

Kinder Ready Learning Center Employee Handbook



LEARNING CENTER

979-704-5111 • www.Kinder-Ready.com

Laying the Foundation for a Love of Learning

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Welcome to Kinder Ready Learning Center!

Welcome to Kinder Ready Learning Center (KRLC) family! I am so happy that you are joining us. Your love for children, dedication to Early Childhood Education (ECE) and your desire to support others will help us continue to positively impact the lives of young children in our community.

I hope you will find your work with us to be both challenging and rewarding. Always know that every KRLC employee is a valued member of our team!

- Avian Mosley

Application of the Employee Handbook

This Employee Handbook (Handbook) is a general guide to the employee policies, as well as the expectations and responsibilities of KRLC employees (employees). **KRLC has a separate Family Handbook, which is expressly incorporated into this Handbook, meaning employees are responsible for knowing and complying with all policies in both the Family and the Employee Handbooks.**

KRLC requires all employees to become acquainted with the contents of this Handbook, including the incorporated Family Handbook, and to acknowledge their familiarity with it in writing annually. Employees are also responsible for reviewing and complying with State of Texas Department of Human Services Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers (Licensing) requirements. The policies stated in this Handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of KRLC leadership. Employees will be notified of any substantive changes to the policies contained within this Handbook. All questions about policies, expectations and/or responsibilities should be addressed to the Director or Owner of KRLC. This Handbook supersedes all previous employee handbooks, manuals and policies.

This Handbook is not a contract and does not guarantee employment for any specific duration. KRLC expressly reserves absolute discretion to make determinations concerning any and all employees-related issues that may arise, but that are not specifically addressed in this Handbook. Employees agree to abide by all policies in this Handbook, and to fulfill all responsibilities designated for their position in this Handbook, to the highest level as determined by the Director, as a condition of continued employment.

For the purposes of this Handbook, the terms “teachers” and “teaching staff members” apply to all employees who engage in instruction – including Head Teachers, Lead Teachers, Co-Teachers, Teacher Aides and specialists – except where a specific teaching role is identified. Similarly, the terms “parent” and “family” are used to refer to the legal guardian/s of a child.

In the event that the Director is unavailable, he or she will assign a designee to complete all time sensitive responsibilities, normally completed by the Director, in his or her absence.

Terms of Employment

Policy & Procedure Compliance

KRLC employees are required to abide by all policies and procedures contained within this Handbook, including the incorporated Family Handbook, at all times during the term of their employment. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Licensing Rules & Regulations

At all times, KRLC employees must meet all requirements set forth by Licensing. Employees are also required to be familiar with Licensing rules and regulations, and to abide by them at all times as a condition of continued employment. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Categorization of Employment

At-Will Employment

All employees of KRLC are employed on an "at-will" basis. This means employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. Likewise, we respect employees' right to leave KRLC at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause.

Non-exempt/Hourly Employees

All employees of KRLC are hourly employees and have scheduled work hours which ensure the appropriate staff ratios for children in each of our classroom settings.

Hourly employees must accurately document all hours worked on a daily basis in order to receive payment. Supervisors will ensure that employees know how to record hours worked as part of their initial orientation.

Non-exempt/hourly employees are entitled to overtime pay for any hours worked over 40 hours a week. Overtime must be approved, in writing, by management prior to the time worked.

Exempt Employees

If an employee is classified as exempt at the time of hire, he or she is not eligible for overtime pay as otherwise required by federal, state, or local laws.

Regular Full-Time Employees

Regular full-time employees are those who have completed their introductory period and are regularly scheduled to work 40 hours per week. All employees of KRLC who have completed their introductory periods are regular full-time employees.

New Employee Onboarding Process

Introductory Period

All employees are considered probationary employees for their first 90 days at KRLC, called the introductory period. During this time, the Director will work with the new employee until he or she is familiar with all required duties and responsibilities.

During the 90-day introductory period, the Director will observe new employees on a regular basis while they are performing their duties. New employees will be given regular feedback

outlining both their strengths and areas that need improvement. This introductory period can also be lengthened as deemed appropriate by management.

Upon satisfactory completion of the introductory period, the employee will generally be awarded full employee status, however, the completion of the introductory period does not guarantee employment for any period of time, since all employees are employed at-will, both during and after the introductory period.

Orientation

All new employees will participate in an Employee Orientation on their first day of employment at KRLC, and will be asked to sign an acknowledgement upon completion.

On the job training is conducted by the Director and/or designee. Even if a new hire has had previous experience in the specified functions of his or her job duties, it is necessary for each employee to learn our specific procedures, as well as the responsibilities of the specific position.

Required Documentation

New employees must complete all required paperwork, and provide all required documentation, including providing records of physical exams, background checks and all other documentation required by Licensing, prior to the start of employment. Many of these documents need to be updated on a regular basis throughout one's employment at KRLC. KRLC maintains a list of paperwork, including links to forms when relevant, required for all employees, on our Employee Portal. Upon hire, the Director will review all requirements with the new employee.

KRLC retains all documentation related to employees for at least three months following the employee's last day of employment.

Personal Data

Employees are required to provide KRLC with current contact information, including current mailing address, telephone number and emergency contact information. Employees must inform KRLC of any changes to contact information or to their marital or tax withholding status as they occur. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings. To make changes to this information, contact management.

Employment Authorization Verification

KRLC is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States.

New hires will be required to complete Section 1 of federal Form I-9 on the first day of paid employment and must present acceptable documents, as authorized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, establishing their identity and eligibility to work in the United States, in accordance with applicable federal law. Employees will not be allowed to begin working unless this information has been provided.

