

All of our center staff are required to read the Parent Handbook.

The
Child's Nurturing
Center

Parent Handbook



Established in 1986

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Our Philosophy Statement

Since our inception in 1986, The Child's Nurturing Center, Inc. has employed trained instructors who follow a strong developmental focus in their interactions with and guidance of children. All of our classrooms use standards to document every child's path toward being Ready to Learn* by the time they enter kindergarten.

We believe in a warm, caring, nurturing environment within which all children will feel free to respond honestly and independently.

We believe our program's purpose is to provide curricular experiences through a developmentally appropriate program from which children of all ages and abilities will find opportunities to express growth within the seven domains of learning.

We believe that children work through play to forge an individualized path which meets their growth and development milestones within their own time frame and ability level.

We believe a close working arrangement with every parent allows our sensitive and highly qualified staff to reinforce those important familial contexts which children bring from home inclusive of their interests, culture, native language and special needs.

We believe that each day is a new opportunity to be filled with fun, exciting, and encouraging hands-on activities provided by our classroom teachers who design their curriculum themes based upon the children's interests.

*From the federally mandated Goals 2000, which assures that every child will enter school Ready to Learn.

Our Mission Statement

The Mission of The Child's Nurturing Center is to provide high quality educare to the families in our community through the application of developmentally appropriate practice for children six weeks through 14 years of age.

Our Vision Statement

The Vision of The Child's Nurturing Center is guided by the principle that all children are entitled to a safe, secure, nurturing environment from which center staff, parents and the community will experience improved quality of life as a result of the interactions and community service we provide.

Our Programs

We teach children utilizing developmentally appropriate practices from six weeks through twelve years of age. The concept of Developmentally Appropriate Practice came through the establishment of acceptable guidelines for professionals to follow when working with young children by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*.

Please let us know if your child will be arriving later than expected or absent. This is also necessary for school age children who have been picked up from school so we do not anticipate they will be returning to the program. If we do not see your child when expected we will reach out in the center app so you are aware we do not have them in our program.

All of our classrooms are separated into developmental groups where children can interact with whom they will continue on to public or private school.

The childcare classroom ratios are:

- Infants & toddlers- 1:3 in one group and 2:6 in one group
- Toddlers & Twos- 1:3 in one group
- Older Toddlers through Young Three year-olds- 2:8 in one group
- Three and Four year-olds- 2:10 in one group
- Four and Five year-olds- 2:12 in one group
- School Age ratios are 2:30 in one group and 1:10 in another.

The structure of our classrooms allows for the inclusion of children with special needs to be with peers best suited to their developmental level.

All Pre-kindergarten student parents are given a Kindergarten Readiness packet and will be provided an opportunity to conference with the teachers two times per year. For those students identified with needing special services conferencing takes place on an 'as needed' basis and, with parental permission, teachers will work directly with support personnel to assist in the children moving through a 504 plan, IEP or IFSP.

Once a year we have the kindergarten faculty from Sandymount Elementary school join us for a parent night where our clients can meet the teachers and have questions answered in preparation of the children's upcoming entry into Kindergarten.

Our center provides care for the Sandymount, Cranberry Station, Mechanicsville, and Shiloh Middle schools. Public school bus service is provided at our driveway for Sandymount and Shiloh.

Center van service to Cranberry Station and Mechanicsville, is provided.

A one-time non-refundable enrollment fee is designated for each developmental group. This is due upon registration with the enrollment agreement. The remainder of the enrollment packet is due on or before your child's first day of attendance.

****Copple, C. & Bredekamp, S., eds, 2009. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.**

The Curriculum

Young children's learning is optimized when the content is meaningful. The Child's Nurturing Center utilizes the *Creative Curriculum* which consists of goals, projects, room design and plans from which our staff formulate their thematic classroom activities to meet the standards published by the Maryland State Department of Education. Developed by Teaching Strategies, Inc., the *Creative Curriculum* is open-ended and concentrates on the child's developmental abilities.

By listening to the children in their rooms, the teachers will find what is interesting to the students. With the theme they have selected in mind the teacher will provide a foundation of activities to nurture each child's growth within the seven domains of

learning.

The Domains of Learning

We have conferencing with parents in our Preschool 2 and Preschool 3 rooms twice a year and use the publication Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy Birth to Age 8 in conjunction with a Performance Portfolio maintained for each child.

