



Parent Handbook

2020-2021

The Child Development Center at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue parts or the policy in its entirety, at any time without prior notice.

Some sections of this Parent Handbook may be modified to comply with current COVID-19 Protocols.

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1 HISTORY AND MISSION STATEMENT

The Child Development Center, CDC, was founded as an integral part of the master plan for Circle C Ranch residents. The planners believed that having a high quality, state-of-the-art child development center would benefit the families and provide peace of mind for parents. This school is unique because of its relationship to the community in which it was established.

Mission

Our mission is to maximize each child's potential by providing an active, collaborative learning environment where children, families and educators become empowered for social, emotional, and academic success.

Vision

Our vision is a world where every child meets their maximum potential.

2 WELCOME

Welcome to The Child Development Center!

We believe the strongest partnership in a child's life is that between the child's parents and the school in which their child attends. The goal that we strive to achieve is for our staff to team with parents to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family. We are committed to providing the highest quality of care to your child and to your family.

We have an Open-Door Policy and want your involvement. We encourage you to get involved in the community, visit or volunteer in your child's classroom, chaperone field trips, and always be an advocate for your child.

We serve children between the ages of 8 weeks old and 12 years old. Our daily program promotes your child's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. We individualize our program to meet the needs of each child.

We continually train our staff using the most current research in child development and early education.

The beginning of school is an important time and please know that we are available to answer any questions that may come up. It is our hope that you and your child will develop a lifetime of wonderful memories while enrolled in our school.

3 PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

At The Child Development Center, we know that children's earliest experiences have a tremendous impact on their development. We respect parents as the primary and most important provider of care and nurturing. We believe parents and teachers are partners in children's care and education. Our school is designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. We provide experiences that enrich and enhance each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. The members of our staff serve as positive role models and provide learning opportunities that are supportive, nurturing, warm, and responsive to each child's individual needs.

4 LICENSING INFORMATION

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of The Child Development Center, Inc., a non-profit organization, formed in 1992 with the State of Texas, establishes policies for our program. The current list of Board of Directors is available to view on the bulletin board near the main office and in the “School Information” page.

4.1 Governmental Licensing Information

The Child Development Center is licensed by the State of Texas and receives periodic inspections by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Parents may request to view a copy of the minimum standards and the most recent licensing inspection report at any time.

You may contact the local licensing office at 512-834-3195. The THHSC child-abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400. The THHSC website is www.dfps.state.tx.us.

4.2 Accreditation Information

The Child Development Center is accredited by the [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#) and maintains the high standards required by the organization.

The Child Development Center is also accredited by Texas Rising Star and holds a 4-star certification which is the highest of the three levels available.

5 ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at The Child Development Center is open to children from 8 weeks – Pre-K. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability, and without regard to a parent or guardian’s race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt.

Before the start of each new school year and any time a new student starts, teachers will give families a welcome packet of classroom specific information and suggestions. The packet will also include a family questionnaire to learn about your child’s interests, your family’s approaches to learning, your child’s developmental needs, and your concerns and goals for your child. The teachers will incorporate this information into ongoing classroom planning.

The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

The Child Development Center reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment at The Child Development Center is contingent upon the parent’s, emergency contact persons’ and child’s adherence to the policies and procedures of The Child Development Center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify The Child Development Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit. The full-time and part-time programs are 12-month programs. Enrolled spots will not be held for children who withdraw for the summer months. Should parents

choose to withdraw; they will have to put the child(ren) back on the wait list as of the date of withdrawal. Discounts will not be given for extended vacation during the summer months and enrolled spots will not be held if tuition is not paid.

Fall re-enrollment will take place each spring. At that time, a re-enrollment form and an annual registration fee must be submitted for each student to secure a spot in the program for the upcoming school year. Requests for enrollment/program changes in the school will be handled on a first come, first serve basis in the order that a request to be placed on the Internal Waitlist is submitted to the Registrar (i.e. changing from TTH to MWF, moving from Full-time to Part-time, etc.). The internal Waitlist will remain valid for as long as your child is an enrolled student at The Child Development Center. Changes will only occur if there is availability in the program requested for the upcoming school year. If there is no availability regarding the change requested, the child would be re-enrolled in his/her current program. The CDC keeps enrolled children in the same class for the entirety of the school year unless a change is made by the Education Director.

5.1 Waiting List

Classes at The Child Development Center typically remain full throughout the year. The CDC keeps waiting lists, divided by age and program. A waiting list application form as well as a non-refundable application fee must be attached and submitted to the office to place a child on the waiting list. Applications will be filed in each age category according to the date the application form and fee are received. Once enrolled, the application fee applies to the child's first annual registration fee.

