

Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC



Where a love for learning begins

Parent Handbook

(610-273-1200)

Revised September 2021

Introduction

Thank you for choosing Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC. It is our goal to exceed your expectations with a high quality level of care for your children. We look forward to serving you and your family with a place like home where your children can grow and learn.

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are designed for the benefit and the protection of parents and children, as well as Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC. We are a licensed center through the Department of Public Welfare and enrolled in the Keystone Stars program. Our staff receives annual training in Early Childhood Education.

Our center is committed to human rights, dignity of the individual, and social justice. We strive to create a program that truly reflects the lives of our children, families, staff and community. By recognizing the impact culture plays on families, we will make every effort to provide culturally responsive child care, by affirming human differences and the right of people to make choices about their own lifestyles. We seek to recognize, appreciate, and respect the uniqueness of each child.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, sex, or handicap. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance, and Department of Public Welfare and/or PA Human Relations Commission.

We value open communication between our center and our parents. Please address any questions, comments or concerns to the director or staff person involved.

Please read this handbook carefully and observe the policies and procedures of Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC. We will strictly uphold the rules as stated in this handbook.

About Us

WHO ARE WE?

Alicia Ford, Director/Owner, is a graduate of Millersville University holding a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with a concentration in Early Childhood Education. Her experience ranges from over nine years in a childcare setting, directing a summer day camp, to three years of classroom teaching. It has been her dream to build a school of her own in which she can influence the lives of many children versus a single classroom. She possesses the qualities of a strong leader with the education and genuine desire to bring out the best in every child. This center has been operating under her direction since November 2014.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Daily lessons and story time are just a small part of our day. Our philosophy is based on the need to foster your child's growth in exploration and discovery with hands-on learning activities and enriching experiences while encouraging independence with a guiding hand. The best kind of learning is active and your child's natural development of a love for learning is our passion. We believe that every child has the right and the ability to learn and can be successful in a supportive environment. We aim to support and engage children of all developmental levels and strive to make sure that all children are able to be included in our program.

At HONEY BROOK EARLY LEARNING CENTER, LLC...

PLAY IS OUR WORK

Policies

TUITION

1. There is a one-time registration fee of \$100 per child at enrollment.
2. Tuition is based on your child's age. Please refer to the current Tuition Schedule.
3. A multi child discount will be applied to the attending sibling that is the oldest or is the lesser of the tuitions. Discount of 10% will be applied only to a sibling of whom they share a biological mother or father.
4. Tuition may be paid in check, cash, credit card, automatic bank draw, or money order.
5. Tuition checks may not be postdated. This would be considered a late payment and may incur a late fee.
6. If it should be necessary to raise our rates at any time during the year, you will be given a 2 week notice.
7. Tuition is due during hours of operation on Monday or the first day of attendance each week. Any payment made after this time may incur a \$10 late fee. This late fee is imposed regardless of any excuses. Including but not limited to: forgetfulness, someone else dropping off child, forgot check book, etc. Failure to make payments as scheduled will be followed with a payment plan agreement. If terms of agreement are not kept, care may be temporarily suspended until balance is paid in full. If child is absent due to illness, tuition is due on the first day child returns to the center.
8. Our hours of operation are Monday-Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm. *There is a late pick-up charge of \$2.00 per minute after 6:00 pm. Calling to say you're late does not excuse late charges.* However, we do appreciate your call so that your child does not become worried or upset. *Payment of late pick-up charge is due at this time of pick-up.* This would be payable to the staff on duty. Do not combine with tuition payment. Repeat offenders will meet with Director to remedy the situation. Parents are expected to abide by the established drop off/pick up times as agreed upon on their financial agreement.
9. Full tuition is to be paid even when your child is absent unless a vacation week is being used or closure credits have been issued by the center.
10. Parent must guarantee the center a minimum of days per week that their child will be attending. Parents are responsible for payment of the guaranteed days. If the number of the guaranteed days or hours proves not to be consistent over a period of time, the agreement contract will be changed upon Director's discretion.

