



MultiCare Children Program

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025 School Year

MultiCare Children Program

WELCOME

Dear Family,

Welcome to **MultiCare Children Program**, where nurturing care meets early education in a culturally diverse and inclusive environment. We are thrilled to have you join our community. Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive, and stimulating space where your child can thrive emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically.

We understand the vital role we play in supporting working families, especially in our vibrant community filled with multicultural households. Our team brings over 13 years of combined experience in New York and Connecticut and speak multiple languages including Spanish, French, Haitian Creole, and English. We go beyond traditional childcare by offering:

- Extended care hours from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM
- Educational activities (STEM, storytelling, music, arts)
- A multilingual, multicultural, and inclusive learning environment

We are proud to offer all this at a competitive price point to make high-quality childcare accessible for all families.

This handbook is designed to answer your questions, outline our policies and procedures, and help you feel confident in the care and education your child will receive. We encourage open communication and invite you to reach out with any questions or feedback.

Thank you for choosing MultiCare Children Program. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

The MultiCare Children Program Team

www.multicarechildren.org

info@multicarechildren.org

(203) 522 -3946

New London, Connecticut

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT ME	3
Philosophy	3
Mission	3
Definition of Family	3
Hours of Operation	3
Evening & Night Care	3
Emergency Substitute Provider	4
Holidays	4
Admission & Enrollment	4
Waiting List	5
Adjustment/Trial Period	5
Inclusion	5
Non-Discrimination	5
Confidentiality	5
My Qualifications	5
Communication & Family Partnership	6
CURRICULA & LEARNING	6
Learning Environment	7
Outings & Field Trips	7
Television Time	7
Electronic Media	7
Multiculturalism	7
Celebrations	8
Rest Time	8
Toilet Training	8
GUIDANCE	8
General Procedure	8
Challenging Behavior	8
Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families	9
TUITION AND FEES	9
Important Notice	9
Tuition Rates	9
Tuition Deposit	9
Overtime Rates or Adding Extra Days	9
Payment	10
Methods of Payment	10
Late Payment Charges	10
Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges	10
Late Pick-up Fees	10
Other Fees	10
Credits & No Credits	11
ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL	11
Absence	11
My Vacation	11
Withdrawals	11

Closing Due to Extreme Weather	11
DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP	12
General Procedure	12
Use of Cell Phones	12
Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up	12
Right to Refuse Child Release	12
PERSONAL BELONGINGS	12
What to Bring	13
Cubbies	13
Lost & Found	13
Toys from Home	13
NUTRITION	13
Foods Brought from Home	13
Food Allergies	13
Meal Time	14
Infant Feedings	14
Toddler Feedings	14
HEALTH	14
Immunizations	14
Physicals	14
Illness	14
Allergy Prevention	14
Medications	16
Communicable Diseases	17
SAFETY	17
Home Safety	17
Clothing	18
Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play	18
Injuries	18
Biting	18
Pets/Animals	19
Respectful Behavior	19
Smoking	19
Prohibited Substances	19
Dangerous Weapons	19
Child Custody	19
Suspected Child Abuse	19
EMERGENCIES	20
Lost or Missing Child	20
Fire Safety	20
Emergency Transportation	20
FAMILY ACTIVITIES	20

ABOUT ME

Philosophy

At MultiCare Children Program, we believe that early childhood is a critical period in the development of the whole child. Our philosophy focuses on nurturing cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth in a safe and stimulating environment. We are guided by play-based learning principles that incorporate structured and child-directed activities to build curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning. We strive to create a culturally responsive environment that values each child's background and identity.

Mission

Our mission is to support families by delivering affordable, high-quality, and inclusive early childhood education and care. We aim to empower children from all backgrounds to reach their full potential through educational excellence, cultural awareness, and community engagement.

Definition of Family

In this handbook when I use the term family, I am referring to a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of your child in my care.

Hours of Operation

Childcare services are provided from **7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday through Friday**. Saturday care is available upon request with at least **2 weeks' notice**.

