



# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Revised July 2019**

**[www.playandlearnccc.org](http://www.playandlearnccc.org)**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK STATEMENT**

Please keep this Parent Handbook accessible while your child is enrolled at Play & Learn. A great deal of time and work has been put into it to provide you with concise information regarding the operational policies and procedures of the Center. It is a valuable reference that will help answer any questions you may have. Periodically as the Handbook is updated, you will receive policy addendums. However, if there is ever a question you may have that is not answered in these pages, please don't hesitate to ask a member of the administrative or teaching staff.

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## **PLAY & LEARN CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE**

35 East Stanton Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43214  
614-846-7576

### **BRENDA WEILBACHER**

Director

Gethsemane Christian Day Care Center – Play and Learn (doing business as Play & Learn Christian Child Care and hereafter referred to as Play & Learn) is a privately owned and operated non-profit child care center which is an outreach ministry of and housed in Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Child care services are provided for children ages 6 weeks to 10 years of age.

The Center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review. A toll-free telephone number is listed on the Center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the Center.

The administrator and each employee of the Center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Cod, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the Center shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the Center, or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent/guardian shall notify the administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the Center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

It is unlawful for the Center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE CHILD CARE COMMITTEE**

At Play & Learn, our primary concern is to provide quality Christian child care services at an affordable price to families with young children. We are proud of the contribution that each member of our staff makes in providing a safe and happy environment where young children are able to grow in mind, body, and spirit.

As a Christian child care center, we wish to exemplify our love for Christ in our daily lives by: (1) showing love and understanding for those with whom we come in contact; (2) supporting the work of the church, the child care, and the staff; and (3) supporting the goals, principles, and philosophy of education of Play & Learn as well as its programs and administration.

The Child Care Committee is composed of several church members, two appointed parent representatives, and the Center Director. The Committee is responsible for the entire operation of the Center and meets once a month to discuss matters presented by the Director and to periodically review policies and procedures. The Committee approves the budget and is responsible for strategic goal setting and the long-term planning of the Center. Parents/Guardians may attend the Committee meetings at any time; however, the Committee chairperson should be contacted prior to the meeting.

### **VISION AND MISSION**

Play & Learn's vision is to enrich family and community through early education. At Play & Learn our mission is to provide quality child care and early education in a safe and supportive Christian environment where young children are able to grow in body, mind, and spirit.

### **GOALS AND PRINCIPLES**

The goals and principles of Play & Learn are:

- To aid and support parents/guardians in the task of raising their children
- To provide children with loving care in a safe, healthy, cheerful, and stimulating environment
- To help children develop a positive self-image by encouraging individual initiative, creativity, self-control, mutual respect, and a sense of responsibility toward others
- To provide children with an excellent educational experience based upon individual and group activities, self-paced learning centers, and skill development in coordination, conceptualization, verbalization, and reading and math readiness
- To address the children's individual needs and concerns as they become evident
- To provide children with a religious foundation based upon the discovery and application of God's love for people in Jesus Christ
- To provide age appropriate and developmental activities that encourage each child to become involved with the learning process
- To foster growth in the area of self-help skills and the decision-making process

### **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

It is our philosophy that the development of the individual as a whole being is attained through the enrichment of the social, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of his/her nature. Our philosophy comes from the Christian commitment of Gethsemane Lutheran Church which encourages the celebration of life through love, respect, caring, and sharing. Thus, the staff at Play & Learn works to promote the development of a healthy, inquisitive, and self-confident child that is prepared for the social and mental requirements of education and is nurtured in a warm, supportive, and secure environment in which love for Jesus Christ and for others is taught and shared.

We believe children are unique individuals who grow and develop at their own pace with their own strengths, needs, and interests. The Center offers a variety of learning opportunities generated from these needs and interests. Many choices are provided within a carefully arranged structure. Learning through play and actual experiences is a cornerstone of the program.

## **PROGRAMS AVAILABLE AT PLAY & LEARN**

- Full-time infant program for children ages 6 weeks to 18 months
- Full-time and part-time toddler and preschool programs for children ages 18 months to 5 years
- Programs during summers and school holidays for children ages 6 to 10 years (kindergarten – fourth grade)

## **OHIO'S EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

In December 2011, Ohio was awarded the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. To be awarded funding, Ohio was required to have Early Learning and Development Standards in all Essential Domains of School Readiness, Birth to Age 5. These five domains included:

- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
- Approaches Toward Learning
- Language and Literacy Development
- Cognition and General Knowledge

Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards describe key concepts and skills that young children develop during the birth-to-five-year period. Their purpose is to support the development and well-being of young children and to foster their learning. The standards promote the understanding of early learning and development, provide a comprehensive and coherent set of expectations for children's development and learning, and guide the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment and instructional practices with young children.

The standards present a continuum of learning and development from birth to age five in each of the domains. Because the infant/toddler years are marked by rapid development change, the standards are divided into three meaningful transitional periods: Infants (birth to around 8 months), Young Toddlers (6 to around 18 months), and Older Toddlers (16 to around 36 months). The standards during the preschool years describe those developmental skills and concepts children should know and be able to do at the end of their preschool experience.

Copies of Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards are in each of our classrooms and are used in the creation of weekly activity plans.

## **STEP UP TO QUALITY (SUTQ) PROGRAM**

Play & Learn is proud to announce that it is participating in the Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) program and has achieved a star rating. SUTQ is a five-star quality rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. SUTQ recognizes and promotes learning and development programs that meet quality program standards that exceed licensing health and safety regulations.

The program standards are based on national research identifying standards which lead to improved outcomes for children. The goal is to provide a single definition of quality, inclusive of all program types, that is measureable, easy to understand, and provides the flexibility necessary for early learning and development programs to achieve the highest levels of quality.

The program standards are organized into the following four domains:

- **Learning and Development:** Is the program using research-based curricula aligned to Ohio's early learning and development standards for birth to kindergarten entry?
- **Staff Qualifications and Professional Development:** Have administrators, lead teachers and assistant teachers obtained required credentials and ongoing professional development hours?
- **Administrative and Leadership Practices:** To What Extent does the program adhere to an annual continuous improvement process?
- **Family and Community Partnerships:** How well does the program engage families and community partners to support children while they are enrolled in the program and as they transition into and out of the program?

## AGES AND STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES

The first five years of a child's life are very important. A young child's brain is developing faster during these early years than any other time in their lives. We work hard at Play & Learn to make sure your child is safe, happy and loved. We also want to make sure we provide activities and materials to help your child grow and learn. We use the Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3) as a screening tool to help ensure that we are providing the best level of care for each individual child.

### STAFF

The staff of Play & Learn is selected from a field of qualified candidates and comprised of well-educated and caring adults who wish to take an active part in providing quality child care and early childhood education for all children. Play & Learn aims to employ individuals who have had a wide variety of experiences both professionally and personally and whose individual personalities and talents complement one another to present a well-rounded staff. Staff members shall be physically, mentally, and emotionally able to care for young children and be actively involved in fulfilling their job responsibilities at all times. Each member of our staff has been carefully interviewed and trained to exemplify our philosophy of operation and education. The staff is here to help guide your child in his/her life experiences in a Christian environment. We are always available to discuss any special needs or concerns you may have.

The administrative staff at Play & Learn is comprised of a director and an assistant director. Each classroom has one or more caregivers/teachers who are responsible for the over-all daily management of the classroom program. Each member of the teaching staff has been employed as a qualified and competent person to care for the individual needs of each child. No staff member shall be under the influence of any substance that impairs the staff member's ability to supervise children and/or perform assigned duties.

Each staff member is required to obtain the necessary training in early childhood development and education as required by law. This includes training in child development, health and safety, first aid, CPR, communicable disease management, and child abuse/neglect recognition and prevention. There is a staff member on site all the hours the Center is open who is trained in first aid, communicable disease recognition and management, child abuse/neglect recognition, and CPR procedures for infants and children in accordance with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidelines. Staff qualifications and staff/child ratios always meet and often exceed local and state requirements.

### STAFF/CHILD RATIOS

(OAC 5101:2-12-18)

The Center employs the number of child care staff members needed to meet staff/child ratios for the Center's license capacity. Child care staff members shall be assigned to a group of children and shall have regularly assigned working hours to give continuity of care and supervision to the children. Below are listed the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services child care licensing staff to child ratios and small group sizes for each group. However, the ratios we follow will often be lower than State licensing ratios.

<u>AGE OF CHILDREN</u>	<u>STAFF/CHILD RATIO</u>	<u>MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE</u>
Young Infants (6 weeks-12 months)	1:5 or 2:12 in same room	12
Older Infants (12-18 months)	1:6	12
Young Toddlers (18 months-2 ½ years)	1:7	14
Older Toddlers (2 ½-3 years)	1:8	16
Young Preschoolers (3-4 years)	1:12	24
Older Preschoolers (4-5 years)	1:14	28
Young Schoolagers (Kindergarten-10 years)	1:18	36



## HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. It is closed the following holidays:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving

The Day After Thanksgiving

A Total of Three Days During the Christmas and New Year's Holidays  
*(The Exact Dates to Be Determined Each Year)*

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

*If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed the preceding Friday.*

*If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed the following Monday.*

In addition to the preceding holidays, the Center will also be closed for a teacher work day one Monday each August (with the exact date to be determined each year) to facilitate the start of each new school year.

## CENTER CLOSING INFORMATION

The Center will close for inclement weather when a weather emergency is declared and persons in the Columbus and surrounding areas are advised not to be on the roads. It may also become necessary to close the Center for a general emergency (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water). Additionally, the Child Care Committee reserves the right to close the Center if warranted by illness or in cases when anticipated low attendance would result in operational costs that are truly prohibitive.

In the event of a weather, general, or Center emergency which necessitates the closing of the Center, the following will occur, providing we have a means of doing so:

- 1) Local television stations will be advised of the Center's closing. Parents/Guardians should plan to listen/watch for this information. Notification will be listed under "Play and Learn Christian Child Care."
- 2) The Center's outgoing voicemail message on the main telephone line 614-846-7576 will be changed to state that the Center is closed. (If you call and the telephone continues to ring without going to voicemail, then it is very likely that the Center does not have power.)
- 3) An email stating the Center is closed will be sent to all parents/guardians who have provided a valid email address.

If there is no power and/or we are unable to notify parents/guardians any other way, then:

- 4) A text message stating the Center is closed will be sent to all parents/guardians who have provided a valid cell phone number capable of receiving text messages.

Should it become necessary for the Center to close during the regular hours of operation due to inclement weather or a general emergency, parents/guardians will be notified by telephone and expected to pick up their children within one hour. Regular tuition charges will be assessed for the duration of any closing.

When school programs are delayed or cancelled, the Center will continue to operate during its normally scheduled hours unless a weather, general, or Center emergency is declared.

*If weather is inclement and/or roads are hazardous but the Center is still open, parents/guardians are asked to allow enough driving time (or contact another person on their authorized pick-up list who is able) to arrive at the Center no later than 6:00 p.m.*

## ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To begin the enrollment process at Play & Learn, an interested parent/guardian should make an appointment to meet with the Director to discuss the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Center. At that time a tour of the facility will be given and the child's specific program schedule discussed. The Director or Assistant Director will acquaint the parent/guardian with the required enrollment forms which must be completed in order for their child to officially be enrolled. Children's records, which are maintained in the administrative office, are considered confidential.

