



Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.

Helping Curious Minds Discover & Grow

**Personnel
Policies & Procedures**

WELCOME

Welcome to the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. family. We are proud to have you as a member of our staff. Each employee is selected because of special qualities, talents, and skills needed to create a well-balanced teaching and support staff. You should be proud of your role at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., and we depend on you to enhance the reputation of the center as an outstanding educational environment for young children. This handbook is intended as an initial guide for employee conduct. However, staff training and ongoing professional development will be provided to help guide your decision-making.

CENTER VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

OUR VISION STATEMENT

To stand out as a leader in exceptional early childhood education

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure every child thrives!

OUR CORE VALUES

1. We instill a solid social emotional foundation!
2. We believe every child can learn!
3. We celebrate each person's unique gifts!
4. We are solution focused!
5. We are lifelong learners!
6. We build strong partnerships with families!

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is a full day early childhood learning center that is committed towards providing top-rated child-care services coupled with a high-quality activity-based learning curriculum. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is dedicated to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children. Parents will feel comforted knowing that their child is spending his/her day in a place where he/she is encouraged to grow and learn at his/her own pace.

We believe that all children can learn; it is our job to create a setting where children's natural *Approaches to Learning* (Curiosity, Initiative, Engagement, and Creativity) are encouraged and built upon. We believe that children learn best by doing. A facilitated, activity-based setting provides children with opportunities to learn about their world through hands on experiences. Activities at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. encourage exploration and development of children's innate curiosity.

We consider Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. a small community; a safe place where children, staff, and families work together as partners; a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging; a place where everyone is respected and celebrated for their diversity as well as their common bonds.

OWNER BACKGROUND

The owner, Erin Medlar, holds a Dual Master's Degree of Science in Literacy/ Special Education from the University at Albany. She is New York State certified to teach in the following areas: Elementary Education (1-6), Early Elementary Education (B-2), Special Education (1-6) and Literacy (B-6). She also holds the School Building Leader Advanced Certification and the School District Leader advanced certification. She has over fifteen years of public and private school teaching experience, working with children from diverse backgrounds with a variety of needs. Mrs. Medlar believes that every child can learn and that it is her responsibility to decipher how each child learns best and to modify the classroom environment to meet those specific needs. Children are our best teachers, and Mrs. Medlar enjoys

learning from them every day. Mrs. Medlar resides in Churchville with her husband Mike and her two children, Nicholas and Zackary.

HISTORY OF IMAGINATION CHILDCARE ACADEMY, INC.

Prior to relocating to the Rochester area, we lived in Scotia, NY. When my son, Nicholas, was four months old, he was placed into the Schenectady County Early Intervention Program, because he was not tracking objects and had difficulty learning new concepts.

At first, a special education teacher came to the house and worked with Nicholas on a weekly basis. After a few months, his teacher suggested that he should work with a physical therapist, as he was having sensory issues and had difficulty learning to crawl. Then, a few months passed and his teachers recommended that he have a speech pathologist work with him, as he was delayed with his speech patterns. A few more months passed by and the teachers and I decided that Nicholas needed more exposure to all of these skills on a daily basis in order for him to progress. The teachers recommended a preschool that was fully integrated with all children. The program consisted of a two hour daily preschool program, which included a special education teacher, a speech therapist, and an occupational therapist. After the pre-school program, parents could opt to have wrap-around daycare included.

This school was incredible. Every day Nicholas and I walked into those doors, he was greeted by name, with love and excitement by every staff member he encountered, including the secretaries and the custodian. He was excited to go to school, making mornings a breeze. Every moment of the day was purposely planned for developmentally appropriate learning. Every time I walked in, regardless of the time of day, the children were learning. Even in the morning, with us being the first people to walk in the door, there were planned fine motor activities on the table (ex. different color bears, with tweezers and color-coded bowls for them to sort the bears) waiting for the children to explore. Nicholas attended this program for about six months, and then he tested out of the Early Intervention Program, though he continued to attend the school until we relocated to Rochester.

Shortly after moving to Rochester, my husband and I began looking for a daycare that was close to home that would provide Nicholas with the same experiences as his old school. I was saddened to learn that these schools are few and far to come by on the West Side of Rochester. We visited several daycares. We found most to be more focused on play, rather than facilitated learning. Many times, we observed the staff sitting next to each other talking, rather than interacting with the children and promoting language building opportunities. Inside the facilities, there were few spaces where children could go to move around, in cases of inclement weather. Some facilities prided themselves in the fact that they offered a writing curriculum for three-year-olds, including oodles of worksheets.

A few months later, I had the amazing opportunity to visit the Strong Museum of Play. I was so impressed with how the museum found ways to provide natural learning experiences for all age groups to discover and explore. Literacy opportunities were in every direction: books, paper, writing utensils, words all over the walls to explain what's happening in the environment (up, down, in, out, loud, quiet). There were multiple opportunities for children to use imaginative play: The Wegmans, the restaurant in the Bernstein Bears section, the helicopter, Sesame Street, and Giant's land, the assembly line, etc. There were vast amounts of exhibits that encouraged children to explore with science, math, music and art. I left the museum that day thinking...wow...what an amazing place for kids to go and learn.

I began to think...what if I created my own learning center, which incorporated all the things I loved about Nicholas' old school, some of the concepts from Strong Museum, and some of my own ideas:

- A warm, nurturing environment where all children would feel respected and loved

- A full day of purposefully planned hands-on experiences that promote literacy, science, math, social studies and technology
- A large indoor arena where children could move around safely and use imaginative play (bakery, restaurant, grocery store auto mechanic)
- A place where parents are considered to be experts on their own children and encouraged to work as partners with the teachers and staff
- A facility that is designed to nurture children's imaginations, helping them discover and grow
- A place where literacy is integrated throughout all parts of the daily routine

This is how Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. was born! The name encompasses all we stand for. We want children to use their imaginations to learn about the world around them. We create an environment that facilitates this learning by modeling and by providing the children with the tools they need to be successful.

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to arrive at LEAST TEN MINUTES BEFORE your shift begins so that you are in the classroom and ready to work with the children as soon as your shift begins. For every 5 minutes you are late for your shift, your pay will be reduced by 15 minutes. This is to adjust for the ACTUAL time you are working in the classroom. Scheduling is critical to the smooth operation of our center and every minute is accounted for. You will be expected to schedule your personal appointments during your personal time.

In case of illness or an emergency causing an employee to be absent from work, such circumstances shall be reported to the director by 5:30am of the scheduled work day begins. Failure to give this notice will result in the employee being charged with an unexcused (unpaid) absence. Excessive absences will result in disciplinary action, up to, and including termination. All staff schedules are posted in the office. Hours of work are subject to change by administration to meet the needs of our families.

***ANY REQUESTS FOR DAYS OFF MUST BE GIVEN IN WRITING TO THE DIRECTOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE FOR APPROVAL.**

Breaks/Lunch Scheduling

All staff schedules are posted in the office. Deviations from the normal schedule may be required. Adjustments may be made with respect to any employee's schedule by the director so that the total hours worked per week do not exceed forty. Overtime must be approved by the director in advance.

The normal work week for all full-time employees consists of five working days, Monday through Friday, of nine hours each and a one-hour un-paid lunch break. All Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. employees are expected to adhere to the stated working hours.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Imagination Childcare Academy uses the Pyramid Model framework as a guide to develop social emotional competence in young children.

The Pyramid Model builds upon a three-tiered approach to providing universal supports to all children to promote wellness, targeted services to those who need more support, and intensive services to those who need them.

We depict our tiered approach as a pyramid with a:

- **Yellow Foundation:** The foundation for all of the practices in the pyramid are the **systems and policies** necessary to ensure a workforce is able to adopt and sustain these evidence-based practices.
- **Blue Tier : Universal supports** for all children through nurturing and responsive relationships and high quality environments.
- **Green Tier : Prevention** which represents practices that are targeted social emotional strategies to prevent problems.
- **Red Tier: Intervention** which is comprised of practices related to individualized intensive interventions.



Encouraging Children To Get Along With Others

Imagination Childcare Academy is committed to providing a safe, loving, and stimulating environment for all children. Our ultimate goal is to help children achieve self-regulation skills and to teach children how to solve their own problems.

The staff will be supportive, firm and consistent in their approach to maintain a positive learning environment. Some techniques the staff will use to encourage the children to solve their own problems are; providing choices, redirecting a child to an alternate activity, encouraging children to talk about their feelings by using active listening, and by modeling appropriate behavior when speaking and interacting with children and adults.

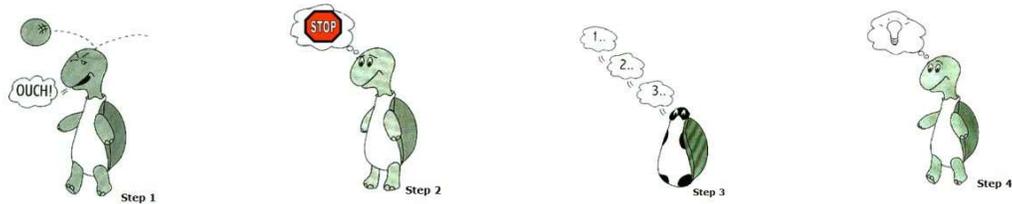
Children learn through observation. As teachers, we model the behaviors that we want our students to exhibit. We use kind words, share with others, and cooperate with all children and adults. By doing this, we teach children how to hear, listen, understand feelings, apologize, and to interact appropriately with others.

Responding To Difficult Behaviors

Our goal is to create an environment that minimizes the need for disciplinary action and increases every child's social emotional competency. We facilitate this goal in two ways: Using the Pyramid Model approach to behavior management (foreseeing and redirecting potential problems before they arise) and providing engaging developmentally appropriate instruction.

As children engage in inappropriate behaviors, teachers will

- 1st- Try to specifically praise others for engaging in the appropriate behavior.
- 2nd- The teacher will give the child a gentle reminder of what the appropriate behavior is by pointing to the visually displayed classroom rules.
- 3rd- The teacher will redirect the child by providing alternative choices.
- 4th- Tucker Time



Our teachers will have children take time in the thinking spot (a place within adult supervision but away from group activities) where children are encouraged to take as long as they need to reflect on how they are feeling and how those feelings affect their behavior.

- 5th-When children feel they are calm and ready to return to the group, the teacher briefly discusses the inappropriate behavior and brainstorms with the child some suggestions for a

replacement behavior. Then, when the child feels he/she is ready to return to the group, he/she may.

Example:

A child is refusing to help pick up the toys that he/she was playing with.

- 1st-Teacher observes other children picking up and praises them for their cooperation.
- 2nd- Teacher asks the child to help her pick up (the teacher places a few items in the bin).
- 3rd- Teacher provides the child with a choice: (once you put these toys away, we can move on to the next fun activity)
- 4th- Tucker Time (Stop, Tuck, Think) Go sit down in the thinking spot, and as soon as you are ready to put the toys away, let me know and I will help you. (Teacher attends to the other child and engages in the next activity).
- 5th- Once the child complies, praise the child for the specific behavior (I see you picking up the toys...Nice work). Then talk about what happened and what could have been done differently. Remind the child that you are proud of him/her for making a good choice.

Helping Children Solve Their Own Problems

We use the Pyramid Model approach to conflict management, which encourages children to think of their own solutions to problems and to consider what the consequences of those solutions will be. We teach a variety of solutions to children, so that when conflict arises they are more prepared to handle those situations. The solutions we teach are as follows:

1. Get a teacher
2. Ask Nicely
3. Ignore
4. Wait and Take Turns
5. Share
6. Play together
7. Say "Please", "Stop"
8. Trade

For example, a child is upset because another child took his/her toy. The child comes up to a teacher crying and says "Tommy took my toy."

Step one: Show Empathy:

- "I bet that made you sad huh?" (*Then, listen to what the child says*)

Step Two: Send the "Power Message."

- "What do you think you should do about it?" (*Have the child brainstorm suggestions. If the child has difficulty coming up with some appropriate solutions, offer some alternatives*)

Step Three: Offer choices.

- "Would you like to hear what other kids have tried?"

At this point, offer a variety of choices that range from bad to good. It's usually best to start out with the poor choices. Each time a choice is offered, go on to step four, forcing the youngster to state the

consequence in his/her own words. This means that you will be going back and forth between Love and Logic steps three and four.

Step Four: Have the child state the consequences.

- "And how do you think will that work?"

Step Five: Put ideas into practice

- "Good luck. I hope it works out."

Step Six: Follow up

- "How did it work"? So, next time if this happens you'll know just what to do."

Setting Up The Classroom To Encourage Acceptable Behavior

The classroom will be broken up into learning areas: building, writing/art, reading/ listening, dramatic play, science & technology. All areas of the classroom will have ample amounts of toys and supplies for children to support their emotional development. Children will be shown how to use materials appropriately and given multiple opportunities to practice using these tools. There are also visual expectations posted throughout the classroom.

We seek to build children's self-esteem by helping them develop self control and responsibility for their own actions. Since our goal is to help each child achieve self regulation skills, we set a few simple, understandable guidelines that set the limits of behavior for the safety and protection of all children. We show children what they should do, rather than tell them what they shouldn't do. Our center rules, that all staff and students are expected to follow are: Be Safe, Be Kind, and Be Responsible.

We show children what each rule looks like. For example, to be safe, we practice walking through the classroom, holding the railing down the stairs and washing our hands properly. To be kind we practice saying kind words to get what we want, taking turns, doing things for others. To teach responsibility we practice putting toys away, hanging up our belongings, and finishing things we have started.

Varying Discipline Techniques For Different Developmental Levels

Some children may need more assistance with problem solving than others. Each child will be given the appropriate amount of scaffolding from adults to help them reach their fullest social/emotional potential.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT TEAM PROCESS

1. Build a Behavior Support Team

PBS begins by developing a team of the key stakeholders or individuals who are most involved in the child's life. This team should include the family and early educator, but also may include friends, other family members, therapists, and other instructional or administrative personnel. Team members collaborate in multiple ways in order to develop, implement, and monitor a child's support plan. When developing a behavior support team one must ask the four following questions:

Who are the key stakeholders and individuals in this child's life?

Why is collaborative teaming a key element of PBS for this child?

What do we need to do to make this a successful collaborative experience that will benefit the child and family?

How are we going to promote the active participation of the family and all team members in the behavior support planning process?

2. Discuss Concerns with Parents and Explain the Behavioral Support Process

Get input from parents/caregivers as to whether these behaviors are seen at home and what happens when they engage in these behaviors at home. Let them know that we will be working as a team to see if we can come up with some strategies to help replace the problem behavior with new skills.

3. Collect Data for Two Weeks

(Date, Time, Setting, What Happened Before, Problem Behavior, and Consequence) using BIR forms

4. Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessment with Behavioral Support Team

Functional assessment is a process for determining the function of the child's problem behavior. Functional Assessment or Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) involves the collection of data, observations, and information to develop a clear understanding of the relationship of events and circumstances that trigger and maintain problem behavior.

The goal of functional behavioral assessment is to identify the function of the child's behavior—the reason or purpose why a child behaves as he/she does in specific situations. The process involves collecting information through the use of direct observations, interviews, record reviews (e.g., school and/or medical records, lesson plans, individualized education plans), and behavior rating scales. This information is used to understand patterns of the child's challenging behavior—the ecological events or conditions that increase the likelihood of challenging behavior (i.e., setting events), what happens before the behavior occurs (i.e., triggers or antecedents), what the behavior looks like (i.e., the behavior), and what happens after the challenging behavior occurs (i.e., consequences). Once collected, the information is analyzed to determine the specific function or purpose of the challenging behavior—whether it occurs in order for the child to obtain something (e.g., attention, object, activity) or to escape something (e.g., demands, activities, social interactions) (Carr et al., 1994; O'Neill et al., 1997). The process is complete when there is enough information that will lead to the development of hypotheses or summary statements (Hieneman et al., 1999) that represent the behavior support team's best guess or prediction as to what conditions reliably predict the occurrence of the child's challenging behavior.