MultiCare Children Programs LLC is open year-round, Monday through Saturday, between the hours of **7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**, except for the following holidays and school vacations:

Observed Holidays and Closures: • New Year's eve and new year's Day: December 31, January 1st and 2nd • Good Friday and Saturday • Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after • Christmas Vacation • Staff Break: 4 weeks (generally the last 2 weeks in June and 2 weeks in March)

Evening Care

With advanced notice, we do provide care between the hours of **3:00 PM to 8:00 PM**. Children in evening care follow a schedule designed to mirror typical home routines, including:

- Calm activities in the evening
- Dinner service (if applicable)
- Bedtime preparation
- A comfortable, secure sleeping environment
- Night-time snacks unless parents request otherwise

Emergency Substitute Provider

In the rare case of an emergency situation, I will call my emergency substitute provider (see list of names posted on the bulletin board). S/he will come to the facility to stay with the children during my absence. In the event that I cannot secure a qualified substitute during an emergency, you or your emergency contact will be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child (ren) and the program will close for the remainder of the day. Should this need arise, you or your emergency contact shall pick up their children within 1 hour of receiving the call.

I will provide my emergency substitute provider with a brief orientation that will include the names and ages of children present, arrival and departure information for each child including the names of people authorized to pick up your child, the location of the children's files including emergency contact information, consent for emergency medical treatment and any special health care needs. The emergency substitute provider will have appropriate credentials and clearances. Names of approved substitutes will be provided to you and a list will be posted on the bulletin board.

Staff / Assistant / Substitute Qualifications.

All staff, assistants, and substitutes employed by MultiCare Children Program meet or exceed Connecticut state requirements for early childhood care. Everyone is trained in pediatric CPR/First Aid, child abuse prevention, safety, and educational best practices. A current list of qualified staff will be available on our parent bulletin board and upon request.

Holidays

MultiCare Children Program is closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve December 31st
- New Year's January 1st and 2nd
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

There will be early closings on:

- The day before Thanksgiving (closing at 3:00 PM)
- December 23rd (closing at 3:00 PM)
- December 30th(closing at 6:00 PM)

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and both the deposit and first tuition payment must be paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

A deposit of \$100.00 is required at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

Based on availability and openings, MultiCare Children Program admits children from **6 months** to **12 years** of age.

Our process for introducing children to the program includes:

- A pre-enrollment family tour and orientation meeting
- A phased entry schedule, starting with shorter stays and gradually increasing
- Individualized attention and caregiver pairing during the adjustment period
- Welcome materials to help the child and family transition smoothly

Children are admitted without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on special needs if a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Waiting List

Children will be enrolled from the waiting list in the order from which they are listed. A family with a child already enrolled in my program will be given priority.

Adjustment/Trial Period

MultiCare Children Program is a fun and exciting place for children to learn, grow, and make new friends. However, it can take time for a child to adjust to a new child care setting. We will ease this transition by encouraging open communication, supporting emotional expression, engaging in play-based role-playing, and reassuring children of their family's return.

A **one-week** adjustment period begins on your child's first day in care. During this period, families may terminate the signed contract without penalty.

Inclusion

I believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. I will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in my program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

If your child has an identified special need, a written care plan must be submitted along with any required forms from your child's physician or therapist. These forms must be completed prior to the child's first day of attendance.

Non-Discrimination

Equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Confidentiality

Unless I receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at my program are confidential.

My Qualifications

I have earned my associate degree in business administration, as well as ongoing education in Early Childhood Education. In addition, I have completed the Connecticut Child Care course

through the American Red Cross, which certifies me for both First Aid and CPR. I continue my education and broaden my knowledge in the field of early childhood education by attending ongoing trainings, seminars, and workshops.

Communication

I believe that a strong parent-teacher relationship is essential for your child to truly thrive in a school environment. Although face-to-face communication is preferred, there are times when this is not always possible. To supplement, I will use the following methods to communicate with you: I will send out monthly updates via email to convey information about current classroom activities and events. I will also be available via phone and/or email. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held 2 times during the school year (February and October).

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications

Daily notes from our educators will be written in the Family-Teacher Journal to keep you informed about your child's daily experiences. The journal supports regular two-way communication between our staff and your family. We encourage you to share any important updates or events at home so we can provide the best care for your child. Journals are placed in your child's cubby at the end of the day. We kindly ask that journals remain at the center.