The Standards identify each child's growth within each domain:

- The Arts
- Social Foundations
- Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies

Technology in the Classroom

We have a very definitive approach to technology in the building and maintain the strategies associated with our approach as part of our contract with each of you. Our staff have tablets they use to present music and short clips to support student learning; however, they are used minimally to support classroom curricula. In addition to the following position statement (Item #3) we follow in our routines with children, these also apply:

1. School age children do not need to remain in direct contact with anyone from outside while in our program as there are phone lines and a communication app for teachers to connect with parents at all times. Please understand we are working with a social group of students to assist them in their development while in our care. Communicating with them through a smart device of any type does not support our work in relationship building with them or you. All devices need to be turned off while in our program.
2. If your child has a smart device operating while in our program, unless it is medically indicated, we will remove it while in our center and return it to you when they leave that day. These devices have security issues that can breach the confidentiality agreements we have written and implied with our clients. For these and other reasons we must not have them operating in the program.
3. In a joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College the criteria for working with young children and technology was addressed in a position statement titled, *Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*.

Our center has adopted these criteria in working with the students in our program. The classroom teachers utilize it to inform their practice in planning curriculum and supporting activities for children of all ages.

Infants and Toddlers:

Our infant and toddler program was established in 1990 to provide care for families who were finding it increasingly difficult to locate quality care for their children under two years of age.

Knowing that the first three years of life are some of the most rapid and significant in a child's development, we focus on the feeling of well-being that promotes a strong bond between caregiver and child.

Our rooms are divided into three separate areas with one care provider to three infants, two care providers to 6 infants and toddlers in the second and one care provider with 3 toddlers and twos in the third. We believe this maintains an environment that upholds the principles of secure-attachment theory.

Daily reports are maintained to give you a day-at-a-glance opportunity to review your child's routines. This information is documented in our center app and is available for you to see throughout the day..

We conference with our Infant and Toddler Parents every three months or sooner regarding their daily schedule and milestones achieved.

A variety of interactions, games and activities are maintained every day to promote language, intellectual, emotional, and physical development. This program utilizes both the Healthy Beginnings Curriculum from MSDE and the Infant and Toddler Creative Curriculum to guide the teachers' development of daily activities and maintaining an accountable program for the children.

Children must be a minimum of six weeks old to enter the program. Parents provide the diapers, food, and changes of clothing.

Preschool Classrooms:

In the *preschool classrooms* (two through five year-olds) every student is brought to an activity table to explore the daily project with the teacher. Students are also provided opportunities to explore concepts in activity centers that are open ended in nature. During this time your child's teacher will ask questions to stimulate the student's development and concept awareness relative to the current theme.

The teachers will also observe your child's interactions and take notes to guide the outcomes of their learning to coincide with the Standards in the Maryland Birth through Eight pedagogy report. This action will support your child's status to enter Kindergarten '*Ready to Learn*'.

Childcare students please pack a crib sheet for the required rest period. Our state regulatory guidelines mandate a two-hour time frame for quiet time.

You will also need to send a lunch each day. We will provide the milk along with both morning and afternoon snacks.

A sports water bottle is also needed for when we are outdoors on the playground.

Through a planned and varied schedule which includes language and literature activities, sharing, projects, social time, making choices, and physical activity, your child will develop a positive self-image along with an understanding of the world around her.

Our classrooms are supplied with equipment designed for children's learning. Please leave your child's toys at home. A 'cuddly' for rest time is appropriate if it is small enough to fit in between the cots for storage.

Classroom day care preschool teachers in the center are, at a minimum, certified to teach in the childcare setting.

Kindergarten and School Age

During the school year our club members have the opportunity to begin their homework, enjoy one another's company, get physical exercise, and choose creative activities. Our classroom is designed with an open-ended format so students may guide their own investigations.

Our school age classroom teachers are guided by Maryland State Department of Education: Common Core Curriculum Frameworks****. These inform our curriculum practice with the students to assure they are being given opportunities to reinforce content from their elementary school experiences. This system is in place during the school year and the summer.

When school is out it is a time of fun and exploration. We have many activities, trips, and experiences, which spell out a productive and healthy way for your child to spend his or her summer. The summer camp is structured around our open activity centers so the children feel they are able to make choices and fulfill their dreams in imaginative and constructive ways.

Before leaving in the morning on the corporate van or public school bus, which depart and arrive at our driveway, the students may explore our activity centers, play games, do art & craft activities, visit our library, or complete bits of homework they were unable to finish at home the night before.

After school, we provide a snack, some homework time, activities, and outdoor play (weather permitting)

When the public school is not in session, your child may attend our center. Sometimes this requires an additional cost although snow days and professional closing days are included in our *full week before and after school* base rate.

