



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025 School Year

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Executive Director – Delores Jameson
Office Manager – Natasha Keplinger
Infant and Toddler Coordinator – Becky Chandler

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

The center's program is based on child development theories and principles. Experiences, activities, and practices reflect this by allowing children to (a) learn to deal with their own feelings and needs, and to understand and cope with those of other children and adults; (b) acquire social skills which will enable them to achieve their own purpose without violating the rights of others; (c) develop cognitive and language skills; (d) utilize and enhance developing physical skills. Children's needs must be given the first consideration in scheduling. The program begins the moment the first child enters the door and continues until the last child leaves. Planning, preparation and clean-up must be done within this context. Children can and should be involved in these activities as individuals or in small groups. They can help with snack and lunch preparation by getting out and putting away materials and equipment. Their involvement must be planned into the day.

Mission

The mission of the Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center is to provide full-day childcare and learning opportunities for children in a secure and nurturing environment. The center pledges to serve the community by providing fully licensed care to children regardless of the families' financial resources, race, or religious affiliation. The center's professionally trained staff will continuously foster opportunities for the child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth, with the goal of supporting children to become life-long learners.

Center History and Affiliations

The Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Centers, Inc., located at 46 South Federal Street and 281 East Market Street, was established in 1971 in response to community needs for the children of parents who work, participate in job training, or attend school. Our center is a United Way funded agency licensed by the State of Virginia, to care for up to 123 children from 6 weeks to twelve years of age. Although a portion of the center is physically housed in the Muhlenberg Lutheran Church, it is not affiliated with any religious group or denomination. The Harrisonburg Rockingham Board of Directors consists of community volunteers and parents who formally meet at least six times per year to set policy and general procedures. The board delegates to the center's executive director the responsibilities for the day-to-day operations of the center.

Board of Directors July 2023-2024

Martha Ross, President	Andrea Burkholder	Julie Wallace Carr
Marsha Knott, Secretary	Diane McCarthy	Chelsey Bollinger
Irana Scott, Co-Treasurer	Daphyne Saunders Thomas	Noah Yoder
Katherine Preston, Co-Treasurer	Tilton Weaver	Holly McCartney
Diana Kiser	Jerri Alley	

State Licensing

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) helps assure parents of the safety of child day care programs that assume responsibility for supervising, protecting and maintaining the well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day. Title 63.1 chapter 19 of the code of Virginia gives the Department of Education authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day care centers, family day

care homes, and child day care systems. The state may also register family day care homes not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day care centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program, and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licenses may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licenser. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor, which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Valley Office of Child Care Health and Safety.

Valley Office of Child Care Health and Safety

PO Box 1208, Waynesboro, VA 22980

(804)921-7688

Hours of Operation

Child care services are provided from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Holidays

Parents who might have objections to recognition of religious or other holidays, such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, or Valentine's Day, or Halloween, should so indicate to the director so that proper arrangements can be made to respect you and your child's wishes.

Holidays are scheduled as listed below. If one of the holidays falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed the previous Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed the following Monday.

New Year's Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after	
Good Friday	Memorial Day	Christmas Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Juneteenth		

The center will be closed for a one-week winter break, for which the exact dates will be announced in September. No tuition will be charged during this week.

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and enrollment fee paid to secure your child's place in the center. First week's tuition payment must be paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of \$100 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 8 weeks to 6 years of age during the school year and ages 6 to 12 in the summer as space allows.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Inclusion

HRCDCC believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

If your child has an identified special need, please let the office know.

Non-Discrimination

At HRCDCC equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or 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.

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 at our program are confidential.

Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff
≤ 16 months	<u>4 to 1</u>
16-24 months	<u>5 to 1</u>
2 year-olds	<u>8 to 1</u>
3 year-olds	<u>10 to 1</u>
School Age Children	<u>18 to 1</u>

Communication

Daily Communications. Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Communication between teacher and family will be through the Procure app. Keep in mind that caring for children is a hands-on job and the information may not be logged in real time. Information will be updated as time and activities allow throughout the day (ex. during nap time).

Bulletin Boards. Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

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.