After two weeks, meet again with team to read through data to determine the function of the behavior and to brainstorm some intervention strategies to replace the behavior.

5. Develop a Hypothesis with The Behavioral Support Team

The functional assessment process is completed with the development of a behavior hypothesis statement. The behavior hypothesis statements summarize what is known about triggers, behaviors, and maintaining consequences and offers an informed guess about the purpose of the problem behavior.

Once a functional assessment is complete, the next step is to develop a hypothesis statement—a prediction or "best guess" of the function or reason a child's challenging behavior occurs. This includes a description of the child's challenging behavior (i.e., what the behavior looks like), information about the specific predictors or triggers that occurred before the child exhibited challenging behavior, the perceived purpose or function of the child's behavior, as well as the maintaining consequences that followed. Predictors include both what conditions immediately precede the child's behavior, as well as any setting events that may be presumed to increase the likelihood of the challenging behavior's occurrence (e.g., lack of sleep, allergies/illnesses, social and interactional factors). Hypothesis development is a critically important step toward developing interventions that are directly linked to the function of the child's challenging behavior (O'Neill et al., 1997).

Very young children have brief learning histories (Dunlap & Fox, 1996). In many cases, those with a limited repertoire of behavior will often use one behavior for several different purposes. For example, children often use a general tantrum (prolonged screaming, crying, pulling away) for multiple functions (e.g., request object and escape transition). Therefore, when sorting out hypotheses the support team should address all of the circumstances in which challenging behavior occurs rather than trying to match an individual function to each challenging behavior.

Once the behavior support team identifies its hypotheses, attention should be paid to the way by which hypotheses are written. They should be carefully written either as a series of sentences that include each component (e.g., description, predictors, purpose, maintaining consequences), or as a "when...then" or "if...then" statement (Hieneman et al., 1999). Remember the more clearly articulated the hypothesis, the more likely the hypothesis will clearly communicate the team's understanding of the child's challenging behavior.

6. Develop a Behavior Support Plan

Once behavior hypotheses statements are developed to summarize the data gathered from the functional assessment process, the team can develop a behavior support plan. Essential components of the behavior support plan are prevention strategies, the instruction of replacement skills, new ways to respond to problem behavior, and lifestyle outcome goals.

The behavior support plan represents the culmination of the assessment process. Typically developed in connection with person-centered planning, the behavior support plan is the team's action plan outlining the specific steps to be used to promote the child's success and participation in daily activities and routines. In order to be most effective, behavior support plans should be both carefully developed and clearly written using plain language, incorporate the values of the family and support team, identify any prerequisite resources and training needs for implementation, and include individual components that are both easy to use and easy to remember.

Behavior support plans must contain the following components:

- a. Behavior Hypothesis Statements – Statements that include a description of the behavior, triggers or antecedents for the behavior, maintaining consequences, and the purpose of the problem behavior.
- b. Prevention Strategies – Strategies that may be used to reduce the likelihood that the child will have problem behavior. These may include environmental arrangements, personal support, changes in activities, new ways to prompt a child, changes in expectations, etc.
- c. Replacement Skills – Skills to teach that will replace the problem behavior.
- d. Consequence Strategies – Guidelines for how the adults will respond to problem behaviors in ways that will not maintain the behavior. In addition, this part of the plan may include positive reinforcement strategies for promoting the child's use of new skills or appropriate behavior (this may also be included in prevention strategies)
- e. Long Term Strategies – This section of the plan may include long-term goals that will assist the child and family in meeting their vision of the child (e.g., develop friends, attend a community preschool program).

7. Implement Suggested Strategies In The Classroom

8. Monitor Outcomes

The effectiveness of the behavior support plan must be monitored. This monitoring includes measurement of changes in problem behavior and the achievement of new skills and lifestyle outcomes.

Once the child's behavior support plan is developed, the behavior support team's role is both to implement the plan itself and to monitor progress toward outcomes valued by the child's family. The keys to successful outcomes are frequent data collection and consistency—relative not only to both when, where, and who implements the plan but also to how the plan is implemented (i.e., whether or not the same intervention steps are followed). Data collection (e.g., direct measurement and indirect measurement) should occur to document whether the plan is implemented with consistency and is effective in achieving the identified goals, as well as whether or not the replacement skills are durable over time (maintenance) and/or across settings/contexts (generalization). Data should be both easy to collect (e.g., rating scales, check sheets) and should be periodically reviewed by the behavior support team to ensure communication, make any adjustments as needed, and review progress relative to the long-term vision of the child and his/her family.

9. Further Intervention Required

If after two more weeks of intense intervention there is not significant improvement in the child's behavior, a different setting may need to be considered where the child can receive more support.

BOARD MEMBERS

Imagination Childcare Academy is a corporation. The sole member of the board is Erin Medlar, who holds all positions on the board. For any concerns, please see Erin Medlar directly. She can be reached at 585-429-0932 or emedlar@rochester.rr.com.

Chain Of Command

All employees report to the director. Teaching Assistants report to his/her assigned teacher. In the event that the director is unavailable, the assistant director or a designated person will be left in charge and all problems or questions should be directed to him/her.

CENTER COMMUNICATION

Mandatory Staff Meetings

We have monthly staff meetings, in addition to two staff development days per year. Notice of these meetings are given upon hiring so staff have plenty of notice to make sure those dates and times are available. All staff are required to attend, as we use these times to communicate important information about our program. Typed notes will be taken at each meeting and the notes will be distributed via e-mail to all employees within 24 hours of the meeting.

Employee Notebook

There is a notebook in the main office, next to the staff sign-in binder. That notebook must be read and initialed every day, upon your arrival. We use this notebook to communicate important information to all staff.

Phone System

How to connect to other classrooms

Press the green button and enter the code for the classroom. All classroom codes are located next to the phones in each classroom.

How to make outside phone calls

Press the green button. Dial 9 first. Then dial the number that you would like to call.

How to transfer a call from one classroom to another

Put the person on hold. Call down to the classroom, and have that person pick up the line that the phone call is on.

How to dial 911

Dial 9. Then dial 911.

CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT

Beginning May 2015, all calls to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment must be made to New York Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (SCR). Mandated reporters can reach the SCR by dialing 1-800-635-1522. SCR staff members will conduct a phone interview, register reports and quickly transmit them to Monroe County Child Protectives Services (CPS) for appropriate follow-up.

Mandated Reporter

All staff members employed by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. are mandated reporters of child abuse or maltreatment. It is the legal responsibility of a mandated reporter to make a report if in his or her professional role at the Center he or she has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or maltreatment or acquires information in any way about a suspected case of child abuse or maltreatment.

Under no circumstance will the Center carry out its own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse or maltreatment. Full cooperation will be given to any and all properly identified representatives from Child Protective Services (CPS), New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) or law enforcement agencies looking into a suspected instance of child abuse or maltreatment involving Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. in any way requested. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will comply fully with all CPS and OCFS rules and regulations regarding investigations into child abuse or maltreatment. Detailed information regarding rules and regulations of investigations of child abuse or maltreatment is readily available in the office for parents to review upon request.

The details of CPS and/or OCFS investigations will be kept confidential, with information given out to authorized recipients on a “need to know” basis only. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. may be prohibited to contact the parent of a child named in a suspected instance of child abuse or maltreatment. Information will be provided to the parent from Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. only if CPS and OCFS give permission to do so.

Parents must inform their child’s teacher of any visible injuries or marks on a child (accidental or other) as soon as the child arrives at the Center. It is in the best interest of the parent to tell the teacher how the injury occurred and what, if any, action had been taken to care for the injury. This will be documented on our daily health check.

Parents will be promptly informed if during their child’s day at the Center he or she is injured or sustains a mark or abrasion on his or her skin (accidental or other), or if a previously unreported mark or injury to the skin is discovered. This will also be documented on our standard incident/accident report form and kept on file.

Procedure For Staff To Follow When Abuse Is Suspected

1. Report concerns to director
2. Director will ensure appropriate coverage for the classroom so employee can come into the office to make the call to SCR
3. Prior to making the call, the director and employee will gather the following information:

- Child's full name, home address and age
 - Names and addresses of child's siblings and parents, if different from the child
 - Name, address and relationship of person(s) suspected of abuse or maltreatment
 - Information that led the employee to have reasonable cause to suspect (may include but is not limited to daily health checks, incident reports and observation records)
 - Names of other people who have witnessed an incident
4. The employee will call SCR and report the alleged abuse and/or maltreatment.
 5. Staff will complete the Report of Suspected Abuse or Maltreatment form (LDSS-2221A) and submit that report to the SCR within 48 hours (if the case is taken). If the case is not taken the employee will still write down the case #, the name of SCR person they spoke to and the date and time the call was made.
 6. The director will contact OCFS immediately when a report has been made.

In the event that any applicant, employee, volunteer or any other person under the control of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. are named as the subject(s) of an investigation of a suspected case of child abuse or maltreatment, he/she will be temporarily relieved of his/her duties without pay, until the investigation is completed. In the event that any applicant, employee, volunteer or any other person under the control of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. are found to be the subject of an indicated report of child abuse or maltreatment, he/she will be terminated immediately, and asked to leave the premises as we do not tolerate or in any manner condone any acts of abuse or maltreatment. All employees and volunteers, prior to hiring and/or working with children, are required to obtain fingerprint clearance and a thorough background investigation is conducted, including accessing the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment and reference checks.

Procedure To Follow When Alleged Incident Involves and Employee

Director will follow the following procedure upon being informed of an alleged incident of Child Abuse and/or Maltreatment that involves an employee:

1. Immediately remove the employee from the classroom, having him/her sit in the office while waiting for further instructions.
2. Immediately Call CPS to report the allegation, record call #
3. Call OCFS to inform them of the incident
4. Let employee know that there is an open CPS investigation that involves him/her and that he/she will not be allowed in the classroom with the children until CPS and OCFS has come to determine whether or not the employee should be allowed to continue to work with children. No other details should be shared with the employee other than CPS and OCFS will be coming within 48 hours to investigate the accusation and that the employee should not speak to anyone about the allegations and or alleged incident. Depending on the severity of the accusation, the director will decide whether or not the employee will be allowed to remain on site (perform other duties that do not require contact with children or be sent home without pay).
5. Complete Child Abuse Report Form LDSS-2221A, Submit to SCR immediately
Make two copies of the following (that are relevant to the incident under investigation to give to licensor and CPS investigator):
 - Health checks
 - OCFS sign in sheets
 - OCFS Blue cards for all children who have regular contact with alleged suspect employee,
 - employee sign in sheets for the day the alleged incident happen
6. Send out a letter to all families to inform them that there is an active CPS case against one of our employees and that if they would like further information they can contact the CPS worker directly.

7. The director will not discuss the alleged incident and/or accusations with any staff members.

CLASSROOM PAPERWORK

Daily Health Check

A daily health check occurs when the child arrives (**while parent is still present**) at the program and continues throughout the day.

Check the following while at the child's level so you can interact with the child when talking with the parent:

1. Child's behavior: is it typical or atypical for time of day and circumstances?
2. Child's appearance:
 - Skin: pale, flushed, rash (*feel the child's skin by touching affectionately on the forehead or cheek*)
 - Eyes, nose, and mouth: note color; are they dry or is there discharge? Is child rubbing eye, nose, or mouth?
 - Hair: (in a lice outbreak look for live lice or nits within a ¼ inch of the scalp)
 - Breathing: normal or different; cough
3. Check with the parent:
 - How did the child seem to feel or act at home?
 - Sleeping normally?
 - Eating/drinking normally? When was the last time child ate or drank?
 - Any unusual events?
 - Bowels and urine normal? When was the last time child used toilet or was changed?
 - Has the child received any medication or treatment?
4. Any evidence of illness or injury since the child was last participating in child care?
5. Any indications of child abuse or maltreatment?
6. Document any unusual findings.

Incident Reports & Accident Logs

If a child is injured at the center, we must complete a detailed incident report, indicating what happened and how exactly the child was injured. A copy of the report must be given to the parent after they sign the original copy, indicating that they received the report. Reports must be sent to the office for filing.

All accidents must be reported immediately to the director.

- Accident reports must be written, signed by the director, given to parents, and copied for the child's file.
- Close supervision of children is the best anecdote to accidents.
- Use risk management to keep the environment safe and hazard free.
- Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. strives to provide the best equipment, the best maintenance, and the best working conditions so all children and adults will be safe while they are in our center.
- Please report or remove any unsafe equipment from your classroom or the playground areas.
- Safety is a joint effort that requires all of us to become risk managers.

In an event that a child is **SERIOUSLY** injured and needs medical attention “the program must **IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY THE PARENT AND OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES** upon learning of the following events involving a child which occurred while the child was

in care at the program or was being transported by the program: death, serious incident, serious injury, serious condition, communicable disease, or transportation to a hospital.”

[Title 18, New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) § 414.15(b)(14), 416.15(b)(14), 417.15(b)(14), 418-1.15(b)(14), 418-2.15(b)(14)]

Topical Ointment Documentation

We must receive written permission from parents before applying any topical ointments. Once written approval is received, each time topical ointment is applied, we must document it on the Topical Ointment sheet. Sunscreen and bug spray must be applied on each child (for those whom parents have given permission) prior to going outside, once in the morning and reapplied in the afternoon.

Daily Parent Communication

Every classroom teacher is responsible for communicating with parents of what activities were done for the day, including how the child ate and slept. This can be done via, BEE folder, email and /or direct communication.

Attendance Sheets

All children must be signed in and out EVERY day on the OCFS attendance sheet as soon as he/she enters the classroom and/or is picked up at the end of the day. **This is a legal document that signifies the release of care from one party to the next.** Please accurately document time of the child’s arrival and departure.

Behavior Incident Reports

Always complete when a child engages in the following kinds of behaviors:

- Aggression to another child or adult that results in physical pain or harm to that person (includes kicking, hitting, biting, scratching)
- Running out of classroom, off the playground, or away from group without responding to the calls of the adult
- Intentionally injuring self in a manner that might cause serious harm to self (e.g., severe head banging, biting self)

Completing the Form:

1. Complete the form as soon as possible after the behavior incident so that you can remember all of the relevant details.
2. If this is the first behavior incident completed on the child, make sure you complete the demographic information about the child on the bottom of the form that will be used to enroll the child in the system.
3. You will use a child ID# (instead of child name) and a classroom ID# (instead of classroom name). These ID#s should be provided by your program. Please ask your supervisor for your classroom ID# and how to establish the child ID so that you can complete the form.
4. You will complete one form for each behavior incident that matches the criteria described above and in the BIR training. An incident might be a single event (e.g., hit) or have a longer duration (e.g., tantrum). When young children engage in challenging behavior, they often engage in multiple behaviors (e.g., hit, kick, and verbal aggression). A behavior incident might include multiple behaviors although you will be selecting the behavior that is most intrusive to note on the form. If the behavior incident ends and the child has another one later in the activity or day; complete an incident form for each separate incident.
5. Provide a copy of the form to the program designee who enters the data for your program.

COMPENSATION INFORMATION

Health/Dental Benefits

All full-time employees are eligible to receive medical and dental benefits, after three months of service. Imagination Childcare Academy will pay 50% of all individual medical and dental insurance premiums. The other 50% will be paid by the employee, having the resulting amount deducted bi-weekly from their paycheck. If employees choose not to receive benefits, then they are to sign a waiver to indicate that they waive benefits at this time. Full time is considered to be anything more than 35 hours per week.

401K

When can I sign up?

After a year of service, you are eligible to enroll in 401K. See the director to be set up with the 401K administrator a month before your one year anniversary so they can set you up in the database.

How does it work?

You contribute 1%	We match 1%
You contribute 2%	We match 2%
You contribute 3%	We match 3%
You contribute 4%	We match 3.5%
You contribute 5%	We match a maximum of 4%

How do I enroll?

Get paperwork from the director. Contact Susanne Daly with any questions about the program or how to complete the paperwork.

