



**Olmsted Center**  
FOR SIGHT  
*Your Vision. Our Focus.*

Dear Parents and Friends,

Welcome to the Olmsted Center for Sight, Early Education Center. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with your child.

Your child's first experience with school is a very important one. His or her success will depend on the teamwork between your home and our school. The information in this handbook has been designed to give you an overview of our program along with important information you will need during the school year. Take some time to read through this book, and sign the signature page at the end. Please do not hesitate to contact the school with any questions or concerns.

We are continuing our program with the Play and Learn School (PALS) in our building. Both staffs have been working hard to ensure maximum success for all children.

We are looking forward to a wonderful and rewarding year with your child.

Sincerely,

*Teresa Doermer*

Teresa Doermer, Director



### OUR MISSION

To help individuals with vision impairments, as well as those with other physical challenges, achieve their highest levels of independence.

### OUR VISION

Visually impaired adults and children, as well as those with other physical challenges, live optimally with no barriers.

### OUR PHILOSOPHY

We understand that each child at the Olmsted Center for Sight, Early Education Program is a unique individual with special talents all his/her own. We support and encourage all children to develop to their fullest potential and to reach out for assistance when they have difficulties. We understand that each child develops at his or her own pace. We strive to make our learning environment a safe and comfortable place for children to experiment and grow.

Each teacher develops appropriate learning activities for the class. The classroom program is balanced between teacher directed and child initiated play. The child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP) is followed closely. The children receive both individual instruction and group opportunities daily.



## Olmsted Center FOR SIGHT

The program is structured to nurture each child's sense of self-esteem and independence. Teachers work closely with the school districts to prepare children for Kindergarten. *Your Vision. Our Focus.*

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's program. Parents are always welcomed into the school to observe. Teachers and therapists are available to schedule times to meet with parents when the need arises. Daily notes and phone calls are welcome.

### COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS!

Please send a notebook in your child's book bag each day. Teachers and therapists will use the notebook as a means of communication by writing daily notes describing what your child has done at school. Questions and concerns can also be addressed in this manner. We encourage your response, and ask that you let us know how your child is doing at home. This is not meant to replace face-to-face meetings and phone calls. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher and therapists and set meetings as necessary. We ask that you call before 9:00 AM or after 2:00 PM, when the children are not in the classroom to allow teachers a chance to talk without interruption.

Please attend parent meetings and in-services. These "gatherings" are a good opportunity to meet other parents as well as staff.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Early Education Program, please contact your child's teacher or Director. Parental presence has a very positive effect on the children and we are interested in your input.

### YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Olmsted Center for Sight, Early Education Program is designed for children birth through five years of age who are at risk educationally due to vision impairments or other delays. The program is designed to develop the "total child" to enhance their understanding



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of the world as they grow and Program provides specialized child's potential educationally,

learn. The Early Education intervention to maximize the functionally, and socially.

The program emphasizes a multi-sensory curriculum. Materials are adapted as necessary to meet each child's vision loss, if applicable. Skill development is taught, independence is encouraged and self-esteem is nurtured.

Each teacher is responsible for planning curriculum that incorporates activities that foster progress on IEP and IFSP goals. Integration with typical preschoolers, as well as group work with children placed in other classrooms, is coordinated by the classroom teacher after consultation with therapists and teachers. It is the goal of the programs to encourage independence, cooperation, and an appreciation of individual differences.

Curriculum is planned around unit themes so that academic concepts are enriched through multi-sensory experiences and play. Quiet activities alternate with more active motor skill activities. Guided free play is scheduled each day to encourage development of social skills that involve cooperation and peer interaction. Time for improvement of self-help skills such as eating and toileting is also scheduled.

We request that you...

Read all notes, newsletters and flyers sent home with your child.

Respond to teacher's questions and notes in your child's notebook or by calling.

Sign and return all forms and permission slips in a timely manner.



### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned on a regular basis. We will provide the same responsible supervision for these excursions as is provided for children while in attendance at the school. These field trips are both a fun and educational part of the program. Parents will be notified in advance and must sign a permission slip.



