


PARENT HANDBOOK 2017-2018

**WESTMINSTER
CHILD DEVELOPMENT
CENTER**





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WECEP Office	412 835 2122
Nursery School & Kindergarten Office	412 835 2906
Child Development Center Office	412 835 9450
Children's Day In	412 722 4687
Westminster Church Office	412 835 6630

2040 Washington Road
Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania 15241

www.westminster-church.org

WCDC Classroom Extensions
Infant Room -161
Toddler Prep Room-158
Toddler Room-162
Pre School Prep Room-159
Pre School Room-163
Pre K Room-160

Welcome to

WESTMINSTER CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Accredited by the

National Association for the Education of Young Children

(NAEYC)

Certificate of Compliance Granted by

PA Department of Human Services



Westminster Child Development Center is proud to have served our community for over 30 years by caring and educating young children



OVERVIEW

ACCREDITATION AND LICENSING INFORMATION

As a NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited program we are committed to providing high-quality educational services to young children and their families.

As a Pennsylvania Department of Education (DOE) licensed facilities we follow the standards set forth for private academic instruction.

As a Pennsylvania Department of Human Services licensed program we hold a valid Certificate of Compliance demonstrating fulfillment of state regulations with regards to the education, health and safety standards.

For further information on accreditation and licensing visit:

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services- at <http://www.dhs.pa.gov>

Pennsylvania Department of Education- <http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Private%20Schools/Pages/State-Board-of-Private-Acedemic-Schools.aspx#tab-1>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) <http://www.naeyc.org/files/academy/file/AllCriteriaDocument.pdf>

HISTORY

Westminster Child Development Center (WCDC) began operations in January of 1983 with an enrollment of eight children and employing two staff.

Over the years, the demand for high quality child care and education has increased. The child development center grew to six classroom and an enrollment of close to 100 children. We do, however, remain constant in our goal to provide the highest quality care and educational opportunities for young children in our community.

We see each child and their family as an important part of the Westminster legacy. We welcome you to celebrate our history, enjoy the present and work together with us to build a strong future for the children and families of Westminster.

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION

PHILOSOPHY

We Believe:

- * Children are unique individuals who develop at their own pace
- * Children learn best when they are actively involved in their environment.
- * Children learn best in a safe, nurturing, and creative environment is essential for Children to test their own ideas and become confident, independent and inquisitive learners.
- * Children benefit from a strong parent/ teacher partnership which encourages positive growth, strengthens family/ teacher bonds and enhances the nursery school and kindergarten program.

As an extension of Westminster Church, WCDC espouses Christian beliefs, values and traditions. As a proponent of multicultural and racial diversity, WCDC respects the beliefs, values and traditions of all peoples.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to create an educational community which provides the highest quality early childhood learning experiences in a safe, nurturing and creative environment. Through a play based, developmentally appropriate curriculum centered around spirituality, we will offer young children an environment filled with discovery and the opportunity for children to develop social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive skills. These skills will provide them with a strong foundation for future academic and social success and instill in them an excitement to be life long learners.

CHILD & FAMILY OUTCOME STATEMENT

Child Outcome: Children will experience growth and learning in a loving environment that offers safe, fun and challenging opportunities.

Family Outcome: Families will be active participants and partners in the education process. We welcome family participation in many forms. With proper clearances, family members may assist in the classroom for a first hand view of their child's learning experience. Westminster Child Development Center teachers and administration will serve as a support system to the families during their child's enrollment. For more information on how you can be involved please contact the office or speak with your child's teacher.



PROGRAM INFORMATION

CURRICULUM

The Child Development Center utilizes the Creative Curriculum integrated with our Christian based philosophy and values.

The Creative Curriculum® is based on five fundamental principles:

- positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning;
- social-emotional competence is a significant factor in school success;
- constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning;
- the physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions;
- teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning

Teachers create theme based activities and incorporate art, music, movement, problem solving , language and literacy into all lessons. Learning centers with hand on, developmentally appropriate activities are implemented.

As children progress into the older classrooms, the Handwriting Without Tears program is introduced. This program focuses on letter recognition and letter formation.

Outside programs such as Soccer Shots, visits from the Upper St Clair Librarian and Music and Movement provide a variety of activities for the children enrolled in the WCDC program.

OPERATING SCHEDULE

The WCDC operates from 7 am– 6pm, Monday to Friday and is open 12 months. Holidays and closings occur during the year.

