

Parent Handbook

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Children's Corner: Statement of Purpose and Goals

1. To provide a licensed, safe, and clean child care facility that supports the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs of each child.
2. To enable parents to work.
3. To support parent's efforts to obtain quality child care services.
4. To provide a community based service.
5. To provide area employers with a concrete alternative for child care for employees in order to reduce absenteeism and increase productivity.
6. To provide a developmentally appropriate program of early childhood education for children in a preschool/day care setting.

Unlimited Access Policy

Parents shall be afforded unlimited access to their child and to the provider caring for their child during the center's hours of operation; unless parental contact is prohibited by a court order (parent or guardian must provide a copy of the court order for the child's files). Parents have the right to enter the center and observe the care of their child at any point during the child's care.

Absences

Parents are asked to notify the school whenever a child will be absent due to illness or vacation. Staff is scheduled according to the ages and number of children that will be in attendance.

Accidents/Illness

Any change in health status will be reported to parents by both phone call and incident report. During enrollment an emergency procedure form is completed by each family that contains contact information for the child's doctor and dentist. For the safety of the child, it is necessary that the center director and designated medical staff person as well as the classroom teachers know about any health conditions or possible hazard to the welfare of the child.

Arrivals/Departures

Center hours are 6:30 am – 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. Parents are asked to bring their child into the building upon arrival and check in with the teacher of duty. To ensure the safety of our staff and children, our front entrance is secured. There is a doorbell to ring that will let staff know you are there (a camera is also present so that no person that is unknown to the staff will be able to enter the building without proper identification). When a child is picked up, be sure to let a staff member know he or she is leaving for the day. Sheets to sign your child in and out each day are located near the office. In the event that you are not able to pick up your child by the time we close there will be a fee to be paid in cash to the staff member who remained in the center (\$10.00 after 5:30, \$20.00 after 5:45 and \$30.00 after 6 pm).

Biting Policy

Our center's perspective on biting is that it is to be expected when children are in group care (especially in toddler groups). We know that there are many reasons toddlers bite. Biting can be a communication of feelings that can't be expressed with words yet; they may bite when frustrated, excited or teething. As child care professionals we do not put our focus on punishing the act of biting, but on helping the child who bit learn other more appropriate behaviors to express their feelings. No child will be expelled from our center for biting unless it is determined that all other

approaches used consistently over time have not worked and that the child may be in need of a different kind of setting or program. Center staff respond to individual biting incidents and episodes of ongoing biting by caring for the child who was bitten first. We comfort and provide first aid to children who are bitten before addressing the child who bit because it reduces the chance of a child using biting as a means of receiving attention. If the skin of the child who is bitten is broken we wash the area with soap and water and cover it with a bandage. Parents are informed by phone if their child receives a bite which breaks the skin, and an incident report will be filled out for all biting incidents; Parents must sign the incident report and be given their copy. Teachers also help the child who was bitten learn to say "No!" when another child is hurting them. We model the words and tone for children to use such as "No!" or "Stop!" or "Don't bite me!" Once the child who was bitten has been cared for, staff members help the child who bit learn other more appropriate behavior by showing the child strong disapproval of biting and redirecting the child to an appropriate activity.

Parents are informed by incident report when their child has bitten and also by phone if skin was broken and the child could have a blood or body fluid exposure. When a child has bitten and broken skin, we have the child rinse their mouth out with plain water. Staff will keep the name of the child who bit confidential and the child's name will not be written on the incident report of the child who was bitten. We want to avoid labeling and use our time and energy to work on stopping the biting. We plan enough activity and provide adequate supplies and toys to avoid boredom, frustration or over-stimulation. Teachers also work to model acceptable and appropriate behaviors for children and help them learn words to express their feelings and help them resolve conflicts. Though we cannot guarantee that biting will never happen in our center, we will deal with biting appropriately so it will end as quickly as possible. We will help your child whether he or she bites or is bitten. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns or if you would like more information on biting.

Breakfast

Children who arrive early in the morning at the center may want to eat breakfast here. Children's Corner does not provide breakfast, but does serve breakfast from 7:00 – 8:30 am. Any child who wishes to eat breakfast is asked to bring a box of cereal and half gallon of milk at the beginning of each week. *All cereal will be stored in an air tight container in the kitchen and brought to the classroom on a daily basis.*

Clothing

Please dress children in play clothes each day. Taking part in activities is part of the fun and no child should have to worry about “getting dirty.” Please remember to dress your child for the weather also. We also ask that you leave at least one extra change of clothes at the center in case of accidents. All clothing items should be marked with your child’s name or initials. Children must wear shoes with a closed toe and closed heel to daycare each day. Athletic type shoes are recommended for jumping, running, climbing, and other physical activities that children participate in daily. Sandals and flip flops are not allowed due to the safety concerns they present. Children will be allowed to remove their shoes for nap, sandbox play, outside water play and dress up. School aged children may bring flip flops to change into for pool days during the summer. This policy does not apply to babies who do not wear shoes yet.