Bulletin Boards

We maintain a bulletin board with program news, announcements, upcoming events, holiday schedules, and general updates.

Email

Please provide us with a regularly checked email address so we can send you updates, newsletters, event invitations, and announcements.

Family Activities

We value families as partners in children's development. You are welcome to visit, participate in classroom activities, attend events, and provide feedback. Family involvement enhances your child's growth. A list of family engagement opportunities can be found at the end of this handbook.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Curriculum

MULTICARE CHILDREN PROGRAMS offers a full, developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum which involves both child-initiated and staff supported learning. Opportunities will include free choice, gross and fine motor skill development, social/emotional awareness and problem-solving techniques, phonological awareness, letter and number recognition, circle time, storytime, arts and crafts, music, dance, writing opportunities, language development, beginning

math concepts, sensory exploration, nature and ecology awareness, health education practices, cultural activities, and other fun educational projects. I believe that by providing the right kind of early childhood education, children will gain the foundation needed to be successful in both their schooling and beyond. MultiCare Children programs has an open-door policy for all parents and guardians. You may visit my program at any time during the program hours. have **13 years** of experience in the child care industry, including **6 years in New York and 7 years in Connecticut**, and I **exceed** the state requirements and qualifications. I participate in ongoing professional development in the areas of:

- Child growth and development
- Safe and healthy learning environments
- Developmentally appropriate practices
- Positive guidance strategies
- Family engagement and cultural diversity
- Early education professionalism

Learning Environment

I provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages of the children in my care. I have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. I strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas.

Outings & Field Trips

Weather permitting, we take supervised walking trips in the neighborhood. Children are closely monitored. A general permission form is included in the enrollment packet. Children must wear walking shoes—sandals or flip-flops are not permitted for safety reasons.

Television Time

Television is not part of our daily routine. Occasionally, we may show pre-recorded educational content (no ads) for a maximum of **30 minutes**. All content is pre-screened to ensure educational value. Alternative activities are always available.

Electronic Media

Electronic media use is limited to 20 minutes or less per child per day. All internet sites and software are pre-screened to ensure they are non-violent and educational. Children may choose alternative activities instead.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. I utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

We honor cultural traditions and welcome families to share customs with the class. Celebrations promote understanding and respect for all beliefs. We celebrate:

- Cultural heritage months
- Traditional holidays with inclusive practices
- Family birthdays (optional)

Rest Time

Infants sleep on their backs per safe sleep guidelines. Children under 5 years of age participate in a quiet rest period after lunch. Sleep is not required; quiet activities are provided.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a home/child care partnership that supports your child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. I am committed to working with you to make sure that toilet training is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns. We partner with families to support positive, developmentally appropriate toilet learning. Children begin training based on readiness signs including awareness, interest, and physical ability. We follow your child's pace and your family's preferences to ensure a respectful and low-stress experience.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. I encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are encouraged to interact with peers and adults with kindness and respect. If a child becomes physically aggressive, staff members intervene immediately to ensure the safety of all children. Discipline is always clear, consistent, and age appropriate. Physical restraint is never used as a disciplinary tool. In the rare case where a child's behavior poses a danger to themselves or others, gentle restraint may be used temporarily to prevent harm.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with your family as the first step to understanding your child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of my program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on my resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

TUITION AND FEES

Important Notice

All payments and fee-related matters are handled by **our business office**. If you have any questions or concerns about your account or fees, please contact the business office directly.

Tuition Rates

- Full-Time Rate (4-5 days): morning 7:00 am to 3:15pm **\$350 a week**
- Extended full-Time Rate (4-5 days): 7Am to 6pm **\$450a week**
- Part-Time Rate (2 days): **\$150**
- **Any added day \$50 daily**

Families commit to a set weekly schedule through the Enrollment Agreement Form. Tuition is due regardless of absences, holidays, or weather-related closures to ensure consistent staff compensation.

Tuition Deposit

A deposit equal to **two weeks of tuition** is required upon enrollment confirmation. This deposit will be applied to your child's final two weeks, provided a **two-week written withdrawal notice** is given. If notice is not provided, the deposit will be retained.