The following waiting list policies apply to all families:

1. The first time a family declines a spot (or fails to call back)- the waiting list date will be changed to the date of decline.
2. The second time a family declines (or fails to call back)- the child will be removed from the waiting list. Any family wishing to get back on the waiting list must submit a new application and fee.

3. Children are considered for admission based on the following priorities:

- 1st: Current students
- 2nd: Siblings of current CDC (Preschool) students
- 3rd: Siblings of current CREW (Afterschool) students*
- 4th: Circle C Residents
- 5th: Non-Circle C Residents

****CREW students must have been enrolled for at least 1+ years to qualify***

5.2 Internal Wait List

An Internal Waitlist is kept for current students who wish to switch programs (i.e. changing from TTH to MWF, moving from Full-time to Part-time, etc.). Requests for program changes in the school must be submitted to the Registrar and will be granted on a first come, first serve basis. The internal Waitlist will remain valid for as long as your child is an enrolled student at The Child Development Center. Changes will only occur if there is availability in the program requested for the upcoming school year. If there is no availability regarding the change requested, the child would be re-enrolled in his/her current program.

5.3 Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

The Child Development Center is open year-round from 7:00am-6:15pm, Monday through Friday, except for specified holidays. The CDC offers a full-time program for children ages two months through five years of age.

A part-time program is also available from 9:00am-1:30pm on a 2-day, 3-day, or 5-day per week attendance basis, for two-year old's through five-year old's. Two-year old's must be 2 by September 1st to be enrolled.

Parents also have the option to sign up for our part-time extended day program, which is for 3-5 year old's only (limited enrollment spots available). This program runs Monday-Friday from 1:30pm-3:30pm for an additional fee.

6 TUITION

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign an Enrollment Agreement prior to enrollment of their child at The Child Development Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

There is no tuition credit or refund given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, pandemics, inclement weather or acts of God.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at The Child Development Center; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Business Director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the Business Director.

6.1 Contracts, Fees, and Deposits

The Tuition Express ACH (bank account or credit card) program must be used to pay tuition. A Tuition Express form must be submitted at the time of registration. There will be a \$25 fee charged for tuition payments returned by our bank. Parents will be responsible for providing a new ACH payment method if their account is declined.

Each year, upon re-enrollment, an annual registration fee is collected. This fee is non-refundable.

For new students enrolling at The CDC, one full month's tuition must be paid in advance, which is considered their Advance Tuition Deposit or "ATD". This ATD will be applied toward the child's last month's tuition at The CDC, with appropriate withdrawal notice (see withdrawal policy). There will be no refunds given for ATD's. Each year, a student's ATD amount will be adjusted to reflect that year's tuition rate. Additional ATD's will be billed in August of each school year.

6.2 Payment Schedule

Tuition rates for the school year are announced each spring during registration. Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month and shall be paid using the Tuition Express ACH program (via bank account withdrawal or credit card). For any family who pays by credit card, a 3% processing fee will be added to your monthly tuition.

A \$25 fee will be charged for returned payments. Parents will be responsible for payment and fees. If at any future time the bank returns a parent's payment, future tuition payments may be limited to certified check or money order along with a \$5.00 monthly processing fee.

Tuition does not include fees for field trips and other special events.

6.3 Late Payments

A \$25.00 late fee will be charged for any tuition withdrawal that does not go through by the 5th of every month. An additional \$10.00 will be charged if payment is not received by the 12th of the month. A \$25.00 processing fee will be charged for any returned payments. If tuition is not received by the 15th of the month, your child may not attend school until the tuition is paid. Please notify our Business Director if you need assistance.

Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at The Child Development Center. If you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Business Director immediately.

6.4 Subsidized Care

The Child Development Center accepts childcare subsidies through Texas Workforce Commission/ CCS.

6.5 Scholarship Program

The Child Development Center offers a scholarship program to families who meet our qualification guidelines. For a copy of the scholarship application and guidelines please contact the Business Director.

7 CONFIDENTIALITY

Within The Child Development Center, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of The Child Development Center, your child's physician(s), therapist(s), and/or student interns who have a "need to know" in order to care for your child most appropriately and safely.

Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as The Child Development Center strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with The Child Development Center.

Outside of The Child Development Center, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of The Child Development Center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of The Child Development Center are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

Parents are **NOT** allowed to discuss **any child** or **employee** through private email, social media, or group forums. This type of conversation will **NOT** be tolerated and could result in the family's dismissal from the school. Our confidentiality policy protects every child's and employee's privacy. If a parent or family member has a concern regarding another child or employee, they should contact a Director directly to discuss those concerns.

7.1 Violations of the Confidentiality Policy

The Child Development Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the CDC. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families, and employees associated with The Child Development Center.

Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information, which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy and could be dismissed from the school.

