



**The Mount Carmel
Early Childhood Center
Parent Handbook
2025-2026**

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Welcome to The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center!

At The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center we encourage collaboration, exploration and play to foster a child's natural creativity and develop a lifelong love of learning.

In bright and beautiful surroundings, children at Mount Carmel have the opportunity to investigate ideas reflecting their interests, experiment with a variety of open-ended materials, and engage in large and small group activities with teachers, peers and on their own.

At Mount Carmel each child's curiosity and creativity is nurtured as they actively explore their environment. As children's interests emerge, teachers encourage them to investigate more deeply, allowing their interests to guide the curriculum and the themes and projects explored. By examining real life experiences in their community, and engaging in hands-on activities, children make sense of their world and are empowered as learners. These activities are integrated into the development of projects that support the learning of fundamental academic skills in a more meaningful way.

As facilitators of the curriculum, teachers reinforce the learning by providing activities to enrich the children's experiences. Our teachers are keen observers paying close attention to the investigations of the children and providing them with opportunities to explore further. Teachers allow the children to grow and develop at their own unique pace, respecting each child's diverse learning style. The daily schedule is predictable but not rigid and organized with appropriate periods of active and quiet time. Extended time periods throughout the day allow the children to become deeply involved in activities of their choice. At Mount Carmel, teachers are flexible and ready to adapt the schedule to accommodate the needs and interests of the children in order to support and facilitate their learning.

At Mount Carmel, we understand that young children are eager learners and that through play they construct knowledge by exploring new ideas. Through play they learn about and make sense of their world in a nurturing and supportive environment curated to foster collaboration. Through play friendships are formed.

Together the children, their families and their teachers create a community of lifelong learners.

Start of School

The beginning of school is an exciting time for children and parents alike! For many children and parents it is the first time they will be apart. For other children, who have had prior school experience, they may be transitioning to a new school or classroom setting. Any change, even a positive one such as this, can produce stress.

In order to help facilitate a smooth transition and reduce the stress and anxiety of separation at the beginning of the year, we have a plan for easing children (and parents) into the school routine. Prior to school starting, the teachers will contact you to set up a **home visit**. Following the home visit, each child (with parent or caregiver) will be **invited to visit their classroom**. Parents will be invited to attend an evening **orientation** at school where they will meet their child's teachers and see their classroom. During the first week of school we will have a gradual **phase-in** period.

Home Visit

The week before class begins, the teachers will contact each child's family to set up a home visit. The purpose of this visit is to allow the children to meet their new teachers in the safe and familiar setting of their own home and to begin making home/school connections. **The home visit will last for about 15 minutes**; it is not necessary to schedule the visit at a time when a parent is available as it can take place with a caregiver or relative. Parents will have an opportunity to meet their child's teachers at Parent Orientation and during the Classroom Visits.

Parent Orientation

Parent Orientation will take place in the OLMC Meeting Hall (located next to our yard). The Directors will begin by sharing an overview of our program. Following the general meeting, families will move into their child's classroom to meet their child's teachers, see the space, and learn more about our curriculum.

Classroom Visit

Each child and a parent (or caregiver) will have an opportunity to visit their classroom and see their teachers in person before school starts. Teachers will reach out via Remini to schedule your classroom visit.

Phase-In Period

In order to facilitate a smooth transition to school, we introduce our children to their new environment and routine with a “phase-in” period.

We start off in small groups for a day or two (depending on the class) and for a short amount of time (The teachers will share the class’ phase in schedule with you via email and let you know which group your child is in.)

We gradually increase the time as the whole group gathers together so that within a few days, the full schedule is achieved. During this time, a parent or caregiver is expected to be available should their child need them. The teachers will contact you if your child needs you.

Suggestions for Adjusting to School

- Your child’s teachers are experienced with supporting children through the separation process and will help guide you or your caregiver. That being said, you know your child best, so please share your thoughts as we go along.
Communication is essential!
- A parent or a caregiver must be present or quickly available during phase-in. Please make sure we have the contact number of the person dropping off the child to school during phase-in.
- Children sense when adults are unsure. Please let them know that you have faith in their ability to be independent and that you trust us to meet their needs and provide a wonderful school experience.
- **Never leave your child without saying goodbye!** Do not pose this as a question such as, “Is it okay for me to leave?” This offers them the opportunity to say, “No!” Instead, tell your child you are leaving and that you will see them later in the day. You might say, “It’s time for me to say goodbye now. I will see you when I pick you up or when I come home from work.”
- Please know that it is not unusual for some children to experience a delayed separation reaction. Often this occurs after a long weekend or a vacation. If this happens please know that we will do our best to support your child through the process.

