



Parent Handbook

2022-2023

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1 History, Mission and Vision 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. In 2022 we are adding a second campus to our school community to continue to educate even more children and families.

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 faculty 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 faculty 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.

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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 faculty 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 campus and on our website.

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. Their office is located at:

1340 Airport Commerce Dr.
BLDG 5, STE 525
Austin, TX 78741

The THHSC child-abuse hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.
The THHSC website is www.hhs.texas.gov.

4.2 Accreditation Information

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

The Child Development Center is also accredited by Texas Rising Star, which is a quality rating and improvement system for early childhood programs run through the state of Texas. The Child Development Center holds a 4-star rating, which is the highest rating available.

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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.

Families will also receive an Age Group Handbook, which is a developmental guide that helps families recognize and better understand what we do at The Child Development Center, and also includes classroom and school wide specific information.

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 disenrolled 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 and wish to return, they will have to restart the waitlist process as a new student. Discounts will not be given for extended vacations and enrolled spots will not be held if tuition is not paid.

Re-enrollment will take place each spring. At that time, a re-enrollment form and an annual registration fee must be submitted online for each student to secure a spot in the program for the upcoming school year.

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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 Waitlist Application as well as a non-refundable wait list fee must be submitted to place a child on the waiting list. Once you are added to the waitlist, your child will remain on the list until a spot is offered. Applications will be filed in each age category according to the date the application form and fee are received. A non-refundable, one month tuition deposit is due once a child is accepted into the program.

The following waiting list policies apply to all families:

- Once an enrollment offer is made through email, families will have 48 hours to accept or decline the spot.
- Should a family decline the spot or fail to respond to the enrollment offer, the child will be removed from the waiting list.
- Any family wishing to be placed back on the waitlist must submit a new Waitlist Application and fee.
- Children are considered for admission based on the following priorities:
 1. Current students
 2. Siblings of current CDC (Preschool) students
 3. Siblings of current CREW (Afterschool) students*
 - *CREW students must be currently enrolled for 1+ years to qualify.

5.2 Hours, Days, and Months of Operation

The Child Development Center is open year-round from 7:00 am - 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, except for specified holidays.

5.3 Holidays and Closures

The CDC observes and is closed on the following days:

- Staff training days (5 days in August)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (3 days)
- Winter Holiday (5-7 days between Christmas and New Year's Day)
- Staff training day (in February)
- Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

The current year School Calendar is on the school's website.

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5.4 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 faculty to maintain appropriate faculty to child ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Faculty deems the child too ill to attend.
4. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, faculty or other children enrolled at The Child Development Center if the child were to be present.
5. Parents' 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.

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.

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.

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For new students enrolling at The CDC, one full month's tuition must be paid in advance, which is considered their Tuition Deposit. This Tuition Deposit will be applied toward the child's last month's tuition at The CDC, with appropriate withdrawal notice (see the withdrawal policy).

There will be no refunds given for Tuition Deposit. Each year, a student's Tuition Deposit amount will be adjusted to reflect the upcoming year's tuition rate.

Pizza Days

Parents choosing to sign up for pizza days will be billed along with your monthly tuition as follows:

- \$20 per month for each full-time and part time 5-day program child.
- \$10 per month for each part time child.

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.

If you choose to cancel, you must cancel by the 25th of the preceding month. For example, if you cancel by November 25th, you will not be billed for December pizza days. To cancel, you must email the Business Director.

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.

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.

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6.4 Subsidized Care

The Child Development Center accepts childcare subsidies through the Texas Workforce Commission/ CCS and Child Care Aware for active Military Families.

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.

6.6 Communication

Good communication is a vital element in a successful school experience. We will use a variety of methods to keep you informed about your child and the events at The Child Development Center.