If an employee is authorized to work in this country for a limited time period, he or she will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility prior to expiration of that period to remain employed by KRLC.

Personnel Files

All paperwork required upon hire, and throughout an employee's tenure at KRLC, is maintained in an individual, confidential personnel file. KRLC maintains separate medical records files and personnel files for all employees. Files containing medical records are stored separate and apart from any business-related records in a safe, locked, inaccessible location. False statements or misrepresentations by action or omission made by an employee in any document included in the personnel file may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Supervisors and others in management may have access to personnel files for possible employment-related decisions. If an employee wishes to review his or her personnel or medical records file, he or she must give KRLC reasonable notice. Inspection must occur in the presence of a KRLC representative.

Documents may be added to the employee's file upon written request to the Director and presentation of the original or copy of the documents for review by the Director for appropriateness in the file.

All requests by an outside party for information contained in personnel files will be directed to management, which is the only department authorized to give out such information.

Protecting Children from Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

To protect our students from vaccine preventable diseases, KRLC employees must provide documentation specifying that they have received all vaccines as recommended by the [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Employees may provide documentation of exemption from specific vaccines for the following reasons, as stated in Licensing regulations:

- If the employee has a medical condition identified as a contraindication by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or
- If the employee objects to vaccines due to reasons of conscience, including a religious belief

In the event that an employee is un-immunized or under-immunized in accordance with the above stated clauses, and a local outbreak or epidemic occurs of the disease/s for which the employee is un-immunized or under-immunized, the employee may be asked to take unpaid leave, and not to attend KRLC until the outbreak or epidemic has been declared over.

Compensation

All information pertaining to compensation must be kept confidential.

Recording Time

It is each employee's responsibility to record hours worked and meal breaks taken accurately and in a timely fashion. Employees will not be paid for hours worked unless they are properly recorded. Time must be recorded as follows:

- Immediately before starting a shift
- Immediately after finishing work, before a meal break
- Immediately before resuming work, after a meal break

- Immediately after finishing work
- Immediately before and after any other time away from work
- When leaving and returning to the building, unless leaving on company business
- Clock in no more than five minutes ahead of scheduled start time and clock out no later than five minutes after scheduled end time

Employees do not need to sign in and out for brief, pre-scheduled 10–15-minute breaks.

If an employee has difficulty with the timekeeping system, he or she should notify management promptly to get any issues resolved quickly. Employees should report any errors in time records as soon as possible.

Employees may not falsify their time records or clock another employee in or out.

Breaks

All full-time employees are given breaks daily, and the length of each break is determined by the number of hours the employee is scheduled to work. All break schedules will be determined by the Director.

All employees are required to take their lunch break. Should an employee choose to skip his or her lunch break, the employee will not be paid for the scheduled break time. Employees are not permitted to eat in the classrooms during their breaks, unless they are eating with the children. Employees remaining on the premises during their break may eat in the staff lounge. All employees must return from break and be ready to work on time, in accordance with our Tardiness policy.

Lactation Breaks

KRLC supports a mother's choice to breastfeed, and will provide support for employees who are breastfeeding as detailed in our Family Handbook. KRLC will provide nursing mothers with a private space and reasonable unpaid break time to express milk for their infants for up to one year following the child's birth.

This break time should be taken concurrently with any other break time already provided whenever possible. Nonexempt employees should clock out for any time taken that does not run concurrently with normally scheduled rest periods.

Employees must discuss the length and frequency of these nursing breaks with the Director and must make reasonable efforts not to disrupt the operations of KRLC.

Pay Periods

Employees are paid twice per calendar month, on the 1st and the 16th. In months when the scheduled pay day falls on a weekend or a holiday, employees will be paid on the preceding business day.

Employees should review their paychecks promptly for errors. If they find a mistake, employees must report it to the Director immediately via email. The Director will assist the employee in taking the steps necessary to correct the error.

Overtime

KRLC employees are not permitted to work more than 40 hours per work week without written permission from the Director, granted prior to the time worked. In the event that an employee needs to work more than 40 hours in a given week in order to ensure the proper functioning of the program, and is authorized by the Owner, in writing, to do so, the employee shall be paid at a rate of time and a half for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours.

Deductions

There are mandated deductions that must be taken from gross payroll for local, state and federal taxes and for Social Security benefits. Court actions related to child support and garnishments to satisfy debt may also be received by the center and are withheld as appropriate. If an employee has questions or concerns about payroll deductions, please raise them immediately with the Director.

If an employee believes that an improper deduction has been made from his or her pay, raise the issue with the Director immediately. KRLC will promptly investigate. If the investigation reveals that the employee was subjected to an improper deduction, the employee will be reimbursed in full no later than the next regular payday.

Payment During Emergency Closures

In the event that KRLC needs to close or delay operations due to emergencies including but not limited to severe weather, fires, power failure, mandated closures due to local or national emergencies or infectious disease outbreaks, employees will receive official notification from their supervisor.

Employees will be paid during emergency closures for up to two weeks, so long as families continue to pay tuition.

Benefits

Leave

Holidays

KRLC is closed for the holidays listed in the Family Handbook. Employees will be paid for planned holidays, according to their regular work schedules.

Bereavement Leave

KRLC recognizes the importance of taking leave when there is a death in the family. Where bereavement leave is not required by law, KRLC will provide bereavement leave as follows:

- All employees are eligible for 3 days of unpaid bereavement leave for the death of an immediate family member.
- Additional unpaid time off may be granted at the discretion of KRLC on a case-by-case basis.
- For purposes of this policy, immediate family members include the following and applies both to the family of the employee and the employee's spouse: child (including foster child and stepchild), spouse, sister, brother, parents (including foster parents and stepparents) and grandparents

Employees must provide notice of need for bereavement leave as far in advance as possible. KRLC may require documentation supporting the need for bereavement leave.