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Field trips are an important part of school. Parents are notified and specific needs are taken into account when the trips are planned. Therapists usually participate in all trips.

of each child's experience at school ahead of time and each child's account when the trips are

### OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important part of your child's day and total health. Weather permitting; the children play outdoors each day. All children who are well enough to be in school, will be expected to participate in outdoor activities.

You can help your child enjoy the outdoors by being sure that he/she is dressed for the existing conditions. In the winter, this includes boots, snowsuit or warm coat and snow pants, mittens and hats.

*Please put sunscreen on your child on warm sunny days before coming to school. We will reapply it throughout the day.*

### BIRTHDAY POLICY

We always celebrate and make each child feel special on his/her birthday. A nutritious treat from home is welcome. Please send in the labels from the packaging if you send in a homemade treat. **NO SMALL OR HARD CANDY** please. Remember we are a nut free building (no peanut butter please).

### WHAT NOT TO WEAR

Please do not send your child in sandals, "flip flops", clogs, crocks or party shoes. Those pose a safety hazard to all children.

Avoid party clothes and clothes that you do not want stained. A child will be uncomfortable and will not be at ease if worrying about getting paint or sand on his/her clothing.

Avoid clothing that is difficult for your child to take off at toileting time, such as items with a back zipper or pants with complex closures.

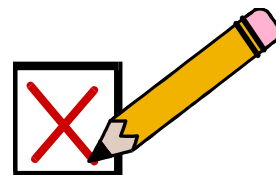
### REST/QUIET TIME POLICY

Rest time/Quiet Time is offered to all of the students. If a child needs to sleep during "rest time", they will each have their own mat, which is sanitized after each use. Children requiring a "nap" will sleep in a separate "quiet" area in the classroom, which is supervised at all times.

Preschool children really need this "rest" time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. This quiet time enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier and more cooperative child with you at the end of the day.

### WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS AT SCHOOL

- Notebook and Book bag and extra change of clothes, including underwear and socks
- Sneakers or shoes with non-slip soles
- Extra sweater or sweatshirt to leave in cubbie
- Lunch and a beverage for full day students
- Blanket for rest time
- Diapers and wipes if necessary
- Sunglasses and sunscreen



### **WE DISCOURAGE:**

- Bringing toys from home, except for show and tell
- Settling disagreements with our hands
- Raising our voices in anger or using hurtful words



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**NO TOY GUNS, WEAPONS  
PERMITTED AT ANY TIME,**

**OR ITEM OF VIOLENCE ARE  
INCLUDING SHOW AND TELL**

## **STUDENT GUIDELINES**

In an effort to make our school a safe and comfortable place to learn we:

- Encourage the children to share with their school friends
- Use words to express feeling, rather than physical actions
- Take turns during games and learning activities
- Speak to others in a courteous manner
- Respond in a courteous manner when spoken to
- Are careful with classroom toys and equipment
- Put away what we use
- Participate in group activities
- Are polite and respectful at all times

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The staff at the Olmsted Center for Sight, Early Education Program will provide each child with guidance that helps the child develop self-esteem. Behavior guidance will be constructive, positive and suited to the age and individual needs of the child.

To ensure appropriate behaviors mentioned above faculty will be good role models for the children. The classroom environment will be arranged to encourage the learning of acceptable behaviors and positive reinforcement and praise will be used often.

Redirection and distraction will be used when behavior is inappropriate. Time out will be used as a last resort and only when children need a few minutes to regain self-control before continuing with the activity. At no time will a child be left unattended. Parents will be consulted immediately when staff has concerns about the behavior of any child.

The program complies with all federal, state, and local laws prohibiting corporal punishment in school.



### HEALTH CONCERNS

Children who are not feeling well cannot concentrate and therefore are unable to participate to their fullest potential. In addition, they risk infecting staff members and the other children at our school. To help us provide a healthy atmosphere for learning, please observe the following guidelines.

#### ***KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME IF ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS ARE EVIDENT:***

- Colds accompanied by coughing or sneezing or colds accompanied by a nasal discharge
- A temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- A serious cough or a cough accompanied by difficulty breathing
- An ear ache or draining ear
- A sore throat
- A rash of any kind unless a doctor declares it harmless
- Diarrhea or vomiting either the night before or the morning of school
- Red, runny or crusty eyes, pink eyes

**If you have any doubts about your child's health, please do not send your child to school. Contact your child's physician.**

If your child is exposed to any communicable diseases while at school, we will send a notice home to you.

