



## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

### **Infants - Pre-Kindergarten**

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# Introduction Section

## Statement of Purpose

Our mission is to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for young children, infants through 6, in order to promote optimal growth in all areas of development.

## Philosophy of Education

We recognize that children are unique, with their own temperaments and other distinct personality traits. We acknowledge, respect and honor individual characteristics, cultural differences, personal strengths, needs, abilities, interests and learning styles.

As children develop, they pass through similar stages in each area of their development, though at different rates of growth. We believe that, in order to demonstrate appropriate expectations and provide adequate challenges for children, it is important to implement an educational program which is based on what we know about children individually and culturally, as well as what we know about the different ages and stages of child development.

There is a large body of research that indicates children learn most effectively through a concrete, hands-on, play-oriented approach to early childhood education: through the manipulation of objects, materials and ideas; through interactions with peers and adults; and through activities that children initiate themselves. Children are interactive learners who are continually striving to make sense out of their experiences.

## Goals

Our primary objective is to support each child's growth, to the maximum of his/her potential, in each developmental domain. By establishing a climate in which children can feel comfort, secure, acceptance, trust and by presenting many opportunities for them to be successful. We aim to assist children in developing a feeling of well-being, and a fundamental sense of self-worth.

# Procedures Section

## Admissions

### Enrollment Checklist

All forms must be completed correctly and returned to us before your child begins his/her first day at Kiddy Learning Station.

Forms Needed to Start:

- Registration Form
- Parent Questionnaire
- Enrollment Form
- Medical Form
- Summary of Licensing Standards (complete back page and return)
- Received Parent Handbook
- Original Birth Certificate (we will make a copy and return the original)

Items to Bring:

Infants

- Bottles Ready Made
- Diapers
- Wipes
- Extra Clothing
- Shoes and/or socks (must be worn)
- Blanket (if desired)

Toddlers and Twos

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Pull-Ups
- 2 Extra changes of clothes (more if necessary)
- Extra pair of shoes
- Blanket (if desired)

Threes, Fours, and Fives

- Change of clothes
- Blanket (if desired)

Summer: Please label all summer clothing

- Sunscreen (labeled)
- Swimsuit
- Towel

Winter: Please label all winter clothing

- Coat
- Gloves
- Hat
- Snow Pants
- Boots or a change of shoes for inside

## **Admission Policy**

The following are needed to complete the child's admission to the center on his/her first day:

1. Tour of school by parents and child
2. A complete medical form including the results of T.B. skin test, shots, and lead screening (to be renewed annually)
3. Complete application forms
4. Complete permission and information forms
5. Birth Certificate: A certified copy of your child's birth certificate or any other reliable proof of identity and age must be submitted prior to enrollment. We will make a copy and return the original to you. Please be advised that we are required to notify the Illinois State Police or the local law enforcement if a certified copy is not submitted within 30 days of enrollment.
6. Necessary fees paid:
  - a. \$75 registration fee (non-refundable) (\$100 for more than one child)
  - b. \$50 activity fee (paid at time of registration and annually in September)

c. First week's tuition

Please be sure that your child's personal file is up to date at all times. Notify the administrating staff, in writing, of any changes in home or work numbers, addresses, changes in emergency or pick up authorizations, marital status, etc. Also, please provide Kiddy Learning Station with copies of all legal documents, i.e. divorce and custody decrees, that pertain to your child. This policy is for the protection of your child. Your complete cooperation is appreciated.

### **Hours of Operation**

Kiddy Learning Station is open Monday through Friday, 52 weeks a year. We are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and offer full-time and part-time rates. Part-time is available Monday-Friday from 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. ages 2 through 6. At this time, part-time is not available for infants and toddlers. Please see tuition sheet for rates.

The school will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve
- New Years Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

### **Tuition and Fees**

#### **Tuition Fees**

All tuition payments are due in advance on Monday by 6:00 p.m. or on the first day your child attends. A \$10 per day late fee will be charged when tuition is received late. Failure to pay fees will result in the termination of services.

#### **DHS Payments**

Individuals that receive state or federal funding are required to pay the difference in tuition that is not covered by the subsidy payment.

#### **Activity Fees for Field Trips, etc.**

Parents pay all fees for field trips, in advance.

#### **Late Pick Up's**

Late pick up's are highly discouraged since it causes distress to children. Late pick up's will be subject to a \$1.00 per minute late fee beginning at 6:01, and is due at time of pick up. If you cannot pick up your child on time, you must notify the school, however, you will still be required to pay the late fee. This charge goes directly to the staff member who was required to stay late, and covers their extra time. Repeated late pickups or failure to pay fees will result in the termination of services. This policy is strictly enforced. If a parent is not at the center by 6:05 p.m., the staff member that is present will call parents and then the emergency contacts on the child's list. It is very important to keep your emergency contacts current. The police will be called for assistance after one hour of no contact with the parents or authorized person. It is our responsibility to stay with your child until he/she is safe. Staff will not hold the child responsible and late pick up's will only be discussed with the parent and never with the child.

