



Parent Handbook of Policies & Procedures

**Wildwood Early Learning Center
16930 Manchester Road
Wildwood, Missouri 63040
636-273-5000**

Dear Parents:

Welcome! This Parent Handbook was developed to give you a complete outline of the procedures and operations of our center, and our approach to planning educational experiences for children enrolled at Wildwood Early Learning Center.

If you ever have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Joseph Deters

Owner

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PARENT HANDBOOK

Introduction and Philosophy

Objective

At Wildwood Early Learning Center, our primary goal is to provide high quality care for children in a safe, warm, and positive environment. We believe proper growth and development is dependent upon a nurturing environment, appropriate learning experiences, and fun. Learning through play is the foundation of our curriculum. Children naturally learn concepts, develop skills, master life's situations, and enhance their language abilities through play. Teachers at the Center introduce the children to enriching experiences and invite them to enjoy a lifetime of learning. It is important for parents to feel good about bringing their children to a safe and nourishing environment. It is our privilege to assure that every child experiences these basic rights.

Description

At Wildwood Early Learning Center, we provide early care and education services for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. The Center has a program for Infants ages 6 weeks through 12 months, Toddlers, ages 12 months to 24 months, Preschool ages 3-5 years, and for Pond Elementary After School children ages 5 years and up.

The center is located at 16930 Manchester Road. The center is open Monday through Friday, 6:30 A.M. until 6:30 P.M., with

the exception of the following holidays: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. If any of these Holidays fall on the weekend, we will be closed on the weekday recognized for the Holiday. We also follow Rockwood's Snow Policy.

Children may attend the center on a full or part time basis. The center has a fenced outdoor play yard with age appropriate equipment.

Staff

Teachers Wildwood Early Learning Center provide individual attention, protection, security, stimulation, support, limits, and affection. Teachers are loving, caring and involved in planning a quality program that gives children opportunities to explore, experiment, and develop creativity. Teachers are well trained in child development. The staff continues to grow professionally through participation in workshops, reading professional literature, and attending staff meetings for in service training.

Our staff meets all requirements set forth by The Missouri State Department of Education, Office of Child Care.

Substitutes

When caregivers have to be absent, we try to cover by reassigning available staff. When this cannot be done, TLC may be placed in that classroom.

Program Information

Admission

Admission is on a first come first served, space available basis, for full-time care. The same is true of part time care, if the requested hours will fit into the overall schedule. A phone call is all that is needed to be placed on the waiting list if space is not available. No child will be discriminated against because of race, creed, color, national origin, or sex. In order to enroll a child at Wildwood Early Learning Center a number of forms need to be completed and returned with the required enrollment fee.

Fees

In order to secure a space at Wildwood Early Learning Center, a completed Child Care Registration Form must be returned with the enrollment fee. This fee is not refundable. This is a one time (not an annual) fee.

An annual activity fee will be due for each child at registration and annually on the anniversary of enrollment.

Payment for Service

Payment is due every Monday and will be considered late after 6:30 P.M. on Tuesday. See Tuition Sheet for late payment fee. The weekly rate remains the same regardless of

attendance or holidays, with the exception of the vacation/sick discount.

Late Penalty

Please arrive by your scheduled pick-up time. If you can't avoid being late please call to make arrangements with your classroom teacher. The center closes at 6:30 P.M. Please arrive in time to collect your child and belongings and exit by 6:30 P.M. See tuition sheet for late pick up charge.

Sibling Discount

Enrolled siblings receive a 10% discount off the oldest child's tuition for full time students.

Vacation/Sick Discount

Children whom are enrolled in the center full time, will receive two weeks per year (Monday through Friday) at 50% off tuition when your child is absent for vacation or illness.

Early Pick-up

Parents who want to pick up their children at a time earlier than their scheduled pick-up hour are allowed to do so, but please let the child's teacher know in the morning, so they are able to gather any information that is to go home with the child.

