



*A Nurturing Environment for Infants and Toddlers.*

*An Educational Foundation for Preschoolers and Pre-K.*

2021-2022 Parent Handbook

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing The Early Childhood School. Since 1996, our school has been providing families in our community with exceptional child education and family solutions, which impact and inspire lifelong learning.

Our mission: To tie family, school, and community together in a safe, caring and joyful environment where children and their families feel comfortable and connected and receptive to learning.

As the Owner/Director, I am excited to welcome you and your child(ren) into our family. We have worked hard to make our community a home away from home for our families. In our school, your child will have a feeling of safety and confidence that encourages exploration and discovery. Our school's security system and comprehensive hygiene practices ensure your child's safety and health while providing you peace of mind. Our updated classrooms are designed to facilitate learning and encourage creativity!

Once again, thank you for choosing Early Childhood School! In the spirit of collaboration, please know that my office door is always open for brainstorming about child development challenges, constructive feedback or praising our top notch staff of early childhood professionals.

Sincerely,

Susan Dunn, M.Ed  
Owner/Director

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## ***SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION***

### **Early Childhood School Licensure and Approval**

Early Childhood School is designed with your family's needs in mind. We offer two dynamic programs all on one campus.

A nurturing environment for Infants & Toddlers.

&

An education foundation for Preschool and Pre-kindergarten.

ECSG is open from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday and offers Full Day and Extended Day options.

Early Childhood School follows rules and regulations set forth by the D.E.E.C. (the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care).

Families may contact the Northeast office located at:

360 Merrimack Street, Building 9 Third Floor  
Lawrence, MA 01843  
Phone: (978) 681-9684  
Fax: (978) 689-7618

Our licensed capacity is 64 children at one given time. Early Childhood School does not discriminate in the enrollment of children, families or selection of staff or volunteers on the basis of race, gender, religious affiliation, age, national origin, sexual orientation, status as a veteran, or any other category protected by law.

### **Our Child/Teacher Ratio is as follows:**

CHILD'S AGE	Educator/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Infant	1:3/2:7	7
Toddler	1:4/2:9	9
Preschool	1:10/2:20	20
Pre-K	1:10/2:19	19

Low ratios and small groups are important criteria of quality. We are proud to offer large, bright, well-equipped classrooms with supportive administration available to support unexpected classroom needs.

## **Philosophy**

The philosophy of our early childhood school is that children's concepts of self, individuality, independence, and confidence are first developed at home with family, then school, and then in their community.

We believe that a combined academic and developmental teaching approach to education is the most fun for children, and that happy children are more receptive to learning.

Our balanced approach enables children to receive a solid foundation without dismissing the importance of creativity and individual expression through art, dramatic play, music, exploration, and free play. This solid foundation leads to future success in school and throughout life.

We believe that providing a comfortable setting where diversity is respected is so important in the family, school, and community concept. Early Childhood School welcomes a diverse teaching team as well as enrollment base. We enjoy learning about each other's cultures, languages and holidays and celebrate the different cultures all through the year.

We strive for consistency and balance when it comes to teaching young children and emphasize the importance of developing relationships with all the children enrolled in our program. This ongoing relationship provides stability and security for children, and gives our educators the opportunity to know the children in our school more deeply and to serve their specific needs. This also enables our educators to form a growing relationship with each family; a quality that we feel makes our program so unique.

## ***SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATION***

### **Team of Educators**

Early Childhood School utilizes a differentiated staffing design combined with a “team approach”. Each classroom team may consist of a Lead Teacher and a Teacher with support from Assistant Teachers and a Floater. Educators are chosen carefully on the basis of the D.E.E.C. requirements, credentials, training, and professional experience. Prior to being hired, all applicants must have a personal interview, a 1-2 hour working interview and provide three references. In addition, during the interview process, prospective staff members submit the necessary paperwork for a CORI (Criminal Offenders Record Investigation) and DCF (Department of Children & Families) background record check. The results of the CORI and DCF background checks are required prior to a staff member being hired at Early Childhood School. Prospective employees are not hired until the results of the CORI and DCF results are reviewed by the Director.

All educators are trained in CPR and First Aid. Education, experience and positive background are not the only criteria needed to be an employee at Early Childhood School. Our educators must be loving, warm, and nurturing with also the ability to set good, healthy guidelines and examples for the children to follow. We also have regular staff meetings to cover health and safety issues, program topics, new information, and professional development. Professional development days are schedules throughout the year and allow time for teachers to plan and organize the requirements for their classroom.

### **Owner/Director**

Susan Dunn, M.Ed. became the proud owner of Early Childhood School on August 31, 2011. Susan is a visible presence each day and enjoys her role as the Director. Susan understands the importance of nurturing & supporting the teachers, and respects that they are the foundation of the school. In addition, Susan celebrates the opportunity to partner with parents about child development issues, behavior management challenges or brainstorming about necessary accommodations, to ensure an optimum experience for each child.

Over the past 25 years, Susan has been an Early Childhood Director, Regional Manager, Consultant & an Adjunct Faculty member in the Education department at Regis College.

Susan looks forward to using her early childhood expertise to create the highest quality early childhood school experience for your child(ren)!!!

### **Teachers and Assistant Teachers**

Teachers and Assistant Teachers are partners in providing care and education. It is their role to ensure a smoothly run, positive environment that enhances young children’s development, growth and learning.

## **Volunteers**

Early Childhood School will provide appropriate orientation, supervision and training to all volunteers. Volunteers will be under the direct visual supervision of an EEC qualified educator at all times; and must have compliance with EEC Background Record Check regulations.

## ***SECTION 3: CURRICULUM***

### **Curriculum**

Early Childhood School's curriculum reflects our school philosophy. It is designed to cultivate each child's life-long love of learning. Educators are expected to base their lesson plans on their knowledge of each child's age and developmental level, individual needs, and the family's culture. They enhance and support children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth and development, ensuring that learning occurs in all these areas. Time is given to explore and investigate through play, using materials to create and construct and broaden their knowledge base. Comfortable, soothing spaces in our home-like environment allow the children the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of their interests and to serve their specific needs. Special child learning centers and small group activities build on expanding social, language, cognitive and physical skills.

Our educators encourage children to observe, take things apart, build, create, draw, ask questions, and talk about a variety of topics. Through thoughtful questions and gentle guidance, we teach how to take pride in achievements, building positive self-esteem. As our children develop and change, our educators change the approach used in the classroom.

The outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom. Daily outdoor play gives educators opportunities to interact with the children and to plan and carry out specific learning experiences and share responsibility for the care of the playground. Outside, your child learns about science, nature and fitness education. Team games teach social skills and teach concentration skills. Constant supervision and concern for child safety shall always be a priority.

### **Small Groups**

- Every major research study on infant and toddler care has shown that small group size and good ratios are key components of quality care. The guiding principle is: the younger the child, the smaller the group. Small groups facilitate the provision of personalized care that infants and toddlers need, supporting peaceful exchanges, freedom and safety to move and explore, and the development of relationships.

### **Individualized Care**

- Following children's unique rhythms and styles, promotes well-being and a healthy sense of self. Responding promptly to children's individual needs supports their growing ability to self-regulate, *i.e.*, to function independently in personal and social contexts. The program adapts to the child, rather than vice versa and the child gets the message that he or she is important, that her/his needs will be met, and that his choices, preferences, and impulses are respected.

## **Cultural Continuity**

- Children develop a sense of who they are and what is important within the context of culture. Traditionally, it has been the child's family and cultural community that have been responsible for the transmission of values, expectations, and ways of doing things, especially during the early years of life. Consistency of care between home and childcare is always important for the very young and it becomes even more so when the infant or toddler is cared for in the context of cultural practices different from that of the child's family.

Because of the important role of culture in development, caregivers who serve families from diverse backgrounds need to:

- Heighten their understanding of the importance of culture in the lives of infants;
- Develop cultural competencies;
- Acknowledge and respect cultural differences;
- Be open and responsive to, and willing to negotiate with families about child rearing practices.

In this way, families and caregivers working together can facilitate the optimal development of each child.

## **Reading and Writing**

- Your child will love to learn and understand the written word by journal-writing, experiencing wonderful books, storytelling and participating in regular large and small group activities that focus on letter shapes and sounds.