Registration for the summer program begins as early as January of each year.

****<http://mdk12.org/instruction/commoncore/index.html>

Field Trips

Field trips are considered to be an integral part of the child's learning and social experiences.

Off premise field trips are taken only by the kindergarten and school age children. We feel our younger students are best served by having the field trip come to them.

A separate fee is charged for these field trips. These are due prior to the day of the trip in order for your child to participate. Cut off dates are clearly stated.

All trips are mandatory for preschool age children and your written permission is always required for your child to attend.

School age field trips are optional since they are taken off premises. Once you sign your child up they are non-refundable.

ANIMALS AND FIELD TRIPS.

Our center is a pet free facility. We do not have live animals in the facility or on our grounds. We also cannot have your pets visit on our property, either. In the event there is a special program that will bring live animals into the facility we will let you know in advance and provide options for your child to go to an 'animal free' zone.

NO SMOKING ZONE

We do not allow smoking on our property.

NO IDLE ZONE:

Cars are not allowed to idle on our parking lot. Please be prepared to turn your vehicle off once you arrive. Children are walking to and from their cars to enter and exit the building. Thank you very much.

Discipline Policy

We predominantly apply redirection of behavior and the use of a Cozy Corner.

We have a written discipline policy that is embedded in your enrollment agreement which reflects our philosophy regarding how we handle children and a tiered approach to interventions. This can be accessed at any time on our website at www.childsnurturingcenter.com. The structure of the Tiered Plan can be modified for students with a 504 plan, IFSP or IEP but cannot put any child or adult in the program at risk.

State regulations require the center to have a signed copy on file for each student enrolled.

When you sign the Center Contract you acknowledge you have read the policy and that you understand it.

Courtesy and respect are imperative to a healthy working relationship and provides for positive role modeling. We apply this philosophy to working with staff, parents, guardians and students.

Health & Hygiene

We provide your child with an entire portion of our curriculum devoted to teaching proper hygiene. Washing hands, using tissues, and proper nutrition are all aspects of what your child will learn to keep himself happy and healthy.

There are some things that we cannot teach them. Your child will not necessarily know if she is beginning an illness. Sometimes students complain of discomfort in the morning but it may be difficult to tell what will happen. Our operational policies on file with our licensing agency regarding exclusion for illness are as follows:

- If a child reaches a temperature of 101 degrees, vomits, is lethargic, or develops diarrhea we must have them picked up from the center within one hour.
- Children must not return to the center for twenty-four hours *after being symptom free without fever reducers or other products that can mask symptoms.*
- Diagnosed cases of communicable disease must not return to the center without a doctor's release.

Rapid pick up when a child is sick is one of the reasons why it is so important to have three persons we may contact who are close to the center. A sick child will be placed in the Sick Child Cozy Corner under staff supervision until pickup.

Please do not administer any medicinal products for potential illness prior to coming to day care in the morning. This can mask more serious symptoms. If your child is out for longer than three days with an illness the center requires a doctor's release to allow them to return to the center. This note must state that your child is no longer contagious.

The center will notify parents of any outbreaks in contagious diseases that may effect the program through a notification message in our online app.

Nutrition

Breakfast is the start to each of their healthy, active days. Please make certain that, if you are bringing in their breakfast, it is nutritious and does not contain a beverage not approved by our licensing agency.

Our center provides two snacks daily. We only serve fresh fruits and vegetables for our snacks with reduced fat milk during all meals. Parents provide the lunch and we will accommodate children bringing in their own healthy snack to eat if they choose to do so. We do check daily to make certain that all lunches contain one protein and a selection of two servings that include fruits and/or vegetables.

If your child requires special milk or a special diet, with their doctor's note updated every six months, we will serve what you provide for all meal settings. You can bring in a container of special milk product and we will mark it with your child's name for their consumption only and store it in our kitchen refrigerator.

Parent Authorization

We know the safety of your child is a primary concern to you as it is to us. Your life is busy and, on occasion, you are not able to meet your daily schedule. For this purpose we have you give us three individuals who are also authorized to pick up your child in emergency cases.

Please notify these individuals that, without exception, they must produce photo identification when they come into the center.

If you wish to have an alternate who is not on the list pick up your child, you must forward this in writing via fax to the center office. Informing alone does not mean we can accommodate your request. It must be verified by the Director or the assigned person in charge in the Director's absence.

Late Pick Up

If you think you are going to be late picking your child up please remember that the staff in our center have been working a long, energetic day. When you leave, they still must close the building up.