### MEDICATIONS

#### ***MEDICATIONS CANNOT BE SENT IN THE BOOK BAG***

According to New York State Health Education Law, any medication to be administered must be brought to the school by an adult in the bottle or container in which the medicine was purchased or prescribed. Written permission from both the parent and the physician must be received before any medication will be given. The note must include permission for school personnel to administer the medication along with the reason, name of the drug, amount and time given. This includes over the counter medication. Verbal and/or telephone requests to



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administer medication are not both the student and the school.

acceptable for the protection of

### PICKING UP A SICK CHILD

It is imperative that the Olmsted Center for Sight, Early Education Program has current and accurate records on your child. Please provide updated information including your daytime phone number. Also, please provide an emergency phone number and contact person, someone that will be available to pick your child up during the day, if the need arises.

### PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

**As per New York State Department of Social Services Pre-School Regulations**, each child must have a medical examination by a physician within the last year. A completed Medical form signed by the physician must be on file assuring that the child:

1. Is free from contagious and communicable diseases.
2. Has received proper immunizations appropriate to his/her age.

A parent is required to submit any immunization updates to the Director throughout the child's enrollment at the school. Each child is required to have an up to date physical examination on an annual basis. Dental exams every 6 months are highly encouraged

### ILLNESSES AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Fever  
Red, running eyes  
Vomiting  
Severe cough  
Measles  
Strep throat  
Tonsillitis  
Impetigo  
Lice

Diarrhea  
Ear ache  
Unusual fatigue  
Chicken Pox  
German Measles  
Scarlet Fever  
Meningitis  
Ring worm  
Hand and Mouth disease

Skin Rash  
Swollen glands  
Sore throat  
Mumps  
Roseola  
Whooping cough  
Conjunctivitis  
Pin worms



Parents will be notified if any of the above illnesses have been reported. Any child who is absent for more than three consecutive days with a communicable disease must have a physician's note to be readmitted to the school. Any child who has one of the communicable illnesses listed above must **stay home for a minimum of 24 hours and must have a physician's note for re-admittance, even if the absence is for less than three consecutive days.**

Parents are asked to assume responsibility, for keeping a child at home if there is any doubt in the child's health. Please do not mask an illness with **TYLENOL**. A fever is a sign that something is not right. **GENERALLY, IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD TO GO OUTSIDE, THEN HE/SHE SHOULD NOT BE AT SCHOOL!!!**

**If a child's temperature exceeds 100 degrees while at school, for whatever cause, or a child develops diarrhea or other illness a parent or authorized person will be called and asked to pick up the child.** For protection of the other children, an ill child will be removed from the classroom and kept with a staff person until the parent arrives.

In case of emergency, your child will be transported to the nearest hospital via emergency vehicle. A teacher or the Director will accompany the child, and the parent will be notified immediately.

### EMERGENCY FORMS

The Emergency Forms are a vital link between home and school in emergency situations. They must be filled out completely. Staff must be able to have a contact person to call at all times. **REMEMBER TO UPDATE THESE FORMS WITH ANY CHANGES** (i.e. new home/work address and/or phone, different emergency contact person, etc.)

### ALLERGIES

Please alert staff of any allergies your child has. It is important that we have this information on file in case of an incident requiring special treatment. If the allergy requires medication, all procedures as previously outlines must be followed.



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Many children suffer from us know if your child is allergic to preservatives. If your child has provide s with a signed diagnosis from your child's doctor.

varied food allergies. Please let a food, food coloring, or a food allergy, we ask that you

### **PEANUT ALLERGY INFORMATION:**

Due to the increasing number of children and adults with severe peanut allergies in our school, our building is "peanut free". This includes peanuts, peanut butter and any snacks that have peanut oil in them. Parents, if you could send in peanut free snacks and lunches, we would appreciate it. We want to create a safe environment for all the children at the school, so please be aware of the following regulations:

No home baked items, unless packaging label provided.