Jury Duty Leave

KRLC encourages employees to fulfill their civic duties related to jury duty. If an employee is summoned for jury duty, he or she must notify the Director as soon as possible to make scheduling arrangements.

If an employee is classified as exempt, he or she will not incur any deduction in pay for a partial week's absence due to jury duty. If an employee is classified as nonexempt, he or she will not be compensated for time spent on jury duty.

KRLC reserves the right to require employees to provide proof of jury duty service to the extent authorized by law.

KRLC will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave in accordance with this policy.

Voting Leave

If an employee's work schedule prevents him or her from voting on Election Day, KRLC will allow him or her a reasonable time off to vote. The time when the employee can go to vote will be at the discretion of the Director, consistent with applicable legal requirements.

Requesting Leave

Planned Absence

To request leave for a planned absence, employees must submit a completed Leave Request Form as soon as possible, with at least 2 weeks' notice whenever possible. It is at the sole discretion of the Director to approve or deny requests for leave, and last-minute requests for non-emergency leave are less likely to be approved due to coverage challenges. While the Director will always attempt to be as flexible as possible, occasionally situations arise, such as multiple employees requesting leave at the same time, which might prevent the Director from approving leave.

Unplanned Absence

To request unanticipated leave for illness, employees must notify the Director by phone as soon as they are aware that they will be unable to attend work.

Except in cases of extreme emergency, employees are required to notify the Director of an unplanned absence themselves, rather than having a friend or family member call on their behalf.

Unanticipated leave will only be considered excused for emergencies, such as illness. In such cases, the illness must be verified by a doctor's note. Employees who are absent for more than one day due to illness must notify the Director by phone each day. An employee who is absent for 3 or more days due to illness must provide a written note from a physician stating that he or she is physically well enough to return to work.

KRLC will provide leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to eligible employees.

Health Insurance

KRLC offers health insurance benefits to protect eligible, enrolled employees from financial loss resulting from hospital, surgical or other health related expenses.

For details on the specific insurance plans offered through KRLC, as well as copies of the plan documents, contact the Director.

Child Care Credit

It is always an honor when any family chooses KRLC to care for their children, and we are particularly honored when our employees, who know our community better than anyone, choose us for their own children. With this in mind, and in recognition of the value our employees bring to our community, we are proud to offer our employees free tuition for one child, and a 50% discount off tuition for any additional children, when their children attend KRLC.

Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Unemployment compensation insurance is paid for by KRLC and provides temporary income for employees who have lost their job under certain circumstances. An employee's eligibility for unemployment compensation will, in part, be determined by the reasons for the separation from KRLC.

Workers' Compensation Insurance

Workers' compensation is a no-fault system designed to provide benefits to all employees for work-related injuries. Workers' compensation insurance coverage is paid for by employers and governed by state law. The workers' compensation system provides for coverage of medical treatment and expenses, occupational disability leave, and rehabilitation services, as well as payment for lost wages due to work related injuries. If an employee is injured on the job while working at KRLC, no matter how slightly, he or she is to report the incident immediately to the Director. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period could jeopardize an employee's claim for benefits.

To receive workers' compensation benefits, notify the Director immediately of a claim. If an injury is the result of an on-the-job accident, the employee must fill out an accident report. Employees who utilize Workers' Compensation Insurance will be required to submit a medical release before they can return to work.

Professional Development Requirements

Annual Trainings

KRLC holds mandatory group trainings throughout the year to help employees develop the skills needed to perform their jobs. It will be each employee's responsibility to make all necessary arrangements to attend. Employees must attend and document a minimum of 30 hours of professional development each calendar year.

In addition, KRLC provides annual, required training for all employees in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children. This training includes warning signs that a child may be a victim of abuse or neglect and factors indicating a child is at risk for abuse or neglect.

Employees will be paid for attendance at mandatory trainings.

Monthly Staff Meetings

KRLC holds monthly Staff Meetings. All employees are required to attend, except in cases of documented emergencies.

CPR & First Aid Certification

All employees must have or obtain CPR & First Aid Certification upon hire, and must renew their certification every 2 years.

Mandated Reporter Training

All employees must complete training in being a Mandated Reporter, and must retake this training at least every 3 years.

Performance Evaluations

Each employee will meet with the Owner or Director every 6 months, or more if needed, for a performance evaluation.

These evaluations will:

- Ensure each employee clearly understands the responsibilities of his or her position
- Provide the employee with the guidelines and help necessary to carry out these responsibilities to the best of his or her ability
- Provide the employee with feedback about his or her observed strengths and opportunities for growth
- Review progress made towards achieving agreed upon professional development goals
- Provide opportunity for the Director and employee to collaborate on updated professional development goals, and
- Inform the employee of how his or her performance has been rated

Each employee will create a customized professional development plan together with the Director. These plans will be culled from a combination of the employee's ambitions and abilities as well the Director's observations of the employee's work.

Prior to these evaluation meetings, the employee will be asked to complete a self-evaluation which will play a critical role in the conversation.

Disciplinary Action

In the event that an employee is not performing at an adequate level as determined by the Director, or has violated certain KRLC policies, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action.