Payment

Tuition is **due weekly by 8:00 AM every Friday**. All payments are non-refundable and must be paid in advance.

A non-refundable registration fee of **\$100** is due annually every **January 1st**. This fee **will not** be prorated.

Methods of Payment

Accepted payment methods include:

- Cash
- Check
- Zell
- Money Order
- Debit Card
- Automatic Electronic Funds Transfer (ACH)

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs and as a result, the business does not allow families to accrue a balance of more than one week of tuition. Late payments will result in late fees. Failure to pay childcare fees may lead to termination of services.

If payment is not received on the day it is due, a late fee of **\$10 per day** will be added to your next tuition payment. Repeated late payments will require your family to enroll in automatic or debit card payments.

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges first. Late fees may still apply if the full balance is not paid by the next due date.

If payment is more than **5 business days** past due, your account may be referred to a collection agency or small claims court. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions, including legal and court fees.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH/card transactions will incur a fee of **\$35**. After two returned or failed transactions, your account will be placed on a “cash only” status.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and is only considered in exceptional cases. A fee of **\$2 per minute** is assessed beginning at **3:15PM** and is due at the time of pick-up. Repeated late pickups may lead to termination of services.

Other Fees

- *Additional fees may apply for special activities or field trips. These are due before the event.*
- *A non-refundable enrollment/registration fee of **\$100** is due annually on **January 1st**.*

Credits & No Credits

- Payment is required weekly, year-round, regardless of absences. This ensures consistent staff salaries and operations.
- In the event of emergencies (weather, pandemic, public health closure), families shall pay **50% of tuition** for up to **2 weeks** to retain their child's spot and support staff salaries.
- Credit may be issued for serious illness or hospitalization with a doctor's note.
- Credit **will not** be given for provider absences. Up to **5 provider personal/sick days** are pre-built into tuition and are **not refundable**.
- Credit will not be given for provider absences

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9 AM, please call me at +1 (203) 522-3946 or email info@multicarechildren.com. I will be concerned about your child if I do not hear from you.

My Vacation

My personal vacations consist of two full weeks a year. You will be notified well in advance of these dates. Full tuition is still due during these weeks. Families are responsible for finding back-up care for their children during holidays, provider vacations and planned or unplanned closings.

Families are responsible for finding back-up care for their children during holidays, provider vacations and planned or unplanned closings.

Withdrawals

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of your two-week deposit.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent me from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced via email, SMS text alerts, and our voicemail system at (203) 555-5678. If it becomes necessary to close early, I will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

I open at 7 AM, and please do not drop-off your child prior any earlier than this time. Families are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

I close at 3:30PM, and please do not pick-up your child later than this time. Families are expected to enter my home and sign-out their child out, and leave by closing time.

Families will be greeted at the door for drop-off and pick-up. Your child will be brought to you. This is to reduce the spread of germs and help ease the transition of the child into their day. At the end of the day I will bring the child to you with all of their belongings. We aim to keep the home and child care clean for the children who are crawling on the ground and this will help maintain this standard.

Use of Cell Phones

Drop-off and pick-up are my primary windows of time to communicate with you about your child. In addition, children need your full attention at this time. Therefore, I respectfully request that you not use cell phones while dropping off or picking up your child.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a valid photo ID for verification. Please inform your designated pick-up person of our policy.

If your child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, we will attempt to contact you and the individuals listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. We will remain with your child as long as possible, but if after **2 hours** we have not been able to reach anyone, we will contact the local child protective services agency for further assistance.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We reserve the right to refuse to release a child if we have reasonable cause to suspect that the person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or is otherwise impaired in a way that could endanger the child. In such cases, we will contact another individual from the Emergency and Release Contact list or, if necessary, notify local authorities. Repeated incidents may result in termination of child care services.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants:** enough clean bottles for a day's use labeled with date and name, at least 8 diapers and wipes per day, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day 2 pack and play sheets, a pacifier if needed, and bibs.

