NOTIFICATION (English)



Family Notification Announcement

OPTION *Schools, Inc.* has developed a Listening and Spoken Language Data Repository (LSL- DR) to advance the mission of OPTION *Schools* by establishing a national database of children and families who are attending or have attended a Listening and Spoken Language program. Currently there is no such national data base regarding outcomes in children with hearing impairment who use listening and spoken language. OPTION *Schools* will use the LSL-DR to collect, aggregate and summarize data from LSL programs to describe the population and to assess overall outcomes. Individual schools will use this program for quality monitoring of their schools. Specific information that will be collected in this national database will be annual speech-language-hearing information, type of technology used, and basic non-identifying demographic information.

The program that OPTION *Schools* has selected to store the data is REDCap (Research Electronic Data Capture) which is a secure, web-based application designed to support data capture for research studies which is supported at University of Miami. If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact Meredith Berger at 212.585.3500 or the Principal Investigator of LSL-DR, Ivette Cejas, Ph.D at 305-243-9199.

This system meets all security guidelines for web-based systems and is stored on the University of Miami server. **No personal identifying information is entered into the system.** Individual schools will have access only to the data that they upload into the LSL-DR.

This letter serves as a notification to you about Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York's participation in this project. You may notify the Meredith Berger if you wish for your child not to participate in this project. Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your child's placement or services at the school.

LSL-DR FAMILY NOTIFICATION (Spanish)



Anuncio de Notificación de la Familia

OPTION *Schools, Inc.* ha desarrollado un Almacen de Datos para Comprensión Auditiva y del Lenguaje Hablado (Listening and Spoken Language Data Repository, LSL-DR) para avanzar la misión de OPTION *Schools*, a mediante de establecer una base de datos nacional de niños y familias que asisten o han asistido a un programa de Comprensión Auditiva y del Lenguaje Hablado. En la actualidad no hay una base de datos nacional relacionado con los resultados de niños con discapacidad auditiva que utilizan comprensión auditiva y el lenguaje hablado. OPTION *Schools* utilizará la LSL-DR para recopilar, agregar y resumir los datos de los programas de LSL para describir la población y para evaluar los resultados en general. Cada escuela utilizara este programa para controlar la calidad de sus escuelas. La información específica que se reunira en esta base de datos nacional va hacer una información anual del lenguaje a la audiencia, el tipo de tecnología utilizada, e información demográfica básica que no identificara al estudiante o la familia en específico.

El programa que ha seleccionado OPTION *Schools* para almacenar los datos es Redcap (Investigación Electrónica Captura de Datos), que es una aplicación segura basada en web diseñada para sostener la captura de datos para estudios de investigación que se apoya en University of Miami. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta acerca de este proyecto, favor de contactar al *Meredith Berger* en 212.585.3500 o la investigadora principal de la LSL-DR, *Cejas, Ivette, Ph.D.*, en 305-243-9199.

Este sistema cumple con todas las reglas de seguridad para sistemas basados en la web y se almacena en el servidor de University of Miami. **No hay información de identificación personal en el sistema.** Cada escuela tendrá acceso únicamente a los datos que cargan/suben en la LSL-DR.

Esta carta sirve como notificación a usted acerca de participación de *Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/New York* en este proyecto. Usted podrá notificar a *Meredith Berger* si usted desea que su hijo/a no participa en este proyecto. La elección de no participar no afectará la colocación de su hijo/a o servicios en la escuela.

Requirements for Enrollment Prior to the First Day of School

- Enrollment/Application Form
- Medical Form: documenting current health, immunizations and special needs. This form must be consistent with the individual health care plan
- *Plan Individual Health Care Needs- This is for children with allergies, asthma, cochlear implants or other health needs. This must be completed in full by a doctor and it must be consistent with the Medical/Physical form.

***Children with EpiPens cannot be in school without this form completed and an unexpired EpiPen on site.**

- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Emergency Contacts and Consent to Pick up:
 - Clarke must have at least 3 contacts to call in case we cannot reach you.
 - No child will be released to a non-parent caregiver if they are not listed on this form.
- Consent to Obtain/Release Information
- Permission Slip-neighborhood walks
- Email Consent
- Media Release and Consent

Additional Forms

These are needed for a child to receive services or required by regulation:

- Parent Handbook/Orientation Review Acknowledgement of receiving the orientation and enrollment material, including the Parent Handbook and all of its information
- OT/PT Prescription for any child receiving this service
- Assistive Technology Intake Form: This form provides us with information about the technology your child uses and the audiologist your child sees outside of Clarke. It also includes specific consent for data logging.
- Library Card
- Sunblock

