



**A Five Star Child Enrichment Facility in Western
North Carolina**

Family Handbook

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Who We Are

About This Handbook

This handbook will help to explain our school and our operational policies further. We reserve the right to update this handbook at any time, but we will let families know if we do. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with this information, along with the Enrollment Agreement provided to you. On your Enrollment Agreement, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt and agreement to the policies outlined in this handbook.

Mission Statement, Values, and Philosophy

At The Children's Center of Western North Carolina (TCC), we are dedicated to creating an inclusive, playful, and nurturing environment where children can grow and learn together in acceptance of one another. We strive to elevate the quality of early learning and leadership by sharing our expertise, resources, and innovative practices.

We value the importance of character, demonstrate commitment to our staff and families, respect each individual, and celebrate our differences. We believe in empowering all individuals to share their perspectives and equally value all contributions. Our commitment extends to building lasting relationships within the communities we serve.

TCC's philosophy is based on a belief that children benefit from an inclusive environment. Our mission is carried out daily by highly trained staff, low teacher/child ratios and state approved curriculum.

We believe that children gain solid interpersonal skills, including self-confidence, acceptance, empathy, and communication. Inclusion allows all children to relate and interact with peers in play and daily routines, engaging in experiences that promote the development of self-help skills, self-control, and the understanding that others have diverse backgrounds and perspectives than themselves.

Board of Directors

Since our founding in 1977, The Children's Center has been guided by a Board of Directors comprised of volunteers. Board members are willing to give their time, talents, and enthusiasm to ensure The Children's Center is fiscally sound and maintains the industry's highest standards. The board is led by the chairperson, selected by the Board to serve a 2-year term. Multiple consecutive terms are permitted.

Requests to address the board may be submitted to the board chair at slarson@thechildrenscenterwnc.org.

The Staff

The quality of the program is due to the quality of the staff. It is vital to attract staff that are experienced and knowledgeable in the field of early childhood. Each classroom is staffed with two full-time teachers. Additional part-time staff and substitute staff float between rooms to offer additional support or coverage where needed.

Each staff person must receive a specific number of hours of professional development in child development or each year. This requirement is what state licensing regulations require and is crucial in maintaining qualified teachers for the ongoing success of our program. All teachers must have some level of experience or education with young children and demonstrate a genuine interest in children. All staff members must have an initial physical, TB test, criminal records check, and a reference inquiry before employment begins.

Licensing and Accreditation

Our school is 5-star state-licensed and regularly inspected to ensure everything meets or exceeds standards, including child-to-teacher ratios and safe facilities. The Children's Center at Gracelyn is subject to inspection by state and local health, fire, licensing, and building agencies. Regulations and inspections pertain to staff qualifications, the facility and playground, nutrition, health and sanitation matters, record-keeping, and child-to-staff ratios. If you have any questions regarding licensing or regulations, please speak with an Administrator.

Educational Programming

Accreditation

The Children's Center at Gracelyn is a 5-star licensed North Carolina childcare facility. The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) rates quality based on staff education and program standards. To learn more about star rated license visit [Star Rated License - Star Rated License \(ncdhhs.gov\)](http://ncdhhs.gov).

Classrooms

The individual developmental needs of each child are considered when placement decisions are made. For a child to develop a positive self-image and appropriate social skills, they need to be

grouped with peers whose developmental age is like their own. In all groups of children, there will be varying ability levels. We typically group children together by cohorts (who they will enter Kindergarten with) who will age up by August 31st. Individual classroom compositions are listed below:

Little Tennessees - Typically 10 children, between the ages of 1yr- 2yr with two teachers. We maintain a ratio of 1:5 at all times.

Nantahalas - Typically 16 children, between the ages of 2yrs- 3yrs with two teachers. We maintain a ratio of 1:8 at all times.

Pee Dees - Typically 16 children, between the ages of 3yrs- 4yrs with two teachers. We maintain a ratio of 1:9 at all times.

Swannanoas - Typically 16 children, between the ages of 4yrs- 5yrs with two teachers. We always maintain a ratio of 1:12.

Curriculum

At The Children Center we focus on child-centered teaching, developmentally appropriate practices, and the belief that 'play is a child's work.' Our goal is to develop each child's confidence, creativity, and life-long learning skills in our program. To support this goal, we use Experience Early Learning curriculum- a learning curriculum that applies child development theories and brain research to a unique model of teacher support, child experience and family engagement.

Experience Early Learning curriculum is based on objectives for development and learning that focus on all the most critical areas for success: The Child, the Teacher, the Environment, and the Family. These objectives are built into every classroom activity, which means that the teacher helps your child develop skills and knowledge in these critical areas all day long. For more information about Experience Early Learning curriculum: [Experience Early Learning \(mothergoosetime.com\)](https://mothergoosetime.com/experience-early-learning).

Assessment

Child assessment is a vital component of all high-quality early childhood programs. Assessment is essential to understand and support young children's development. The Children Center has selected Authentic Assessment, an integrated assessment system with Experience, to measure child outcomes. Authentic Assessment is an ongoing observational assessment tool based upon years of feedback from thousands of educators and significant research about how children develop and learn. Authentic Assessment helps educators to document your child's learning progress through intentional and natural observations. For more information about Authentic Assessment: [Assessment – Experience Early Learning \(mothergoosetime.com\)](https://mothergoosetime.com/assessment-experience-early-learning)

Assessment Plan

The Experience Curriculum's embedded observation prompts for teachers in the monthly assessment planning toolkits supports teachers with assessments. Informal artifacts such as work samples, creative art, and photos may also be included by the teachers.

Our goal is to assess children twice per year, and assessments will be conducted by adults that the child is familiar with. Assessments will be conducted via observation during the natural course of the child's day. This may include during one on one, small group, or large group opportunities.

Assessment results

Teachers use the information gathered during the assessment process to:

Identify children's interests and needs.

Be intentional in their teaching.

Develop goals for each child and plan for individual student needs.

Guide instructional/environmental planning that best meets the needs of all children.

Share progress with families by pinpointing where children are along a continuum of development and education.

Assessment results and developmental progress is shared with parents at their parent-teacher conferences.

Suppose assessments indicate a need for further evaluation. In that case, the teachers will discuss this with the family and use the information gathered for referral to an outside agency for additional diagnostic screenings and assessments.

Behavior Guideline Philosophy

Our foundational goal at TCC is to help our students develop strong social and emotional skills. We believe that when children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop positive self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Research indicates that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than students who exhibit social and emotional difficulties (Hyson 2004; Kostelnik et al. 2015).

WE DO:

1. Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. Reason with and set limits for the children.
3. Model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. Modify the classroom environment to prevent problems before they occur.
5. Actively listen to the children.

6. Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. Ignore minor mistakes.
10. Explain things to the children on their level.
11. Use short, supervised periods of “time-out” for ages 3 and up.
12. Stay consistent in our behavior management program.

WE DO NOT:

1. Physically or verbally punish children.
2. Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
3. Deny food or rest as punishment.
4. Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
5. Leave the children alone, unattached, or without supervision.
6. Allow discipline of children by children

Additionally, socially-emotionally healthy children are better able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers. To support our students in developing these skills, we take an initiative-taking and preventive approach to guidance that reinforces appropriate behaviors rather than focusing on inappropriate behaviors.

Our Environment: We provide children with exciting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive. We develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding extended periods of wait time without activity. Yet, our schedule is flexible enough to follow the children’s interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs.

Our Teachers: We work to develop a strong rapport with each child. We help children put words to their emotions. We use social stories to help teach our students healthy social skills. We strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.

Our Families: We communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school. We partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

Hyson, M. 2004. *The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum*, 2nd ed. New York: Teachers College Press
 Kostelnik, M.J., A.K. Soderman, A.P. Whiren, M.L. Rupiper, & K.M. Gregory. 2015. *Guiding Children’s Social Development and Learning: Theory and Skills*, 8th ed. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Behavior Guidance

Teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.

Aggressive Behavior

- Teachers will meet with the administration for advice, support, and strategy planning.
- Teachers will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted on a log. Documentation may include incident reports, ABC charts, or Behavior Plans.
- Teachers will work together as partners with the parents of children who present aggressive behaviors and the victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
- Teacher-parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private. They shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- The administration will hold a conference with the parents/guardians of the child exhibiting aggressive behaviors to develop a plan of action and schedule follow-up meetings or telephone conversations as needed.
- If necessary, intervention shall ensure each child has access to professional services, such as referrals to community agencies offering early intervention services, community mental health centers, and/or a private therapist. All discipline decisions will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's understanding level.
- If an aggressive occurrence happens multiple times in one day the parent/guardian may be called to pick up their child. Administration will inform them at that time if the child may return the next day or if the parent/guardian shall seek alternative care due to a lack of behavioral resolution or the parent's lack of cooperation.

Biting

Biting is a normal part of child development. Young children bite for various reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth. Biting can also be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they are feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions, and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. If they cannot find the words they need quickly enough or cannot articulate how they are feeling, they may resort to biting.

Biting tends to occur most often between 12-24 months of age. Biting past the age of two and a half to three is less common. For repeated biting instances with preschoolers, we may request a parent/teacher conference. The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss what may be causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid and therefore lead to biting. Additionally, we would develop a

joint plan of action following our behavior guidance procedures listed in this handbook. If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident/Accident Report that keeps the identity of both children confidential.

If concerns persist

Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the child's safety and the safety of others in the classroom. Our response will be calm, respectful and give the child information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not. Despite these efforts, some children may continue to exhibit significant, challenging behaviors. The following steps will be completed if a child must be removed for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others:

1. Make a referral to an early childhood mental health specialist or Healthy Social Behavioral Initiative specialist through the Child Care Resource & Referral and refer to the agency responsible for early childhood special education services.
2. Maintain documentation on file of the incident's outcomes, subsequent parent conference, and the plan developed that includes appropriate intervention strategies. The parent conference's purpose is to create a plan jointly with the family and available resources to address the specific behaviors that constitute an imminent danger (recurring violence, behavior, or aggression)
3. If a child continues to exhibit persistent, severe challenging behavior that is unsafe to themselves, other children, or the teachers. The Children's Center may recommend and/or require alternative placement if it is deemed in the best interest of the child, program, and other children. A written warning will be given to the families before enrollment revocation occurs.
4. If parents/caregivers, at any time, refuse recommendations then TCC has the right to refuse services to the child and family.

Enrollment and Tuition

Admissions Process

Children are eligible for admission at the age of 15 months. The admission process begins with a tour of the school. Children are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis, depending on availability in the child's cohort classroom. Children are placed on a wait list if there is no availability.

Spaces are filled from the wait list according to the following priority system:

The Children Center staff children

GCPC affiliated families/children
 Siblings of currently enrolled children
 Previous TCC families
 General Public

Children must be able to benefit from participation in an inclusive group setting. If, after a tour and discussion of the child's needs, it is determined that TCC is not a good fit for the child, TCC will attempt to give resources and information about other programs that may benefit the child and family.

Registration & Requirements for Enrollment

After parents are notified of the admission date, you must complete the Enrollment Application and all paperwork, pre-enrollment visit at TCC and pay the non-refundable registration fee. TCC will provide a Tuition Agreement with current rates.

Upon receipt of the enrollment application and other enrollment paperwork the parent is signed up in our Brightwheel and ProCare Accounts (where payment of registration can be made online).

On the first day a child attends school, the office must have in each child's file:

- A completed Enrollment Application, including Schedule & Tuition Agreement
- A signed Enrollment Agreement and Pre-Enrollment Visit
- A completed set of enrollment paperwork
- Completed medical action plan (if applicable)
- A health assessment by a licensed physician (within the last year)
- A record of immunization or a completed exemption form (within the last year)

PLEASE NOTE: We are required to have each of these forms in our files in order to maintain our license to operate. State law requires us to exclude from school any student whose files are incomplete until we have received their missing paperwork. We appreciate your cooperation.

Tuition & Fees

Tuition

We know that your child's early education is important and does not come without a price. Paying tuition on time helps ensure that we can continue to retain our highly trained teachers and provide them with positive work experience. Information about current tuition rates is available in our Tuition Agreement. Tuition increases occur in the fall and typically reflect a cost-of-living increase. All tuition is due in advance

of services provided and in accordance with your tuition agreement. TCC will provide a Tuition Agreement with current rates.

The best way to pay tuition and fees is online through ProCare. Tuition balances will generally be posted on the first of the month. Through ProCare, you can make recurring or one-time payments online using a checking or savings account for no additional fee. If you choose to use a credit card, a 3% fee is assessed by Tuition Express. If online payment is not possible for you, a check or money order can be submitted. We do not accept cash payments.

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month, no later than the 5th. While we are a non-profit organization and strive to take the needs and problems of our families into consideration, we must maintain financial stability.

Accounts 30 days in arrears or repeated failure to pay tuition by the due date may result in the termination of services. Any requests for exceptions must be made with the Executive Director.

A late fee of \$50 will be assessed on any account that has not been paid in full by the 5th of the month unless these arrangements have been made. If tuition is not paid, your child will not be allowed to attend, and their spot could be forfeited to those on the waiting list. Upon enrollment at TCC, all families will be expected to sign a statement that they have read, understand, and will abide by the tuition agreement.

Receipts can be printed out via your ProCare payment portal for employer reimbursement or tax purposes.

