



# Family Handbook

# WELCOME

Dear Family,

We are so happy to have you join our school. We are excited to partner with you and your child on their new learning adventure. Cornerstone Learning Center is a place for children and families to learn to love the world around them and all that was and is created in their world. To facilitate every child's growth in all areas of development: social, cognitive, emotional, and physical. To teach Christian values that lay a solid foundation for each child to become all that God created him or her to be. To nurture and cherish every child's curiosity and creativity which foster a love for learning.

Thank you for choosing Cornerstone Learning Center. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Cornerstone Learning Center

[cornerstonelcoffice@gmail.com](mailto:cornerstonelcoffice@gmail.com)

610-356-1923 (office)

<http://cornerstoneandlearning.org>

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## **ABOUT US**

### ***Philosophy***

Cornerstone Learning Center strives to be child-designed and teacher-facilitated. We believe in interactional learning that results from dynamic interaction between a child's emerging cognitive and affective systems and the child's environment. To this end, our teachers create environments that offer diverse opportunities to explore using a variety of materials. As your child engages with the environment and shows his/her individual interests, the teacher engages your child with open-ended questions and opportunities in order to deepen his/her learning experience. Our school cherishes play and creates spaces that are full of opportunities to learn through play. The children in our classrooms are encouraged at all times to explore and create through art, language, meeting times and guided lesson time. Children gain self-confidence and independence by experiencing successes. Through teacher observations and interactions with children, we design learning opportunities based on each child's learning styles, special needs, and pace. Interwoven into all we do and teach is our commitment to providing and instilling a strong foundation of Christian values and practices.

### ***Mission***

To provide exceptional care and education every child deserves and to respect every child as God's creation.

### ***Vision***

Cornerstone Learning Center is a place for children and families to learn to love the world around them and all that was created in it.

We do this by:

- Facilitating every child's growth in all areas of development: social, cognitive, emotional, and physical.
- Teaching Christian values that lay a solid foundation for each child to become all that God created him or her to be.
- Nurturing and cherishing every child's curiosity and creativity, which foster a love for learning.

### ***Hours of Operation***

Child care services are provided from 8 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday.

### ***Holidays***

- We are closed for these holidays:
- Thanksgiving Day
- Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>-Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

- Veterans Day
- Easter Week

### ***Definition of Family***

In this handbook, we refer to the family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor, or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

### ***Admission & Enrollment***

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and the enrollment fee must be paid before your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment payment of one week of tuition is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

*Based on availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks through age 5. Our facility does not admit children who are eligible for kindergarten enrollment. For fall enrollment, the child's fifth birthday must be later than September 1 of that year.*

Our process for introducing children to our program is

During the tour of our facility, we would hear about your child, your family, and what you are looking for in your child's learning experience. We encourage you to bring your child with you during the tour.

Children are admitted regardless of race, culture, gender, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

### ***Inclusion***

**Cornerstone Learning Center** believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage the full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her capabilities and needs.

### ***Non-Discrimination***

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

### ***Family Activities***

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program by, visiting children's classrooms, participating in events, and providing feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

## **Confidentiality**

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

## **Staff Qualifications**

Our Teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Education/Certification</b>	<b>AND</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Teacher	Bachelor's degree in any field or Associate Degree in any field or Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development Associate Certification (CDA) Child Development Associate Certification		2 years
Assistant Teacher	High School Diploma		0 years

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **Cornerstone Learning Center**.

## **Child-to-Staff Ratios**

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child-to-staff ratios:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Child to Staff</b>	<b>Maximum Group Size</b>
0-12 months	<u>4to1</u>	<u>5</u>
13-24 months	<u>5-1</u>	<u>5</u>
25-35 months	<u>6-1</u>	<u>10</u>
3-year-olds	<u>10-1</u>	<u>14</u>
4-6-year-olds	<u>10-1</u>	<u>16</u>

## **Communication & Family Partnership**

**Daily Communications.** Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be placed into your child's cubby at the end of the day.

**Newsletters.** Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are emailed to you at the beginning of each month.

**Email.** We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters, and general updates.

**Family Visits.** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children.

**Child Service Reports.** Child Service Reports (CSR) are sent home [twice] a year. In the CSR, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request a conference regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

### ***Open Door Policy***

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

### ***Publicity***

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

## **CURRICULA & LEARNING**

### ***Learning Environment***

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

### ***Curricula & Assessment***

**Cornerstone Learning Center** uses an emerging curriculum. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.



## ***Outings & Field Trips***

Weather permitting, we conduct supervised walking trips around the neighborhood. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the parent/guardian.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are inappropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of childcare programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as during field trips.

## ***Transition***

Your child's transition into child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure that the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

### ***The transition between learning programs***

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child to the new program.

### ***Transition to elementary school***

We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about attending elementary school

## ***Electronic Media***

Electronic Media are limited to 30 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

## ***Multiculturalism***

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

## ***Rest Time***

Infants sleep according to their schedule and are put to sleep on their backs.