Any parent who violates the Confidentiality Policy will not be permitted on CDC property thereafter. Refer to the policy regarding Parents Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of a child when a parent is prohibited from accessing school property.

8 MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of The Child Development Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of The Child Development Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at The Child Development Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of The Child Development Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child

- ◆ Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

9 PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Child Development Center always requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of The Child Development Center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of The Child Development Center but is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters the center.

Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. **Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on CDC property thereafter.** Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing school property.

9.1 Swearing/Cursing

No parent or guardian is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or guardian feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

9.2 Threatening of Employees, Children of Other Parents or Adults Associated with The Child Development Center

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, The Child Development Center cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the CDC will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

9.3 Physical/Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children at The Child Development Center:

While The Child Development Center does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the childcare facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or Director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

9.4 Smoking

For the health of all CDC employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of The Child Development Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

9.5 Entry Door Safety

For the safety of all the children, we have secured doors. Only people who are authorized can enter the building while children are present. When families enroll, they will receive one free key fob and have the option to purchase additional key fobs. Lost key fobs may be replaced for a fee. Each family's key fob opens doors during the child's scheduled program times (example: Part-time doors will not open until 9:00 am and will shut-off by 3:30 p.m.).

Please do not hold the door open for unauthorized individuals. In addition, if you have forgotten your key fob, do not follow another family in, but instead press the button to buzz the office. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children, and families of The CDC. Be alert and immediately report any breaches or concerns to the office.

9.6 Confrontational Interactions with Employees, other Parents or Associates of The Child Development Center

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of The Child Development Center or the parents of other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

9.7 Policy for Handling Parent Concerns

If a parent has a concern, he/she should first discuss it with the lead teacher of the child's class. If the lead teacher and parent cannot resolve the concern together and to the satisfaction of both, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Directors. A three-way conference may be arranged at this time. If a resolution is not reached, the matter will then be brought to the attention of the Executive Director and/or the Board of Directors for their consideration.

9.8 Social Media

This social media policy applies to parents, employees, students, and The Board of Directors of The Child Development Center.

This policy includes (but is not limited to) the following technologies:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Snap Chat, Instagram)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. You Tube)
- Micro-blogging (i.e. Twitter)

As part of our duty to safeguard children it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all our families and employees. We therefore require that:

- No photographs taken within the The CDC or CREW settings or at The CDC or CREW special events and outings with the children, are to be posted for public viewing, except those of your own child.
- Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children. (This excludes those photographs taken by staff for the children's online learning journal, which are sometimes used for display in the setting, for use on The Child Development Center website and in other advertising material if parental permission is given).
- No public discussions are to be held or comments made on social media sites regarding The CDC or CREW children, staff or Administrators (except appropriate use for marketing fundraising events) or that could be construed to have any impact on The Child Development Center's reputation or that would offend any member of staff or parent using the school.
- If a parent names the Child Development Center on any social media platform, they must do so in a way that is not detrimental or derogatory to the school.

- Parents are not permitted to set-up private or public social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) accounts/groups related to the Child Development Center without expressed written consent from the Executive Director.

9.9 Violation of Social Media Policy

Any parent found to be in violation of the above or by posting remarks or comments that breach confidentiality, bring the Child Development Center into disrepute or that are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to the Child Development Center, its employees, or other children could result in immediate dismissal from the school.

10 PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at The Child Development Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) The Child Development Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. See section 13 for more information on Court Orders. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

Any parents wishing to visit the school on non-court appointed days are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director and are allowed in the school only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of The Child Development Center will accompany **the parent** at all times, throughout the school.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Child Development Center, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Child Development Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Child Development Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. The Child Development Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

The Child Development Center will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon CDC property. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, The Child

Development Center cannot have a child at the CDC when the child's parent is prohibited access. Circle C Child Development Center will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

11 DISMISSAL

Every effort will be made to resolve differences. However, circumstances that can result in a child /family's dismissal from the school, include, but are not limited to:

Behavior aspects of a child:

- Any child who is not yet ready for the group experience or whose needs cannot be met in a group setting (i.e.-cannot get along with other children, unable to follow class rules and teacher instructions, requires one-on-one attention from the teacher for a majority of the day),
- A child who continually places the safety of him/herself, other children, or staff members at risk.
- A child with behavior problems so severe that they cannot be accommodated within the scope of the regular program and regular staff-child ratio, or lack of a written plan or instructions from a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or therapist specializing in young children.

Parental disregard for Center policy:

- Tuition is 30 days overdue and there is not a written plan for payment of back tuition,
- Failure to pay the tuition according to the written plan,
- Consistent disregard for the hours of operation,
- Failure to treat the CDC staff and children with respect.

