

EARLY LEARNING CENTER

Parent Handbook



YWCA Northeast Kansas
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1 – Welcome

We are so happy to be able to welcome your family to the YWCA Northeast Kansas' Early Learning Center! Thank you for choosing our organization as your partner in early education. Caring for your child is our number one priority, and we want you to feel secure and confident in your decision to allow us this big, joyous responsibility. Please take enough time to thoroughly read through this parent handbook. In order to keep all children, parents, and staff safe and happy, we have developed a set of rules, procedures, and accountability standards and have outlined those in this handbook. We request that you contact your child's teacher or the ELC Program Director with any questions that may arise. We encourage you to become an active participant in your child's early education, and we welcome your questions, concerns, and comments.

2 – Mission Statement

YWCA is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.

3 – Program Philosophy

The Early Learning Center is dedicated to empowering parents and students to reach academic success, teaching diversity and acceptance through interactive education, and providing a safe, nurturing environment for children to grow and excel academically, socially, physically, emotionally, and creatively.

4 – Licensing Information

4.1 – GOVERNMENT LICENSING

The Early Learning Center is licensed through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

4.2 – FOOD PROGRAM

The Early Learning Center is a participant of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

5 – Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

As child care providers, all staff at the Early Learning Center, by law, are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. This means that if a staff member *suspects* child abuse or neglect, they are required by law to report those suspicions to the appropriate authorities. Employees are not required to discuss their concerns or suspicions with parents/guardians prior to reporting, nor are they required to investigate any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. We at the YWCA Early Learning Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

As mandated reporters, the staff of the Early Learning Center cannot be held liable for reports made which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith".

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing related to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (car seat, seat belt, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child be kept home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

6 - Enrollment

Enrollment at the Early Learning Center is open to children from 12 months (and walking) to age 5.

The Early Learning Center has 3 classrooms:

- Toddlers (12 months **and** walking to 2 ½ years old)
- Transition (2 ½ years old to 5 years old, based on developmental and academic milestones)
- Preschool (3 years old to 5 years old, based on developmental and academic milestones)

Students will be placed in ELC classrooms according to age, developmental level, and space available.

The YWCA Early Learning Center is open to all students without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, gender identity, sexual orientation, or sex.

Caregivers can apply for enrollment by completing the Enrollment Application, completing a tour of the facility, and paying the enrollment fee. Enrollment fees are non-refundable.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, tour of facility, signed Financial Agreement, signed Family Handbook receipt, and enrollment fee. Immunization records and health assessment **must** be received at the time of enrollment in order for the child to start.

Continued enrollment at the Early Learning Center is contingent upon the family's, emergency contact persons', and child's and caregivers' adherence to the policies and procedures of the Early Learning Center as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Families are required to notify the Early Learning Center Program Director immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment, or any time thereafter, change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being withdrawn from the program and forfeiture of any fees.

7 – Tuition

All parents/guardians are required to sign a Financial Agreement prior to the enrollment of their child. Caregivers are required to indicate to whom all billing information or correspondence is to be addressed.

Cash, check, money order, or credit card may pay tuition. We encourage you to enroll in our ACH program. You may arrange for fees to be withdrawn weekly, every two weeks, or monthly.

Tuition does not include fees for any field trips, but does include meals.

7.1 – PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All fees must be paid in advance. Payment is due at drop off each Monday for the current week of care.

7.2 – DCF CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE

The Early Learning Center does accept child care subsidies including DCF. Payment is expected to be received as normal. Our provider number is **B795363**.

7.3 – NO PAY/NO STAY POLICY

All payments are due by drop off on Monday for the current week of care. A charge of \$5.00 will be added to the account if not received at drop off on Monday. If payment is not received Monday morning, the child will be added to our “No pay/No stay” list and the parent/guardian will receive a reminder note in their child’s cubby. Payment and late fee **must** be received at drop off Tuesday morning in order for your child to stay. If payment is not received, the child will not be allowed to stay at the center. If payment is not received by the following Monday, the child will be withdrawn from the program.

There will be no credit given for scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations or inclement weather.

7.4 - DISCOUNTS

The Early Learning Center offers a multiple child discount for families with more than one child enrolled in either full or half time care. Each child after the first will receive \$10 off tuition each week.

The YWCA offers a 25% discount to all employees. This includes the employee’s own child(ren) only.

The YWCA offers a limited amount of need-based scholarships to families. If you think your family may qualify, please speak to the ELC Program Director regarding this program.