Conferences. Family & teacher conferences occur once a year. During these conferences, 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 additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

The child's teacher will advise the parents when:

- A child's behavior pattern is different than usual
- The child may have been exposed to a communicable disease
- The child has become ill or is injured

The parents will advise the center when:

- A child will be absent from the center
- The arrival/departure time is different from usual
- Someone other than the parent is to pick up the child (in this case, written or telephone notice is required)
- A change has occurred in the family that might affect the child (separation, divorce, death etc.)
- Changes have been observed in the child's behavior
- A child has been given medication that may cause a change in behavior

THE PROGRAM AND A TYPICAL DAY

Learning Environment

The center aims to provide to its children many real experiences that are challenging and promote positive self-image. Because young children learn best through active involvement in their bodies and through their senses, the daily schedule is arranged to include many opportunities for the manipulation and exploration of materials both indoors and outdoors with the same consistent care givers. Children come to understand their world through play experiences that promote curiosity, problem solving, creativity and language. Children also need to play with peers and experience relationships with caring, consistent adults to learn language, social skills and a sense of self. The space, materials, natural environment and people are all necessary parts of the setting in which the child learns through play. Infant and toddler playtime includes floor time/tummy time to strengthen and develop gross motor skills in addition to sensory, music, art and language exposure throughout the day. In addition to specifically planned activities, the teachers seize the spontaneous moments and routine activities to model respect and caring, and to extend children's thinking as they are engaged in casual conversation. For example, children gain independence as they learn to self-feed, or zip their coats when preparing to go outside. Teachers aid children as needed and give instructions and encouragement to match abilities.

The following opportunities are available at the center each day:

- Imaginative play involving dress-up clothing, puppets, etc.
- Creative expression using paints, markers, playdough or glue

- Music and movement
- Sensory experiences with sand, water, playdough, etc.
- Manipulation of blocks, puzzles, pegboards, etc.
- Science and math involving pets, plants, cooking, etc.
- Large muscle activity with climbers, tricycles, running, etc.
- Language experiences involving stories, fingerplays, poems

Typical Daily Schedule by Program

Infant Daily Schedule:

7:00-8:30	Drop Off
8:30-10:00	Nap
10:00-10:30	Bottle
10:30-11:30	Play time/Stroller Walk
11:30-1:00	Nap
1:00	Bottle
1:30-2:30	Play time/Outside
2:30-4:00	Nap
4:00	Bottle
4:00-5:30	Play time
5:30	Center Closes

Mobile Infant Daily Schedule:

7:00-8:30	Drop Off/Bottle if needed
8:30	Breakfast
9:00	Group Time
9:30-11:30	Morning Nap
11:30	Bottle
12:00-12:30	Outside
12:30	Lunch
1:00-3:00	Afternoon Nap
3:00	Bottle
3:30-4:30	Outside
5:30	Center Closes

Toddler's, Two's & Three's Daily Schedule:

7:00 a.m.	Center Opens
7:30 a.m.	Classroom Centers
8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Outside
10:30 a.m.	Classroom Activities
11:45 a.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	Outside
1:00 p.m.	Naptime
3:00 p.m.	Snack
3:30 p.m.	Outside
5:30 p.m.	Center Closes

Pre-K Daily Schedule:

7:00 a.m.	Center Opens
7:30 a.m.	Classroom Centers
8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Outside
10:30 a.m.	Classroom Activities
11:45 a.m.	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	Outside
1:00 p.m.	Naptime
3:00 p.m.	Snack
3:30 p.m.	Outside
5:30 p.m.	Center Closes

Consistent Care Policy

The Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center strives to provide consistent, high-quality childcare to each child. Consistent, dependable relationships are the foundation of a child's secure attachment. It provides children with consistent routines and unlimited learning opportunities, and provides families with the security of knowing their child is in a safe and nurturing environment. Each child is assigned a classroom with a teacher and a full-time floater. Children will receive consistent care from their providers. In the event of the absence of a provider, a qualified substitute will be available to work. The same providers are assigned to classrooms so that all children and providers will learn to know each other.