The Child Development Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time if the Executive Director deems it necessary. Although families can be dismissed immediately, when possible, the school endeavors to follow the procedure below:

- Parents will be notified of the issue by teacher or office staff as soon as possible.
- Parents and teacher or office staff will set up a conference for discussion of problem within 48 hours.
- A follow-up conference will be scheduled 2 weeks later.
- If significant improvement is not observed, parents will be asked to seek outside assistance to aid in a solution.

- After a reasonable time, if a solution cannot be reached, the Executive Director may communicate dismissal.

Any past due balances must be paid at the time of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection.

Ultimately, continued enrollment will be at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. A parent who wishes to appeal a dismissal from school may do so by arranging a meeting with the Board of Directors at which the lead teacher and Executive Director will outline attempted modifications and discuss their effectiveness. The parent may request further or alternative modifications. However, the Board will not overturn the decision of the Executive Director unless it is shown that she/he has acted in a biased or unprofessional manner during the dismissal process.

The Center Director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave CDC property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. The Child Development Center will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Executive Director if they wish to return to CDC property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Executive Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with The CDC by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by The Child Development Center.

11 WITHDRAWAL

One month written notice via the Withdrawal Notice Form, as of the end of a month, is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, the Advance Tuition Deposit on file will apply to the last month's tuition. Advanced Tuition Deposits will not be refunded; any overages will be credited to your account.

The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter CDC property without prior permission of the Center Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Director if they wish to return to CDC property following the last day of enrollment at The Child Development Center. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Director and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

13 COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) The Child Development Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with The Child Development Center administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Child Development Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, The Child Development Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, The Child Development Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of The Child Development Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The Child Development Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

14 ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Upon arrival at The Child Development Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into school on the electronic tablet located outside the classroom doors. Children are required to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the school. Parents are required to help children put away their personal belongings and get settled for the day. The CDC discourages idling vehicles be left in the parking lot unless the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold temperatures to maintain interior or engine temperatures. Parents are also required to not leave a sibling or other child in the car unattended while they drop off their child.

The Child Development Center discourages parents from sneaking out of the building in an attempt to avoid separation issues with their child. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. The Child Development Center believes it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug, and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The teacher present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The professional employees/teachers of The Child Development Center are available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time.

Upon arrival, parents are required to follow the Medication Policy if a child must receive medication during the course of the day.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent must present the special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with either the classroom teacher or Director. These special instructions include but are not limited to: early pick up, alternative pick up person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of

concern which the teachers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

The Child Development Center does not serve or provide breakfast in the morning. Parents are required to feed their child breakfast prior to arriving at The Child Development Center.

14.1 Notification of Absence

Parents are encouraged to inform the school by 9:30am if a child will not be attending or will arrive late on a scheduled day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the office not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our administrators to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the office, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. See section **25.4** for more information on communicable diseases. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. The Child Development Center will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child’s absence from school.

14.2 Center’s Right to Refuse Admission

The Child Development Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.

4. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at The Child Development Center if the child were to be present at the center.
5. Parent's failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
7. Parents' failure to follow the tuition policy as outlined in Section 6 of this handbook.

Parents will not be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

15 PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents or other authorized adult are required to sign their child out of care on the electronic tablet located outside the classroom doors. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on the CDC's premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to exit the building once they have signed their child out of care. The CDC discourages idling vehicles be left in the parking lot unless if the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold temperatures to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

15.1 Late Pick-Up

Please be considerate of our teachers by picking up your child by the appropriate time. You will be charged \$10.00 per child for the first minute for late pick-up. You will be charged \$2.00 for each additional minute. This fee will be paid to the office. This includes the children who need to be picked up by 1:30 p.m. (part-time), 3:30 p.m. (extended day), or by 6:15 p.m. (full-time). Please note that The Child Development Center closes at 6:15pm; therefore, late fees will accrue up until the time a family leaves the building.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or emergency pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

15.2 Persons appearing to be impaired by drugs and/or alcohol

The staff of The Child Development Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of The Child Development Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the CDC from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, The Child Development Center staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police, and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the staff of The Child Development Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of The Child Development Center will contact the child's parents, local police, and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

15.3 Emergency Contact & Authorized Pick-Up People

At enrollment, parents will be required to include any and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from The Child Development Center. In an emergency, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contact and one authorized pick-up person. State regulations require each family to have at least one emergency contact (other than a parent) and one authorized pick-up person.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program.

Parents do not need to be listed as an emergency contact or authorized pick-up person. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents

(in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

The persons listed under the admission information will be required to provide a Government issued photo ID prior to the CDC releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the admission information must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

The Child Development Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Admission Information form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Admission Information form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form have the right to act "In Loco Parentis." In Loco Parentis status affords the pick-up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child's day including but not limited to, incident/accident reports, and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff is not permitted to discuss the child's day with them.