Annual Fees

Annual registration fees for currently enrolled families are due every September 1. All registration fees are nonrefundable.

Returned Checks

There will be a service charge for any returned checks. In the event of a returned check, a money order will be due immediately, late fees will apply, and immediate termination of services may apply. Payments from customers with prior unpaid returned checks must be, from there on out, in the form of a money order or cashier's check.

Family Discounts

Families with more than one child enrolled full-time receive 10% off the oldest child's tuition.

Withdrawing

If you need to withdraw your child from TCC you must give 2 weeks' advance notice in writing. The 2 weeks' notice begins the day it is received in the school office. You will be charged tuition during this two-week notice period, whether your child is in attendance or not.

The School Day

Your Child's First Day

Preparing for the first day of school can be exciting, but it can also be an overwhelming and anxious time – we understand! We will collaborate with you to make your child's first day the best it can be. Do not hesitate to share any concerns you have before that first drop-off. If possible, we recommend new students start with a few half days, gradually lengthening their time. This helps your child become familiar with the new environment and new faces and reduces anxiety. Each child is unique in their patterns and ease of adjustment to new situations.

Be sure to talk with the staff daily during the transition phase. A consistent daily schedule (arrival and departure routines) also helps children adjust to a new routine and environment. You're always welcome to message via Brightwheel to see how your child's adjusting or download the Brightwheel app for updates throughout the day.

On the first day, we ask that you send in the items listed below. Please make sure to label each item with your child's name.

- Please provide two complete sets of extra clothes, including socks, for your child. It is always a good idea to keep a sweater or sweatshirt at the center, too. Clothing should be updated periodically to make sure it still fits and is appropriate for the season.
- Diapers (if applicable). These items will stay at school.
- A small blanket for a nap, a small pillow, or a comfort item is optional. We will keep these items in your child's cubby, and we will wash them weekly.

Hours of Operation and Parking

TCC is open from 8:00 am- 5:30pm, Monday- Friday. Our center cannot be accessed prior to 8:00am by families or children. While we do not restrict the number of hours used daily/weekly, please know that our staff work 9hr shifts and when children can remain in care for less than 10 hours per day, it helps us to adhere to our state mandated ratios without increasing our salary expense.

To ensure our children's safety, it is of utmost importance that we practice safety and courtesy while in the parking lot. Please watch out for others, drive slowly, and hold children's hands.

If you are entering the building, please DO NOT hold the door open for others. The person behind you may not be a parent.

Arrival

Mornings can be busy times, and they often set the tone for our day. Help your child have a successful start to their day by doing the following when you and your child arrive at school:

- Sign your child in using the Brightwheel App and your check-in code. There is a kiosk at the entrance, or you can use your smart device to check in.
- Parents must accompany their child to and from the classroom each day.
- You must connect with the teacher upon your child's arrival. This is a wonderful opportunity to share any essential information they should know about your child's morning or changes to their schedule.
- Help your child wash their hands before playing.

Please plan to bring your child to school by 9:00am as this is our cut off time, if your child will arrive later a Dr's note will be required. We want each of our students to gain the most they can from their experiences at TCC. When children consistently arrive late, they miss educational opportunities and fun activities that the teachers have carefully planned.

Separation Anxiety

The first few weeks of school are always a time of adjustment, and many students (and parents) feel a sense of separation anxiety which is perfectly normal. Here are a few strategies to help with the process. Remember, separation anxiety is a phase, it is perfectly natural, and it will pass. Make the goodbye prompt and cheerful. Giving your child "one more minute" prolongs the inevitable. As a parent, the best thing you can do is hug your child, say "I love you," and reassure them that you will be back soon.

Establish a goodbye routine. Children crave routine, and parents who establish a consistent goodbye routine have better luck with successful goodbyes. This could be a secret handshake or a special 'I Love You' ritual. This provides a special moment between the two of you that offers a sense of reassurance. Trust your child's teacher. This may be difficult to do when you do not yet know them, but keep in mind that our teachers have chosen this profession because they love children, and they have a wealth of ideas and strategies to help settle an upset little one.

Acknowledge how your child is feeling. It is important to accept and respect your child's temporary unhappiness as it is genuine and normal. Say things like, "I know you feel sad when Mommy leaves, but you will have a good time, and I will be back very soon."

Also, be prepared for regression. Sometimes a change in schedule like a long weekend or an illness that keeps your child home for a few days can have you feeling like you are right back to square one. As frustrating and upsetting as this can be, it is perfectly normal. Stick to the above strategies, and you should notice a significant difference in a couple of days.

Departure

It is important to sign your child in and out each day. You can sign your child out via the Brightwheel app at the front entrance kiosk or on your smartphone, like signing in upon arrival. It is also critical that you check in with your child's teachers before leaving and keep your child within close distance after retrieving them. To ensure a smooth and uninterrupted learning environment for all children, please note that once your child checks out for the day, they will not be able to return to care. This helps us minimize classroom disruptions and maintain a consistent routine for everyone.

School closes at 5:30pm sharp. A late pick-up fee of \$1/minute will be assessed when a child is left beyond the center's operating hours. The late pick-up fee does not constitute an agreement to provide after-hours service. If you believe you will arrive after 5:30pm, please alert your child's teacher via the Brightwheel app as soon as possible. Failure to pick up your child or contact TCC, and if you or another authorized emergency contact cannot be reached within 1 hour after closing time, TCC staff will contact the local authorities.

Absences, Sick Days & Vacations

For children to learn from our program, they need to be here on a regular basis. As a licensed center, we must record attendance. Please notify your child's teacher if you know that your child will be out of school ahead of time for an appointment or vacation. To ensure a smooth and uninterrupted learning environment for all children, please note that once your child checks out for the day, they will not be able to return to care. This helps us minimize classroom disruptions and maintain a consistent routine for everyone.

If your child is sick, please notify us as soon as you can. You can send all notifications to your child's teacher via messaging within the Brightwheel app. As soon as possible, you should notify the center if your child has a communicable disease. You may be asked to provide a doctor's statement upon your child's return to the center.

If a child is to be absent longer than three days, the parent is required to call. An absence of five days or more without notification may result in loss of a childcare space. If your child has been absent two days in a row for unknown reasons, a staff member may be in contact with you to check in and ensure the child is well and when to expect their return.

Classroom Schedule

Each classroom follows a slightly different schedule that is customized for their students, and the teachers' work schedules. The primary school day is from 8:00 am- 5:30pm with a rest time from 1:00pm- 3:00pm. While all parts of the school day are important, if you need to make appointments during the school day, we recommend your child not miss the primary educational time of 9:00am- 12:00pm. During this time, we heavily focus on working in large and small groups, completing centers, circle time, and individual child observations for assessments. To ensure a smooth and uninterrupted learning environment for all children, please note that once your child checks out for the day, they will not be able to return to care. This helps us minimize classroom disruptions and maintain a consistent routine for everyone.

