Dear Colleagues,

The Alcorn State University Child Development Learning Center (referred to throughout this document as the “CDLC,” or as “The Center”) would like to extend our warmest welcome to all parents and children affiliated with our institution. It is a pleasure to serve your child.

The CDLC is licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH). It plays a dual role at Alcorn State University: as a child care facility, and also as a Laboratory Center—primarily for students pursuing majors in the field of human sciences but also for students in other allied health fields.

Established in 1950, the CDLC has had the privilege of serving generations of learners who have successfully transitioned into mainstream educational institutions.

We believe that the crucial, early years of life lay the foundation for future development. Therefore, we are keen to promote the overall development of children through creative curriculum, committed and qualified staff, and a well-equipped child care facility.

This handbook serves as a document to inform parents about the operations and procedures of the CDLC. This document is not all inclusive and is subject to revision. This document is not intended as a substitute for communication or consultation. The CDLC staff will continue to connect with parents via other channels, including (but not limited to) email and letters.

We ask that you share with us often, as feedback is vital and will help to strengthen our commitment to serving children and families.

Thank you for the opportunity to invest into these formative years.

Warmly,

Dr. Martha Ravola
Interim Chair/ Associate Professor
Department of Human Sciences
# Child Development Learning Center

## Letter from the Department Chair

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I: CHILD CARE CENTER OVERVIEW

HISTORY
The Alcorn State University Child Development Learning Center (formerly the Child Development Laboratory Center) was established in 1950, and has been licensed by the Mississippi Department of Health since June 23, 1980. It operates under the auspices of the Alcorn State University Department of Human Sciences.

The Department of Human Sciences has a long-standing history of concern, commitment, and involvement in programs for young children and their parents. This commitment is exemplified through the University's land-grant mission of teaching, research, and outreach.

At the Center, children receive quality care and instructional content. University students observe and study the developmental characteristics of infants, toddlers, and young children (6 weeks to 5 years of age) while gaining practical experiences and an in-depth perspective of the early childhood industry as a career. The CDLC also serves as a research site for other University academic units, and provides continuous learning opportunities for community-based early childhood programs. In carrying out its commitment, the CDLC has set forth the following goals:

GOALS
- To provide a high-quality early childhood environment that will foster optimal growth, development and early learning in young children
- To provide a learning laboratory that permits University students to interact with young children as they study their physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth and development
- To fulfill all childcare licensing standards set forth by the Mississippi Department of Health
- To provide full-year, full-day child care services, as well as a parenting education program, to help facilitate parents' role as teacher, learner, communicator, decision-maker and collaborator
- To serve as an educational resource for community-based early childhood programs and other child-serving agencies

COMPOSITION
The CDLC consists of three classrooms: infant, toddler and pre-school. The program accepts children between the ages of six-weeks to five-years. Although children are grouped according to age, the specific age range for each classroom may vary, depending on Center enrollment.

CURRICULUM
The Child Development Learning Center uses an age-appropriate, theory-based curriculum that is scientifically proven to support young children's growth, development and early learning. Children participate in a variety of learning activities throughout the day that allow for self-expression,
creativity, active and quiet times. Child- and teacher-directed activities permit individualized and cooperative learning within a safe, secure environment. The Center currently uses the “Creative Curriculum,” which promotes critical thinking with a focus on pre-literacy and pre-numeracy.

Each teacher completes at least 15 contact hours of professional development training each program year, according to licensing standards.

II. PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

LEARNING CENTER PROCEDURES
The CDLC operates under the auspices of the Alcorn State University Department of Human Sciences. As such, Human Sciences students (specifically those enrolled in Child Development and Nutrition Programs) are assigned to observe or participate at the Center. Research studies are also conducted at the Center by professionals in various academic fields. Studies are carefully screened by the Alcorn State University Internal Review Board (IRB), the chair of the Department of Human Sciences and the Center’s staff. Parents receive prior information on the nature of any study and parental permission for each child’s participation is requested.

ENROLLMENT POLICY
The CDLC’s classrooms cater to the following age tiers: infant (6 weeks to 12 months of age); toddler (12 months to 2 years of age); and pre-school (3 to 5 years of age). Parents are invited to inquire about enrollment at the Center’s main office.

Classroom enrollment is based on the availability of space. Children of parents who are designated as students, faculty and staff of Alcorn State University are considered priority for enrollment purposes.

WAITING LIST POLICY
Parents should visit the CDLC to place their child’s name on the waiting list. A waiting list for each classroom is maintained for a period of one year. After a year, parents must reapply.

Once a childcare slot becomes available, parents are required to complete the following mandatory forms. This information MUST be on file before a child is admitted into the CDLC:

- A completed application form
- Mississippi Certificate of Immunization Compliance
- A certified copy of the child’s birth certificate
- A copy of the child’s social security card

Once all forms are complete, parents will be notified of a start date for childcare placement.

HOURS OF OPERATION
The Center is open Monday through Friday. It’s hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Friday. Parents are encouraged to retrieve
their child at a reasonable hour—no later than 5:15 p.m. on Monday through Thursday and 4:15 p.m. on Friday — to avoid late fees. In the case of an emergency or delay, parents should call to inform the Center’s office at (601)-877-6255.