Policies and Procedures

The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center has established the following policies and procedures for parents. We ask for your full cooperation and support by reading and complying with these policies. The administration retains the right to amend the handbook at any time. Notification of any changes will be given via our website.

Daily Procedures

Remini App



The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center uses the **Remini App** for contactless check-in and check-out as well as ongoing communication with parents. Remini enables teachers to easily share photos, videos, events, sign up sheets, and messages to families.

Drop Off and Pick Up



Every day, parents/caregivers will sign their children in and out using the QR code via the Remini App. QR codes are placed next to the door to each classroom. This will ensure smooth transitions between parents and/or caregivers and teachers.

Mornings: Parents and/or caregivers will escort their children to their classrooms, unpack their belongings into their cubbies, switch children into their school shoes and engage them in an activity.

Afternoons: Parents/caregivers will come to their child's classroom. It is important that parents/caregivers arrive on time for pick up as it can be upsetting to children if their parent/caregiver is not there when the classroom door is opened.

Important: If a person *who is not* pre-approved needs to pick up your child on a given day, please tell the teachers via the Remini app and email the office. The office will then email you the approved Remini pick up form to complete.

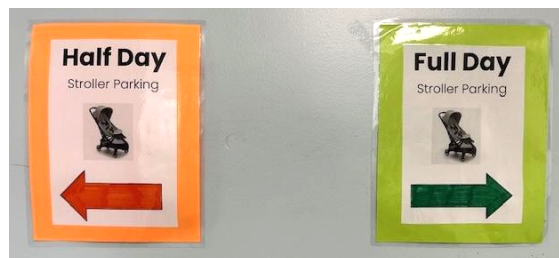
Please note that your child will not be released to someone (other than a usual caregiver) without written consent from a parent or a parent's designee. The designated person will be asked to show proper ID for verification purposes and to sign out using a code generated on the Remini App.

Extended Day (After School)

We offer an Extended Day Program daily with two times available (3-4pm and 3-5pm). The program is only for children who attend school full days. Pre-registration is required for use of the program. Space is limited so advanced notice will be necessary for children to attend. If interested, please call the school office or send an email to info@themountcarmelecc.org.

Stroller Parking

If possible, **we ask that families bring scooters, strollers and bikes home with them rather than leaving them at school.** If it is necessary for your family to leave your stroller in the building during the school day, there are two designated areas in the lower level of our school: one room for half day and one room for full day. We also have a rack for holding scooters and helmets.



Double Parking on Withers Street

The courtesy of double parking on Withers Street is at the discretion of the parking agents and the local precinct. Please place a school issued placard in your window and do not leave your car for more than five (5) minutes. School issued placards can be obtained from the office.

Adult Bathrooms

The bathrooms on the first and second floors are reserved for children's use only and are clearly labeled. **An Adult bathroom is located on the lower level near the stroller parking area.**

Admissions

Non-discrimination

Mount Carmel does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission policies or other school administered programs generally made available.

Mount Carmel gives preference in admission to:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students at Mount Carmel.
2. Siblings of former students who attended Mount Carmel.
3. Applications in the order in which they are received.

Required paperwork

The following forms and conditions must be met before beginning a school year:

1. Mount Carmel contract completed.
2. Financial Obligations as agreed to in the contract must be met in full.
3. An up-to-date medical form with a full immunization record must be on file.
4. Completed emergency contact information must be on file.
5. Completed Intake form must be on file.

Re-registration

To ensure your child's enrollment in our preschool for the following school year, the following is to be completed by the required deadline:

1. Registration materials and enrollment contracts must be submitted along with a complete tuition deposit for the next school year.
2. The current year's tuition and any additional fees must be up-to-date.

Classroom Procedures

Clothing

Children should dress comfortably for school. They need to wear clothing which they can pull up and down with ease enabling them to practice their independence.

Clothing that should not get messy is best **not** to be worn to school.

School Shoes

In addition to comfortable clothing, we are requesting that school shoes be worn in school. School shoes promote cleanliness inside the classroom as well as make it more comfortable and safer for children. **School shoes should be closed-toed, lightweight, and soft with flexible rubber soles that stay on securely.** They can be sneakers or sturdy slippers which can be worn out in our yard space.