Our license only covers us until 6:00pm so the center must be closed by then. This becomes a licensing and insurance issue after 6:00pm..

Late Pick Up Fees

Our license stops at 6:00 in the evening. At that time you are personally hiring the individual working the evening shift and they are due, upon your arrival, \$7.50 ***per child*** for every fifteen minutes or portion thereof, ***no exceptions***.

If these fees are not paid that evening your child care is not accessible until payment is brought into the center and, if the payment is not rendered within two business days, your child's position is considered terminated. Lateness in picking up a child will terminate your position in the program after three episodes.

Medical Records and Medication

State law requires the medical records we request at the time of registration. These tell us things about your child that may assist us in emergency situations. All records must be in place and properly filled out prior to the first day of attendance,

Please be certain they are maintained yearly. When you prepare for your child's annual doctor visit, you can take a copy of the immunization form with you which is in the Health Inventory found online at www.childsnurturingcenter.com . Go to the 'Contract' page and you will find all the center registration documents there. The doctor can update your child's record at that time.

Annually we will ask you to review your child's file for any changes. You will be asked to update any information on the emergency card and health inventory. Proof of the update is provided to our licensing agency by your initials and date on the bottom of the forms.

If your child has special medical needs our Director of Operations will meet with you to formulate how we can accommodate for those.

If all records are not updated, the center will receive a records violation which will go against our record with the state and affects both our Quality Rating and Accreditation status.

Medication Administration

Medication is administered under a doctor's order by an authorized person in our program who has completed MSDE approved training.

All medications must be in the pharmaceutical or original bottle with expiration date current with the dosing of that medication.

If a parent asks that pain-relieving medication is to be given it is for one time per incident and then only for pain, not fever. Any other use of these types of products must have a doctor's order to accompany it.

Requests to administer are not fulfilled without the proper paperwork accompanying them. Please contact the Director of Operations for the required form.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition

We need to cover our expenses on an annual basis. Other programs may charge a yearly enrollment, program, or supply fee that is non-refundable, ours is one time only payable at registration.

We work out our budget for the year and prorate the expenses over fifty-two weeks. That is why we have a monthly tuition fee based upon the weekly cost multiplied by 4.33 weeks and do not credit for holiday, vacation, emergency closings, or sick days.

Payment of tuition is through our app. If paying monthly by check the amount is due on or before the 22nd of each month prior to care being provided. When paying through the app or in cash the payments are due on or before the 25th of each month prior to care being provided. All payments are due on those dates by 9:30am in the morning. Weekly payments are only through the app and are also due on or before 9:30am each Friday prior to care being provided.

Field Trip Expenses

Costs of field trips cover the expense of the trip.

We calculate the cost based upon how many students have registered for the event. This is why it is so critical that registration be

done in a timely manner. It is also the reason why the trips are non-refundable.

It is important that these be paid in advance so we know the number of children committed to attending will meet the cost.

Holidays

Part time students follow the CCPS schedule for modifications. We are closed on**:

- New Year's Eve*
- New Year's Day*
- Martin Luther King Day (coincides with CCPS schedule)
- President's Day (coincides with CCPS schedule)
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas Eve* and
- Christmas Day*

You can find all modifications and closing dates on our Program Calendar which is distributed in August of each year for the Fall and Spring terms. We will distribute the Summer term dates in May.

*Occasionally the Winter Holidays will be modified based upon where they fall within a week.

**Modifications are done annually to meet the need for teacher planning time which is required for our Accreditation.

Please reference your classroom teacher for any amendments to this schedule.

Occasionally we may need to close early for trainings. We will provide a minimum of one week's notification when this needs to happen.

Snow Policy

Please refer to our app for notifications regarding Emergency Closings or modifications for the day.

We generally *do not* follow the Carroll County Public Schools closings.

Reporting Vacations

Letting us know when you have vacation plans allows our teachers to vacation at times when student attendance is lower. If we can arrange in advance for classroom size change, it keeps us from hiring substitutes or creating overtime. This can mean smaller tuition increases in the future.

Withdrawal Or Change Of Program

We require one month *written* notification of your intent to change the structure of your child's attendance or to withdraw from the center.

We hope that all the information you need
Is conveniently found in this handbook.

Our Center Director and Operations Director are available
to answer your questions
Monday through Friday.

Please don't hesitate to speak with either of them
about any of your concerns.

If you do not reach them immediately,
leave an Admin Only message in the app
and it will go directly to them .

Thank you for choosing

The Child's Nurturing Center, Inc.

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