Please Note: Parents are required to keep the Center informed of any changes that may occur as related to their job, home address, telephone numbers, additional childhood immunizations, emergency contact, or other pertinent information as it arises.

HOLIDAYS
The Child Development Learning Center will be closed on the following days for University observed holidays:
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas/New Years
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Staff Professional Development (will give two-weeks notice)

Please view the University Calendar at www.alcorn.edu for more information on scheduled closures.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
If it becomes necessary to close the CDLC due to inclement weather, the Center will follow the guidelines set forth through official University statements.

FEES
The CDLC’s monthly fee is determined by an income-based scale. For parents who earn an annual income of $34,999 or below, the fee is $250 per month. For parents who earn an annual income of $35,000 to $49,999, the fee is $300 per month. For parents who earn $50,000 or more, the fee is $350 per month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARENTAL ANNUAL INCOME</th>
<th>MONTHLY CENTER FEE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0 - $34,999</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 - $49,999</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000+</td>
<td>$350</td>
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</table>

Parents who are employed by Alcorn State University will have their childcare fees deducted from their monthly salary by the business department via an automatic payroll deduction. This deduction will be executed on the 1st payroll cycle for bi-weekly employees and once a month (at the end of the month) for monthly employees.
Parents who are not employed by the University (including University students) are required to pay their childcare fees by the first (1st) of each month to the University’s business office, located on the first floor of the Walter Washington Administration Building. **No child care service fees will be accepted at the Center.** All payments must be paid directly to the business office.

If the payment due date occurs on a weekend or a holiday, the fee should be addressed on the following business day. Failure to address fees in a timely manner will result in late fees assessed.

For non-employees and students, a tax form will be issued from the business office indicating payments for the year by January 15 of each calendar year.

*If a child is ill or absent, parents are expected to continue to pay the regular monthly fee.

**LATE FEES**

Failure to pay on time will result in a late fee of $25. If the child care fees (along with the late fee), are not paid beyond the second business day of scheduled payment, child care services will be suspended until the issue has been resolved. (See Late Departures)

**ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES**

The CDLC is prepared to accept children as early as 7:45 a.m. Parents arriving with their children must come into the building to sign the child in each morning. They must also sign the child out each evening.

A sign-in / sign-out sheet is maintained at the front entrance of the Center. This is important, because the Center uses this information to verify attendance, for meals served, and for fire safety drills.

All children must be signed out and picked up only by authorized persons listed on the enrollment application, unless direct permission is given otherwise. Direct permission must be offered via a written statement, signed and dated by the parent or guardian. Children will not be released to any unauthorized individual. This is first and foremost for the safety of the child.

Please be advised that if the Center staff does not know the person who intends to retrieve a child, photo identification will be requested.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents in the morning, or to not want to leave when it’s time to go home. Because of this, the Center requests that arrivals and departures are brief. Five minutes is sufficient during these transition times. The longer parents prolong the departure, the harder it becomes for both parent and child. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word is all that is needed in the morning. Children are nearly always excited to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.
Parents should avoid visiting or volunteering at the Center until the child has adjusted. The Center staff recommends giving children a minimum of two weeks to adjust to the routine.

**LATE ARRIVALS**
Parents should call the Center no later than 8:30 a.m. if they are running late. The CDLC will not accept any children after 10:00 AM unless a doctor’s excuse is presented upon arrival. Late arrivals interfere with the childcare program’s schedule. Children should arrive at the Center on time to experience the full benefit of the program.

“Circle-Time” begins each morning at 9:00 a.m. This morning routine sets the academic tone of the day and is very important. Parents are encouraged to make every effort to ensure their child’s timely arrival.

**LATE DEPARTURES**
Children are expected to be retrieved no later than 5:15 pm, Monday through Thursday and 4:15 pm on Friday. Parents are expected to notify the Center if they are running late. If a child is not retrieved on time, parents will be charged a late fee of $25. For each additional five-minute increment, an additional $5 fee will be assessed.

Children who are not retrieved by 6:00 p.m., whose parents cannot be located, will be taken to the campus police/safety center and reported to the chairperson of the Department of Human Sciences, as well as the Mississippi Department of Health.

A late fee form with the details of the late fee assessed must be signed at the Center director’s office. Arrangement for payment of late fees should be made during the following business day at the University business office. Child care services will be suspended until payment has been made. Parents must present proof of payment (i.e. a receipt) to the director prior to resuming services.

**NAPS/QUIET TIMES**
Parents should refrain from retrieving their children during the Center’s daily quiet time. These times are between 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m, with slight variation.

All children (with the exception of infants, who nap on their own schedules) must lie down in the afternoon for a quiet period of time. The children nap on cots with bedding supplied by the Center. On rare occasions, parents may be asked to provide additional linen/blankets to accommodate their child.