8 - Confidentiality

Within the ELC, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a “need to know” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and

sensitive information about staff, other caregivers, and/or children will not be shared with families, as the ELC strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and health related information of anyone associated with the Early Learning Center.

Outside of the ELC, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the legal guardian of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Families will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of the ELC, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any individual who violates the Confidentiality policy will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Refer to the policy regarding Families' Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding withdrawal of a child when a caregiver is prohibited from accessing agency property.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of the Early Learning Center are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

9 – Caregiver Code of Conduct

The Early Learning Center requires the families of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of the ELC 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 the ELC, but is the responsibility of each and every person who enters the center. Families are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Individuals who violate the Caregiver Code of Conduct will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Please refer to the Policy on Caregivers' Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a caregiver is prohibited from accessing agency property.

9.1 – SWEARING/CURSING

No caregiver or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on the property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a caregiver or adult 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.

9.2 – THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such

behavior are appreciated, the ELC will not assume the risk of a second chance. **FAMILIES MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

9.3 – PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN

Corporal punishment is not permitted in the child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for caregivers to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Families are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Caregivers are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no caregiver or other adult may physically punish another family's child. If a caregiver should witness another family'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 adult to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or ELC Program Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one family to seek out another family to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or program director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or program director will address the issue with the other family. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the program director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency 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 family or adult visiting the center.

9.4 – SMOKING/VAPING

For the health of all ELC employees, children, and associates, smoking or vaping is prohibited anywhere on company property. Families are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of the ELC. Caregivers who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

9.5 – CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES OR OTHER FAMILIES

While it is understood that caregivers will not always agree with the employees of the ELC or the families of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

9.6 – VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The Early Learning Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Families must understand the implications of this responsibility. Caregivers need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy

not only applies to their child or family, but also to all children, families, and employees associated with the Early Learning Center. Any individual who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other families for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

10 – Caregiver Right to Immediate Access

Caregivers of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at the Early Learning Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the ELC must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial caregiver(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both caregivers are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both caregivers must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with the Early Learning Center, both legal guardians shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Early Learning Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one caregiver by request of the other caregiver, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one caregiver does not want the other caregiver to have access to their child, we suggest that the caregiver keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain the child are secondary to the other caregiver's right to immediate access. The ELC staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the ELC Program Director, and are allowed in the child care facility only at the discretion of the ELC Program Director. An employee of the ELC will accompany visitors at all times throughout the center. The ELC will dismiss any child whose legal guardian is prohibited from entering upon company property. Due to the legal guardians' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, the Early Learning Center cannot have a child at the agency when the child's legal guardian(s) is/are prohibited access. The Early Learning Center will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the legal guardian agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

11 – Dismissal/Withdrawal

11.1 - WITHDRAWAL

The Early Learning Center requires a two week notice if a family wishes to withdraw from the program. This notice must be **written** and given to the ELC Program Director. *Verbal notice will not be considered adequate.* Billing will continue for two weeks after notice is given **regardless of whether or not the child attends.** If written notice is not given, even after

being placed on the no pay/no stay list, the account will continue to be billed until written notice is received. The parent/guardian is responsible for **ALL FEES** assessed during the two week notice and any additional fees for failure to give adequate notice.

The caregivers and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter the center without prior permission of the ELC Program Director. A withdrawn child and their family are required to call and request an appointment with the ELC Program Director if they wish to return to the center following the last day of enrollment. Appointments are made at the discretion of the ELC Program Director and are not a right of the withdrawn child or caregiver.

11.2 - DISMISSAL

The Early Learning Center reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause.

Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30 day period will be referred to small claims court for collection.

The ELC Program Director or designee will assist the caregiver in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and families are required to leave company property immediately in a calm and respectful manner. The Early Learning Center will request assistance from local police should any individual become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings following dismissal.

A dismissed child and their caregivers are required to call and request an appointment with the ELC Program Director if they wish to return to company property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the ELC Program Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or family. Following a dismissal, any adult or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by the Early Learning Center.

12-Drop-off Procedures*

Upon arrival at the Early Learning Center, the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care via the QR code on their Procure app or their unique 4-digit PIN. Children are required to be escorted by the adult dropping them off to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the child care facility. Family members are required to help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day. Grownups should *not* send any open food or beverages with their children. Food and beverages should be left in the car, as having food or beverage in hand can cause both a mess and conflict with other children. Meals are provided by the ELC.

Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their caregiver to leave. We believe it is best for grown-ups to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all of the child's things are put away, the caregiver will kiss, hug, and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The employee present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Caregivers are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the loved one of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The ELC Program Director is available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time. At arrival, caregivers are required to follow the Medication Policy if a child must receive medication during the course of the day.