Staff are sensitive to the attention spans of young children and plan, accordingly, making activities extensive enough to be challenging and fun but short enough to avoid overwhelming a child. Each classroom has a schedule posted that lists approximate times of activities. Routine provides security, but flexibility is also important in meeting the varying needs of young children.

Classroom Activities and Learning Experiences

Teachers plan activities for the learning centers in the classrooms weekly. Teachers strive to be culturally aware and sensitive in their approach to planning. They plan concrete activities that can be modified to meet all children's needs and provide challenges in skill development.

The classrooms are organized into centers or defined interest areas. Activities are planned for each center in which the children move freely throughout each day. The variety of learning centers include literacy and language development, math and science concepts, music, child-initiated play, technology (age dependent), art/creative experiences, social studies, community relations, dramatic play, writing (age dependent), and gross and fine motor play.

Teachers connect with and use their community's resources and the families we serve to expand our curriculum and provide additional hands-on learning experiences. In-house learning events may include cultural experiences through community members as well as a cultural experience provided by families within the center, demonstrations by community helpers, or scientific investigations.

Toilet Training

High collaboration between you, your child, and your child's teachers makes for more successful toilet learning. Children learn toileting skills through consistent, positive encouragement from all the adults who care for them.

When your child shows an interest, you and your child's teachers will discuss how to work together to encourage toilet learning. We are committed to working with your child consistently so that toilet learning can be accomplished in a developmentally appropriate manner with minimum stress for you and your child.

Every child begins toilet learning at a different age and progresses at a different rate. We are always available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's progress. Several complete changes of clothes and two pairs of shoes should be kept at the center during toilet learning. Children are required to wear pull-ups or underwear when potty training. Typically, children are trained before entering our Threes/Fours classroom.

Playground and Outdoors

We play outside every day that weather permits. When the weather keeps us inside, we find safe and fun ways to get active indoors. Our playground equipment and materials are designed for active play and exploration, which keeps kids learning while getting exercise and fresh air. Teachers are encouraged to plan outdoor activities to address multiple areas of skill development, including climbing, balance, and coordination, throwing, kicking, running, jumping, and pedaling. Please dress your child to get dirty.

Air Quality

TCC staff monitor the conditions and make decisions using the Division of Air Quality's 'Air Quality Color Guide.' On days that are labeled code yellow, outdoor time will be reduced. Children will not go outside on days labeled code red, and gross motor activities will occur indoors. Children will use the playground at least twice daily in most situations. In exceptional cases such as a child with asthma or an extreme allergy condition, a doctor's note is required outlining proper care for the child.

Nutrition

The Children's Center is a strives to be a "Green" early education school. With this, our soaps and cleaners are certified green except for a bleach water solution made to sanitize and disinfect as mandated by the state of NC. Our foods are whole grain and/or whole wheat.

Milk for lunch and nutritious morning and afternoon snacks are provided by the center. The menu for each month is posted in the kitchen and sent monthly via email. Parents provide lunches (Bento Box) from home Monday-Thursday and the center provides Pizza on Fridays for the children. If your child has an allergy or nutrition preference which prevents him/her from having Papa John's cheese pizza, please plan to pack lunch on Friday as well. Lunch boxes need to be placed in the large stainless refrigerator on the appropriate shelf.

All lunch boxes/bags must have your child's name written on the OUTSIDE. Additionally, all lunches need to be dated with the current date. This is a State Sanitation Requirement.

We have included a description and listing of the nutritional requirements for meals for young children in your enrollment packet. These are the guidelines that we are required by the state to follow, and we ask your co-operation in adhering to these guidelines in the lunches that you send with your child. All lunches must be packed in a bento type box that is ready to serve. Ready to serve means that there are no containers for the teacher to open, i.e., yogurt cups. Hot food can be brought in a thermos if the child can eat directly from the thermos. Grapes, hotdogs, cherry tomatoes, and other small food items MUST be cut in half at home. Milk (1% or whole) and water are served with snacks and lunch. Fridays, to give parents a break, we order cheese pizza for each child from Papa John's Pizza as their sauce contains no High Fructose Corn Syrup.

We ask that you provide your child with a water bottle or sippy cup (developmentally appropriate) each day with their name and date, for water consumption only. Water is refilled often as the children have access in the classrooms and on the playground.

We ask that you not send snack foods, candy, or gum with your child as this can cause difficulties within the classroom.

Peanut Free School

Not only is peanut butter a choking hazard for little ones, but peanut allergies are also among the most severe of all food allergies. Peanut allergy symptoms can range from a mild rash to anaphylaxis, a rapid and sometimes deadly swelling of the airways. With the rise in occurrences of peanut allergies, we at The Children's Center are becoming increasingly careful to protect those that have been diagnosed with peanut allergies and that may have undiscovered peanut allergies.

In efforts to protect our children the following procedures are in place:

- Parents are required to provide PEANUT FREE breakfasts, lunches, and snacks for their children. This includes, but is not limited to peanut butter sandwiches, peanut butter crackers, peanut butter cookies, trail mix, etc. (Sunflower seed butter and Almond Butter are great alternatives!)

- **NOTE:** If any children in your child's classroom have a severe allergy to any food products, those items may be banned altogether. The teacher will notify you if this is the case.
- Food items with a warning label stating that the product may contain traces of peanuts or that the product is manufactured with peanuts are allowable as they contain only minimal traces of peanuts. However, in a classroom that has a child with a diagnosed peanut allergy this may not be allowable. Program staff will inform parents if this portion of the policy needs to be altered based on need.

Special Dietary Needs

We can provide allergy-friendly alternatives with documentation from a doctor for students with food allergies or intolerances. Lifestyle preferences do not require doctor notes. We ask that you not send snack foods, candy, or gum with your child as this can cause difficulties within the classroom.

Rest Time

All children will participate in a 2-hour quiet rest time (this supports the 1-hour lunch break required per teacher). Children are not required to sleep; however, we have a remarkably busy and stimulating morning, so most toddlers and preschool-aged children will nap when given a relaxing and quiet space to do so. Parents are encouraged to send thin blankets or special "stuffed animals" from home for the child's comfort. If a child does not fall asleep after a short rest, they are given quiet activities within the nap room. The center provides cots and linens. These items are washed and disinfected when soiled, or weekly.

There are always 1 (2-5yr olds) to 2 (1-2yr olds) teachers within the nap room during naptime observing by sight and sound. We do not use mirrors, video, or sound monitors in place of sight and sound supervision.

Personal Belongings

To prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost, please label ALL items brought from home with your child's name. Within each classroom, each child has a cubby assigned to them. This will provide storage space for your child's personal belongings. Please check your child's cubby daily for items that need to be taken home.