The yearly schedule is outlined on the calendar given to each parent.

The WCDC closes on the following holidays:

July 4th

Summer In Service Day (August)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and day after Thanksgiving

One week Christmas Holiday Closing

Good Friday

Memorial Day

One Week Summer Closing in June

DAILY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The daily schedule offers opportunities for socialization, emotional development, imaginative play, language and literacy, mathematical and scientific concepts, problem solving, creative thinking and expression, physical and spiritual development through center based child initiated activities. Teacher directed activities are also offered, such as circle time, music and story time. A variety of enrichment presentations, special visitors throughout the year, and hands-on science and music programs complement the classes

The WCDC program reflects Christian beliefs, values and traditions by modeling daily the love of God, self and others. We encourage and develop spiritual growth through classroom teaching, reading of Bible stories, prayers, and celebrating the seasons and holidays from a Christian perspective. Children attend Bible Time classes monthly where they learn Bible stories and songs, and visit the chapel and sanctuary during the year.

CLASSES OFFERED

- * Infant Room (must be 3 months old to enter)
- * Toddler Prep Room (once child is mobile they may move into Toddler Prep)
- * Toddler Room
- * Pre School Prep Room
- * Pre School Room (child must be full toilet trained to enter preschool)
- * Pre K Plus



DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Upon enrollment parents will create a passcode to be used with our electronic sign in and out system. This number will be used to sign your child in and out each day at the electronic station located at the entrance to the center.

When arriving at the center, please park along the curbed sidewalk outside of the center or in one of the parking lots. Please use caution when in the parking lots. Children should always be supervised when on Westminster property. Please do not leave children in a car unattended. All children, including siblings of enrolled children must be supervised at all times. Adults dropping off or picking up must accompany children to and from their classrooms. Please do not allow children to run in the hallways. Please do not leave infants in car seats unattended in the hallway.

Children develop a feeling of security and trust when parents and caregivers communicate in a positive manner in the child's presence; therefore, seeing positive interaction between you and your child's teachers is an important part of your child's day.

Upon arrival each day, parents should communicate any important information regarding the child's health, disposition, and changes in schedules, etc. This ensures that educators have current, important information about your child each day.

When children arrive they should be greeted by their teachers, hang up belongings, wash hands and either sit down for breakfast or select an activity.

Once the children are dismissed, the pick-up person is responsible for the child. For safety reasons, please do not take your child from the classroom or playground without the teacher's acknowledgement. Children must be accounted for at all times.

Please do not park in the handicapped spaces, unless you have proper identification. USC Police will ticket violators. There are additional parking spaces available in the lot across the street. In the interest of safety, please do not leave children unattended in your car.

- ⇒ All persons who will be picking up must be listed on the Emergency Contact Form (minimum age is 16). If additional individuals must be added to this list, please notify the office by email.
- ⇒ If you have an emergency that requires you to make last minute alternative pick-up arrangements, please call the WCDC office (412-835-9450) or email us. Such arrangements can only be made by the parent or guardian. Children will not be released to any unauthorized person without permission email) from parents or guardians. Staff are trained in procedures to protect each child in the program and are required to confirm the identity of any unfamiliar person before releasing a child. Staff will request photo identification of unfamiliar persons seeking to pick up children.
- ⇒ Staff will not release a child to any person who is impaired or in any way may endanger your child.

All children must be supervised by an adult at all times on Westminster property.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

There is a 15 minute grace period extended without a late fee. If a child is picked up late a late fee of \$5 will be charged along with the hourly fee for the amount of time late. We recognizes the occurrence of unforeseen circumstances would cause a parent to be late. In this case, a courtesy call (412-835-9450) is greatly appreciated.

Excessive late pick up times will result in a change to the child's schedule.

REGISTRATION AND FINANCE POLICIES

REGISTRATION

WCDC enrollment is based on availability of slots. Siblings of current children, WNSK enrolled children and church members do receive preference for enrollment. If all slots are full, families may register for our waitlist.

Once a slot becomes available, a family will be notified and the registration process will begin.

There is a one time **NON-Refundable registration fee.**

TUITION

Tuition rates are based on the age of the child, number of hours enrolled and the amount of time enrolled. Part time enrollment is considered 15- 25 hours per week. Full time enrollment is considered over 25 hours per week. There are separate rates for full time and part time enrollment.

Tuition rates are based on the age of the child. There is an infant/ toddler rate and a preschool, prekindergarten rate.