**OPEN DOOR/VISITOR’S POLICY**
The Center maintains an open-door policy for parents and requests that parents visit and volunteer often. Visitation should occur in the observation booth so that parents may familiarize themselves with what is happening within specific classrooms, without interference to the normal classroom dynamic. Visitors (even parents) cause children to react in an excited manner that does not normally occur when the teacher is alone with the children.
Any visitor who wishes to enter the Child Development Learning Center should:

- Sign-in at the entrance
- Provide identification
- Be courteous of the classroom schedule

**Observation**

A sound-proof, one-way viewing observation room is adjacent to the various classrooms. Parents may observe at any time. The classroom schedules are posted in the observation room. Parents should sign the observation log, located in the observation room.

The observation room allows parents and University students to capture children’s natural behavior. The Center’s staff is comfortable with parental observation, and are ready to answer any questions. Parents should submit questions to the teaching staff during scheduled breaks to avoid disruption of the classroom. Parents who observe illegal or unacceptable behavior displayed by the teaching staff or students should report immediately to the Center director or chairperson of the Department of Human Sciences, located in the main office of the Eunice Powell Building.

**Please Note:** While observing, parents may witness situations involving other children. These observations are confidential and should not be discussed outside of the Center’s staff. Please respect the rights and privacy of all children and their families.

**Extended Leave**

It is common for parents to decide not to continue with CDLC childcare services during the summer months. When this occurs, parents are required to pay the full monthly fee, regardless of the child’s absence. Licensed childcare facilities are allocated a specific number of childcare slots. When a childcare slot is reserved, no other child can be placed in that slot. Therefore, it is costly for the Center to reserve childcare slots without receiving compensation.

**Absences and Withdrawals**

Parents should notify the Center no later than 9:00 a.m. if their child will be absent, or inform the teacher at least one day prior to a scheduled absence. Parents must provide written documentation, or a Doctor’s excuse, if their child will be absent for more than three (3) consecutive days. Excessive absences not associated with illness (14 days or more) may result in a child being dismissed from the Center.

To withdraw a child from the Center, parents must submit written/electronic documentation 30 days (at minimum) in advance of the withdrawal date. The student’s last day should be at the end of the current month so that charges for the incoming month are not assessed.

**Please Note:**

- Verbal notice of withdrawal will not suffice.
- If a child attends for any days in a month, fees will be accessed for the full month. There
will be no proration of fees.
· In the absence of a written notification, the full monthly fee will be assessed.

**Example:** We received a written notice on March 31st stating that your child will no longer attend the Center. Their last day will be April 30th.

**SUMMER WITHDRAWAL**
If a student will not attend the Center during the months of June and July, parents should notify the Center 30 days (at minimum) in advance of the withdrawal date. There is no guarantee that a slot will be available when the new school year begins. In order to guarantee a slot, payment must continue and a signed agreement must be completed. (See Extended Leave)

**SPECIAL CASES**
Please contact the Center directly for information regarding post-graduation attendance (CDLC matriculates) or services for recent University alumni.

**TERMINATION POLICY**
The Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment at its discretion, including for the following reasons:
· Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
· Failure to pay
· Failure to complete required forms
· Lack of parental cooperation, disrespect
· Consistent absences or late arrivals
· Continual or serious behavioral issues
· Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
· Failure to attend mandatory parent meetings or parent-teacher conferences
· The Center’s inability to meet the child’s needs
· Serious illness of the child

The Center will offer two-week’s written notice when there is a decision to terminate enrollment. Fees associated with the two weeks must be paid in full, regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance. Termination notice will not be given while parents are on vacation. Once a child or parent has been terminated from the Center, the child, nor the parent (in regards to the child’s siblings) can re-enroll.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**
Mississippi state law forbids the use of any forms of discipline that incorporate biting, jerking, slapping, kicking, spanking, shaking, labeling and any form of corporal (physical) punishment on the childcare premises by anyone, including childcare staff and parents. The CDLC enforces and supports the Mississippi State Child Abuse and Neglect Law.
The Center defines the word discipline as, “guiding a child’s behavior to help them gain self-regulation (control of themselves) and the ability to interact with others in an appropriate manner.” Our primary goal is to guide children in a non-judgmental and positive way, in order to preserve their integrity and self-esteem.

The Center’s staff uses age-appropriate disciplinary strategies to teach children, rather than to punish them. This is achieved through love, consistency, and firmness. Children are explained the rules of the Center frequently. Two main patterns of behavior are stressed: (1) respect for other people and (2) respect for property.

Methods of discipline most often used by the Center staff include:
- Encouraging children to solve problems themselves
- The use of strategies such as: intervention, discussion, re-direction to another play area, loss of privileges, logical consequences, timeout
- Informing the parent of their child’s chronic behavioral issue so that parents and staff members are handling the issue in a consistent manner to establish continuity in discipline strategies
- *Chronic behaviors might include such things as biting, the use of profanity, hitting, etc.
- Calling parents to remove a child whose behavior prevents the teacher from being able to properly care for other children in the classroom

If behavioral problems persist, the Center will begin termination procedures in the interest of the safety and well-being of all.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**
If staff suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, the Center is required to report this information within 48 hours to the Mississippi Department of Human Services and/or a law enforcement agency.