The required State forms included in the enrollment packet are:

- Child Enrollment and Health Information Form, including health and immunization records, emergency transportation authorization, and parent roster permissions
- Child Medical Statement (to be completed by a licensed physician within thirty days of enrollment)
- Family Information Form
- Copy of the Parent Handbook

Also included in the enrollment packet are:

- Supplemental Enrollment Information Form and Fee Agreement Contract
- Policy Agreement, Release of Liability, Media Release, and E-Mail Listing Form
- Child and Adult Care Food Program Enrollment Forms
- Entry Survey and Parent Questionnaire
- Medical and Dental Emergency Plan

All children must be registered in advance and must comply with the state regulations with regard to physical examinations and immunizations. Play & Learn reserves the right to deny admission of a child whose parent/guardian refuses to have a child immunized or denies consent for emergency transportation by emergency squad to a source of medical treatment.

When the necessary enrollment forms are completed and returned, and the required non-refundable \$25 registration fee and security deposit equivalent to two weeks' tuition are paid, a starting date will then be scheduled for the child.

Children are enrolled on a "first come" basis for full-time positions. Children may be enrolled on a part-time basis in the toddler and preschool classrooms as long as part-time positions are available. No part-time positions are available in the infant room.

## BUILDING SECURITY

The Main Building east side (yellow) entry door from the parking lot has a security system. Entry to the Main Building will be possible by simply entering an access code on the push-button pad mounted next to the door. Each Play & Learn family and staff member will be assigned a different access code to use to gain entry to the building. Visitors and anyone else who do not have an access code can gain entry to the building by using the same push-button pad to call the cell phone of designated Play & Learn staff member who will be able to use the cell phone to remotely open the door for them. Similarly, the Infant/Toddler House will be kept locked with a smaller push-button keypad on the doorknob. Families and staff members will be given the access code to use to gain entry. Visitors and those who do not have the access code may gain entry by ringing the doorbell to signal to an Infant/Toddler House staff member to open the door.

**In order for this security system to be most effective, please remember the following:**

- **Do not to prop open the doors when the building is locked.**
- **Do not hold open the door for others entering the building.**  
They may enter their designated access code or call to gain entry.
- **Do not to share your family access code with others.**  
If a friend or extended family member comes to pick up your child, they can use the push-button pad (Main Building) or doorbell (Infant/Toddler House) to call the designated staff member to gain entry.
- **Do not share your family access code with your minor children under the age of sixteen.**  
Children may inadvertently share the number with multiple others without realizing the consequence.

**Above all, remember that the safety of those using the building and the effectiveness of the security system will only be as good as we ALL make it!**

## **TUITION AND FEES**

*Effective August 19, 2019*

Play & Learn exists as a non-profit organization with tuition and fees established to defray the primary cost of operation. Tuition and fees are determined by the Child Care Committee. Subject to revision, new rates shall be provided to parents in advance of the effective date.

### **Cost of Full-Time Child Care**

Parents who pay the full-time private pay rates may leave their child any or all of the hours the Center is open. The following are the full-time tuition rates.

<b><u>Age Group</u></b>	<b><u>Weekly Rate</u></b>	<b><u>Weekly Sibling Discount Rate</u></b>
Infant	\$276.00	-----
Toddler	\$256.00	\$231.00
Younger Preschool (Big Birds Class)	\$240.00	\$216.00
Older Preschool & Pre-K (Cookie Monsters & Kermits Classes)	\$220.00	\$198.00
School-Age (No School Days)	\$220.00 or \$55.00 per day	-----

### **Cost of Part-Time Child Care**

Parents who pay a part-time private pay rate may leave their child the number of hours/days assigned in their part-time schedule. Parents who need to request changes to their child's assigned part-time schedule due to changes in their work schedules may do so by notifying the office no later than the Friday preceding the week of the requested schedule change. Requests for changes to the current week's part-time schedule due to a child's illness will not be permitted. A half-day is defined as five or less hours of attendance on any given day. The following are available part-time schedules with their assigned tuition rates.

<b><u>Age Group</u></b>	<b><u>4 Full Days</u></b>	<b><u>3 Full Days / 4 or 5 Half-Days</u></b>	<b><u>2 Full Days / 3 Half-Days</u></b>
Toddler	\$216.00	\$165.00	\$124.00
Younger Preschool (Big Birds Class)	\$202.00	\$154.00	\$116.00
Older Preschool & Pre-K (Cookie Monsters & Kermits Classes)	\$189.00	\$144.00	\$109.00

### **Fees**

One-Time Registration Fee \$25.00 per family

#### **To Be Paid Upon New Enrollment and Each August**

Annual Supplies/Materials Fee (Toddler, Preschool, and Pre-K Classes) \$50.00 per child

Approved 7/15/19

## **TUITION AND FEES (Continued)**

### **Sibling Discount**

Any parent/guardian who currently has more than one child enrolled on a full-time basis at Play & Learn is eligible to receive a discount off the weekly tuition cost when the second child and each additional child is enrolled on a full-time basis in the toddler or preschool classes. (*See the listed weekly sibling discount rates.*) The discount applies to the older siblings' rate(s). There are no sibling discounts for children in the infant program or for children enrolled on a part-time basis.

### **Registration Fee and Security Deposit**

Payment of both a non-refundable registration fee of \$25.00 per family and a security deposit of two weeks' tuition secures the child(ren)'s position(s) in the Center. The security deposit is non-refundable until enrollment begins. The registration fee and security deposit are considered to be part of the enrollment process; therefore, enrollment is not complete until these are paid and the necessary forms are completed. The two-week security deposit payment will be applied to the child's last two weeks of attendance at the Center provided a two-week written notice of withdrawal from the Center has been given. If a two-week notice of withdrawal is not given, then the security deposit will be forfeited.

### **Holding Fee**

A non-refundable holding fee is charged when a child leaves the center for a period of four or more consecutive weeks (typically during the summer). The holding fee is due prior to your departure and may be applied once during any one school year. A child may be removed from the Center up to three months. The holding fee, which is the equivalent of two weeks' tuition, is required to hold the space for your child. Once the holding fee is paid, a space will be guaranteed to be available upon your child's return. If no holding fee is paid, the space may be assigned to another child and your child's name placed on our waiting list for the next available space.

**NOTE:** The fees are set by the Committee and reviewed annually and revised as necessary. These fees are current for the time of revision of this Handbook.

### **Supplies/Materials Fee**

There is a \$50.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-K classes. This fee is to be paid in August prior to the start of each school year.

### **Books, School Pictures, Novelty Items**

Workbooks may be required as part of a class; however, they are not included in the tuition payments. They are sold at cost to parents/guardians. Notification of book fees will be made so as to allow ample time for payment. School pictures and items such as Play & Learn T-shirts and tote bags will be offered throughout the year without obligation to purchase.

### **Child Care Damage Fee**

Although the materials, supplies, and equipment at Play & Learn were chosen with durability in mind, misuse or misbehavior may cause permanent damage. You are responsible for any damage above and beyond normal wear and tear caused by your child while at Play & Learn.

### **Parents/Guardians Receiving Tuition Assistance Through the Franklin County Title XX Program**

Parents/Guardians receiving tuition assistance from Franklin County are responsible to pay their assigned co-pay and maintain the schedule provided by the County. Parents/Guardians will also be responsible to pay for any absentee days (at the current private-pay rate) which exceed the amount allotted by the County as well as any other fees, including but not limited to, registration fees, supplies/materials fees, late fees, field trip/activity fees, transportation fees, or fees charged for child care services which exceed the hours and days authorized by the County. Parents/Guardians are responsible to submit any re-determination paperwork in a timely manner so as to maintain eligibility. Parents/Guardians that, at any time, cease to be approved for the Title XX program will immediately become responsible for private-pay tuition rates until such time as they become eligible for tuition assistance.

## TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Payment of a non-refundable registration fee in the amount of \$25.00 and a security deposit of two weeks' tuition are required to reserve a space for your child when the Center notifies you that one is available.

There is a \$50.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-K classes. This fee is to be paid in August prior to the start of each school year.

Tuition is due each Monday for the week. A \$25.00 late charge per family will be added to your account if your balance is not paid by the close of the day on Tuesday. All tuition payments are non-refundable.

Payments may be made in checks, money orders, cash, or Auto Debit. All cash must be paid to the office. Play & Learn is not responsible for lost cash payments that are not made directly to the Director or Assistant Director in the office. A receipt will automatically be given if cash is received. Checks should be made payable to Play & Learn. Checks may be dropped in the payment box located in the main building front hallway or the box on the counter in the infant/toddler house. Receipts and/or copy of your payment record will be issued upon your written request.

There will be a \$35.00 charge for each NSF returned check / Auto Debit. This must be paid before the child can continue the program. An excessive number of returned payments will require that cash be paid prior to rendering future services.

Tuition is charged on a weekly basis. Tuition payments will not be refunded or credited for Center closures or absences due to inclement weather, general emergencies (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), illness, or other activity. If a holiday falls during a weekday, you will be charged your full week's tuition, the same as any other week.

Play & Learn closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Should it be necessary to pick up your child later than 6:00 p.m., late fees will be assessed according to the fee schedule outlined in the Late Pick-Up Policy and will be payable with the next week's tuition payment. Please be courteous and call in advance to notify the Center if you will be late and/or make other arrangements for someone to pick up your child(ren). If the Center has not been notified and a child remains after 6:30 p.m., the Columbus Police Department and Children's Services will be contacted to pick up the child.

Each child enrolled on a full-time basis is allotted one week of vacation time per school year. Tuition will be charged at one-half the regular rate during vacation time providing the child has been enrolled at the Center for at least six consecutive months and a two-week written notice is given.

A two-week written notice to the Director is required for withdrawal of your child from the Center. If a two-week notice is not given, your security deposit will be forfeited and you will be responsible to pay full tuition for the balance of two weeks.

Delinquent payments without prior satisfactory arrangements with the Director shall result in immediate withdrawal of your child from the Center until your account is brought current. If for some reason you are unable to meet the tuition payment schedule, please see the Director to make alternate arrangements.

If action is necessary to collect amounts past due on your account, you shall be responsible for all cost incurred related to collection of your past due account, including, but not limited to attorney fees and court costs.

You will be notified as soon as possible and not less than one month prior to the effective date of any rate increase.

Play & Learn will provide the Center's tax identification number to parents/guardians upon request.

## VACATIONS

1. A child enrolled yearlong at the Center is allotted five vacation days per year, whereby the tuition rate is one-half of the normal rate.
2. A child must be enrolled six consecutive months before being eligible for vacation time.
3. Vacation time is per school year from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> each year.
4. Vacation time cannot be accumulated from year to year.
5. Vacation must be taken a full week at a time (Monday-Friday).
6. You must notify the Director in writing at least two weeks in advance when you are planning to take your vacation for the half-price weekly rate to apply.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Tuition payments will not be credited or refunded for Center closures or absences due to inclement weather, general emergencies (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), illness, or other activity. If a holiday falls during a weekday, you will be charged your full week's tuition, the same as any other week.

All parents/guardians are asked to notify the Center by 10:00 a.m. if their child(ren) is/are not going to attend. Lunch counts are needed by this time each day.

Children who do not attend the Center for a period of ten days without notifying the office will be dropped from the enrollment roster.