- **Toddlers:** enough clean bottles for a day's use labeled with date and name (if applicable), 2 sippy cups, six diapers and wipes, at least two changes of clothes per day, a blanket, and sheet.
- **Older Toddlers:** 2 cups, at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program a blanket, and sheet, and at least two changes of clothes per day diapers and wipes if applicable.
- **Preschoolers:** a water cup, at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
- **Kindergarteners:** a water cup, at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
- **After School Care Children:** a water cup, books for homework.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. I am not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the program.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items may be placed or retrieved in the Lost-and-Found Box located in the entry hallway. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to avoid loss or conflict among children. Exceptions may be made for comfort items or show-and-tell with prior approval.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

We request that families do not bring food from home unless previously arranged due to allergies or dietary restrictions. If permitted:

- Foods must be labeled with your child's name, date, and type of food.
- Food sharing is not allowed unless it is part of a planned group activity.
- Leftover food will be discarded unless it is shelf-stable and unopened.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify me in writing so that I can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. A copy should be given to me prior to enrollment.

Meal Time

Meals are served using real, child-safe plates and flatware. Good table manners are encouraged, and teachers eat with the children to model behavior. Weekly menus are posted for families. Staff are trained in pediatric choking first aid and are present during all meals.

I am trained in first aid for choking and am always present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with your child’s name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- Formula must be brought in a factory-sealed container in a ready-to-feed strength or powder or concentrate. Formula brought from home must be labeled with your child’s name.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

Toddler Feedings

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org). Every **January**, we review the latest recommended immunization schedule from the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics. If a child is not going to be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, the parent must complete the appropriate exemption form required by state regulations. Unimmunized children may be excluded during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illnesses, as directed by the state health department.

Physicals

Routine physical exams are required according to the American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines. A copy of your child's most recent physical exam must be submitted before enrollment. Families are responsible for ensuring their child's physicals are up-to-date and providing the program with a copy of the most recent health assessment results.

Illness

I understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to my program. I have the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. I will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than I can provide.
- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 1 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to my care is required.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify me regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide me a letter detailing your child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care.

Medication

Although I am certified to administer medications to students, this includes prescription medications as well as over-the-counter medications and ointments, I prefer not to administer medication with the exception of EMERGENCY use medications to prevent life-threatening anaphylactic reactions (ex. Epi-pen) and EMERGENCY oral medication (ex. Benadryl). Sunscreen must be applied prior to coming to the Program. For baby diaper cream must be applied at home. Any medications your child needs will have to be given by the parents/guardians. I also request that I be informed of any medication or topical application and possible side effects of such medication, that you have given your child up to 24 hours before bringing him/her to school. This is for your child's safety. I will need to monitor your child throughout the day for side effects and will only be able to do that if I am aware of medication given and what to look for.

In the event that your child is prescribed an EMERGENCY medication, the parental responsibilities include providing me the proper medication authorization form, and the medication. The medication administration form must be signed by the authorized prescriber and parent/guardian giving me authorization to administer the medication. This form is available upon request.

The medication authorization form must include information, such as:

- The child's name, address, and birthdate
- The date the medication order was written
- Medication name, dose and method of administration
- Time to be administered and dates to start and end the medication
- Relevant side effects and prescribers plan for management should they occur
- Notation whether the medication is a controlled drug
- Listing of allergies, if any and reactions or negative interactions with food or drugs
- Specific instructions from prescriber how medication is to be given
- Name, address, telephone number and signature of authorized prescriber ordering the drug
- Name, address, telephone number, signature and relationship to the child of the parents giving permission for the administration of the drug

Please note that there are many variations of the medication administration form that medical providers have access to. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the medication administration form clearly states that it is for licensed childcare centers. Please understand that your child may not be able to attend if he/she does not have the proper authorization.

All medications must be in their original child resistant safety container and clearly labeled with the child's name, name of prescription, date of prescription, and directions for use. Except for non-prescription medications, pre-measured commercially prepared injectable medications (ex. Epi-pens), glucagon and asthma inhalant medications, all medications will be stored in a locked container and, if directed by a manufacturer, refrigerated.