Switching shoes should be part of the morning routine as you arrive at school. We are asking that parents change their children into school shoes before they arrive in school or at their cubbies. Their street shoes can be stored in the stroller or cubby.

Cubby Supplies

Your child's **cubby** should always be stocked with:

- An extra pair of school shoes (see above description)
- Diapers and wipes (if not toilet trained)
- A sweater or sweatshirt
- Multiple changes of underwear
- Two pairs of pants (or shorts, skirt etc.)
- Four shirts
- Several pairs of socks



Labels

Please clearly label everything that belongs to your child, especially items placed inside of their cubby. To simplify the process, we recommend using Mabel's Labels to help keep your child's items organized and easy to identify.

Mabel's Labels

We have partnered with Mabel's Labels both to fundraise and to solve the "lost and found" issues. When you purchase Mabel's labels for your child's belongings, we receive 20% of the total amount!

To purchase labels and support our school:

1. Click this link: <https://mabelslabels.com/fundraising/support>
2. Scroll down to our school's name: **The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center (Brooklyn)**

3. Shop and help support our school!

Birthday Celebrations

A child's birthday is a very special day. In order to keep celebrations consistent from child to child, we ask that you provide a special birthday snack. Please keep the snack small and uniform (same color cupcake, same fruit, same crackers). Please be sure to contact the classroom teacher before any celebration is planned and **please be sure to inquire about any allergies in the class.**

Other things to keep in mind:

- Please do not drop off items such as balloons and goody bags.
- If you are planning a party outside of school, please send invitations directly by mail/email. Please do not drop off presents at school.
- Parents of children with summer birthdays can arrange a "special day" celebration for their child during the school year.

Lost and Found

Children's clothing and other belongings should be labeled to prevent loss of items. Lost items without names will be placed in our "Lost & Found" bin located under the stairs near the stroller/scooter parking. Please check it regularly! Lost and found items will be held for approximately 30 days and then donated to Saint Mary's Church.

Toys from Home

Please do not allow children to bring toys from home that are not **essential** to their adjustment to school. If your child rests at school and needs their special "lovey", they may bring in a small stuffed animal which will be kept with their rest blankets.

Snack and Lunch

Snacks

Each day, parents are asked to provide healthy snacks for their children. Snack time will be scheduled in the morning and in the afternoon. Please send a wholesome, substantial snack such as fresh fruit, vegetables, crackers, pretzels, cheese, yogurt, dried fruit, and muffins. Each classroom is equipped with a refrigerator should your child's snack need refrigeration. Please do not include candy or gum in snacks or lunches. Please label all snacks and snack containers with your child's name.

Lunch

All children will eat lunch in school. Lunch is a relaxing and enjoyable part of the day for the children. They really like the social aspects of lunch, the feeling of independence as well as the opportunity to practice self help skills. Please keep this in mind as you prepare their lunch each day. Please send food that they enjoy and can eat independently. We will encourage but never force a child to eat and we will not emphasize an order in which food should be eaten.

Lunches are refrigerated in the classroom and should be packed in small, soft lunch containers/bags labeled with your child's name. Warm lunches should be sent in thermal containers and stored in the cubby until lunchtime. We cannot reheat the children's lunches.

Rest

Rest

According to the New York City Department of Health, all Full Day children are required to rest for approximately 60 minutes after lunch. Each child is provided with a rest cot. Parents provide the rest blankets/sheet (crib size) and launder them at the end of each week.

Children may bring in a small stuffed toy/doll as added comfort at rest time.

Please remember to label all rest items!

- We highly recommend the **"Tot Cot Nap Mat"** for rest time; please visit **urbaninfant.com** and enter the **coupon code SLEEPER0517**
- Alternatively, a crib sheet and small blanket for rest time are fine.

Toileting

We are happy to work with your child wherever they are on the path to learning to use the toilet. Once you think your child is comfortable wearing underwear to school, please allow them to do so and let the teachers know. Please be sure to provide plenty of changes of clothing in the event of accidents!

Communication

Open communication is an essential part of a successful preschool experience and encouraged between parents, teachers and administrators. Please know that you may discuss anything of concern with the teachers and/or the Directors.

In case of an emergency, please feel free to contact the school office at 917-993-1330.