Performance Improvement Plan

In the event that an employee is not completing his or her job responsibilities at an adequate level as determined by the Director, the employee may be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). A PIP is implemented when an employee's deficiency can be addressed through professional development, mentoring and/or enhanced effort on the part of the employee. This PIP will clearly describe the problems in the employee's performance, the steps necessary to correct the behavior and the length of time provided for the employee to correct the designated deficiency.

Employees may be placed on a PIP for any deficiency of performance. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to provide intentional, developmentally appropriate lessons for the children
- Failure to establish appropriate, meaningful relationships with children, families and/or colleagues
- Failure to communicate appropriately with children, families, colleagues and/or KRLC leadership
- Failure to consistently engage with children throughout the day

While an employee is on a PIP, the employee's performance will be closely monitored by his or her supervisor and/or other KRLC leadership as deemed appropriate based upon the specific concerns. This monitoring will include observations related to the designated deficiency, and may also include general observations as deemed appropriate by KRLC leadership. KRLC leadership will meet with the employee on a regular basis to discuss the employee's progress, and will document all observations and meetings, indicating improvement or lack thereof.

Failure to make sufficient progress towards the goals stated in the PIP and/or the identification of additional deficiencies, may lead to an employee's being placed upon probation, suspension with or without pay or to immediate termination.

Professional Conduct Notification

In the event that an employee is not complying with KRLC policies at an adequate level as determined by the Director, he or she may receive a Professional Conduct Notification (PCN). A PCN is issued when an employee's deficiency is related to meeting basic standards of professional conduct. This PCN will clearly describe the problems in the employee's performance, the steps necessary to correct the behavior, and the length of time provided for the employee to correct the designated deficiency.

Employees may receive a PCN for any violation of policies. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Utilizing a personal cell phone, smart watch or other electronic device while working
- Failure to properly record hours worked
- Poor hygiene
- Failure to follow dress code
- Posting information on Social Media related to KRLC
- Failure to document child incidents and /or to provide reports to parents

Immediate Termination

In the event that the Director determines the employee's deficiency or violation is of a serious enough nature, the Director may decide to forgo a PIP or PCN and instead terminate the employee immediately. Examples of violations warranting immediate termination include, but are not limited to:

Failure to follow KRLC policies and/or state, local or federal regulatory policies; endangerment of children; illegal use of drugs; using profanity on school property or at a school event; smoking on the premises; stealing or dishonesty; insubordination (direct refusal to follow legitimate orders); fighting, drinking alcoholic beverages before or during work hours; falsifying time

sheets; possession of a firearm on school property; any activity, either during work hours or outside of work hours, that would comprise the employee's or school's integrity or reputation; inadequate supervision of children.

Examples of inadequate supervision include, but are not limited to: leaving a child, or children, unsupervised for any length of time; utilizing a personal cell phone, smart watch or other electronic device while with the children; knowingly placing a class out of ratio; failure to collaborate with colleagues to ensure that all children can be seen and/or heard at all times; not knowing how many / which children are under the employee's direct supervision.

All employees are required to report any and all instances of lack of active supervision to the KRLC leadership by close of business on the day it was observed. Failure to do so will result in the employee being considered complicit in the lack of supervision.

Equal Employment Opportunity

KRLC is committed to the principles of equal employment. We are committed to complying with all federal, state and local laws providing equal employment opportunities, and all other employment laws and regulations. It is our intent to maintain a work environment that is free of harassment, discrimination or retaliation because of age (40 and older), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status, gender identity or expression), pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status or any other status protected by federal, state or local laws. KRLC is dedicated to the fulfillment of this policy regarding all aspects of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, placement, transfer, training, promotion, rates of pay and other compensation, termination, and all other terms, conditions and privileges of employment.

We are all responsible for upholding this policy. Employees may discuss questions regarding equal employment opportunity with the Director or any other designated member of management.

KRLC will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, or any violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy in a confidential manner. KRLC will take appropriate corrective action, if and where warranted. KRLC prohibits retaliation against employees who provide information about, complain about or assist in the investigation of any complaint of discrimination or violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

Disability Accommodation

KRLC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and all applicable state and local fair employment practices laws and is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, including disabilities related to pregnancy, childbirth and related conditions. Consistent with this commitment, KRLC will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified individuals where appropriate to allow the individual to perform the essential functions of the job, unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the business.

If an employee requires an accommodation because of a disability, it is the employee's responsibility to notify the Director. The employee may be asked to include relevant information such as:

- A description of the proposed accommodation
- The reason the employee needs an accommodation
- How the accommodation will help the employee perform the essential functions of his or her job

After receiving a request, KRLC will engage in an interactive dialogue with the employee to determine the precise limitations of the disability and explore potential reasonable accommodations that could overcome those limitations. Where appropriate, we may need permission to obtain additional information from the employee's medical provider. All medical information received by KRLC in connection with a request for accommodation will be treated as confidential.

KRLC encourages employees to suggest specific reasonable accommodations that they believe would allow them to perform their jobs. However, KRLC is not required to make the specific accommodation requested and may provide an alternative accommodation, to the extent any reasonable accommodation can be made without imposing an undue hardship on KRLC.

If leave is provided as a reasonable accommodation, such leave may run concurrently with leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and/or any other leave where permitted by state and federal law.

KRLC will not discriminate or retaliate against employees for requesting an accommodation.