Clothing & Shoes

A full day at our school includes fun activities like singing, painting, playing indoors and out, dancing, and eating, so we recommend easy-fitting, washable clothes. Being comfortable lets kids focus on learning and having fun! The children are expected to play outdoors daily. Our feeling is that if your child is well enough to be at the center, she/he is well enough to play outdoors. Fresh air and movement are

necessary daily for general well-being and healthy development. We will play in the rain, mud and snow as conditions safely permit so, please dress your children accordingly.

Make sure your child is wearing shoes for easy movement. Flip-flops, clogs, cowboy boots, and slick-bottomed shoes often cause children to fall when running outside and limit their play and are not permitted. Please be sure that your child's shoes are rubber-soled and closed-toe with a closed heel or heel strap. Shoes are required for all children.

Please provide two complete sets of extra clothes, including socks, for your child. Clothing should be labeled with your child's first and last name and checked periodically to make sure it still fits. Please provide appropriately layered clothing to keep warm in wintry weather, including mittens or gloves, caps, hoods, hats, sweaters or sweatshirts, socks, and warm, waterproof outerwear and footwear. Please have your children wear sun-protective clothing such as clothing made with fabrics rated for ultraviolet protection or clothing that protects skin areas most prone to sun damage. Sometimes learning and fun can get messy! TCC is not responsible for lost, stained, soiled, or torn clothing.

Diapers

Parents of children in diapers and of children who are toilet training must provide an ongoing supply of diapers, and additional necessary clothing. If your child is wearing pull-ups, it is helpful to send in the type with Velcro sides. This allows us to help your child change without having to take off their pants and shoes. Cubbies and coat hooks should be checked daily for items that need to be laundered. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine.

Both the diaper and the outer shell must be changed as a unit. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.

Belongings from Home

Your child will be provided with stimulating, educational toys every day. Special objects such as a blanket, soft toy, or a stuffed animal are okay for rest time. ***Please leave other toys and belongings at home, as bringing a treasured object to school can create tension between children and stress for children and staff if something is lost or misplaced.***

Toy weapons (guns, water pistols, swords, shields, or other items that resemble weapons) are not permitted at TCC. All personal electronics (except augmentative communication devices) are not permitted at TCC. We cannot assume responsibility for lost or damaged personal belongings.

Change in Pickup Person

The safety of our students is our top priority. Please notify your child's teacher or an administrator, in writing, if someone other than you is picking up your child. TCC staff will only release your child to the parents and guardians or the other adults you authorized on the student's Enrollment Application, within the Brightwheel App. If you need to authorize a new pickup person, please send the request via Brightwheel or email. For your child's safety, any time a person we do not recognize comes to pick up your child, we will ask for a government-issued photo ID. Persons picking up children must be at least 18 years old. You may add or delete names of authorized adults allowed to pick-up your child at any time. A biological parent may not be removed without proper court documentation provided to the center.

Custodial & Foster Care

Some families have legal custodial orders that address who is permitted to pick up or visit a child. If there are custody orders or protection orders relating to your child, a copy must be provided to TCC for your child's file. This information is confidential and solely for the safety and well-being of your child. Families must update the administration when custody orders change or expire. Please note that employees cannot be responsible for supervising parenting time (visitation), and, as a result, visitation for non-custodial parents is not permitted in our centers.

For enrolled children in the foster care system, TCC will need to receive a copy of the foster care paperwork. TCC will release the child only to the foster parents or the child's caseworker, who must sign the child in and out on the visitor's log and provide proper identification. The caseworker must verify any additions or changes in writing (by letter or fax).

The School Year

School Calendar

You will be provided with a calendar upon enrollment. TCC will be closed most federal holidays. We also dedicate time each year to professional development. TCC maintains the right to change the calendar at any time. Tuition and fees are not prorated for illness, holidays, inclement weather, or emergency closures.

Inclement Weather Days

The Center will be open for inclement weather days if possible. Closings and delays will be determined by the Director and Assistant Director and based on information gathered from staff and others that live in

various areas of the community. This is to ensure that road conditions are gathered from various sources so that the best and safest decision can be made for everyone.

Weather conditions in the mountains change frequently and are highly localized. Please remember to check the news and the voicemail system frequently on days that weather and road conditions are questionable and changing frequently. Feel free to contact the director via Brightwheel for updates as well.

While we understand that parents have work and other obligations, our first and top priority is the safety of our children, staff, and families.

In the event we open late, close early or cannot open at all, we will notify 13 WLOS-TV and send a message to all parents through Brightwheel. A decision regarding closing will be made by 6:00 a.m.

Celebrations & Birthdays

Celebrations and birthdays are special days for kids, and we want to share in the fun! If you would like to provide a small treat for the celebration, all items must be nut-free (including peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, and food processed in plants using nuts) and commercially packaged with ingredient statements so we can be sure we're accommodating any allergies or dietary restrictions. Please do not send in any treats or candy, which may be a choking hazard to our students. Healthy snack options such as whole-grain items, vegetables with dip, fresh fruit, fresh fruit popsicles, or yogurt are always an excellent choice. Please be sure to provide enough for everyone in your child's classroom and check in with your child's teacher before the special day so they can share if there are any allergies and plan accordingly. Per NC Childcare Rule 10A NCAC 09 .0604 SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS, Balloons are prohibited.

Transitioning to a New Classroom

TCC strives to make the transition from one classroom to another as smooth as possible. When the time comes to transition from one class to the next, we look at your child's developmental and maturation levels, as well as space availability in other classrooms. A notice will be sent when your child is transitioning to a new classroom. Due to the small size of our school, most children know each other from our playground/outdoor time, and teachers have the benefit of knowing most children and building a connection with them at some time during their time here. Your child's current teacher will share with the new teacher about your child's strengths, areas for growth, and supportive strategies. If you are interested in setting up a conference centered around transition, feel free to reach out to your child's teacher.

Medical Report & Immunization Record

A record of immunizations and a children's medical report must be completed and on file at school before each child's first day of attendance. Records should also include results of any screenings, prescribed medications, descriptions of any allergies, and current or chronic health conditions.

As the child receives new immunizations, the date and type of shot or immunization should be reported to administration to be added to the child's record. Immunizations may be obtained either through the pediatrician or the Buncombe County Health Dept. A schedule of immunizations can be acquired through the Center office. See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/> for the current national immunization schedule.

Communication & Family Involvement

ProCare App

Upon enrollment, you will receive an invitation via email or text to set up your ProCare account. Through this app you can access your account balance, make a payment, or obtain a statement.

Brightwheel App

Upon enrollment, you will receive an invite via email or text to set up your Brightwheel account. Through the app, you can communicate with your child's teacher or administration via messaging, and receive your child's daily report regarding meals, diaper changes, and activities.