## LATE PICK-UP POLICY

Play & Learn closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. It is important to the operation of our child care program that all children are picked up from Play & Learn before closing time. This means that parents/guardians arrive in enough time to gather children and their belongings and exit the Center no later than the 6:00 p.m. closing time. This policy will be strictly enforced, and habitual late pick ups will result in termination of service.

Play & Learn will allow one late pick up occurrence per every six months or six months from your last late pick up occurrence. This will result in a warning. If you have already received a warning and are late again, a late fee will be assessed using the fee schedule detailed below and will be payable with your next week's tuition.

1 <sup>st</sup> Occurrence after warning	\$10.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> Occurrence after warning	\$10.00 plus \$1.00 per minute after closing time
3 <sup>rd</sup> Occurrence after warning	\$10.00 plus \$2.00 per minute after closing time
4 <sup>th</sup> Occurrence after warning	\$10.00 plus \$5.00 per minute after closing time
5 <sup>th</sup> Occurrence after warning	Termination of service

Late fees will be assessed per child.

Staff cannot discriminate between lateness due to car trouble, traffic, or inclement weather.

If a child remains at Play & Learn past 6:00 p.m., the child's parent/guardian will be called to determine when someone will arrive to pick up the child. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact(s) will be called. Please be courteous and call in advance to notify the Center if you will be late and/or make arrangements for someone else to pick up your child(ren). If the Center has not been notified and a child remains after 6:30 p.m., the Columbus Police Department and Franklin County Children's Services will be contacted to pick up the child.

## TAX STATEMENTS

A tax statement indicating the amount spent for child care services is completed for each family who has had children enrolled at the Center during the course of the calendar year. Parents/Guardians will be notified when the statements are ready to be picked up in the office. Parents/Guardians of children no longer enrolled at the time the statements are printed may call and request a copy to be picked up in the office. Tax statements generally are not mailed.

## UPDATED ENROLLMENT FORMS AND CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Prior to the beginning of each school year in August, the Center will distribute a packet of updated enrollment forms to each parent/guardian as required by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. A set of forms will need to be completed for each child enrolled at the Center before your child(ren) can continue the program. Please be sure to notify the office in writing immediately whenever you have a change of information, such as a new home or work address or phone number, a person to be added to the authorized pick up list, a new emergency contact, etc. This will better enable us to serve you and your child, and it is extremely important in the event of an emergency.

### PARENT ROSTER

A parent roster including the names and telephone numbers of parents who have children enrolled at Play & Learn is maintained and available upon request. The parent roster is updated at least once annually. The roster does not include the names and telephone numbers of parents who do not wish to be included.

### DAILY ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The center is open to children at 6:30 a.m. At times, staff may arrive earlier than that time to set up for the day; however, they are not authorized to unlock the doors until the opening time of 6:30 a.m. Upon arrival at the Center, each child must be taken directly to his/her assigned classroom/teacher. Under **no circumstances** is a child to be dropped off outside the building, left at the main entrance, or permitted to enter/exit the building alone. Prior to departing for the day, parents/guardians are expected to assist their child with removal of coats, boots, hats, etc. and washing of their child's hands with liquid soap and running water for at least fifteen seconds.

Each teacher keeps a class attendance roster with him/her to document each child's arrival and departure. Parents/Guardians should be sure that the staff member in charge has acknowledged their child's presence during drop off and recognized their child's departure during pick up, to ensure the constant supervision of your child.

Children will only be released to their parents/guardians or persons who have been authorized in writing by their parents/guardians at the time of enrollment. A child will only be released to persons sixteen years of age or older. Any changes in authorization must be done in the parent's/guardian's handwriting and submitted in advance to the office. Under **no circumstances** will a child be released to an unauthorized person. Be aware that any person picking up your child may be asked to show some form of picture identification before your child will be released. Children who are not picked up by 6:00 p.m. will be assessed late fees according to the fee schedule outlined in the Late Pick-Up Policy and will be payable with the next week's tuition payment. Please be courteous and call in advance to notify the Center if you will be late and/or make other arrangements for someone to pick up your child(ren). If the Center has not been notified and a child remains after 6:30 p.m., the Columbus Police Department and Children's Services will be contacted to pick up the child.

If a custody agreement is in effect, Play & Learn must be provided a copy of the agreement to maintain on file. A parent/guardian of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent/guardian shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent/guardian unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent/guardian. Under the laws of the state of Ohio, both parents/guardians may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent/guardian, who chooses not to include the child's other parent/guardian on the authorized pick-up list must file an official court document (e.g. current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Without that document on file, the Center may release the child to either parent/guardian, provided that parent/guardian shows legal documents verifying his paternity/her maternity of the child.

Children transported in vehicles must be buckled securely into car safety seats/seatbelts that meet state requirements. Parents/Guardians will take whatever steps are necessary to maintain and use car safety seats. Play & Learn does not maintain extra car seats on sight to loan to parents/guardians. Additionally, Play & Learn staff members are not permitted to install car seats in parents'/guardians' vehicles. Play & Learn reserves the right to contact another person on the authorized pick up list if this requirement is not met. When a staff member believes that the safety of the child is better served if the parent/guardian does not drive, parents/guardians agree to either leave the program by taxicab and reimburse the Center for the cost of the cab or have another person on the authorized pick up list be called to pick up the child.

## **REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

(OAC 5101:2-12-19)

It is our intent to build a partnership with parents/guardians to help them provide the most suitable environment possible for their children. Toward this goal, we have many resources and referrals available to parents/guardians upon request.

We understand that children will sustain a variety of bumps and bruises as a result of just being a child; however, we ask that you let us know of any unusual injuries and/or accidents that occur at home. It is important for parents/guardians to be aware that under section 2151.421 of the Revised Code, the administrator and each employee of the Center are required to immediately report their suspicions of neglect and/or physical (including but not limited to suspicious bruises, cuts, or marks), emotional, and/or verbal child abuse to the public children services agency (Franklin County Children's Services Agency). It is the responsibility of this agency to investigate each report.

### **TERMINATION OF SERVICE**

If a parent/guardian wishes to terminate enrollment of his/her child in our program, a two-week written notice is required. If a two-week written notice is not given, a parent/guardian will be billed for the period of two weeks from the date of the notice and the two-week security deposit will be forfeited. Any parent/guardian who terminates enrollment without paying all due fees will receive a bill specifying the amount owed and a time limit for payment.

It is our sincere hope that your child has a positive experience at our Center. However, we acknowledge that sometimes either children are not ready for a large group experience or home and Center environments drastically differ to the extent that the child is extremely unhappy. The Center reserves the right to re-evaluate any child's continued participation in the program who has needs that cannot best be met by the Center or that may be detrimental to the health or progress of the other children. The Center may, under these circumstances, request withdrawal of the child from the program. Play & Learn will be happy to recommend suitable alternatives that may better suit the child's needs. A two-week notice will generally be given should the Center request withdrawal of the child from the program. However, if the child is an immediate danger to himself/herself or others or presents behavioral problems which unreasonably disrupt the Center, immediate withdrawal may be requested. Play & Learn reserves the right to terminate child care services with or without cause or notice.

Reasons the Center may choose to terminate a child's enrollment include, but are not limited to:

- A child's severe and repeated misbehavior. Program staff will work with the child in a positive manner as specified in our guidance/management policy. Children who do not respond positively and who create dangerous situations for themselves or others may be better accommodated in another setting. Parents/Guardians will be consulted by the Director whenever any difficulties arise and kept informed about disciplinary processes.
- A parent's/guardian's noncompliance with program policies and requests for cooperation in working with his/her child or a parent's/guardian's inappropriate actions or comments directed toward any staff member and/or other children enrolled in the Center. If a parent/guardian disregards such specific requests for compliance and cooperation or acts in an inappropriate manner toward Center staff and/or enrolled children, child care services may be terminated immediately.
- A parent's/guardian's habitual lateness in arriving to pick up his/her child.



**SUPERVISION**  
(OAC 5101:2-12-19)

The children shall be organized in groups with assigned specific child care staff members to give continuity of care and supervision to the children on a day to day basis.

The child care staff in charge of a group of children shall be responsible for their supervision. Supervision means child care staff members have knowledge of children's needs, accountability for their care, and knowledge of which children they are responsible for at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Children shall be within sight and hearing of child care staff members at all times.

A record of each child's daily attendance shall be maintained in the child's assigned class group. The class attendance roster shall remain with the group at all times throughout the day including during outdoor play, during emergency evacuations and drills, and when groups are combined.

Children may visit the next older age group for transitioning purposes. Before a child begins a transition period to the next class, a transition agreement must be signed by the child's parent/guardian. The written agreement between the parent/guardian and the Center shall specify the beginning and ending date of the transitioning period and include the transitioning schedule. A copy of this agreement will be available in the assigned classrooms. A child's transition may be initiated at the request of the parent/guardian or the Center.

A school-age child may run errands inside the building or use the restroom alone without adult supervision as long as the child is within hearing distance of a child care staff member and the child care staff member checks on the child at least every five minutes until he/she returns to the group. The child may not leave the classroom until he/she has obtained permission from the child care staff member in charge of the group.

A preschool or school-age child may participate in activities in the building sponsored by other groups, such as computer or gymnastics classes, as long as signed and dated written permission has been obtained from the child's parent/guardian detailing the nature, location, and starting/ending times of the activity, the arrangements for going to and from the activity, and the time period for which the permission is given.

**CARE AND NURTURING OF CHILDREN**

The child care staff shall be responsible for the well being and safety of each child in the group to which they are assigned and for meeting each child's basic needs. Staff will acknowledge and respond appropriately to children who are crying or who show distress. Staff shall implement practices that are supportive of individual developmental needs when caring for children with special needs.

All children must be served food that is not a choking hazard and that is developmentally appropriate in size, amount and texture. Children will be permitted the opportunity and encouraged to learn to feed themselves as their developmental levels allow.

Diapers and clothing shall be checked regularly every two to three hours and when wet or soiled shall be changed immediately. Parents/Guardians are responsible to provide, as needed, a daily supply of diapers and at least one complete change of clothes including shoes for their child.

Staff will assist with the needs of the children such as toileting, hand washing, and basic hygiene.

The administrator and each employee of the Center shall protect or remove children from a person or situation that is determined to be unsafe. Children shall not be exposed to inappropriate language, conversations, or behavior by Center employees, media, parents/guardians, or visitors.

## **CARE OF CHILDREN WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS**

(OAC 5101:2-12-15&16)

It is important that you inform the staff of any allergies or medical conditions your child may have. This will assist us in being better equipped to handle any emergencies that may arise and to provide the best possible care for your child.

A child with health conditions or requiring medical procedures may be cared for at the Center providing the Center is properly equipped and a detailed "Medical/Physical Care Plan" is completed with all the necessary information and instructions and is signed and dated by the child's parent/guardian on the prescribed form. This plan shall also be signed and dated by the child care staff member(s) responsible for the child, the Center Administrator, and, if applicable, the certified professional who trained the Center staff to perform the medical procedures. Each Medical/Physical Care Plan must be updated/revised at least annually, or more often, if necessary. Only child care staff members trained by the parent/guardian, or certified professional shall be permitted to perform medical procedures. There shall be a trained child care staff member onsite at all times whenever children who require treatment are present.

A child with a health condition includes a school-age child whose medical condition requires the availability of an inhaler or medication for emergency needs. The child may be in possession of these items only if they are kept in a closed bag/backpack out of the reach of other children and signed and dated written permission is obtained by the child's parent/guardian. Center staff shall be notified of these children whose condition necessitates the carrying of these items.