Outdoor Play

Weather permitting; each class will get at least one hour of outdoor time per day. Infants may be walked in a stroller in the general vicinity of the building, including downtown. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission slip for walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips. Permission Slips for each trip must be signed by the child's family.

Transitions

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

Transition from home to center

It is normal for your child to have some fears about being away from you. Children, like adults, need time to get used to new situations. Try to prepare your child for the changes as far in advance as possible. Discuss any concerns. Talk about some of the new people your child will meet and the new things your child will do. If you are enthusiastic, soon your child will be too. Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns.

If this is the first time your child has been separated from you, it is natural for him/her to be hesitant. A cheerful good-bye kiss, a smile, and a reassuring word that you will be back after

work is all you need to do. Our caring staff will take it from there. Please do not sneak out when your child is not looking.

Transition between learning programs

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability.

Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world.

Screen time is prohibited for children under two years old.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 15 minutes.

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

Infants will be placed in the crib to sleep. Cribs will be free of everything but a fitted crib sheet and a pacifier if needed.

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.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

The Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care provides children with many positive experiences. Through these experiences, children have opportunities and are encouraged to learn how to deal with their own feelings and needs, as well as to understand and cope with the feelings of peers and adults. They also acquire social skills that will enable them to achieve their own purpose in a positive way, without violating the rights of others.

The environment is designed and activities are planned so that negative behavior and conflicts are minimized. We believe that children who are busy and interested in their surroundings and given guidance to make appropriate choices are less likely to encounter conflicts. Guidelines are stated positively, are non-punitive, and accompanied by an explanation of expectations. Adults help children express their feelings in positive ways and encourage them to recognize

and respect the feelings of others. Because children are just learning how to get along with others, share materials and attention, and problem solve in positive ways, conflicts do arise. However, the teacher is there to assist the children as needed and to resolve the conflict to the benefit and satisfaction of all.

The following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques are used when a child is having a difficult time following directions or treating others or equipment with respect:

- A. Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he/she is demonstrating acceptable behavior
- B. Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
- C. "When....Then" Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to accomplish something before going on to something else. Sample: "When you finish picking up the blocks, then you can go outside."
- D. Choice Statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to make a positive choice. Sample: "Do you want to take you nap with a stuffed animal or a book?"

Certain disciplinary actions (Section 22 VAC 15-30-487 of the *Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers* Department of Education, 2012) are NEVER USED. These include physical or forceful punishment, withholding or forcing food or rest, demeaning or threatening remarks, punishments for toileting accidents, forced confinement and separation from the group so that the child is away from the hearing and vision of a staff member. Only when a child is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior or hurting self, others or equipment will the child be separated from the group and the adult lets the child know that when he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, the child is encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again. The adult remains within sight and sound of the child while the child is regaining control.

If a child exhibits persistent behavioral difficulties, the teacher will initiate a meeting with the family to discuss the cause of the behavior, a plan for providing positive support, and a procedure for regular communication. If the child is hurting other children, a plan for ensuring the safety of other children and staff will be developed by the teacher and the Executive Director. Additional professional input may be sought with the permission of the Executive Director and the family. Family members are welcome to request a meeting to discuss behavioral concerns at any time. While a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate each child's individual needs, HRCDCC reserves the right to immediately terminate the enrollment of any child whose behavior becomes a threat to other children or staff or who does not respond to supervision and other interventions efforts.

Parental Concerns

Your suggestions and concerns are always welcome so that we can provide your child with the best possible care. Specific concerns should be dealt with in a timely manner in the following three step process:

- Concerns about a child's care or experiences should be mentioned and discussed as soon as practical with the staff member most closely involved (teacher, aid, or director). Any concerns about another child should be expressed to the staff member most closely involved.
- Please try to arrange a discussion at a time when the staff member can devote attention to your concern and not sacrifice childcare or supervision. The director has an open-door policy with parents and will make time to address your concerns directly or concerns not resolved in the first step, and discuss the timeline for implementing any changes. If a parent feels that a concern has not been adequately dealt with in the previous two steps,

the parent may wish to contact the center's board of directors by observing these procedures:

- A parent may phone the chair of the personnel practices committee, who will advise the parent on subsequent steps including a follow-up letter.