HHS health and human services www.hhs.gov

HHS Headquarters

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20201

Toll Free Call Center: 1-877-696-6775

Religious Accommodation

KRLC is dedicated to treating its employees equally and with respect, and recognizes the diversity of their religious beliefs. All employees may request an accommodation when their religious beliefs cause a deviation from the KRLC dress code or the individual's schedule, basic job duties or other aspects of employment. KRLC will consider the request, but reserves the right to offer its own accommodation to the extent permitted by law. Some, but not all, of the factors that will be considered are cost, the effect that an accommodation will have on current established policies, and the burden on operations — including other employees — when determining a reasonable accommodation. At no time will KRLC question the validity of a person's belief. Employees should speak with the Director if they require religious accommodation.

Curriculum Expectations

The Role of the Educator

At KRLC, we see young children as capable, competent and full of wonder. We give them the respect they deserve by creating an environment which encourages questioning and by helping them to discover their own answers. We recognize that, in today's world, where you can Google any fact in seconds, it is not the role of the educator to impart knowledge, but rather to help young children to create their own knowledge with our active support. Our teachers are responsible, with the support of the Director, for implementing this vision through intentional curriculum implementation.

Lesson Planning

Our students often spend the majority of their time in our care. We have an obligation to ensure that we are using their time well. With this in mind, teachers are required to create thoughtful, engaging, developmentally appropriate lesson plans. These plans must meet the individual needs and developmental levels of each child in the class.

Teachers are given scheduled lesson planning time each Friday. In addition, except when taking scheduled breaks, teachers should utilize the time while children are napping for lesson planning and other classroom responsibilities.

Interactions with Children

Positive interactions with the children are a vital piece of our curriculum. Through providing quality interactions, we help young children develop a strong and positive self-image which will support them in their current and future endeavors. Teachers are expected to:

- Greet each child by name at the classroom door when he or she arrives to start the day
- Communicate with children at eye level as this helps establish the value we place on the children's words and thoughts
- Speak to children using respectful tones and words at all times
- Interact with children in a warm and responsive manner
- Encourage and support the development of children's independence and self-care skills

Playground Interactions

Teachers are responsible for supervising children at all times while they are at KRLC, as detailed in the Supervision of Children Policy in our Family Handbook. Teachers are simultaneously responsible for engaging in positive, meaningful interactions with children throughout the day. This includes while on the playground.

Children learn a tremendous amount while outside playing, and teachers have an important role to play in supporting this learning. Outside time is not only for hopping, skipping, jumping, climbing and gross motor development, it is also a time for socialization, taking turns and cooperative play. Teachers must be actively engaged in supporting these endeavors at all times while outside with children.

Support for Communication with Families

As described in the Communication with Families policy in our Family Handbook, collaboration with families is a key goal at KRLC. If an employee is uncomfortable speaking to a family about a particular situation or issue, please see the Director for assistance. The Director may be able to offer guidance or speak with the family him or herself if necessary.

The Director should always be kept abreast of any on-going communication with a family regarding a specific issue, particularly if there is a challenge or concern.

Operational Expectations

Job Descriptions

KRLC maintains a job description for each position. These descriptions serve as an outline only. Due to business needs, employees may be required to perform duties that are not within their written job description. Furthermore, KRLC may revise, add or delete details from job descriptions in response to business needs at any time. As needed, KRLC may revise job descriptions with or without advance notice to employees.

If an employee has any questions regarding his or her job description, or the scope of his or her duties, the employee should speak with the Director.

See the Appendix for current KRLC Job Descriptions.

Attendance & Punctuality

Each KRLC employee has a set, assigned schedule. KRLC cannot operate effectively or efficiently unless its employees can be depended upon to show up for work on a timely and consistent basis. Timely and regular attendance is an expectation of performance for all KRLC employees. Employees should be at work and prepared to receive children at their designated starting time. Teachers must have the room and all necessary materials prepared before the children arrive in the morning. Failure to do so will be considered an instance of tardiness.

Family Events

KRLC employees are required to attend all school-wide family events, except in cases of documented emergencies.

Excessive Absences

KRLC recognizes that there are times when employees need to take time off from work. However, KRLC requires that employees take leave in a responsible manner. Our ability to function, to provide support to our staff and to provide high quality care to the children in our center relies upon the consistent attendance of our employees. Therefore, in the event that an employee has one unexcused absence, it will be noted in the employee's file. A second unexcused absence will result in receipt of a Professional Conduct Notification. A third unexcused absence may result in the employee being placed on probation or immediate termination.

Given the unsustainable challenge caused by excessive absences, if an employee needs to take off extended periods of time, or must be absent on numerous occasions for legitimate reasons, KRLC reserves the right to ask an employee to take a leave of absence until the employee is able

to return to work at a regular schedule. Eligible employees are encouraged to inquire about Family Medical Leave in such cases.

KRLC will welcome the employee back if there is a position available. KRLC reserves the right to request a note from the employee's physician stating that the employee is medically able to work his or her regular schedule, in the event that the leave taken was due to medical necessity.

Tardiness

An employee is considered tardy when he or she is not in his or her designated classroom or office, and ready to start the day, at the employee's scheduled start time. In the event that an employee is running late, he or she must provide as much notice as possible. If an employee is tardy without notice, the employee may receive a Professional Conduct Notice. All instances of tardiness will be noted in an employee's record. If an employee is tardy more than twice in a 6-month period, KRLC reserves the right to change the employee's schedule and the employee may be placed on probation.

Leaving Early

Arranging for classroom or office coverage mid-day is extremely challenging. Therefore, employees are not to leave work early unexpectedly except in cases of extreme emergency. In the event that an employee needs to leave the premises unexpectedly prior to his or her scheduled end time for any reason, the employee must notify the Director immediately and prior to leaving. The employee must also ensure that proper coverage is arranged for the classroom prior to leaving, if applicable. We will make every effort to provide coverage quickly in the event that an employee needs to leave due to an emergency. Leaving a classroom out of ratio is never acceptable and may lead to Immediate Termination.