Curriculum

Each classroom follows a teacher planned curriculum that is appropriate for their age group. After infancy, preschool curriculums are followed in order to prepare your child for school/ Teachers work daily to prepare your child to read and write as well as work on patterns, mathematics and life skills. Daily activities are posted in each classroom on the board describing what was done during the day. In addition, daily sheets are kept for all children age 2 and younger documenting information such as diaper changes, toilet training, eating times and amounts, and naps. The purpose of this communication is to let parents and family know what the children are doing at their “jobs” while moms and dads are working or are at home.

Discipline

The aim of discipline is to provide a child with enough structure to help him be responsible for his or her own conduct. At Children’s Corner we look at discipline as a teaching tool instead of a punishment,. Biting, hitting, inappropriate language, etc. are handled on a day to day, individual basis. Distraction or redirection to a more appropriate activity is attempted as a first response to a child’s negative behavior. Occasionally a child may be asked to take a break from the group until they are ready to join in and take part in appropriate activities. State licensing standards mandate that corporal punishment, verbal abuse, threats, etc. may not be used in any way as a form of punishment (If you ever feel that any staff is guilty of such behavior, notify the center director or

owner at once). As needed, parents are informed of any negative behaviors through the use of written incident reports. Any time a parent has a concern regarding a report given to them, they may speak to the lead teacher of their child's classroom or the director of the center. If and when a child's behavior is consistently disruptive, a parent-teacher conference will be called with the center director and possible solutions will be explored. On rare occasions, it may be in the best interests of the parent, staff, child, and his or her friends that other child care arrangements be made. If a situation like this arises, parents will be notified to weeks in advance of a center decision to terminate services.

Emergency Closings

If the center needs to be closed due to bad weather or emergency, the closing will be announced on local television and radio stations as well as be emailed to parents who have elected to share their email address with us. If bad weather or an emergency develops during the day and an early dismissal is necessary, parents will be notified by phone and email. A staff person will remain until all children have been picked up. The center has procedures in place for other contingencies such as intruders in the center, intoxicated parents, abducted children, lost children, power failure, bomb threats, earthquakes and structural disasters, chemical spills, fire, and tornado. Fire and tornado plans are practiced each month. Signs are posted in the hallways with relocation information in the event of a nuclear emergency.

Fee payments

Tuition payments are due on Monday for the current week. Both cash and check payments are accepted and we do offer an electronic debit option which is free to utilize. There is a \$4.00 per day late fee for any payment received after Monday of each week. After 3 days (Thursday), a child will not be allowed to return to the center until payments are current. Tuition is charged a half rate for any week that a child is absent from the center due to vacation or illness. If a child is absent more than two weeks out of the year, then full tuition is charged for weeks absent.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the center program. A "blanket" permission slip is signed by each parent when a child enrolls in the center. This slip allows a child to attend any center sponsored

activity or ride to and from school or special classes. Parents are notified of any planned trips and may exercise the option of not having a child accompany the group on a specific trip.

Health Checks

A daily health check is conducted in the center when a child arrives. Children who have a fever of 100F or higher or have a communicable disease may not be at the center. Provisions are made for a child who becomes ill at school. A cot is provided and parents are called and requested to pick up the child. Parents will be notified by phone if their child has any change in “health status” throughout the day. State licensing standards mandate an annual physical examination for each child in a preschool/daycare setting. In addition, the State Department of health requires current physician certification of all immunizations. The centers’ license is dependent upon compliance with this regulation. Appropriate forms are included in the enrollment packet at registration. In case of a religious waiver, a special form is available.

Holidays

Children’s Corner celebrates six paid holidays each calendar year. These include January 1st, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. The center is closed on these days. If any of these days falls on a Saturday, the center will close on Friday. If they fall on Sunday, the center will close on Monday.

Home-School Communications

Newsletters and frequent notes are added to the calendar of events posted in the center to inform parents of “happenings”. Parents are urged to contact a child’s teacher or the center director anytime they have a comment, suggestion, idea, or problem.

Lunch/Snacks

A licensed, registered dietician has prepared a state approved 6 week cycle menu for the center. This includes daily snacks as well as lunch items. The menu is posted in the center and is rotated throughout the year. Children are given the opportunity to taste and test many new foods and dishes; some of which may have been prepared during a morning preschool class. The center provides a variety of good nutritious foods; therefore no food is to be brought from home for

children under 5 who are not enrolled in school, unless there is a documented medical reason. Parents provide food for infants until they can eat center food and whole milk for children under the age of two.

Medication

Medication which is to be given to a child at school must be labeled with the child's first and last name and be in the original container. Parents must fill out and sign a medication authorization form specifying the name of the medication, dosage, method of administration, the times the medication is to be given, and the number of days the medication is to be given. The name of the child's physician, parent signature and date must be on the authorization. The medications are kept out of the children's reach in a locked container. Please note that we cannot administer or the counter medications to children. If there is a conflict between parental instructions and the directions on the medication without a note from the child's physician.