Weather Policy

Delays and closing will only be undertaken when there is significant cause of concern for student, parent, and staff due to snow, ice or road conditions. Cancellation or delays will be communicated to parents by our Tadpoles system. We will Rockwood's policy for snow and ice.

On days when snow accumulates during the day or severe weather warnings are in effect, the Director may decide to close early. In such cases, parents will be called to arrange for early pick-up for their children.

Termination of Services

We reserve the right to terminate childcare services at any time, with or without notice.

Withdrawal from Program

A minimum of two weeks notice is required to withdraw a child from the program. This withdrawal request must be in written form and delivered to the Director of the program.

Parent Contact

Parent's wishes for their child's care are always solicited, and will be respected whenever possible within the policies of the school. All discussions regarding children's development,

health, family situations, and so on will be treated confidentially; only those staff members who need such information will be informed.

Communication is vital to a successful relationship between school and home, and so many opportunities for parent communication have been established.

Arrival/Departure

At the front desk is a daily sign-in/sign-out via Tadpoles. You must make sure to check in your child in the morning and out in the afternoon. The teachers try to greet you when you arrive, but please be sure to make contact with a teacher if they are busy when you arrive or when you are departing with your child. The Center opens at 6:30 A.M. Please do not drop off your child before then. If staff members are in the building, they have come in early to do things they can't get done while supervising children. Only an authorized adult may pick up your child from the Center. An authorized adult is one whose name is on the registration form as a parent/guardian or listed on the release form as authorized to pick up your child without notification. Anytime another adult will pick up your child you must fill out a release form, and please be sure your child and teacher know of your plans. In case of emergency, you may call a teacher to give verbal authorization, which will be acceptable if your voice is recognized.

General Communication

Besides calling/emailing the center to let us know when your child will be absent, we also encourage you to use the phone

whenever you have a question or concern about your child or the program, or when you just want to see how they are doing that day. If you have anything to discuss that will take more than a minute or two, the teacher may need to arrange to call you back at a mutually convenient time.

Parents Bulletin Board

There is a “parents” bulletin board in the lobby, which contains breakfast forms, medication forms, weekly menus, and any other important information we like to communicate about the center. Inside of each classroom there will be a schedule of the weekly lesson plans that your child will be involved in. Daily records are sent home via Tadpoles in all classrooms.

Message Boxes

Each child has a cubby or folder where projects, daily record sheets, messages, and bills are put. Please make a practice of checking it each time you pick up your child.

In the front lobby, there is a box where you may leave tuition payments and notes for the Director.

Parent Visits

We encourage you to visit our center anytime. You are welcome to observe your child during class time and to participate in any special activities arranged by the center.

However, in order to prevent disturbing the children during scheduled nap time, please avoid visits to your child between the hours of 12:30 – 2:30.

Child Care and Health

Clothing & Belongings

Please dress children in clothing appropriate for the season as we play outdoors every day except in extreme weather. Please include boots, waterproof mittens, hats, and snow pants for the winter.

Children should always have a full change of clothes including socks and underpants in their cubby. All clothing should be appropriate for active play and messy play. PLEASE LABEL anything that could be mixed up with another child's, especially outerwear.

Aside from a cuddly doll or stuffed animal for naptime or a special item to share on show & tell day, other articles from home should not be brought to the center because of the difficulties they create.

Diapers and Supplies

Parents must provide all diapers, wipes, and necessary ointment or cream. Disposable diapers are preferred.

Toileting

Wildwood Early Learning Center does not participate in toilet training until the age of two. Children over the age of 24 months will begin learning to use the toilet when the parents and teacher together feel your child is ready. Teachers will notify you if they see signs of readiness while your child is at the Center. When teaching toileting, teachers use a gentle approach with lots of positive reinforcement and a consistent routine.

Nap and Rest Time

Your child's day will be very full, so children up to the age of five years have a scheduled rest period for each day.

Each infant has his or her own crib in the room. Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep in a crib. The infants at Wildwood Early Learning Center are provided with a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards. There will be no pillows, quilts, bumpers, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other fluffy products in the crib. All infant bedding is provided by the center.