Termination of Enrollment

The Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any child under the following circumstances:

- **The child is causing injury to other children or adults and does not respond to supervision and other intervention efforts as described above**
- **Tuition payments are not paid on the Monday prior to attendance**
- **The child's parents/guardians fail to submit required documents or abide by program policies or procedures as described in the Parent Handbook**
- **The parent or family have treated the staff or director in an aggressive or disrespectful way**

Two weeks' notice will be given to the parents in the event of termination, unless the need for termination is immediate.

TUITION AND FEES

Important Notice

Tuition is based on a sliding fee scale according to family gross income. Household income verification of both parents is required to be eligible for the sliding fee scale. Upon receipt of W2's, tax returns, or three paystubs, the finance committee will review for sliding fee scale eligibility and weekly rate. If both household income verification is not provided, you will be billed at the highest rate.

Registration

An initial non-refundable registration fee of \$100 must be paid prior to receiving paperwork to enroll your child. This fee will confirm your spot for care. Registration must be complete before a child can attend the center.

- Registration form with two emergency contacts
- Current physical immunization records
- A copy of the child's birth certificate
- Completed CACFP form
- Signed tuition and policy agreement
- Income verification
- ACH Debit form agreement

Tuition Payment

Weekly tuition must be paid every Monday before your child can attend. Tuition is collected each Monday through ACH debit. ACH collection forms must be completed at enrollment. Online payments will include a 4% transaction fee. There is a \$50.00 fee for returned checks.

An annual activities fee of \$50.00 will be charged in September of each year.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:30 a.m. please call us at (540)434-5268 or email hridaycare@verizon.net. If your child is absent from the center you are expected to pay the full tuition. However, one time during the calendar year, January – December, you may pay half the normal weekly tuition if your child is absent for the entire week (Monday – Friday). This one-time half rate is called a holding fee.

Summer

For purposes of this section, depending upon your residency, summer can be defined as the time city or county schools close for the summer until they reopen again in the fall. Prior to taking the summer off, a non-refundable payment equal to one week of tuition is required to hold your child's spot at the center.

Snow Closings and Late Openings

The center's director and a designated member of its board of directors will decide closings or late openings. An announcement will be made through email, a post on Facebook and the WHSV website on the closing page. Unless otherwise stated, parents are responsible for payment during these weather-related delays or closings. In the event of prolonged inclement weather, the Board of Directors may consider a reduction in tuition.

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.

Withdrawal

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Without this notice, parents will be liable for two weeks tuition.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 7:00 a.m. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

We close at 5:30 p.m. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time. At no time is any child allowed to leave the building or playground without adult supervision.

Drop off is from 7:00-9:30. Your child's schedule directly impacts their growth and development. We are committed to maintaining a consistent routine to maximize your child's time in our care. In order to ensure that your child gets the most out of their day it is important that your child is dropped off in the morning in time for breakfast and their morning nap for infants. If you will be dropping off after 9:30 please contact the director to let them know. Infants may not be dropped off in their car seat, parents must remove the child from the seat and hand them to their teacher.

For infants and toddlers: Dropping off in the middle of nap is disruptive to the other children in the classroom so please make every effort to drop off before naptime begins.

Daycare: Parents should park in the Wells Fargo parking lot and walk your child to the daycare entrance.

Pre-K: Parents should park in the Muhlenberg Lutheran Church parking lot and enter through the red doors.

Parents are expected to pick up children by 5:30 p.m. If a parent is late in picking up a child, the following fees will be assessed:

5:31-5:35 \$20.00

5:35-5:40 \$30.00

5:40-5:45 \$40.00

5:45 or later will result in a fee of \$50.00

If a child is left after 5:45 p.m. and the center staff has been unable to reach parents or emergency contacts, the Department of Social Services will be called for assistance.

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.