- You are encouraged to take a minute to chat with the teacher at the beginning or end of each day. Sharing information can help teachers relate to your child appropriately. Teachers also use information shared to individualize curriculum. If you need to meet with your teacher to discuss concerns or matters at length, please inquire about a scheduled phone call or a parent/teacher conference.
- Teachers will provide daily and weekly updates via the parent engagement app to keep families informed of their child's day, of upcoming events and lesson plans.
- Periodic newsletters will be e-mailed from administration, to inform you of changes and activities within the school.
- Monthly snack menus are posted in classrooms.

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 are in a "need to know" position, to care for your child appropriately and safely.

Confidential and sensitive information about our 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

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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, or 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

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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 faculty 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 faculty.

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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

The Child Development Center does not support or condone corporal punishment of children, therefore, 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, if deemed necessary, 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/Vaping

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

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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 full-time family's key fob opens doors between 7:00 am - 10:00 am, and 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm.

Part-time families will pick-up and drop-off at a designated location outside the building.

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 or threats 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 an Education Director. 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 if deemed necessary by the Executive Director, it will be brought to 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, SnapChat, Instagram, etc.)
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Collaborative online spaces
- Media Sharing services (i.e. You Tube)

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- 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 faculty 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, faculty 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 faculty 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

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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 faculty 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. The 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 faculty members at risk.
- A child with behavior problems so severe that they cannot be accommodated within the scope of the regular program and regular faculty-child ratio, or lack a written plan or instructions from a psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or therapist specializing in young children.
- In the event of any of the above situations, The CDC will attempt to assist the family with next steps.

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,

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- Failure to treat the CDC faculty 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 the teacher or office faculty as soon as possible.
- Parents and teachers or office faculty will set up a conference for discussion of the 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 requesting a meeting with the Board of Directors. However, the Board will not overturn the decision of the Executive Director unless it is proven that she/he has acted in a biased or unprofessional manner during the dismissal process.

An administrator 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.

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, posting/commenting online, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law by The Child Development Center.

12 Withdrawal

To withdraw from the CDC the below process **must** be followed:

- Submit the CDC Withdrawal Notice Form (found on the website).
 - You must give two full calendar months of advance written notice of withdrawal, effective the last day of the month (see example).

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- Given the above is followed, your tuition deposit that is on file will be applied to the final month's tuition payment.
 - Your last month will NOT be prorated.
 - All other payments are entirely non refundable, including all payments made at the time of registration, in the event enrollment is canceled.
- **Example:**
 - You want to withdraw at the end of May.
 - You will need to submit your Withdrawal Notice no later than March 31st.
 - You will continue to pay your full tuition through April.
 - Your Tuition Deposit will be applied to your May payment.
 - Any other payments such as Pizza Cards, etc. will still be due.
- **If the required notice is not provided, the tuition deposit will be forfeited.**

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. 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.

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14 Arrival Procedures

Upon arrival at The Child Development Center, full time parents must use their key fob or buzz the office to be let in. All children are required to be escorted to their designated classroom door by the parent or the adult dropping them off. A faculty member will meet you at the classroom door to receive your child. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the school building.

Part time families will drop off at a designated drop off location as determined by your child's teacher.

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 not allowed to leave a sibling or other child in the car unattended while they drop off.

Upon arrival, parents are required to follow the Medication Policy (see Policy 24.6) 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 writing 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 faculty 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 **Policy 24.4** for more information on communicable diseases. 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.

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15 Pick-up Procedures

Upon pick-up at The Child Development Center, full time parents must use their key fob (between the hours of 7 am - 10 am and 3 pm - 6 pm) to get into the school. Between 10 am - 3 pm, buzz the office so they can retrieve your child for you. Once a parent receives their child, 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, parking lot and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to picking up their child and are required to exit the building promptly.

Part time families will pick up at a designated pick-up location as determined by your child's teacher.

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.

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 includes the children who need to be picked up by 1:30 p.m. (part-time), 3:30 p.m. (extended day), or by 6:00 p.m. (full-time). Please note that The Child Development Center closes at 6:00 pm; 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 authorized 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 Child Development Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear 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 faculty 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 faculty of The Child Development Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The Child Development Center will contact the child's parents, local police, and Child Protective Services of the situation.