Job Abandonment

If an employee is absent for 2 consecutive days without contacting the Director, KRLC will presume that the employee has voluntarily resigned. KRLC will review any extenuating circumstances that may have prevented the employee from calling in before the employee is removed from payroll.

Appearance and Dress Code

The appearance of our employees is very important as they are the primary representatives of our school. Employees must always look professional, meaning that clothes must be well fitting and in good repair. Employees are prohibited from wearing sportswear, short-shorts, short skirts, or any other attire which shows excessive skin. Employees should be neat and clean, with their hair groomed and nails clean.

Teaching staff should always dress in clothing that will allow them to fully engage in their roles, including going outdoors, sitting on the floor or low chairs, running, participating in messy activities and engaging in active play with young children. KRLC provides each employee with 5 KRLC t-shirts to wear while at work. Employees are required to return all 5 shirts upon leaving employment with KRLC. If the shirts are not returned, KRLC will determine that the employee has chosen to purchase the shirts, and the cost of the shirts will be deducted from the employee's last pay check.

Employees must wear comfortable, closed-toed shoes which enable them to run if needed while outside with the children. Employees must remove their shoes when entering the building.

Fragrant products, including but not limited to perfumes, colognes and scented body lotions or hair products, should be used in moderation out of concern for others with sensitivities or allergies.

Employees who smoke must change their clothes and wash their hands before interacting with the children.

KRLC, in accordance with applicable law, will reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities or religious beliefs that make it difficult for them to comply fully with the personal appearance policy unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on KRLC. Contact the Director to request a reasonable accommodation.

It is at the Director's discretion to approve or prohibit any attire. If a Director determines that an employee's appearance does not meet requirements, the Director may send the employee home to change. The employee will not be compensated for the time he or she is away from work.

Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

This policy is a continuation of the Confidentiality policy stated in our Family Handbook. The two portions together encompass our full employee confidentiality / non-disclosure policy.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, names of KRLC children and family members, a child's contact information and address, a child's development, temperament, health, history, preferences and skills, as well as all information about families' and employees' personal and professional lives.

Confidential information also includes information about the facility, policies, administrative decisions, school budget, teaching team makeup, classroom placement of children and all members of the KRLC community.

If an employee is unsure if something is confidential, he or she should discuss the item with the Director - without fear of reprimand - prior to divulging any information. If an employee accidentally divulges confidential information, he or she should notify the Director at the earliest possible opportunity.

Confidential information does not include any information that:

- Becomes publicly known, as by public use or by publication, or otherwise ceases to be confidential, except through a breach of this policy by the employee
- Is designated by KRLC leadership as not confidential

When information is shared with authorized individuals, it must be shared in a private setting to ensure complete confidentiality. This means that only the specific details needed to professionally support a child, an employee and/or a family can be shared. Employees are not to speak about children or families with anyone, including but not limited to other families and/or employees, who does not need the information. All related and un-related details which are not necessary to share to execute professional responsibilities shall not be disclosed.

All employees must abide by KRLC standards for professionalism and respect for others at all times.

By accepting employment at KRLC, employees agree to be bound by this policy both during and after their terms of employment, meaning that they cannot share confidential information even after they leave the school, in perpetuity.

Cell Phones, Smart Watches and Personal Electronics

Employees are prohibited from utilizing personal cell phones, smart watches or other personal electronics while with the children. Doing so may be deemed a lack of proper supervision. Employees may utilize their devices while they are on scheduled breaks, so long as they are away from the children. Employees are prohibited from photographing or recording enrolled children on personal devices.

KRLC provides company walkie-talkies for staff to use for internal communications during the day.

Employees should provide the office phone number to their families to call in the event of an emergency. Employees are asked to wait until their break or lunch time to make any personal phone calls, although emergency calls will be permitted as needed so long as they are infrequent, are conducted away from children and proper coverage is arranged for the classroom prior to the employee leaving the room.

Employees are prohibited from utilizing their personal phones to contact enrolled families, except in very unique circumstances which must be pre-approved by the Director.

Employees on Social Media

For purposes of this policy, social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to a personal web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether associated or affiliated with KRLC or not.

All employees are prohibited from posting information, including but not limited to, stories, photographs, videos and/or recordings on social media about children and families currently or previously enrolled in KRLC. The only exceptions are staff members posting information about children in their own, personal, families and those who are tasked with managing the KRLC social media pages. These employees may post content on KRLC social media, so long as they only post images of children whose parents have approved such use. Names of children are never used in marketing or social media platforms.

KRLC understands the value and appeal of personal social media usage, and urges employees to be mindful of the fact that anything posted on the internet is there forever. Employees should:

- Understand that they are accountable for their postings and other electronic communications
- Recognize that:
 - An employee's ability to serve as a positive role model for students and as a representative of KRLC is a critical aspect of his or her employment

- Social media activities may be visible to current, past or prospective students, parents, colleagues and community members
- Accordingly, employees must exercise discretion when using social media (even for personal communication) when those communications can reflect on their roles at KRLC

KRLC discourages employees from connecting with enrolled families on social media, and urges employees to use caution if they choose to do so.

In no case may the use of social media interfere with or impede an employee's duties or responsibilities to the school or its students. Employees are prohibited from posting on social media during work hours, except when posting on behalf of the school.