## **Mathematics**

- By counting, patterning, sorting, classifying, estimating and predicting, your child develops the foundation of math skills and an appreciation for the world of numbers.

## **Science**

- Performing experiments, investigating properties, and observing cause and effect help your child build scientific thinking skills and a connection with the natural world.

## **Progress Reports**

Early Childhood School educators prepare a written report on the progress of each child in the program. We offer parents a conference to discuss the content of the report. A copy of the

progress report will be given to the parent and a copy is kept in the child's record. The frequency of children's progress reports is as follows:

1. For infants and children with identified special needs, the progress report is prepared every three months.
2. For toddlers and preschoolers, the progress report is prepared every six months.

The progress report is based on observations and documentation of the child's progress in a range of activities over time, and may include samples of the child's work.

### **Classroom Transitions**

Our educators understand that children feel more secure when transitions from one classroom to another go smoothly and meet the child's individual needs. Children will advance to the next classroom based upon several factors, the deciding factor being the developmental readiness of that child to be able to thrive in the next classroom designed to create new and exciting challenges for them. We also take into consideration the age that the child was enrolled into our program and how long they have spent in that particular classroom and lastly, the current enrollment and availability of space of the classroom.

Whenever children are preparing to transition to a new classroom or program our Director will prepare a written transition plan for you. The transition plan will include information based upon collaboration from your child's educators and information about the whole transition process.

Your child's educator will assist with the transition in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand and will work to ensure that the transition process meets the child's individual developmental needs. Parents and educators will also communicate frequently with each other throughout the process.

## ***SECTION 4: Enrollment Process***

### **Enrollment at Early Childhood School**

Early Childhood School accepts children twelve weeks through 6 years of age in our School. Early Childhood School does not discriminate on the basis of a child's ethnicity, economic level, family structure language, religion, sex, national origin or disability. Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment.

Names are placed on our waiting list by date of application, with priority given to the children who have siblings currently enrolled in the program. Enrollment for students on the waiting list is guaranteed once all deposits and fees have been received.

A Registration requires a \$75 non-refundable fee per child upon enrollment. A \$50 non-refundable re-enrollment fee per child is due at re-enrollment time annually.

## **Trial Period Policy**

Different children have different needs. All programs are not suitable for all children. For this reason, Early Childhood School wants to accept children for a one-month trial basis. During this trial period, we will decide if our style and expectations match the needs for which we are providing service. If for any reason, this program is found to be unsatisfactory for any particular child, we will make every attempt to discuss this with the parent(s) in order to determine the cause and to make the necessary adjustments. If the child has a need we cannot meet or that reasonable accommodations do not provide an optimum environment for the child, we will be happy to assist the family with our referral procedures. (See Referral Services Procedures)

## **Transition from Home to School**

Once the decision to enroll has been made, the Director will review specific policies and procedures and plan for your child's smooth transition from home to school. This could include arranging short visits with your child before his or her start date or having your child stay for a shorter day in the beginning. Tuition will be charged on the first day your child is solely in our care.

All enrollment forms, the non-refundable tuition deposit (one-full month) and the enrollment fee are due before your child enters the program. Your child's teacher will keep you informed of your child's successes or any adjustment difficulties as they occur.

## **Key Policies**

Upon enrollment, each family will receive the access code that accesses the main entrance to our school. Only authorized individuals should have access to the provided code. We ask that you please keep this code to yourself and do not share it with others picking up. The code will be changed as needed and all parents will be informed of the new code.

## **Safety Precautions**

Please do not allow your child(ren) to roam around our school, the stairs or playground unsupervised. These are behaviors that do not occur during the day at school and maintaining consistency between staff and families is important to us. Children are reminded that our entrance/exit door is to be touched only by "MOMS, DADS, and TEACHERS". Parents can support this safety policy by using this language during these busy arrival and departure times.

## ***SECTION 5: DAILY ROUTINES***

### **Arrivals**

Early Childhood School believes that daily communication between parent and educator is vital to providing the best experience for a child.

We ask that at least one parent make contact with your child's classroom educator at drop-off

time. This will be a time to talk informally with an educator and communicate any information that may be relevant to your child's day, (e.g. child's sleep was disturbed last night, a spouse is away, relatives are visiting, etc.) Parents should assist their child in hanging up coats, putting things in the cubby and settling into the classroom. If your child is having difficulty separating, an educator will be happy to assist by engaging the child in an activity and comforting him or her. Once you have made the decision to leave, you should feel free to discreetly observe through our viewing window and/or call us later to check on your child.

Under no circumstances may a parent leave a child at Early Childhood School: (1) prior to opening, (2) prior to the child's scheduled arrival time without Director approval, or (3) without making sure that the child has been properly received by an educator.

### **Arrival Time**

Children benefit from predictable routines. Regular attendance and arrival times at school helps them gain the most from the programs at Early Childhood School. For that reason, we request that all children arrive by 9:00 am to allow adequate time to explore and interact with other children during morning free play. Arriving after 9:30, during structured activities, can create anxiety for the child and disruption to the classroom routine for the other children enrolled in our program. Families should consult with the Director to arrange for arrival time after 9:30 am.

Arrivals prior to 8:00 am are accommodated in an age appropriate classroom until their teacher arrives. All classrooms are typically open by 8:00 am. Children arriving in the early morning are welcome to enjoy breakfast at school from 7:00 am until 8:00 am at which time our staff will clear the table, wash hands and faces and prepare for our busy arrival time.

In order to avoid disruption of naptime routines, we ask that ALL children (except Infants) who will be arriving later in the morning arrive either before lunch is served in the classroom, between 11:15 and 12:00, or after 2:30 pm. Arrival times after 2:30 pm are subject to approval of the Director.

### **Departures**

When picking up your child(ren) from Early Childhood School, please allow visitation time before the schools' closing time or before your child's scheduled departure. Remember that educators also have families, personal lives, and scheduled appointments. Please keep in mind that your child's teacher must continue to monitor the rest of the class even though you may feel that you have important issues to discuss. For extended discussion, you will always be able to arrange an appointment with the Director at a mutually convenient time.

Other than parents, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick up a child from Early Childhood School. Anyone who is unfamiliar to staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present identification before a child is released to them. Children are allowed to leave only when accompanied by an authorized adult. Such authorization must be renewed at least every 12 months.

To ensure the security of the children, the Early Childhood School staff will adhere to the following procedures:

- Check pick-up authorization form in child's file. A child may be released to a person who is not on the authorized list only if the parent has provided a verifiably dated and signed note authorizing a specified person to pick-up the child at a specified time. The note must include the driver's license number of the authorized person or another verifiable means of identification.
- Before releasing a child to someone other than a parent, staff will check the driver's license or other identification to make sure it matches the authorization form or special authorizing note.

Under no circumstance will a child be released to a person who is not on the list or for whom the parent has not authorized by note or verbally that day even if the child and a staff member are familiar with the person. This includes parents of other children enrolled at Early Childhood School. No Early Childhood School employee will force a child to leave the school with someone unfamiliar to the child.

If there is a court order prohibiting any individual from having access to a child, the school must have a copy of the documentation ordering such prohibition.

### **In the Beginning**

Children react differently to new situations. Your child may cry when you leave, but in most cases, the tears will end as soon as you turn the corner. Try to relax. When you leave, please go with a smile and a cheerful good-bye. (You are welcome to call later in the day to speak with your child's teacher). Many parents keep going back for one more kiss, reassuring their children over and over. Uncertainty on your part, however, can hinder your child's adjustment. In all probability, your child will love the school and will look forward to coming each time. If it seems that extra time and help in making the transition are needed, we will call you to make a plan together. Please be assured that we will not allow your child to suffer prolonged unhappiness.

### **A Common Occurrence**

There is a common occurrence with children, which can be less of a problem if parents are forewarned. Your child(ren) may be blissfully happy for the first few days, before announcing, seemingly out of the blue, "I am not going!" One reaction is to think something negative must have happened at the school. This is not usually the case. Usually, the child is simply coming to grips with the fact that going to school will be an everyday event, not a novelty. Your child probably wants to be "big", but leaving home every day has a note of finality, which requires emotional acceptance. For the small group of children who face this challenge, we plan for gradual adjustment, based on the needs of the child. Before you know it, Early Childhood School will be a place of comfort and security, eagerly anticipated by your child and you.