**Biting Policy**
Biting occurs as a normal part of the developmental changes of a toddler. These changes may not be understood from an adult perspective. Some children bite often and some not at all. In addition, some children may be victims more frequently than others. The following actions are taken by the Center’s staff when a biting incident occurs:
- The caregiver focuses their attention on the victim, rather than the child who committed the offense
- The caregiver cleans the bite with antiseptic and applies a bandage if the skin is broken
- An ice pack is applied for a few minutes
- The caregiver allows the biter to gently stroke the victim, so that both children learn about appropriate ways to touch and relate to each other
- The parent is notified if the bite has broken the skin, or if it is in a prominent place (such as on the cheek)
- An incident report is filed
MEAL SCHEDULES
The Child Development Learning Center participates in the Mississippi Child and Adult Care Food Program. Nutritious meals are served at no additional cost to parents. The following schedule is observed by the Center for meal times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEAL</th>
<th>TIME SERVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Menus are posted on the Parent Information Board (located near the Center’s entrance) and in each classroom. The menu is planned to meet 100% of a child’s daily dietary needs. Please check the menu daily. If a child has a food allergy, please notify the Center’s staff immediately. Any child who requires a special diet due to medical reasons will be provided meals and snacks in accordance with his or her needs.

Written instructions from the child’s licensed physician should be submitted regarding all food issues. Instructions should list each dietary restriction/requirement and should be signed and dated.

Since not all children arrive at the same time, options regarding breakfast are followed:
- Any child present before 9:00 a.m. will be served breakfast.
- Any child arriving after 9:00 a.m. should be fed prior to arrival.

The Center’s lunch count occurs at 10:00 a.m. If a child arrives after that time, parents should notify the staff immediately to ensure that a meal is prepared.

Children are offered a variety of foods, but are not forced to eat. They are encouraged to try one or two bites of everything, and must eat or try a little of everything before being given seconds of anything. Sometimes children are surprised by what they like.

If a child refuses to eat, no additional food will be served until the following designated meal/snack time.

**Please Note:** The meal schedule and menu are subject to change without prior notice.

*Due to Food Safety Regulations, please note that all outside food must be store-bought and labeled. Approval from the director must be requested two weeks (at minimum) prior to the catered activity’s scheduled date.

MEALS FOR INFANTS
Infants are always fed on demand. Parents are expected to supply meals for their infant, if they are not yet capable of consuming table foods. Cereal should **not** be added to bottles. Cereal mixed
with milk will be fed to infants out of a bowl, rather than a bottle. Please label all bottles with the infant’s name and the date of preparation.

**Birthdays and Holiday Activities**

Each child’s birthday is his or her “Special Day.” The Center encourages parents to celebrate the child’s birthday in age-appropriate ways. It is at the discretion of the parents to schedule and supply birthday items for the celebration. Birthday celebrations at the Center should be simple and child-centric. All parties will be given at 3:00 p.m. during the afternoon snack time. Parents are welcome to join the children during celebrations.

Parents may supply a special treat (such as cake, cupcakes or cookies) for all children in attendance. Food items should be store-bought, in their original packaging, and labeled with ingredients.

A birthday observance at the Center is not intended to substitute for each family’s special observance at home.

The CDLC occasionally hosts holiday parties throughout the year. Sign-up sheets will be posted at the front door for parents to volunteer. On Halloween, the Center allows children to wear costumes at the parent’s discretion.

**Belongings & Supplies**

Do allow children to bring toys to the Center. Exceptions are made for designated days such as “Show-and-Tell,” as well as regarding a blanket or favorite stuffed animal (to be kept at the Center) for quiet/nap time.

Parents are responsible for supplying the following (as needed) supplies for their child:
- Diapers
- Pull-ups
- A minimum of two full changes of clothing (including socks and underwear) appropriate for the weather
- Appropriate outerwear for the cold/rain

All items must be labeled with the child’s name and/or initials. When soiled clothing is sent home, a clean, spare change of clothes should be brought back the next day. It is the parent’s responsibility to maintain these items at all times.

**Transportation**

The Child Development Learning Center does not provide daily transportation to or from the facility. However, excursions off-campus sometimes occur as a part of the program. Off-campus field trips typically involve the use of University vans or buses. All drivers are required to have a valid Mississippi Driver’s License and proof of insurance.
FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Field trips and excursions away from school are a part of the enrichment program for children. Activities will be age-appropriate and in consideration of travel time.

The Center will not take infants on trips unless accompanied by a parent. Toddlers are allowed to travel no more than 30 to 40 minutes away from the Center, one-way. Pre-school students may travel to a distance not greater than two hours.

Parents will be informed in advance of the date, time and place of all off-campus excursions. A separate permission slip must be signed for each child to participate. Parents are responsible for fees associated with the trip. All children must be secured in approved car seats, provided by parents.

Parents are encouraged to participate in excursions, however, their attendance is not mandatory. Parents will receive information about the trip, its scheduled routes and stops, and an itinerary. Permission slips will accompany the teacher, and will feature each child’s emergency contact information for the day. In the event of an emergency, children will be cared for and parents will be notified.