WCDC requires each child be enrolled a minimum of 15 hours per week.

The account holder assumes full financial responsibility for payment. Payment schedules will be provided to families each year. Bills are distributed bi weekly.

Tuition may be made by cash, check or direct debit. If payment is not received, your child's space will be relinquished. WECEP is a non-profit, self-supporting community school; therefore, the Board of Directors reserves the right to investigate and act upon any delinquent account. All returned checks and late payments are subject to a \$30 fee. Failure to make full payments can result in termination of enrollment. We do accept CCIS for more information please contact the office.

WITHDRAWALS

The Executive Director must be notified two weeks in advance, in writing, if a child is to be withdrawn. The Executive Director reserves the right to require withdrawal of any child whose needs cannot be met by WCDC staff. The administrative staff also has the authority to move any child to another class, should it be deemed necessary for the welfare of the child and/or the class.

AGREEMENTS

Tuition agreements are to be completed each year with a start date of July 1 and an end date of June 30. The agreement indicates the days and times of enrollment as well as the hourly rate being charged. You may change your agreement once per year without a fee. Subsequent agreement changes may be made however, a \$35 fee will be charged for each additional change. Agreement changes should be made in writing. Agreements must be reviewed and resigned every 6 months even if no change is to occur.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Temporary schedule changes, additional days and or additional hours may be added with prior approval. Adding hours or days will incur an additional charge. The current rate will be charged when adding days or hours.

ASSESSMENT POLICIES

ASSESSMENTS

Assessing children is an integral part of the WCDC program. We engage in ongoing assessment which examines teaching practices, guides curriculum planning, maintains communication with parents, identifies skills and interests of each child, recognizes children that are in need of additional support, and confirms the program is meeting its goals and objectives.

A comprehensive assessment requires a multi-method approach to record a complete picture of the child's skills and abilities. This is done by using the following methods: getting to know the child, using developmental checklists, requesting input from the parents, observing the child in the classroom, and collecting the child's work samples. The checklists are shared with the parents along during the parent conferences in the to discuss the child's progress.

The assessment information is kept in the child's file. The child's teacher and administrative staff have access to children's files. No information from the child's file is given out without the parent's written permission.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year. This is a time for you to talk with the teaching staff and learn about your child's development and progress. Conference dates and times will be offered to parents by their child's teachers. It is important for parents to make every effort to attend at the scheduled time. Parents and/or teachers may request additional conferences, if either feels there is a need. All conferences, as well as the child's records, are treated confidentially.

DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS

When a staff member or administrator suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this information is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive and confidential manner. The parent is provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

SAFETY POLICIES

SITE EVACUATION

If it is necessary to leave the school property, the teachers and children will be relocated to the primary or secondary relocation site. The following procedures will be in effect:

- * Administration will notify the police department, the site, the Board President, TV stations (KDKA and WTAE) and KDKA radio.
- * The TV stations will announce that the children have been relocated to the primary or secondary site. It will not announce the name of the location for security reasons.

The specific location of the primary and secondary evacuation sites is given to parents during the first week of school.

SECURITY SYSTEM

In order to provide a safe environment for your children a security system is in place throughout the WNSK/WCDC facility. Each year, families are asked to order key fobs to gain access into the building. A refundable deposit is required for every key fob that is ordered. When key fobs are lost, your deposit will not be refunded and a new one will need to be purchased. An intercom system is available in the main lobby in the event you have forgotten your key fob or for emergency use. All key fobs are deactivated at the end of the school year. Families will be refunded their deposit when they return their key fob.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately to the Youth and Family Services agency. Due to their contact with children, nursery school/kindergarten teachers and child development professionals are considered mandated reporters.

GUIDANCE POLICY

Positive approaches to help guide children's behavior as well as to encourage sharing, caring and active participation in resolving conflict is the primary form of guidance used in the classroom. The guidance methods include redirection of focus, reminders of the classroom rules, as well as expectations and teacher facilitated arbitration when necessary. Classroom rules are few in number, clearly defined and consistently followed. Teachers and school administrators will maintain open communication with parents for the purpose of developing a strategy that will enable the child to be successful.

The WCDC staff reserves the right to dis-enroll a child from the school if a child's behavior is aggressive, overly disruptive or dangerous to the health and or safety of other children or the staff. Decisions about such terminations will be made by the WECEP Executive Director and Board of Directors.