## **Snacks**

Early Childhood School will make sure children received morning and afternoon nutritional snacks as provided by parents. We ask that parents who wish to offer their child a snack from their lunch box, do so outside of the school or in the car. Offering late day snacks to your child at pick-up times increase anxiety for those children remaining at the school.

## **Telephone Contact**

Early Childhood School must be able to reach parents at all times. If a parent will be unavailable at any of the numbers originally given during enrollment time, please make sure to note how you can be reached for that day at drop-off time.

Parents need to call Early Childhood School immediately should an emergency arise that prevents them from picking up their child on time. Parents will receive a late notice and will be charged an applicable late fee, even if they have called the staff to let them know of their late arrival. It is important to call, however, because it is comforting for children and staff to know a parent is on the way.

If a child has not been picked up by 6:30 pm and no word or directions have been received from the parent or other authorized adult, a protective service worker or law enforcement officer will be notified to pick up the child. In such cases, the administrator on duty will stay with the child until the child is united with family.

## **Naps and Rest**

DEEC regulations require that an extended period of sleep, rest or quiet activities be provided for children in care for longer than four hours. Children who choose not to sleep or awaken early must be offered quiet activities for the remainder of the sleep or quiet activity period. Early Childhood School provides opportunities for children to rest or engage in quiet activities for children that are in our care for less than four hours.

1. The length of the sleep, rest or quiet activity period must be appropriate to the needs of the children.
2. When children choose not to sleep or awaken early, they will be offered quiet activities for the remainder of the sleep or quiet activity period. The quiet activities offered must be developmentally appropriate for the children served.
3. Infants nap/rest according to their own individual schedule.

During sleep, rest or quiet activities, our educator will ensure that children are easily accessible during an emergency.

## **Toilet Training**

Children must be physically, cognitively, and emotionally ready if they are to be successful with learning to toilet independently. Your child's teacher will follow the family's lead and will partner with each family to make toilet learning a relaxed and successful process that builds the children's self-confidence and self esteem. The process begins at different ages for different children.

Once a child is toilet trained and out of diapers, teachers do not enter the bathroom to wipe a child's body after using the bathroom. Parents may provide disposable wipes for those children who have difficulty cleaning their own bodies with toilet paper only. Please note that in the case of bathroom accidents, your child's teacher, along with a co-teacher, will gladly assist your child with cleaning their body and changing into clean clothes.

## ***SECTION 6: POLICIES TO NOTE***

### **Clothing**

Clothing should be comfortable enough to allow children to fully participate in a wide variety of activities (*i.e.*, painting, water play, sandbox, etc.) without undue concern that these clothes will be damaged. Pants and comfortable clothing free of complicated fastenings, are suggested since many activities are apt to be messy and require physical movement. For safety, as well as health reasons, children should wear comfortable footwear that has closed toes.

Children are expected to dress appropriately and be ready to go outdoors in every season. Please dress children in cool clothing for summer; warm coats, hats and gloves in the winter; and sweater in the fall and spring. Parents are responsible for providing a new bottle of sunscreen, and bug-spray labeled with their child's name, each spring. Sunscreen/bug-spray will be applied when needed if written permission for its application is on file.

Each child is expected to keep a complete change of extra clothing, including socks and shoes at school. Extra clothing should be placed in a plastic Ziploc bag clearly labeled with the child's name. During toilet training, please bring at least two extra changes of clothing. Parents of infants and toddlers also need to provide disposable diapers and any needed diaper powder, wipes, or ointment.

For parents of girls in dresses, for health and hygiene reasons, please dress your child with bloomers or tights over diapers and underwear.

Children should not wear any of the following clothing:

- Clothing with violent or inappropriate language or pictures
- Open-toed sandals, Crocs or any shoe without a back strap.

Each child will have a designated space to hold personal belongings. The children are expected to wear shoes at all times. When a child wears heavy winter-weather boots to

school in place of shoes, other shoes or hard-soled slippers must be sent for use indoors. Please check your child's cubicle periodically to see that it is complete with clothes appropriate to the season and your child's growth.

### **Inclement Weather**

We realize that our families depend on us to be open on a consistent basis and we will make every effort to limit our school closings and/or delays. We will be open on snowy days unless there is a state of emergency or if it is determined that the intensity of the storm would prevent staff from safely arriving at school. In addition, a power outage would also mandate a closing for the day.

There may be times when our school does close or implements a delayed opening. In these situations we ask for your cooperation. You can obtain the most up to date information by calling our phone number (978)352-4900. ECSG will leave a message by 6:15am. So when the weather reports hazardous travel conditions or you notice public school closings, please feel free to call our phone number before heading to ECSG.

In addition, if the phone system is not working you may assume that the power is out and we are not allowed to operate without power.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outside play is an extension of the curriculum and is aimed at promoting children's physical growth and socialization. Educators are encouraged to take stimulating materials outdoors to extend curriculum activities. Early Childhood School incorporates at least 60 minutes of physical activity for our full day programs.

Plan for your child to play outdoors every day, weather permitting. Remember to dress your child appropriately for the season. In cold weather, children should wear several layers of loose-fitting warm clothing.

In extremely cold weather, and especially if there are high winds, children should play indoors and time outside should be kept very brief. Any combination of wind and cold that results in a wind chill at or below 15 degree F poses a significant health risk. Our educators will refer to daily local weather report to be informed about wind chill factors.

Extreme heat can be as hazardous to children as extreme cold. When playing outdoors in warm weather children should wear lightweight cotton clothing. Drinking cool beverages, especially those with low sugar content (like water) also help the body to maintain a comfortable temperature. The Heat Index is an indication of how the temperature "feels", and is a combination of actual heat and relative humidity. A heat index of 80 degree F or below is considered comfortable, and safe for children to play outdoors. A heat index between 80 degree F and 90 degree F means that children should be closely observed while outdoors, and outdoor

playtime should be limited. When the heat index is above 90 degree F, young children should not play outdoors OR for very short periods of time. Again, local weather reports are a valuable resource for obtaining heat index information.

Children should use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher that blocks both UVB and UVA rays whenever they play outdoors, and sunscreen should be reapplied at the end of the day.  
**PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO APPLY THE FIRST APPLICATION OF SUNSCREEN TO THEIR CHILDREN EITHER PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OR DURING THEIR DROP OFF TIME.**

### **Toys from Home**

Except for toys that are needed in the very opening days of school to help ease your child's transition, we ask that you leave all toys at home or in your car. Some acceptable items to help smooth a transition from home to school would be a blanket, a stuffed animal, or family picture.

Some classes have a scheduled "show and tell" experience where children can bring items from home. Please make sure that everything brought in is LABELED, and that no belonging is extremely valuable. Early Childhood School cannot be responsible for items brought in from home.

We do appreciate when parents send in a book or item that is relevant to a topic that the children are focusing on. We ask that you consider several factors when helping your child choose appropriate toys/books to school, please do not include the following:

- Guns and violent toys (superheroes, swords, etc.)
- Books with television/movie subject matter
- Books or toys that make noise (can be disruptive at rest time but great fun the rest of the day).

### **Birthdays**

Many families eagerly anticipate celebrating their young child's birthday and enjoy making it a memorable day for the family. Early Childhood School welcomes birthday celebrations, but asks that classroom parties remain age appropriate and simple. We encourage healthy snacks, special fruit or muffins instead of sugary snacks. Parents may want to commemorate their child's birthday by presenting a book or puzzle to the classroom in their child's honor.

*\*Please do not send birthday party invitations to be handed out at the center.*

### **When a Teacher Leaves**

The Director at Early Childhood School understands that change is a challenge to everyone: children, teachers, and parents. We take the responsibility of staffing our school very seriously

and we are confident that we have set employment standards to always reflect what is in the best interest of our program and the children enrolled here.

In the event a teacher resigns, a resignation notice will be distributed via email and/or be placed in your families' mailbox. The notice will announce the teacher's last day and the staffing plan in the interim. Families will also receive notification when a new teacher is hired. As important as the teacher-child relationship is, it is just one part of the big picture. Continuity of group, schedule, activities, and friends can form a strong foundation for children to adjust to a departing teacher.