11. Each child is entitled to a “vacation week”. You are able to use one "Vacation Week" per year, per child. The year running September to September. Only one "Vacation Week" is given per child, per year, regardless if tuition is, or was shared, or the responsibility of other parties prior to taking a "Vacation Week". It is the parent's responsibility to notify staff to verify and document the "Vacation Week". Notification must be done in writing and approved by the director prior to absence. Please use “Vacation Request Form”.
12. **RETURNED CHECKS:** The charge for a returned check is \$40.00. After you have been notified of the returned check, payment to replace check and \$40.00 fee is due the next day your child returns to the center. If more than 2 checks have been returned, only cash, credit card, or money order will be accepted for future tuition payments.
13. **SCHOOL AGE:** During the public school year, School Age children may attend the center in the following sessions: before school or after school, or both before and after school. Tuition for school-age students is a flat rate for morning care and afternoon care and a guaranteed schedule must be established. In the event of a delayed opening, school closure, or early dismissal from school, tuition for a school age child who is enrolled part time will be adjusted to cover the additional care. Those who are already full time will not be required to pay a higher fee. Payment is due according to your financial agreement regardless of the school district closing schedule. School Age summer program fees will be based on the amount of times your child will attend and must be scheduled to attend a minimum of 20 days throughout the summer. A minimum of 20 days must be paid for. If schools should resort to remote learning during the school year, we will adjust our tuition to accommodate students on a full time basis and aid them with their schooling. Further guidance will be given in the event that this care becomes needed.
14. **Subsidized Care-** The Early Learning Resource Center provides subsidy payments for families in need of help paying for childcare. Please visit <http://www.philadelphiachildcare.org/> to find out if you are eligible. We are a center that accepts subsidy payments. Families receiving subsidy are required to pay their co pay on a weekly basis or childcare services will not be continued. If subsidy payments do not meet our scheduled tuition amounts, families will be responsible to pay the difference as well as any additional fees that subsidy does not cover.

ENROLLMENT

1. At time of initial registration, parents are required to fill out state forms, which contain important information, which could be vital in the case of an emergency. Child will not be enrolled until ALL forms are completed in their entirety.

2. Every 6 months we are required to update our files, in December and June. However, please keep in mind that any of your information that changes in the meantime should be updated immediately. (Ex. telephone numbers including cell numbers and addresses for work and home)
3. Termination of childcare must be in writing and given with at least a 2 week notice.
4. Child's records will be transferred to new schools or programs in accordance with the parent's or legal guardian's written request. After verification of parent's request, a copy of the child's records will be sent to the new school.
5. Upon enrollment, parents will be given access to the Procure system. Parents are required to sign their children in and out every day and may use this system to track payments and necessary paperwork. When given access codes, parents should not share these with anyone else. They are confidential and vital to our security.
6. Within 45 days of enrollment, your child will receive an initial developmental assessment which will be shared with you and a conference will be offered.
7. Semiannual conferences will be offered in December and June. During these conferences, teachers will go over Child Service Reports and ASQ developmental reports. Conferences will also be held as needed and as requested by the parent.

GENERAL

(DRESS, SAFETY, ABSENCES, CLOSINGS)

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, AND DRUG USE IS PROHIBITED ON THIS PROPERTY.

1. Please dress children comfortably, allowing for activity of movement and getting messy during outside play and craft time. Please try to avoid dressing your child in clothing that is difficult for them to get off quickly or by themselves, such as overalls, bodysuits, etc. Sometimes kids wait until the last minute to get to the bathroom and they are not able to get clothing off in time.
2. Outside play is a scheduled part of our routine (weather permitting). Please make sure your child wears appropriate play shoes and suitable outerwear for weather conditions. According to regulations set by the Department of Human Services, we are able to take the children outside when the real feel is above 25 degrees Fahrenheit and below 90 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Please keep 2 changes of seasonal clothing in your child's cubby for use as needed.
4. Items brought from home are not the responsibility of the classroom teacher or HBELC staff in any form and should generally be left at home.

5. The center cannot be responsible for the results of a forcible or violent intruder. Staff are trained to react in a way that they feel will protect the safety of the children and themselves. Questions about our emergency operations can be directed to the director.
6. Parent must accompany their child, regardless of age, into the classroom, then see that child has been checked in, or acknowledged by a staff member. At pick up, parents should inform the appropriate staff person that they are leaving with the child. Please be sure to take precautions leaving the building and entering the driveway.
7. Turn engines off when not in vehicle. Please do not park in front of the door or diagonally.
8. Release of children: If someone other than natural parents or legal guardian will be picking up your child, please notify us in advance with a note or a phone call. Phone calls for pickups of persons not listed on emergency contact sheet will be verified with a call back from our staff. Notification is required whether or not that person is listed on your emergency contact form.
9. Department of Human Services further clarifies requirements regarding release of a child. In reference to "the child's parent", means the enrolling parent or both parents. Both parents have the right of release of his or her own child unless there is a court order that does not allow the release to one of the parents.
10. Parents arriving at the center between 8:30 and 8:45 A.M., please be aware that the public school bus will be picking up children. Please do not try pulling into our driveway before the school bus stops. If you see the school bus coming, please be patient and wait for the children to load.
11. Every month you will receive an electronic newsletter. These newsletters contain important information about your child's class events, new policies and changes, important notices, vacation dates, and more. Please keep your email address up to date.
12. Closings: On occasion, it may be necessary to close the center due to unforeseen events beyond our control (typically snow). Please be sure to check our Facebook page and your email for updates.
13. Absences: Please be sure to notify the center when your children will be absent. As a reminder, when a child is absent voluntarily or due to sickness, tuition remains the same and payment is expected on the first day back.

