THE

LEARNING

CENTER



701 SW Roosevelt St. Topeka, KS 66607

**Welcome**

Here at The Learning Center our goal is to provide your child a happy, safe, welcoming, fun environment with early learning opportunities. It is our belief that children should always feel safe. It is important to establish positive relationships with children and parents. Childcare providers should work together in order to provide the most positive experience for everyone.

**Communication**

It is very important for us to always have open communication. A staff member will let you know if there are questions or concerns about your child. Each child will have daily reports on the Procare app to let you know about your child’s day. Staff will record real time information such as check-in/check-out times, meals/amount eaten, diapering/toileting, and naptimes. The Learning Center ask that you keep your child’s teacher informed of any changes in routine, difficult sleep nights, changes in eating, etc. as that may affect your child’s day. If you would like to speak with the director, please do not hesitate to.

**Authorized Pick-up**

Parents are welcome to visit The Learning Center during the hours of operation and request to see their child unless prohibited by a court order. If necessary, The Learning Center can request a copy of the order. Children will only be released to individuals listed on the enrollment form unless notified of otherwise. If anyone other than the child’s legal parent, guardian or someone who is listed on the enrollment form is to pick up a child, The Learning Center needs to be notified in writing through text, procare app, or email. The person picking the child up may need to show a driver’s license or other picture ID. All children will be picked up from the check-in desk.

**Transportation Policy**

Transportation is not offered currently.

**Required Forms**

For your child(ren) to begin care, there are a few forms that must be completed and turned in. In your packet you will see a total of 5 forms, an Emergency Medical Form, a Health assessment, copy of your child(rens) up to date shot records, and your child’s contract. A health assessment and shot records printed by your child’s pediatric office is required. Your child(ren) will not be allowed to start without these forms completed. If one week has passed and these forms have not been submitted and/or communication with the director has not been made, you will be moved to the wait list and your spot may be filled.

**Hours**

The current hours of operation at The Learning Center are 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Management Staff**

Director: Dayleen Alegria, 7854388822, miniexplorerstopeka@yahoo.com

**Probationary Period**

The Learning Center reserves the right to terminate care without reason at any time. Upon the joining of a new family to The Learning Center family, there will be a 14 day probationary period in which the staff will make sure we are a good fit for all of the families in the centers' care.

**Mandated Reporter**

Childcare programs are identified as mandatory child abuse/sexual abuse/neglect reporters. If staff suspects possible abuse, neglect, or any other endangerment to an enrolled child, the staff member will complete a suspected abuse form and turn it in to the Director, or the person in charge at the time, who will notify Child Protective Services, Department of Social Services, or proper authorities.

ALL employees must report actual or suspected child abuse or neglect of any child attending The Learning Center as soon as possible to the Director. All evidence of abuse or unusual injuries, including bruises, contusions, lacerations, and burns, shall be noted on the child's record, and shall be reported upon discovery to the Director. The Director shall report within 24 hours to the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services any evidence of suspected child abuse or neglect.

**Zero Tolerance Child Abuse Policy**

To ensure the health and safety of young children in The Learning Center, we stress to our staff that corporal punishment or physical discipline is defined as physical abuse and will not be tolerated. And evidence of physical abuse or sexual misconduct will be grounds for dismissal upon the completions of an investigation. The incident will be reported to the proper authorities.

**Activities**

Children learn through play and observation. We enrich their learning experiences by reading books, providing art supplies, dramatic play props, music experiences, science exploration, and both large and small motor activities. To foster their learning, we look for teachable moments in our everyday environment and have meaningful conversations with the children about their real-world experiences.

**Mealtimes**

Meals will not be held for child(ren) who are running late or arrive after the following mealtimes:

* Breakfast 8:00am - 8:30am
* Lunch 11:00am - 11:30am
* Snack 3:00pm – 3:30pm

**Schedule**

Infant schedules change throughout their first two years of life. The key is for everyone to communicate together on what works best for your child. However, a schedule will not take precedence over your infant’s needs. If they are tired, staff will let them nap. When they are hungry, staff will feed them.

Staff do follow a routine to assist children in regulating themselves and to foster security that a regular schedule can provide. In general, our day typically looks like:

**6:00am ………………… Arrival time-structured independent play**

**7:30am ………………… Wash hands before eating Breakfast**

**8:00am ………………… breakfast**

**8:30am ………………… Potty Break & change diapers, wash hands & brush teeth**

**9:30am ………………… Circle time, activity time**

**10:00am ………………… Outdoor/activity time**

**11:00am ………………… Read, puzzles, play tables or areas, etc.**

**11:30am ………………… Wash hands before lunch & eat lunch**

**12:00pm ………………… Potty breaks & check diapers (wash hands), brush teeth**

**12:30pm ………………… Nap/quiet time**

**2:30pm ………………… Potty break & change diapers + wash hands**

**3:00pm …………………. Eat snack & rewash hands**

**3:30pm …………………. Outdoor time or free play (depending on weather)**

**4:15pm …………………. Potty breaks & check diapers -+ wash hands**

**4:30pm …………………. Structured independent play**

**6:00pm …………………. Close facility/clean units**

\*\*note schedules vary and each classroom is different

\*If your child arrives after a meal it is your responsibility to make sure they were fed prior to drop off.