16 TRANSPORTATION

The Child Development Center does not provide transportation at any time.

17 20-21 CDC SCHOOL CALENDAR

AUGUST 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

10-14: In-service
17 First Day of School

FEBRUARY 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

15: Staff In-Service
All Programs Closed

SEPTEMBER 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7: Labor Day All Programs Closed

MARCH 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

15-19: Bldg Maintenance/
Spring Break
All Programs Closed

OCTOBER 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

NOVEMBER 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

25-27: Thanksgiving Break
All Programs Closed

MAY 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

31: Memorial Day
All Programs Closed

DECEMBER 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

23-31: Winter Break
All Programs Closed

JUNE 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

JANUARY 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1: New Years Day
All Programs Closed

JULY 2021

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

18 EMERGENCY CLOSING, PANDEMIC, AND INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by the inclement weather message on the CDC website, text message, and by email.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call; of the pickup location should the children need to be evacuated from the school. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

Should the school need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than 15 school days. If the closure extends to beyond 15 school days, parents will have their tuition reduced by a minimum of 50%. All decisions are at the discretion of the administration and the Board of Directors.

18.1 Pandemic Emergency Response

In the event of a pandemic, The Child Development Center will follow guidelines and directions implemented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal and Local Governments, and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (Child Care Licensing).

To ensure the safety of children, families, and staff, the school will monitor the situation and take into account the guidance and suggestions from the authorities on the situation. Decisions made by the center will consider the safety of children, families, and staff. Decisions may include:

- Closure of the center
- Length of closure to be determined by the Executive Director, The Board of Directors, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

Federal and Local Governments, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

- Adjusted hours of service
- Daily health checks of children and staff
- Limited entry into the building
- Limited access to the property
- Limitations on what the children may bring into the center, such as:
 - Blankets
 - Stuffed animals
 - Pillows

The Child Development Center will communicate these plans through a variety of methods such as mass emails and Constant Contact.

Tuition Policy during a School Closure

Should The Child Development Center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than 15 school days.

If the closure extends to beyond 15 school days, parents will have their tuition reduced by a minimum of 50%. All decisions are at the discretion of the administration and the Board of Directors. Please remember tuition is not determined by attendance but by enrollment status. All enrollment is maintained during a closure period as long as all commitments to the school are fulfilled.

Withdrawal Notice during a Center Closure

The policy stated in this handbook (Section 12) will remain in effect at all times.

19 DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Discipline at The Child Development Center shall:

- Be individualized and consistent for each child.
- Be appropriate to the child's level of understanding.
- Be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

Positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction shall be used, including:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the age of the child.

There will be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training.
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- Subjecting children to psychological abuse or using coercion.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed.
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age.

20 ITEMS FROM HOME

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Children in classrooms with nap/rest time are permitted to include with their bedding supplies, one plush/non-musical toy with which to nap/rest. This toy is to be placed with the bedding supplies and use of it will only be allowed at nap/rest time.

Your child should not bring candy, toys, or money from home. The following items should be kept at school or brought in daily. All items must be labeled with the child's first name and last initial. Diapering creams/powders and sunscreen must be labeled with the child's full name.

INFANTS	TODDLERS, 2's, 3'S, and 4's
Filled bottles (label caps also)	Nap items: crib sheet & blanket (full-time only) —must be taken home to wash on Fridays
Baby Food (full name and date)	At least one change of clothing (including shoes & socks)
Diapers and Wipes	Lunch Items (full name & date on each container)
Diaper Rash Cream (if desired)	A filled water bottle (must be taken home DAILY for washing)
Crib blanket (large enough to "tuck under" mattress)	
2-3 changes of clothing	
Security items such as pacifiers	

21 DRESS CODE

22.1 Children

Clothing:

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

Parents are prohibited from dressing children in overalls or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting.

Coats, hats, and gloves must be provided in the winter months.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes. For safety reasons, children may not be allowed to ride tricycles or use certain climbing equipment if they do not have appropriate footwear.

Children ages 3 through 5 are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. Children under 3 years of age are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. Circle C Child Development Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

21.2 PARENTS

Clothing:

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at The Child Development Center or involved in any CDC sponsored events. Inappropriate clothing would include, revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

Parents are required to remove or cover their shoes prior to entering the infant classroom. This will reduce the risk of injury to a child on the floor and will help to maintain a clean floor. Parents not wishing to use shoe covers can simply leave their shoes outside the classroom door prior to entering the room.

22 Special Activities

The Development Center occasionally supplements the in-class curriculum with special activities.