HEALTH POLICIES

SICK CHILD POLICY

If a teacher feels a child is not well enough to be in school, the parent will be contacted to pick up the child. If the parent can not be reached, emergency contacts will be notified.

A child will not be admitted to school if he/she is experiencing:

- ⇒ Flu-like symptoms
- ⇒ An unidentified rash or skin condition
- ⇒ Diarrhea (must be diarrhea free at least 24 hours)
- ⇒ Fever (child must be fever free for 24 hours)
- ⇒ Vomiting (free of vomiting at least 24 hours)
- ⇒ Hacking cough, infectious mucous, drainage
- ⇒ Any contagious condition such as ringworm, lice, etc.
- ⇒ A contagious disease such as measles, chicken pox, roseola, etc.

Please contact the school immediately if your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease. Per DHS licensing, if any suspected case of a contagious disease is reported a health notice will be posted on the front door of the school.

A doctors note stating the child is no longer contagious is required to return to school.

MEDICATION POLICY

Any medication must be labeled with the child's name, brought to the office and recorded in the Medication Log. Prescription medication must have the original packaging with the doctor orders of dosing on the package as well as the child's name. Staff will not dispense medication without written parental consent. Epi pens must be in their original packaging. All staff is trained in the administration of Epi pens.

HAND WASHING POLICY

In order to maintain a healthy environment and reduce the risk of transmitting infectious diseases all children, staff and volunteers will wash their hands upon entering Westminster classrooms.

HEALTH STANDARDS

All Health Assessment forms must be current completed and submitted annually. The form must be signed and dated by the physician.

When a child in the program is under-immunized because of a medical condition or the family's beliefs we must have written documentation by either physician for medical reason or parent if due to family beliefs.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FOOD POLICY/SNACK/NUTRITION

Snack time is important for children for many reasons: awareness of good nutrition, development of social skills and as a complement to regular meals. Together we hope our children become more aware of good nutrition and the effect it can have on their bodies.

Suggestions for appropriate healthy snacks will be provided and are available on our website. Please keep in mind that children only need small portions.

Westminster Child Development Center is a tree nut/peanut free facility.

Foods that may cause allergic reactions in some children (i.e. peanuts and nuts) **must** be avoided. Teachers will make parents aware of the known food allergies in the class. All snacks must have a printed ingredients label attached. No home-made treats will be permitted.

TOYS FROM HOME

Science and nature items are always welcome, but we ask that all other toys be left at home, except for a special item needed during the transitional period.

Westminster Child Development Center cannot be responsible for damaged, lost or stolen toys.

CLOTHING

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing, suitable for active play, which is sometimes messy and often outdoors. All removable clothing **MUST** be clearly marked with the child's name.

Boots should be large enough for the child to put on with minimum assistance. Snow pants are necessary only when teachers specify outside activity, during the winter months.

Tennis shoes are safer for school play in preference to any dress shoe, boot or opened toe shoes. We strongly recommend that the children do not wear flip flops or clogs of any kind.

FIELD TRIPS

Preschool and Pre K classes do attend field trips during the year. We welcome parents to attend field trips. Any parent attending a field trip must obtain the volunteer child abuse clearances prior to attending the trip.

SPECIAL LUNCH

Several times during the year, WCDC staff will prepare and serve a special lunch for children. Parents are asked to contribute \$5 for each special lunch. A menu and sign up sheet will be provided to families prior to the date of the special lunch.

DIAPERS, DIAPER CREAM AND WIPES

Parents are required to supply diapers/pull-ups. Parents are required to supply wipes which are used by the entire class. If your child has an allergy to wipes please inform the staff and supply wipes to be used for your child only. Diaper cream must be labeled with your child's full name.

BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday is very special, and we would like to mark the occasion. You may sign up to send a special birthday snack to share with the class. Please refer to SNACK/NUTRITION section.

NAPPING

Infants nap on their own schedule. Infants younger than 12 months old must sleep in a crib and be placed on their back to sleep. Infants may not be swaddled. Only a crib sheet and pacifier may be in a crib with an infant. Each infant is to have an assigned crib which is labeled with their name.

Nap time for children enrolled in Toddler, Pre School Prep, Pre School and Pre K Plus is from 1pm-3pm. We ask no drop off or pick up occur at this time. As children grow out of needing a nap, they will be given the opportunity to rest from 1-1:30. If after a half hour, they are not asleep, they will be provided with a quiet activity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

One of the goals of the WCDC program is to work in active partnership with parents .