- The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center will continue using the **Remini App** for contactless check-in and check-out as well as ongoing communication with parents.
- Remini enables teachers to share photos, videos, calendar events, sign up sheets, emergency texts, contactless attendance, and much more with the touch of a button.
- Notification of an emergency school closing will be sent by email, Remini app and/or phone call. In such an event, we will follow directions from the Department of Education and the Diocese of Brooklyn.
- It is our intention that our school website, www.themountcarmelecc.org, will have the most updated information available about classroom/school events and programs. Information regarding school events and programs will be emailed or posted on Remini regularly.
- Parent Orientation and Parent-Teacher conferences are great opportunities for getting to know teachers as well as discussing questions and /or concerns that you might have about your child's development in school. This year we will once again meet in person for the Parent Orientation but our Parent Teacher conferences will continue to take place via ZOOM.
- We encourage parents to use Remini or email* for contacting teachers and/or scheduling a meeting via ZOOM or a phone call convenient to both of you. The email address for all staff is the first letter of their first name followed by their entire last name @themountcarmelecc.org

*Please note- All matters of substance should be handled by phone, in person or by ZOOM and **not** by Remini/email!

Teachers may not be able to check email/Remini during the school day, so in addition to sending a Remini message, please send any time-sensitive messages via email to the office. Teachers will do their best to reply to emails within 24 hours on school days.

Please refrain from having conversations at arrival and dismissal when children are present. Teachers need to focus on the children at those times and it is never appropriate to talk about children in their presence.

Teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at risk. Parents will be promptly notified of teacher concerns.

Initial concerns should be handled directly with the classroom teacher. If the problem is not resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the Directors.

Special Education Services and Evaluations

We recognize that children learn and grow in their own individual ways. We strive to make each classroom a place of exploration, challenge and success for all of our children. Parents, pediatricians and preschool teachers are on the frontlines in identifying children who may need additional support in their development.

Through classroom observations, assessments and conferencing, our teachers will work with parents to determine whether a more thorough evaluation is recommended for a child. **(Important: Only parents can initiate a form evaluation through the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)).**

We will support you through the process asking that you maintain open and frequent communication with us so that we can best tailor our approach to meet your child's needs. In some cases it is recommended that the child is provided with services in the classroom. These services may include Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy or the assistance of a SEIT (Special Education Itinerant Teacher). Along with the classroom teachers, the support team will work to provide an appropriate educational experience for the child.

Student Recommendation Forms

Request for Teacher Recommendation Forms for children applying to ongoing schools must be made at **least three weeks in advance**. These forms are school to school documents and will not be returned to parents. Please be sure that all pertinent information is handed in at the time of the request.

Photography Use

The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center may photograph or video students and

their families, along with classroom activity and children's work for the purpose of documentation and for marketing the center unless a parent/guardian has indicated otherwise in writing.

Photos and videos may be used on The Mount Carmel ECC website, social media, in brochures or other materials and in presentations. These photographs will not be used for commercial purposes and individuals will not be identified by name.

Finance

Tuition Payment Policy

The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center is dedicated to maintaining careful management of its finances and has adopted the policies listed below covering the payment of tuition and fees and other related financial issues. We appreciate our families' cooperation in assisting us in meeting our financial obligations in a timely manner.

- Tuition payments are due on the dates stipulated in the enrollment agreement or on the dates arranged by an alternative payment plan.
- The required tuition deposit must accompany each enrollment agreement. If an agreement is received without a deposit, it will be returned, and the child will not be considered enrolled. A re-enrollment agreement will only be accepted by The Mount Carmel ECC if the family is not in arrears on current tuition.
- All families must enroll in FACTS Tuition Management.
- If payment cannot be made on time, it is the parent's responsibility to contact us and make appropriate alternative arrangements.
- Questions regarding billing should be directed to info@themountcarmeleecc.org.

Annual Fund

Each year we will appeal to families with our Annual Fund. Gifts of any amount are welcome, and no gift is too small. Your tax-deductible donations will allow our school to maintain lower tuition and also help to provide the necessary capital to enhance our programs and improve our facilities.

Health and Safety

Fire Drills/Evacuations

In compliance with the regulations of the FDNY, fire drills will take place throughout the school year. We will begin the drills once the “phase in” period is complete. Classes will practice leaving the building through the designated exits depending on where they are in the building. Teachers will notify you if a drill has taken place during the day in case your child is upset or concerned.