22.1 Field Trips

Notification of a field trip will be posted in the classroom, with all pertinent trip information including, destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost, and mode of transportation. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be filled out, signed, and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend.

If a parent opts out of a scheduled field trip and chooses to not have their child participate, the child must remain at home until the classroom returns. The CDC cannot accommodate additional children in other classrooms as we must maintain teacher-child ratio regulations set by NAEYC and state licensing requirements.

The CDC does not drive children, so volunteer parent drivers will be requested for the trip. The CDC will submit a background check on each volunteer transporting any child other than his/her own, per state licensing requirements.

22.2 Animals

From time to time, teachers adopt classroom pets for the classroom. Past adopted animals include fish, rabbits, and guinea pigs. Teachers ensure that the children follow proper hand washing procedures after handling class pets. If other animals enter your child's classroom during the school year, parents will receive notification.

22.3 Water Activities

During summer months, water activities will be allowed which may include sprinklers, splash tables, spray bottles, and other creative ways to stay cool. At no time do we allow wading pools that the children would be immersed in. At the beginning of each summer teachers will announce their class water day schedules via monthly classroom newsletters or additional memos in children's folders.

23 PARENT PARTICIPATION / VOLUNTEERS

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. Parents can participate and volunteer at the center in many different ways. Parents may volunteer to attend trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Teachers will have a volunteer opportunity form available to be filled out at the Open House.

Another important way to contribute is to be a room parent. Room parents play a huge role in coordinating classroom events. Room parents typically coordinate teacher appreciation efforts for birthdays, holidays, and end-of-year celebrations. Many rooms also plan lunch for the teachers once a month. They also help teachers coordinate pizza day sides, holiday celebrations and any special projects. Room parents can also encourage other parents to get involved by recruiting help or helping the teacher plan for parent story reading, helping plan for pet care, and making sure the teacher has help with special projects the children are working on.

Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom, or on field trips.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements), will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent.

24 HEALTH AND SAFETY

24.1 Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

ALL EMPLOYEES of The Child Development Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law.

The employees of The Child Development Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at The Child Development Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of Circle C Child Development Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- ◆ Sending a child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

24.2 PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center's office prior to the child's first day of attendance. Per licensing regulations, all children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at The Child Development Center. If you choose not to have your child immunized, please ask about how to obtain an immunization waiver. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the Registrar to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

Parents are required to update all health and immunization related information at least quarterly, or as needed. Information is kept confidential and is only shared on a "need to know" basis. Classroom teachers are always given copies of emergency contacts, emergency releases, and allergy information.

All children are required to have a Health Care Statement filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend The Child Development Center. The Health Care Statement, indicating the child's ability to attend The Child Development Center, must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the Center prior to the first day of enrollment.

24.3 Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Severe Allergies" form which is in the registration link/paperwork, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every twelve months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy.

Parents must also execute a “Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies” form. This form releases The Child Development Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the “Severe Allergies” form, provided The Child Development Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein. It is the parent’s responsibility to monitor the expiration date of their child’s medication and replace with the updated medication. The CDC reserves the right to exclude any child with severe allergies who do not have up-to-date rescue medications in their classroom. Attendance can resume once the proper medications are provided and accompanying paperwork for the medication is completed.

24.4 Communicable Diseases

The Child Development Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent’s responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child’s emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor’s note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. The Child Development Center reserves the right to

refuse to allow a child to return if the Executive Director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to school the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken on the forehead.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur 2 or more times during the school day. Children may return to school when they have been free from loose bowels or diarrhea for 24 hours without medication.

Children excluded from the program due to vomiting may not return to the program until they are symptom free, without medication, for 24 hours. Children will be sent home after vomiting once and he/she is not permitted to return to school the following day at a minimum.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. The Child Development Center will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child’s absence from school.

24.5 Biting

Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all children bite, biting is considered a normal stage in a child’s development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child.

Karen Miller, author of *Things to Do with Toddlers and Twos*, suggests that children may bite for any of the following reasons:

- **Teething:** Toddlers are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain for a moment.
- **Sensory Exploration:** Toddlers are very good at using all of their senses to learn about the world. The “oral mode,” an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates.
- **Cause and Effect:** Toddlers are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic: there is a lot of noise and attention from adults.
- **Self-Assertion:** This is probably the most common reason young children bite. It is a way to express frustration when they do not yet have the language skills to do so.

Our teachers take action to reduce the number of biting incidents by providing access to teething toys, sensory exploration activities, opportunity to explore cause and effect, and offering toddler’s options and alternatives to reduce frustrations.

When a child receives a bite, that child is immediately comforted, the bite is washed with soap, and a Band-Aid is applied if the skin is broken. The teacher will tell the child who bit, “It is not okay to bite. Biting hurts very much.” If possible, the teacher will try to encourage the child who received the bite to express his/her feelings. “It hurts” or “Don’t bite me” are

statements that teachers will model for the child to repeat. The teacher will then redirect the child to another area of the classroom.