Susanne Daly
Financial Services Representative
Financial Partners of Upstate New York
PH: [585-241-5224](tel:585-241-5224)
FX: [585-241-5296](tel:585-241-5296)
susannedaly@financialguide.com

What if I do not want to participate at this time?

This is a voluntary benefit. If you choose not to participate, you just simply need to waive your enrollment. However, if you change your mind at any time, you can choose to sign up on a later day.

Tuition Discounts for Employee's Children

All employees who have children who attend Imagination Childcare Academy will receive a 20% discount off tuition.

Bonuses

Staff who show outstanding performance on a continual basis are eligible to receive bonuses. These bonuses will be determined by the director and strictly based on performance and will be given in compliance with all laws.

Holiday Pay

Full-time employee's that work eight-hour days will receive eight hours of holiday pay for holidays where the center is closed for the entire day.

Part-time employees will receive holiday pay for their normally scheduled hours for a holiday where the center is closed for the entire day. (Example: if you are normally scheduled six hours per day you will receive six hours of holiday pay.)

These benefits are available after the three-month probationary period.

These Holidays include:

New Year's Day
Labor Day

Memorial Day
Thanksgiving Day

Independence Day
Christmas Day

Personal/Vacation Time

Vacation time will accrue at a rate of .04 for every hour worked. Employees will begin earning vacation pay from their date of hire. Vacation time can be used interchangeably with sick time.

- Prior approval for taking vacation time must be obtained from the director.
- No more than twenty vacation days may be taken at any one time
- Vacation time can be taken only in increments of half days and full days.
- Vacation pay in lieu of actual time off will not be allowed except in cases determined by the director to be in the best interests of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.
- No employee will be permitted to use vacation leave until the time has been earned.
- **If an employee takes the work day off either for the work day directly before a holiday and/or the work day directly after a holiday, the employee will NOT receive pay for the holiday. (Effective 9/1/2019)**
- **Paid vacation time cannot be used for the day directly before a paid holiday and/or the day directly after a paid holiday. (Effective 9/1/2019)**
- Employees leaving the employment of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., whether voluntarily or involuntarily, forfeit their unused vacation time regardless of the circumstances under which the employee leaves.
- Vacation time will not be accrued while on unpaid leave of absence.
- Vacation time cannot be used for either of our annual Professional Days, scheduled on Martin Luther King Day and Veterans' Day, as these training courses are mandatory and require all staff to be present. If you must take the day off, understand that it will be without pay.

Sick Time

Sick leave will accrue at a rate of 1 hour of every 30 hours worked. Employees will begin earning sick pay from their date of hire. Sick time can be used interchangeably with vacation time.

Sick leave can be used for:

- Employee's mental or physical illness, or injury, or diagnosis, care, treatment, or preventive care for employee's mental or physical illness or injury;
- Covered family member's mental or physical illness or injury or diagnosis, care, treatment, or preventive care for a covered family member's mental or physical illness or injury;
- Absences related to employee's status as a victim of domestic violence, family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking; or
- Absences related to a covered family member's status as a victim of domestic violence, family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking.
- The term "Family Member" is broadly defined under the NYSSL to include an employee's child (biological, adopted, or foster child, a legal ward, or a child of an employee standing in loco parentis), spouse, domestic partner, parent (biological, foster, step, adoptive, legal guardian, or person who stood in loco parentis when the employee was a minor child), sibling, grandchild, or grandparent; and the child or parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner.

- Employees may request in writing or verbally that an employer provide a summary of the amount of sick leave accrued and used by the employee, which the employer must provide within 3 business days of the request.
- Employees have a right to reinstatement and protections against retaliation for exercising rights under the NYSSL.
- Sick time can only be taken in half day/full day increments.
- Sick leave shall not accumulate during any period an employee is on leave without pay.
- Sick leave may not be taken in advance of being earned.
- Illness extending beyond earned sick leave may be charged against earned vacation leave, unless employee requests leave of absence without pay.
- An employee will not be permitted to return to work after an absence of three or more consecutive workdays without an authorization from a doctor.
- In case of illness or medical emergency causing an employee to be absent from work, such circumstances shall be reported to the director by 5:30am on the scheduled workday. Failure to give this notice will result in the employee being charged with an unexcused (unpaid) absence.
- Sick time cannot be used for either of our annual Professional Days, scheduled on Martin Luther King Day and Veterans' Day, as these training courses are mandatory and require all staff to be present. If you must take the day off, understand that it will be without pay.
- If an employee leaves for any reason, all accumulated sick time will be forfeited as of termination date.

Time Recording for Hourly Employees

There is a time sheet in the office. There will be space on the sheet for clocking in at the beginning of your shift, for clocking out and back in from lunch, and for clocking out at the end of your shift. Any missed portions of your time sheet (for example, you forget to clock out for lunch one day) should be filled in by hand and initialed by an administrator.

The director will record your total hours worked at the end of each two-week pay period. The results will be logged and recorded both in the administrative files, and for your records, on your paycheck. The information will be compiled for review regularly by the director and will be a factor considered in your annual performance evaluation.

Paychecks

Paychecks are distributed every other Friday at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. You do have an option for direct deposit, which will be deposited, in your bank account by the morning of payday.

Overtime

All overtime must be approved by the director. Whenever possible, a request for overtime should be made in advance. If your work has required you to clock in early or clock out late, or miss part or all of your lunch hour, please see an administrator for authorization. All overtime must be noted and signed on your time sheet by the director in order for you to receive compensation. You are responsible for taking your time sheet to an administrator for signature, as there is no unauthorized overtime. Overtime is accrued when regular staff work more than 40 hours in one week. You cannot "make up" time for hours missed in a previous week.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Introduction

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. recognizes and respects the importance of privacy and confidentiality as an individual right and as a basis for building partnerships. Our organization requires personal information from its families, employees and volunteers to provide appropriate and responsive

childcare services. This policy has been developed to comply with the highest standard in the protection and preservation of privacy and confidentiality.

Due to the sensitive nature of information that you will know as a teacher of young children, it is imperative that you keep sensitive information confidential. Any information about children or their families must be shared on a “need to know” basis only. Thus, be very sensitive about discussing children’s developmental needs and family information in public places such as the lounge or hallway. Others that do not have a need to know could hear such information. Follow the NAEYC code of ethical conduct when deciding to share information. Protect the interests of each child and family by keeping confidentiality. Also strive to be supportive of center efforts by avoiding negative or malicious discussions about center issues. Stay positive and focus on the strengths and needs of the children in your care.

GOALS – What are we going to do?

We will:

- maintain private and confidential files for our families, employees and volunteers
- continue to improve systems for the appropriate use, storage and disposal of records
- Ensure the information in these files is used only for the provision of services by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., and only shared with relevant organizations as defined in this policy.

Collection Statement

Strategies – How will it be done?

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. aims to meet these goals through the adoption of this specific Privacy and Confidentiality policy statement which will guide our practices in this area.

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will:

Collection of Information

- Ensure that its families, employees and volunteers have access to our privacy collection statement that includes details about how they can access their personal information, have this corrected as needed, make a complaint about a breach of privacy, if one occurs.
- Ensure each employee and volunteer’s information is correct in personnel and other files. This includes information on qualifications, criminal history checks, staff entitlements, contact and emergency information, health and immunization information, and any relevant medical and legal information. This would include any other relevant information collected by the service.
- Ensure that information collected from individuals is maintained in a private and confidential manner at all times.
- Ensure that such information is not divulged or communicated (directly or indirectly) to another as follows:

To the extent necessary, for the provision of services by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.:

Staff will:

- Maintain individual and service information and store documentation according to this policy at all times.
- Not share information about the individual or service, management information, or other staff, other than as allowed in this policy or as per legislative authority.

If confidentially procedure has been breached. Individuals can make a complaint to the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. CEO if they believe there has been a breach of their privacy in relation to the Privacy principles. The breach will be assessed by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. within 14 days. Where the information collected is incorrect, the information will be corrected. Where a serious breach of privacy is found, appropriate actions will be negotiated between the CEO and the individual to resolve the situation, in line with the complaints procedure.

- Will ensure information provided by individuals, staff and committee members is only used for the purpose it was collected for.
- Ensure each individual's information is correct in organizational records. This includes information on immunization updates, income and financial details (credit card or bank information), contact details of family and emergency contact information, and any medical or legal information.
- Provide individuals and services with details on the collection of personal information collected: This information will include:

Methods

We keep two kinds of records on children attending our setting:

1. Developmental records

- These include observations of children in the setting, samples of their work, summary developmental reports and records of achievement.
- They are usually kept in the classroom and can be accessed, and contributed to, by staff, the child and the child's parents.

2. Personal records

- These include registration and admission forms, signed consents, and correspondence concerning the child or family, reports or minutes from meetings concerning the child from other agencies, an ongoing record of relevant contact with parents, and observations by staff on any confidential matter involving the child, such as developmental concerns or child protection matters.
- These confidential records are stored in file cabinet and are kept secure by the person in charge in an office or other suitably safe place.
- Parents have access, in accordance with the access to records procedure, to the files and records of their own children but do not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss personal information given by parents with other members of staff, except where it affects planning for the child's needs. Staff induction includes an awareness of the importance of confidentiality in the role of the key person.

Other records

- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- All volunteers are advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

Access to personal records

Parents may request access to any records held on their child and family following the procedure below.

- Any request to see the child's personal file by a parent or person with parental responsibility must be made in writing to the director
- The setting commits to providing access within 14 days - although this may be extended.

- All third parties are written to, stating that a request for disclosure has been received and asking for their permission to disclose to the person requesting it. A copy of these letters is retained on the file.
- 'Third parties' include all family members who may be referred to in the records.
- It also includes workers from any other agency, including social services, the health authority, etc. It is usual for agencies to refuse consent to disclose, preferring the individual to go directly to them.
- When all the consents/refusals to disclose have been received these are attached to the copy of the request letter.
- A scan of the complete file is taken.
- The director goes through the file and removes any information which a third party has refused consent to disclose. This is best done with a thick black marker, to score through every reference to the third party and information they have added to the file.
- What remains is the information recorded by the setting, detailing the work initiated and followed by them in relation to confidential matters. This is called the 'clean copy'.
- The 'clean copy' is photocopied for the parents who are then invited in to discuss the contents. The file should never be given straight over, but should be gone through by the director, so that it can be explained.
- Legal advice may be sought before sharing a file, especially where the parent has possible grounds for litigation against the setting or another (third party) agency.

CORRECTIVE ACTION POLICY

Disciplinary Procedures

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. attempts to provide a uniform administration of disciplinary actions for employees. Disciplinary actions may include counseling, written reprimand and warning, suspension, and termination of employment. The following list of examples, which may result in disciplinary action, is not intended to be exhaustive and does not limit the reasons for discharge.

- Inefficiency, incompetence, or negligence in the performance of duties.
- Violation of Center policies or State of New York licensing laws
- Careless, negligent, or improper use of Center property or equipment
- Discourteous treatment of other employees, children, or their families
- Absence without approved leave
- Failure to report for duty on time
- Failure to report an unscheduled absence within 2 hours of scheduled working hours
- Averaging above 10% unapproved leave
- Conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude, child abuse or neglect, or any felony
- Misuse of Center funds
- Falsifying or omitting job information to secure position
- Consumption of illegal drugs or any violation of the Drug-Free Workplace policy
- Possession of firearms, lethal weapons, or alcohol on the job
- Dissemination of confidential information
- Repeatedly missing required deadlines (for example, lesson plans, behavior reports, and readiness reports for class advancement)
- Violations of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

Each employee will have an introductory probationary (three-month) period at the beginning of his or her employment. The director will assess the employee's performance at the end of this period and determine eligibility for continued employment.

Misconduct not specifically described in these policies will be handled as warranted by the circumstances of the case involved. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. may impose penalties as it deems appropriate, and such penalties can range from a warning to termination. Likewise, obvious infractions of the rules of conduct may result in whatever action is deemed appropriate by the director.

All employees are expected to conduct themselves according to the highest standards of integrity and ethics. Standards of employee conduct normally expected in any place of employment will be the standards of employee conduct at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., whether or not such are in writing. As a basic standard of justice, employees are informed of the behavior expected of them through such avenues as job descriptions, personnel policies, and instructions of supervisors. Employees and administrators are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Complaints by employees should be conducted in the director's office. Administrators should counsel employees in private.

Employee Misconduct will result in disciplinary action. Written reports of all disciplinary action will be prepared and placed in the employee's personnel file. Disciplinary action will be taken as soon as the facts are known and a fair judgment can be made. The following disciplinary actions may be taken, depending on the nature of the offense and circumstances surrounding the particular case. Discipline may or may not be progressive.

1. Counseling: Counseling should be used by the director to explore with an employee the source of any problem and to find constructive ways to overcome any problem. Counseling will be conducted in private. The director will document the counseling session.
2. Written Reprimand and Warning: The employee is given written warning that he or she has violated Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s rules, regulations, or procedures, or otherwise exhibited unacceptable and/or inappropriate behavior, or failed to perform job requirements properly. The specific offense will be stated along with required remediation, and further sanctions to be imposed if the infraction is repeated.
3. Suspension: An employee may be suspended without pay for a period of up to two weeks.
4. Discharge: An employee's association with Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. may be terminated; in which event, the employee shall forfeit all benefits.

Disciplinary action will be taken only after communication of the specific reasons for the proposed action to the employee by the director. The director has the right to impose any of the disciplinary actions listed. Disciplinary actions are normally utilized in accordance with the severity of the infraction.

Standards of behavior have been developed pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all employees can conduct themselves according to certain rules, good behavior, and conduct. The purpose of these standards is not to restrict the rights of anyone, but to help people work together harmoniously according to the standards that Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. has established.

Due to the nature of employees working with children and the safety concerns, Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. retains the right to random drug testing.

Grievance Procedures

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. policy is that each staff member receives fair treatment in every respect. The Center is committed to preserving and improving cooperative and harmonious relationships

among all Center employees. The Center urges any employee who feels he or she is not receiving fair treatment to use the grievance procedures listed below.

1. If there is a problem, speak with the individuals involved.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved at that level, or if the employee feels unable to confront the other individuals involved directly, the employee should take the problem to the director or assistant director.
3. If the decision is unsatisfactory to the employee, he/she may bring the matter to the Board of Directors. The decision rendered by the Board will be final.
4. If an employee has a problem with the director that he or she is unable to resolve, the employee may submit a written complaint to the Board of Directors. The decision rendered by the Board will be final.

COVID 19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Program Commitment to Staff

Staff are our most important resource. Without you, we wouldn't be able to provide the high-quality care our families deserve. We know that these are scary times filled with stress and uncertainty and despite it all, we can count on you to ease the anxieties that your children and families face. While our children and families can count on you, we want you to know that you can count on us! Your well-being is important to us and we are committed to supporting you and being there to meet your needs.

Our priority at Imagination Childcare Academy is to ensure the safety of the children and staff that come to our center. We are working on creating new procedures every day in order to achieve this goal, but we will not be successful without your help! Imagination Childcare is following all communicable disease guidelines set forth by OCFS and the CDC. We understand that we must do our part to keep our children safe. As the risk in our area for Covid 19 still remains, we are asking each of our employees to acknowledge and agree to the following procedures.

Agree to be aware of my health. If I or any person within my household show any of the following symptoms, I agree to stay at home.

- Fever over 100.4
- New cough of any kind
- Shortness of breath
- Lethargic, overly tired, unusually calm or quiet
- Mild respiratory illness/issues

I agree to report to work only if I am symptom free. If I or anyone living within my household has any of these symptoms, I understand that I will not be allowed to report to Imagination Childcare Academy until they are cleared by the doctor. I agree to notify the director of any conditions or changes in my health status. I agree to inform the director if I test positive for Covid 19 so that the school can take necessary mandated steps. Imagination Childcare Academy agrees to keep the identity of the employee confidential.