In the event of an emergency requiring us to evacuate the 10 Withers Street building, we will take the children to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on Havemeyer Street and N 8th Street or, if necessary, to The Church of the Annunciation located at 65 Havemeyer Street.

Medical Forms

The Mount Carmel ECC requires all children to have a physical examination before the beginning of the school year. Each student’s record of immunization must meet New York State Standards. Failure to comply may result in a child being temporarily suspended from school.

All enrolled children are required to be vaccinated. The required school immunizations can be found at www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/immunizations. Delays in vaccination or vaccine doses and/or alternative immunization schedules are not allowed. Child Care facilities and schools are required to exclude children who are not vaccinated on time and not in compliance with required immunizations.

Allergies

If your child has any allergies, please notify us in writing before school begins or as soon as you are made aware of the allergy. In case of a severe allergy and if your child has been prescribed medication, you must make arrangements to meet with the teacher and director to determine appropriate procedures.

While we do not ban any foods and are not a “nut free” school, we will do our best to keep known allergens away from your child.

Allergy Procedure:

When a child is identified as having an allergy, the child’s picture is posted in the classroom in a prominent place with the allergen listed in red. These signs also indicate if medication is on site. **An Allergy Action Plan** signed by a physician must be on file and kept with the medication as well. We also conduct a formal interview with

the parents of a child with life-threatening allergies to be sure teachers know specifically what an allergic reaction may look like, the child's understanding of it, the child's use of language and demeanor around the subject, what precautions have been taken at home and in public to gauge likely previous exposure, and how many exposures and reactions have occurred. Parents are taken step by step through the likely decision making process on whether to administer emergency medication so that teacher decision making time can be minimized in the event of an emergency.

Medication

For safety reasons, **children may not bring medications to school, including but not limited to over the counter medications**. According to State Health Law, teachers and/or staff are not permitted to administer any kind of medication unless an allergy action plan is in place.

Injuries

Several of our teachers and staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid. Our teachers and staff do their best to prevent accidents from occurring. However, injuries do sometimes occur. When a child is injured they are immediately attended to by a trained teacher or staff member and brought to the office. Minor cuts are washed and bandaged. Ice packs are applied to bumps and bruises. All injuries are documented and filed in the office. Parents are called immediately should a child require further treatment or become ill or uncomfortable. Should a child require emergency treatment, staff will call 911 and then the parents. The child will be accompanied at all times by a teacher or staff member until a parent arrives.

Contagious Medical Conditions

The average preschooler comes down with infections several times a year. Each infection strengthens the body's defenses so as children get older, they get sick less often. **It is important for the health of all in our community that you keep your child home when they are not feeling well.**

Please read the following health guidelines carefully. While we cannot prevent illness, we can take certain precautions to minimize the spread of a virus and/or infection.

Please keep your child at home and notify the office if:

- They are in the first stages of a cold, with copious mucus, heavy cough, sneezing etc.
- They have a fever or have had a fever the day(s) before. Your child's temperature must be normal, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

- They have a rash on the face or body. (We must have a doctor's note that the condition is not contagious)
- They have had diarrhea and/or vomiting that morning or the day before.
- You have detected lice or nits (eggs) in their hair.
- One or both eyes are red, with or without mucus or crust. (We must have a doctor's note that the condition is not contagious).
- If a child develops a fever, rash, diarrhea or vomiting in school, or if we detect lice, we will isolate them and phone you immediately to take your child home. Please make sure that you, or the person at the emergency number, is reachable and available in case this occurs.

Please contact the school office if your child will be absent with a contagious illness. We will notify the rest of the class to be on the lookout for symptoms.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain the health and well-being of all the students in our school.

If your child has been exposed to or has *any* symptoms of Covid-19, a negative test result and/or medical clearance will be required in order for them to return to school.

All of the above is subject to change as we are updated by the New York City Department of Health.



THE MOUNT CARMEL

Early Childhood Center

THE MOUNT CARMEL EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER 2025 -2026 PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center's Parent Handbook, effective September 1, 2025. I understand that this document supersedes any other previously issued handbook. I am aware that it is my responsibility to acquaint myself with its contents.

I understand that The Mount Carmel Early Childhood Center may amend the Handbook provisions without advance notice. Families will be alerted to any such change via email soon after the change.

Child's Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____