Caregivers are required to notify the child's teacher or ELC Program Director of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The caregiver must present the special instructions in the form of a letter **and** verbally discuss them with either the classroom teacher or ELC Program Director. These special instructions include but are not limited to: early pick-up, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed, and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of the child throughout the day.

**Due to current COVID restrictions, adults other than ELC teachers and YWCA staff are not permitted past the lobby. Please understand that this is for the health and safety of all of the children. As soon as is practical, the ELC will resume normal drop-off procedures.*

13 - Absence/Lunch Attendance

Caregivers are required to inform the center by 9:00am if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the ELC Program Director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables us to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our center. This information will be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the ELC Program Director so that the families of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Your child's identity will remain confidential.

Caregivers of a student arriving after 10:00am must notify the center by that time to ensure we are able to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios upon your child's arrival.

13.1 - RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

The Early Learning Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause. Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by Kansas State Licensing Regulations.
2. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.
3. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff, or other children enrolled at the Early Learning Center if the child were to be present at the center.
4. Caregivers' failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
5. Caregivers' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.

Caregivers WILL NOT be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

14-Pick-up Procedures

Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care via the Procure app on their phones or via the Procure kiosk at the front desk. Once an approved adult signs a child out, the adult is then solely responsible for supervising the child while on agency premises. The pick-up person may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Caregivers are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child, and are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care.

Caregivers or persons designated to pick-up are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or other authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the caregiver(s) is/are unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

14.1 – LATE PICK-UP

All measurements of time are to be according to the ELC clock located in the pick-up classroom. A \$1.00/minute after 5:30pm late fee will be added to the account for a child picked up late. The late pick-up will be noted on a form and a copy will be given to the parent. Any and all late pick up fees are then considered part of the next week's tuition and must be paid by Monday at drop-off.

14.2 – PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP

The Early Learning Center staff will contact local police and/or the other legal guardian should a caregiver/authorized pick-up person appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The caregiver's right to immediate access does not permit the center from denying a legal guardian access to their child even if the individual is or appears to be impaired; however, the

ELC staff will delay the impaired adult as long as possible while contacting the other legal guardian, local police, and child protective services, if need be.

Anyone picking up the child who is not a legal guardian will be denied access to the child.

14.3 – EMERGENCY CONTACTS/AUTHORIZED PICK-UP LIST

At enrollment, caregivers will be presented with an Emergency Contacts/Authorized Pick-up form. Families are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from the Early Learning Center. In an emergency situation the child’s legal guardians will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached. Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

Caregivers will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency Contacts/Authorized Pick-up form have the rights to act “In Loco Parentis.” In Loco Parentis status affords the pick-up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child’s day including but not limited to, incident/accident reports, and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation the people on the Emergency contacts/Authorized Pick-up form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff is not permitted to discuss the child’s day with them. These persons will be required to provide government issued photo ID prior to the center releasing the child or must utilize their 4-digit Procure PIN. There will be no exceptions to this rule. All changes and/or additions to this form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only legal guardians have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

The Early Learning Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency contacts/Authorized pick-up form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling caregiver(s) to inform each person on the form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

15 – Emergency and Inclement Weather Closing Information

In the event of inclement weather or an emergency closing, parents will be notified of the closing via Procure and by checking local news stations (WIBW, KSNT).

Should the center need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child’s legal guardians first to arrange pick-up. Should the staff be unable to reach the child’s legal guardians, the emergency contacts will be contacted to arrange for pick-up.

Should the center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures less than 7 school days. If the closure extends beyond 7 schools days, families will have their tuition reduced/refunded.

16 – Court Orders Affecting Enrolled Children

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the Early Learning Center must be provided with a Certified Copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the legal guardian(s) request(s) a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both legal guardians are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both legal guardians must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with the ELC administration, both legal guardians shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Early Learning Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one legal guardian by request of the other legal guardian, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one legal guardian does not want the other legal guardian to have access to their child, we suggest that the legal guardian keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, the ELC is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of the ELC cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. The Early Learning Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

17 – Discipline Policy/Guidance

Discipline is intended to help children learn self-control. As providers, it is our duty to help children understand boundaries and redirect inappropriate behavior in a safe, healthy manner.

We believe that keeping children busy and actively engaged decreases the frequency of behavior problems in the classroom. Transition activities help the children move smoothly from one activity to another. Our teachers use Love and Logic; positive guidance, redirection, and choices.