Should parents decline to have their children participate in a field trip, alternate care must be obtained for the day.

FIRE SAFETY

The Center has a written fire and disaster evacuation plan and practices these drills with the children monthly in the presence of the Alcorn State University fire chief. In addition, teachers incorporate a fire safety curriculum within their classrooms. The Center is regularly inspected for fire safety.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency in which the Center is forced to close and occupants are asked to evacuate to another building on-campus, the Center’s staff and students will relocate to the Fine Arts Building. The Fine Arts Building is located across the street from Eunice Powell Hall and is within walking distance of the Center.

In the event of an emergency in which the Center is forced to close and occupants are asked to evacuate to another building off-campus, the Center’s staff and students will relocate by means of University vans/buses to the Wesley Foundation Chapel Community Center. The Wesley Center is located approximately one mile outside of the University on US 552, approximately three miles from the Child Development Learning Center. Parents will be notified of locations and directions during the time of an emergency.
III: HEALTH AND SAFETY – REGULATION REGARDING SICK CHILDREN

ILLNESS POLICY
The health and well-being of all children at the CDLC is very important. For the protection of the children, the staff will maintain strict adherence to the Center’s illness policy.

SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CHILD CARE
(no exceptions)

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Children who are contagious are not permitted by law into child care. Communicable illnesses include, but are not limited to: infectious conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, Hepatitis A, scabies, ringworm, diarrhea, chicken pox, scarlet fever, lice, and strep throat. If a child displays signs of a communicable disease, parents will be notified and asked to retrieve the child. The child may return to care only when he or she is no longer contagious. In most cases, a note from the child’s physician is required to indicate that the child may return to childcare and all signs of illness are gone.

All parents who have a child enrolled in the classroom of the infected child will be notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for.

- Fever: A child is required to be fever free, without the aid of any fever-reducing substance, for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to child care. A temperature of 100 degrees or higher is considered a fever.
- Diarrhea: Infants and toddlers with fevers and/or diarrhea pertaining to teething will be accepted into care, provided a doctor’s note is presented stating that these symptoms are due to teething.
- Vomiting: If a child vomits while in the Center’s care, a parent will be expected to retrieve the child within the hour. The child must stay home until 24 hours have passed with no vomiting episodes.
- Runny Nose & Coughing: Children may be brought (at the Center’s discretion) to the Center if they have a common cold (slight occasional cough, clear runny nose, occasional sneezing). Nasal discharge of any color other than clear is unacceptable in child care. A constant runny nose, which requires continual wiping, is also unacceptable in child care, regardless of the color. Children who have a clear runny nose which lasts longer than a week, and which may be due to allergies, are permitted to attend.
- Rashes: Any rash that produces pus or liquid (other than a mild diaper rash) must be accompanied by a note from the child’s doctor stating that it is not contagious before a child can return. Without a note, rashes must be completely invisible before a child can return to child care.
- Runny and/or Crusty Eyes: Watery, matted, red or pink eyes are unacceptable under any circumstances.
· **Excessive Crankiness:** If a child is: irritable; excessively whiny or crying; wants to be constantly held; requires more attention than the teacher can give; or disrupts the routine of the other children in the classroom, he or she must be kept home, regardless of the presence of other symptoms.

· **Lice:** Children who have lice are not permitted to return to child care until after the second hair treatment and no nits are present. Children will be inspected by the Center’s staff upon arrival, before parents leave.

**Please Note:** Children must be free from any of the previous listed symptoms for **24 hours (at minimum)** before they can return to the Center. The Center reserves the right to refuse to admit a child until staff deems health issues as satisfactorily resolved.

Please take the rules regarding health seriously. Parents are encouraged to call the Center if they are unsure about whether or not to bring their child. Parents should have a back-up plan available in the event that their child is ill and they are unable to miss work.

**MEDICATION POLICY**

Prescription medications, ointments, and creams may be administered by Center staff. Parents are required to fill out the proper forms, and to supply all medication in original, labelled containers. All written instructions shall be valid for six months, unless a shorter time period is designated by the physician, dentist, or parent. Teachers will not exceed the manufacturer’s recommended dosage, unless there is a written physician’s note with alternate instructions. The Center will not administer non-prescription medication, ointments, creams, or lotions under any circumstances. These must be administered by a parent.

**INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS**

The CDLC will make every possible effort to limit the risk of personal injury to a child under its care. However, some situations may be unavoidable. When accidents, injuries and problematic behavior occur, a staff member will document the situation thoroughly and contact parents immediately. All documentation will be kept on file and must be signed by the parent or guardian.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

The CDLC reserves the right to undertake any steps deemed necessary to obtain emergency medical care for a child. The Center’s first priority is to stabilize the child and to retain the help that he or she needs. The following steps outline the Center’s emergency care procedures:

· Attempt to contact a parent or guardian
· Attempt to contact the child’s physician
· Attempt to contact any of the persons listed on the emergency medical form

In the event the first three attempts are unsuccessful, the Center will:

· Call the paramedics
· Call another physician
· Transport the child to the nearest hospital (if-needed)
The CDLC staff is trained in infant, child and adult CPR and First Aid. In the event of an emergency, the CDLC staff will administer the necessary first aid required.