I will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered including, but not limited to the following:

- Name, address and date of birth of the child
- Name of the medication and dosage
- Pharmacy name and prescription number
- Name of authorized prescriber
- The date & time the medication was administered
- The dose that was administered
- The level of cooperation of the child
- Any medication errors
- Food and medication allergies

- Signature of the staff administering
- **Sunscreen** may be applied with written permission from the parent. Parents must provide the sunscreen, labeled with the child's name.
- **Insect repellent** may also be applied with written parental permission and must be provided by the parent, labeled with the child's name.

Communicable Diseases

When a child in my program has a suspected reportable disease, it is my legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. I will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Home Safety

I pride myself in having a warm, loving and safe environment in which your child can explore, learn and experience many different things. Some features that help ensure your child's safety are:

- ☐ Working smoke detectors are on each floor and near cooking and sleeping areas.
- ☐ Working carbon monoxide detectors are near the sleeping area.
- ☐ Adequate Ventilation throughout my home.
- ☐ No guns or firearms on premises.
- ☐ Gates are used on stairways when children under 5 years old are present.
- ☐ Fire extinguishers are maintained properly.
- ☐ Toys are age appropriate, in good repair and of a non-violent nature.
- ☐ Electrical outlets are covered.
- ☐ Pens, pencils and office supplies are out of reach.
- ☐ Knives and adult scissors are out of reach.
- ☐ Cleaners, chemicals, matches and fire starters are out of reach.
- ☐ The hot water heater is regulated at 120°F.
- ☐ Medications are out of reach.
- ☐ A well-stocked first aid kit is kept near and expiration dates are observed.
- ☐ Animals are child-friendly, properly immunized and in good health.

- ☐ I am certified in Infant & Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid.
- ☐ Hot radiator and water pipes are covered or out of reach or not very hot to the touch.
- ☐ Safe grassy areas to play.
- ☐ Yard is free of splinters and harmful objects.
- ☐ Safety approved play equipment and toys.
- ☐ Yard routinely treated to deter insects.
- ☐ Outside areas where children play is fenced and gate locked.
- ☐ Children do not play outside unsupervised.
- ☐ Ponds, wells, tool sheds and other hazards are fenced or closed off.

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. My yard is used as an extension of my program, and daily activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for program play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 95°F or less than 32°F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is 150 or higher.

Injuries

First aid will be administered by me in the unlikely event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive a report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. My program is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, your child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while I will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, my response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. My focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. I will work with the families of both to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Pets/Animals

Rue, our family pet, is a golden doodle which is a standard poodle/golden retriever mix. He is an indoor dog, deemed healthy by a veterinarian and is current on all his immunizations. He is not neutered, and is up-to-date on his rabies vaccination. He has been raised with children and is an intelligent, gentle, loving dog. His breed is also considered hypoallergenic for those with pet allergies. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding Rue, please do not hesitate to talk with me about it. Rue will be spending his day upstairs or outside in his designated area(not in the classroom).

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, I expect the same from all families. I will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, I reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your child from my care.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor program environment and vehicles used by my program are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on my program's premises.

Prohibited Substances

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on my premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. I am legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. I will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

I am required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if I have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. My program will cooperate fully

with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from the group during an outing or field trip and is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

My home is fully equipped with working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and emergency lights. My fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children quarterly.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with your child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

From time to time, I offer an opportunity for families to participate in the activities that help with growth and improvement of their child's education. I encourage families to take an active role.

Examples of Family Events:

Please be sure to look at the Bulletin Board for announcements of these activities and events.

- Holiday Gathering
- Book Swap
- Fall Festival
- Annual Family Picnic

Program Activities:

Enjoy and help your child's class with these special activities.

- Share a meal with your child
- Chaperone field trips
- Read to children at arrival or pickup
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Donate requested items
- Contribute to Pot Luck Meal
- Family Teacher conferences

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to me prior to enrollment.

I may update this handbook from time-to-time and will provide notice as updates are implemented.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures I have set up are for the safety and welfare of all children in my care. I look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received and reviewed the **Family Handbook**. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask questions if I do not understand any policies, procedures or information contained in the **Family Handbook**.

Recipient Signature

Date

Provider's Signature

Date