Please understand that certain situations may warrant a sudden termination of a teacher. We understand that this action can be upsetting and may cause confusion especially since families are not provided with the full account of the facts and events that lead up to a teacher being dismissed. As always, the Director/Owner is available to properly discuss the facts of any situation regarding complicated staffing issues that may arise.

### **School Photographs**

School photographs are taken once a year, typically each Fall. Individual as well as one group photo are available for purchase directly from the photographer. The photo date and purchase price is made available at least 2 weeks prior to the picture day.

Throughout the year, Early Childhood School will take pictures and post these candid action shots on our bulletin boards. Occasionally, Early Childhood School will use these photographs in our newsletter and our promotional literature, as well as Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, InstaGram, etc.). We ask for general permission to use photographs of your child in the paperwork signed by all families.

### **Babysitting for Early Childhood School Families**

The employees of Early Childhood School are professional educators committed to providing high quality care and education to all children and families in an evenhanded manner. Babysitting and other financial arrangements and relationships between Early Childhood School employees and Early Childhood School families are not allowed. This policy exists so that we can prevent increase risk of:

- Compromised effectiveness working with children
- Compromised confidentiality regarding families, children and ESCG business/staff.

## ***SECTION 7: CHILD GUIDANCE AND MANAGEMENT***

### **Behavior Management**

The goal of Early Childhood School's child guidance policy is to build self-worth, increase social competence, and enhance the dignity of each child. All guidance and discipline techniques used at the school will be in accordance with this positive emphasis and to help children learn to make socially acceptable choices. For this reason, educators strive to use mediation, guidance, and various techniques to assist children in making acceptable choices.

**Positive Approaches to Guidance Include the Following:**

Educators will have a well-designed, developmentally appropriate learning environment and provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

Educators will know and be sensitive to the developmental, cultural, and individual needs of each child.

When inappropriate behavior occurs, the educator shall examine the situation thoroughly to determine the cause; for example, a child may be reacting to something in the classroom, stress at home, a physical problem, or some other factor.

The educator shall be responsible for documenting patterns of inappropriate behavior and bringing such patterns to the attention of parents and to the Director.

Our educators, under the supervision of the Director, are responsible for behavior management within their groups. Children will not be allowed to hit, bite, or in any way physically injure another child. Please note that it is the responsibility of the school to handle conflicts in behavior that occur at school. We may also ask you to discuss a problem with your child. In some instances, it may be necessary to provide a modified time out to allow a child to regain their self-control.

If a child is unable to control their behavior through the above noted methods, a private conference with the Director, educators and parents will be scheduled. A plan to foster more positive behavior will be worked out and closer contact with the parents will be instituted. Outside consultation with a specialist could be required.

If a child still does not respond to repeated help in exhibiting safe behavior, and if the child is in danger to self or to other children, or if the child's parents refuse to seek outside consultation when recommended, Early Childhood School will reserve the right to disenroll the child from the program.

The following are some specific types of interventions that are always prohibited by Early Childhood School policy:

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children;

- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment;
- Depriving children of meals or snacks;
- Force feeding children; and
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.

Occasionally, children may not be able to regain control of their behavior in spite of the teacher's/providers best efforts. The provider should seek help for these instances:

1. The child's behavior is so intense that it is likely the child will be isolated and ostracized by the other children if it continues.
2. There is a serious possibility of harm to the child or other children or their ability to learn and grow in the program.
3. The child's behavior consumes so much of the provider's time and energy that the provider has considered asking parents to remove the child from the program.

\*For safety of all children, when a child becomes aggressive or is considered a danger to themselves or others, parents will be called and asked to pick up within 1 hour.

### **Biting**

Biting is not uncommon when infants and toddlers respond to the discomfort of teething and when they are beginning to express their strong likes and dislikes. Biting can also occur when children are seeking adults' attention or when the child is adjusting to sharing their space and their materials. Biting occurs most frequently when children's language is just emerging-it is sometimes their most effective strategy for expressing their emotions.

We wish that biting never happened-but it does. You can be assured that Early Childhood School educators supervise all children all the time. When we are working with a child who is using his/her teeth to solve problems, our educators target their efforts to prevent injuries and to change this behavior as quickly as possible.

Educators model and encourage children to "use their words" to solve their problems. They also model and encourage other appropriate ways to express strong emotions. They may say, for example, "if you are upset you can stamp your feet!" Teachers and administrators also make every effort to work with parents to eliminate this behavior. We can identify methods for changing the biting behavior, books to share with children, etc.

If a child should be bitten, these procedures are followed:

1. The child who was bitten receives necessary first aid immediately. He/she is comforted and the injury is washed with soap and water.
2. The teacher fills out an INCIDENT FORM and INJURY FORM describing what happened. After receiving the necessary signatures from the respective parents, the biter and bitee, the child specific forms are filed in each child's enrollment folder. Under no circumstances is the identity of the biter or the bitee disclosed to parents/guardians. Any type of disclosure would be a breach of confidentiality.
3. If the skin was broken, parents of the child who was bitten are called immediately. If the skin was not broken, the incident is discussed when the parent(s) come in the afternoon.
4. Early Childhood School follows a strict code of confidentiality. That means that when we discuss issues of concern, we will share information about your child ONLY with you.

## ***SECTION 8: NUTRITION***

### **Nutrition**

In an effort to provide the best nutrition to meet your child's specific needs, parents are asked to provide their children with morning and afternoon snacks. At times, snacks will be brought in by families to share with all children in the classroom. If your child is unable to eat these occasional treats because of food allergies, please indicate this on your child's enrollment form and personally speak with your child's teacher. PLEASE REFER TO OUR NUT FREE FOOD POLICY.

Each child is required to bring their lunch, a morning and afternoon snack, two drinks in spill proof cups, and all utensils needed for their lunch. Please bring foods already prepared to eat as we are not equipped to peel, cut or slice. Foods that need to be heated must be sent in labeled microwavable containers. Glass containers are not allowed. We suggest using freezer packs in your child's lunch box to help keep your child's lunch cold. Unused food in good condition will be saved. This may give you a better indication of what your child has eaten.

Meals at the school are used as an opportunity for developing appropriate social behaviors, conversation skills, good nutrition habits, and ecological attitudes that discourage food waste. Educators interact with children while they are eating and work with those children who need guidance, containers opened, etc. Teachers encourage children to serve themselves, when appropriate, and will ensure that each child receives an adequate amount and variety of food.

Teachers will dispose of, or return to home, milk, formula or food unfinished by your child, as directed by parents. Teachers will offer water to children at frequent intervals and upon request by the children.

All lunches should be free of sugary snacks, chocolate, candy, and carbonated drinks. Some food suggestions for your child's lunch are:

- Small containers of finger foods: meats, cheeses, vegetables, and pickles, fruits-chopped to bite size that are cooked, dried or fresh.
- Eggs: hard-boiled, deviled, chopped or salad.
- Thermal containers of spoon foods: fruits, applesauce, yogurt, cottage cheese, meat pies, rice, noodles, stew, meatloaf, potato, and dinner leftovers.
- Commercially packaged juices, (with squeeze proof holder), dried fruits and seeds, crackers, bread sticks.
- Sandwiches: thin, simple, cut small. Cream cheese, toasted cheese, cold cuts.
- Snack; breads, muffins, biscuits, crackers, dry cereal, fruit bits.

Early Childhood School strives to partner with families to accommodate the nutritional and cultural needs of each child. It is important to indicate any special dietary needs (*i.e.*, allergies or cultural/religious food preferences) on enrollment forms. Parents need to bring these needs to the attention of the educators at the time of enrollment and when their children transition into a new classroom.

\*Please refer to the list of the 10 TOP CHOKING FOODS FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 4 located in your parent enrollment information. Items packed in a lunch that is listed on the Choking Foods list, or that is high in sugar may not be offered to your child while at school.