## **HEALTH POLICY AND ILLNESSES**

(OAC 5101:2-12-16)

Upon enrollment, a medical statement must be completed for each child which includes an immunization summary, a date of exam within the last twelve months, and the signature of a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), or certified nurse practitioner (CNP) who examined the child. A completed updated medical statement must then be obtained annually (no more than every thirteen months) for all children under six years of age. At Play & Learn, we are very conscientious about each child's health and safety. Because children and staff members have entered into a large group situation, they will be exposed to a wider variety of germs. Our illness policy encourages ill children and staff members to remain at home until they are fully recovered.

A staff member with currently valid training in the management of communicable disease will observe each child daily upon arrival at the Center to ensure each child is free from any apparent communicable disease. Staff members are trained in the recognition and management of communicable diseases as well as proper handwashing techniques and disinfecting procedures. The Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart is posted in both the main building and the infant/toddler house.

Please do not send your child to the Center with a fever, sore throat, or other suspicious symptoms. Play & Learn reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the Center for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day in keeping with the guidelines outlined in Ohio Administrative Code, Chapter 5101:2-12-33. This is to ensure the continued good health of everyone at the Center.

If your child becomes ill while at the Center, he/she will be isolated from the other children and provided a cot/crib and blanket and observed carefully for worsening condition. You will be contacted immediately when it becomes necessary for you to pick up your child due to an illness. Please refer to the "Management of Communicable Disease" page in this handbook for the signs and symptoms of illness which require immediate discharge of a child from the Center. Whenever someone develops a communicable disease, a notice is posted at the entrance of the affected classroom. Notes will be sent home to all families of children in the affected classroom. Should your child develop a contagious disease, please notify the office immediately.

We can all work together in practicing preventative medicine. Proper handwashing techniques should become daily routine. Children should be taught to cover noses and mouths for sneezes and coughs. Balanced meals and adequate rest/sleep should be incorporated into each child's stage of development.

## MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

(OAC 5101:2-12-16)

The current version of the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart will be followed for appropriate management of suspected illnesses. Copies of this chart are posted in the cafeteria of the main building and in the main hallway of the infant/toddler house. If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease at the Center, a notice will be posted at the entrance of the affected room within the next day of Center operation.

Many parents/guardians ask, "How do I know if my child is well enough to go to Play & Learn?" The following guidelines should assist you in making that decision:

1. The child should enjoy his/her day at the Center and should not become overly fatigued as the result of normal participation in activities.
2. The child should not be given aspirin, Tylenol, or other fever reducers to mask a fever prior to arrival at the Center. If the child has a fever, he/she must be fever free without the aid of medication for 24 hours prior to returning to the Center.
3. If your child has a communicable disease, the period of communicability must be over prior to return, in accordance with the communicable disease chart posted in each building.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent/guardian or a person designated by the parent/guardian:

- Temperature of at least one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (taken by the axillary/armpit method with a digital thermometer) when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four hour period)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching, or eye pain
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness

The parent/guardian of the child will be notified by telephone and the child will be discharged to the parent/guardian or other authorized person **within one hour**. A child who exhibits any of the above symptoms of illness may return to the Center only when he/she has been free from the symptoms without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours and/or has completed any necessary course of treatment to assure that he/she is not contagious. (A physician's note may be required depending upon the illness and its method of treatment.)

A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be: 1) within sight and hearing of an adult at all times, 2) cared for in another room or portion of a room away from other children, and 3) provided with a crib/cot and made comfortable. A mildly ill child who is experiencing minor cold symptoms or who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the above symptoms may attend the Center. The child will be cared for within the child's group and observed carefully for signs and symptoms of worsening condition. If the child should develop any of the above listed symptoms (as stated in OAC 5101:2:12:33), he/she will immediately be isolated and discharged to the parent/guardian or authorized person **within one hour**. If both parents/guardians are unavailable, the persons designated as emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the child. A form will be sent home with the child detailing his/her symptoms and information regarding his/her return to the Center.

If your child requires medication, vitamins, or a special diet, there is a required form available at the office to be completed and signed each time medication needs to be administered. Medication that does not have a prescription label must be clearly marked by the parent/guardian with the child's name, dosage, time, and why it is being given. All medication must be in the original container.

Staff will be trained in the recognition and management of common childhood illnesses by attending a state approved course which teaches proper handwashing and diapering techniques to our staff. When a staff member becomes ill, the same policies will apply. If a staff member is unable to perform his/her assigned duties due to an illness or a communicable disease, the staff member will be sent home to recover and an approved substitute will be assigned to cover that staff member's class.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS, FOOD SUPPLEMENTS, OR MODIFIED DIETS (OAC 5101:2-12-25)

State law requires that the Center obtain written instructions signed by a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or dentist and written and dated instructions signed by the parent/guardian on the prescribed "Request for Administration of Medication" form each time a medication, food supplement, or modified diet is to be administered. In order for a medication, food supplement, or modified diet to be administered by the Center, written instructions must be secured by a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist or a prescription label must be provided which contains the child's name, a current date (within the last twelve months), the exact dosage to be given, the specific number of dosages to be given daily, and the means of administration. Written, signed, and dated instructions of the parent/guardian must also be completed on the prescribed form. Medication will not be administered on an "as needed" basis. A medication, food supplement, or modified diet shall not be administered for any period of time beyond the date indicated by the physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist certified to prescribe medication, or **twelve months**, whichever comes first.

Over-the-counter, non-prescription pain/fever-reducing medications that do not contain aspirin will only be administered by the Center if accompanied by written instructions from a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist which include a specific diagnosis and reason why the medication is to be administered. Over-the-counter, non-prescription cough or cold medications that do not contain codeine may be administered by the Center without written instructions from a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist if written instructions from the parent/guardian are provided on the medication request form. The name of the medication, name of the child, birth date of the child, date, and the parent/guardian's signature must be included on the form. The full name of the child who is to receive the medication is to be printed on the medication container. The medication shall be in its original container with its original manufacturer's label attached which specifies appropriate dosages based on the child's age and weight. Recommended dosages for a child's age and weight will not be exceeded. The Center will administer the medication for no longer than **three consecutive days** within a fourteen-day period unless accompanied by signed instructions from a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist.

Non-prescription topical ointments, creams, or lotions may be administered by the Center without written instructions from a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist if written instructions from the parent/guardian are provided on the medication request form. The form shall also include the name of the ointment, cream, or lotion; name of the child; birth date of the child; date; and the parent's/guardian's signature. The written instructions will be valid for no longer than **twelve months**. Authorization for administration of the ointment, cream, or lotion may be canceled by written request of the parent/guardian at any time. When used for skin irritations, such as diaper rash, the topical product shall be administered by the Center for no longer than **fourteen consecutive days** at any one time period of use unless accompanied by signed instructions from a licensed physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist. Cough drops, creams, sunscreens, and lip balms are considered medication. Instructions for over-the-counter medications must be followed. Non-prescription topical products and lotions used only as a preventative measure do not need to be documented. Signed and dated written instructions from the parent/guardian must be obtained, however, on the medication request form.

The Center shall not administer any medication, food supplement, medical food, or topical product until after the child has received the first dose or application at least once prior to the Center administering a dose or applying the product, to avoid unexpected reactions. Emergency medications that are listed on a completed Medical/Physical Care Plan are exempt from this requirement. The Center shall not administer any medication, food supplement, medical food, or topical product for any period of time beyond the date indicated by the physician, physician's assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist certified to prescribe medication on the prescription label, for **twelve months** from the date of the form, or after the expiration date on the medication, whichever comes first.

All medication and food supplements must be given to Center staff for immediate safe storage, except that an inhaler or medication may be available to a school child with a special health condition in an emergency in accordance with the Center's medication policy. A school-age child with a health condition may be permitted to have possession of an inhaler or medication for emergency needs if these items are stored in a closed bag/backpack out of the reach of other children and signed and dated written permission is obtained by the child's parent/guardian. Center staff shall be notified of these children whose condition necessitates the carrying of these items.

## **MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND GENERAL EMERGENCIES**

(OAC 5101:2-12-16)

Persons trained in first aid and CPR will be readily available at all times during the hours the Center is in operation. A Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Plan which gives the emergency telephone numbers, the names of those persons trained in first aid, CPR, and communicable disease, and specific instructions to follow in the event of an emergency is posted by each telephone in the office, in the kitchen, in each classroom, and in other spaces used by the children, such as the Multipurpose Room and Great Hall. A first aid kit is readily available in the kitchens of both the main building and Infant/Toddler house. The Center staff shall have access at all times to a working non-coin operated telephone.

An emergency medical authorization statement must be completed by the parent/guardian of each child upon enrollment at the Center. This statement will be kept on file in the office for ready reference when a child is being considered for medical or dental treatment. Play & Learn reserves the right to deny admission of a child whose parent/guardian denies consent for emergency transportation to a source of medical treatment.

Precautions are taken to prevent accidents and to insure the safety of children and adults. However, should a serious incident, injury, or illness occur affecting a child, the child's parent/guardian would be notified immediately. Should a child need to be transported by emergency squad to the hospital for treatment due to a serious incident, injury, or illness, the child's health and medical records will accompany the child. A Center administrator or child care staff member will accompany and stay with the child until the parent/guardian assumes responsibility for the child's care. Subsequent medical supervision and/or treatment, if necessary, is the parent's/guardian's responsibility. If a child should sustain any type of head injury, no matter how slight, his/her parent/guardian should be contacted immediately.

An "Incident/Injury Report" will be completed by the child care staff in charge of a child when the following occur: 1) a child becomes ill and requires first aid or receives an injury which requires first aid treatment; 2) a child is transported to a source of emergency assistance; 3) a child receives a bump or blow to the head; or 4) an unusual or unexpected incident occurs which jeopardizes the safety of child or Center employee, such as a child leaving the center unattended, a vehicle accident with or without injuries, or exposure of children to a threatening person or situation. The completed report should be given to the parent/guardian to review and sign on the same day the incident/injury occurred. A copy of the completed and signed report should be given to the parent/guardian and the original returned to the office to be placed in the child's file at the Center. A "Serious Incident Reporting for Child Care" form will be completed by the child care staff when the following occur: 1) death of a child at the Center; 2) a child receives a bump or blow to the head that requires first aid or medical attention; 3) an incident, injury, or illness requires a child to be removed by the parent/guardian or emergency services from the Center for medical treatment, professional consultation, or transportation for emergency treatment; 4) an unusual or unexpected incident which jeopardizes the safety of a child or Center employee; or 5) an incident defined as a serious risk noncompliance.

A Medical, Dental and General Emergency plan; a Dental First Aid Chart; and a fire and weather emergency plan including evacuation routes is posted in the office, in the kitchen, in each classroom, and in each area used by the children. Monthly fire drills are conducted at varying times, and monthly tornado/weather drills are conducted during the months of March through September. In addition, quarterly emergency/lockdown drills are also conducted. Written documentation of these drills is kept onsite. Should there be a general emergency (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), staff members are instructed to follow the directions detailed on the Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Plan. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately if the general emergency requires the children to be picked up from the Center or an alternate evacuation site (St. Michael School). Please keep the office updated of any changes in your business and home addresses and telephone numbers so you can be easily located and reached in the event of any emergency.

### **CONCEALED WEAPONS LAW**

(Ohio Revised Code Section 2923.1212)

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance onto Center premises.