Employee Conflict Resolution

It is our goal to function as a community of collaborators in all respects. In the event that an employee has a concern about or conflict with another employee, he or she is encouraged to resolve the conflict directly through constructive conversation. If support is needed, the Director is available as a resource to facilitate conflict resolution. Whenever possible, the Director will work with both parties at the same time so that solutions are reached in a collaborative manner.

All conflicts must be resolved in a professional and private manner, meaning conversations about conflict must not occur in public spaces or when children, families and/or other colleagues are present.

Grievances

Grievances and personal complaints are best handled informally and expeditiously between the employee and his or her supervisor. Employees are encouraged to speak to their supervisors about complaints, questions and suggestions. In the event that an employee feels his or her grievances are not being properly addressed, you have the right to contact the Owner.

Except in the case of legal violations or abuse, at no time may an employee share a grievance with anyone other than your supervisor and/or the Owner. This includes, but is not limited to other employees and current or past families.

Expense Reimbursements

KRLC strives to purchase all necessary materials for our classrooms. If a teacher needs specific materials, he or she should submit a request to the Owner at least one week in advance and KRLC will make every attempt to purchase the requested item, if it is deemed reasonable.

We recognize that our staff will occasionally make purchases using their own resources to supplement the materials and supplies provided by KRLC.

When an employee makes a purchase for KRLC, the employee must submit the receipt, along with a completed Expense Reimbursement Form, to the Office within 30 days of the expense in order for the expense to be eligible for reimbursement. While all reasonable purchases will be approved, it is at the sole discretion of the Director to determine if a purchase is related to KRLC's needs. Any purchases deemed to be unreasonable or unrelated to KRLC will be denied.

Personal Property

The Director has complete discretion to approve all materials and furnishings in the school. This includes personal possessions employees bring from home or purchase for the classroom.

KRLC has no liability for any personal possessions brought into the school for either personal or professional use.

Proprietary Information & KRLC Property

All materials that an employee receives while at KRLC remain KRLC property, except by the express written statement of the Director. This includes, but is not limited to all materials purchased by KRLC or KRLC families for the classrooms.

Employees are not permitted to take into their possession anything which is the property of KRLC, whether it be material items or payment not owed to said employee, without the expressed permission of the Director. Any employee who is found guilty of stealing time, stealing KRLC or another individual's property, stealing money from KRLC or any other person, submitting false receipts for products purchased with KRLC money, will be terminated immediately and the proper authorities will be notified. Legal and Court costs will be the responsibility of the person committing the theft.

All curriculum information and materials that an employee creates, writes, develops, receives or compiles during the performance of his or her duties at KRLC becomes KRLC property. While employees are entitled to retain and utilize copies of all non-confidential information and/or materials they create while employed at KRLC, employees must also leave a copy of all said creations at KRLC in the event of termination, resignation or retirement.

Employees must return all KRLC property at the time of separation. Failure to return some items may result in deductions from your final paycheck where state law allows. In some circumstances, KRLC may pursue criminal charges for failure to return KRLC property.

KRLC Keys

Certain KRLC employees may be issued a key to gain access to KRLC facilities. Employees who are issued keys are responsible for their safekeeping. All lost or stolen keys must be reported to a supervisor as soon as possible. Employees are prohibited from making copies of KRLC's keys except upon the direction of KRLC management.

Upon separation from KRLC, and at any other time upon KRLC's request, all keys must be returned to a supervisor.

Voluntary Resignation

Most employees are asked to provide at least two weeks' notice, in writing, to the Director when voluntarily resigning from KRLC. Directors are asked to provide a minimum of four weeks' notice. While employees are not required to provide this notice, any employee who resigns without providing at least the requested notice will not be eligible for rehire.

Employees are asked not to discuss their resignation with other employees or community members prior to notifying the Director.

Employees should notify KRLC if their address changes during the calendar year in which resignation occurred, to ensure tax information is sent to the correct address.

Exit Interviews

When an employee resigns or retires, KRLC leadership may invite the employee to participate in an exit interview prior to his or her departure. Employees are requested, but not required, to participate.

Criminal Activity & Arrests

Employees are required to notify KRLC immediately if they are arrested for or convicted of a crime. Involvement in criminal activity while employed by KRLC, whether on or off KRLC property, may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of employment.

Health & Safety

Emergency Procedures

KRLC has a full Emergency Preparedness Plan, which employees and families may review upon request.

Accident & Injury Reports

All Accident and Injury Report forms for children need to be shown to the Owner prior to sharing them with families. Completed and approved Reports shall be filed in the KRLC office as detailed in the Medical Emergencies policy in our Family Handbook.

If an employee is injured during the normal work routine, a written Accident and Injury Report needs to be filled out and the Director must be notified immediately.

Head Injuries

All injuries above the neck are to be reported to the Owner and then the family. Ice should be applied as necessary and teachers should observe the injured individual to monitor for any side effects. As stated in the Family Handbook, it is up to the family whether or not to follow up with a doctor's visit. Employees should not provide any recommendations about follow up care.

Serious Injuries or Illness

In the event that a child experiences a medical emergency, either illness or injury, which we believe requires emergency medical treatment, one employee should initiate first aid as needed and another should notify the Director, who will call 911. The employee who witnessed the incident will promptly turn in a written report to the office.

Sharing of Emergency Information

Employees are not permitted to share information about KRLC emergency procedures beyond what is included in the Family Handbook, except on a need-to-know basis, as doing so compromises our security. The more people who know our security protocols, the less secure we are.

The Role of Teachers During Emergencies & Emergency Drills

Teachers must learn the proper procedures for conducting all emergency drills.