### **Other Tuition Policies**

Tuition must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or for any other reason. Days missed in our part-time program will not be made up on alternate days due to licensing requirements and group capacity.

Returned checks will be assessed a \$25 NSF charge for the first return, \$50 for the second and the account must be paid by a cashier's check or money order for a period of six months before checks will be accepted again.

### **Payment Policy**

Payments will only be accepted by check, money order, cashier's check or credit card. Cash will not be accepted at any time.

### **Transfer Policy**

The school year runs from September through June, with recreational camp program during the summer months. It is expected that children will remain throughout the school year in the classroom in which they have been enrolled in September. If spaces become available in other classrooms during the school year, the decision to transfer students from one preschool class to another will be based on teacher and director observations, anecdotal records, developmental assessments, and recommendations as the child's overall maturity, readiness and likelihood of benefiting from the proposed placement. Before a child is transferred to another classroom, as well as the parents, will also be asked to provide input regarding their recommendations and positions. No child will be transferred before first consulting with all parties involved.

When determining placements, the age of the child is only one of many factors to be considered by the school, including but not limited to the child's physical, emotional and cognitive levels of development: the child's speech and language needs, the child's demonstrated patterns of pro-social behavior, and the child's ability to adapt to new situations.

Transferring children in the middle of the year can present problems for both the child as well as the classroom to which the child is transferred. It is of outmost concern that the placement not jeopardize the emotional security of the child or the progress that the child has already made, nor that it be disruptive to the ongoing operation of the program in the proposed classroom; therefore, placements will be made on a trial basis. If it is determined that the child has not adjusted to the classroom situation, or that the placement is detrimental to the other children or to the ongoing operation of the classroom program, alternative placement will be sought. A parent staff conference will be called and recommendations will be made as to the appropriateness of transferring the child back to the original classroom, as well as regarding referrals to other schools.

### **Academics**

#### **Educational Program**

We do not think that any one particular educational model embodies all of what we know about the best ways to teach children, in each of the development domains; therefore, we use an eclectic approach, continuing an array of techniques from a number of proven methods.

We do, however, strongly believe in the principles of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP). We think that DAP best expresses our commitment to the application of development theory, in early childhood educational programming:

We believe in addressing the needs of the whole child, in each of the developmental domains:

- Physical (sensory- perceptual/motor)
- Affective (social-emotional)
- Cognitive (intellectual)

We think it is imperative to take into account the ages, stages, individual and cultural characteristics of the children for whom we are gearing instructional activities.

We recognize that, even within a group of same-age children, not all children are ready to learn the same thing, at the same time, on the same day of their lives but, rather, are allowed to progress at their own pace.

We believe that balance is also a necessary component of the curriculum, so we incorporate varied experiences for the children. We include activities, which are:

- Child-initiated and teacher-directed
- Open-ended and structured
- Active and quiet
- Small group, large group and individualized

#### The Child's Role

For young children, exploration and play are the key experiences that foster awareness and comprehension of the world. According to the prominent developmental experts, play is children's work; therefore, we prepare and structure a discovery-oriented learning center environment, providing for a wide range of developmental levels and personal interests, so that children can get the most out of their work.

As active learners, children's activity is an integral part of the learning process. It would not be developmentally appropriate for us to expect young children to sit down, sit still and be quiet, for long periods of time, so that "knowledge can be fed" to them, when we know that young children learn most effectively through interaction.

Children are given developmentally appropriate materials and tasks to assist them in the development of concept formation.

Children are given choices of activities and are encouraged to develop decision-making skills.

Children are given many materials and opportunities supporting the development of creative expression.

#### Learning Styles

Children's individual learning styles differ, are respected, and are taken into account when planning and scheduling activities.

Each child has a primary and secondary modality strength through which most learning occurs:

- Visual (seeing)
- Auditory (hearing)
- Kinesthetic / Tactile (moving and touching)

The child whose primary learning modality is visual may need for the teacher to include diagrams and displays to enhance his/her learning. The child who is primarily an auditory learner might benefit from the teacher presenting material paired with songs. The child who is predominantly a kinesthetic/tactile learner needs to be able to move around and touch materials to optimize his/her learning.

An understanding of children's different learning styles must also include an awareness of children's preferences for certain environmental factors. Everyone has their own optimal conditions under which they work best. For example, one child might prefer to sit in a chair, in a cool, quiet area with soft lighting, and have a tendency to perform optimally early in the morning, while another child's peak performance might occur later in the day, and he/she may prefer laying on pillows, in a bright, loud, warm atmosphere. The astute teacher provides for these differing preferences by arranging the schedule and environment accordingly. The teacher will set opportunities at different times of the day for children to accomplish similar tasks. The teacher will set up the learning centers so that there are bright areas and more dimly lit areas, quiet and active areas, etc. Children are allowed to choose where they feel most comfortable doing their work, within reason.