Amplifying Our Daily Cleaning Efforts:

While this is part of our normal routine, there will be additional efforts made to disinfect the classrooms, gross motor spaces and high traffic areas, paying special attention to doorknobs, phones, tables, chairs, keyboards, handrails, gates etc. We will be disinfecting with a higher concentrated bleach/water as recommended by the CDC. In addition to classroom cleaning, all staff members will be assigned various areas of the building for frequent disinfecting.

DISCRIMINATION

Commitment to Diversity

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. welcomes, celebrates, and promotes respect for all people! In our commitment to diversity, we embrace people from all backgrounds and we seek to include knowledge and values from many cultures in our program. Our commitment to work toward an environment that values diversity requires that we create, promote, and maintain activities and programs which further our understanding of individual and group diversity. We promote values that discourage intolerance and discrimination.

We intend to incorporate diversity into every aspect of the Imagination Childcare Academy culture: including the curriculum, teaching, programs, staffing, personnel training practices, and special events!

Imagination Childcare Academy Inc. is committed to providing equal access to and participation in employment opportunities and in programs and services, without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, veteran status, or disability. Imagination Childcare Academy Inc. complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and other applicable laws providing for nondiscrimination against all individuals. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will provide reasonable accommodations for known disabilities to the extent required by the law.

This policy covers nondiscrimination in employment and in access to educational opportunities. Therefore, any member of our school community, guest or visitor who acts to deny, deprive or limit the educational, employment, social access, benefits and/or opportunities of any member of our school community on the basis of their actual or perceived membership in the protected classes listed above is in violation of Imagination Childcare Academy's policy on nondiscrimination. When brought to the attention of the Executive Director, any such discrimination will be appropriately remedied immediately.

Equal Opportunity Employment

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. gives equal employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, religion, sex, marital status, handicap, national origin, or veteran status. All individuals shall be recruited, hired, assigned, advanced, compensated, and retained on the basis of their qualifications and performances. Any questions you might have concerning equal opportunity may be addressed to the director.

Harassment

It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general. Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted). The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. guarantees fair treatment of all employees. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. strives to maintain a work environment in which all staff are free from harassment, and

expressly prohibit any form of unlawful harassment of employees and co-workers on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities.

All employees must have a physical statement signed by a health official testifying that the employee is physically able to safely supervise young children.

EMERGENCIES

Emergency Contact Information

ICA	Direct Line	730-7163 (office phone)
Erin Medlar	Director	429-0932 (cell phone)
Luigi	Maintenance	755-3601 (cell phone)
Corey Chavers	OCFS Licensor	238-8544 (office phone)

In the event of an emergency, the following plan will be followed:

1. Remain calm. Reassure the child (victim) and the other children at the scene. As a general rule, do not move a severely injured or ill child, but there are times when you should do so:

- If the area is unsafe, move to a safe location;
- If the victim is face down and needs CPR, turn the victim face up; and
- If the victim is unresponsive, has an open airway and is breathing without assistance, turn the victim on his side with the victim's hand in front.

2. Call for emergency medical services. Give all the important information slowly and clearly. To make sure that you have given all the necessary information, wait for the other party to hang up first. If an accidental poisoning is suspected, first contact the **National Poison Control Hotline** at **1-800-222-1222** for help

3. Follow any instructions given by the emergency operator.

4. Send emergency contact information and permission to obtain emergency care when the child is transported for emergency care.

4. Notify parent of the emergency as soon as possible. If the parent can't be reached, notify the child's emergency contact person.

5. After the needs of the child and all others in care have been met, immediately notify OCFS if the emergency involved serious injury to the child, infectious illness or death.

6. Complete the form Incident Report for Child Day Care (LDSS-4436). Give a copy to the child's parent and keep a copy on file. If the incident results in the death of a child, send a copy of the completed report to your OCFS Regional Office.

Evacuation Procedures

The objective of this plan is to reduce the possibility of harm to the children, staff, facility and visitors to the center in the event of an emergency. Care must be taken to ensure that all occupants are aware of the following basic procedures:

1. Become familiar with the location of all stairways and exits (Maps of evacuation routes are posted on the wall near each exit door).
2. There is a fire alarm manual pull station on the wall near each exit door.
3. Faculty should not attempt to secure or collect personal items during an evacuation.
4. Upon direction/instruction of the alarm or director or designee, immediately evacuate the building.
 - The director or emergency personnel will identify which safe haven/assembly area.
 - All children must line up in an orderly fashion at the specified door.
 - Teachers must close all windows and doors and shut the lights off.
 - Teachers must make sure to take the emergency bag (includes emergency information on each child and medications), the attendance clipboards, and the walkie talkie.
 - Prior to leaving the building, teachers must do a quick head count, making sure that they have all of their children that are in attendance for the day, and immediately walk, to the designated Safe Haven.
 - Once teachers have arrived at the Safe Haven, take attendance.
 - The director, in consultation with the Emergency Personnel, will determine if parents should be asked to pickup children. The decision to have parents pick up their children will be made based on expected time out of the Center or the nature of the emergency.
 - The director will contact the off-site emergency number to notify parents.
 - In case of emergencies that do not warrant evacuation outside of the building (natural disasters [tornadoes, for example], chemical spills, bombings, etc.), proceed to designated shelter-in place (basement of the church).
5. Each classroom will post evacuations route maps indicating the following:
 - Primary and secondary routes
 - Locations of the assembly areas
 - Fire Alarm Manual Pull stations
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Fire detection and suppression devices, such as: smoke detectors, heat detectors, sprinkler heads, sprinkler control valve

The Director will assign a staff member/Safety Coordinator to inspect the Center each morning to ensure the following:

- All exit doors are unlocked and accessible
- All exit lights are working properly
- All corridors and doors leading to exits are clear
- There are no items hanging from sprinkler heads or fire alarm devices
- Fire alarm devices, extinguishers and sprinkler heads are not obstructed
- All evacuation maps are in place and current

All faculty members will be trained on fire protection and evacuation practices.

1. Fire drills will be conducted monthly. The property manager's office must be notified of each drill. The director will keep a record of all drills.
2. In case of emergency or drill, all personnel should leave the building in an orderly manner - Walk, Don't Run. Teachers should search their rooms and close all doors before leaving.

Additionally, the director or designee will search all areas within the Center and ensure all occupants have been safely evacuated.

3. Physically challenged children will be provided assistance to help exit the building. At the assembly area, teachers will immediately take a head count of each classroom group to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Head Teachers shall report the final head count to the director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the director immediately!
4. Parents will not be allowed to remove a child from the custody of the Center during the evacuation. Once all children are accounted for at the Safe Haven, parents may be allowed to sign out their children.

Safe Havens: Maps Attached

Primary: Walt Disney Elementary School (Across the Street)

Secondary: Gates Fire Department (Corner of Coldwater Road and Buffalo Road)

EMPLOYMENT

Qualifications and Experience

- (1) To be qualified as a DIRECTOR, a person must possess:
 - (a) a Master's degree, including or in addition to, 12 credits in Early Childhood, Child Development, or a related field; and,
 - (b) at least one-year full-time teaching experience in a child day care center, family or group family day care home or other early childhood program; and,
 - (c) at least one year of experience supervising staff in a child care program or a related field of work; and
 - (d) NYS teaching certification in Education
- (2) To be qualified as a TEACHER for a Universal Prekindergarten class, a person must possess:
 - (a) a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and/or related field, which includes at least 9 credits of early childhood and or child development; and
 - (b) at least one year of teaching experience in a child care program; and
 - (c) NYS teaching certification in Education
- (3) To be qualified as a TEACHER for the toddler and/or Junior Pre-K class, a person must possess:
 - (a) an Associate's degree in Early Childhood, Child Development or related field, or a Child Development Associate credential or other Office-recognized credential specific to the preschool developmental period, and
 - (b) at least one year experience related to caring for children, or
- (4) To be qualified as a group TEACHER for a school age class, a person must possess:
 - (a) a High School High School Diploma, or its equivalent; and
 - (b) at least two years of direct experience working with children less than 13 years of age
- (5) To be qualified as an ASSISTANT TEACHER to any age class, a person must possess:
 - (a) a High School Diploma, or its equivalent, and
 - (b) at least one year of experience working with children less than 13 years of age

Hiring Procedure

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. uses the following procedure for hiring new staff. Minimum qualifications for each position are based on job analysis/job descriptions.

1. Determine the positional needs to be filled.
2. Place classified ads in local newspapers, workforce development, and institutes of higher learning stating days, hours, and location of positions available.
3. Accept telephone calls, solicit resumes, and arrange interviews.
4. Review resumes and check references.
5. Conduct Interviews
6. Select the most qualified individual(s) and set up a one-to-two week training period.
7. Have the new employee fill out all necessary paperwork, including a criminal background check.
8. Employee must pass a fingerprint clearance and criminal background check
9. Have the new employee work with another teacher until the criminal background check is approved.
10. Make reference/resource materials available to new employees while creating their lesson plans.
11. Continue to hold staff meetings and inform employees of any available courses and/or workshops to further enhance their experience.
12. Perform regular staff evaluations to monitor staff development, and provide feedback and encouragement

Outstanding performance on the job or conduct well above the standard expectations and requirements will be recognized.

Job Descriptions

Every Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. employee's primary focus is the happiness and well-being of the children who attend our program. Teachers and Teacher's Assistants must come to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. with a basic knowledge of early childhood development. All staff will be informed of their specific responsibilities and given their class assignments by the director.

- Teachers will be responsible for developing a weekly lesson plan that utilizes the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. curriculum, and must submit these plans to the director on a weekly basis.
- Teacher's assistants will be responsible to their assigned teachers, and it will be their duty to implement the class schedules and lesson plans, as well as to assist the teachers in their lesson plan development.

Staff Files

Each staff member has an employee folder on file in the office. This file contains the following:

- A Completed Application
- Resume
- A signed criminal conviction statement
- Fingerprint Clearance
- SCR clearance
- SEL clearance
- A Copy of Diploma & Certifications
- An Emergency Form
- First Aid/ CPR Certification
- A Health/ Medical Form
- References
- A Signed Personnel Form

- A Training Record
- A W-4 Form
- Am IT-2104 form
- Evaluations
- Notice of Pay Rate
- Employee profile

Probationary Period

All Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. employees are considered probationary employees for a period of ninety days. It is a period of adjustment and adaptation on both the personal level and the job requirement level. The employee is expected to meet or exceed the initial demands of the position during this time period. Also, it is a time period for adjustment to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s overall policies and work rules. If the employee fails to adapt successfully to the requirements of their position, the program or service component, or Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. as a whole, employment will be terminated. Termination during the probationary period can be made without notice and without recourse to the grievance procedure. If supervisors recognize unsatisfactory progress before the ninety day period is over, the director will recommend termination, and termination will be effected.

Probationary employees will be evaluated at the discretion of the director; however, all probationary employees must have at least one formal evaluation completed by the end of the ninety day probationary period. After ninety days of employment, the director will prepare a written evaluation, discuss the evaluation with the employee, and decide whether or not to offer a contract to the employee. A copy of the evaluation will be given to the employee. Written feedback about the orientation process will be obtained from newly hired staff at the conclusion of the introductory period.

No increase in salary will be given upon completion of the probationary period.

Limited-time employees (Substitutes) who are hired for subsequent contract periods will be contract employees and not be subjected to the probationary period.

The probationary period is designed solely for determining an individual's suitability for a position and his/ her level of competence in performing the duties of one in such a position. Satisfactory completion of the probationary period will enable the employee to continue in that position only for the duration of the period stated in the contract, or for the period of time deemed necessary by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. for completion of certain tasks, or for as long as performance and behavior remain satisfactory, and funds remain available to pay for the position. In all instances, continued employment is solely at the discretion of the director.

Covering Planned and Unplanned Absences

Imagination Childcare Academy employs several float staff throughout the building to ensure that ratios can be maintained at all times. Float staff cover lunch breaks, planning times, planned and unplanned absences. In the event of an absence, teachers are required to leave written lesson plans so that "substitutes" can resume instruction. All float staff are familiar with the children and the routines of each classroom, allowing for smooth operation.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STAFF

Appearance and Appropriate Dress

Your use of discretion in style of dress and behavior is essential to illustrate your professionalism. Therefore, while performing duties for the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., you are expected to dress in attire appropriate to the business environment, and you are expected to behave in a professional

and businesslike manner. You will use good judgment in your behavior, at all times, to best represent yourself and the academy.

- **Jewelry** should be conservative. Long chain necklaces or pendants should not be worn as they can present a safety hazard to children. Earrings should also be small, conservative, and secure, to prevent children from grabbing and pulling them loose.
- **Shoes** must be neat and in good repair at all times. Tennis shoes or flats are best. Since you are expected to engage the children in activities on the playground, shoes should be appropriate for the situation. Open toe or open heel shoes are not recommended for safety reasons.
- **Clothing** should be clean and in good repair at all times. Worn out or stained attire is not allowed! A neat and clean appearance is expected at all times. Shirts should cover all bras and no cleavage should be showing. NO LEGGINGS, TANK TOPS, SWEAT PANTS, YOGA PANTS AND/OR ANY OTHER TIGHT-FITTING CLOTHING AT ANY TIME. Shorts, skirts and dresses should be at least fingertip length or longer when arms are down at your side. Please be mindful, you are working with young children, so dress appropriately.
- **Smoking** is not permitted on the center premises at *any* time.

Cell Phone Policy

At Imagination Childcare Academy, the teachers' primary responsibility is to the children, therefore, the use of cell phones and/or smart watches is strictly prohibited while on the clock, this includes texting. Any incoming phone calls for staff will be received by the office. Our main number is (585) 730-7163. Please give this number as your emergency contact number, so if you have a family emergency, you can be contacted. Upon arrival, ALL EMPLOYEES are required to turn off their cell phones and place them in the office, unless they have received office approval to keep phone on their person. Employees may retrieve their cell phones from the office for use on their breaks and at the end of their shift, once they have signed out.

Parking

All Imagination Childcare Academy employees are required to park across the street in the Holy Ghost Church parking area unless the employee has received written permission from management.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings must be stored out of reach of children, either in a cabinet or in the office. This is a NYS regulation and any violation of this policy will be grounds for an immediate write-up.

Interactions with Parents

All staff is asked to refrain from establishing relationships outside of work with families. This includes social media, outings, babysitting, and any other form of interaction outside of the building, as this is a conflict of interest and often can lead to uncomfortable situations.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family involvement is an integral part of children's success. Our parents and caregivers are our children's primary teacher. We work collaboratively with families to ensure each child has the optimal learning experience. We have an open door here at Imagination Childcare Academy. Parents are welcome to come in at any time and encouraged to volunteer their time if they are able to.

Throughout the year, we have lots of fun family events where we encourage parents to participate: (Halloween Parade, Supper with Santa, Diversity Night, Imagination Day, Father's Day Lunch, Mother's Day Lunch, Spring Clean-Up Day, Parent-Teacher Conferences).

Imagination Childcare Academy is a true reflection of our community, in that there is a multitude of diverse cultures represented. We have children who speak Spanish, Arabic, Polish, Bulgarian and Filipino. We welcome this diversity by hosting an annual multi-cultural night (families are encouraged to share their traditions, including food and celebrations with our school community).

Upon arrival, staff is expected to greet all children and their families in their home language, making them feel welcome.

Accommodations will be made to ensure that all assessments, screenings and parent teacher conferences are conducted on a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner and in the family's home language. Interpreters are attained through the child's school district as needed.

FAMILY LEAVE TIME

Funeral Leave

Employees, after one year of service, may be granted time off with pay upon the death of a member of their immediate family and the approval of the director. The amount of time off granted will be at the discretion of the director.

Time lost for which payment is made in accordance with the provisions of this Section shall not affect eligibility for holiday pay.

Leave of Absence

The director may approve a leave of absence without pay to any employee because of sickness, disability, or other personal reasons. The application for such leave must be submitted in writing by the employee stating the reason for the request.

If the leave of absence request is for personal reasons including extended illness, injury, or pregnancy, it shall be accompanied by a statement from the employee's physician stating the nature of the illness or incapacity that causes the employee to be medically disabled for performance of his or her normal work.