For the toddler and preschool age children the rest period is between 1-1/2 and 2 hours. All children are encouraged to rest

quietly during this time. Please send the following items to school for your child to use during nap time:

- 1 fitted sheet
- 1 small blanket
- 1 lovey or comfort item

Rest items should be labeled with your child's first and last name or initials with permanent ink. Cot sheets and blankets must be laundered weekly. Teachers will put all rest items in your child's bag and will place it in your child's cubby on Friday. Please retrieve items on Friday and bring them back on Monday.

Outdoor Play

Children play outdoors twice a day for at least a 30 minute period. When weather does not permit outdoor play the children participate in dancing, aerobics, marching, obstacle courses, and other active indoor games.

When picking up or dropping off your child while outside play, please use the gated walkway located toward the back exit of the building. No kitchen entrance and exit will be permitted.

Health Policies

When your child is sick, we try to prevent the spread of illnesses by asking you to keep your child at home if he/she has behavior that indicates illness such as: lack of energy, sleepiness, loss of appetite or severe congestion, had a fever, vomited or had diarrhea (two or more very loose stools) during the previous 24 hours.

For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection, he/she may return to day care immediately if he/she has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours. If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to care, please call your onsite director to discuss it. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor.

Symptoms requiring removal of child from day care:

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm,; (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to daycare, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.

- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

In case of emergency, Parents will be called immediately, not only if your child is sick, but also in case of an incident. Please see that our records are kept up-to-date on your location during the day. When parents or their designated alternate are unable to be reached in the case of an emergency, the staff will proceed with getting medical attention for the child as they see appropriate, as authorized by the registration form. We will, of course, document all that we do and continue trying to reach you.

Medical Updates

By State law, every child must be immunized as appropriate for his or her age, and have a health form from their doctor completed and returned before enrollment can begin. We also need to be informed when the child receives additional immunizations so that our records can be brought up-to-date.

Medications

We will administer medication to a child only with the dated, written permission of the parent(s) stating the length of time medication may be given. This information will be provided on a Medical Administration Authorization Form.

Prescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, instructions for administration, including the times and amounts for dosage, and the physician's name. All nonprescription medication shall be in the original container and labeled by the parent(s) with the child's name, and instructions for administration, including the times and amounts for dosages.

The date and time(s) of administration, the name of the teacher giving the medication, and the quantity of any medication given will be promptly recorded.

All medication will be stored out of reach of children.

Food and Nutrition

At Wildwood Early Learning Center, we offer breakfast (until 8:15am), a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack to all children ages 6 months and up. All meals and snacks are nutritious and meet state requirements for nutritious meals, snacks and methods of food service. Parent's of infants must prepare and provide all infant formula/breast milk and any additional baby food or finger food. Menus are available to all parents and are posted on the parent's communication board in the front lobby.

Allergies Please provide the Director with a detailed list of your child's allergies or any special dietary restrictions. A list of children with allergies will be posted in each classroom.

Guiding Children's Behavior

The techniques used at our Center are consistent with a positive, problem solving approach to classroom management. Our teachers understand children are not born knowing what is safe and appropriate to do. Children need years of practice and guidance. The teacher's job is to set age-appropriate limits to help children develop self-control and to provide a sense of security. When problems arise, the child's feelings and emotional needs must always be acknowledged and respected. Teachers will use several methods to teach discipline.

Teachers will establish clear and simple limits, so the children always know what is expected of them. Teachers will always be consistent, use the positive approach, talk in a calm, yet firm voice when enforcing rules, and reinforce positive behavior with praise. In the case of misbehavior, teachers will use the following techniques: redirect the child to an alternative activity, explain why the behavior needs to be corrected, help the child to find better solutions to his or her problems, and provide opportunities for the child to make amends. In all cases the inappropriate behavior is the target, not the child. A child may need to have a brief "time-out" to calm down in a quiet but supervised area if they totally lose their self-control, but this is used as the exception not as a rule after other methods have failed.