For birthdays, you can still send in snacks, but they have to be store bought, with a label. Also, please don't send in any snacks that are from the bulk section in the grocery store. There is a lot of cross-contamination with peanut products. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding with this matter.

### **FIRE/SAFETY**

#### **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Each parent is required to complete and sign and Alternate Pick Up Permission Form permitting release of the child to the parent's designee(s). Parents are asked to list names of people other than themselves who can pick the child up from the school. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY A CHILD BE RELEASED TO ANYONE WITHOUT CONSENT.**

A child may be released after the following procedures have been followed.

1. A parent has informed the school in writing, or by phone in emergency situations only, that the child will be picked up by the parent's designee.
2. The person picking up the child has been listed on the consent form.
3. The person picking up the child has picture identification.



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A name on the consent form may  
no circumstances will a name be

only be changed in person. Under  
changed over the phone.

The school is equipped with a buzzer system on the doors. No one may enter the school without first identifying him or herself.

## FIRE

The school is designed with the children's safety as a primary concern. The building is equipped with a fire alarm system, firewalls, and fire doors. Each room has an evacuation plan posted, and staff are trained in evacuation procedures. The New York State Department of Education for Preschools requires monthly fire drills.

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

In accordance with the provisions of New York State Law, the staff and administrators of schools are required to report suspected abuse and maltreatment. Any reasonable cause to suspect abuse and/or maltreatment of any child who attends our program will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

## HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

Parents help a child succeed in school when they:

**Read to him/her and listen to him/her read.** Children who are read to and who read to others even if they "make up" the stories have larger vocabularies, more information, and clearer concepts than do other children.

**Stimulate his/her imagination.** Begin simple stories and let the child suggest what will happen next.

**Teach him/her to observe.** Learning to detect likenesses and differences is an important step in learning to read and to spell. Encourage a child to notice the likenesses and differences in such things as flowers, houses, and animals.



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**Answer his/her questions.** Inquisitive child is not trying to trying to satisfy a vital need to

Adults should realize that the be a nuisance. He/She is merely know and learn about his world.

**Set an example.** Children are small mirrors of the homes from which they come. Parent should set an example of the speech, behavior and values they want to see reflected in their child.

**Develop his/her self-confidence, and independence.** The timid, fearful child is a reluctant learner. Being responsible for a daily task develops self-confidence. Allow your child to do things for himself whenever possible. Show your pride in your child's accomplishments.

**Listen to him/her.** A child's small talk tells a parent a great deal about his ideas, information, vocabulary and values.

**Give him/her rich experience.** What a child learns in school depends in part on the related experiences he/she brings to school. Listening and observing walks, trips to zoos, parks, shopping centers, libraries, fairs, and farms are sources of good experiences.

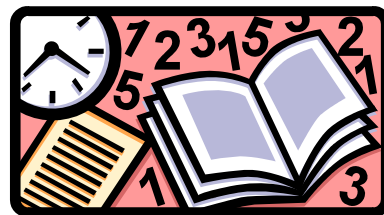
**Helpful Experiences:** It would be to your child's advantage if you would help him/her:

...be aware of daily learning experiences that occur: ex. trip to the store, walk or ride.

...be aware of numbers and their value.

... notice letters on signs, books, magazines, etc.

...point out shapes, colors, etc.



## **ABOUT OUR PALS FRIENDS**

The Olmsted Early Education Program shares the building with the Play And Learn School. Teachers from both programs carefully plan activities that benefit both groups of children.



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These programs enrich out  
important learning opportunities

activities and provide many  
for both programs.

If you have questions about our program, please contact Teresa Doermer at the Olmsted Center for Sight - Early Education Program at (716) 836-7556.

## **Parent Signature Form**

### **Topics Covered:**

- Mission, Vision and Philosophy statements
- Parent involvement
- Education program
- Field trips
- Outdoor play
- Birthday policy
- Clothing/accessory policy
- Nap/Rest policy
- Supplies needed
- Student guidelines
- Discipline policy
- Health concerns
- Medications
- Picking up a sick child
- Physical Examinations
- Illnesses/Communicable diseases
- Emergency Forms
- Allergies/Peanut allergy info.
- Fire Safety
- Child Abuse

I have read and understand the above topics covered in the parent handbook



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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_