We start by setting consistent, clear, understandable limits. This fosters the child's ability to become self-disciplined, which is our ultimate goal. We encourage staff to ignore negative behavior as much as possible while keeping the child and other students safe. We also encourage staff to reinforce/reward appropriate behavior.

If a child is having trouble following directions or staying within their limits, the staff are trained to give the child choices for their behavior and assist them in thinking it through. It is important to a child's development that rather than being told to do something, they make their own choices and experience the consequences of those choices.

The ELC staff are **never** permitted to use corporal punishment.

Please do not be discouraged if your child is disciplined or has a rough listening day. Children act out and test limits at all stages of development. You will be notified of any behavior we feel should be

reinforced at home and we will strive to work with you as a family to help your child correct those behaviors.

18 – Dress Code

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing. Coats, hats, gloves, scarves and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. It is not necessary for the children to wear their winter boots to school. Teachers will change the children into their winter boots when they go outdoors.

Children are not permitted to wear open backed shoes. All sandals must have a strap around the back securing them on. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

All children are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes, shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. We also request one oversized long-sleeved shirt to be sent to school for messy art projects/activities so we can try to keep your child/ren's regular clothes as tidy as possible. Teachers will post reminders for grown-ups to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. The Early Learning Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

19-Curriculum Information

19.1 – DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Curriculum – Activities in all age groups are based on the most up-to-date practices recognized by experts in the field of early childhood education. We use a literacy approach to curriculum. The classroom teachers prepare lesson plans, which are handed in to the director for review and input. All lessons must align with Kansas Early Learning Standards. We will focus highly on literacy using the Animated Alphabet in each classroom.

Observations – We value your child's experiences here at our center. Observations will occur throughout your child's time here and this will help us to provide the best care and education for his/her development.

19.2 – CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Children are assigned to classrooms by age and cognitive ability. When your child is ready to move to the next classroom, you will be given notice and a transition plan will be initiated for your child to gradually try out their new classroom.

19.3 – STAFF TO CHILD RATIOS

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Minimum Ratio</u>
12 mo to 2 ½ years	1 staff for every 5 children
2 ½ yrs to school age	1 staff for every 10 children
3 yrs to school age	1 staff for every 12 children

19.4 – NAP/REST TIME

All children are encouraged to nap between 12:30 and 3:00 daily. The Preschool classroom will only offer nap between 12:30 and 2:00 daily. If your child does not need a nap, he/she will be asked to lie quietly with a book.

19.5 – CAREGIVER/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Caregiver-teacher conferences are scheduled once in the fall and once in the spring, both following quarterly testing. To give you and your child the best possible experience and education, we ask that you attend both conferences each year. Additional conferences may be requested by the caregiver if needed throughout the year.

19.6 – CAREGIVER/TEACHER DAILY COMMUNICATION

Staff are expected to communicate with caregivers daily about your child's activities, any praises, or any concerns. At pick-up, the teacher will have very limited time to discuss your child's day with you. Please be respectful of the fact that the teacher still needs to monitor the other children in care. If you need more than a few minutes to discuss your child's day or any concerns, please see the ELC Program Director to set up a phone conference or caregiver-teacher conference. Each child has a mailbox that work/crafts/important information will be placed in. Please remove all contents each day.

19.7 – SUPPLIES NEEDED

All children need to bring a sippy cup or a water bottle, 2 complete changes of clothes, a sheet and blanket for their mat/cot (toddler or twin bed size) and a back pack to keep their sheet/pillow in. Toddler and Non-Potty-Trained Transition students need to bring diapers/pull-ups as well. Wipes will be provided.

19.8 – BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS*

We allow parents to bring in cupcakes or other special treats for their child's birthday. We do not allow treats containing peanuts/peanut butter.

For special holidays, teachers will post sign-up sheets for treats/activities.

**Due to current COVID restrictions, treats must be store-bought only.*

19.9-GRADUATION

We have a graduation ceremony each year at the end of May for the Preschool students who will be entering Kindergarten. Details will be announced.

20 – Field Trips

The Early Learning Center frequently supplements the in-class curriculum with off-premise field trips. Caregivers are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including, destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost, and mode of transportation. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be filled out, signed, and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend.

The Early Learning Center provides all required supervision for all field trips. Due to availability of space on the bus, caregiver attendance is not available. Caregivers will not be permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on a field trip.

21 – Health and Safety

21.1 – PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS/VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the center's office prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up-to-date immunization record on file at the Early Learning Center in accordance with state licensing requirements

All children are required to have a health form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend the ELC.