The foods listed below pose a choking hazard to children under the age of 4. Small round firm foods that can slip easily down the throat, those that are stringy or sticky, and those that swell when moist are the most dangerous. Please read through this list carefully and keep it in your home so that you can refer to it when preparing these foods. We feel very strongly about the safety of your child, if we are not comfortable serving an item in your child's lunch that is a potential choking hazard we will send it back home and offer something else.

**APPLES:** Always chop apples and other firm fruits into manageable, bite-sized pieces, or cook until soft in texture.

**CARROTS:** Raw carrots should be finely shredded or cooked thoroughly until mushy to the touch.

**CELERY:** Its stringy quality makes celery hard for young kids to chew and swallow properly. With a peeler, remove the stringy outside layer of the celery stick, and cut it up before serving.

GRAPES: Cut grapes in quarters before giving them to your child (if they have seeds, remove them). Similarly, cherries should be pitted and chopped before serving.

HOT DOGS: Must be cut up to become safer to eat. Slice lengthwise and then chop into irregularly shaped bit-sized pieces.

SOY/NUT BUTTER: Spread a very thin layer on a slice of bread and serve with a beverage. Children under 4 should never eat large clumps of soy/or peanut butter from a spoon or a finger: **PEANUT BUTTER is not allowed at school.**

RAISINS: Raisins should not be given to children under age 2. Two-to-four year olds should be served only plum, moist raisin or ones that have been cooked in foods like pudding or bread.

HARD CANDY: Small sucking candies are dangerous because kids tend to bite them and may accidentally swallow them whole, blocking their airway.

NUTS: Peanuts (like hot dogs) are a leading cause of childhood choking. But all nuts pose a threat because of their size and shape and therefore should be avoided. **Nuts are not allowed at school.**

POPCORN: Its size, shape, and sharp, irregular edges make popcorn a prime choking food.

PRETZELS: Its size, shape, and sharp, irregular edges make pretzels a prime choking food.

There is an item called a small part cylinder that is the same size as a child's throat under 4. This tube is used to determine if any foods or toys are too small for children that are potential choking hazards. If you are interested in purchasing one of these cylinder's you can call discovery Toys at 1-800-426-4777. This information was found in CHILD MAGAZINE.

### **Nut Free Foods**

Several of the children in our program have allergies to nuts. Strict avoidance is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction. The allergy can be life threatening. If a reaction occurs, we must immediately call 911 for help. Immediate injection of adrenaline is necessary and immediate medical care is required. As a result, our school is "nut free".

## ***SECTION 9: HEALTH AND MEDICATION***

### **Illness**

Any new social setting offers exposure to illnesses and germs. Although our educators take precautions to prevent the spread of illness, children entering a new childcare setting may become ill. Please be prepared to make alternate arrangements for the care of your child.

When deciding whether to keep your sick child out of school, the two most important things to think about are:

1. Does the child's illness keep him/her from comfortably taking part in activities?
2. Does the sick child need more care than the staff can give without affecting the health and safety of other children?

If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then the child should not go to school. If he/she is sent to childcare or school, then the caregiver or teacher may not allow the child to stay.

A third question to ask is:

3. Could other children get sick from being near your child?

Most common illnesses, like a cold, are not really harmful. Other children can catch illnesses before, during, or after your child is sick. Having a sick child stay home may not really prevent other children from getting sick. Children should be kept at home if the cold is new and is accompanied by fever, productive cough, chills, lethargy, or excessive runny nose that cannot be controlled when wiped.

Early Childhood School recommends that parents keep several Authorizations for Medication Forms at home to have on hand for trips to the doctor. Additional forms are available and they are suitable for use by the doctor as a physician's order to the center.

Parental cooperation is essential in this effort to support Early Childhood School to prevent the spread of illness.

Children will be excluded from care when:

- He/she has a fever of 101° or higher
- He/she is vomiting
- He/she has had 2 or more loose bowel movements within an hour

Children who have been "symptom free" for 24 hours may return to school.

### **Health Consultant**

Early Childhood School is fortunate to utilize the consultation services of Sue Debendictis, Public School Nurse at Danvers High School. Sue graduated from Northeastern University with

a Bachelor's degree in nursing and has over 25 years of experience. She is available to our program for consultation as needed, to approve our program's health care plan and to approve first aid training and training in medication administration.

### **Educator Training for Health and Safety**

All educators are trained in the school's emergency and evacuation procedures, in standard precautions and in medication administration procedures.

1. First Aid and CPR.
2. CPR training is renewed annually.
3. All educators are trained in infection control procedures.
4. All educators will receive basic training in USDA recognized nutrition requirements for the healthy growth and development of children.
5. All educators receive basic training in food choking hazards.

### **Tooth Brushing**

According to DEEC regulations, any child that is in care for more than four hours or consumes a meal while in care will be required to brush their teeth. Early Childhood School will be incorporating this by having the families provide a new toothbrush that is clearly labeled with their child's name on it, and a tube of toothpaste for your child to use. They will be stored in a safe and sanitary manner open to the air and without touching each other. These brushes will need to be replaced every 3 months or after an illness.

All rooms will have their own ways of incorporating this policy:

- **Infants:** The educators will assist the infants and brush their teeth after their lunch time while they are still sitting at the table.
- **Toddlers:** Educators will assist children individually in brushing their teeth after they have their lunch and wash their hands.
- **Preschool:** The educator will prepare toothpaste in small dabs on paper plates then as each child finishes their lunch, they can get their tooth brush and use their brush to get a dab of toothpaste off of the plate and rinse at the sink when done brushing. Then they will return their brush to its holder.
- **Pre-Kindergarten:** The educator will prepare toothpaste in small dabs on paper plates then as each child finishes their lunch, they can get their toothbrush and use their brush to

get a dab of toothpaste off of the plate and rinse at the sink when done brushing. Then they will return their brush to its holder.

### **Medication Policy**

Early Childhood School encourages parents and physicians to schedule medication outside of school hours whenever possible. In order to meet the needs of families for circumstances in which it is necessary to administer medication during school.

Each person who administers prescription or non-prescription medication to a child is trained to verify and to document that the right child receives the proper dosage of the correct medication designated for that particular child and given at the correct time(s), and by the proper method. Each person who administers medication (other than topical medication) must demonstrate competency in the administration of medication before being authorized by Early Childhood School to administer any medication.

When administering medication, no attempt will be made to restrain a child or to use unusual force if the child is upset or uncooperative. A parent will be called immediately if such a problem occurs. Parents may also come to the school to personally administer medications to their children. The school will not be responsible for medications administered by parents.

Early Childhood School strictly adheres to the following Medication Policy:

- All medication administered to a child, including but not limited to, oral and topical medication of any kind, either prescription or non-prescription, must be provided by the child's parent.
- All prescription medications must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed and with their original labels affixed. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging and be accompanied by doctor's orders and an Authorization for Medication Form from parents.
- The educator must not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the original container; unless so authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care Practitioner. Any medications without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a written physician or pharmacist's descriptive order.
- Unless otherwise specified in a child's individual health care plan, the educator must store all medications out of the reach of children and under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety during the time the children are in care and during the transportation of children.
  - a) Those medications found in United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Schedules II-V must be kept in a secured and locked place at all times when not being accessed by an authorized individual.

- b) Prescription medications requiring refrigeration, shall be stored in a way that is inaccessible to children in a refrigerator maintained at temperatures between 38° F and 42° F.

Emergency medications such as epinephrine auto-injectors must be immediately available for use as needed. When possible, all unused, discontinued or outdated prescription medications shall be returned to the parent and such return shall be documented in the child's record. When return to the parent is not possible or practical, such prescription medications must be destroyed and the destruction recorded by a Director in accordance with policies of Early Childhood School and the DPH Drug Control Program.

- No educator shall administer the first dose of any medication to a child, except under extraordinary circumstances and with parental consent.
- Each time a medication is administered, the educator must document in the child's record the name of the medication, the dosage, the time and the method of administration, and who administered the medication (except in the case of using a diaper rash topical medication).
- All medications must be administered in accordance with the consent and documentation requirements specified.

### **Plan for Administration of Medication**

#### *Prescription Medication*

1. Prescription medication must be brought to school in its original container and include the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per day and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
2. The Center will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
3. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form before the medication can be administered.