**Please Note:** All costs associated with emergency treatment are the responsibility of the parent. The Center will not be held liable for any sickness or injury of a child, parent, guardian, family member or visitor while on the Center's premises, or in the company of a staff member during field trips or excursions.

**IV: CLASSROOMS**

**STAFF-CHILD RATIOS**

The CDLC is organized and staffed to minimize the number of groups, teaching staff, and classroom transitions experienced by a child during the day, as well as during the program year. Every attempt is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children, as well as among groups of children.

Staff begin to transition children “of age,” preparing them to move to the next classroom approximately two weeks in advance. During this transition, the child is sent to the next classroom for a period of time (no longer than four hours per day), so that they may become familiar with the new class and teachers. The teaching staff adheres to the following staff child ratios:

- Infant: 5:1
- Toddler: 9:1
- Preschool: 14:1

**INFANT & EARLY TODDLER CLASS**

“Learning as We Grow”

The goal of the Infant and Early Toddler Class is to provide a warm, nurturing environment where infants feel safe and secure to explore, learn, and grow confidently. This course offers a curriculum that is designed to support the infant’s social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs.

Staff respect that each child develops at his or her own pace with definite interests, likes and dislikes. Therefore, children are surrounded with a variety of age-appropriate toys and equipment to choose from, which helps to build skills and optimize their overall development.

**This Class:**

- Provides visual/auditory stimulation
- Encourages language development
- Engages children in physical activities to develop gross motor skills
- Includes teacher and child-directed activities to promote skill development
- Assists infants in developing social, emotional and self-help skills
- Supports infants in using problem-solving strategies
These experiences are designed to facilitate the development of the child’s self confidence and trust, preparing them for life-long learning and future academic success.

**INFANT PROCEDURES**

Infants admitted to the Center:
- Must be at least 6 weeks of age
- Spend the day in a safe, separate play area
- Are provided a single level crib/cot for naps
- Are provided with clean bedding by the Center

Staff in the Center wash bedding weekly (or on an as-needed basis.) Toys and equipment are sterilized frequently to prevent the transmission of diseases.

**FEEDING PROCEDURES**

During infancy, one of the most important things an adult can do is to give the child a feeling of trust. The adult(s) caring for an infant should provide a consistent response to his or her needs. One way this can be achieved is by feeding on demand. At the Center, infants are fed when they are hungry, unless parent(s) instruct the director or caregiver differently.

When feeding an infant, Center staff watch for cues to know when the infant has had enough. These cues include: the infant no longer sucks on the bottle’s nipple; lengthy pauses; turning the head away from the bottle.

Center staff use care when handling infant formula and food to prevent food-borne illness. Dehydration caused by food poisoning can be life threatening in a very short time to infants. Before preparing formula or food, staff members are required to:
- Wash their hands
- Clean and disinfect preparation surfaces
- Utilize a separate, designated food preparation sink, away from the diaper changing/hand washing area

To provide safe, nutritious food, the following procedures are established:
- All breast milk and formula are labeled with the child’s name, the date and the time of preparation
- Parents are requested to supply formula and baby food for special diets
- All breast milk and formula are refrigerated after mixing, feeding and immediately upon arrival at the Center
- When parents provide infant foods, all food should be labeled with the child’s name, the date and the time of preparation
- No egg whites or honey will be given to infants less than 12 months of age
- No medication will be added to breast milk or formula
- Bottles will not be prepared at the Center. They must be pre-mixed by parent.
- Used bottles and warmed, unused formula will be discarded after 1 hour to prevent bacterial growth.
· Unconsumed portions of formula will be discarded at the end of each day.
· Frozen breast milk will be thawed overnight in a refrigerator and warmed in lukewarm water immediately prior to feeding. Frozen breast milk which has been stored at home for more than three months, or that is not dated, will not be accepted. Thawed breast milk will be refrigerated and used within three hours. Thawed breast milk will not be refrozen.
· Center staff do not heat formula, breast milk or baby food in a microwave oven, as there is the possibility of a bottle exploding or of “hot spots,” which could result in the burning of a child’s mouth. Microwaving also destroys the essential nutritional components of breast milk.

Other Feeding Procedures:
· Bottles and nipples are to be supplied and cleaned by parents.
· Infants will be held when fed until they are able to hold a bottle or drink from a cup. Bottles will not be propped.
· Children will not be allowed to walk around with bottles.
· Chopped, safe table foods are encouraged after 10 months of age.
· Cups and spoons are encouraged around 9-10 months of age.
· Changing food textures is necessary to meet an infant’s developmental and nutritional needs. Around 1 year of age, formula is replaced with whole milk (around the time when an infant can drink from a cup.)
· Bottle feeding will be discouraged after 18 months of age.
· Whole milk is not recommended for children under 12 months of age. Whole milk is encouraged for children ages 12 months through 23 months. Parents who request 2% milk must do so in writing.
· A note from the child’s health care provider is required if a child is to be: limited food/formula intake; given diluted formula; given Pedialyte; or is on any type of elimination (allergy) diet.