In order to safeguard your child we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

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 release of your child from the program.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants:** enough clean bottles for a day's use, diapers, and at least 2 changes of clothes. All bottles must be labeled and dated. Pacifier if needed.
- **Toddlers:** enough clean bottles for a day's use (if applicable), diapers and at least two changes of clothes. All bottles must be labeled and dated. One blanket for napping.
- **Two's and Three's:** at least two changes of clothes. If going through the toilet training program, spare shoes and socks. Two blankets for napping.
- **Pre-K:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes. Two blankets for napping.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, blankets, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located at the front door. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

NUTRITION

Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks are served every day and meet the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) requirements for nutrition.

The center provides Parent's Choice brand iron-fortified formula, infant cereal and pureed food for all infants and toddlers in the program. You may elect to provide your own formula, breast milk, and baby food each day. If you supply bottles and food from home, it must be brought in labeled, pre-measured, mixed and ready to serve.

CACFP worksheets must be completed upon enrollment and updated periodically as your child grows.

Special diets may be arranged between parents and the center's directors. Special treats are allowed for celebrations and should be arranged in advance with the child's teachers (no presents should be brought for birthdays).

The CACFP prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET center at (202)720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write CACFP, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202)720-5964 (voice and TDD). CACFP is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care admits children of any race, religion, disability, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, program and activities made available to students at the center. We do not discriminate in any way within the administration of our educational policies, enrollment policies, financial plan or any other school administered program. A multi-cultural, anti-biased curriculum is offered.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed "on cue" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- 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. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child's home or discarded at the end of each day. 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.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child's name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- 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: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

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. Every year, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding 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.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than [30] days 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 your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. 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 greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100.4°F or higher under the arm)
- 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 more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- 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.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

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 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

Our center does not administer prescription or over the counter medication to children. The center staff will assume responsibility for dispensing emergency medication only (epi-pen). For emergency medication only, a permission form obtained from the office is required to be filled out by the child's physician and parents before any medication will be administered. Medication is stored in a locked cabinet in the office. The staff member administering the medication will also sign and indicate the time that the medication was actually given to the child. Staff will not administer any medication that is outdated. In special circumstances a parent may enter the building during the day to administer medication to their own child (i.e., eye drops or prescription medicine).

Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream) sunscreen and insect repellent require a topical form signed by the parent, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

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 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
- COVID-19
- 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
- Tuberculosis

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 that 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.

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 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.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. 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 the State of Virginia to report any and all instances of suspected child abuse. When a staff member has information or evidence of suspected child abuse, the director is informed of the concerns and the Department of Social Services is contacted with the information. The Department of Social Services will determine the action to be taken.

Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma

Belief Statement

We believe that preventing, recognizing, responding to, and reporting shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT) is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting their healthy development, providing quality child care and education.

Background

Shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death. According to 8VAC20-780-40, all child care centers shall develop written procedures for prevention for shaken baby syndrome or abusive head trauma, including coping with crying babies, safe sleeping practices, and sudden infant death syndrome awareness.

Procedure/Practice

Recognizing:

Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high-pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

Responding to:

If SBS/AHT is suspected, staff will:

- Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director.
- Call the parents/guardians.
- If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR.

Reporting:

- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care and/or the home are reported to Department of Social Services. (540)574-5110

Prevention strategies to assist staff in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child:

Staff first determine if the child has any physical need such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy
- Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a toy or rattle
- Turn on music or white noise

In addition, the facility:

- Allows for staff who feel they may lose control to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children
- Provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed

Prohibited behaviors

Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to)

- Shaking or jerking the child
- Tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat
- Pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

EMERGENCIES

Fire Safety

Fire drills will be conducted monthly and recorded to be reviewed by the Harrisonburg Fire Department. Evacuation plans will be posted on the wall next to exits.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

1. Get the children out
2. Call 911
3. Put out a small fire

In the event that the children need to be evacuated from the HRCDDC Building or Muhlenberg Lutheran Church, we will walk with the children to Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church until parents can be reached. If there is an emergency that involves the whole downtown area, the children will be moved to Park View Mennonite Church by Harrisonburg City buses. Parents will be notified as soon as practical of the evacuation notice.

An emergency preparedness plan is available in the office for your review. Please ask if you would like a copy.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to 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 **Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **HRCDDC** 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 **Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center Family Handbook** that I do not understand.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date