#### *Non-Prescription Medication*

1. Non-prescription medication will be given only with written consent of the child's physician. The Center will accept a signed statement from the physician listing the medication(s), the dosage and criteria for its administration. This statement will be valid for one year from the date that it was signed.

2. Along with the written consent of the physician, the Center will also need written parental authorization. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form, which allows the Center to administer the non-prescription medication in accordance with the written order of the physician. The statement will be valid for one year from the date it was signed. Parents must update written authorizations for oral, non-prescription medications on a weekly basis.
3. The Center will make every attempt to contact the parent prior to the child receiving the non-prescription medication unless the child needs medication urgently or when contacting the parent will delay appropriate care unreasonably.

### *Topical Ointments and Sprays*

1. Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, and bug spray, etc. will be administered to the child with written parental permission. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and include a list of topical non-prescription medication.

### **Management of Infectious Disease**

To protect the health of all children, Early Childhood School follows the exclusion policies for serious illnesses, contagious diseases and reportable diseases in conformance with regulations and recommendations set by the Division of Communicable Disease control, (DPH).

Early Childhood School will notify all parents in accordance with the Department of Public Health recommendations when any communicable disease or condition has been introduced into the program.

### **Plan for Managing of Infectious Disease**

Children who exhibit symptoms of the following types of infectious diseases, such as gastrointestinal, respiratory and skin or direct contact infections, may be excluded from the program if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting comfortably;
- The illness results in greater care need that the educators can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;
- The child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing or other signs of serious illness; diarrhea;
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours at home or once at school;

- Mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is non-infectious;
- Rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease;
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conductive with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for re-admission, with or without treatment;
- Tuberculosis, until the child is non-infectious;
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;
- Head lice, free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;
- Strep infection until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- Many types of hepatitis are caused by viruses. The symptoms are so alike that blood tests are needed to tell them apart. In the U.S., the most common types of hepatitis are A, B, and C. Types B and C are spread through blood and other body fluids. Type A, is spread through contaminated food and water or stool (feces). Fact sheets are available from the State Department of Public Health. [www.state.ma.us/dph](http://www.state.ma.us/dph)
- Chicken pox, until the last blister has healed over.
- Flu – A child will be excluded for 7 days after a positive flu test. The child must be fever free, medication free for 24 hours and able to participate in all activities. A doctor's note is required to return to school.

A child who has been excluded from school may return after being evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk to him or her to the other children.

Nevertheless, Early Childhood School program staff may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the child.

If a child has already entered the school and shows signs of illness (for example: a fever equal to or greater than 100.5° by the oral or auxiliary route, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc.), he/she will be offered their mat, cot, or other comfortable spot in which to lie down. If the child manifests any of the symptoms requiring exclusion (as listed above) or it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child that he/she be taken home, his/her parent will be contacted immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible.

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the school, the Director will notify parents immediately, and in writing, which is typically posted outside of classrooms. Whenever possible, information regarding the communicable disease shall be made available to parents.

The Director shall consult the Early Childhood School Health Manual for such information. DPH must be contacted when there is a reported communicable disease in our program.

Please remember that all symptoms must have disappeared, or the child is on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to the Program. In some instances, a physician's certificate of good health may be required before a child will be allowed to return.

The Director, in consultation with the child's teaching team, will determine if a child is exhibiting any of the above illnesses or symptoms. If it is decided your child should be sent home, parents will be asked to pick their child up promptly. A reasonable amount of time (no more than 90 minutes) will be allowed for parents' arrival. If the parents of an ill child cannot be reached or do not respond to the School's request to pick up their child, the emergency contact identified on the child's Enrollment Form will be asked to come pick up the child instead.

If parents ignore and/or purposefully disregard the Health Care Policy, child care services for the family will be immediately suspended to ensure the health and well-being of all children. The suspension may be lifted after the parents meet with the Director and agree to comply with the Health Care Policy going forward.

If your child is sent home with an Exclusion for Illness Form, its terms are strictly enforced. It is very important that all communicable illnesses be reported to the School. A statement from a physician denoting the type of illness and the date when the child may return to school may be required for contagious illnesses; however, Early Childhood School retains the right to continue to exclude a child despite a physician's statement if that statement contradicts the Program's policies. When any child in class has developed a communicable disease, parents are informed in writing within 24 hours.

We follow strict washing and disinfecting procedures. Educators will educate children about and promote hand washing procedures and health precautions. .

### **Plan for Meeting Individual Children's Specific Health Needs**

During intake, parents will be asked to record any known allergies or any chronic medical conditions requiring an individual plan, which have been diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner on the face sheet. The face sheet will be updated yearly.

The plan must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered.

- The educator may administer routine, scheduled medication or treatment to the child with a chronic medical condition in accordance with written parental consent and licensed health care practitioner authorization.
- The educator must have successfully completed training, given by the child's health care practitioner, or, with his/her written consent, given by the child's parent or the program's

health consultant the specifically addresses the child's medical condition, medication and other treatment needs.

- Any unanticipated administration of medication or unanticipated treatment for a non-life-threatening condition requires that the educator must make a reasonable attempt to contact parents prior to administering such unanticipated medication or beginning such unanticipated treatment, or, if the parent(s) cannot be reached in advance, as soon as possible after such medication or treatment is given.
- The educator must document all medication or treatment administration, whether scheduled or unanticipated, in the child's medication and treatment log.
- The written parental consent and the licensed health care practitioner authorization shall be valid for one year, unless withdrawn sooner. Such consent and authorization must be renewed annually for administration of medication and/or treatment to continue.

All allergies or other important medical information will be posted in each classroom, on the refrigerator in the kitchen, and on the snack storage cabinet. Allergies list will be updated as necessary. Children with a food allergy will only be served food from home.

All staff and substitutes will be kept informed by the Director so that children can be protected from exposure to foods, chemicals, pets or other materials to which they are allergic.

The names of children with allergies that may be life threatening (*i.e.*, – bee stings) will be posted in conspicuous locations with specific instructions if an occurrence were to happen. The Director will be responsible for making sure that staff receives appropriate training to handle emergency allergic reactions.

### **Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP)**

Every child with special health care needs in school should have an (IHCP). An IHCP helps to make sure your child receives the health services he or she needs during the school day.

Your Child's IHCP should include:

- The health services your child should receive at Early Childhood School
- When, where and how the health services will be provided
- Who will provide the health services? With written permission from your child's health care practitioner, you can train staff in implementing your child's health care plan.
- An Emergency Response Plan that lists possible emergencies and what to do – this plan should be discussed with all school staff.
- A copy of the Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Health Needs

The IHCP should be reviewed and updated whenever your child's medical condition changes. It is very important that you notify the Director immediately when changes happen. The IHCP should be kept in your child's school file. If your child receives special education, ask to have the IHCP attached to your child's Individualized Education (IEP). That way the people who provide health care services and the people who provide education services can coordinate care for your child.

## ***SECTION 10: SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROTOCOL***

### **Building Security**

Early Childhood School takes security of our building and the children in our care very seriously. Our main door is kept locked at all times and unfamiliar faces must ring our doorbell and be personally invited inside. A secure fence surrounds the entire play area and our educators are trained to conduct the highest level of supervision practices during our walking field trips, outside walks and how to handle unexpected visitors.

Please note that the double doors located in the front of the building on East Main Street, as well as all other access doors, (located in the Young Toddler and SchoolHouse back hallway), are kept locked and can only be exited in the case of an emergency.

It is important that our main entrance/exit door be securely closed behind you. In addition, please do not let any unfamiliar faces into our school without immediately notifying a staff person that a visitor requires assistance.

### **Accidents and Emergencies**

Current emergency phone numbers for each child shall be kept on file so that a parent or designated emergency contact can be reached in the case of an emergency. It is important that families report changes in their own emergency contacts' phone numbers to the school.

Parents and then emergency contacts will be telephoned in case of the following:

- If a child becomes ill or injured while attending the School. Emergency contacts will be called if parent cannot be reached in a reasonable amount of time.
- If a child is left at the center after 5:30 pm.
- If the School must close because of extenuating circumstances such as a weather emergency.