### The Teacher's Role

The field of EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, which encompasses children from birth through age eight, arose as a result of research, which demonstrates that young children think and learn quite differently from older children. Early childhood education methods are unlike those used in elementary and secondary education because they are based on principles of child development. The teacher's role, therefore, is also very different. The teacher is primarily a director and facilitator.

- Teachers provide guidance, planning and direction of children to activities and materials that may excite the children's curiosity and interest.
- Teachers extend activities that children are already engaged, in order to make them more challenging.
- Teachers ask questions that stimulate open-ended discussions and promote higher-level thinking.
- Teachers use direct instruction to introduce Thematic Units, in which the disciplines are integrated around a specific topic.
- Teachers encourage children's involvement in pleasant, low-competition learning games, to develop different competencies.
- Teachers capitalize on daily living situations, seizing opportunities to teach problem-solving skills, conflict resolution, self-help skills, etc.

Teacher's observations, anecdotal records and developmental assessments of children's progress are used to help determine when and how it is most appropriate to introduce new material. Many "teachable moments" arise spontaneously and teachers take advantage of those occasions to facilitate learning. We assist children in developing functional skills in context, because genuine learning involves the generalization of concepts from one area to another, and this is more likely to occur if there are opportunities for application in meaningful, true-to-life situations.

### Developmental Methods

When young children spend inordinate amounts of time "drilling for skill", such as when they are required to write the alphabet and specified vocabulary repeatedly, they are developing "splinter skills" skills that are virtually unrelated to real-life application & devoid of meaning. This is an outdated method which is not used in developmentally appropriate early childhood programs today, it's indicative of a pushed-down, academically-oriented curriculum that, for many years, was standard practice beginning

in first grade but which, in recent years, had been imposed on much younger children and often resulted in the “hurried child syndrome”. Research has shown that the old “drill for skill” approach is not even appropriate for children in the primary grades, and so it has been replaced by more authentic methods that are now being used with children through third grade.

For example, today the accepted practice for teaching Language Arts called Whole Language, where the focal point is on the whole intent and meaning of communication. In early literacy development, there has been a shift away from teaching children to first master the convention of print, towards helping them to gain an appreciation for the use of print. It's akin to the way we learn to ride a bike. We do not spend lots of time practicing each sub-skill pushing the pedals, then turning the handle bars, next balancing ourselves, etc. before we get on the bike. We learn those necessary skills as a whole coordinated effort, while we are on the bike and riding. Usually we fall several times before we succeed, but eventually we get it right because we have a purpose in mind. In much the same way, children are taught reading and writing today by doing them, with purpose. “Form follows function”. In time, the skills will become polished. Children learn reading and writing for the purpose of practical communication, and for creative expression. Rather than use drilling tactics to teach letters, words and sounds, children work with a Key Word Vocabulary consisting of words that the children have chosen and want to learn. We have found that this approach is much more motivating and useful to children.

We believe that new concepts should be introduced to children in fun, meaningful ways, and when children demonstrate readiness to learn therefore, we do not push children to acquire academic skills. We think that with the proper stimulation and guidance, children will be encouraged to broaden their interests, and those skills develop in time.

#### Curriculum Components

The child's day is filled with activities that keep them interested, stimulated and happy. Children are offered a range of choices designed to stimulate the six areas of a child's development.

1. Large Motor Development: Large motor activities are those that emphasize use of the arms, legs and feet, and other body muscles.
2. Fine Motor Development: Fine motor skills include the use of small muscles of the body such as hands and fingers.
3. Social/Emotional Development: Social and emotional development is enhanced throughout the curriculum during adult-child and peer interactions, as well as through dramatic and role-play experiences.
4. Language Development: Language development is also enhanced throughout the entire curriculum. It is difficult to isolate a language experience because the entire day is filled with them.
5. Cognitive Development: Although cognitive development is usually thought of as ABC's and 123's, it is important to realize that cognitive development occurs throughout the day.

Creative Development: This is perhaps the most tangible area of development that you can see the works of art done by the children hanging everywhere in the center.