Consistent with the CDC confidentiality policy, parents are not told the name of the child who bit their child. Parents of the child who bit are informed and work together with the teachers with the intention of helping to prevent further incidents of biting. We recognize how upset parents may be when they learn their child received a bite; however, we also recognize that biting is a normal component of child development. Despite

our many concerted efforts to prevent biting incidents, they are bound to occur. Our school does not exclude children because of biting alone.

Please feel free to ask the staff any questions about young children biting. Parents should understand and take comfort in knowing that biting is a normal stage in the course of a child's development and, like all stages, he/she will quickly outgrow it.

For more information on biting, we suggest reading the book, *Things to Do with Toddlers and Twos* by Karen Miller.

24.6 Dispensing Medication

The Child Development Center will only dispense un-expired, over the counter and/or prescription medication that is in original, labeled containers, and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. The Child Development Center will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. One doctor's note per course of treatment is required. If a child, for example, is to be given a course of antibiotics for 10 days, the doctor's note must identify the dates that the medication is to be given.

Parents are required complete an Authorization to Dispense Medication Form the first day that medication is to be dispensed. The medication form, doctor's notes, and medication are to be turned in to the teacher. Medications will be stored in a dedicated classroom medication box or refrigerator if necessary. Medication may not be stored in a child's cubby, lunch box or backpack.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date. Parents and teachers are not allowed to administer any kind of vitamins or medications by adding them to the child's bottle, cup, or thermos.

In case a physician orders a special medical or dental management procedure for a child in our school, an adult trained in the procedure must be onsite whenever the child is present.

24.7 Fire/Emergency Drills

The Child Development Center conducts monthly fire, emergency/evacuation, and lockdown drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency/lockdown drill or real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the school. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child into the school. Parents may wait with the child's class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency/lockdown situation, the Executive Director or designated staff member will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time, any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. When parents arrive to pick up their child, we ask that you wait until the director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and has given the staff permission to release children. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. Children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

24.8 Alternate Safe Location

Should the Administration of The Child Development Center or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the CDC to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to Kiker Elementary School. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

24.9 Medical Emergencies

In case of critical illness or injury during school hours, appropriate first aid or CPR will be given immediately, and the appropriate emergency personnel will be contacted. Parents will also be notified immediately.

24.10 Surgery

Children may not attend school the same day that they have surgery. Young children recover quickly, but there is always a risk of reactions to anesthetics. The Center does not have the materials or staff to react to such emergencies.

24.11 SIDS Prevention

In accordance with commonly recognized SIDS prevention techniques and THSC requirements, we put all infants (younger than 12 months) to sleep on their backs without the use of infant sleep positioners (unless ordered by a physician). We will only make exceptions if you provide us with documentation from your pediatrician. If infants arrive to the program asleep, or fall asleep, in equipment not specifically designed for infant sleep, the infant will be removed and placed in appropriate infant sleep equipment. All of the following elements (soft blankets, pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, and soft toys) are not allowed in cribs or rest equipment for infants younger than 12 months.

24.12 Incident/Accident Reports

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be placed in the child's classroom folder. If you wish to have an in-depth discussion or meeting with your teacher regarding an Incident/Accident Report, we ask that you schedule a specific time frame with your teacher.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up.

However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

Should a person other than the parent or one designated to act “in loco parentis” pick-up the child, a parent or person designated to act “in loco parentis” must sign the Incident/Accident Report and return a copy to the center director within 24 hours. Failure to sign and return an Incident/Accident in this time period will result in your child’s exclusion from the program until such time as the report is returned signed.

24.13 Food Policy

All meals are enjoyed family style, with the children and teachers sitting at tables to promote good manners, eating habits, and socialization skills.

The following is a guideline to help assist you in planning a healthy lunch for your child. These patterns are from the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. You may access the complete USDA CACFP meal pattern packet online at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/blocks2.pdf.

All age groups:

All food items must be labeled with your child’s name. The Child Development Center does not permit children to share or exchange food items.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor’s note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instruction for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

The Child Development Center never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavior reasons.

Food can be used by teachers for classroom lessons.

Peanut/Nut Free Classrooms

Due to the extreme nature of some allergic reactions to peanuts/nuts and products containing peanuts and/or nuts in some children, The Child Development Center may have classrooms that are peanut/nut free. Your child's teacher will notify you if the classroom is peanut/nut free. The teacher will also notify you of any other allergies in the classroom. Per our Confidentiality Policy, only the allergen will be identified, not the child.