14. Parent involvement: We appreciate and encourage parental help and involvement. There are times when we could use a couple of extra hands for special occasions or just because. Some ways to be involved include but are not limited to:
 - * Read stories
 - *Share a hobby
 - *Lead an activity in which you love (woodworking, cooking, music, etc)
 - *Attend parent/teacher conferences

15. We offer infant through school-age childcare and each are cared for in separate rooms. Please use the following procedures for access to your children and the office:
 - * **Infant parents** enter through the right door in lobby and remove shoes or use booties before entering infant room.
 - * **Toddler parents** may enter by way of infant room. Please remember that no shoes are allowed in the infant/toddler rooms.
 - * **Older Toddler parents** enter through the infant room.
 - * **Preschool parents** enter through the 2nd door on the left once in the school age room.
 - * **School age parents** enter through the lobby door.

16. Each child who becomes eligible for enrollment into a new room within our center will receive a transition period as determined by the administration, teachers, and parents. Prior to the transition period, parents will be made aware that such a transition will be happening via a written letter. A child who is eligible to transition to the next classroom will be supported by the separating and receiving teacher in a cooperative effort to make the child feel comfortable in their new space.

HEALTH

Our policies and practices for care plans of children with special needs, asthma, medical needs, food allergies, and medication administration are based on the ideas and policies put forth by the Caring for our Children manuals. We also utilize the manual for guidance with how to handle other health and safety situations.

1. All enrolled children must have a health assessment completed by a physician within 30 days. The health assessment is regularly, depending on the age of your child. When health form expires, you must obtain another form to be completed by physician.

2. Children who are sick need rest and care. Please do not send sick children to the center. If child becomes ill at the center, we will call parent or emergency contact person to pick up the child.

3. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Department of Human Services, each child should have a period of outdoor activity, daily. If child is too sick to participate, then child should not attend center until he/she is able to participate

in both indoor and outdoor activities.

4. If your child has symptoms of illness of any kind, they should be discussed with the Director and a decision will be made about whether or not your child can remain in group care. HBELC has the right to refuse care while child is ill in the best interest of all children and staff.
7. **ASTHMA-** children may participate in activities, however, parents need to supply us with description of severity, and treatment including medications and any other procedures.
8. **MEDICATION-** we can only administer medication to your child with the following provisions:
 - *a medication permission slip must be filled out and signed by parent
 - *medication shall be given directly to staff person, never to be left in the hands or belongings of a child.
 - *If medication is liquid and needs to be measured, please send along medication measuring spoon or cup as we do not keep these on hand.
 - *medication is to be in original container with identifying information specifically for your child.
 - *Over the counter medication must be labeled with child's name and fill in medication form for dosage. (This also applies to lip balm, cough drops, topical cream, sun screen etc, please fill out form)Medication must be left with a staff person, not the child.
 - *We do not provide over the counter medication. Parents must provide these on an as needed basis.
9. It is vital that we have current, up-to-date medical emergency information in your child's file. If any changes occur, please notify center.
10. Immunizations: Children must be up to date with installment and booster immunizations as recommended by the AAP unless a valid exemption form is provided.
11. Emergency medical care: If emergency medical care is needed for a child, the parent shall be contacted as soon as practical, in the best interest of the child. A staff person shall accompany a child to a source of emergency care, and shall remain with child until the parent assumes responsibility for the child's care.
12. Hygiene: All children shall wash their hands upon entrance to their classroom, after toileting, and before eating. Parents are also encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands upon entrance of our center.
13. All of our staff are trained in First Aid and CPR within their first year of employment and recertify every 2 years.

14.

INCLUSION STATEMENT

We will provide every family with a developmental assessment within the first 45 days of enrollment and then again, every 6 months. Based on our assessment, we may discuss with you next steps to further investigate any “red flag” that appears during our assessment. We will be using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire for an in-depth picture of the development of your child. In the event that a child is in need of further developmental services beyond our personal capabilities, we will work with the BCIU and CCIU and other local programs to accommodate your child to the best of our ability. Our staff will participate in inclusion-based trainings (when they are available) to learn how to take full advantage of having a child with a disability participate within our classrooms and how to implement activities that are accommodating for all children.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION STATEMENT

It is our goal to work to meet the needs of every child in our care. This includes the struggles that may come with behaviors that might typically result in suspension or expulsion from care. We understand that children come from many different backgrounds and cultures, and to that point, we will work with parents to gain a good understanding of each child’s needs and how to properly help them be successful in the classroom. Acts of aggression and violence towards classmates, staff, or property will be met with patience, understanding, and a willingness to work with parents/guardians to put in place a behavior management program unique to that child. With cooperation from families, we expect to be successful with behavior redirection and correction. Should a child or family be so unwilling to cooperate that physical aggression and violence continues and puts others or our property in jeopardy, we will immediately conduct another meeting with the necessary parties to evaluate further actions. If meetings and established programs are unsuccessful, ultimate consequence of referral to new care may be discussed.