## Curriculum

Learning objectives vary by classroom, according to the ages and stages of development of the children; however, the following is an example of goals for children in the kindergarten, in each curricular area:

Discipline	Goals
Language Arts <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listening</li><li>• Speaking</li><li>• Reading</li><li>• Writing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recall the content of brief oral messages</li><li>• Express feeling about self and others in socially acceptable ways</li><li>• Recognize that print symbolizes spoken language</li><li>• Use drawing and spelling approximations describe events in journals</li></ul>
Math	Combine and separate objects corresponding to sums
Science	Recognize body parts associated with the five senses & distinguish sensory experiences
Social Studies	Identify behavior that promotes friendships and positive relationships
Fine Arts	Experience dance forms representative of different cultures
Physical Education	Perform basic loco-motor forms and none loco-motor movements
Health, Safety & Nutrition	Identify health practices that contribute to the growth and physical development

### The Learning Center Environment

Child-initiated activities are an integral part of our curriculum. These activities usually occur within the learning centers of each classroom. Learning centers are interest areas in which children learn specific subjects. Classrooms have the following centers and materials, or they are similarly arranged and equipped to accommodate for specific subjects. Classrooms have the following disciplines/ centers and materials, or they are similarly arranged and equipped to accommodate for specific ages & developmental levels:

Disciplines/Centers	Materials/Activities
<u>Basic Skills</u> Language Arts/Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Library/Reading</li><li>• Writing</li><li>• Listening &amp; Speaking</li></ul>	books, pillows, carpet, story cards, pocket charts, pencils, paper, letters, games, notebooks, etc. books, tapes, cassette recorder
Math	numbers, beads, pennies, etc. for counting, one to

- Manipulative one correspondence, patterning, designing, graphing, sorting, sequencing; scales, charts, clocks, etc.
- Blocks small and large construction toys, vehicles and figures

### Content Areas

- Science aquarium/fish, discovery toys, magnifying glasses, shells, magnets, rocks, books, pictures, puzzles, magazines
- Social Sciences maps, globes, magazines, books, puzzles, pictures, etc.
- Dramatic Area housekeeping, doll & puppet play; dress up clothing, cash register, grocery store, etc.
- Music & Dance instruments, radio, record player, cassette player, records & tapes, etc.
- Gym climber, slide, balance beam, parachute, etc.
- Puzzles and Games small and large puzzles, individual and group games
- Media Center stereo, radio, television, VCR, computer, tapes, records

Teachers, according to guidelines manage learning centers, which determines the number of children who may comfortably occupy each center at a given time. Children “sign up” for learning centers by placing their name cards in a pocket chart under the picture of the center of their choice. Matching pictures are posted in each center. Popular centers sometimes have a waiting list on which the children write their names. Children are able to develop decision-making skills, problem-solving skills and social skills, such as turn taking, cooperation and sharing, in addition to developing skills in areas of personal interest.

### “Plan, Do, Review”

We implement some elements (and/or variations on components) of The High/Scope Curriculum, which is commonly used in progressive early childhood education classrooms today, most notably, in the majority of Head Start Programs. Based on the development principles of constructivism espoused by Jean Piaget. This approach encourages children to participate in planning, executing and reflecting on their day.

#### PLAN

Each morning at circle time, teachers discuss the Thematic Unit and the activities they have planned that day for the children. Children talk about the teacher-structured activities that they would like to participate in, as well as proposing activities of their own design in which they would like to become involved that day, in Learning Centers.

#### Do

Children execute their plans, involving themselves in activities that have been designed by the teachers as well as themselves.

#### Review

Children discuss their activities with their teachers and peers indicating where they worked and any special projects in which they participated. Children write in daily journals about something that occurred during their day.

### Early Literacy Development

Research on children’s development has revealed that stages which children commonly progress in every area, including oral and written language development. For example, children develop auditory receptive language before they develop expressive language

skills. It is our policy to promote the natural maturation of children, encouraging them to express whatever stage of development that they are currently in; therefore, we recognize that activities such as scribbling, writing letter like forms, and the more advanced usage of drawing pictures to illustrate events, as well as inventive spelling are legitimate and necessary explorations of medium and are also assertions of skill on the road to literacy.

Research has also indicated that the single most influential factor fostering children's early literacy development is the experience of having good literature read to children by parents at home. We urge you to read to your child on a regular basis.

### **Special Needs**

Reasonable accommodations and efforts will be made to meet the individual needs of each child, however, if it is determined, based on teacher and director observations, anecdotal records and developmental assessments, that a child has special needs requiring services which place an undue hardship on the school, the child will be referred to another program where the child's needs can be met.

### **Assessment Policy**

The child care center reserves the right to conduct developmental assessments of children's growth and progress, in order to determine appropriate placements and programming.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Please notify the director or assistant director at least one week prior to the event. No home baked goods will be allowed.

### **Naptime**

The licensing regulations of the Illinois Department of Family Services require that we provide a rest period for the children each day. Naptime will last 2 hours between 12:45 p.m. through 2:45 p.m. each day. Children who do not sleep will be permitted to get up after 45 minutes of resting and will continue to have a quiet time with equipment or activities that will not disturb the napping children.