21.2 – CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

All allergies must be listed on the child's health form. Please verbally communicate this to the ELC Program Director at the time of enrollment as well. If your child has a severe food allergy, this will be noted in the kitchen and posted in the classrooms to keep staff aware and to serve as a reminder. Should your child need food/beverage substitutes due to a reason other than allergies that is not documented by a medical professional, please provide those to the center with your child's name written on the item.

21.3 – COMMUNICABLE DISEASE INFORMATION

The Kansas Department for Health and Environment issues an exclusion policy and it is included below.

Children with fever are managed differently in child care. The presence of fever alone has little relevance to the spread of disease and may not preclude a child's participation in child care. A small proportion of childhood illness with fever is caused by life-threatening diseases, such as meningitis. It is unreasonable and inappropriate for child care staff to attempt to determine which illnesses with fevers may be serious. The child's legal guardians, with the help of their child's health care provider, are responsible for these decisions. Caregivers should be notified anytime a child has a fever.

A facility should not deny admission to or send home a child because of illness unless one or more of the following conditions exists. The parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the legal guardian should be notified immediately when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the facility, as described below:

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities;
- 2) The illness results in a greater care need than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children; or
- 3) The child has any of the following conditions and poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others:

A. An acute change in behavior including lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, uncontrolled coughing, noticeable (spreading) rash, or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility.

B. Fever (temperature above 101 degrees Fahrenheit orally, above 102 degrees Fahrenheit rectally, or 100 degrees or higher taken auxiliary (armpit)) and behavior change or other signs and symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea). Oral temperature should not be taken on children younger than 4 years (or younger than 3 years if a digital thermometer is used). Rectal temperature should be taken only by persons with specific health training.

C. Uncontrolled diarrhea, that is, increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper until diarrhea stops; blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.

D. Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

E. Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.

F. Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider or health official determines the condition is noninfectious.

G. Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.

H. Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

I. Untreated scabies, head lice, or other infestation.

J. Untreated Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend child care.

K. Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stage (chicken pox, streptococcal pharyngitis, rubella, pertussis, mumps, measles, Hepatitis A).

21.4 – MEDICATION POLICY

Staff members are not permitted to administer medication to any child unless the legal guardian has completed a Medication Authorization Form. Caregivers must indicate a start date and end date, reason for the medication, and dosage. If this form is not complete, children will not be administered medication.

The Early Learning Center will only dispense over-the-counter medication and/or prescription medication that is in an original, labeled container and is accompanied by a doctor’s note.

21.5 – ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at the Early Learning Center using an Accident/Incident Report. All biting incidents will be documented as accidents as well. If the injury is serious, a caregiver will be contacted before pick-up. The caregiver will sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be made and given to the caregiver. When staff complete an incident report, any other children involved in the incident will not be named, but will simply be referred to as “another child”.

21.6 – FIRE, TORNADO, AND OTHER EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Early Learning Center conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Caregivers, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, caregivers may not sign children into or out of the program. Caregivers must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child into the program. Families may feel free to wait with the child’s class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the ELC Program Director or designate will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any individuals waiting to sign a child in will have to leave the premises with the child. All other caregivers or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 30 minutes of the telephone call.

Individuals wishing to sign their child out of the program during a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation are expected to have patience with the staff as they are trying to maintain order during an often hectic and dangerous situation. If the center is in the midst of a fire/emergency drill, individuals will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to sign a child out of the program. If the center is having a real fire/emergency situation, caregivers will be asked to wait until the ELC Program Director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and gives the staff permission to release children. Once again, it is important for families and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate with the fire/emergency personnel and center administration during these important and critical situations.

21.7 – BITING POLICY

Although we understand that children explore, especially at the infant/toddler age, by using their mouths, we do have a strict biting policy. Any time a child bites another student, an incident report will be written. Staff members will do their best to keep this from happening, but children are quick and biting happens often in childcare facilities. For each time that a biter breaks the skin, that child's adult will receive a copy of the incident report as well. We maintain a strict 3 strike rule when it comes to biting. If a child receives 3 biting reports, he/she may be dismissed from the program.

21.8 – FIREARMS AND WEAPONS POLICY

At **no** time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunitions and/or weapon on agency property for **any** reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

22-Emergency and Agency Contact Information

ELC cell phone number – 785-260-1366

YWCA Front Desk main number – 785-233-1750

Topeka Police Department – 785-368-9551

Topeka Fire Department – 785-368-4000

Stormont Vail Hospital – 785-354-6000

St. Francis Hospital – 785-295-8000

Poison Control – 1(800)-222-1222