Create a free Brightwheel account. When you receive an invitation via email or text, please create a free parent account using either the website or mobile app. Make sure to use the same email address or cell phone number that the invitation was sent to.

Confirm your child's profile. You will see your child's profile after you create an account - you can confirm information such as birthday. If you do not see your child's profile, please contact us with the email address or phone number you used to sign up. You will not see updates within Brightwheel until we start to use it regularly. Set your account preferences. You can adjust your notification preferences within your profile settings on the app.

Check-In Codes

You must use your check-in code to ensure proper record-keeping! To make this easier, Brightwheel allows you to customize your check-in code at any time. Here is how to do this from your profile in the app.

Tap the Edit icon next to your check-in code.

You will see a red-orange screen with your current code displayed.

Enter a new 4-digit code.

If your code matches that of another staff or parent, a warning message will be shown, you can still save and use that code, but it is not recommended*

Once you enter a unique code, tap the Save button.

*Please Note: If your check-in code is not unique, you will be required to take a second step and enter the last four digits of your phone number to verify your account before completing a check-in.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Family participation is encouraged and welcomed. TCC uses Family Conferences to offer family support and communication. Family Conferences are designed:

- To guide families and teachers with a way of sharing valuable information about their child.

- To individualize the planning process for each child in the context of their family, culture, and community.

- To explore ways to use a child's family's strengths to promote growth and development.

- To create an ongoing process for recording the growth and development of the child.

We schedule two formal conferences each school year, but we encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher at any time if you have questions, concerns, or want an update on your child's progress. During these conferences, you will be provided with a written report about your child's strengths and areas for growth. Virtual, phone, and in-person conferences may be available.

Developmental Concerns

If at any point you have developmental concerns for your child, please reach out to your child's teacher to discuss. If teachers have concerns, they will communicate them with the families and administrative staff. If we cannot address the concerns internally, we will reach out to our community resources and programs. Oftentimes these measures may be of support by offering strategies useful to the family and teachers, for the child(ren).

Family Support

While TCC specializes in providing high-quality early childhood education, we recognize that our students and families may have needs outside early education. We have a variety of ways that we can support our families. These include:

- Assist families with locating community resources. See our Community Resource binder located in the office.

Help families obtain emergency assistance in areas such as food, clothing, utilities, housing, and counseling.

Assist families with a successful transition to school.

Access to a Family Resource Lending Library. Please reach out to TCC if you need support.

Home Language

It is important to TCC that all families are given the opportunity to fully understand, interpret, and become involved in their child's education. TCC will work with the family to provide information in the language they are most comfortable with for any family that makes a request.

Confidentiality

All information contained in your child's records, including your personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly involved in the care of your child or affiliated with NCDCEE, protective services, or other government agencies will not have access to your child's records without your written authorization or court order. All TCC staff members must sign a Statement of Confidentiality upon employment.

As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child's records; to do so, please email us at connect@thechildrenscenterwnc.org. If you withdraw your child from the center, we will maintain your child's records for at least 1 year per NCDCEE regulation. Lastly, out of respect for other children and families, please do not post photos or videos that contain images of children other than your own on the Internet.

Family Involvement

TCC believes that children thrive when the relationship between the family and the center is a partnership.

We strongly believe that positive two-way communication at The Children's Center is extremely important. Families are encouraged to communicate with teachers and administration in convenient and appropriate ways. This may include by phone, notes, email, or in person. Information is shared with families through verbal conversations, the Brightwheel app, newsletters, flyers, family bulletin boards, notes, phone calls, posters, conferences, and e-mail. TCC has an open-door policy and offers many opportunities to be part of your child's early learning experience and connect with other families.

Teachers will be sending home information on a regular basis. You are welcome to call to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher.

Concerns about any aspect of our program, or your child's care, may be expressed to the center director. Communicating with our teachers and staff through their personal devices during work hours is not allowed. Please use Brightwheel, their classroom email, or contact the school directly.

All TCC employees are expected to treat all children and families with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families. If difficulties arise, we encourage families to share their concerns with the administration verbally or in writing. Inappropriate language directed toward staff and/or in front of children will not be tolerated. Through communication, we will work to resolve the issue. If you are not satisfied with the solution, we encourage you to contact the Executive Director. Please do not confront children or other parents in our program. When any member of the TCC community shows behavior that threatens the safety of others or shows repeated disrespect towards other members of our community, TCC reserves the right to ask the family in question to leave the school immediately and terminate that child's enrollment at TCC.

Each child is provided with a mailbox and/or cubby. Please check these daily for notes, newsletters, and/or artwork. Remember to communicate in writing any changes in your child's schedule.

Our main office must be informed of any of the following changes:

- address and/or phone numbers, or e-mail address
- parent/guardian employment,
- health/immunizations up-dates,
- other pertinent information related to your child.

In addition, if you are a family that uses English as a second language, we will try to communicate to you in your chosen language, if requested.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering is always welcome. We would love to have you share your time and talents with the class. We encourage you to read a book, play an instrument, or share a hobby with the children. Ask your child's teacher about the many ways you can help.

Fundraising Committee

Grounds Beautification Committee

TCC Board

Annual Fall Walk Event (Neighborhood Trick- or- Treating)

Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon

Annual Holiday Program

Annual Graduation

Illness and Medication

Illness Policy

We realize that it is difficult for working parents to keep their children home, but exclusion from school will help prevent contagion and promote the health and safety of your child. Children should be kept home from school if they are feverish, have diarrhea and/or vomiting, have nasal mucous discharge that isn't clear, or if they show signs of becoming sick (listlessness/drowsiness, productive cough, sore throat, ear pain, eyes that are pink, burning, itching, or producing discharge). If your child cannot comfortably participate in the day's usual activities or your child needs to stay indoors and/or have additional rest, these signs are indicative that the child should not be at school.

TCC has established guidelines in accordance with state childcare law and other best practices concerning sick children. In case of a communicable disease or condition, and at the discretion of the administration, other parents will be notified to watch for symptoms in their children.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, a parent will immediately be called to come and pick them up. TCC is not able to provide arrangements to care for sick children. Parents are required to respond as soon as possible concerning the sick child when contacted by TCC staff. If we cannot reach the parents within thirty minutes, we will reach out to the family's emergency contacts as stated on enrollment/annual forms. If the illness warrants, the child's pediatrician will be contacted for consultation.

Children may attend with minor illnesses if it is not contagious, and it does not affect the child's ability to participate in the day's routine. Minor illnesses include:

- Mild respiratory infections

- Acute infections subsiding after treatment, such as pink eye, impetigo, ear infections

- Cold symptoms without a fever

If the child's health deteriorates at some point in the day, the parent will be contacted to come to pick them up.

It is always helpful if you can provide TCC with a doctor's note, when applicable.