### **Discipline Policy**

We believe that children learn best through interactive experience and that, while children are engaged in those experiences, teachers have opportunities to facilitate children's affective development, including fostering their self-esteem, pro-social behaviors, and inner controls. We think that children need to believe that teachers must guide and redirect children in a caring, positive manner, and that the best way to promote constructive interactions that encourage and enhance learning is to:

1. Have Developmentally Appropriate Expectations of Children: Consider the capabilities of the individual child at his/her age and stage of development and whether you are expecting a child to do something that s/he cannot comprehend, or that s/he is not developmentally ready.
2. Plan Ahead: Know goals & objectives. Plan lessons that incorporate balance in the schedule. Plan for transition times between activities so that children are not kept waiting.
3. Prepare the environment: Arrange learning centers so that there are a variety of activities available. Have sufficient amounts of supplies on hand to avert children's disputes over sharing a limited number of materials.

4. Use Group Management Techniques: Set clear, simple rules so that the children know what is permissible. Review periodically, discussing natural & logical consequences. Limit the number of children in each area, to avoid overcrowding. Rotate children from one activity to another so that others can have turns. Give children opportunities to choose alternatives, both individually and by group consensus.
5. Model Appropriate Behaviors: Demonstrate proper use of materials and socially acceptable behavior: "This is the way we use the paint brush so that the paint doesn't drip" or "We place the blocks in the container, Beth, so we can find them tomorrow", etc. Show and explain how and why we do things. Simplify your language according to the needs of the child. Demonstrate how we solve our problems by talking about them. "Think aloud" so that children can witness your own problem-solving skills first-hand.
6. Use Positive Direction: Guide children to areas & activities that stimulate interest, based on your observational data about what excites each child. Build and reinforce each child's strengths.
7. Be Encouraging and Use Positive Language: Let children know when you are pleased with them. Sing "I like the way John is helping", etc. to reinforce appropriate behavior. Say, "only walking inside" instead of "don't run" and "we speak quietly in school and save our loud voices for outside", etc.
8. Use Nonverbal Communication: Sometimes just a gentle touch or a glance can serve as a reminder and help to put a child back on task, such as attending to the lesson at circle time.
9. Use Redirection: If a child is not responding to modeling, positive direction and encouragement, say "I'm sorry, Tommy, but this is not how we play in the library, please choose another area to play in. To avert a power struggle, give children a choice of at least two alternatives.
10. Use Time Out: If a child is having consistent problems complying with rules, such as continuing to misbehave after redirection, tell the child that you think it's time for the child to take quiet time, in order to calm down, and have the child sit in a nearby chair. Time out shall consist of the number of minutes corresponding to the age of the child, so that a 2 year old is in time out for 2 minutes, a 3 year old for 3 minutes, etc. Time out will never be used for children under the age of two.
11. Review Regular Anecdotal Records of Child Observation: Periodically observe each child, noting specific incidents that illustrate his/her strengths and needs. Keep records from which to plan units and lessons. If persistent problematic situations arise, note the "ABCs ". Antecedents, Behavior and Consequences that will be useful in determining possible causes and reinforcing conditions. Staff will document incidents and a signed report (parents & teacher sign) will remain in the child's file.
12. Review Children's Progress with Parents: Points out patterns of behavior and, in consultation with the Director, make suggestions about possible strategies for effecting change, if necessary.

### **Academic Probation and Dismissal**

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the center director to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interests of that child, the other children in the class and the overall operation of the center to terminate enrollment. Every reasonable effort should be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision to terminate enrollment is made. Reasons for the termination of enrollment may include, but not be limited to the following:

- ✓ Abuse of other children, staff or property
- ✓ Continued violation of Kiddy Learning Station policies

- ✓ Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- ✓ The center's inability to meet the child's needs
- ✓ Non-payment of tuition (immediate termination)

#### Terminating a Child's Enrollment Because of Disciplinary Issues

A child's enrollment will be terminated only after all avenues for assisting that child have been exhausted and it has been determined that it is in the child's best interest to leave the center. Planning with the parents to meet the child's needs will be considered when he or she leaves the facility, including referrals to other agencies or facilities.

Whenever possible, written notification will be provided to the parent one week in advance of termination of enrollment.

Please give at least a two week written notice if you plan to withdraw your child from Kiddy Learning Station. There are no refunds on tuition or registration if you withdraw.

We extend our thanks for your cooperation with Kiddy Learning Station policies.

### **Attendance**

#### **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

We require children to be in attendance by 9:00 a.m. and not later than 10:00 a.m. If you need to bring your child to school later than 10:00 a.m. you must call by 9:00 a.m. to make arrangements. We also request that you call whenever your child will be absent.

#### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Occasionally, the school must close due to inclement weather conditions. No discounts will be given for those days. Be alert to weather reports and announcements of school closing. We will be listed on [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com).