GENERAL CHILDCARE POLICIES

1. Childcare is available for children 6 weeks to 12 years of age.
3. If the center is closed due to weather or a holiday, tuition will not be charged for that day.
4. Our center will open at 6am and close at 6pm Monday through Friday. Our staff may arrive earlier than 6 am to prepare. If you are also at the center, you may not enter until 6:00am. Please wait in your car until the doors are opened for you.
7. Lunch: Children attending our center need to bring a packed lunch, complete with a drink. Please make sure lunches are well balanced and healthy. Please try to avoid excessive sugar and encourage healthy eating habits by sending nutritious foods. Lunches may be kept in our refrigerators. Please label child's name on lunch bags and thermoses and keep these items clean by washing them daily. Please pack utensils and any other items they need. Lunch time is hectic, so please prepare the food in advance the best that you can. (Ex. cut/peel fruit when packing the lunch if this is what your child needs) We will heat food to take the chill off, but cannot cook microwaveable meals due to the length of time required to prepare. *WE ARE A NUT FREE FACILITY. WE WILL NOT SERVE ANY PRODUCTS THAT INDICATE POSSIBLE CONTAMINATION WITH NUTS.*
8. All children will have a rest period after lunch. All children need to bring a blanket/pillow if desired. Please label these items with child's name. Blankets and pillows will be sent home weekly for laundering.
**It is settling for some children to have their backs rubbed or patted during nap time. Please instruct teachers otherwise if this is not something you wish for your child.*
9. Please be sure to check your child's cubby daily for important information, crafts and other belongings.
10. Children who display any physical aggression or emotional threats to others or destruction of property will require supportive resources. A parent conference will be requested and a plan for success/support will be put into place.
11. Drop-in care will be available on an as need basis and with advance notification. Anyone using this service is required to keep files up to date with health and contact information just as any other enrolled child.
12. School age: If your child is sick, or sent home from the elementary school due to illness, your child also cannot receive child care. If your school age child will not be on the bus after school, please make sure to let us know. We will call you if they are not on the bus as scheduled to confirm their whereabouts.

13. HBELC will provide a morning and afternoon snack for all enrolled children.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN:

The following information is to assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of children attending the Honey Brook Early Learning Center. Our Emergency Operations Plan provides a response to various types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions.

- **Immediate Evacuation**- children are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the center in the event of a fire, etc.
- **In-Place Sheltering**- sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- **Evacuation**- total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to our relocation facility, Honey Brook Presbyterian Church. Staff will inform you by phone once children are safe at the relocation facility and by a posted notice on **the front door of the center listing which relocation facility is being used.**
- **Modified Operation**- may include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems that make it unsafe for children (such as a utility disruption), but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

We ask that you DO NOT call during an emergency. This will keep the telephone free to make emergency calls and relay information. We will call you to let you know that we have taken one of these protective actions. We will also call you when we have resolved the situation and it is safe for you to pick up your child.

Children will only be released to designated people listed on the authorized Emergency Contact Form. Please feel free to review your child's emergency contact form for any changes. This form will be used every time your child is released. Please ensure that only those persons you list on the form attempt to pick up your child.

We specifically urge you NOT to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, we ask for your understanding and cooperation. Should you have any additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures, please feel free to contact us during our hours of operation.

NON-COMPETE

Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC invests significant time, money and resources in screening, educating and training employees. Employees have access to confidential business information and proprietary methods that are the sole and exclusive property of Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC.

Please respect that we ask our staff to sign a non-compete agreement for a period of 1 year after leaving employment with us.

While employees may provide occasional babysitting services during non-business hours, employees are specifically forbidden from:

1. Opening home daycares
2. Accepting nanny positions from current clients of HBELC or parents who have been clients of HBELC during their employment
3. Soliciting HBELC clients for any other daycare provider.

Such acts could have a damaging impact on Honey Brook Early Learning Center, LLC. Former employees who violate their agreements are financially responsible for any losses HBELC may incur as a result of their actions.

HONEY BROOK EARLY LEARNING CENTER

*****PLEASE READ AND RETURN THIS PAGE ONLY*****

This handbook contains policies and procedures to help create a friendly environment for all. PLEASE read it in its entirety.

It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to read and abide by the provisions set forth in this policy. HBELC will also uphold the contents of this policy.

After reading the policy, please initial that you have read each section and contact us with any further questions.

Please initial indicating you have read each section:

Tuition: _____
Enrollment: _____
General: _____
Health: _____
Emergency Operating Plan: _____

Please sign below and return this page to HBELC to verify that you have received a handbook and that you have read the policies.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
Child's Name: _____