**Payment Fee**

**Late pick-up** An automatic fee of $25 will be added to your account the first minute after closing wiht an addisional $1 per minute after closing. At the 25 minute mark an additional $35 per 20 minute fee will be added.

**Early drop off** fee of $15 per 15 minutes

Additional Fees:

* $100 One-Time Non-refundable Registration Fee
  + If a spot is being held for a child – This $100 registration fee will be due upon application submission as a “holding-fee”. If the child enrolls on-time, the fee will transfer as the registration fee. If child does not enroll, this fee will remain non-refundable.
* Yearly $120 Supply Fee -due January 1st yearly, prorated $10 a month depending on month new families start.

A convenience fee will be added to all credit card payments and payments.

Personal checks that are returned due to lack of funds will be assessed a $30.00 returned check fee. Cash or cashier check will be required as payment for a returned check. Your child will be moved to a waitlist after 2 returned checks.

A late fee of $50 will be charged to clients with outstanding fees. After two weeks the child will be moved to the waitlist. Childcare may be reinstated if in two weeks’ time payments and late fees are paid in full.

**Payment Methods Accepted**

Forms of payment accepted are Cash, Apple pay, Check, Credit Card, Venmo, cash app, procare app, or DCF subsidy.

**Tuition Rates\***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DAYCARE | PRE-SCHOOL |
| Age 0 weeks to 12 months: **$280 per week full time, $140 per week part time** | 2 years old: **$220 per week full time, $110 per week part time** |
| Age 12 months to 18 months: **$260 per week full time, $130 per week part time** | 3 years old: **$210 per week full time, $105 per week part time** |
| Ages 18 months to 2 years: **$240 per week full time, $120 per week part time** | 4 years old: **$200 per week full time, $100 per week part time** |
| Ages 2 years to 3 years: **$220 per week full time, $110 per week part time** | Daily rate: $70 per day, per child |

**All rates are subject to change at any time with a 30 day written notice!**

**Vacation & Holidays**

The Learning Center will follow the states holiday schedule:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Junior Day

Presidents Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Veterans day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving (Black Friday)

Christmas Day

\*\*The Learning Center will be closed August 26th-August 30th\*\*

\*\*The Learning Center will close at noon on Halloween, new years eve, and Christmas eve\*\*

\*Due to fixed costs, there is NO REDUCTION in tuition for these holidays or closed days.

**Professional Development Training Days**

Due to the increase in required training hours, we will close 1 day in the spring & 1 day in the fall for professional development training. No reduction in tuition will be given for these professional development days. The Learning Center will give at least 1 (one) months’ notice for each professional development day.

**Meals**

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which means that we provide nutritionally balanced meals and receive three visits a year from Food Program staff. The menus are posted in the front office and will also be in your packet. We ask that you do not bring food to The Learning Center unless prior arrangements have been made with the director. We provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack.

Formula or breast milk must be in labeled bottles/bags. Please label all supplies. Staff will let you know when more is needed.

**Guidance**

Children will be treated with courtesy and respect. Most discipline issues can be managed by the environment, such as making sure there are enough hands-on activities for everyone, and that kindness is modeled by all staff members. The Learning center staff members will never withhold food, use shame, intimidation, or physical punishment to manage behaviors.

**Illness**

State regulations require us to maintain a medical record on each child and for the child to have a physical examination within 3 months prior to his admission to care.

Please return the completed medical form before your child begins attending The Center.

If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, he/she should be kept at home and THE STATUS OF HIS/HER CONDITION SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE CENTER. (strep throat, pinworm, viral infections, infected ears and/or glands, measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever, pink eye, COVID-19, RSV, Hand foot & Mouth, etc., are among those conditions categorized as "highly contagious".)

If a child becomes ill during the day, the parents will be contacted with the request to pick the child up and take them home. It is requested that the child be picked up within 30 minutes of the notification. If the child is not picked up, we will begin contacting your emergency contacts to pick the child up. We must consider the needs of all children in care and the spread of contagious disease.

Please keep your child at home when they are sick. This rule applies to siblings of children who are sick as well. Out of respect for the staffs health at the learning center and the families who attend, we will refuse care to children who have a fever of 100.5 or higher, an unexplained or contagious rash, head lice or nits, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye or if there is drainage from ears. Mini Explorers reserve the right to refuse care for a child that appears too ill for care (fatigue, inconsolable crying, etc.)