Parents of children in an allergen aware classroom are responsible for providing foods that are free of the identified allergen for their child's lunch. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts or nuts have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut/nut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain Chocolate M & M's have this statement on the label.

Infant Classrooms:

Children enrolled in the infant through 1 ½ year old classrooms must have all food items for consumption prepared and labeled each day the child is in attendance. This includes formula/breast milk bottles, baby food, snacks, and juice bottles. Prepare one more bottle than you think your child will consume in a day to be sure that your child will not run out. If breastfeeding, bottles must be labeled with child's name, date, and the time & date the milk was expressed. Prepared bottles must be stored in the

designated refrigerator and will be warmed in a water bath prior to feeding. No bottles will be microwaved. All bottles must be taken home by the parents each night to be washed.

Teaching staff do not offer solid foods and fruit juices to infants younger than six months, unless that practice is recommended by the child's health care provider and approved by families. Sweetened beverages should be avoided.

Parents must provide and label all utensils and bowls necessary for feedings. Children will not be fed directly from baby food jars, nor will the staff use previously opened baby food. Teachers will mix baby cereal just prior to feedings. All unused food remaining after a feeding will be discarded.

Parents are required to complete a feeding schedule for their child on a monthly basis, or as the child's feeding requirements change. Staff will complete a daily chart for each child detailing for the parent what the child ate, when, and how much.

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to come to the center during the day to feed their child. Appropriate, private feeding locations will be made available. Please discuss your desire to come to the center to breastfeed your child with the classroom teacher.

Toddler and Preschool Classrooms:

The Child Development Center offers children a morning snack at approximately 9:30 a.m., a half-hour lunch at approximately 12:00 noon and an afternoon snack at approximately 3:30 p.m. The Child Development Center does not serve breakfast.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main entrée first, followed by healthy snacks.

We are committed to teaching and fostering good nutrition as an integral part of the early childhood experience. To help promote healthy, well

balanced eating habits, parents are required to provide a sensible lunch for their children each school day. Lunches should include a sandwich (or main entrée item) and healthy sides such as fruit, vegetables, and the like. Parents should limit sweets/treats. Candy bars, sodas, or candy treats are not permitted in school lunches. Please be aware of potential choking hazards with children under 4-years-old. These foods include hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, spoonful of peanut butter, chunks of raw carrots, or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. All uneaten food will be placed back in the child's lunch so parents can see what items and how much their child consumed during the day. Parents should limit the number of choices offered in their child's lunch, as children often become distracted by the choices. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satiated, but not so much that food is wasted.

The Child Development Center prohibits any food item in glass containers (except Baby food in the infant classrooms), as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff.

Parents may place lunches containing milk, cheese, yogurt, and/or other food items requiring refrigeration in their classroom refrigerator or include an ice pack in their child's lunchbox.

All food items provided in your child's lunch must be labeled with your child's name. Simply labeling the child's lunch box/bag is not sufficient. Children will not be permitted to consume any food item not labeled with his/her name.

All lunch bags, containers, and food items must be labeled with the child's name.

The Child Development Center will provide a healthy morning and afternoon snack for children enrolled in extended care and full time. A list of the daily snacks available to the children will be posted in the classroom on a monthly basis.

24.14 Pizza Days

The Child Development Center offers pizza days once a week (alternating Thursdays & Fridays) as a fundraiser. Children may have as much cheese pizza as they want, and teachers will provide a sign-up list for families to volunteer to bring healthy side dishes for the classroom

Each \$20 pizza purchase is worth five pizza days. Families will receive a reminder in their child's folder when it is time to purchase additional pizza days. At that time, you can come by the office to make payment. Because this is a fundraiser; no refunds will be given on the balance when the child withdraws. Pizza days are not offered during the month of August.

24.15 Gang-Free Zone/Firearms and Weapons

Any area within 1000 feet of The Child Development Center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalty.

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunition, and/or weapon on Center property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

24.16 Lice Policy

Upon detection of live lice and/or nits on a child, The CDC will contact the child's parent/guardian. Children with live lice and/or nits who have NOT

been treated may not attend school. The child may return to school after treatment with an over the counter or prescription medication and thorough combing has been completed. The class will be notified and information regarding steps for parents to follow will be sent home. Once a child has been treated for lice and/or nits and returns to school, frequent re-checks will be done to ensure that treatment was effective.

Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with

getting head lice. Head lice are a common occurrence among young children. Head lice spreads from person to person by direct contact with hair or by sharing items such as hats, brushes, etc.

25 POLICY CHANGES

The Child Development Center reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to change any policies through written communication with families.

The CDC utilizes e-mail as the prime form of communication. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure we have an up to date e-mail address on file at all times.

26 CENTER INFORMATION

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