DIAPER CHANGING POLICY
On arrival, staff will ask parents when a child’s last diaper change occurred. Staff check diapers at least hourly, or as needed, and change them accordingly. Parents are responsible for providing diapers and diaper wipes. Diapers will not be rinsed or laundered at the Center. Cloth diapers are prohibited. All diaper containers at the Center have covers and are plastic-lined.

Center staff adhere to the following diapering procedures:
· Wash hands
· Gather necessary materials (i.e. clean diaper, wipes, clean clothing, etc.)
· Put on disposable gloves
· Place a single-use cover on the changing table
· Place the child gently on the table. Remove the soiled diaper and deposit it into a plastic-lined and covered diaper receptacle
· Clean the child’s diaper area from front to back with a clean, damp wipe for each stroke
· Wash hands
· Apply topical cream/ointment/lotion (if notified via a written parental request.)
· Apply a clean diaper.
· Dress the child.
· Wash the child’s hands. (Infant or child can now return to other children.)
· Place the single-use cover in the covered diaper receptacle.
· Disinfect the diaper changing table. Remove gloves.
· Wash hands.

**EARLY TODDLER PROCEDURES**

Children learn best through play and engaging in natural interactions with each other and their environments. The Center’s early-toddler procedures support learning by:

· Designing the classroom environment and curriculum around the needs and interests of children
· Carefully selecting classroom materials in order to give children the best and most appropriate developmental learning opportunities to support and enhance cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development
· Encouraging participation in both large and small group experiences
· Offering alternative choices
· Partnering with families for quality care
· Welcoming parents into the classroom
· Communicating daily with parents through conversations at drop off and pick up times, as well as conferences on an as-needed basis

Respecting parents as their child’s first and most important teacher, Center staff work closely with families to ensure continuity of care.

**TODDLER CLASSROOM**

“YES WE CAN” - Barack Obama

Being a 3-year-old is the beginning of a huge transformation. During this time, children transition from the toddler stage to the preschool stage. In the toddler classroom, children exercise: their cognitive development skills (such as reasoning and thinking); their physical development (such as fine and gross motor skills); and their language development (such as phonemic awareness and socialization.) Spanish is incorporated into the daily curriculum.

Children leave this course prepared for the next level by methods of teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities. This classroom offers a model of co-teaching that allows children to have greater opportunities for individual teacher-child interaction, and to experience individualized instruction.

**Social/Emotional Development**

· Teachers encourage cooperative play through the use of effective techniques to properly guide early toddlers away from such behaviors as biting, temper tantrums, and aggression.
· At this age, toddlers want to become independent and to learn proper hand washing skills. They begin toilet training as a way of learning of personal care skills.
Physical/Emotional Development
· Toddlers strengthen their small motor skills (e.g. fingers) by using different manipulatives to put together or take apart objects.
· Activities and sing-along songs, as well as outdoor play, help toddlers to develop their large muscles (running, jumping, climbing, rolling over, etc.)

Cognitive Development
Toddlers will:
· Learn to engage in pretend play
· Begin to understand the uses and functions of a variety of objects
· Are exposed to basic concepts of cause and effect, as well as how to group different objects based on similarity and thematic relationships.

TODDLER TOILET TRAINING
Children generally achieve toilet training between the ages of 2 to 3 years. Potty training should be the child’s accomplishment, not the teacher’s or parent’s. Children should not be compared to how peers are doing. Each child trains easily when he or she is ready.

When the child is ready, toilet training is often quick and easy, and can be achieved within a few weeks. Some signs that signal toilet-training readiness include: appropriate verbal and body language skills to communicate the need to use the potty; staying dry for long periods of time; the ability to dress and undress one’s self; an interest in staying dry or clean.
*Onesies should not be worn during the toilet training process.

The Center takes a proactive attitude towards potty training. Scheduled and prescribed times (after meals, before and after naps, going to and returning from the playground, etc.) are established for toilet use. Children are encouraged to sit on the potty at these times for a short period, and are allowed to get up when they are finished. Children are not forced to sit on the potty for long periods of time.

Parents must support the toileting process at home while training is taking place at the Center. The use of similar methods at home are encouraged for continuity.

During toilet training, the Center requires that children wear pull-ups for health and safety reasons. The activity level at the Center can easily distract a child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at home. Therefore, the Center will continue to use pull-ups until children can (and will) announce that they must use the bathroom not just at home, but at the Center as well, and can control their bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond the announcement.

It will be at the teacher’s discretion when parents may start to exclusively use “big girl” or “big boy” underpants during child care hours. While children are learning to use the potty, two additional sets of spare clothing are required.
**Preschool Classroom**

“Learning Has No Limit”

Pre-school classroom teachers embrace a shared vision that “Learning Has No Limit.” In accordance with state educational standards, children are offered a multitude of concrete learning activities that cover every domain of early learning and development.

Teachers use a variety of research-based techniques for instruction, including “The Project Learning Approach,” and the “Creative Curriculum Assessments,” which promote concepts of critical thinking.