In the event of a minor accident at Early Childhood School, first aid measures will be taken and an Accident Report Form will be completed. The original Accident Report will be given to the parent, and a copy will be placed on file in the child's folder. Minor scrapes and bruises are treated with tender loving care. The School does not call parents for every minor injury. Parents will be called in the case of accidents that may need a doctor's attention. The School will always call parents if their children experience one of the following:

- Injury to the head or face;
- Injury that causes a great amount of bleeding;
- Injury or incident that upsets the child to the point of inconsolability.

In the event of a serious accident or emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance. Every effort will be made to contact parents immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the School will attempt to reach the emergency contacts and then the physician listed on the Enrollment Information Form. In the event the child's parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, an assigned member of the Early Childhood School staff will stay with the child and secure needed medical treatment. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense.

Early Childhood School operates in a manner that minimizes accidents and injuries to children and staff. Should an accident or injury occur, staff would act immediately to administer emergency procedures.

All incidents and injuries will be reported to parents on an Incident/Accident Report Form within 24 hours of any such occurrence. Minor accidents, such as cuts and scrapes, will be treated with soap and water; bruises and bumps treated with ice.

### **First Aid and Transportation to the Hospital**

1. In the case of an emergency or illness (such as a seizure, a serious fall or serious cut), the teacher in charge will begin administration of emergency first aid while a second teacher takes other children to another area or room.
2. Other staff will be alerted to send for assistance.
3. The Person-in-Charge will contact the parent to come and pick up child or if response time is a factor, to have the parent meet the child and accompanying staff at the emergency room of the hospital utilized in emergencies.
4. In the event a situation arises that is life threatening, an ambulance will be called immediately. The parent will be called to meet the child and staff at the hospital. The educator or other designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance. The child's file will be taken. The child's family will be responsible for any financial expenses.

### **Emergencies While on a Field Trip**

If an accident or acute illness occurs while on a field trip, the Teacher will take charge of the emergency, assess the situation, and give first aid as needed. The Teacher based on the severity of the emergency or illness will determine the method and urgency of transportation for the child to receive medical treatment. If necessary, an ambulance will be called.

The Director, or other designated adult, will be contacted by the Teacher as soon as possible and informed of the nature and extent of the injury and the proposed plan of action.

As a preventive measure, prior to departure from Early Childhood School, the Director and or Teacher, will determine appropriate guidelines to be followed during the field trip to insure continuity and safety of the children including:

1. A first aid kit will be taken.
2. Emergency information, including contacts and telephone numbers, will be taken.
3. Educators must know the location of a telephone AND/OR have a working cell phone available.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

Emergency Evacuation Plans/escape routes for each floor level are posted at all exits.

During an emergency evacuation the Person-in-Charge will be responsible for:

1. Calling 911 via school phone or if unavailable personal cell phone.
2. Taking the attendance information and designating person to lead children out of the building.
3. Conducting a sweep of the building.
4. Beginning telephone chain and designating program staff to contact parents/emergency contacts for the each child present in that day.

Infants and non-mobile walkers will be placed in the evacuation cribs. (The crib with the red band on the leg) or carried by program staff. All available program staff will assist with the evacuation of the Infant Room.

The Person-in-charge will make a visual inspection of each classroom before exiting the building.

All classrooms, once evacuated, will meet by the back fence, inside the playground and wait for the go ahead by the Person-in-charge (after receiving verbal clearance from emergency personnel), before re-entering the school.

Emergency evacuation drills are conducted bi-monthly at different times of the program day as determined by the Director. Documentation of the date, time and effectiveness of each drill will be maintained and the Fire Drill Log. This documentation will be kept for five years. Children and educators practice using different evacuation routes so that they will be familiar with them.

In the event of a widespread threat (flood, hazardous materials accident requiring evacuation away from the center and surrounding area):

- We will evacuate to Perley Elementary School on North Street in Georgetown.
- If Perley is within the threatened area, we will evacuate to Masconomet School in Topsfield.
- Early Childhood School will be notified by an authorized person conducting door to door announcements.
- The children and staff will be transported to evacuation sites in 4 marked and 3 unmarked police units as well as a council on aging van.
- The police station would also contact us if there was a situation of a dangerous person requiring Shelter-in-Place where we would remain in our infant and toddler classrooms.

### **Accidents at Home**

Parents should notify their child's teacher if their child has fallen during time away from ESCG, since bumps and bruises often appear after the fact.

### **Special Requests**

The Early Childhood School program staff has made a commitment to provide exceptional care for ALL children. Although we will make every attempt to meet your child's needs, there may be times that a special request exceed what we are able to handle in a group setting. Requests that require staff to monitor a child closely for symptoms of illness indicates the need for one-on-one care and may jeopardize proper supervision of the rest of the children in the group. Typically, close monitoring of a child is best offered to a child by their parent at home.

We ask that parents discuss any special requests with your child's teacher and/or the Director in advance when possible. Together we can discuss if we can appropriately meet your child's needs.

## ***SECTION 11: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT***

## **Family Input/Concerns**

Early Childhood School works hard to support and encourage a partnership with parents in the early education and care of their children. Please support the well being of the school by bringing any unaddressed or serious concerns to the Director for communication, sharing and solutions. All issues can be resolved by the Director.

## **Communication**

Parents have the responsibility to keep themselves informed through the school's sources of communication. They are:

- The monthly School Calendar shares special announcements and reminders and is distributed via Parent mailboxes.
- 
- Each classroom has a parent Center that includes a log book for communication with your child's teacher.
- Each family has a mailbox for memos, notes, "take-homes", newsletters, and artwork. (infants and toddler programs are provided a daily sheet).
- The School Newsletter; which is published quarterly.
- Special notices and memos are distributed periodically and posted on the bulletin board at the entrance/exit door.
- Children's work is displayed throughout the classrooms and on bulletin boards.
- Framed enclosed bulletin boards display bios and pictures of classroom educators.

## **Parent Visits**

Early Childhood School welcomes unannounced visits by parents to our program and/or to their child's room at any time while their child is present.

## **Parent Participation**

We welcome and encourage parental involvement in a variety of ways. We have family activities throughout the year that are a great opportunity to get to know other families at Early Childhood School and to see your child in action with their school friends. Some of the events we host are: family apple picking, carnival day and other family fun days throughout the year.

Parents are always welcome for lunch, birthdays or simply for visits to read or participate in a special project. We also invite parents to share their talents, occupations or hobbies with us.

### **Parent Input**

Early Childhood School encourages parental input in the development of program policies, through the use of:

- Individual or group parent meetings.
- Requesting a meeting with the Director.

### **Procedure of Identifying and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

All Early Childhood School Educators are mandated reporters according to Massachusetts General Law C119, § 51A. This means that if an educator has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect of a child he/she must file a report with the Department of Children and Families. See attached information for definitions, reporting procedures, etc.

The following procedure will be followed:

- An educator who suspects abuse or neglect must document observations including the child's name, date, time, child's injuries, child's behavior, and any other pertinent information. The educator will discuss this information with the Director.
- The educator with assistance from the Director will make a verbal report to DCF, to be followed by a required written report 51A within 48 hours.

Department of Children and Families Telephone number is 978-557-2700.

- If an educator feels that an incident should be reported to DCF, and the Director disagrees, the educator may report to DCF directly.
- All concerns of suspected abuse and neglect that are reported to DCF will be communicated to the parents by the Director unless such a report is contra-indicated.

Procedure for Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse/neglect while in the care of Early Childhood School:

- Early Childhood School is committed to protect all children in care from abuse and neglect. The following are procedure for reporting suspected child abuse/neglect while the child is in the care of Early Childhood School.
- Any report of suspected abuse or neglect of a child would be immediately reported to the DCF and the DEEC. A meeting will be held with the educator in question to inform

him/her of the field report.

- The educator in question will be immediately suspended from the school with pay pending the outcome of the DCF and DEEC investigations.
- If the report is screened out by DCF, the Director has the option of having the educator remain on suspension pending the DEEC investigation or allowing the educator to return to the classroom WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE DEEC. This decision will be made by the Director in conjunction with the DEEC and will be based on the seriousness of the allegations and the facts available.
- If the allegations of abuse and neglect are substantiated, it will be the decision of the Director whether or not the educator will be reinstated.
- The Director and other educators will cooperate fully with all investigations.