First Day of School Checklist

- All required paperwork must be submitted before your child can start, including:
 - Medical/Physical Form with up to date immunizations, including the flu vaccine
 - Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
 - Plan for Individual Medical Needs (required for every child with allergies, regular medication, asthma, cochlear implants, etc.)
 - Permission slip for neighborhood walks (including going to the playground.)
 - Emergency Contacts and Consent to Pick-up

- Notification about any urgent medical concerns, such as allergies.
- Backpack-To be brought to school each day. Backpacks should be of reasonable weight. Each child should be able to carry his/her own backpack without assistance. The backpack should fit your child's lunchbox, notebook and other items.
- Lunch in a lunch box (each day). No nut products. Clarke does NOT heat food.
- Marble bound notebook/Communication Book (This should be checked by parents daily.)
- Change of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) appropriate for the season to be left in school. All items should have your child's name on the tag
- Blanket for naptime (will be sent home to be washed every Friday, before vacations or if your child leaves school early because of illness)
- Sheet for the cot, if parent prefers. Cots are the size of a standard crib sheet.
- Supply of spare batteries for your child's hearing aids or cochlear implant
- Pull-Ups for children not yet toilet trained (Pull-Ups with Velcro side tabs are preferred)
- A package of wipes

The following items are not mandatory but would be appreciated by your child's class:

- Packages of unopened wipes
- Purell anti-bacterial lotion
- Glue/glue sticks
- Magnetic tape
- Construction paper
- New non-toxic markers
- New, unopened crayons
- Boxes of unopened, soft tissues
- Unopened boxes of healthy snacks- animal crackers, pretzels, rice cakes, etc to share with class (NO NUTS)
- Cake, muffin, or brownie mixes for special occasions.
- Fresh fruit to share with class

ADJUSTMENT TO PRESCHOOL

Each child responds differently to starting school. Transition from home to school is a major change for most children (and their parents!) Some strategies to help with first days/weeks of the transition:

- Positive Signals: Be aware of how you are feeling. It is perfectly normal for parents to be nervous or worried about a new school or a new teacher. Children pick up on parent's feelings, though, and may think your hesitation or worry means school isn't a fun, safe place to be.
- Start using a special goodbye routine before the first day of school. Some parents use a certain phrase- "Saving my hugs till later!" or action, such as a special handshake or wave, a kiss on the palm "that goes right to your heart" or "a hug, a kiss, a wave, and goodbye!"
- Provide a transition object such as a family picture or a book or a stuffed animal.
- Acknowledge your child is sad or scared but in a positive way. "I can tell you are nervous, but I know you will love your teacher and have fun playing with friends."
- Don't sneak out-Though tears are hard to watch, a child feels safe in routine, predictable events. Saying goodbye will become part of the new routine. If your child looks up and realizes you are gone, he may be clingier the next time out of fear you will disappear again.
- Once you say goodbye, leave quickly. The longer the goodbye is the harder it will be for your child.
- Read books about going to preschool such as "The Kissing Hand" by Audrey Penn and "Llama Llama Misses Mama" by Anna Dewdney.

Many children are exhausted the first week of school. Their sleep schedule and routine for waking and bedtime might be different, and they are very busy during the day. Sometimes this results in behavior changes or regressions. Most of these changes are typical and stop when a child is comfortable with the new routine, has adjusted to the different demands of school, has adjusted to a new sleep schedule or feels more connected to teachers and friends at school

Your child's teacher will be in frequent communication with you. Share with your child's teacher changes you see at home. If we observe difficulty with transition that is outside of the range of typical, we will let you know and discuss different ways to address it. It is important to realize that each teacher's priority is the care, safety and support of your child. Unless there is a health or time sensitive concern, the teacher cannot leave the room to talk with you but will follow up later in the day by phone or email.

In the classroom, children adjust to being in a group with other children in various ways. Some children join the group right away and are comfortable from the start, never seeming to have separation anxiety. Other children may appear to adjust easily at first but show signs of stress after a week or two. And some children may need to observe their new class and classmates for several weeks before they feel comfortable joining the group. We will try to make this transition as smooth as possible for your child and will let parents know how your child is adjusting through frequent notes during the first few weeks of school.

We know that the separation of a child from his or her parent is filled with emotion for the parents too. The beginning of school may be especially difficult for those parents who will be separated from their child on a regular basis for the first time. Our teachers and therapists will communicate with parents about a child's day, but parents can also reach out to the program leadership team to ask questions.

Clarke's expects a great deal of parent involvement, including observations of their child's class and participation in therapy sessions. We typically wait until after the first two weeks of school to start having parent's observe, to allow a child get used to the routines of school. Once your child is used to the routine and is secure in knowing that he or she will see you soon, having the parent in the classroom or speech is much less confusing.