## **SAFETY**

The child care staff in charge of a group of children shall be responsible for their safety in keeping with the policy established by the Center. No child shall ever be alone or unsupervised (by staff or parent/guardian) while at the Center. There is to be no running in the building except during directed physical activity in the Great Hall or Multipurpose Room.

Two responsible adults are on the premises at all times. A staff member trained in first aid, communicable disease management, child abuse/neglect recognition, and CPR is available on site all the hours the Center is open.

Upon arrival to and departure from the Center, parents/guardians will be responsible to check in with the staff member responsible for their child's care. Staff members are to greet each parent/guardian and child upon arrival to and departure from their class and immediately mark the class attendance sheet to reflect each child's arrival and departure. In the parent's/guardian's absence staff members assume responsibility for the child. Upon arrival to the Center the parent/guardian re-assumes full responsibility for his/her child.

The Center staff has immediate access to a working telephone at all times. Fire drills will be conducted monthly throughout the year. Weather drills will be conducted monthly during the months of March through September. Emergency/lockdown drills will be conducted quarterly. Records of the dates and times are kept in the main office. Fire emergency and weather alert plans (including evacuation routes) are posted in the office, in the kitchen, in each classroom, and in other spaces used by the children, such as the Multipurpose Room and Great Hall.

Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle for field trips, special outings, or routine trips, a first aid kit and a working cellular phone will accompany them. A person trained in first aid/management of communicable disease and CPR shall be available on the trip. Each child shall wear a wristband with proper identification including: the Center's name, address, and telephone number. Emergency exiting procedures from transportation vehicles shall be practiced with the children on a monthly basis by all staff responsible for transporting children. A record of the dates, times, and staff involved is kept in the office. Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle for field trips, parents/guardians are responsible to provide a suitable car/booster seat as required by Ohio's revised child restraint law which states the following:

- Children less than 4 years old or 40 pounds must use a child safety seat.
- Children less than 8 years old, unless they are at least 4 feet, 9 inches tall must use a booster seat.
- Children ages 8-15 must use a child safety seat or safety belt.

Before a child can participate in a water or swimming program where the water is more than two feet deep, a parent's/guardian's signed and dated permission slip is required indicating whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer. The children will be supervised by the child care staff and the pool or body of water shall be supervised by persons who are certified lifeguards or water safety instructors in compliance with the rules of the American Red Cross. The required staff/children ratios of Ohio Law shall be maintained during all swimming and water play activity.

When an accident or injury occurs or when any other incident necessitates the emergency transportation of a child, the Center shall complete a report on the form prescribed by Ohio Law. A copy shall be given to the parent/guardian and the original shall remain on file at the Center.

The use of spray aerosols is prohibited when children are in attendance at the Center. This includes aerosol sunscreens and medications. Cleaning equipment and materials shall be kept in spaces inaccessible to children. Cots, pads, or mats used for napping shall be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water and sanitized at least every three months or when reassigned to another child. Cots which become soiled during daily use shall be cleaned immediately with soap and water and sanitized with an appropriate germicide. All equipment should be inspected regularly to ensure its safety. Electrical outlets must have appropriate coverings when not in use.

Equipment safety and safe use of the equipment are a high priority at our center. Equipment is routinely maintained, and children are instructed as to the rules for safe play as part of our curriculum.

All child care staff members are required by law, ORC 2151.421, to immediately notify the Local Public Children's Services Agency when a child is suspected to have been abused or neglected. A toll-free telephone number is listed on the Center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

## **SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY**

(OAC 5101:2-12-24)

Before a child can swim or participate in an activity in or near a body of water two or more feet in depth, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent/guardian indicating: the child's name and birthdate, whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer, the location of the swimming site, a statement of whether or not the Center is providing additional adults or child care staff members above the licensing ration requirements for this activity, and a statement that the parent/guardian grants permission for the child to participate.

All swimming sites shall meet state and local guidelines for environmental health inspections and for onsite and private pools. Swimming activities shall not be permitted in lakes, rivers, ponds, creeks, or other similar bodies of water with the exception of school-age children who have the written permission from the child's parent/guardian.

Activities in bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be supervised by persons who are currently certified as lifeguards or water safety instructors by the American Red Cross or an equivalent water safety program. If the lifeguard is a child care staff member, he/she shall not be counted as a child care staff member in the staff/child ratio. Child care staff members and all adults accompanying the children shall be actively supervising children and shall be able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area including the bottom of pools. The required staff/children ratios of will be maintained or exceeded during all swimming and water play activities.

Before an infant or toddler child can participate in water activities using wading pools, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent/guardian indicating whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer. The children will be supervised by the child care staff, and the required staff/children ratios shall be maintained or exceeded during all water play activities.

Child care staff members shall review swimming and/or water safety rules with the children each time they participate in water activities. Included in these rules there shall be a system for checking to ensure that each child is safe when in the water.

## **TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIP SAFETY**

(OAC 5101:2-12-14)

Before a child may participate in a field trip, special outing, or routine trip, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent/guardian. Before leaving the Center, each child shall be given a proper identification wristband to wear including: the Center's name, address, and telephone number. Children shall be assigned to specific child care staff members for all trips. Attendance rosters including the number of children present will accompany the group on each trip. Staff/child ratio requirements shall be met and often exceeded on all field trips. At least two staff members will supervise the group on any walking field trip.

Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle (either by bus or parent/staff volunteers) for field trips, special outings, or routine trips, a first aid kit and a working cellular phone will accompany them. A person trained in first aid/management of communicable disease and CPR shall be available on the trip. Child care staff members shall also ensure that the following are taken with the group on each trip: emergency transportation authorization forms for each child, the health record and treatment supplies for any child who has a health condition, and a record listing each child on the trip. Emergency exiting procedures from transportation vehicles shall be practiced with the children on a monthly basis by all staff responsible for transporting children. A record of the dates, times, and staff involved is kept in the office. Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle for field trips, parents/guardians are responsible to provide a suitable car/booster seat as required by Ohio's revised child restraint law which states:

- Children less than 4 years old or 40 pounds must use a child safety seat.
- Children less than 8 years old, unless they are at least 4 feet, 9 inches tall must use a booster seat.
- Children ages 8-15 must use a child safety seat or safety belt.

Should a child need to be transported to the hospital for medical treatment due to a serious incident, injury, or illness, an emergency squad would be contacted. Transportation by emergency squad is the only type of emergency transport used at the Center. An emergency medical authorization statement must be completed by the parent/guardian of each child upon enrollment at the Center. Play & Learn reserves the right to deny admission of a child whose parent/legal guardian denies consent for emergency transportation to a source of medical treatment.

## GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE

(OAC 5101:2-12-19)

The child care staff members assigned to supervise a child or group of children shall be responsible for their guidance and discipline in keeping with the policy established by the Center. Child guidance and discipline will be handled with kindness, consistency, and understanding in accordance with the individual needs of each age group and each child. Child guidance and discipline measures shall be developmentally appropriate for the child, shall be consistent, shall be explained to the child, and shall take place at the time of the incident as soon as the issue can be safely addressed.

The child care staff member shall:

- 1) Use developmentally appropriate techniques suitable to the children's ages and relevant to the circumstances, such as, but not limited to: setting clear limits; redirecting the child to an appropriate activity; showing children positive alternatives; modeling the desired behavior; reinforcing appropriate behavior; and encouraging children to control their own behavior, cooperating with others, and solve problems by talking.
- 2) Intervene, when needed, as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of all children.
- 3) When necessary, use developmentally appropriate separation from the situation which shall last no more than one minute for each year of age of the child and shall not be used with infants or toddlers under the age of two years. When the child is to return to the activity child care staff members will review the reason for the separation and discuss the expected behavior with the child.
- 4) If necessary, hold a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the child may regain self-control.
- 5) Communicate and consult with parents/guardians prior to implementing any specific behavior management plan. This plan must be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

The staff will discuss the rules thoroughly with children and explain why it is necessary to have them. We do not want children to hurt themselves or others. We want them to learn to respect other people and their property. Through the language of support and positive reinforcement, expectations are made clear and behavior is reinforced when these expectations are fulfilled. Developmentally appropriate child guidance and discipline techniques are used at all times.

The purpose of guidance and discipline is to enable the child to develop inner controls and self-discipline. To help the child accomplish this, we use positive and supportive communication. Discerning right from wrong is a continual learning process. We want to approach child guidance and discipline with positive action so that there is reinforcement for acceptable behavior and a learning process taking place as a natural part of the child's growth and development. With this in mind, these are the ways we guide and manage the children:

- Rather than focusing on negative outcomes, we **encourage positive choices and interactions**. By doing this, we help the child realize his/her accomplishments.
- We use **redirection**. This occurs when a teacher helps the child determine different ways to deal with situations. The children are encouraged to problem solve on their own so they can determine the best outcomes for themselves.
- **Communication** is an important part of guidance and discipline. We talk to a child when unacceptable behavior occurs to be sure he/she understands the rules and why they exist. We then encourage the child to communicate his/her feelings and why the choice was made. This enables the child to process the best way to handle the situation.
- If the unacceptable behavior continues, the child may be separated from the group in the classroom for a **time out**. Time outs are to be used sparingly and are not to be abused by the teacher. This can be an opportunity for a child to be removed from a situation so the teacher can communicate what has transpired. A time out should last no more than one minute per age of the child. It is hoped that this will encourage the child to understand the importance of acceptable behavior.

The use of active listening and discussion with the child is used to redirect the child to appropriate behaviors. When necessary the child is removed from the group either in the classroom or the office until the child is ready to return to the group. A child may lose a privilege if the misbehavior is extreme. Once the child is redirected, separated from the problem situation, talked to about the problem situation, and then praised for appropriate behavior, he/she is welcomed back to the group. If inappropriate behaviors persist, a plan of action will be devised and implemented by the Center Director, teacher, and parent/guardian. When children's behavior is unacceptable, the child care staff members shall:

1. Use developmentally appropriate techniques suitable to the children's ages and the circumstances
2. Use developmentally appropriate separation from the situation only as necessary
3. Communicate and consult with parents/guardians in implementing any specific behavior management plan.



## **GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE (Continued)**

(OAC 5101:2-12-19)

If a child is dangerous to himself/herself or to others in the class, a member of the administrative staff is to be notified at once. Inappropriate behavior reports are to be completed by the teacher and then signed by the Director. The report shall then be given to the parent/guardian of the child to be read and signed. A copy of the report shall remain on file at the Center. If the behavior continues, the parents/guardians may be notified to attend a conference with the Director in order to come to a satisfactory solution. In cases involving the chance of injury to another person or the destruction/vandalism of property, it may become necessary to suspend or dis-enroll a child from the Center either temporarily or permanently. Play & Learn provides a quality and safe environment with a large amount of equipment for the children. If a child causes significant damage to the property equipment, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for the cost of replacement or repairs.