A leave of absence may be granted for a period not exceeding ninety consecutive days.

Time spent on such leave of absence without pay shall not be considered time in service for purposes of determining sick leave or vacation leave.

Should the employee decide to return before the expiration of the leave without pay, he or she may do so after giving the director a minimum of three day's notice, and providing proper certification indicating that he or she is capable of performing the regular job duties without restrictions.

Upon return from leave of absence, reasonable attempts will be made to reinstate the employee in his or her former position, or one of equal status and salary.

Employees who do not report back to work or contact the office on the date due back to work will be considered to have resigned.

When an employee requests permission to return to work after being granted leave without pay as a result of illness or disability, he or she must provide a statement from his or her physician that certifies that he or she is capable of resuming normal and regular work duties without restrictions.

If an employee requests time off without pay for personal reasons, and approval of the request would burden Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. or unreasonably disrupt Imagination Childcare Academy,

Inc.'s functioning, the request may be denied. If the employee takes time off, in spite of the denial, the time off will be considered an unauthorized absence, which could result in immediate termination.

Paid Family Leave

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will adhere to the Family Medical Leave Act guidelines for maternity/paternity leave.

Overview

New York's Paid Family Leave provides job-protected, paid time off so you can:

Bond with a newly born, adopted or fostered child,

Care for a close relative with a serious health condition, or

Assist with family situations when a family member is deployed abroad on active military service.

You can continue your health insurance while on leave and are guaranteed the same or comparable job after your leave ends. If you contribute to the cost of your health insurance, you must continue to pay your portion of the premium cost while on Paid Family Leave.

Benefits -- Time

Paid Family Leave benefits phase in over four years. Eligible employees can take Paid Family Leave for up to eight weeks in 2018, with coverage increasing to 10 weeks in 2019 and 2020, and 12 weeks in 2021. Leave can be taken either all at once or in full-day increments. You may take the maximum time-off benefit in any given 52-week period.

Benefits -- Pay

Paid Family Leave pay benefits also phase in over four years. Benefits are a percentage of your average weekly wage, capped at that same percentage of the New York State Average Weekly Wage, as calculated annually by New York State's Department of Labor. These benefits are 50% of your average weekly wage for 2018, 55% in 2019, 60% in 2020, and 67% in 2021.

EXAMPLE 1: An employee who earns \$1,000 a week in 2018 would receive a benefit of \$500 a week (50% of \$1,000). In 2019, that employee would receive a benefit of \$550 a week (55% of \$1000).

EXAMPLE 2: An employee who earns \$2,000 a week in 2018 would receive a benefit of \$652.96. This employee's benefit is capped at 50% of New York State's Average Weekly Wage — currently \$1,305.92. Half of that amount is \$652.96.

Eligibility

All eligible employees are entitled to participate in Paid Family Leave.

Full-time employees: Employees who work a regular schedule of 20 or more hours per week are eligible after 26 consecutive weeks of employment.

Part-time employees: Employees who work a regular schedule of less than 20 hours per week are eligible after working 175 days, which do not need to be consecutive.

Employees are eligible regardless of citizenship and/or immigration status.

Funding

Paid Family Leave is funded through employee payroll contributions that are set each year to match the cost of coverage. The rate of employee contributions is reviewed annually, and is subject to change by New York State's Department of Financial Services.

You can use the calculator at ny.gov/PFLcalculator to get an estimate of your weekly deduction.

Qualifying Events

New Child: You can take Paid Family Leave during the first 12 months following the birth, adoption, or fostering of a child. Expectant mothers cannot take Paid Family Leave for their own pregnancy. Paid Family Leave for the birth of a child begins after the birth. It is not available for prenatal conditions.

Serious Illness: You can take Paid Family leave to care for a close relative with a serious health condition. These relatives can live outside of New York State and even outside the country. You cannot take Paid Family Leave for your own health condition.

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves: Inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential health care facility, or Continuing treatment or continuing supervision by a health care provider.

A close relative includes:

- Spouse, Domestic partner
- Child and stepchild
- Parent and stepparent
- Parent-in-law
- Grandparent
- Grandchild

Military Active Service Deployment You can take Paid Family Leave to assist with family situations arising when your spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent is deployed abroad on active military service or has been notified of an impending military deployment abroad. You cannot use Paid Family Leave for your own qualifying military event. Your Rights and Protections

*You have job protection, ensuring you can return to the same job (or a comparable one) when you return from Paid Family Leave.

*You can keep your health insurance while on leave. If you contribute to the cost of your health insurance, you must continue to pay your portion of the premium cost while on leave.

*Your employer is prohibited from discriminating or retaliating against you for requesting or taking Paid Family Leave.

*You do not have to take all of your sick and/or vacation time before using Paid Family Leave.

Taking Paid Family Leave

1. Notify your employer. When you want to take Paid Family Leave, you must notify your employer at least 30 days before your leave will start if it's foreseeable. Otherwise, notify your employer as soon as possible.

2. Obtain required forms. Contact your employer, employer's insurance carrier, or visit ny.gov/PaidFamilyLeave to obtain the required forms.

3. Complete and submit forms. Fill out the *Request For Paid Family Leave (Form PFL-1)* following the instructions on the cover sheet, and submit it to your employer. Your employer must fill out their section of the form and return it to you within three business days. If your employer fails to respond, you may proceed to the next step below and submit all materials directly to your employer's Paid Family Leave insurance carrier.

4. Obtain and attach supporting documentation. The specific documentation or additional forms required for each type of leave are described on the request for Paid Family Leave and at ny.gov/PaidFamilyLeaveApply.

5. Submit your request forms and supporting documentation. Submit to your employer's Paid Family Leave insurance carrier. You can submit your claim before or within 30 days after the start of your leave. The insurance carrier must pay or deny your request within 18 calendar days of receiving your completed forms.

Discrimination Complaints

Employees are protected from discrimination and retaliation for requesting or taking Paid Family Leave.

If your employer terminates your employment, reduces your pay and/or benefits, or disciplines you in any way as a result of you requesting or taking Paid Family Leave, send your employer's designated Paid Family Leave contact a formal request for job reinstatement using the *Formal Request For Reinstatement Regarding Paid Family Leave (Form PFL-DC-119)*, which can be found in the forms section of ny.gov/PaidFamilyLeave. **File the completed form** with your employer and send a copy to:

Paid Family Leave, P. O. Box 9030, Endicott, NY 13761-9030

If your employer fails to comply with the request for reinstatement within 30 days, you may file a Paid Family Leave discrimination complaint with the Workers' Compensation Board using *Paid Family Leave Discrimination Complaint (Form PFL-DC-120)*, which is also available on the Paid Family Leave website. Once your complaint is received, the Board will assemble your case and schedule a preliminary hearing in front of a Workers' Compensation Law Judge.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES IN THE CLASSROOM POLICY

For the health and safety of our children and to ensure the reduction of food allergy exposure, we have instituted the following food and beverage policy.

1. Staff can have hot beverages in the classroom, such as coffee and/or tea if they are in a stainless steel, well-sealed container and don't contain any nut products or any other allergen contaminants.
2. Breakfast and snack foods provided by Imagination Childcare Academy are for children only. Staff can choose to bring in their own healthy breakfast and/or snack to eat with the children as long as it does not contain any nuts, peanuts and/or any other allergen contaminants.
3. Our goal is to reduce the risk of possible exposure to allergens. Please make sure that you are aware of all allergies that are in your classroom. Be mindful that just because your classroom does not have any allergies, another classroom might. Therefore, some food and/or beverages are not allowed in the classrooms due to allergies in the building. These foods include but are not limited to:

Nut And Tree Nut Products (included but not limited to)

- trail mix,
- granola bars,
- any items that may be processed in a facility of nut/tree nuts
- donuts
- cookies
- cupcakes
- chocolate candy
- chips,
- cereals containing allergen products

To be sure a food item is safe, please read the back of the package to make sure that the item was not made in a facility that processes nuts and/or peanuts.

4. Staff must be in communication with families about any celebrations that the families may want to bring in food items. There is a birthday celebration handout available on our website that includes snacks that are safe to bring in.

Actions for those who violate the above policy:

- a. If any of these are found in the classroom, the employee will be asked to throw out the allergen.
- b. If it is found a second time, a meeting will be held with the Compliance Coach and the Director, and a write-up will be placed in the employee's file.
- c. If it is found a 3rd time, employment will be terminated.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE CENTER

NAEYC Guidelines

All teachers are expected to follow the NAEYC GUIDELINES. All staff is expected to adhere to the NAEYC code of ethics at all times. The code is attached for review.

- Teachers must provide warm, nurturing interactions on the child's level. Such interactions should provide guidance and developmentally appropriate early education.
- Direct Supervision of every child is expected at all times. Failure to provide supervision will be subject to discipline up to termination.
- The center will keep New York State adult to child ratios at all times. Make sure that you receive additional help when the number of children approaches the legal limits. Ratio adherence is a dual responsibility between teachers and the director. Never leave your group out of ratio for any reason other than an extreme child emergency that requires leaving the group for emergency assistance. Call the director for assistance when you need to leave the group and the total number of children in attendance exceeds the safe ratio.

Holidays

We are closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Labor Day

Memorial Day
Thanksgiving Day

Independence Day
Christmas Day

Hours of Operation

We are open from 6:30am-6pm Monday through Friday.

Security System

At Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc., we have a key coded entry system to ensure the safety of all of our staff and students. Please ask the director for the four-digit code. This code must not be shared with anyone who is not an employee or a parent of a child who attends Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.

Important Phone Numbers

ICA	Direct Line	730-7163 (office phone)
Erin Medlar	Director	429-0932 (cell phone)

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Alcohol and Drug Use

Alcohol and drug use are prohibited anywhere on the Imagination Childcare Academy campus. This includes tobacco use. Due to the nature of employees working with children and the safety concerns, Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. retains the right to random drug testing.

Anaphylaxis Prevention Policy

Upon enrollment and whenever there are changes, parents/guardians will be required to provide the program with up-to-date information regarding their child's medical conditions, including any allergies the child may have and any emergency medications prescribed for potential anaphylaxis. The parents/guardians will work in conjunction with the program and the child's physician to complete the documents required for any allergy that the child may have. These documents will guide all staff in the necessary actions to take during an allergic or anaphylactic reaction. The program will keep these

documents and any emergency medications in a designated area known to all staff members as outlined in the program's healthcare plan and will ask for updated paperwork when necessary. Additionally, if a child without a known allergy and/or without medication on site has signs/symptoms of anaphylaxis during program, staff will call 911 and follow the instructions provided by the 911 dispatcher.

Documents

- Any child with a known allergy will have the following documents on file when applicable:
 - NYS OCFS form 7006 - Individual Health Care Plan for a Child With Special Healthcare Needs or approved equivalent
 - NYS OCFS form 6029- Individual Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan or approved equivalent
 - NYS OCFS form 7002 – Medication Consent Form or approved equivalent

These forms will be completed by the child's parents in conjunction with the program and the child's physician. In the event of an anaphylactic reaction, staff will call 911 and follow the instructions outlined in these documents.

Staff Training

- All staff members will be trained in the prevention, recognition and response to food and other allergic reactions and anaphylaxis upon hire. A number of staff will also maintain certifications in CPR & First Aid and medication administration. If a child with an allergy requires the administration of Epinephrine or other emergency medications, the parents will be required to train any staff member caring for that child on the administration of the prescribed medication.

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Allergic Triggers

- Each classroom will have a posting with a list of individual children's allergies that is visible to all staff and volunteers caring for the child. All staff will take steps to prevent exposure to a child's known allergy, including but not limited to reading food labels. Handwashing, cleaning and all other regulations related to allergies and anaphylaxis as outlined in the OCFS Childcare Regulations will be followed by all staff and volunteers.

Communication

- Upon enrollment of a child with a known allergy, all staff and volunteers will be made aware of the child's allergy and associated medication needs, as well as ways to reduce the risk to exposure to said allergen. In addition, all parents and children will be made aware of any allergies in the classroom, as well actions being taken to reduce exposure. Confidentiality will be maintained when discussing any child's allergy with parents and other children.

Annual Notification to Families

- Families will be given a copy of the program's Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy upon enrollment. This policy will be reviewed and updated annually. Families will receive an updated copy of this policy annually and whenever changes are made.

Blood and Vomit

If, at any time, you must handle vomit, blood, or bloodied items, there are important steps to remember.

1. Always wear gloves if there is blood or vomit present.
2. Use only disposable items for cleaning in these situations (such as gloves, paper towels, tissues, etc.).
3. Disposable items used must be placed in a plastic bag and knotted securely before being placed in the trash.

4. Clothing and sheets should be placed in a plastic bag, knotted securely, and sent home to be washed.
5. Hard items and surfaces (toys, counters, floors, furniture, etc.) should be washed thoroughly with soapy water and dried thoroughly. When dry, the hard items should be sprayed thoroughly with disinfectant bleach solution and dried thoroughly (air-drying is preferred).
6. Remember: any paper towels you use must be placed in a knotted plastic bag.

Note: It is strongly recommended that all staff keep a change of clothes at the Center.

Caring For Ill Children

- Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is committed to providing quality childcare to the children who attend our programs and to provide such care on a consistent basis that parents can rely on. We believe that in order to provide such consistency, it is essential to adhere to a health policy which provides specific health criteria which must be met for a child to be cared for at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.. Finally, we believe that only a team effort between staff and parents can maximize a healthy environment for all children to the fullest extent possible.
- In the event that a child becomes ill while at the center, parents will be notified immediately, and expected to pick up his/her child and bring him/her home as quickly as possible. A child who is ill must be provided with a quiet place to rest that is in view of, and under supervision of a staff member.
- We are a center for healthy children. A child who is not well does not benefit from our program and can adversely affect the health of the other children.
- In the event that any of the following occur, we ask that parents keep their child at home:
 - Temperature of 101° or above
 - Any fever accompanied by:
 - A deep cough,
 - An earache or draining ear,
 - Spasms of cough, or
 - Sore throat
 - Diarrhea or vomiting (your child must be free from these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the center)
 - A rash of any kind until diagnosed, treated or declared harmless by a physician.
 - Red, runny or matted eyes—which may be Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)
 - Severe Colds with excessive discharge from either the nose or the eyes

Food Allergy Symptoms and Reactions

The most common food allergy signs and symptoms include:

- Hives, itching or eczema
- Abdominal Pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- Tingling or itching in the mouth
- Nasal Congestion or runny nose
- Slight, dry cough
- Odd taste in mouth

Severe reactions may include one or more of the following may be signs of anaphylaxis and require immediate treatment:

- Constriction and tightening of airways

- Trouble swallowing
- Turning blue
- Drop in blood pressure (feeling faint, weak, passing out, confused)
- Rapid Pulse
- Difficulty breathing
- Sense of impending doom

***Call 911 immediately. If child does not have his/her own epi pen in the classroom emergency bag, go to office medicine cabinet, get stock epi pen and administer epi pen immediately. Follow instructions on the special health care plan.

How a child might describe a reaction:

- “This food is spicy”
- “My mouth feels funny”
- “My tongue feels hot like something is poking it”
- “My lips are tight”
- “It feels like there are bugs in there” (Describing itchy throat or ears)
- “There’s a frog in my throat”

Children’s Health Records

- Children’s health records are kept and maintained in the office. All records relating to children are confidential and cannot be disclosed without written parental permission to anyone other than the office, its designees or other persons authorized by law.