Department of Early Education and Care Telephone number is: 717-988-6600.  
360 Merrimack Street, Building 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Lawrence, MA 01843

### **Referral Services Procedure**

The Director and Educators evaluate and monitor children's behavior and progress through periodic team meetings, evaluations, and through daily observations. If a behavioral incident occurs, or there is a reason to be concerned about a specific developmental issue, our procedures for observing, evaluating and referring the child or family to an appropriate agency or professional resource are as follows:

- Educators will provide to the parent(s) a written statement including the reason for recommending a referral for additional services, a brief summary of the program's observations related to the referral and any efforts the program may have made to accommodate the child's needs. Educators are responsible for recording information about a child's behavior and development in an accurate and factual manner, which states specific behaviors and the date, time and duration of observations made.
- The Director will review and sign all documentation regarding such behaviors.
- The designated Educator may be asked to observe the child in the classroom for three half-hour periods unless the situation requires the Director to act immediately.
- Parents will be asked to review documentation and concerns about the child's behavior or development, and will have written parental consent before any referral is made.
- The Director and parents then develop a plan to help identify both the child's needs and sources of help available to address those needs. This may include the Department of Social Services, the child's pediatrician, the early Intervention team, or the local public school system if the child is over three years old.

- Early Childhood School will follow-up the referral, with parental permission, and contact the agency or service provider who evaluate the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the center. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from the agency, or is ineligible to receive services, Early Childhood School shall review the child's progress at the school every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.
- Early Childhood School will maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parent conference and results.

Additional information may be obtained from the following:

- Local community mental health agencies for educational testing, counseling services, therapy and/or behavioral consultation;
- Department of Social Services when an abuse or neglect issue is suspected;
- Local Early Intervention Programs and/or Regional Consultation Teams funded by the DPH and DEEC for children requiring additional services due to their unique developmental and special needs;
- Child Witness to Violence and local battered Women shelters;
- Local Education Authority for children over three years of age for information regarding Special Education Services and CORE evaluations for a child;
- Local Child Care and Resource and Referral agencies for information about customized child care searches and placement information for parents of children and special needs, local training opportunities and information about their resource library and how to access it as well as information about other local resources;
- Regional DEEC Licensing Specialist for technical assistance regarding child growth and development matters, licensing concerns licensing regulation or policy interpretations; and,
- Regional Department of Early Education and Care Policy and Training Advisors or Regional Contracting and Monitoring Coordinators for information on subsidy resources including flexible funding for children with disabilities or a mental health diagnosis.

### **Termination and Suspension Policy**

Early Childhood School offers the following plan to avoid suspension or termination of a child due to challenging behavior:

1. Provide an opportunity to meet with parents to discuss options other than suspension or termination.
2. Offer referrals to parents for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services;
3. Pursue options for supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training; and
4. Develop a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.

Even when the preceding referral procedure has been followed, there may be circumstances, which warrant termination of a child's enrollment at Early Childhood School.

Although every effort will be made to avoid taking this step, the following situation may necessitate discontinued enrollment:

- Parent's refusal to seek professional help.\*
- Physical or emotional problems that require constant one-on-one attention. \*
- Severe behavioral problems that cannot be controlled and may endanger the child or other children.\*
- Physical or emotional impairment that the school cannot reasonably accommodate.\*
- Failure to pay tuition for two consecutive months.\*
- Failure to provide health forms and other paperwork required for enrollment.\*
- Failure to cooperate with the school's policies.\*
- Parents who verbally or physically intimidate staff members by yelling, swearing or other aggressive behaviors will immediately lose their child care services. ECSG has a zero tolerance policy about aggressive parent behaviors on ECSG property. No refunds will be given for unused child care services & tuition deposit will be forfeited.

Upon request, the Director will provide parents with details of any other resolution rights or procedures that apply. Before a decision to terminate enrollment is made, the following steps will be taken:

Documentation will be prepared by the Director to be shared with parents.

\* No refunds will be given for unused child care services & tuition deposit will be forfeited.

### **Confidentiality of Family Information**

Early Childhood School educators will not distribute, share or discuss information (including photographs or other images) about children and families in their care by any means, whether written or verbal, using any medium, including but not limited to telephone, email or electronic text, without the expressed written permission of the child's parents. Images of children, whether or not they are identified by name, as well as personal information related to children and their families, may not be posted on the publicly accessible portions of "Facebook", "My Space", or any other similar online directory, social utility or networking website under any circumstances. However, images of children and personal information related to children and families may be shared on the restricted, private portions of such websites only with the expressed written permission of the child's parents.

Early Childhood School Educators will not discuss children and families in their care with anyone not directly involved in implementing the child's program, including but not limited to, other parents in the program, and may not distribute copies of information in a child's record without the expressed written permission of the parents.

## ***SECTION 12: TUITION***

*Please refer to the current fee schedule (provided separately) for the tuition rate applicable to your family.*

*Our program charges its tuitions on a monthly basis and only allows exception to full monthly payment upon enrollment. Full monthly tuition is due when initial enrollment occurs on days 1 -15 of your first month. A 50% payment is due when enrolling on or after day 16.*

*Tuition should be made to "ECSG", and can be dropped off at the school in the designated tuition box located in the lobby. All cash payments must be hand delivered to the Person-in-Charge, and a receipt will be provided.*

*Monthly payments are due in full on the 1st of each month. Late fees of \$5/day effective starting the 1st will apply and automatically be billed to your account.*

*A School Year Registration requires a \$75 non-refundable fee per child upon enrollment. A \$50 non-refundable re-enrollment fee per child is due at re-enrollment time in the spring. Each family will receive the key code for the door upon enrollment.*

*A ONE-MONTH nonrefundable last month deposit is due prior to enrollment to guarantee space.*

Tuition is not reduced for snow days, vacations, illness, or holidays, professional development days or special events as planned by our school.

Each child must be picked up promptly at the end of his or her scheduled program. We require parents who anticipate having difficulty picking up their children on time, to make back-up arrangements and to notify our center. If a child is left at Early Childhood School of Georgetown past their scheduled program, the following late fees will be charged:

\*Late fees- First 5 minutes = \$20.00 late fee

An additional \$20.00 will be charged for each 15 minute increment thereafter.

e.g.- If your child is scheduled to be picked up at 4:30 the following will

apply.

4:35 pick-up = \$20.00

4:50 pick-up = \$40.00

etc.

Each week the attendance sheets will be reviewed and late pick-ups will be billed accordingly. An emailed invoice will be sent to you and the late fees will be due the following Monday.

A FOUR-WEEK written notice is required to decrease your family's schedule coincided with the 1st of the month. More than one change in a given school year requires a \$20 administration fee. A new child Parental Agreement form must be completed for each schedule change.

Each family is expected to follow their contracted schedule and adhere to their usual arrival time and usual departure time as written on their Parental Agreement form and as stated at the time of enrollment. A deviation in the contracted schedule jeopardizes our proper child-teacher ratios and will result in late fees.\*

Extra hours can be added when approved by the Director on an available space basis only. All requests are approved by the Director and are based upon a first-come-first-serve basis. Extra hours are available at a cost of \$10.00/hour increments per child; but not to exceed 10 hours in a given day.

At least a ONE-MONTH written notice to the Director is required to withdraw from the program. Following such notification, the FULL one-month DEPOSIT is

applied to the month of your family's last day and NO PARTIAL PAYMENTS WILL BE ARRANGED. Coordination of your withdrawal notice with your family's last day is strongly recommended. See our Director for guidance.

Wait List: If a family chooses to withdraw for the summer, they may re-apply for September enrollment. It should be noted that their re-enrollment will be based on availability and there is a strong possibility that your child will be wait listed, so plan accordingly. Please understand that our school is obligated to a full time staff and we take this responsibility seriously. Our teachers are the foundation of our school and we value all of them!

If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, the check must be replaced in addition to the \$25 penalty charge. Two returned checks will be cause for accepting future payments by money order.

When a child transitions from one classroom to another, the tuition is not prorated. If there is a decrease in tuition, that savings is applied to the first full month the child is in their new class.

Early Childhood School of Georgetown reserves the right to make changes to the policies and tuition schedules within 30 days written notice.