⇒ Parent volunteers are needed to assist with a variety of activities within the school and classrooms. Some of the opportunities include:

- * Fundraising Committee
- * Scholastic Book Fair
- * Assisting with parties
- * Assisting with speech/hearing screening /vision screening
- * Parent committee

⇒ We would be happy to have parents share their special talents, training, or abilities. This could be realized in the form of a parent workshop, a program geared for children in the classroom, or volunteer assignments at various special school events.

⇒ Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit their child's class during the school year. Please confer with the teacher beforehand to set up a convenient time for all.

⇒ Our policy does not allow classroom visits of non-enrolled children, such as out-of-town relatives and friends.

⇒ Volunteers who volunteer on a consistent and ongoing basis or attend field trips must obtain required clearances.



SCHOOL CLOSINGS OR DELAYS

In rare instances or during a state of emergency, **the WCDC program may close for weather related occurrence.** Announcements will be made on KDKA and WTAE as well as on their websites.

There may be times with the Westminster Nursery School and Kindergarten is closed or have a delayed opening. The WCDC may remain open even if the WNSK program is closed.

Children enrolled in both the WNSK and WCDC program may attend the WCDC program, if ratios allow, on WNSK school closing days. Parents will be charged the hourly rate for the time attended in WCDC. Prior approval to attend the WCDC is required.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents are asked to inform the center by 9:00 am if their child is not attending on their scheduled day.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Westminster Child Development Center is a smoke free facility. The outdoor play area is also considered part of the facility in that no smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

PLAYGROUND USE

State Regulations **prohibit** families from utilizing the playground when any classes are in session. The playground may only be used by children enrolled and attending our program. The playground may only be used by the community before 7am and after 6pm Monday to Friday and on the weekends.

OTHER WECEP SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

WNSK PRE SCHOOL PRE, PRESCHOOL AND PRE K CLASSES

See WNSK.org for more details

WNSK STAY AND PLAY

Picking up at 3pm can be a challenge for families trying to meet a school bus at the same time. WNS offers an after school service from 3-3:30 each day. The children are escorted to a classroom and remain there with a teacher until a parent or guardian arrives to pick them up.

WNSK LUNCH BUNCH

You can bridge your child's morning program with their afternoon program by signing up for a lunch time with their friends. Food brought into the program must be peanut/tree nut free and not need refrigeration. Children will be provided glasses of ice water. This program includes an active play time in our play room or on the playground weather permitting.

WNSK PRIVATE KINDERGARTEN

Our Private Kindergarten is licensed by the PA Department of Education to provide a quality academic program with published curriculum and teaching goals and objectives. There is a Report of Progress Assessment Checklist that is used for children enrolled in this program. This program has two PA certified teachers.

Our Private Kindergarten is a half day program and has 2 sessions meeting Monday-Friday: 9am-11:30am and 12:30pm-3pm. Most surrounding school districts provide transportation to our programs.

WNSK LITTLE SCHOLARS

Our Little Scholars Program provides an extension of the learning that takes place in the Kindergarten classroom. Little Scholars classes include: Reading/Writing Workshop, Mathematic, Cooking Up a Story, Silly Science, Technology and Club K (an adventure/community service club for the Kindergarten age child).

WNSK ENRICHMENT CLASSES

Extend your child's day with enrichment classes offered in the fall and spring. Each Enrichment Class focuses on a specific topic such as music, art, cooking, STEAM or Movement.

CHILDREN'S DAY IN

Drop in care available on a first come first serve basis from 9am until noon Monday to Friday. For more information please call (412)722 4687.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of residents shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible individuals with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to the provisions of aids or the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among the available methods and subject to available funds.

Any resident/client/student/ (and or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following:

- WESTMINSTER CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
2040 Washington Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15241
- Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance
Department of Public Welfare
Room 223 Health and Welfare Building
P.O. 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111
- Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
301 Fifth Ave
Suite 390, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
- Bureau of Civil Rights Compliance
Department of Public Welfare
Western Field Office
Room 702 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue



**WE ARE THE
WESTMINSTER WESTIES**



WECEP Board of Directors

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Natalie Brown

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John DeSimone

Sherrie Koch ,WPC Sessions Rep
Rev. Jim Gilchrist ,WPC Head of Staff

Westminster Nursery School and Kindergarten is one of three programs operated by Westminster Early Childhood Education Programs (WECEP), LLC.

WECEP is a 501c3 non profit organization, which operates as an extension of the Westminster Presbyterian Church.