Classroom Cleaning Schedule (See Appendix)

Daily

- Wash your hands upon entering the classroom.
- All eating surfaces cleaned and sanitized before and after children eat.
- Floor swept after every meal.
- Non-disposable plates, cups and utensils washed and sanitized after each use.
- Sink areas kept clear of debris. Cleaned daily. Pour leftover bleach water down the drain
- At the end of every day:
 - Sweep & mop floors
 - Vacuum carpets
 - Spray "touched" surfaces (door knobs, faucets, counters, shelf tops, etc.) with bleach water.
 - Wipe down cots with bleach solution

Weekly

- Ensure that parents launder all used sheets and blankets.
- Sanitize toys
- Launder dramatic play clothes

Employee Health

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. teachers and administrators are subject to generally the same wellness guidelines as are its students. Staff may not participate in Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. activities if they display any of the following symptoms:

- fever over 101°
- flu
- unusual rash

- severe cough
- rapid or labored breathing
- severe cold
- vomiting
- yellowish skin or eyes
- diarrhea
- head lice
- contagious illness

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. maintains a roster of qualified teacher's assistants, who are available for temporary classroom duty. All state staff-to-child ratios will be respected.

First Aid Procedures

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will receive proper care;

1. They will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged.
2. Treatment will be logged and the parent will be notified when the injury occurred.
3. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is required to log any injuries observed on a child that may have occurred outside of the school.

If a medical emergency arises, a parent will be contacted before any emergency treatment takes place unless doing so endangers the child's life. In such a case, necessary steps will be taken, putting the child first (calling hospital, doctor, poison control, and so forth). If a parent is unable to be reached, the alternate responsible adults listed on the child's Emergency Card will be contacted.

Classroom Emergency Bags

Each classroom has its own emergency bag that should be stored in the same place, up high, out of the reach of children. This bag should go with the children wherever they go (playground, gym, outside, field trip, etc.)

Include the following in each of your classroom emergency bags:

- First-aid manual
- Sterile gauze pads of different sizes
- Adhesive tape
- Adhesive bandages in several sizes
- Wipes
- Tweezers
- Disposable instant cold packs
- Thermometer
- Plastic non-latex gloves (at least 2 pairs)
- Blue card information for each child
- Emergency child specific medication (asthma inhalers and/or epipens)

It is the head teacher's responsibility to keep the first aid kit fully stocked with these items.

****THE EMERGENCY BAG MUST BE KEPT OUT OF REACH OF THE CHILDREN!****

NEW YORK STATE CHILD DAYCARE CENTER REGULATIONS

All licensed childcare centers are required to comply with all of the Child Day Care Center regulations defined by New York State. These regulations were created as a result of a child being seriously injured. They have been put into place to ensure the safety of all children.

The complete list of regulations can be found on the Office of Children and Family Services website at: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_regulations.asp.

The regulations are broken up into the following categories:

- 418-1.1 Definitions, Enforcement and Hearings
- 418-1.2 Procedures for Applying for and Renewing a License
- 418-1.3 Building and Equipment
- 418-1.4 Fire Protection
- 418-1.5 Safety
- 418-1.6 Transportation
- 418-1.7 Program Requirements
- 418-1.8 Supervision of Children
- 418-1.9 Behavior Management
- 418-1.10 Child Abuse and Maltreatment
- 418-1.11 Health and Infection Control
- 418-1.12 Nutrition
- 418-1.13 Staff Qualifications
- 418-1.14 Training
- 418-1.15 Management and Administration

ALL STAFF IS EXPECTED TO KNOW ALL OF THE REGULATIONS AND TO ABIDE BY THEM AT ALL TIMES.

OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

We are regulated by the Office of Children and Family Services. By law, they are required to conduct at least six unannounced visits per year to ensure that we are abiding by all state regulations. Our current licenser is Christina Fitzgerald and she can be reached at 585-238-8540.

OPENING AND CLOSSING PROCEDURES

Opening Procedure

- Put all lights on
- Make sure heat/air conditioning is set to 70°
- Get materials ready for the day
- Put out table top activities that were planned for the morning
- Fire & Safety Check
- All exit doors are unlocked and accessible
- All exit lights are working properly
- All corridors and doors leading to exits are clear
- There are no items hanging from sprinkler heads or fire alarm devices
- Fire alarm devices, extinguishers and sprinkler heads are not obstructed
- All evacuation maps are in place and current
- Make sure all walkways have been shoveled and salted (during winter months)

Closing Procedure

- Make sure all bathrooms and classrooms have been thoroughly cleaned (use checklist)
- Make sure all garbage has been emptied and brought out to the dumpster

- Shut all lights off before leaving
- Lock the front door using the skeleton key
- Make sure Nellis Hall is locked
- Make sure all windows are closed
- Turn off all air conditioning units
- Put new attendance sheets in each classroom
- Get out breakfast for the following day

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

An employee's performance review or appraisal is the systematic evaluation of the employee's performance in consideration of established performance standards and his or her potential for development.

The objectives of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. requirement for employee evaluation include:

1. Improving employee motivation
2. Providing the individual employee information concerning his or her strong and weak areas of performance and how he or she can improve.
3. Providing an objective system of evaluation for each employee on his or her performance relative to job standards and duties.
4. Providing accurate and complete information to be utilized for determining pay increases, promotions, transfers, demotions, and terminations.

We measure employee performance using multiple tools:

1. ECERS (Early Childhood Classroom Environment Rating Scale)-Conducted once a year to evaluate the classroom environment and to highlight classroom environment strengths and needs. These scales are used to inform decisions on ordering supplies, materials and conducting professional development.
2. Core Body of Knowledge Assessment and Professional Development Planning Tool is conducted once every year with the director. This tool is used to guide professional development decisions and to assist the director with ways to support the employee.
3. TPOT (Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool) is conducted twice a year (fall and spring) to measure staff implementation of teaching and behavior support practices associated with the Pyramid Model. We use the TPOT as a platform for internal coaching. Staff work collaboratively every other week with an internal coach to set Pyramid practice implementation goals based on the TPOT results and create plans to reach those goals.
 - An employee's performance shall be formally evaluated at least once a year, where the director will observe the employee for at least an hour, documenting what he/she sees, noting strengths and areas of growth.
 - Prior to submitting the performance evaluation report, each employee will be given the opportunity to rate his/her own performance.
 - The director shall meet privately with the employee and explain the evaluation to the employee.
 - At the conclusion of the meeting, the director will sign the evaluation and enter the date the discussion with the employee took place.
 - The employee will also sign the evaluation attesting that he or she has read the evaluation, has had the opportunity to make any comments, and that he or she concurs or does not concur with the director.
 - The Director will give a copy of the evaluation to the employee.
 - Outstanding performance on the job or conduct well above the standard expectations and requirements will be recognized with either a salary increase or a bonus.

- When a written commendation is warranted, the director will prepare a letter to the staff member and make two copies. The original will be given to the staff member and the second copy will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

* THIS IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ALL TEACHING POSITIONS AT IMAGINATION CHILDCARE ACADEMY

PLAYGROUND SAFETY/SUPERVISION

1. The playground will be checked every morning prior to being used by program staff. Assigned staff members will fill out a daily playground checklist.

- Scanning the area for potential safety hazards
- Staff will report to the director any equipment that needs to be repaired

2. Staff members need to make sure they are following their regularly scheduled playground and field times.

- This is to ensure that different groups and classes are getting their allotted time
- Different age groups and classes are not to be combined at any point on the playground due to OCFS regulations.

3. Staff will conduct face to name checks before, throughout, and after playground use maintaining appropriate child: staff ratios at all times

- Caregivers/Teachers should record the count on an attendance sheet
- Attendance clipboards, emergency bags, and walkies should be with you at all times when leaving the classroom
- Teachers should review playground rules with children prior to allowing them to play (Rocks and sticks stay on the ground, we slide down the slide, we stay with our class, we line up when our teacher tells us).

4. To ensure adequate supervision of children, staff should be in specific positional points. Attached below are examples of positions staff should take. Examples 1 and 2 show appropriate positions staff members should take on both sides of the playground. (See appendix for Pics)

- These areas are points where staff members should be standing to monitor the children in their care
- Be sure to move around your area because children tend to travel around their play areas constantly
- Staff members should also be within close proximity to children who are going down slides to prevent any injuries

5. After using any extra playground equipment, be sure to return any items used on the playground back to its proper place within the building.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AED/CPR/ First Aid Training

All staff who are interested in taking CPR/AED and First Aid training must see the director so that she can register the employee for the appropriate class.

MAT (Medication Administration Training)

Any staff member who is interested in administering medication must be MAT trained. This is a 15 hour in person training who trains participants how to administer prescription and over the counter medications correctly. All lead teachers are encouraged to participate in this training.

Mandated Training Prior to Working With Children

Prior to working with children, all newly hired staff are required to complete the following training:

(a) Office of Children and Family Services Online Training:

1. Go to www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu
2. Click on the Learn button, which gives you a menu of options.
3. Click on the Go to the E-learning catalog and get started link.
4. Take the following courses:

- Foundations for Health and Safety (5 hours)
- Mandated Reporter (2 hours)
- Obesity (2 hours)
- Shaken Baby (1 hours)
- Supervision of Children (1.5 hours)
- Emergency Preparedness (1.5 hours)

THE ABOVE TRAININGS MUST BE RE-TAKEN BI-ANNUALLY!

Make sure to print off the certificates after completion and give these to the director so that you may be compensated for your time.

(b) Pyramid Model Training

Upon hiring, the director will sign you up for an 18-hour online training session for the Pyramid Model: Preschool Modules 1, 2 and 3, which will provide you with the necessary background information and strategies to assist you in implementing the Pyramid Model.

Preschool Module 1: Building Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments

Content Includes:

- Understanding the Relationship between Challenging Behavior and Social Emotional Development
- Examining Our Attitudes about Challenging Behaviors
- Building Positive Relationships
- Designing the Physical Environment
- Schedules, Routines, and Transitions
- Planning Activities that Promote Engagement
- Giving Directions and Teaching Classroom Rules
- Ongoing Monitoring and Positive Attention

Preschool Module 2: Social Emotional Teaching Strategies

Content Includes:

- Identifying the Importance of Teaching Social Emotional Skills
- Developing Friendship Skills
- Enhancing Emotional Literacy

- Controlling Anger and Impulse
- Developing Problem-Solving Skills
- Individualizing Instruction
- Partnering with Families

Preschool Module 3: Individualized Intervention; Determining the Meaning of Behavior and Developing Appropriate Responses

Content Includes:

- Overview of Positive Behavior Supports
- Reviewing the dimensions of communication: Form and function
- Considering behavior, including challenging behavior, as communication
- Providing an introduction to Functional Assessment
- Understanding the development of Behavior Support Planning

Higher Education

Staff members are encouraged to further their education while in the employment of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. When an assistant teacher receives his or her teacher certification, he or she may qualify for an immediate increase in pay, in lieu of an annual increase. Staff members may qualify for immediate rate increases in lieu of an annual increase upon completion of any additional certificates or degrees.

Employee Orientation

All new employees, substitutes, and regularly scheduled volunteers shall complete our orientation program and provide proof of sufficient mastery with a Staff Training Quiz prior to working with the children. Each employee receives a copy of the Employee Handbook at orientation and the handbook is reviewed in its entirety with the new staff.

The orientation program covers the following:

- Review of center policies.
- Review of all licensing rules and regulations
- Training in emergency procedures, including the operation of fire extinguishers.
- First aid procedures.
- Job responsibilities in relation to the job description.
- Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control, including hand-washing procedures and universal precautions for handling body fluids.
- Schedule of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. activities.
- Review of child abuse and neglect laws and reporting procedures.
- The procedure for ensuring that all Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. employees know the children assigned to their care and their whereabouts at all times.
- Behavior management techniques.
- The integration of children with disabilities into the program.
- Confidentiality policies.
- Training for proper lifting and carrying of children.
- Online training in all related OCFS topics
- Online training in the Pyramid model

Initial 15 Hours of Training

All staff member are required to attain at least 15 hours of professional development within the first six months of employment. Program topics include, but are not limited to:

- instruction in child development
- individual assessment
- special needs
- cultural diversity
- public safety
- emergency medical procedures
- communicable diseases
- curriculum planning and developing
- behavior modification
- nutrition and food preparation
- financial budgeting

Training will be made available through various seminars, staff meetings, visits from community officials and professionals, and hired consultants.

Ongoing Training

Every staff member shall participate in at least twenty hours of continuing education every year. Each staff member is responsible for attendance at sessions of particular concern to his or her classroom and responsibilities. Registration fees and schedule changes should be discussed in advance with the director. Employees must submit original certificates to the director immediately upon completion of coursework in order to get paid.

Aspire

All staff is required to maintain an updated Aspire account. Please see the director for help with creating an account.

Staff Meetings

To ensure that staff has the opportunity to receive pertinent information and clarification of problems and issues, we conduct mandatory monthly staff meetings. A list of scheduled meetings can be found on our school calendar. The meetings will be held from 6:00pm-7:30pm, unless otherwise stated by the Director. We will document the dates and the information discussed at these staff meetings and send the notes to all staff in an email.

Staff Training Log

A staff training log is used to monitor attendance and information covered during each training session. The training log is kept in the office, in each staff member's personal file. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the director when training has occurred, so that the training log will be kept up-to-date.

Training & Staff Meeting Schedule

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. makes available to all staff members a program of in-services and training that enhance and enrich the teaching experience. Each staff member is encouraged to attend educational workshops and meetings as our work schedule and budget permits. The director is encouraged to attend these meetings and share any information and handout materials with the entire staff during staff meetings.

Paid Planning Time

All teachers will receive at least a half an hour of paid planning time daily. At this time, teachers will be allowed access to technology and the internet so that they may use these resources to assist them with planning. All classroom staff will receive at least a half an hour per week, away from children, of paid training time to collaborate as a team.

Training Pay

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s policy is to pay for half of the expense of a course up front. Additional individual employee training costs paid by the employer may not exceed \$100 annually. Courses must be approved by the director in advance. Employees will be reimbursed for the second half of the tuition after six months, if still in the employment of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. We have two mandated Professional Development days a year in our academic calendar.

PROGRAM/CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

We believe that all children can learn; it is our job to create a setting where children's natural *Approaches to Learning* (Curiosity, Initiative, Engagement, and Creativity) are encouraged and built upon. We believe that children learn best by doing. A facilitated, activity based setting provides children with opportunities to learn about their world through hands on experiences. Activities at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. encourage exploration and development of children's innate curiosity.

We consider Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. a small community; a safe place where children, staff, and families work together as partners; a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging; a place where everyone is respected and celebrated for their diversity as well as their common bonds.

Curriculum

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is committed towards providing high quality child care and education for young children. The daily program at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is structured so that children will experience the security of routines they can easily master and that will contribute to a peaceful, yet active learning environment.

Our center follows the guideline of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We fully support NAEYC's position that a major determinant of a quality early childhood program is the degree to which a program is developmentally appropriate. For a program to be developmentally appropriate, content and teaching strategies must be age and individually appropriate.

Leading research in the field today suggests that play is the primary means by which children grow in the preschool years and even beyond into the primary years. In addition to its value in developing children mentally, play also serves important functions in children's physical, emotional, and social development. Therefore, a structured play environment is an essential ingredient in our educational curriculum.

Children need years of play with real objects and events before they are able to understand the meanings of symbols such as letters and numbers. Learning initially takes place as young children touch, manipulate, and experiment with things, and interact with people. Cause and effect is a large part of children's early learning experiences. Therefore, learning materials at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. are real, concrete and relevant to the lives of children.

Children at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will have access to a variety of learning materials that support our view towards providing facilitated hands-on learning experiences. Such materials include: sand and water tables equipped with accessories, blocks, puzzles, manipulatives, dramatic play props, a variety of science investigation equipment and items to explore. Fiction and non-fiction texts are

integrated throughout the day to promote literacy into children's real experiences. To build on children's creative expression, they will have continual access to popular children's books, recordings, paper, crayons, water-based paints, markers and the world of nature.

Interaction with adults and peers is another essential ingredient to the development of children. They learn not only from direct experience, but also from validating their experiences with others. Teachers provide a variety of activities for the children, increasing difficulty, complexity and challenges as the children become more involved with the activity and develop understanding and skills. Our staff is trained to facilitate the children's learning process as they explore and inquire.

Child Assessment

We are an early learning facility that strives to meet the individual needs of EVERY student. We use assessment to help us make decisions about: lesson effectiveness, students' needs and strengths, and to drive instruction.