If your child becomes ill while in care, the director will call you and expect you to pick him/her up right away. If the director is unable to reach you, the director will begin calling your back-up contact numbers. The director will do their best to isolate ill children from the other children until they are picked up.

If you need the director to administer medication to your child, the center will need an Administration of Medication form signed by you. This includes pain relievers, diaper rash cream and teething gels. If needed a copy can be emailed to you but must be returned, signed before any medicine can be administered. One can also be picked up from the office.

Once a fever has been broken WITHOUT medication for 24 hours and no other symptoms of illness are shown then they can return to care after 24 hours of being symptom free. A doctors note is required to return.

**Meals**

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which means that we provide nutritionally balanced meals and receive three visits a year from Food Program staff. The menus are posted in the front office and will also be in your packet. We ask that you do not bring food to The Learning Center unless prior arrangements have been made with the director. We provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack.

Formula or breast milk must be in labeled bottles/bags. Please label all supplies. Staff will let you know when more is needed.

**Guidance**

Children will be treated with courtesy and respect. Most discipline issues can be managed by the environment, such as making sure there are enough hands-on activities for everyone, and that kindness is modeled by all staff members. The Learning center staff members will never withhold food, use shame, intimidation, or physical punishment to manage behaviors.

**Naps/Quiet Time**

Naps are offered but in no way forced. Depending on the age of the child(ren) will determine if they will be offered one or two naps. Staff will allow the child(ren) to choose when they are ready to make the transition from two naps to one. If a child refuses a nap, then they will be offered quiet play time away from where others are sleeping. At The Learning center we will do our best to help the child(ren) get onto a schedule where naps are at the same time as others however if a child(ren) are asking for another nap then one will be provided.

**From Home**

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys or candy from home. It is very difficult for young children to share, and even more difficult when it is their own toy or candy. If your child manages to sneak a toy in, it will put it in a safe place to be retrieved at departure. 1 comfort item is allowed to be brought from home all other items brought from home will be kept in the child’s cubby and sent home at pick up.

Sunscreen and insect repellant are allowed with a medical form authorization if you wish for them to be applied.

**Clothing**

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children dress in washable, comfortable clothing.

\*Three sets of clothing need to be kept in the child's cubby at all times. Clothing should be marked with your child's name. Please include underwear, pants, shirts and socks. If soiled clothing is sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next morning.

\*Parents are required to provide their own diapers and wipes.

\*\*Please remember that children are taken outdoors daily (weather permitting) and should be dressed accordingly (sweater, jacket, hat, mittens, etc.) Shoes should be appropriate for outdoor play. Even if your child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, we will still go outside. This is done to comply with state requirements.

\*\*Please remember to check the lost and found box for missing items. Found items will be cleaned out and donated to a charity organization every 6 months. We CANNOT REPLACE LOST OR BROKEN ARTICLES. If your child brings money or something valuable, The Learning Center will not be responsible, and it is important that the teacher or the director be informed.

**Birthdays & Celebrations**

The Learning Center will have a lunch celebration for the day before thanksgiving and the day before Christmas. We encourage you to join us for these celebrations, but please let the director know ahead of time if you want to bring treats. All treats need to be approved by the director. Every classroom will decorate and have an age-appropriate party. We do ask that you do not bring any presents. Home baked Cupcakes and other treats are not allowed unless approved by the director. Only goods purchased from a store in a sealed container and the seal cannot be broken. Must check with director for allergies and to be approved by director. There must be one for every child in your child(rens) classroom and accommodations met for those who have allergies. Unfortunately, we can only have additional family join for the Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations.

**Termination**

The Learning Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment if a parent/guardian does not reasonably support the policies and procedures of The Learning Center. The Learning Center reqires a two weeks’ written notice to be given to the director for termination. The two weeks are required to be paid for regardless of attendance. If the director deemes it to be in the best intrest of the child or the center, immediate tetermination may be applicable.

**Child Custody Issues**

In the event that custody becomes an issue for your family, a court order stating that a “non-custodial parent may not pick up a child from childcare” will need to be submitted and placed in the child’s file. Without a copy of the court order on file, staff members cannot refuse a custodial family member the right to take their child from the Center. Law enforcement officials are called immediately in the event that a custody battle arises while on our property.

**Absent/Late arrival**

Unplanned absences should be reported to the director as soon as possible. Planned absences should be communicated at least 7 days prior. Parent(s) shall be charged 100% of their normal childcare cost If any Child(ren) are absent. If Communication is not made by 8:30 A.M. to notify of your child being late or absent, then the child will need to stay home the remainder of the day. Drop off cut off time is 9 A.M. or for half day children drop off cut off is an hour after their scheduled drop off time. This will help us to ensure we are able to plan appropriately for the days meals as well as minimizing distractions for the other children in care. Children dropped off after 8:30 A.M. or after 12P.M. are expected to be fed before drop off.

**Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills are held monthly to comply with the state requirements and acquaint your child with evacuation and other emergency procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon be accustomed to it and know just what to do. These include fire and tornado drills.

**Damages**

If any of the Child(ren), while under the Child Care Provider’s supervision, causes any damage to the premises other than normal wear and tear on toys, furniture, or damage, the Parent(s) shall be responsible for repairing any said damage caused by the Child(ren).

**Confidentiality Policy**

Confidentiality is a top priority and ALL Personal information of Children, families and staff will not be shared for any reason unless requested by KDHE personnel and authorities. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families. We encourage respectful relationships between staff, families, children and community members and value the partnership we have with all who are apart of our family. We have a “No Tolerance” policy for sharing of confidential information about the staff, families and children.

**Outdoor Play Policy**

Per the Kansas Health Department children are required to go outside at least an hour a day. Schedule thirty (30) minutes in the morning and thirty (30) in the afternoon. Wind chill and heat index play apart in making the decision when to go outside. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather this includes hat and gloves in the winter. If the weather is not appropriate for outside play, children will have gross motor time indoors.

**Childcare Outside of the Program**

If you are in need of childcare outside of our normal business hours any and all arrangements between staff and parents will need to be made outside of the program. Due to confidentiality reasons, we reserve the right to terminate any staff or family immediately if a violation of confidentiality is made.

**Social Media Policy**

Social media plays a part in our center, it is our policy to protect children in our care. The Learning Center has a photo permission form that is signed at enrollment and updated every two years. This allows parents to choose where photos of their children are being used. To safeguard all children, maintain privacy and the security of our families and children, we require:

* No pictures taken within the school or a school event with children are posted for public viewing except those of your own children. Parents do not have the right to take pictures of anyone’ else child.
* Pictures taken by The Learning Center staff are the only pictures allowed to be posted on social media after permission policy has been signed. The Learning Center does use social media to communicate with families and share information happening within our program. This does include pictures of events, classroom activities, and special events.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

The Center will remain open unless it is deemed too hazardous to be out on the streets. In this case you will receive a message from the director, it will be put on our social media pages and other apps we use to contact parents. If The Center must close during the day, while in operation, due to unforeseen circumstances, you will be required to have your child picked up within 30 minutes of notification.

**Policy Changes**

If a change is being made to the policies, you will be given 30 days’ notice and an immediate copy of the change. We ask that the new policy be honored immediately following the weeks’ notice. Policies will be reviewed and updated at least once a year.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

Here we observe the provisions of the Kansas Act Against Discrimination and shall not discriminate against any person because of race, religion, color, sex, disability, national origin, or ancestry.

It is our promise that we accept all children, families and staff as equals regardless of race, color, or religious beliefs and all are encouraged to participate in our non-discriminating environment. All daily activities are age and stage appropriate and will promote the individual child’s physical, intellectual, emotional, and social well-being and growth. We promote curiosity and exploration. We establish an environment for learning and creativity.

**The following requirements must be met in order for a child to be admitted:**

1. The child must be 2 weeks old and not yet 6 years old.

2. Parents must complete an enrollment packet (forms are listed below) and return all pages to the director one (1) week prior to admission!

*A. Enrollment Agreement*

*B. Medical Record, History of Immunizations, and Physical*

*Assessment*

*C. Emergency Medical Care Authorization*

*D. CACFP Food Program Enrollment Form*

*Allergy Form (If needed)*

*E. Photo release form*

*F. Sunscreen Permission Form*

*G. Infant Paperwork (if children are enrolling as an Infant)*

*3. First weeks payment and deposit must be made.*

Please notify of any changes of phone number, address, place of

employment or a change in emergency pick up information as soon as possible.

***All Enrollment Agreements, Parent Handbooks (if changes are deemed necessary), CACFP enrollment, and Emergency information are updated annually in July and all documents returned by Aug. 1st for enrollment.***

**Handbook Acknowledgement**

This handbook will be reviewed on a yearly basis. Staff, families, childcare aware consultants, and our lawyer will be asked to also review and to give their input via survey & email. Once revisions have been made, all parties will receive an updated copy of the handbook during the enrollment period each year.

This handbook may be reviewed/ revised in between enrollment periods and families will be provided a 30-day notice as updates are implemented.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures that have been set up for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

[\_\_\_\_] I have received and reviewed the handbook. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the handbook and to seek understanding if I do not understand any policies, procedures or information contained in the handbook.

Please sign stating you have read, acknowledge, understand and agree to the hand book given by The Learning Center.

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child Care Provider Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child Care Provider Name/Title\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Time of care needed:

From:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ To:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*not to exceed 10 hours a day unless approved by director

Days needing care:

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday