

THE CHILDRENS
CENTER
OF
LAKE FOREST



PARENT'S HANDBOOK

**THE CHILDREN CENTER OF LAKE FOREST
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MISSION STATEMENT

THE CHILDREN'S CENTER OF LAKE FOREST IS A STATE LICENSED DAYCARE AND PRESCHOOL FACILITY. WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE THE QUALITY CARE THAT YOUR CHILDREN DESERVE. OUR STAFF IS PREPARED THEORETICALLY AND ARE EXPERIENCED IN PROVIDING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN IN A SAFE AND LOVING ENVIRONMENT THAT WILL MEET THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS. WE RESPECT EACH CHILD AS AN INDIVIDUAL REGARDLESS OF ORIGIN, COLOR, OR RACE. WE MAINTAIN OPEN COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS SO AS TO BE ABLE TO POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO EACH CHILD'S OPTIMUM GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. WE LOOK FORWARD TO MAKING YOUR FAMILIES EXPERIENCE A FRUITFUL ONE.

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HOURS OF OPERATION

The Children's Center of Lake Forest is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. There is a \$1.00 per minute charge for picking up your child after 6:00 p.m. If late pickups becomes a recurring problem, the Center's director will try to discuss ways to resolve the problem and if it still continues, we may need to terminate your childcare. Late fees should be paid to the teacher waiting with your child. If your child has not been picked up by 6:10 p.m. and we have not received a phone call we will call emergency contacts.

If the child is still in our care after 6:30 p.m. with no contact from anyone, the staff member will need to contact the Police Department.

We are closed on the following days:

- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving and the Friday after.**
- **Christmas Day**
- **New Year's Day**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Independence Day**

If Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve falls on a weekday, we will close at 2:00 p.m. If Christmas Day or New Year's Day fall on a Saturday, we

will close on the Friday prior, and if it falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday.

ADMISSION & FEES

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$60.00 that must be paid prior to the admission date.

Tuition Payments are due by Tuesday at afternoon of each week. There is a late payment fee of \$15.00 that must be included with your payment if your payment is late.

Parents have the option to pay weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, but it has to be in advance of services provided.

A \$25.00 fee is due for any returned checks.

If an account becomes delinquent, the Director will partner closely with the family to resolve any issues in a timely manner. If the account is continually delinquent, the Director has the authority to deny services until the account is cleared.

Full Tuition payment is required for all families even if your child is absent or if it is a scheduled holiday.

KEYPAD ACCESS

Every new family has a four digit access code that will be given to only someone that will be picking up your child on a regular basis. Others may ring the doorbell and a picture identification will be requested at pickup time. We ask parents to notify the center if a different person will be picking up their child.

SIGN IN & OUT

It is mandatory to sign in on the clipboard designated to your child's class at drop off time and also sign out at the time of pickup. This is mandatory for anyone dropping off or picking up a child. You will find these clipboards on the table underneath the doorbell by the main entrance.

COMMUNICATION

Infants through 3 years of age, have a daily report sheet so parents can be informed of the child's daily activities. The center also issues monthly newsletters to keep families updated on any changes or reminders. Parents are always welcome to call at any time to check on their children. Parent-Teacher conferences are available upon request. Please feel free to schedule one with your child's teacher.

NAP TIME

Every effort is made to adjust to the individual needs of all children regarding their daily nap. Children are allowed to take a book to their cots at the beginning of nap time. Parents may provide the child with a special book, stuffed toy, and favorite blanket in the Toddler room through the Five's room. Per DCFS regulation we cannot allow any blankets in the cribs other than the mattress linen during all nap times in any infant room. Infants nap at their own time; toddlers between 11:30AM-2:30PM; Two's through Four's nap between 12:30PM-2:30PM. Children who do not nap are required to rest quietly on their cots. Our teachers are very nurturing as to rubbing the children's head or backs to help them relax or sleep.

MEALS & SNACKS

The Center provides breakfast between 6:30AM and 9:00AM, morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack. The snacks will either be a fresh fruit or vegetable, which will also include water or milk. We partner with a food catering company called Quality Catering that ensures that all of the meals that are served to the children meet CACFP government standards. We are avid participants in this government program. CACFP sets nutritional standards that must be met and with Quality

Catering, they have a dietician on staff that ensures those standards are met. Children enjoy treating their classmates to a special snack for birthdays or other special occasions. We require everything brought to the center to be pre-packaged, fresh fruit, or something healthy. Please talk to the teachers on days you would like to bring a special treat to the center. Please be aware that some children have allergies so please check with the teacher of your child's classroom to ensure that you are able to bring a treat that ALL children can have. If this procedure is not followed, we are not able to give out any of the treats brought so as to not leave any child out. Lunch is provided at 11:00AM for infants and toddlers and at 11:30AM for two's and older children. We positively encourage children to eat what is served. Please notify the class teacher if your child has any food restrictions such as allergies or religious beliefs so that we can properly accommodate your child.

If parents prefer to provide their child's lunch and snacks, it needs to be done on a daily basis. If it's only a one time treat, we ask the parents to please provide for all the children in their classroom as this encourages sharing.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The state of Illinois assists eligible families with financial assistance. The center requires that

families keep up to date with all of the requirements of this program.

If for some particular reason your approval will not be received before your expiration date, please notify the Director.

The center will not provide care if your paperwork is expired unless you have already previously spoken with the Director about the matter and have come to an agreement of approval.

DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Below is a GENERAL schedule of a typical day and is subject to change dependent on the classroom.

6:30-8:00AM	Arrivals and drop-offs in Infant and 3 year old room.
8:00-9:00AM	Children go to their classrooms. Guided Play & Activities
9:00-9:15 AM	Bathroom/handwashing
9:15-9:30AM	Morning Snack
9:30-11:30AM	Learning & Outdoor activities Or Gym.

11:30-2:45PM	Lunch Time/Nap Time/Bathroom
2:45-3:00PM	Afternoon Snack
3:00-5:00PM	Learning & Outdoor activities Or Gym.
5:00-6:00PM	Departure/Free guided play.

Parents can pick up their children at any time of day.

However, we ask that drop-off and pick-up time be consistent. Please notify us if any changes in schedule will take place to reassure that the teacher ratio is in compliance with the DCFs regulations at all times.

SICK/VACATION POLICY

Full tuition payment is expected by Tuesday at noon of each week regardless of if your child was absent on some days. If a payment will be late, please notify the Director before a late fee of \$15.00 is charged.

If your child did not attend the center for a full week or longer because of illness or vacation, please see the Director for financial arrangements.

After a year of full time enrollment, families receive a free week that may be used any time after the year. Please notify the Director before use of that vacation week.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES **ILLNESS**

Please notify the center if your child will be absent.

Per Health department regulations, children who are sick and were taken to the doctor and diagnosed with a contagious virus, it is required to notify the center so that we can notify other parents to ensure the health and safety of all children in our care. Children are asked to stay home and return to the Center with a doctor's note stating the child is able to resume to normal day activities. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, per health regulations, Department of Children and Family Services, as well as the safety of our children and staff. If any child is showing any of the following symptoms, we will call the parent to notify them and possibly request for them to come pick up their child dependent on the severity of those symptoms.

Examples of associated symptoms include, but are not limited to:

1.) Fever (100 F. higher)-Child needs to be fever free for 24 hours without any medication.

- 2.) Nausea or vomiting.**
- 3.) Diarrhea: runny or watery stools, or 2 or looser stools within last 4 hours.**
- 4.) Sore throat, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.**
- 5.) Children with pink eye will be sent home immediately and may return after being on medication prescribed by a doctor after 24 hours.**
- 6.) Unexplained Rash.**
- 7.) Excessive Crankiness: Child is irritable, excessive whining or crying, wants to be constantly held, or requires more attention than we can provide.**
- 8.) Lice (may not return child to care until no more nits are spotted).**
- 9.) Communicable diseases (chicken pox, roseola, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, influenza, etc.)**

If your child has any illness that is contagious, you will be required to pick up your child as soon as possible. Your child will be required to be medication free for at least 24 hours of that illness before returning to the center.

This benefits your child and the other children. Your help at keeping your sick child home is appreciated.

Parents of a child with a diagnosed contagious condition (measles, head lice, pink eye, mumps, chicken pox, etc.) are asked to notify us as soon

as possible so that the center may alert parents to watch for symptoms in their own children.

CHANGING YOUR CHILD'S SCHEDULE

Please notify the Center or your child's teacher ahead of time so we can reassure there is space available if there will be any change of schedule

If your child is attending part time or full time and you want to cut down on the amount of days your child is attending, then we require a 2 week notice and your tuition payment for the spot reserved. If your child does not attend all the days you have reserved for him/her for the remaining 2 weeks, tuition payment is still required for the contracted days.

CUSTODY

The Department of Children and Family Services requires all children's files to have emergency contacts in the event parents cannot be reached at a needed time. If either parent is not authorized to visit or pick-up your child, we require a copy of custodial documents stating the

legal rights of either parent so that we may comply with full protection and safety of the child. For security reasons, a photo identification will be required at pick-up time for someone who is asked to pick-up on a one time basis.

TOYS

We prefer that children DO NOT bring toys from home as this usually becomes problematic for the children without a toy. If it is something that can be shared with the entire group and is school appropriate (i.e. books, videos, etc.), you are welcome to speak to the classroom teacher prior to bringing in that toy to make an arrangement. Little ones have a difficult time sometimes sharing the toys with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please be aware that they may be put away if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Toy weapons (guns, knives, swords, squirt guns, etc.) are not permitted and will be turned away at the door.

If your child has a favorite nap time toy, please bring it and we will get it out of there cubby at nap time. This only allowed in the Toddler room through the Five's room. We not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. Any

articles of clothing, toys or other items should be labeled with your child's name.

POTTY TRAINING

Parents and teachers may communicate closely as to when a child may be ready to begin potty training. Let us know when you have begun training your child so we can partner our efforts. We will work with you and advise you of the supplies we need to make this experience for your child as smooth as possible. Please be advised that each child develops at their own pace so we do not push potty training if the child is not truly ready.

CLEANLINESS/HYGIENE

We do my best to maintain a clean center and clean children. We have the children wash their hands after they go potty and before meals and snacks.

To encourage proper health hygiene, we ask parents to have their child's hand washed before entering the room at drop off time. Our staff

reinforces proper hand washing after bathroom breaks, meals and snack time.

Infants sleep in separate cribs. We provide mattress linens. Toddlers through the age of four sleep on cots. Each child has a separate cot that we provide with blankets and pillows brought from home.

MEDICATION

Please fill out a medication form for the medication that needs to be administered to your child. We are not able to administer any sort of medication to any child without a documented medication form giving us parental authority to do so. Please ask the classroom teacher for the location of those forms.

If your child is on medication and it needs to be taken while he/she is at daycare, the medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, dosage, and when to be taken. If medication is to be taken only twice a day, i.e. (morning & night) then we encourage that medication to be taken at home.

All over the counter medication such as Tylenol, Motrin etc., need to be brought in brand new with a sealed cap.

Do not leave medicine in cubbies or diaper bags. Please make sure all medicine is handed to the Director or Teacher for safe storage. Thank you.

INJURIES

Incident reports are written for all incidents that occur at the center. The teacher that is present at the time of the incident is required to sign the form as well as the parent consenting that they have read and received that report. The parent is then given their copy of the form and another copy goes in the child's classroom file as well as the center's file.

If a child arrives to the center with any injury, mark or bruise that occurred at home, please notify the classroom teacher so that an observation form can be documented. This observation form requires the signature of the observing teacher as well as the parent of that child. If there is any unusual markings on any child, the classroom teacher will call the parent and fill out an observation form. If an incident occurs at home without any bruise appearing, please advise the center in case a bruise does appear later or a serious ailment occurs.

FIRE AND TORNADO

Fire and tornado drills are practiced at least quarterly. For proper evacuation of the center, children are required to nap with their shoes on so as to follow all safety precautions needed to ensure the safety of all children. During our fire drills, the fire marshal is present to ensure that we are practicing our routines safely and correctly.

TEMPORARY OR PERMENANT TERMINATION OF SERVICES

We may terminate care if the terms of our center contract and policies in this handbook are not followed.

Some are examples below (but not limited to):

- **All forms in the child's file are not completed after 3 or more consecutive attempts from the office manager to fill them out. This would call for temporary termination until all of the requested documentation is received.**
- **If the child is having behavioral issues that are a safety concern to the teachers and other children we try to work with the parent in partnering to figure out the best method to work with the child in changing this behavior. If the behavior becomes a danger to the staff and**

children then we may request permanent termination.

- **If childcare tuition is not paid on time and no financial arrangements are made with the Director, then this could result in temporary termination until that bill is cleared or permanent termination for non-cooperating parents.**
- **Excessive late pick-ups can result in permanent termination if no effort is made to change the situation.**
- **Any and all disrespect to staff or other children will result in permanent termination.**

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/ CHLD NEGLECT

The state of Illinois requires all employees of a daycare to report any and all cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. We do this for the protection of your child and the children in our care.

VACCINATION

The state of Illinois requires all children in a daycare facility to be properly vaccinated by a licensed doctor. We ask documentation of all up to date vaccinations and routine physicals prior to the child's start day at the center. If all of those documents are not received prior to their

start date we will not be able to begin their care at our center.

If there are any questions or concerns that are not answered in this handbook, please feel free to ask the Director or office manager. Thank you.