Illness Exclusion Criteria Appendix A. Can be found on TCC's website or in the office.

* This chart is not an exhaustive list of communicable diseases and policies for exclusion from childcare. For more information, please contact a member of the TCC Administration team.

Chronic Health Conditions

For any child with health care needs such as allergies, asthma, or other chronic conditions (ex: seizures, G-Tube, etc.) that require specialized health services, a medical action plan shall be completed. The medical action plan must be updated annually, and the medication administration form must be completed every 6 months or when changes to the plan are made by the child's parent or health care professional. Blank medical action plans may be requested at any time. The medical action plan shall be signed by both the parent and the child's health care professional and must include the following:

- A list of the child's diagnosis or diagnoses, including dietary, environmental, and applicable activity considerations
- Contact information for the child's health care professional(s)
- Medications to be administered on a scheduled basis; and
- Medications to be administered on an emergency basis with symptoms, and instructions
- Medications

We recommend that you administer medications at home. To help with medication scheduling, you may consider asking your health care provider for prescriptions with 12-hour dosages. TCC will ONLY administer emergency medication.

General Medication Policies

No prescription or topical, non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream, or powder shall be administered to any child:

- without written authorization from the child's parent
- without written instructions from the child's parent, physician, or another health professional
- in any manner not authorized by the child's parent, physician, or another health professional
- after its expiration date or non-medical reasons, such as to induce sleep or with a known allergy to the medication.

All medications will be given following the doctor's written instructions.

Medication will be stored separately for each child.

Medications will be stored in a locked cabinet in the classroom or locked box in the Center refrigerator, depending on the medication. Medications for external use will be stored separately from medications for internal use.

Do not store medication in diaper bags, lunch bags, backpacks, or any other personal belongings.

We do not mix the medication with food, formula, or juice, nor will we dispense any medication in a bottle or cup.

Medications will be administered by regular classroom staff who have been trained in medication administration in the presence of another staff person. All staff follow the Six Rights of Safe Medication Administration: right child, right medicine, right date/time, right dose, right route & right documentation. Staff will document each dosage on the medication form, listing time, amount given, and initial. If any side effects are noticed, they will be noted on the form, and the child's parent will be notified.

Medication forms will be added to the child's file after the medication request is completed. Forms for long-term medication will be considered confidential and treated as such.

It is the responsibility of the parent to remove or dispose of any medication after the duration of the request has ended. The classroom staff will dispose of any medicine at the Center after the medication form has expired or after a child has left TCC.

Alternative medications, such as herbal or homeopathic medications that are not tested by the US Food and Drug Administration for safety or effectiveness, lack safety information and cannot be administered at TCC.

TCC reserves the right to refuse administration of medications if we feel that it is in the best interest of the staff.

Prescription Medication

For a staff member to administer any medication to your child, you must complete the Medication Administration Permission Form in its entirety.

The medication must be brought to school and stored in the original, tamper-resistant container in which they were dispensed with the pharmacy labels. The pharmacy label must specify:

- The child's name

- The names of the medication

- The amount and frequency of dosage

- The date the prescription was filled and the expiration date

The medication shall be administered only to the child for whom they were prescribed. It shall be administered according to the prescription, using the amount and frequency of dosage specified on the label.

A parent's written authorization for administering a prescription medication shall be valid for the length of time the medication is prescribed to be taken or up to 6 months when needed for a chronic medical condition, whichever is less.

Emergency Medication

If your child requires the use of emergency medications (i.e., inhalers, Epi-pen, Diastat, etc.), you will need to complete the corresponding medical action plan. Blank medical action plans may be obtained from administration and these plans MUST have a doctor or healthcare professional's signature. Emergency medicines will be kept unlocked and easily accessible to adults but out of children's reach (at least 5 feet off the ground). This is to ensure easy access in the case of an emergency. We work with a county nurse to ensure our staff is appropriately trained for your child's specific medical needs. In this case, we may need to delay/pause enrollment until staff are fully trained.

Over-the-Counter Medication

In general, TCC staff will not administer over-the-counter medication except when a health professional prescribes over-the-counter medicines. This situation is most common for chronic health conditions (ex: Benadryl for students with allergy action plans or fever-reducing medication for students with febrile seizure action plans). TCC will not administer over-the-counter medicines such as cough syrup, Tylenol, ibuprofen, antibiotic cream for abrasions, or medication for upset stomach in the cases of acute illness or pain. Children that have these symptoms may need to remain at home until they are symptom-free.

The over-the-counter medication must be brought to school and stored in the manufacturer's original packaging with the child's name written or labeled on it. It shall be accompanied by a Medication Administration Permission Form that specifies:

- The child's name

- The medical conditions or allergic reactions

- The names of the authorized over-the-counter medication

- The amount and frequency of the dosages, which shall not exceed the amount and frequency of the dosages on the manufacturer's label

- In cases where the prescription says, "as needed" (i.e., allergy exposure, etc.), the instructions need to specify criteria for the administration of the medication (be specific with what symptoms or situations are criteria for administration)

- The route in which the medication shall be administered

- Possible reactions or side effects

- The signature of the parent AND physician, or another health professional

- The date the instructions were signed by the parent and physician or other health professional.

Topical Creams and Sunscreen

Parents and guardians may give a TCC standing authorization for up to 12 months to apply over-the-counter topical ointments, topical teething ointment or gel, lotions, creams, and powders, such as sunscreen diapering creams, baby lotion, and baby powder, to their child, when needed. The over-the-counter topical medications form must be completed before we can administer these medications.

TCC provides sunscreen to all students. Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving at the center and dress them in hats/visors and tightly woven clothing to help prevent sunburn during outdoor play. TCC staff can reapply sunscreen in the afternoon before going outside if we have an up-to-date Sunscreen Permission Form on file. If you prefer your child, use a different sunscreen in the afternoon, please complete the over-the-counter topical medications form.

Medical Report & Immunization Record

A record of immunizations and a children's medical report must be completed and on file at school before each child's first day of attendance. Records should also include results of any screenings, prescribed medications, descriptions of any allergies, and current or chronic health conditions.

As the child receives new immunizations, the date and type of shot or immunization should be reported to administration to be added to the child's record. Immunizations may be obtained either through the pediatrician or the Buncombe County Health Dept. A schedule of immunizations can be acquired through the Center office. See <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/> for the current national immunization schedule.

Cleaning & Sanitation

Cleaning and disinfecting are part of our broad approach to preventing infectious diseases at TCC. Each classroom has a "yucky bucket" for toys that have been contaminated with bodily fluids. Contaminated toys are specifically washed, sanitized, and air-dried. Each classroom is cleaned daily (Ex: tables, chairs, floors, toilets). Laundry is performed weekly, or when soft items are soiled.