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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, the faculty 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 faculty 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. The faculty 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 Emergency Closings

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by message through parent engagement app and email.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the faculty will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the faculty be unable to reach the parents, the

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persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. The faculty will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call with 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.

17.1 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 faculty, 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 faculty. 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 faculty
- 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 as necessary.

17.2 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.

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17.3 Withdrawal Notice during a Center Closure

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

18 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.

19 Dress Code

19.1 Children

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,

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weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

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.

See your child's Age Group Manual.

20 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.

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.

21 Health and Safety

21.1 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.

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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 faculty 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)
- 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

21.2 Pre-Enrollment Requirements

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be submitted 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. **Each vaccination record must include a signature (including a rubber stamp or electronic signature) of the health-care provider that administered the vaccine. Please note that vaccine records printed from an online portal do not meet licensing regulations.** All four-year-old children are required to complete a hearing and vision screening within 120 days of enrollment as required by the state of Texas Health and Human Services Department.

If Parents choose to not have their child immunized, the child is required to have a current state issued Affidavit For Exemption From Immunizations on file in place of an immunization record. Each parent or guardian who signs a vaccine exemption affidavit form also acknowledges they understand that their child may be excluded from school attendance in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the Texas commissioner of Health.

Parents are required to update all health and immunization related information 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 Healthcare Statement filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend The Child Development Center. The Healthcare 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.

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21.3 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 it with the updated medication. The CDC reserves the right to exclude any child with severe allergies who does 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.

21.4 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. The Child Development Center does not require employees to show proof of vaccines.

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 faculty will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the faculty 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

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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 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more. 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 may be 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.

21.5 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. 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. Our school does not exclude children because of biting alone.

21.6 Dispensing Medication, Applying Sunscreen, Insect Repellent, or Diaper Cream

The Child Development Center will only dispense un-expired, 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 responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date.

The CDC will only dispense unexpired over the counter medication if it is accompanied by a complete Authorization to Dispense Medication Form. Parents and teachers are not allowed to

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administer any kind of vitamins or medications by adding them to the child's bottle, cup, or thermos.

Sunscreen / Insect Repellent / Diaper Cream

Parents are required to complete an authorization form to apply sunscreen, insect repellent or diaper cream.

Parents must apply sunscreen and insect repellent to the child prior to coming to school. The Child Development Center will apply sunscreen and insect repellent to children prior to outdoor time during the school day. Parents must provide the school with the child's sunscreen and insect repellent. It must be kept in its original container and labeled with both the child's first and last name.

All items will be stored in a dedicated classroom medication box, cabinet, or refrigerator if necessary. These items may not be stored in a child's cubby, lunch box or backpack.

In the case that 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.

21.7 Emergency Drills

The Child Development Center conducts monthly fire/evacuation and quarterly severe weather and lockdown drills. Parents, faculty, 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 an emergency drill parents may not sign children in or out of the school. Parents must wait until the drill is complete 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 administrator 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, parents will be required to wait until the director or designee has accounted for all faculty and children and has given the faculty permission to release children. Parents will be notified via email, the parent engagement app, and/or the telephone of the situation. Children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the notification.

21.8 Alternate Safe Location

Should the Administration of The Child Development Center or any emergency services personnel determine the building to be too dangerous to be occupied, the faculty and children will be taken to Kiker Elementary School. Once the children are assembled there, the faculty

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will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the notification.

21.9 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.

21.10 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 faculty to react to such emergencies.

21.11 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 penalties.

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.

22 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 email as the prime form of communication. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure we have an current email address on file at all times.

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23 Center Information

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Aaron Sotak, Treasurer
Randy Glenn, Member
David Wagner, Member

Website
www.TheChildDevelopmentCenter.org

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. In the event of a policy change, families will be notified. Any such action shall apply to existing as well as to future families.