#### **Field Trips**

Field trips will be offered throughout the year, ages 3 and up. Parents must submit a permission form (provided by the center) prior to the scheduled field trip(s). If a permission form is not submitted prior to the field trip, the child will be excluded from attendance in order to maintain child/teacher ratios in the remaining groups. Please discuss with the Director if you would like to chaperone on any of the field trips. Prices & further details will be available prior to any field trips planned.

### **Opportunities for Parent Involvement**

#### **Parent Information Bulletin Board**

Parents will be advised in writing of any important information, activities, and events. Please remember to check our parent information bulletin board regularly for announcements. We welcome your input and suggestions.

## **Classroom Observations**

We fully support and encourage parent involvement. Therefore, any parent who would like to observe in the classroom may do so at any time during the school day, without making prior arrangements.

## **Volunteering**

Parents who are interested in assisting in the classroom are encouraged to discuss this with the director or assistant director. In accordance with state licensing regulations, volunteers must meet the same employment qualifications as paid staff. Therefore, parents who have made arrangements with the school to regularly volunteer in the classroom, or to accompany a class on a field trip, cannot be responsible for a group of children unless they have met all state requirements. The lead teacher in each classroom will be responsible for supervising volunteers in their classrooms.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

During the school year, reports of children's progress are made to parents informally on an ongoing basis, as well as formally on progress report card each semester. Parents wishing an in depth parent/teacher conference may request one at any time and arrangements will be made. We ask you to remember that the teachers are responsible for attending to the children during regular school hours and ask you to keep discussions with teachers to a minimum, so that children are properly supervised.

## **Family Activities**

Throughout the year, we invite families to participate in a number of school events. You will be notified of these events in advance.

## **Fundraising**

Kiddy Learning Station will make every effort to keep our tuition costs as low as possible while maintaining the highest level of quality. As a result, fundraising efforts are essential to the center in order to make large equipment purchases and to fund center improvements, repairs and remodeling. Families are required to participate in fall and spring fundraisers each year, and to raise a minimum amount towards our goal. Your support is greatly needed and much appreciated.

## **Staff and Parent Relations**

Each classroom is staffed by a teaching team as well as assistants to maintain appropriate staff/child ratios. Staff members are assigned as needed. Substitutions and transfers are made as necessary. You will be notified of and introduced to new staff members as they join our team. Please feel free to introduce yourself to a staff member you do not know. If you have questions or would like to request a conference, please see the administrator on duty.

## **Strategies to Promote Conflict Resolution**

Any disagreements that occur in the classroom can be resolved amongst the children themselves, if they have the necessary communication skills, and if they are encouraged to be responsible for working out interpersonal conflicts by talking to each other. (It is important to clarify to children the occasions when it is critical to seek adult intervention.) More often than not, instead of speaking directly to one another about its importance to

assist children in acquiring the skills that facilitate conflict resolution. The focus is on expressing feeling and finding a solution, rather than on blaming anyone for the problem. Kindergarteners who have already developed the communication skills have jobs as “peacekeepers” and act as mediators assisting other children in communicating “I messages” and using active listening skills to reflect back what has been expressed.

### **Biting**

Biting is a normal development and is very common among young children. At some point before your child reaches six he/she is likely to bite someone or to be bitten. When a child repeatedly bites, the director will request a conference with the parents and together will try to figure out how to handle the situation. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the director to decide for the child to stay home for a while. Each situation will be handled case by case and the decision will be based on whether it is in the best interest of the children.

### **Dialogue Format for Expressing “I Message”**

Each child states:

I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Feeling & circumstance)  
I want \_\_\_\_\_.  
(What change to occur?)  
I will \_\_\_\_\_.  
(What to be done to effect change and bring about resolution)

Apology Suggested:

I'm sorry.  
I forgive you.

“I message”: Each person takes ownership of their part in the dispute by stating their position and the conditions under which they believe the situation arose, Child #1: “I feel mad when you hit me”. The other child then expresses his/her “I message”, Child #2: “I feel upset when you take my book”. Next, each child states what change they want to occur. Child #1: “I want you to stop hitting me”. Child #2: “I want you to ask me if you can have the book when I’m finished, instead of grabbing it”. Now each child states what it will do to change the situation and solve the problem: Child #1: “I will ask you to share the book”. Child #2: “I will talk to you instead of hitting you”. Apologies are suggested, if it seems that they are in order, but this should not be forced: Child #1: “I’m sorry” and Child #2: “I forgive you or it’s O.K.”

### **Discipline and Parenting Information**

In accordance with Illinois law that delineates acceptable disciplinary measure in licensed day care centers, our Discipline Policy encourages the use of positive direction and prohibits all forms of physical and emotional degradation of children.