Hand Washing

Handwashing has long been established as one of the most important things to prevent the spread of illness. In our school, hand washing requirements for staff are as follows:

- Upon arrival at school/center

- Before and after setting up snacks/food for student consumption

- Before and after helping students use the bathroom

- After handling items soiled with body fluids such as blood, drool, urine, stool, or discharge from nose or eyes

After handling an ill child

After using the bathroom or taking care of other personal needs (i.e., nose-wiping) and eating

In our school, hand-washing requirements for students are as follows:

Upon arrival in the morning

After using the bathroom

Before and after eating food

Before and after sensory play

After they have touched a child who may be sick or who has handled soiled items

After blowing/wiping their nose

The required method for handwashing is as follows:

Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.

Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.

Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.

Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Safety

Supervision

TCC staff assume responsibility for enrolled children when they enter the classroom or are escorted by a staff member onto the TCC property. Teaching staff always supervise toddlers/twos by sight and sound. Children 3-5 years of age are supervised primarily by sight, but supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers frequently check on children who are out of sight. This is common in associative and cooperative play.

All classrooms monitor attendance by updating their attendance records throughout the day and counting and matching the numbers of children present with names on attendance records. "Name to Face" headcounts occur throughout the day, particularly when moving about the center at every threshold.

Injuries/Accidents

Your child's safety is of our utmost concern, but we recognize that minor bumps and scrapes are an everyday part of your child exploring and learning through experience. Known minor injuries sustained at school are reported to parents on an Incident Report Form, of which you will receive a copy. If your child

is injured in our care, our first step is to administer first aid. A first aid kit is available in the office, and each class always has a small first aid kit with them. The most common treatment is ice on bumps, soap and water cleansing, and a bandage on a minor wound. All permanent staff members are trained in First Aid and Infant/Child CPR within the first 90 days of their employment, and they must maintain their current certification every two years.

If an accident is more than minor, a parent will be called to discuss the need for possible medical treatment. If the accident is more serious, a parent will be contacted and requested to come immediately. In the event of a life-threatening illness or injury, an ambulance will be called. To ensure your child's safety, your Enrollment Agreement provides a record of names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people you have authorized to pick up your child. We ask you to keep this information current and supply names and phone numbers for your child's doctor and preferred hospital.

Emergency Procedures

We make every effort to be prepared for potential emergencies. TCC has an emergency response plan for fire, inclement weather, or if a lockdown becomes necessary. This plan is updated annually and submitted to the NCDCEE. These plans are reviewed annually with the staff. Additional precautions we take in the event of an emergency are:

- Emergency phone numbers are posted by all phones.

- TCC keeps an emergency "To-Go" bag in the main office with first aid supplies and emergency contact information for all students and staff.

- Fire drills are practiced once each month, and shelter-in-place drills every three months to prepare children in case of an emergency.

- Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each room.

- Annual inspections by the Asheville fire inspector. If an emergency requires evacuation, we will notify you as soon as the children have been relocated to a safe area.

- Mandated reporting requirements

It is our mission to ensure all children in our center are safe and well cared for, not only while they are at our center, but at all times. NC law requires everyone who works directly with children to report suspicions or evidence of child neglect or abuse to local law enforcement. Those who fail to report can be held accountable under the law. The law prohibits interference with an individual's attempt to report child abuse or neglect. Our school will offer full cooperation during the investigation of the reported incident.

Child Maltreatment

Should a staff member have reason to suspect abuse, they will contact TCC administration and follow up with an immediate phone call to Buncombe Human Services. If an administrative staff member is unavailable, staff members have the authority to make the call and to prepare a written report of the account.

All staff undergoes a fingerprint and criminal background check before employment begins.

All staff members are responsible for protecting all children from abuse from any child or staff member.

All staff members are required to report any suspected cases of abuse, whether it is suspected at TCC or away from TCC

TCC staff receive training in recognizing and responding to child maltreatment, including abuse and neglect.

You can make a report of suspected maltreatment in a licensed childcare center to DCDEE by calling 919-814-6300 or 1-800-859-0829 in North Carolina. DCDEE will take on the responsibility for the entire investigation of child maltreatment in childcare. The law requires that information about ongoing investigations must be kept confidential, and as such, will not be included on the DCDEE website.

School Policies

Smoke-Free and Weapon-Free Environment *NC Child Care Rule 10A NCAC 09 .0604 (h)(i)(j).*

TCC and all playgrounds are smoke-free and tobacco-free environments. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, including e-cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, shall not be permitted on the premises of the childcare center or during any off-premises activities. Additionally, firearms and ammunition are prohibited in all licensed childcare centers, including TCC, unless carried by a law enforcement officer.

Transportation

TCC does not transport children to and from school or for any off-premises activities. Parents are expected to provide transportation for their children.

Babysitting

TCC strongly discourages families from entering employment arrangements with staff. However, we recognize that our staff members are highly trained, wonderful people and are often the people that know your child best, next to you. Any arrangement between a family and a TCC employee for employment or services outside the program and services of TCC is an individual endeavor and private matter, not connected or sanctioned by TCC.

Program Oversight

Our program's quality and compliance with State laws are carefully regulated and evaluated annually by the NCDCEE. In addition, we may also ask parents to complete and return an evaluation of the program intermittently. Summaries of evaluations are presented to our Board of Directors to enable them to monitor the quality of our services.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Children's Center always requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of TCC is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of TCC but is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters the school. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on TCC property thereafter.

Swearing/Cursing

No parent or guardian is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people. If a parent or guardian feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff. Threatening of Employees, Children of Other Parents or Adults Associated with The Children's Center will not be tolerated.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or an administrator.

Furthermore, it is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or an Administrator's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or an administrator are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our program have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

Commitment to Diversity

Tolerance and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to various ages, genders, lifestyles, family structures, races, cultures, religions, and physical abilities. Therefore, we emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

Grievance Procedure

Disagreements may occur, even with the best of intentions. Experience has taught us that open communication is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. Adults must demonstrate the cooperative, compassionate communication we want our children to imitate. If you have a concern, please discuss it with your child's teacher or the staff involved. If the concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a meeting can be arranged between the people involved and a member of the administration. At that time, a course of action can be determined.

If this does not resolve the issues to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may write a request to the Board of Directors to review the matter. The request must include:

1. A written statement identifying the issues.
2. Solution being sought.
3. A statement of the Director's actions to resolve the matter.

The Board of Directors will meet as soon as possible with the Director to review the complaint/concern and will prepare a written response to the parents' complaint. Complaints concerning licensing policies and procedures may also be reported to the Division of Child Development at 1-800-859-0829.

Nondiscrimination

TCC does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring, and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all staff members, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors,

and clients. TCC is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

Record Retention

TCC complies with the requirements outlined in the "Records Retention and Disposition Schedule" developed by the NCDCEE.

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