Money and Valuables

Children do not need to bring money to school. If money is needed for a special project, please enclose it in an envelope and write the child's name and amount and purpose for the money of the outside.

Nap

Licensing regulation requires that all children under school age be given a daily rest period. There is a scheduled nap time each afternoon for children age one to six and infants nap as needed. Children are never forced to wake up before they are ready. Children age 1 and older may bring a blanket for rest time. We ask that you take your blanket home each Friday to be washed and bring it back on Monday.

Parent Involvement Opportunities

The success of the child care program at Children's Corner is greatly enhanced by understanding and cooperation between parents and the center staff. There are both formal and informal ways to strengthen these lines of communication:

1. Telephone: This may be initiated by either teacher or parent. It is quick, efficient, and effective. Please call any time you have a question or concern.
2. Parent conferences: these can be requested any time.
3. Newsletter/Notes: Schedules are posted in classrooms and around the building.
4. Parent Visits: Center parents are invited to visit the classrooms and spend time with a child whenever work schedules permit. A much clearer picture of your child's day at work can be gained from this experience. Please note that visiting parents may not provide car care, guidance, or discipline to other children in the center. Grandparents, other relatives and friends may be designated by parents as an emergency contact or be given permission to pick a child up from daycare. However, they are not allowed to stay and visit due to licensing regulations.
5. Beautiful junk can be found anywhere and everywhere. Please help us keep fees down by contributing items such as paper, magazine, novelties, dress up clothes, hats, jewelry, shoes etc.

Parties

Children are encouraged to make birthdays their own special day at the center. Extra treats are permissible on these days (We ask that Party invitations not be passed out at the center unless the whole class is being invited). Children and teachers also celebrate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, etc. in a special way. If any parent has a question or concern regarding the celebration of a religious holiday, please make it know too the teacher. No child will be discriminated against or made to feel left out because of religious beliefs or family traditions.

Safety

Our staff is aware of the importance of a safe environment both inside and outside the building. Each classroom is arranged with much thought and planning for the safest, educationally sound environment for each child. Outdoor play equipment is firmly anchored and checked on a daily basis for wear. The building has a fire protection system and monthly fire and tornado drills are held. Occasionally, a child will be more daring than a parent wishes to allow. Children's Corner wants each child to challenge his or her own skills and to develop large muscle coordination. Parents who have objections to their child's participation in an activity or are concerned about safety are urged to talk to the child's teacher.

Staff

All Children's Corner staff members are required to complete First Aid, CPR and Universal Precautions training and must update those certifications regularly. Each new employee must pass a state and national criminal record check which are repeated every 2 years for state and 4 years for national. Each staff member also attends several hours of DHS approved workshops and trainings to continue their education each year.

Student Records/Forms

When enrolling in the center, each child is required to have the following forms on file (per Iowa Regulation):

1. Medical health record and immunization card. This must be signed by a physician or nurse practitioner and updated each year.
2. Enrollment form. This includes name, address, family members, emergency phone numbers, date of birth, arrival and departure times, etc.
3. Permission slip/transportation form. This form allows the child to take part in and be transported to and from field trips, school, activities or special events.
4. Emergency treatment form. This authorizes the hospital and physician named to provide needed treatment in an emergency if parents cannot be reached.

Summer Camp

A summer day camp is available for children ages 5-8 years. The cost is regular full time tuition plus an activities fee; Parents provide a pool pass as well as a onetime bowling fee. Several local businesses cooperate in providing activities and facilities for our camper. They include: bowling lanes, the public library, ice arena, city parks, the Science Station, swimming pools, etc.

Supplies

A monthly supply item is requested from each family who is enrolled at the center. This helps defray costs and keep tuition down. It is important that every family do their fair share in providing these items. Examples include: toilet paper, kleenex, paper towels, and Dixie cups.

Television/electronics/toys

Children's Corner believes that a child's time at school is best spent with hands on activities and exploration of the world. The center has purchased equipment and toys to challenge each child's ability as well as provide successes in play. Because of this we do not allow children to watch television or play with electronic devices (such as Ipads, videogames, etc.). We ask that you do not bring toys from home unless your teacher has a planned show and tell day.

Video Monitoring System

Employee screening and supervision is only part of the training and licensing requirements for child care centers. The protection of each child in the center must be absolutely guaranteed insofar as possible. To that end, and to aid parents in sharing a child's experiences anonymously, a monitoring system is located in the center office. Each classroom is equipped with a video camera that records on a continuous basis. Staff members are aware of this program and often use it as a way to evaluate teaching methods or serve as the "eyes in the back of the head" which allow them to see happenings that might otherwise be missed. Curious and nervous parents may take advantage of this camera system as well. Reassurance on a child's environment can make the first days at the center a little easier.