All Center employees and child care staff members shall not:

1. Abuse, endanger, or neglect children, including shaking a baby.
2. Utilize cruel, harsh, unusual, or extreme techniques.
3. Utilize any form of corporal punishment.
4. Delegate children to manage or discipline other children.
5. Use physical restraints on a child.
6. Restrain a child by any means other than holding children for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the children may regain control.
  - Prone restraint of a child is prohibited. Prone restraint is defined as all items or measures used to limit or control the movement or normal functioning of any portion, or all, of a child's body while the child is in a face-down position. Prone restraint includes physical or mechanical restraint.
7. Place children in a locked room or confine children in any enclosed area.
8. Confine children to equipment such as cribs or high chairs.
9. Humiliate, threaten, or frighten children.
10. Subject children to profane language or verbal abuse.
11. Make derogatory or sarcastic remarks about children or their families including but not limited to cultures, nationalities, race, religion, or beliefs.
12. Punish children for failure to eat or sleep or for toileting accidents.
13. Withhold any food (including snacks and treats), beverages or water, rest, or toilet use.
14. Punish an entire group of children due to the unacceptable behavior of one or a few.
15. Isolate and restrict children from all activities for an extended period of time.

Parents/Guardians of children in our Center should not use any guidance or discipline techniques with their children other than those described in this policy while their children are on Center property. Parents/Guardians are also not permitted to discipline other children at the Center. Parent/Guardian concerns should be directed toward the staff. The Center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in the Center's care. The specifications of this Guidance/Discipline Rule 5101:2-12-19 of the Ohio Administrative Code applies to all employees at the Center.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY**

The Center will provide outdoor play each day in suitable weather for any toddler, preschool, and school-age child who is in attendance four or more consecutive daylight hours. Generally, children can play outside when the temperature is between 25 and 90 degrees. However, outdoor play may be restricted due to weather factors including, but not limited to: extreme wind chill factor, high humidity or heat index, high ozone levels, high pollen counts, thunderstorms and lightening, high winds, precipitation, etc. If the weather is not suitable for outdoor play, classroom staff will be notified by a member of the administrative staff to keep the children indoors, and another type of large muscle activity will be provided in the Great Hall, Multipurpose Room, or classroom.

Child care staff members are responsible to watch for potential hazards while observing the children and shall actively supervise to prevent injury. Should an emergency situation arise which creates unsafe outdoor play conditions, classroom staff would be notified by the administrative staff to keep the children indoors and would be given other specific instructions to follow as necessary.

## CURRICULUM

At Play & Learn, we have begun to use the research-based Innovations curriculum. This curriculum: addresses all domains of children's development; focuses on building relationships between children and their teachers and between teachers and families; views children as active participants in the learning process; is sensitive to the developmental capabilities and backgrounds of individual children; views play as the foundation of concurrent and future learning; and views the teacher as an active participant in building relationships, setting up the environment, and using a variety of teaching roles and strategies.

Curriculum integration, which numerous studies have found to be effective in fostering children's transfer of knowledge and skills, means that learning happens most effectively when children are able to transfer knowledge from one experience to another, both within and across academic disciplines. The curriculum is integrated so that learning occurs primarily through projects, learning centers, and playful activities that reflect the current interests of the children.

We believe learning should be fun. Play & Learn's theme-based curriculum is designed to be age appropriate and meet the needs of each individual child and focuses on the whole child, not just the brain. We take an active approach to learning and use an experience-based process to introduce cognitive concepts. We foster the child's competence through hands-on learning and problem solving while exploring a weekly or monthly theme.

The activities focus on the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development of each child. Math and reading readiness, colors, shapes, and visual and auditory discrimination are presented in a variety of learning games and activities. Social and communicative skills are also emphasized in our daily routines. Activities are designed to: build self-confidence; develop vocabulary; encourage recognition of differences in sound, size, shape and color; increase interest in books, numbers, and people; improve coordination; introduce new ideas; and develop self-esteem.

We believe that the children and the teachers are a team that work together to learn about the world. Our classrooms are child-directed with the teachers establishing areas of interest based on the needs and interests of the group. The environment is set up to be both supportive and safe.

Activity centers are set up throughout the room to offer children a variety of opportunities for exploration. This provides the child choices to investigate the activities at his/her own pace. The centers include, but are not limited to: imaginative/dramatic play, blocks and transportation, science, language development/reading, games and manipulatives, and creative art. The basic premise for our curriculum is that the children learn through play.

Children use play to test and understand the world in which they live. During play, children have the opportunity to interact with others, building their social and intellectual skills, and explore their individual surroundings. It helps them learn about independence as well as caring and sharing with others. It allows them to problem solve while critically thinking about their effects on their world. We value play and encourage it through our curriculum.

We maintain an open-door policy at Play & Learn. Any custodial parent/guardian of a child enrolled at Play & Learn shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center during the hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the Center, or evaluating the premises. A parent/guardian of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent/guardian shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent/guardian unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent/guardian. **With exception to drop off and pick up times, upon entering the premises, ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS and VISITORS must report to the office!**

Play & Learn provides a variety of age appropriate activities for the children. The classroom schedules provide both active and quiet play opportunities. A schedule of the daily program for each age group is posted in each classroom and a copy may be obtained from the office.

## SAMPLE SCHEDULES

### Infant Schedule

6:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival, cuddle time, breakfast, bottles, diapers, and free play
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Music, stories, and puzzles
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors), art, and morning naps
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch, bottles, and diapers
12:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Quiet play, cuddle time, and afternoon naps
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Snack, bottles, cuddle time, stories, and diapers
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors), songs, and music movement
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Free play and departure

### Toddler Schedule

6:30 – 8:30 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast clean up, diapers and potty, and table top activities
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:45 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	Art, sensory, and group activities
11:20 – 11:30 a.m.	Music movement
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Lunch
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch clean up, diapers and potty, and circle time
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Video, stories, prepare for nap
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Wake up, diapers and potty, and songs
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Snack
4:00 – 4:45 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
4:45 – 5:00 p.m.	Group story time
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 5:40 p.m.	Clean up
5:40 – 6:00 p.m.	Table top activities and departure

### Younger Preschool Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Center time
9:45 – 10:00 a.m.	Clean up and bathroom break
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	Circle time
11:20 – 11:45 a.m.	Art and sensory activities
11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Clean up, bathroom break, and wash hands for lunch
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:20 p.m.	Large muscle play and group games
1:20 – 1:30 p.m.	Bathroom break and prepare for nap
1:30 – 3:15 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in cafeteria, free play, and departure

## SAMPLE SCHEDULES (Continued)

### Older Preschool Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and group activity
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Center play and art/sensory activities
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Large muscle play, group games, and music movement
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Bathroom break, story time, and prepare for nap
2:00 – 3:15 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in cafeteria, free play, and departure

### Pre-Kindergarten and School-Age (No School Day) Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Calendar, weather, and group activity
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Center play and art/sensory activities
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Large muscle play, group games, and music movement
1:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Bathroom break, story time, and prepare for nap
1:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:00 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in cafeteria, free play, and departure

## TRANSITIONS

Children respond in a variety of ways to transitions into new settings and environments. Some settle in quickly while others may have a more difficult time adjusting. Please be assured that your child will be supported during all transition times here at the Center.

### **Transitions Into the Center**

When parents/guardians wish to consider transitioning their child into the Center for the first time, a time is arranged for them to visit the Center for a tour. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to bring their child with them to that visit if possible. During the tour, parents/guardians will meet the program Director and be informed of the Center's philosophy, policies, and procedures as well as shown the classroom, playground, and common areas in which their child would be on a daily basis. Also discussed are specific details about the child such as likes and dislikes, eating and sleep patterns, allergies and health conditions, previous child care experiences, etc. During the tour, the child's specific program schedule and classroom placement are discussed. Upon arrival to the child's designated class, parents/guardians and the child are introduced to the classroom teachers. The child is encouraged to freely explore and interact with the other children in the class.

Once parents/guardians make the decision to enroll their child at the Center, they are given a packet of enrollment forms to complete. Once the enrollment forms have been completed, a start date can be scheduled for their child. At Play & Learn, we want to support parents/guardians and children with the transition into the Center. In order to help with the transition, parents/guardians may choose to accompany their child prior to the assigned start date for another visit(s) to play and get acquainted with the teachers and children in the class. Parents/guardians may also choose to start their child on an abbreviated/shortened schedule for the first week or two so the child can ease into his/her new surroundings. Newly enrolled children can expect to be warmly welcomed into the classroom. Parents/guardians can expect to get a special note home detailing the child's first day/week.

### **Transitions Within the Center**

As children age and develop, transitions from one class to another can be expected to occur. When a child becomes eligible to transition from one class to another, teachers and parents/guardians will be consulted to discuss the child's readiness for transition. Prior to the transition, the child's current teachers will complete a readiness checklist/assessment to determine if necessary skills have been mastered.

Once it has been determined the child is ready for transition to the next class, a transition period will be scheduled. Transition periods are usually completed on a one-week or two-week basis. The parent/guardian will receive a letter detailing the transition. (*See sample transition letter.*) A written Transition Agreement detailing the dates and times of the transition period will also be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and the program Director. (*See sample Transition Agreement.*) Copies of the completed and signed Transition Agreement will be available in both the child's current classroom and new classroom.

Prior to the transition, information regarding the child will be shared between the child's current and new teachers. Parents/Guardians and the child will be shown the new classroom and introduced to the new teachers. The child's belongings and extra clothes will be moved to the new classroom. On the child's last day in his/her current classroom, parents/guardians may choose to bring a special treat to share with the class. Parents/guardians can expect to get a special note home detailing the child's first day/week in his/her new class.

### **Transitions From the Center**

There are a variety of reasons why a child transitions from the Center. It may be time for the child to start kindergarten; the family may be moving or relocating to another area and thus changing to a new child care arrangement; the family or financial situation could have changed necessitating removal from the Center. Whatever the circumstance, it is our goal to help make a child's transition from the Center as smooth and positive as possible.

Once parents/guardians decide to transition their child out of the Center, a written two-week notice must be given. The deposit that was paid to start at the Center is then applied toward those last weeks' tuition. Once parents/guardians have informed their child (if applicable) of the upcoming transition, teachers may then discuss the transition with the child. Children will have the opportunity to discuss their feelings about the transition and talk about their new school or child care arrangement if they so choose.

When the child's last day at the Center arrives, parents/guardians may choose to bring a special treat to share with the class. Teachers may also choose to send a special note or small parting gift home with the child. All of the child's belongings, artwork, journals, portfolios, etc. will be gathered together and sent home with the child. Copies of the children's records/assessments will be made available upon the parent's/guardian's request.

## SAMPLE TRANSITION LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian(s) of \_\_\_\_\_:

Congratulations! Your child is soon to be completing the infant program at Play & Learn Christian Child Care and moving on to the toddler program. During the weeks of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, we will begin to transition your child from the Baby Bears infant room to the Elmos toddler room for a few hours each day so that your child may get to know the classroom staff as well as the class routines. Attached is a copy of the Transition Agreement including a transition schedule for you to review and sign. Your child will then become a member of the Elmos class on \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will be your child's new teachers.

Once your child joins the toddler class, you should plan to bring a small pillow and blanket for napping, a complete change of clothes including shoes, and a supply of diapers. The teachers will notify you of any other items your child may need. Beginning \_\_\_\_\_, the weekly tuition payment will change to \$\_\_\_\_\_ per week. Tuition will still be due each Monday for the week. A \$25.00 late charge per child will be added to your account if the balance is not paid by the close of the day on Tuesday.

As your child enters this new phase of childhood, we would like to assist you in any way possible. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me in person, by telephone at 614-846-7576, or by email at playandlearnccc@gmail.com. Also, please feel free to visit any time and become acquainted with your child's new classroom and the classroom staff.