STAFF WILL NEVER USE ANY FORM OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT THAT MAY JEOPARDIZE CHILDREN'S MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH.

Safety and Security

As a licensed child care program and a professional in the field, the staff of Wildwood Early Learning Center is required to report any incidents of child abuse or neglect to state officials.

Emergency Procedures

In cases of emergency, Wildwood Early Learning Cemnter's staff will follow the following procedures:

- First aid will be administered immediately, as needed.
- A member of the staff will call 911. A member of the staff will stay with the child until emergency personnel has arrived.
- One staff member will accompany the child to the emergency room until the parent/guardian, or designated emergency, contact arrives.
- Parent/Guardian will be notified. If parent/guardian cannot be reached, emergency numbers will be called.

Evacuation Plan

In the event of an emergency, such as a building evacuation, it may be necessary for staff or emergency personnel to transport children. Staff regularly schedules practice emergency evacuations as required by state licensing regulations. Posted in each classroom is an emergency plan with telephone numbers and the center's emergency procedures.

Field Trips and Transportation

Many field trips are planned during the summer to build community involvement, learn from hands-on experience, and expand classroom experiences. The following procedures must be followed in order for your child to participate in field trips:

- Child must be four years old
- Staff must notify parents/guardians at least two weeks in advance of each field trip.
- Staff must send home permission slips that include the location, time, schedule, and any extra fees that must be collected. Permission slip must be signed and dated by a parent in order for the child to participate in the field trip.

Typical Day

We do not adhere to a rigid schedule of activities in any program, since part of operating a developmentally appropriate program is to be able to adapt to the changing needs of children. However, teachers do approach each day with a planned framework. Each age group has a different set of policies and a schedule that is available for you to view.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the center is based on research that indicates that children learn best by "doing" and re-creating their understanding of the world. The role of the teacher is to help children increase their understandings by supporting their explorations and gently challenging their misconceptions. Children are offered many opportunities to read, write, count, reason, create, and use their muscles during the day. The following content areas are included in Today's Children of Wildwood's curriculum:

Language Arts

Early literacy skills are taught through activities which include: multi-sensory activities, songs, story-telling, rhymes, finger plays, rhythm activities, puzzles, matching games, and exercises for hand and eye coordination. Other language development is supported through discussions, circle times, puppets, dressing up, story telling, and role play.

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Mathematics

Students will have many opportunities to practice pre-number skills during center time. They will develop math concepts through sorting, comparisons, sets, patterning and sequencing, recognition, counting and identification of numerals. Computation skills, as well as the skills of problem solving, measurement, fractions, space, and simple graphing will be introduced. We introduce basic math concepts through:

- Sorting by shape, color, and size
- Finding and building patterns
- Sequencing
- Counting games
- Number songs
- Literature
- Construction toys and materials

Social Studies and Science

Social Studies/Science topics are integrated into the curriculum during hands-on activities, small group projects, and centers. Emphasis is placed on developing inquiry skills such as questioning, obtaining and using information, making decisions, and communicating.

We develop the child's understanding of his responsibility toward living and non-living things through:

- Exploration

- Experimentation
- Discovery

Positive behavior is reinforced and encouraged. Teachers use this time to gather information about the children's interests, knowledge, and learning styles, which they will use to plan future lessons.

Circle Time

Each day, children will be involved in circle time activities and center time. Teachers develop short activities during circle time to support the development of children's listening skills, cooperative skills, verbal language skills, self-confidence, conflict resolution skills, literacy appreciation, and social skills.

Center Time

Center time is an important part of the school day. Teachers are an active part of center time. While children are exploring activities of their choice, teachers observe their choices and encourage independence and cooperation. Center activities include:

- Language/Library
- Arts and Crafts
- Manipulatives/Math
- Science and Sensory
- Housekeeping/Dramatic Play
- Action Play
- Music
- Construction/Blocks.