As adult role models, we believe that we are responsible for demonstrating to children appropriate behavior, including courtesy, respect and problem-solving through the use of language, therefore, we do not allow any kind of corporal punishment or verbal denigration of children at our facility, either by staff or by parents and/or guardians. This includes such disciplinary measures as slapping, ear pulling, etc., as well as the use of demeaning language spoken with the intent to humiliate a child.

Although we understand that this is a controversial issue because many cultures condone the use of corporal punishment, we adhere to the belief that non-violent alternatives to child management are more effective. We urge you to try implementing the school's discipline policy yourselves, in support of our efforts to teach socially acceptable behavior and conflict-resolution skills to your children, while maintaining their self-esteem.

We also understand the stress and frustration that can become overwhelming at times to parents. Many area agencies offer support and training services to parents for free or reduce rates. The Parental Stress Services provides a variety of services at a number of locations including parenting classes, parent support groups and referrals.

Parent training classes can enable you to increase your knowledge of child development and learn disciplinary techniques. We strongly suggest that you take advantage of these services, and we believe that an understanding of child development can aid you in formulating expectations that are realistic and appropriate for the age and stage of your child's development. They will teach you strategies for child management and you'll have opportunities to meet other parents who have had similar experiences.

### **Child Involvement**

The children are explained the rules of the daycare center frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. If a staff member feels as though a child is not following the rules of the center, the staff member will explain to the child what behavior is inappropriate as well as explain the consequences for those actions. This is done in an attempt to re-direct the child's inappropriate behavior. Limits and consequences shall be clear, consistently enforced, and explained to the child before and as part of any disciplinary action;

- The child will receive one warning.
- If a child continuously displays inappropriate behavior, the child will be removed from the group for a period of time not exceeding one minute per year of age.
- The parents of the child will be informed of the child's behavior at the time of the child's departure from the center.
- Infants and toddlers are not subject to time out. Any child less than 24 months shall not be removed from the group

Children will be encouraged to express their needs and feelings in words. They will be supported by the teachers in their interactions with peers—to negotiate, to discuss, to confront appropriately and to express their feelings. Teachers will acknowledge and accept children's feelings and help them find acceptable ways to deal with them. In the rare event that a child cannot be helped to control her emotions or behavior, a teacher will sit with that child, comfort her, and help her regain composure and rejoin the group.

### **Communication With Parents Regarding Discipline**

Parents will be informed if there is a problem with a child's behavior. Parents and teachers will work together to set appropriate goals for the child and determine strategies for helping the child achieve the goals. If necessary, a consultant may be recommended to work with the child, parents and teachers.

Please arrange a conference with the classroom teacher to discuss any concerns you have about your child's experience in the classroom. The director of the center will also be available at any time for a conference.

### **Management Plan**

The behavior management plan for children is based on a respect for the child, and an understanding of appropriate developmental levels for each child. The behavior

management of any individual child is carried out in a quiet and private manner as much as the situation will allow.

The staff uses positive reinforcement and role modeling techniques as a means to reinforce positive behavior. The staff encourages the use of re-direction and child-initiated dialogue as a means of settling issues. It is not the child, but the child's actions that are given the attention. The use of "time-out" is used only in cases where the child has the ability to reflect on past behavior and make the appropriate changes. The length of time in a "time-out" will not exceed one minute per year of the child's age.

No child will be denied food as a form of punishment. No child will be punished for not using the toilet. Staff will not force-feed, threaten, and physically or emotionally strike a child. No child will be punished in a cruel, humiliating, or abusive manner.

In the event a child's behavior poses a continual threat to himself/herself or the rest of the children attending, it will be the responsibility of the Director, in consultation with the parents to recommend appropriate support services that will aid the child.

## **Health and Safety Issues**

### **Health Policy**

Children will be required to wash their hands upon arrival of the facility. Childcare staff will conduct a daily pre-admission screening to determine if the child has obvious symptoms of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the child's inclusion or exclusion for the day will be determined in accordance with the following list:

(1) an illness that he/she will not be able to participate in the program activities comfortably including outdoor activity (2) fever over 101°F (3) illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children (4) unexplained rash (5) unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or signs of possible severe illness (6) Diarrhea or vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration (7) mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his/her saliva (8) rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non communicable (9) purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated (10) impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated (11) strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours (12) head lice, until the morning after the first treatment (13) scabies, until the morning after treatment (14) chicken pox, until at least six days after onset of rash (15) whooping cough, until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed (16) mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling (17) measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash, or (18) symptoms that may be indicative of one of the serious communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code.

If your child becomes ill during school, you will be notified immediately. You will be required to arrange to have your child picked up as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called immediately for assistance. Major and minor incidents that occur to a child will be recorded in the file and parents will be notified immediately.