Sincerely,  
  
Brenda Weilbacher  
Play & Learn Director

## SAMPLE TRANSITION AGREEMENT

I FULLY UNDERSTAND AND AM IN AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING POLICIES REGARDING MY CHILD, \_\_\_\_\_, TRANSITIONING TO THE \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS:

- 1) Transitions for children in the Center are decided monthly, quarterly, or semi-annually. The Director makes all final decisions for children transitioning. Input will also be gathered from teachers, infant primary caregivers, and parents/guardians.
- 2) Transitions are decided on the following areas of development: physical, social, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, self-help skills, as well as the age of the child. When applicable, the child's teacher(s) will complete a developmental checklist/evaluation before the child moves up to the next class.
- 3) Transitions will be made gradually and according to the needs of the child. Transitions are completed on a one-week to two-week basis.
- 4) Time is a crucial factor in coping with change. Children will not be rushed. We will be respectful and considerate of parents'/guardians' needs and concerns during this process.
- 5) Copies of the Transition Agreement will be placed in the child's current room and the transitioning room.

The following transition schedule will be followed.

**Transition Beginning Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transition Ending Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transition Schedule:**

Monday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
Tuesday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.  
Thursday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
Friday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Monday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
Thursday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Friday, \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **TRANSITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Play & Learn will help support children's transitions by consistently implementing the following transitional activities.

### **Infant to Toddler Transitions**

- Make adjustments to the napping schedule, transitioning children to one afternoon nap after lunch
- Make adjustments to the feeding schedule, transitioning children to the foods on the full menu at the Center's scheduled meal and snack times
- Move children from sleeping in a crib to sleeping on a cot
- Introduce the use of a spoon at meal times
- Work with children to keep their shoes and socks on throughout the day
- Schedule visits to the toddler room

### **Toddler to Preschool Transitions**

- Transition children from sitting in a high chair at the table to sitting on a child-sized chair
- Transition children from using a sippy cup to using a small plastic cup with no lid
- Work with children to use eating utensils properly and consistently at meal times
- Assist children with toilet training and work with them to pull their own pants down and up at toilet times
- Work with children to use appropriate hand washing practices
- Provide activities that will help children begin to learn letters, numbers, colors, and shapes
- Schedule visits to the preschool room

### **Preschool to Pre-Kindergarten Transitions**

- Increase the length and complexity of group circle times
- Begin decreasing the length of nap/rest time
- Work with children to hold and use writing utensils with their fingers instead of fists
- Work with children to develop self-help skills, such as dressing/undressing and putting on own coats and shoes
- Provide activities that will help children continue to learn letters, numbers, colors, and shapes
- Work with children to begin writing their first names
- Schedule visits to the pre-Kindergarten room

### **Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten Transitions**

- Continue decreasing the length of nap/rest time to mirror the kindergarten schedule
- Provide activities that will help children further continue to learn letters, numbers, colors, and shapes
- Provide activities that will allow children to practice writing/journaling
- Provide activities that will help children learn about sorting, classifying, and sequencing objects
- Provide activities that will help children in pre-reading and reading
- Work with children to write their names using capital and lower case letters
- Support parents/guardians in arranging time for children to visit a kindergarten classroom

## MEALS AND SNACKS

(OAC 5101:2-12-22)

Play & Learn daily provides breakfast, snacks, and a hot lunch. All of our meals are nutritionally balanced and meet the minimum daily requirements as determined by the State. We offer a variety of menu items and encourage children to “take two bites” of everything served. The weekly dated breakfast, snack, and lunch menus are posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria, in the kitchen, in the infant/toddler house, and in each classroom. Should your child require vitamins or a special diet, you must have a written prescription or statement signed by a licensed physician, physician’s assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist. Children are not permitted to bring their own food to the Center for meals unless they are on a modified diet.

### **Breakfast**

Play & Learn provides a breakfast which includes a minimum of one serving each of milk, fruit/vegetable, and bread/grains every morning at 8:30 a.m.

### **Lunch**

The noon meal will include a minimum of one serving of fluid milk, one serving of meat or meat alternative, two servings of vegetables and/or fruits, and one serving of bread/grains and will supply one-third of the child’s recommended daily dietary allowance. The noon meal will be served to every child who is in attendance at the Center entirely through the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

### **Snacks**

Children will receive an afternoon snack daily. These nutritious snacks will include a minimum of two foods from the four basic food groups.

### **Milk/Formula**

For children under twelve months of age, the Center shall use formula or breast milk provided by the parent/guardian unless otherwise directed in writing by a licensed physician, physician’s assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist. For children twelve months to twenty-four months of age, the Center shall provide and use whole homogenized vitamin D fortified cow’s milk unless otherwise directed in writing by a licensed physician. For children over twenty-four months of age, the Center shall provide and use 1% vitamin A & D fortified cow’s milk. Non-cow milk substitutions may be provided by a parent/guardian and served to a child over twelve months of age with written parental consent. Reconstituted dry powdered milk may be used for cooking but shall not be used as a beverage.

### **Juice**

Only full-strength (100%) fruit or vegetable juice shall meet the fruit or vegetable requirements for meals or snacks.

### **Modified Diets**

Modified diets shall be approved in writing by a licensed physician, physician’s assistant (PA), advanced practice nurse (APN), certified nurse practitioner (CNP), or licensed dentist. If an entire food group is eliminated, the parent/guardian shall provide written instructions from a physician on the prescribed form. When special diets are required for cultural or religious reasons, signed and dated written instructions shall be provided by the child’s parent/guardian. ***If a child is unable to have a food item listed on the weekly menu, parent/guardians are responsible to provide a suitable alternative in conjunction with the physician’s instructions provided for the modified diet.***

### **Meal Counts**

Parents/Guardians are asked to notify the Center by 10:00 a.m. if their child has not yet arrived but plans to be at the Center to eat lunch since meal counts are due by this time each day. If you have not notified the Center and your child arrives after 10:00 a.m., you will be responsible to provide a lunch for your child.

### **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program our activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; 2) fax: 202-690-7442; or 3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



## **INFANT DAILY PROGRAM, CAREGIVERS, AND FORMULA/FOOD**

(OAC 5101:2-23)

The staff members responsible for the care of the infants shall plan and implement a program of activities suitable to the age levels and abilities of the infants under care. Provisions for outdoor play shall be available according to the infants' stage of development. Staff members will be assigned to have primary responsibility for each group of infants in care during each staff daily shift to assure continuity of care. Parents/Guardians will be kept informed of the primary caregivers assigned to their infants. The Center shall assure that any necessary information regarding an infant's care is exchanged between child care staff members and between staff members and parents/guardians.

Each infant shall be allowed to safely and comfortably sit, crawl, toddle, walk, and play according to the infant's stage of development in a designated space apart from the sleeping area each day. Each infant shall be removed from the crib, swing, infant seat, or other equipment throughout the day for individual attention. Each infant shall be removed from his/her crib for all feedings and be held or fed sitting up for bottle feedings.

Infants shall be cared for in a safe manner. Infants shall not be placed in the cribs with bibs or any items which could pose a strangulation or suffocation risk. Infants shall be placed in their cribs for sleeping, and shall not be allowed to sleep in car seats, swings, or other equipment. If a medical condition exists where a child needs to sleep in equipment other than a crib, written permission shall be obtained from a licensed physician. Infants under twelve months old shall be placed on their backs to sleep unless the child's parent/guardian provides written authorization signed by the child's licensed physician on the "Sleep Position Waiver for Child Care" form. Infants who are able to roll from back to front and front to back shall be placed initially on their back for sleeping but allowed to remain in a position they prefer. No blankets shall be in the crib for infants under twelve months old. A one-piece sleeper or wearable blanket is permitted. Only children who are not yet able to roll over are permitted to be swaddled using a wearable swaddling blanket.

Parents/Guardians shall provide the staff with detailed information on feeding schedules and sleeping schedules for their infant. A log is maintained for each infant so that parents/guardians can be kept informed of what is happening throughout the day with their infant. Parents/Guardians will be given a daily report for their child which details the child's food intake, sleeping patterns, times and results of diaper changes, and information about daily activities.

Infants shall be served food in conformity with dated written instructions from the parent/guardian or physician. The instructions shall include amounts of food, type of food, and feeding times and be updated as needed based upon the child's needs and parent's/guardian's instructions. Should parents/guardians not provide instructions for the serving of food to their child, the infant shall be served formula and/or food in sufficient amounts to meet the meal pattern and quality of the USDA child and adult food program child care component.

Parents/Guardians are responsible to provide the appropriate number of prepared formula and/or juice bottles their child needs each day. The bottles must be labeled (bottle and cap) with the child's name and the date. The Center generally does not prepare formula. Parents/Guardians are also required to maintain a backup supply of powdered formula and bottles for use at the Center if formula is spilled and/or if not enough formula is provided to meet the infant's daily requirements. The backup supply of formula and bottle(s) should be labeled with your child's name and will be stored and used for your infant if and when it becomes necessary. Play & Learn does not store filled bottles of formula, milk, or juice at the Center overnight. Open containers of ready to feed and concentrated formula shall be covered, dated and refrigerated according to the manufacturer's instructions. Prepared formula and food shall be discarded or sent home daily if not used.

Until used, all formula or food shall be labeled with the child's name and date of preparation and refrigerated immediately after preparation or upon arrival and sent home daily. Formula or food that is commercially prepared may not be required to be refrigerated until after opening and shall be stored and served according to the manufacturer's instructions and the expiration date on the label and labeled with the child's name and date of preparation.

In the infant program, the children are on individual feeding and sleeping schedules as determined by the parent/guardian and teacher. Activities such as stories, songs, large muscle play, etc. are planned to be done individually and in small groups. As the infants develop, they are gradually introduced to group activities so that by the time they are 18 months of age, they will be ready to be promoted to the toddler group. Provisions for outdoor play shall be available according to the infants' stages of development.

## INFANT DAILY PROGRAM, CAREGIVERS, AND FORMULA/FOOD (Continued)

(OAC 5101:2-12-23)

If breast milk is provided by the parent/guardian, it shall be labeled with the child's name, date expressed, and the date of receipt. Centers shall follow the chart below in regard to storing breast milk:

### If breast milk is stored:

- At room temperature (up to 78 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In the refrigerator (39 degrees Fahrenheit or lower)
- In a freezer compartment inside a refrigerator (5 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In a freezer compartment of a refrigerator with separate doors (0 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In a chest or upright freezer (-4 degrees Fahrenheit)

### Then keep it as long as:

- 6 to 8 hours
- Up to 5 days from the day breast milk was expressed
- 2 weeks
- 3 to 6 months
- 6 to 12 months

Mothers who wish to breastfeed or pump breast milk at the Center may utilize the infant sleep area or downstairs main room in the infant/toddler house or one of the upstairs classrooms in the main church building.

## INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS

Each infant is assigned a separate crib for sleeping. If a crib is considered hazardous for an infant, regardless of age, the infant may be assigned to a cot with written permission from the parent or guardian. An infant sixteen months of age or older may be assigned to a cot with written permission from the parent/guardian. All children over thirty-five inches tall will be assigned an individual cot for sleeping.

Play & Learn will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for the infant and toddler children. Parents/Guardians are responsible to bring pre-mixed formula in the necessary number of bottles their infant will need throughout the day. The bottles must be labeled (bottle and cap) with the child's name and the date. Parents/Guardians will also provide food for those children not yet eating "table food". The food must be labeled with the child's name and the date. Please remember that meal times can be very messy for your child. Therefore, please dress your child in "play clothes" and supply bibs and changes of clothing as necessary. We understand that your child may need help with some foods and might be reluctant to try new foods. The staff is here to help your child during meal times.