To ensure that children receive the best educational opportunities possible, classroom instruction includes both child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities. Classroom design incorporates nine learning activity centers, which include: blocks and building; music and movement; math and manipulatives; dramatic play; writing; science and discovery; listening; reading and language development; and creative art. CDLC preschool teachers and assistants are committed to ensuring that all children possess the tools necessary for a successful transition to kindergarten.

**Transitions**

To transition from the Infant Classroom to the Toddler Classroom, children should:

- Sit at tables to eat using eating utensils
- Begin to use spill proof cups
- Use a pacifier only at nap time
- Sleep on mats
- Begin serving themselves
- Begin age-appropriate negative behavior (e.g. saying no, hitting, grabbing toys, having tantrums and screaming when frustrated or disappointed)

To Transition from the Toddler Classroom to the Preschool Classrooms, children should:

- Sit at tables to eat using eating utensils
- Use spill proof cups exclusively
- Begin potty training
- Serve themselves
- Practice age-appropriate negative behavior (during this time children may demonstrate aggression and are very physical. They may use “bad words” or “swear words” and may try to stretch the truth.)
- Engage in group activities to enhance social skills
- Learn the power of words
- Value friendships
- Know and learn boundaries
- Learn to control negative behaviors
- Take rest on cots (may not sleep)
- Participate in “Show-and-Tell”
- Use the buddy-system for walks

Transitions may take place before the child’s birthday if the teacher and director feel that the child is developmentally ready to transition to the next class.

**CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES**

Parents should supply adequate clothing for each child. Changes of clothing should be stored in the child’s cubby at all times in case of an accident. All clothes, coats and belongings should be labeled. The Center will not be responsible for hair bows, headbands, barrettes, jewelry, etc.

Parents should:
- Label all items with the child’s name including clothes, diaper bags, diapers, pacifiers, etc
- Ensure that closed-toe shoes are worn at all times.
- Refrain from allowing children to bring valuable or sentimental items to the classroom
- Provide several changes of clothes and appropriate outerwear for the weather
- Furnish supplies in a timely manner when requested by the Center’s staff
- Supply milk, food items for special diets, medicine, disposable diapers, wipes, and/or pull ups, etc. as previously outlined.

**V: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & POLICIES**

**PARENTS: SCHOOL/HOME CONNECTION**

Parents are an integral part of a child’s education. The quality of a childcare facility is related, in part, to the degree of parental involvement.

The CDLC will make every effort to keep parents fully informed of the activities of the Center and their child’s progress. A bulletin board in the hall is maintained with state licensure information. Each family will receive a quarterly newsletter. Daily notes will be sent home with infants and toddlers. Notes for older children will be sent as needed. Conferences will be scheduled twice per year. If parents feel more is needed, they may call the Center’s office and set up a consultation.

**PARENT ORGANIZATION**

Parents are encouraged to join the parenting organization. Its primary function is to support and provide input on the policies of the Center. This organization also generates funding via parent-sponsored fundraisers. Funds are used to increase the quality of the Center and to replenish educational supplies. The director of the CDLC serves as the advisor to the organization’s board. Board officers and meeting times are determined at the beginning of each fall semester.

**PARENT CONFERENCES & MEETINGS**

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled periodically, or may be requested by the teacher, parent or director. Attendance at all scheduled meetings is highly encouraged.
PARENT EDUCATION
For parents seeking additional information, educational materials are available in the Parent Resource Center or in the director’s office. Contact the director for more information on available resources.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
Families are asked to use discretion in regards to posting on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat or other social media outlets. If pictures are taken at school (including at a birthday or other special event), please do not include other children. There are federal confidentiality issues to consider.

The Center also asks that names of teachers or administrators not be mentioned on personal social media accounts, again for privacy reasons.

CELL PHONE POLICY
The use of cell phones is not permitted in the corridors or classrooms of the Center at any time, for any reason. If calls must be made or received, the parent room or the lobby should be used. When dropping off or picking up a child, parents should be available to greet the child and the teacher, and to hear or share any necessary information.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY
The only information that teachers may share with parents, is information concerning his or her child. Conversations about other children, other parents, co-workers or supervisors are unprofessional and in violation of the Center’s policy. In some instances, such conversations are illegal due to various privacy and confidentiality laws. All adults (staff, University students, researchers and volunteers) working at the Center must sign a confidentiality agreement.

AFTER-HOURS BABYSITTING POLICY
Occasionally, parents may ask teachers to baby sit. The Center does not encourage this practice and assumes no responsibility for employees after their scheduled work hours. Additionally, staff members are not allowed to transport children to or from the facility.

REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK & CONTRACT
The Child Development Learning Center reserves the right to make changes to the Handbook, or the policies therein, as deemed necessary and to meet state licensing standards. All parents will be notified in writing of any changes.
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STAFF

Dr. Martha Ravola, Interim Chair
Arthur K. Owens, Director
Chestina Mackey, Teacher
Geraldine Booth, Teacher
Latasha Coleman, Teacher