In the event that it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, teachers will be responsible for taking along materials and supplies essential to maintain their class in a safe manner, including the class emergency bag, contact information for all children, and any medications. The Director will be responsible for taking children's records and first aid materials.

When evacuating the building, follow the designated route, calmly leaving the building with the children and shutting the door behind you. Teachers must be sure to count the children as they leave the classroom, when they arrive at the exit, before they close the door to the building and when they arrive at their designated gathering spot.

Upon arriving at the designated assembly area, whether inside or outside, teachers must again take roll using a printed list, and report the number of children present to the Director. Teachers may re-enter the building and/or return to the classroom when the all clear is given.

Handling Bodily Fluids

Blood borne pathogens are pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. To minimize the opportunity for exposure to these pathogens, employees must follow these guidelines when handling food, bodily fluids, urine, feces, blood, etc.

Cleaning Injuries

Wear gloves when covering an injury (scrape, scar, sore).

Diaper Changing

Always wear gloves when changing diapers. Do not deviate from changing the child's diaper with your gloves on.

No Violence in the Workplace

KRLC has a zero-tolerance policy regarding workplace violence and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and/or other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, that occurs in the workplace or other areas. This applies to all adults in the KRLC community, including management, employees and non-employees such as volunteers, contractors, parents and visitors.

Workplace violence can include oral or written statements, gestures or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, damage to property, or any intentional behavior that may cause a person to feel threatened.

Employees are to report any incidents of violence immediately to the Director.

No Workplace Harassment

KRLC has a strict policy against all types of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment and other forms of workplace harassment based upon an individual's age (40 and older), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status, gender identity or expression), pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected

by federal, state, or local laws. All forms of harassment of, or by, employees, vendors, visitors and families are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

No Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment, or
2. Submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
3. 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.

While it is not possible to identify every act that constitutes or may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of sexual harassment:

- Unwelcome requests for sexual favors
- Lewd or derogatory comments or jokes
- Comments regarding sexual behavior or the body of another
- Sexual innuendo and other vocal activity such as catcalls or whistles
- Obscene letters, notes, emails, invitations, photographs, cartoons, articles or other written or pictorial materials of a sexual nature
- Repeated requests for dates after being informed that interest is unwelcome
- Retaliating against another for refusing a sexual advance or reporting an incident of possible sexual harassment to KRLC or any government agency
- Offering or providing favors or employment benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, etc., in exchange for sexual favors; and
- Any unwanted physical touching or assaults or blocking or impeding movements.

Other Harassment

Other workplace harassment is verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's age (40 and older), race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status, gender identity or expression), pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information (including testing and characteristics), veteran status, uniformed servicemember status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws.

Again, while it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute other forms of workplace harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute workplace harassment:

- The use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories
- Written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes, or shows aversion or hostility toward an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and that is placed

on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on our premises, or circulated in the workplace; and

- A display of symbols, slogans, or items that are associated with hate or intolerance toward any select group.

Words Can Hurt

Another form of harassment is gossip. Words can hurt, emotionally and professionally. Any employee who engages in gossip with the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile or offensive employment environment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

If an employee feels that he or she has witnessed or has been subjected to any form of discrimination or harassment, the employee should immediately notify the Director or the Owner. KRLC prohibits retaliation against employees who, based on a reasonable belief, provide information about, complain, or assist in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination.

KRLC will promptly and thoroughly investigate any claim and take appropriate corrective and/or remedial action where we find a claim has merit. If KRLC begins an investigation, we will endeavor to conduct the investigation in a timely manner and will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. In the same way, anyone involved in an investigation of harassment has an obligation to keep all information about the investigation confidential. KRLC will only share information about a complaint of harassment with those who need to know about it. Failure to keep information about an investigation confidential may result in disciplinary action. Investigations will be documented and tracked for timely resolution.

When the investigation has been completed, KRLC will normally communicate the results of the investigation to the complaining individual, to the alleged harasser and, if appropriate, to others who are directly involved. If our policy against harassment is found to have been violated, appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination, will be taken against the harasser so that further harassment will be prevented. Both the rights of the alleged harasser and the complainant will be considered in any investigation and subsequent action.

If KRLC determines that harassment or discrimination occurred, corrective action will be taken to effectively end the harassment. As necessary, KRLC may monitor any incident of harassment or discrimination to assure the inappropriate behavior has stopped. In all cases, KRLC will follow up as necessary to ensure that no individual is retaliated against for making a complaint or cooperating with an investigation.

Retaliation and Whistleblower Policy

Retaliation or any other negative action is prohibited against anyone who, based on a reasonable belief, reports a possible deviation from KRLC's policies or cooperates in an investigation. Those who retaliate against others for reporting a possible deviation from KRLC policies, or for cooperating in an investigation, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When employees notify a supervisor, manager or an appropriate government or law enforcement agency that they have reason to believe their employer is violating a state or federal statute, or violating or not complying with a state or federal rule or regulation, those employees are protected from retaliation. As such, KRLC has a strict policy that prohibits retaliation against employees who make such reports while employed at KRLC. KRLC also does not permit retaliation against employees who refuse to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of a state or federal statute, or a violation or noncompliance with a state or federal rule or regulation.

KRLC encourages employees who have information regarding possible violations of state or federal statutes, rules, or regulations, or violations of fiduciary responsibility by KRLC, to report it immediately to a Director or the Owner.

State of Texas Requirements

As a licensed child care center, KRLC complies with all licensing regulations for child care centers as detailed by the Texas Department of Education.

A copy of these regulations can be found [HERE](#).

Appendix: Job Descriptions

Job Title

Description

Responsibilities

Requirements