Disposable diapers are to be provided by the parents/guardians, and sufficient quantities shall remain at the center for daily use. The child/ren should be wearing a clean disposable diaper upon arrival at the center. Parents/Guardians may also choose to provide a pacifier or attachable teething ring for their child to use while at the Center.

## DIAPERING AND TOILET TRAINING

Parents/Guardians are expected to supply disposable diapers for non-toilet trained children. Ointments, creams or other topical substances are considered a medication and will only be applied if proper procedures are followed for the administration of medications. (See the "Administration of Medications, Food Supplements, Modified Diets, or Fluoride Supplements" page in this handbook for more information.)

The staff is very happy to assist you with your child throughout the toilet training stage. When you feel your child is ready, discuss the matter with your child's teachers and they will continue your efforts at the Center. The Center shall ensure that toilet training is never forced. Parents/Guardians should bring several changes of clothes and underwear for those children who are being toilet trained.

## NAP/QUIET TIME

For toddler, preschool, and school-age children a nap/quiet time is set aside each afternoon after lunch. We encourage the children to rest and lie quietly. Any child who does not fall asleep after an appropriate length of time during the designated nap/quiet time shall have the opportunity to engage in quiet activities.

Each toddler or preschool child shall be assigned an individual cot for sleeping/resting. If the use of a cot is hazardous to a child, the Center will obtain parent/guardian written permission for an alternative plan. School-age children who rest, nap, or sleep may be provided with a clean, washable pad, mat, or comfortable furniture instead of a cot. No child is permitted to rest, nap, or sleep on the floor. Each child should have a small blanket and pillow for nap time. Parents/Guardians are responsible for laundering blankets at least once weekly. All cots, pads, mats, or other furniture are cleaned and disinfected before reassignment to another child.

## TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We cannot be responsible for toys and personal belongings brought to the Center. In order to avoid lost articles, please make sure that all of your child's belongings are clearly marked with his/her name.

Each child will need a complete set of extra clothing that is appropriate for the season. Infants and toddlers may need additional changes of clothing. Each child may bring a blanket that is to remain at the center for naptime and a small sleep toy or animal. "Special" blankets may be taken home at night. All other blankets and sleep toys will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered.

We request that you check with your child's teacher before allowing toys to be brought from home into the classroom. Sharing personal toys is often difficult for young children. Generally, toys for preschool and schoolage children may be brought from home only on a designated "share day". Please do not allow your child to bring items that either you or your child would be upset if they got broken.

We ask that "adventure toys" (such as, but not limited to: super heroes, toy guns and other weapons, etc.) not be brought into the classrooms as these toys are often associated with aggressive play. No weapons of any kind are permitted on Center property. Teachers must be consulted prior to bringing live animals into the classroom.

## CLOTHING

Please remember to dress your child as comfortably as possible to enable him/her to participate in the different activities of the room. Children, regardless of age, may need assistance in selecting proper clothing to wear for the daily weather. Guidance in making sure that your child will be dressed for comfort as well as health is a parental responsibility. Parents/Guardians may also need to intervene to determine whether an item of clothing is too small or too large to wear.

In the summer, the rooms are air conditioned. Children will play outside as long as the temperature is below 90 degrees. So you should plan to dress your child appropriately. In the winter, the children play outside if the temperature is above 25 degrees. Make sure your child has appropriate outdoor wear: boots, a hat, mittens, long pants and/or snow pants, a warm coat, and any other necessary clothing to insure your child's warmth during outdoor play. Shoes that are comfortable with nonskid soles are preferred. Also, shoes that tie or fasten/buckle are safer during active play than are those that simply slip on. **Due to the active nature of the program, please do not send your child to the Center in flip-flops.**

You will need to leave at least one complete extra set of clothing for your child (including shoes, socks, and underwear) at the Center at all times. Parents/Guardians of infants and toddlers should plan to provide multiple sets of clothing for use as needed throughout the day. All clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name and stored in the designated place in your child's classroom/cubby. All soiled clothing needs to be taken home daily. Make sure to check for these in your child's take home basket every day.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

(OAC 5101:2-12-7)

Play & Learn encourages all parents/guardians to actively participate in their child's education and in the fellowship of the Child Care. We provide many opportunities throughout the year for parents/guardians to participate.

We maintain an open-door policy at Play & Learn and welcome your presence at the Center. Any custodial parent/guardian of a child enrolled at Play & Learn shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center during the hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the Center, or evaluating the premises. A parent/guardian of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent/guardian shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent/guardian unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent/guardian. **With exception to drop off and pick up times, upon entering the premises, ALL PARENTS and VISITORS must report to the office!**

A roster of the names and telephone numbers of the parents/guardians of children attending the Center are available upon request. The roster will not include the name or telephone number of any parent/guardian who requests his/her name or telephone number not to be included.

Any parents/guardians interested in enrolling their child at the Center will meet with the Director or the Assistant Director for an orientation session to discuss the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Center. Time will be given for a tour and answering any questions and concerns the parents may have.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, the Center will host an open house. This is designed to provide parents/guardians and children with the opportunity to meet classroom teachers, administrative staff, and other child care staff. At this time teachers can share information on classroom activities, policies, educational goals and objectives with the parents/guardians.

At various times throughout the year, Play & Learn will sponsor special events and activities for staff, parents/guardians, and children. These may include parties, Week of the Young Child Celebration, Christmas and spring programs, and special programs for entertainment and educational purposes.

The individual classrooms will also have special activities, such as birthday parties, holiday parties, and field trips at which we encourage parents to volunteer and participate. Parents/Guardians should be sure to look for the posted sign-up sheets for these activities. Any parent/guardian who has a special interest or skill that he/she would like to share with the children may schedule a time to visit the classrooms. Special arrangements can also be made for parents/guardians to join their child at a meal for a nominal fee.

Play & Learn distributes a weekly email update which may include: upcoming Center and community events, notes from the Director, classroom updates, and other important information and reminders.

Any important announcements and upcoming events, weekly menus, and parent information will be posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria of the main building and at the entrance of the infant/toddler house. Also parents/guardians should be sure to check in their child's classroom for any posted additional information, communicable disease notices, and classroom activities.

Parents/Guardians who need assistance with problems or complaints related to the child care program are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director to discuss the matter.

The Center will schedule periodic conferences for each parent/guardian to meet with the appropriate child care staff member in order to discuss the child's behavior, progress, social and physical needs, or any other pertinent matter. These conferences will occur at least once each year for children enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten programs. Telephone conferences will occur only when an in-person parent conference is not practical. All conferences, whether done in person or by telephone, will be documented in writing and kept on file at the Center. Conferences for parents/guardians of infants are available upon request.

## **DONATIONS**

We welcome donations of almost any kind. Toys and clothing that your children have outgrown will be put to good use at Play & Learn. Things you throw away can often be used in the classroom. Suggestions include: egg cartons, clean dishwashing soap and bleach containers, juice cans, old sponges, toilet paper and paper towel rolls, cereal boxes, old socks, cardboard, scrap lumber, old clothes for dress-up, clothespins, buttons, etc.

## **DAILY COMMUNICATIONS**

Children enrolled at the Center are assigned an individual cubby or basket to be used for storage of their personal belongings as well as a means of Center communication to parents/guardians. Most communication is done by email. However, parent memos, program announcements, etc. will be periodically placed in your child's take-home cubby or basket. Plan to check your child's take-home cubby or basket regularly for this important information. All correspondence to be placed by parents/guardians in other children's cubbies or baskets in the Center, with exception to children's birthday party invitations, needs to be approved by the Director or Assistant Director before being distributed.

## **PARENT AND STAFF INTERACTIONS**

Good communication between parent/guardians and teachers is an essential part of the educational process. As professionals, we try to plan activities and learning experiences that will encourage your child's skills and interests on an individual basis. Child assessments and progress reports are completed periodically, and formal conferences held at least once per year for children who are enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten programs. Children who are enrolled in the infant program receive daily reports and also can have annual conferences. At any time throughout the year, please don't hesitate to let your child's teacher know of any questions or concerns you may have. Our staff members are here to be of assistance to you in any way possible.

The Play & Learn Director is responsible for the daily operation of the center, its programs, and its staff. Priority is given to maintaining the highest quality of child care services for our families. The Director's door is always open if you feel like chatting or if you wish to discuss a matter of concern. Your suggestions and comments are welcomed and appreciated.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

If you have a problem or concern, please direct it to the Director immediately. Together we can work to attempt to resolve the issue in a prompt and satisfactory manner.

Any grievance between a parent/guardian and Play & Learn shall be handled in the following manner:

1. The issue shall be discussed with the Director.
2. If the grievance is not alleviated following this discussion, then the matter is to be presented to the Director in writing, offering possible solutions.
3. The Director has five (5) working days to respond to the parent's/guardian's grievance in writing.
4. If the parent/guardian remains unsatisfied, a written request may then be made to the Child Care Committee to discuss the grievance.
5. The Child Care Committee will discuss the grievance and reach a decision. The decision of the Child Care Committee is final.

## **PARKING LOT SAFETY**

There are a minimum of four parking spaces reserved by the main entrances of the Main Building and Infant/Toddler House for families dropping off and picking up their children. Parking is not permitted in fire lanes, directly in front of the I/T House stairs, or in any area not marked for parking. All vehicles must be in a parking space. Handicapped spaces are reserved for people with a handicapped sticker.

Remember to follow the traffic pattern in the parking lot, entering with the "in" arrow on the west side and exiting with the "out" arrow on the east side by the garage. Remember to drive slow through the parking lot and watch for children and adults who may be crossing.

Please do not allow children to cross through the parking lot on their own or run ahead of you. An adult must always be present with the children and accompany them in and out of the Center.

Please do not leave your vehicle idling in the parking lot while you come inside the Center. **Under no circumstances** should you leave a child unattended inside a parked/idling vehicle.

If you see any loitering or suspicious persons or activity in or around the Center, please report it to an administrator (or teacher) immediately so that the situation may be remedied and the safety of all maintained.

## **PLAY & LEARN EMPLOYEES AS AFTER-HOURS BABYSITTERS**

Since Play & Learn has many talented and dedicated teachers who love children, it is natural for families seeking after-hours child care to ask a member of the Play & Learn staff to babysit. However, Play & Learn discourages our employees from making after-hours babysitting arrangements with enrolled families. It undermines our professionalism and can blur boundaries between staff and families, causing favoritism or inappropriate staff-family relationships. Play & Learn wishes to promote professional, healthy, and respectful relationships between our staff and your children.

Play & Learn will take every reasonable precaution for the safety and well-being of children while they are in our care during normal operating hours. The Center's responsibility, however, does not extend to any after-hours private employment arrangement between parents/guardians of enrolled children and Center employees.

If you choose to enter into an after-hours babysitting agreement with a Play & Learn staff member, you understand and agree:

- That any such agreement must be made off of Center grounds.
- That the staff member enters into such an agreement as a private citizen, acting in his/her individual capacity, and not as a Play & Learn employee.
- That Play & Learn assumes no responsibility for its employees in such an agreement after their scheduled work hours at the Center or their performance of said babysitting services, including transportation.
- To hold Play & Learn harmless from any action which results from such an agreement.