The nearest hospital from this center is:

Arlington Heights

Northwest Community Hospital  
800 W Central Road  
Arlington Heights, IL 60005  
(847) 618-1000

Mundelein

Condell Medical Center  
801 South Milwaukee Ave,  
Libertyville, IL 60048  
(847) 362-2900

**Child Exempt from Medical Care & immunization**

In accordance with the Child Care Act of 1969, as amended, a parent may request that immunizations, physical examinations and/or medical treatment be waived on religious grounds. A request of such waiver shall be in writing, signed by the parent or parents, and kept in the child's file. Parents of a child exempt from emergency medical care on religious grounds have to provide the center with an authorization form indicating the name, address and phone number of the certified practitioner that we will notify in case of an emergency.

**A medication request form must be filled out before staff can administer any medications (one form per medication). Please ask a staff member for a form.**

**Confidentiality of Records**

The confidentiality of children's records will be maintained and progress reports, assessments, files, and any information contained therein, will not be released without parental permission, except in the case where a receiving school has the right to assess those records without parental permission, as per the Family Education Rights & Privacy Act.

**Safety and Security**

Fire and Tornado drills will be performed monthly. We request that you follow these procedures when dropping off or picking up your child:

- Children must be escorted into and out of the school each day.
- Children must be signed in and out daily.
- Children will be released to only the persons listed on the child's application as authorized persons to pick up. Identification will be required.
- Children will not be released to persons under 15.

Kiddy Learning Station, reserves the right to deny release of children to persons who are suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse**

Any staff member in a childcare facility, who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or has observed the child being subjected to circumstances that would reasonably result in neglect or abuse, must immediately report or cause a report to be made to the appropriate child protective agency.

## **Pesticides**

Anderson pest control will come in at least once a month. Visits by Anderson pest control will be done at 6:30 a.m. Anderson pest control (experienced in IPM) will be our partner by controlling pests with non-chemical and least-toxic controls. They will also offer recommendations for sanitation, maintenance and organization that will prevent pest problems in the future. All licensed childcare centers are required by Illinois Law (93-0381) to utilize Integrated Pest Management. Parents will be notified in the event spray pesticides must be used inside the facility. An employee will be appointed to oversee IPM and record keeping. Pesticides will never be sprayed when children are present. All toys and items handled by children will be removed prior to pesticide application. Children will be kept out of the treated area for at least two hours after the application. This facility will try to control pests before they occur, by keeping pests out, remove pests' food and water, remove pests' harborage/shelter, monitor for pest problems and treat any existing pest problems.

## **Bringing Personal Belongings to School**

### **School Supplies**

The child care center provides most necessary school supplies such as paper, crayons, pencils, scissors, etc., and the children are not to bring these items to school, unless specifically requested by the classroom teachers for special projects, etc.

### **Clothing**

All children must keep a change of clothes at school, in case of illness, toileting accidents, etc., and each item is to be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name, in a labeled bag or backpack. Younger children should bring at least two complete changes of clothing. The school does not provide diapers and wipes, please provide an appropriate supply. Everyday outerwear should also be labeled, such as coats, hats, scarves, mittens, boots, etc.

### **Special Comfort Items**

It is our policy to recognize and support the need that some children have to bring to school a special item to which they are attached, that helps them to feel comforted and secure in a new environment. If your child is having difficulty separating from you or adjusting to school, and your child has a special stuffed animal, blanket, pillow, etc., which usually provides comfort to him/her in times of stress, do not hesitate to send this item along to school. Please advise the teacher of this need.

### **Toy Weapons**

We do not provide or encourage the use of any toy weapons including guns, swords, knives, martial arts equipment, or action figures who resort to violence as a primary means of problem-solving whether or not they are designated "good guys". Consequently, we do not allow play of that type, toys or videotapes of those characters in school.

We strive to teach children to resolve social issues by talking about problems and, on a daily basis we work on providing children with the appropriate language to do so. We believe that is counter-productive to permit children to engage in violent fantasy play, as it teaches them that violence is a viable problem-solving alternative. We have found that this kind of play leads to acting out in real-life situations, including threatening behaviors, karate kicking, hitting and other forms of violence. We believe that violent play is not only potentially harmful to children physically, but that it is also very confusing and confounding to their moral development, and so we recommend that you regulate your child's involvement in these activities at home as well.

**Brag and Tell**

Classroom teachers will announce when they will be scheduling brag and tell at which time children may bring a toy to school, provided it is of a nonviolent nature. The children will be encouraged to share, so please do not send any items that you would not want your child to share with other children. The child's name should be clearly labeled on their special item and will be returned home the same day. Please discourage your child from bringing any items on days besides their scheduled brag and tell days. Also, items such as gum, candy, money, and balloons are never allowed.

**Forms**

Forms can also be found on our website, [www.kiddylearningstation.com](http://www.kiddylearningstation.com).