Assessments include:

Observations- Conducted continuously, teachers are required to write anecdotal notes daily based on observations. These anecdotal notes are used to inform teaching practices.

Writing Samples- Teachers are required to collect work samples from children and place them in children's portfolios. See Curriculum for specific samples that need to be included. These samples are used to document children's progress throughout the year.

Pictures- Pictures are taken to document children are meeting certain standards. See curriculum for more information of when to use picture documentation.

Collections of student work- These are also added to the portfolios to document students' progress.

Discussions- Through discussion teachers are able to decipher as to whether or not children truly understand a concept. Anecdotal notes should be taken to document discussions as a way to inform future planning

Ages and Stages-These are conducted once a year (Fall) for each child as a way to monitor children's development. Parents are asked to complete these checklists and results are given back to parents within two weeks of completion, along with any suggestions for what to do next.

Brigance- This assessment is conducted in the fall on each child to use as a baseline for each child's development

COR Advantage- This tool is being utilized to monitor children's progress throughout the year.

Three times per school year (fall, winter & spring), teachers complete a student assessment summary form. This form includes a breakdown of each student's strengths and needs in the following developmental areas: literacy, math concepts, social emotional, fine motor, gross motor and self-help. Teachers use these forms to help guide individualized instruction.

PYRAMID MODEL

In 2016, we were chosen by New York State to participate in the First Cohort of a Pilot program for the Pyramid Model. We have been implementing this program ever since. All staff are required to attend 18 hours of professional development that introduces the Pyramid Model prior to working with the children at Imagination Childcare Academy. See the professional development section of this handbook for more specific information about the trainings.

What is the Pyramid Model?

A three tiered approach to behavior management

Strategies are based on evidence-based best practices in early childhood.

Strong teaching and learning practices

Focused on building positive relationships, developing supportive and nurturing environments, teaching social skills, empathy and emotional vocabulary

Provide individualized supports when needed.

Parents, teachers, and administrators work together to support the social-emotional development of each child

What Does A Pyramid Model Program Look Like?

1. Nurturing and responsive relationships
2. High quality environments
3. Targeted social emotional supports
4. Individualized Positive Behavior Support



Research demonstrates that children’s social and emotional development lays the foundation for growth in all developmental domains and future success in school.

What is the Goal of the Pyramid Model?

To Promote Children’s Success By....

Creating an environment where EVERY child feels good about coming to school.

Designing an environment that promotes child engagement and success.

Focusing on teaching children what TO DO!

Teaching expectations and routines.

Teaching skills that children can use in place of challenging behaviors.

Fingerprint Clearance

All employees must be fingerprinted at an Official Fingerprinting site that has been approved by the Office of Children and Family Services. An appointment must be made prior. To obtain an appointment you may call the Call center at 877-472-6915 or go on the following website: www.L1Enrollment.com.

Statewide Central Register Database Check

All employees must be cleared through the Statewide Central Register Database check. See the director for the appropriate paperwork. There is a \$25 fee for each employee.

Staff Exclusion List Check:

All employees must be cleared through the Vulnerable Persons Central Registrar. See the director for the appropriate paperwork.

Criminal Conviction Statement

All employees must sign a criminal conviction statement in which they attest to whether or not they have a record of convictions.

Medical Clearance

All employees must have a Tuberculin Test completed and the form must be completed and signed by a physician. The employee must also provide a medical release statement that is prepared by a physician that clears the individual to work in a child care setting.

CPR/First Aid

All employees must complete an OCFS approved CPR/ First Aid training course bi-annually within.

Reference Checks

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. All employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This Policy is one component of **Imagination Childcare Academy Inc.'s** commitment to a discrimination-free work environment. Sexual harassment is against the law and all employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment and employees are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state or local antidiscrimination laws.

Policy:

1. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s** policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, with **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** In the remainder of this document, the term "employees" refers to this collective group.

2. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action (e.g., counseling, suspension, termination).
3. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee of **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** who retaliates against anyone involved in a sexual harassment investigation will be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform the director. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.
4. Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including managers and supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
5. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever management receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including managers and supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.
6. All employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** will provide all employees a complaint form for employees to report harassment and file complaints.
7. Managers and supervisors are **required** to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to **the director**.
8. This policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all employees and should be posted prominently in all work locations to the extent practicable (for example, in a main office, not an offsite work location) and be provided to employees upon hiring.

What Is “Sexual Harassment”?

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
- Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual's employment.

A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual's sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient's job performance.

Sexual harassment also occurs when a person in authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions or privileges of employment. This is also called "quid pro quo" harassment.

Any employee who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.

Examples of sexual harassment

The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited:

- Physical acts of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body;
 - Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
- Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
 - Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target's job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
 - Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
- Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile work environment.
- Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.

- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
 - Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.

- Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
 - Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
 - Sabotaging an individual's work;
 - Bullying, yelling, name-calling.

Who can be a target of sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.

Where can sexual harassment occur?

Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.

Retaliation

Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours).

Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in “protected activity.” Protected activity occurs when a person has:

- made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
- testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
- opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to management, or by simply informing a supervisor or manager of harassment;
- reported that another employee has been sexually harassed; or
- encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.

Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Reporting Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it knows about it. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to the director. Anyone who witnesses or becomes aware of potential instances of sexual harassment should report such behavior to the director.

Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A form for submission of a written complaint is attached to this Policy, and all employees are encouraged to use this complaint form. Employees who are reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and note that it is on another employee's behalf.

Employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

Supervisory Responsibilities

All supervisors and managers who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, **are required** to report such suspected sexual harassment to **the director.**

In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue.

Supervisors and managers will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation.

Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

All complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner, and will be confidential to the extent possible.

An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, commenced immediately and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.

Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.

While the process may vary from case to case, investigations should be done in accordance with the following steps:

- Upon receipt of complaint, **the director** will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If complaint is verbal, encourage the individual to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If he or she refuses, prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.
- If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, take steps to obtain and preserve them.
- Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
- Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses;
- Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
 - A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
 - A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
 - A timeline of events;
 - A summary of prior relevant incidents, reported or unreported; and
 - The basis for the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective action(s).
- Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
- Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
- Inform the individual who reported of the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

Legal Protections And External Remedies

Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** but is also prohibited by state, federal, and, where applicable, local law.

Aside from the internal process at **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.**, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities. While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, you may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

In addition to those outlined below, employees in certain industries may have additional legal protections.

State Human Rights Law (HRL)

The Human Rights Law (HRL), codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15, § 290 et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees, regardless of immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the Human Rights Law may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (DHR) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed any time **within one year** of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the HRL, **within three years** of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with DHR if they have already filed a HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to **Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.** does not extend your time to file with DHR or in court. The one year or three years is counted from date of the most recent incident of harassment.

You do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate your complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney's fees and civil fines.

DHR's main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. You may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: www.dhr.ny.gov.

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR's regional offices across New York State.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint, and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief, but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a “Charge of Discrimination.” The EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at www.eeoc.gov or via email at info@eeoc.gov.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

Local Protections

Many localities enforce laws protecting individuals from sexual harassment and discrimination. An individual should contact the county, city or town in which they live to find out if such a law exists. For example, employees who work in New York City may file complaints of sexual harassment with the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Contact their main office at Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector Street, 10th Floor, New York, New York; call 311 or (212) 306-7450; or visit www.nyc.gov/html/cchr/html/home/home.shtml.

Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police de

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Supervision is one of the key requirements in the prevention of accidents and injury throughout our center. All staff is required to have the skills to be able to assess potential risks during supervision and be able to implement changes to supervision to avoid accident or injury. New and relief staff should be informed of potential supervisory risks according to each individual child in a confidential and sensitive way.

Safety of each child is our number one concern at Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. We work as partners with parents to ensure that every child is protected.

Parents will:

- Ensure that a staff member sees his/her child upon arrival and ensure a staff member is informed when departing.
- Inform staff if someone other than those who are authorized to pick up the child on the “Pick-up” sheet will be picking up the child.
- Ensure the ‘authorized person to pick up’ information is up to date.
- Inform staff of any current or pending court orders affecting the child and provide the center with a photocopy of the court order to be kept with the child’s enrolment form.
- Adhere to correct sign in and out procedures.
- Make sure that they do not prop open doors for others to enter into the center.

Staff will:

- Never leave a child unattended, this includes at meal times when children are eating and drinking and when they use the restroom.
- Ensure that all children are within sight and/or hearing of staff at all times.
- Ensure that where multiple areas are available to children at the same time (indoor/outdoor activities) all areas are supervised and within teacher/student ratio.
- Position themselves (do not sit back to the children) and arrange equipment, furniture and activities appropriately.
- Communicate effectively by informing other staff if they are leaving an area so that student/teacher ratio is always withheld.
- Be aware of the ‘Child Pick Up’ procedure and ensure children are only released to authorized people.
- Be flexible to allow for small groups of children who may require supervision (eg: A group of children who are still eating their lunch.)
- Regularly evaluate their supervisory practices through staff meetings, staffroom discussions and at other times when required.
- Document changes made to supervisory practices and the reasons for making them
- Do regular head counts of children in their care (especially when entering the playground & on leaving the playground).
- Be aware of where every child is at all times.
- Discuss best position points of supervision (especially in the playground) to avoid clustering in one spot. Supervision should be active and interacting with the children (not just standing and watching).
- Ensure staff: child ratios are correct at all times to assist supervision.
- Throughout the day, we have planned bathroom breaks. This is when the entire class will line up outside the bathroom and go one at a time. There will be one teacher in the doorway of the bathroom so he/she is able to supervise the child in the bathroom and supervise those children in the hallway. The other teacher will be in the hallway supervising the other children. In any event that a child needs to go to the bathroom that is not at one of these times, a staff member will accompany the child, and another staff member will be called in to stay in the classroom with the children so that the teacher/student ratio is never compromised. If an extra staff member is unavailable, we will go to the bathroom as a class.
- Question any stranger to the center in a friendly way eg: “Hello, can I help you?” (And observe the person’s actions).

Director will:

- Support staff in developing a plan for improving facilities and correcting problems if effective supervision is difficult due to the design of buildings or grounds.
- Maintain current records relating to authorized people to pick up each child, court orders and custody issues.

SUPERVISION OF STAFF

Purpose

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. is committed to ensuring that every member of staff receives effective supervision on a continual basis. The purpose of this policy is to promote a consistent approach to staff supervision throughout the center, to ensure that individual management supervision of staff is geared to achieving our objectives, and in so doing to enhance the quality of staff performance in providing childcare services. Supervision is also the primary mechanism by which the personal impact on staff of their work is addressed.

Persons Affected

Staff and Volunteers of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.

Definitions

Supervision is defined as any communication between two or more staff, one of whom is a supervisor, where the primary purpose is to enhance staff performance and effectiveness in carrying out the requirements of his/her job performance. Types of supervision will vary, but include the following:

- Planned/ formal supervision - pre-arranged sessions with an agreed agenda.
- Informal/ unplanned supervision – a response to a task or event when it is inappropriate to wait for the next planned supervision.
- Annual Evaluation – formal annual review of the year’s work and planning personal goals for the next year

Responsibilities

The Director has the responsibility for developing the staff effectively, ensuring that they receive regular, quality supervision at least once every twelve weeks, clearly stating and agreeing expected work standards and ensuring training and development opportunities are identified, facilitated and evaluated.

- A record will be made of the dates and times of scheduled sessions, and also of each session, particularly noting agreed actions, endorsed by both parties. A copy of this record is given to the staff member and the other is placed in the employee’s file. Dates and times will be arranged in advance, normally at the prior meeting. The arrangement will be honored unless changed by mutual agreement and a new arrangement made for the earliest possible time/date.
- The Director will also provide unplanned supervision to staff as may be required

Individually each staff member must;

- Take responsibility for their own performance and learning, ensuring it is integrated into their everyday practice.
- Reflect and learn from their work experience, training and development opportunities.
- Prepare for and take part in supervision under the arrangements agreed.
- Take any action agreed in supervision, to improve performance and enhance their effectiveness.

Policy

This policy is designed to promote a consistent approach to staff supervision by setting out the responsibilities of staff and managers, the issues to be covered, and the appropriate recording process. The quality of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.’s program can be defined as the extent to which it meets the needs of those who use its services. Staff skills, motivation and relationships with families are key elements in determining quality of child care service. These key elements can be enhanced by effective supervision.

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s view is that every member of staff has the right to regular, planned supervision. For it to be effective, supervision should be:

- Viewed as an opportunity for shared reflection on work.
- Seen as part of a culture that promotes reflective practice/evidence based practice, self-directed learning and learning from experience.
- An integral part of the working routine.
- Approached in a positive, constructive, honest, open and forward-looking manner

Supervision for the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. team provides an opportunity to:

- Monitor progress of staff with the objectives agreed at the annual evaluation, in line with the organization's vision.
- Reflect on the effectiveness of recent training and development activities contributing to workplace competence, and identify any outstanding needs.
- Provide feedback on performance.
- Provide support, direction, advice and guidance on individual cases, staff and management issues.
- Develop skills and understanding.
- Ensure policy and standards are met consistently in practice.
- Discuss any external/personal circumstances that may have a bearing on work

Procedure

All involved should prepare for planned supervision sessions. Preparation may include:

- Drawing together factual information on recent and current work.
- Preliminary reflection on progress, achievements and performance generally in relation to objectives, plans, standards and targets.
- Identifying any areas of uncertainty about policies or procedures or how to put them into practice.
- Identifying any anticipated constraints and threats to effective performance
- Any suggested improvements to practice, procedures or policies.
- Reflection on recent training and development activities with evaluation of their impact on their role/service delivery.

All of these topics should be covered in planned supervision, but the priority given to each one will vary, depending on the nature of the staff member's title.

- Review of work done, evaluation of performance and achievements, objectives, priorities and standards.
- Need for any personal support to staff where work can be difficult and stressful.
- Awareness and understanding of relevant policies, procedures and standards.
- Adequacy of relevant policies, standards, systems and procedures.
- Review of sick leave and other absences.
- Review of individual professional development.
- Suggestions for improving performance
- Any other topics either party wishes to discuss
- Agreement of clear, realistic, measurable objectives and activities for work and personal development during the period to the next planned meeting.

Records on meeting sessions will be kept by those involved;

- These records will be signed and agreed by the Director and staff member, and should outline the issues discussed, decisions reached and action agreed.
- Supervision records are the property of the employer and should be available for management

- examination when requested.
- Appropriate confidentiality of records will be maintained.
- Records should be kept for 6 months after a staff member has left Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. and then destroyed.

Supervision is to be seen as a process, to be achieved by a range of methods;

- Wherever possible, supervision should be undertaken primarily on a one-to-one basis.
- Arrangements for planned one-to-one supervision should ensure as much privacy as possible, and prevent interruptions from visitors or the telephone.
- The Director should be involved in supervising all staff as he/she is responsible for managing performance, training and development and annual appraisals. Other staff may also be involved in non-managerial aspects of supervision, e.g. Teachers who work directly with Teacher Assistants.
- In order for supervision to be consistent, the organization's supervisor records the regularity of sessions.

TECHNOLOGY USE POLICIES

A. Acceptable Use Policy--General

Electronic Devices and Cell Phones

The use of any type of personal electronic media device for social or entertainment purposes, including but not limited to, listening to music on headphones, playing screen games, surfing the internet, sending e-mails, texting or making personal calls while supervising children is prohibited. The use of cell phones and SMART watches is permitted for staff who are not responsible for supervision of children. To ensure orderly operation of the program the Director, Assistant Director, and/or Supervisor are allowed to carry cell phones only when they are not responsible for directly supervising children.

Computers, I-pads and Laptops may only be used when teachers are not responsible for directly supervising children. I-Pods and MP3 players may only be used for playing music.

Teachers may only incorporate high quality, commercial free, educational and/or movement based videos into the instructional day. **Screen time is limited to 30 minutes once a week** for children ages 2 years through 12 years, so as to reduce the harmful effects of screen time on health, learning, behavior and sleep.