After lunch, all children participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

## ***Toilet Training***

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are

not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

## **GUIDANCE**

### ***General Procedure***

**Cornerstone Learning Center** is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their full potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

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

### ***Challenging Behavior***

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at [school] has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report them to the Director.

### ***Physical Restraint***

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

### ***Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families***

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

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

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

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### ***Payment***

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due as outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement*.

### ***Late Pick-up Fees***

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered a rare occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at 5:30 PM and will be due upon arrival.

### ***Special Activity Fees***

From time to time, there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due before the event, activity, or trip.

### ***Late Payment Charges***

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore, we have established procedures to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$10 will be added for each day that it is late. If your account has not been paid in full within 5 business days, your child may be discharged from the program.

If payment is more than 10 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

### ***Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges***

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on "cash only" status.

### ***Additional Fees Credits***

- **Withdrawals** - if a child is suddenly withdrawn from the program without a 2-week written notice of withdrawal, a 2-week tuition fee may be applied. Families who withdraw and later re-enroll will be charged a re-enrollment fee.

## **Credits & No Credits**

- **Credit will not be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days. Sick days are considered in determining tuition and are not refundable.
- **Credit will not be given for Inclement Weather** - if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, your account will not be credited for that day.

## **ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL**

### ***Absence***

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9 AM, please email your child's classroom teacher and keep a copy @cornerstonelcoffice@gmail.com. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

### ***Withdrawals***

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees.

### ***Transfer of Records***

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions on where the records should be sent is required.

### ***Closing Due to Extreme Weather***

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, or loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced through our auto call feature from ONE CALL NOW. We will follow the Marple Newtown school district closing procedures.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility, to arrange.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

### ***General Procedure***

We open at 8 AM. Please do not drop off your child before the opening. A parent/guardian is expected to accompany their child/children and sign him/her in.

We close at 5:30 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time. Your punctuality is appreciated.

### ***Cell Phone Usage***

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best

use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the center.

### ***Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up***

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

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 2 hours we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### ***Right to Refuse Child Release***

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the dismissal of your child from the program.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

### ***What to Bring.***

- Paperwork (Enrollment Form, Emergency Contact Form, Child Health Assessment, Non-Discrimination Form, Emergency Operations Plan, Handbook Receipt)
- Schedule for infants under 1 year.
- Formula and bottles
- Drinks-sippee cups
- Lunch and two snacks
- Crib sheet (for nap cots) and a small blanket for all nappers ages 1-6
- Diapers

- Change of clothes and sneakers for the current season / playground
- Backpack

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

### ***Cubbies***

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

## **NUTRITION**

***Foods Brought from Home: We are a nut-free facility. So, please do not pack peanut butter sandwiches.***

Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration, and were made with freshly purchased ingredients. A list of ingredients is required, and there must be enough food for all children.
- Foods should be labeled with the child's name, date, and type of food item.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.

### ***Food Allergies***

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

Food allergies can be life-threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

### ***Meal Time***

Children have lunch in their classroom they enjoy this time together, the Teachers also joins them at the table at mealtime.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

### ***Infant Feedings***

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed "on demand" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly).

- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- Formula must be brought to the premises in a factory-sealed container in a ready-to-feed strength or powder or concentrate. The formula will be diluted at the childcare site according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer or by the child's health provider, using water from a source approved by the local health department. Formula brought from home must be labeled with the child's name.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

### ***Toddler Feedings***

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

## **HEALTH**

### ***Immunizations***

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every January, we check with the Public Health Department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding the attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

### ***Physicals***

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than 6 weeks after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

### ***Illness***

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

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than we can provide.

- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

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

### ***Allergy Prevention***

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us with a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

### ***Medications***

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication. You are also required to sign a medication log each day it is applicable.



- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the family. Non-prescription medication will not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

### ***Communicable Diseases***

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or the Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

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

## **SAFETY**

### ***Clothing***

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

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

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

### ***Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play***

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 99 °F or less than 37 °F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be canceled if the air quality rating is 50 or below.

### ***Communal Water-Play***

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water play. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious diseases.

## ***Injuries***

Safety is a major concern in child care, so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and the course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

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

## ***Biting***

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

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

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

## ***Respectful Behavior***

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

## ***Smoking***

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

## ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

## ***Dangerous Weapons***

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

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

### ***Child Custody***

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

### ***Suspected Child Abuse***

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

## **EMERGENCIES**

### ***Lost or Missing Child***

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

### ***Fire Safety***

Our center is fully equipped with alarms, an evacuation crib, and emergency lights.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a bimonthly basis.

### ***Emergency Transportation***

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

## **CENTER POLICIES**

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed quarterly and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center administrator.

# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgment, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center before enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time to time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the Cornerstone Learning Center Family Handbook, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the Cornerstone Learning Center staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the Cornerstone Learning Center Family Handbook that I do not understand.

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Recipient Signature

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Date

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Center Staff Signature

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Date

## **FAMILY ACTIVITIES**

**Family Events:** See our monthly newsletter for all events!