The use of TV/Video is prohibited for children under the age of 2 years.

TV/video use will not occur during nap time or meal time.

All staff who are directly supervising children must leave their cell phones in the office. Cell phones are not allowed in the classroom where children are present.

Firm-Maintained Systems

Voicemail, electronic mail (e-mail), and Internet systems are maintained by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. to facilitate firm business. Therefore, all messages sent, received, composed, and/or stored on these systems are property of the firm and are subject to inspection and review at the firm's discretion.

Personal Use Extremely Limited

These systems are to be used by employees in conducting firm business and are not for employees' personal use. The firm understands that on occasion immediate family members may need to leave messages on the voice-mail system for an employee and is willing to accommodate such personal use of the system to a limited degree. However, personal use of the voicemail (or e-mail and Internet) system which interferes with an employee's work performance will not be tolerated.

Privacy Not Guaranteed

Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. reserves the right to access an employee's company voicemail (outgoing and incoming), e-mail, and Internet messages at any time. Therefore, an employee's outgoing voice-mail message must not indicate to the caller that his/her incoming message will be confidential or private. The existence of a password on either system is not intended to indicate that messages will remain private, and passwords must be made known to the firm by all employees.

Erasure Not Reliable

Employees should be aware that even when a message has been erased, it still might be possible to retrieve it from a backup system. Therefore, employees should not rely on the erasure of messages to assume a message has remained private.

Message Access

Messages on the company's voicemail, e-mail, and Internet systems are to be accessed only by the intended recipient and by others at the direct request of the intended recipient. However, the firm reserves the right to access messages on each system at any time. Any attempt by persons other than the above to access messages on either system will constitute a serious violation of firm policy.

Harassment and Discrimination

Messages on the firm's voicemail, e-mail, and Internet Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. et systems are subject to the same policies regarding harassment and discrimination as are any other workplace communications. Offensive language or harassment of discriminatory nature in such messages will not be tolerated. Report any offensive messages to the Director.

B. Acceptable Use Policy – Internet

As part of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s commitment to the utilization of technology, our employees have access to the Internet. To protect the firm and our employees, the following procedures must be followed by employees making use of the Internet:

- a. It is Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. policy to limit Internet access to official business. Employees are authorized to access the Internet for personal business after-hours in strict compliance with the other terms of this policy.
- b. The introduction of viruses or malicious tampering with any computer system is expressly prohibited.
- c. Employees using Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. Internet access are acting as representatives of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. As such, employees should act accordingly so as not to damage the reputation of the firm.
- d. Files that are downloaded from the Internet must be scanned with virus detection software before installation or execution. All appropriate precautions should be taken to detect a virus and, if necessary, to prevent its spread.
- e. The truth or accuracy of information on the Internet and in e-mail should be considered suspect until confirmed by a separate (reliable) source.
- f. Employees shall not place company material (copyrighted software, internal correspondence, etc.) on any publicly accessible Internet computer without prior permission.

- g. External connections to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. internal network are not permitted unless expressly authorized.
- h. The Internet does not guarantee the privacy and confidentiality of information. Sensitive material transferred over the Internet may be at risk of detection by a third party. Employees must exercise caution and care when transferring such material in any form.
- i. Unless otherwise noted, all software on the Internet should be considered copyrighted work. Therefore, employees are prohibited from downloading software and/or modifying any such files without permission from the copyright holder.
- j. Any infringing activity by an employee may be the responsibility of the firm. Therefore, this firm may choose to hold the employee liable for their actions.
- k. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will conduct periodic inspections of computer systems owned by Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. for violations of this policy.

D. Digital Confidentiality Policy

Our company cyber security policy outlines our guidelines and provisions for preserving the security of our data and technology infrastructure. The more we rely on technology to collect, store and manage information, the more vulnerable we become to severe security breaches. Human errors, hacker attacks and system malfunctions could cause great financial damage and may jeopardize our company's reputation. For this reason, we have implemented a number of security measures. We have also prepared instructions that may help mitigate security risks. We have outlined both provisions in this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all our employees, contractors, volunteers and anyone who has permanent or temporary access to our systems and hardware.

Confidential Data

Confidential data is secret and valuable. Common examples are:

- Unpublished financial information
- Data of customers/partners/vendors
- Customer lists (existing and prospective)

All employees are obliged to protect this data. In this policy, we will give our employees instructions on how to avoid security breaches.

Protect Personal and Company Devices

When employees use their digital devices to access company emails or accounts, they introduce security risk to our data. We advise our employees to keep both their personal and company-issued computer, tablet and cell phone secure. They can do this if they:

- Keep all devices password protected.
- Choose and upgrade a complete antivirus software.
- Ensure they do not leave their devices exposed or unattended.
- Install security updates of browsers and systems monthly or as soon as updates are available.
- Log into company accounts and systems through secure and private networks only.
- We also advise our employees to avoid accessing internal systems and accounts from other people's devices or lending their own devices to others.

When new hires receive company-issued equipment they will receive instructions for:

- Disk encryption setup

- Password management tool setup
- Installation of antivirus/ anti-malware software
- They should follow instructions to protect their devices and refer to management if they have any questions.

Keep Emails Safe

Emails often host scams and malicious software (e.g. worms.) To avoid virus infection or data theft, we instruct employees to:

- Avoid opening attachments and clicking on links when the content is not adequately explained (e.g. “watch this video, it’s amazing.”)
- Be suspicious of clickbait titles (e.g. offering prizes, advice.)
- Check email and names of people they received a message from to ensure they are legitimate.
- Look for inconsistencies or give-aways (e.g. grammar mistakes, capital letters, excessive number of exclamation marks.)
- If an employee isn’t sure that an email they received is safe, they can refer to management.

Manage Passwords Properly

Password leaks are dangerous since they can compromise our entire infrastructure. Not only should passwords be secure so they won’t be easily hacked, but they should also remain secret. For this reason, we advise our employees to:

- Choose passwords with at least eight characters (including capital and lower-case letters, numbers and symbols) and avoid information that can be easily guessed (e.g. birthdays.)
- Remember passwords instead of writing them down. If employees need to write their passwords, they are obliged to keep the paper or digital document confidential and destroy it when their work is done.
- Exchange credentials only when absolutely necessary. When exchanging them in-person isn’t possible, employees should prefer the phone instead of email, and only if they personally recognize the person they are talking to.
- Change their passwords every two months.

Transfer Data Securely

Transferring data introduces security risk. Employees must:

- Avoid transferring sensitive data (e.g. customer information, employee records) to other devices or accounts unless absolutely necessary. When mass transfer of such data is needed, we request employees to ask management for help.
- Share confidential data over the company network/ system and not over public Wi-Fi or private connection.
- Ensure that the recipients of the data are properly authorized people or organizations and have adequate security policies.

Report Scams, Privacy Breaches and Hacking Attempts

Management needs to know about scams, breaches and malware so they can better protect our infrastructure. For this reason, we advise our employees to report perceived attacks, suspicious emails or phishing attempts as soon as possible to our specialists. Management must investigate promptly, resolve the issue and send a companywide alert when necessary. Management is responsible for advising

employees on how to detect scam emails. We encourage our employees to reach out to them with any questions or concerns.

Additional Measures

To reduce the likelihood of security breaches, we also instruct our employees to:

- Turn off their screens and lock their devices when leaving their desks.
- Report stolen or damaged equipment as soon as possible to management.
- Change all account passwords at once when a device is stolen.
- Report a perceived threat or possible security weakness in company systems.
- Refrain from downloading suspicious, unauthorized or illegal software on their company equipment.
- Avoid accessing suspicious websites.

We also expect our employees to comply with our social media and internet usage policy.

Management should:

- Install firewalls, anti-malware software and access authentication systems.
- Arrange for security training to all employees.
- Inform employees regularly about new scam emails or viruses and ways to combat them.
- Investigate security breaches thoroughly.
- Follow this policies provisions as other employees do.

Our company will have all physical and digital shields to protect information.

Disciplinary Action

We expect all our employees to always follow this policy and those who cause security breaches may face disciplinary action:

1. First-time, unintentional, small-scale security breach: We may issue a verbal warning and train the employee in security.
2. Intentional, repeated or large-scale breaches (which cause severe financial or other damage): We will invoke more severe disciplinary action up to and including termination.

We will examine each incident on a case-by-case basis.

Additionally, employees who are observed to disregard our security instructions will face progressive discipline, even if their behavior hasn't resulted in a security breach.

Take Security Seriously

Everyone, from our customers and partners to our employees and contractors, should feel that their data is safe. The only way to gain their trust is to proactively protect our systems and databases. We can all contribute to this by being vigilant and keeping cyber security top of mind.

E. Social Media Policy

Social media has changed the way we communicate, both at work and in our personal lives. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. has established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media, including but not limited to:

- Networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram)
- Video and photo sharing sites (i.e. Flickr, YouTube)
- Messaging platforms (i.e. Messenger, WhatsApp)
- Blogs, wikis, online forums and message boards (e.g. Quora)
- Internal messaging systems (e.g. Slack, Yammer)

These guidelines apply to both company sponsored social media and personal use as it relates to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.

Guidelines

- **Be Transparent.** If you share anything related to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. and/or associate yourself with Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. in any way, add a disclaimer in your profile such as: "Views expressed are my own."
- **Use Good Judgment.** Remember that what you share online is permanent. So be smart in what you say and do online. Ultimately, you are responsible for what you write, which can not only reflect on you personally but also on Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s brand. If what you're thinking of writing gives you concern, pause and reach out to your director for guidance.
- **Uphold Our Values & Policies.** Guidelines for functioning online are the same as the values, ethics and confidentiality policies you are expected to uphold in general as an employee of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.

Protect Confidential Information. Never share Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.'s confidential or proprietary information, or share upcoming news about Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. Examples include, but are not limited to: financial information; information on employees, customers, partners, or suppliers; and business development deals.

- **Proceed with Caution.** You may encounter negative posts about the Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. has a team that monitors social media and is trained to respond to these types of situations. Let this team respond or, if you believe they are unaware of the incident, alert the director.
- **Respect Our Brand.** Employees are not allowed to create or manage Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. branded social media accounts without official permission from Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc.
- **Stay Legal.** Respect copyright and fair use laws. Give credit where credit is due.

VISITOR POLICY

*****ANY PERSON WHO IS NOT EMPLOYED BY IMAGINATION CHILDCARE ACADEMY, INC. OR WHO DOES NOT HAVE A CHILD WHO ATTENDS IMAGINATION CHILDCARE ACADEMY, INC. IS CONSIDERED TO BE A VISITOR. (THIS INCLUDES THE LANDLORD, THE NYS INSPECTORS, FAMILY MEMBERS OF STAFF, ETC.)*****

IT IS BETTER TO BE SAFE AND SURE THAN TO BE AT RISK.

- Any visitors to the center can only gain access via the security-controlled front door,
- It is our policy that only senior management may open the door to visitors.
- Visitors must state what the purpose of the visit is or whom they are coming to see and provide identification.
- Identification must be validated by senior staff. If the staff member is unsure, he/she must verify who the visitor by telephoning the department they represent to confirm their visit.
- All visitors to Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. will sign into the 'visitor's book' on arrival and sign out upon departure.
- They must sign into the visitor's book as soon as they arrive and be escorted to the appropriate room by a qualified member of staff.
- They must be supervised at all times by a member of staff.
- At no time should children of Imagination Childcare Academy, Inc. be left alone with any person who is not a member of our staff. This includes all volunteers.
- Before leaving the premises, visitors must first inform a member of staff and sign out.
- The 'visitor's book' can be found in the office and visitors are required to provide the following information:
 - The date of visit
 - The time of arrival
 - The purpose of visit
 - The destination of the visitor
 - A signature both upon arrival and departure

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS ANY VISITOR ALLOWED TO LEAVE WITH A CHILD UNLESS THEY ARE THE APPROVED PERSON WHO HAS AUTHORITY FROM THE CHILD'S PARENT TO PICK UP THE CHILD.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children. Volunteers and students will not be counted in the staffing ratios and are never left alone with the children. No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age.

Volunteers must be mature, of good character and possess suitable personal qualifications.

Volunteers must be in good physical and mental health and have the energy and emotional stability necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of their positions.

Child day care centers must review and evaluate the backgrounds of all applicants for volunteer positions with the potential for regular and substantial contact with children, except for a parent of a child enrolled in the center who is applying to be a volunteer if such parent will not be counted in determining teacher/child ratios and such parent will not be left unsupervised with children. All applicants whose backgrounds must be checked are required to provide the following:

- (1) a statement or summary of the applicant's employment history including, but not limited to, any relevant child-caring experience

(2) the names, addresses and day time telephone numbers of at least three acceptable references, other than relatives, at least one of whom can verify employment history, work record and qualifications, and at least one of whom can attest to the applicant's character, habits and personal qualifications to be a child day care center staff member;

(3) a sworn statement by the applicant indicating whether, to the best of the applicant's knowledge, such applicant has ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony in New York State or any other jurisdiction and fingerprint images as required to comply with the requirements of 413.4 of this Title; and

(4) the information necessary to determine whether the applicant is the subject of an indicated report of child abuse and maltreatment as required by section 418-1.10(b)(1)(i) of this Subpart.

(5) the information necessary to determine whether the applicant is listed on the register of substantiated category one cases of abuse or neglect maintained by the Justice Center for the Protection of Persons with Special Needs, pursuant to Section 495 of the Social Services Law, as required by section 418-1.10(b)(1)(ii).

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency situation, every effort will be made to keep the center open. If the center must close, the director will contact each employee and will also post the closing on WHEC. As a general rule: if Gates Chili-School District is closed, we are closed:

While it is impossible to anticipate every circumstance of a potential emergency, we do have the following general guidelines in place:

At all times:

- In the event of a utility outage (power, gas, and/or water) prior to 7:00 am, the opening of the center will be delayed.
- If still without utility service at 11:30 am, the center will remain closed for the day.

During the winter months:

- In the event of a utility outage during normal business hours, the center will announce its' decision to close after 30 minutes.
- Parents will be notified by phone and required to pick up their children.

During the summer months:

- In the event of a power outage during normal business hours, the center will remain open. Parents will be notified after 60 minutes.
- In the event of a water outage during normal business hours, the center will announce its' decision to close after 60 minutes. Parents will be notified by phone and required to pick up their children.

If our center closes due to the weather, utility outage, or emergency situation, all employees who were scheduled to work at that time will be paid regardless.

WELLNESS POLICY

Mission:

Our children will learn how to make healthy choices about food and physical activity as part of their daily lives – building a foundation for a lifetime. Our staff model healthy eating and physical activity. We strive to work with our parents to promote healthy habits for life.

To achieve these goals, Imagination Childcare Academy has adopted the following policies:

Nutrition & Physical Activity Education

- Lesson plans include learning experiences about healthy eating at least once per month.

Food & Beverage Practices & Behaviors

- All meals and snacks for children include a variety of fruits and vegetables, especially deeply colored ones.
- Safe, fresh drinking water is available and accessible for children to serve themselves at all times indoors and outdoors.
- Teachers avoid drinking sugar-sweetened beverages when caring for children.
- At meal time, at least one teacher sits with children at the table and eats the same meals and snacks.
- Teachers encourage children to serve themselves meals and snacks with supervision.

- Children have the opportunity to prepare the eating areas. They help set the table and clean up after the meal.

Physical Activity & Screen Time

- Teachers interact with children and model fun ways to move and play in both structured and unstructured physical activities, using available open space and equipment.
- Teachers encourage families to limit screen time at home to no more than one to two hours daily.

Other Activities

- Center staff is provided information on individual health assessments, or the center conducts a staff wellness assessment in order to increase staff awareness of personal health status.
 - Center staff is provided resources related to nutrition and physical activity to encourage staff wellness.
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Appendix 1: Playground Supervision Spots



Figure 1: Front Side of the Playground



Figure 2: Backside of the Playground