

Family Handbook

Updated July 1, 2024



The Early Learning Center

1633 Route 70, Southampton

telceducation.com

(609) 953-3736

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to The Early Learning Center.....	1
General Center Information.....	2-3
Education Programs.....	4
Curriculum & Assessments.....	5
Attendance Policies.....	6-7
Parental Involvement & Communication Policies.....	8-9
Health and Safety Policies.....	10-12
Illness and Covid-19 Policies.....	13-15
Emergency Preparedness.....	16
Positive Discipline Policy.....	17
Expulsion Policy.....	18
More Information Links.....	19

WELCOME TO THE EARLY LEARNING CENTER!

This handbook is your guide to our center and our operational procedures.

If you have any questions about the policies in this handbook, or if you have any suggestions on something we could be doing better, please contact us at 609-953-3736.

At TELC, our mission is to provide child care that meets the needs of each child and family in a safe, loving and educational environment. Our focus is to provide an encouraging educational experience, promoting social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. Committed to the families we serve, we strive to give parents complete peace of mind while providing quality, reliable and safe child care.

Please take a few minutes to become familiar with this information, along with the Enrollment & Tuition Agreements. Before your child's first day, we ask you complete the Acknowledgment of Receipt form. We're looking forward to getting to know you and your child. We are honored you've chosen us for your child's education and care.



GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION

Center Management & Contact Information

We're here to answer any questions or discuss concerns you may have at any time.

Owners: Jennifer and Alexander Medvesky | Jenn@telceducation.com

Curriculum Director: Blythe Long | Blythe@telceducation.com

Phone Number: 609-953-3736 | Fax number: 609-953-7082

Facebook: @TELC

Unexpected Closures

TELC will remain open during most severe weather events. When there are severe weather warnings the Center will close, or hold a delayed opening in accordance with the Lenape Regional High School District. You will be notified via the Brightwheel app by 5:30 a.m. of a closure, or delayed opening. In the event the State closes TELC for any period of time due to quarantine or pandemic concerns, families will be notified as soon as possible.

Closure Dates

The Center will be closed on the following dates for holidays and teachers in service days:

- August 30th & September 2nd
- October 14th
- November 28th & 29th
- December 23, 24, & 25
- January 1st
- January 20th
- February 17th
- April 18th
- May 26th
- June 19th
- July 4th

GENERAL CENTER INFORMATION

Teaching Staff

We conduct criminal background screenings, including fingerprints, for all of our staff. Every staff member completes a full orientation and training upon hiring, to ensure they are able to meet the needs of the children they are serving.

Professional Development

Every teacher completes 10 hours of health and safety training and Pediatric CPR/First Aid Training within the first 4 weeks of hire. Additionally, our teaching staff completes 20 hours of professional development annually, meeting the child care licensing guidelines for continuing education.

Grow NJ Kids

We are a proud participant of New Jersey's Quality Rating Improvement System Grow NJ Kids! Research shows that children who are in quality child care and early learning programs when they are young are better prepared for Kindergarten with better reading skills, more math skills, and larger vocabularies.

Brightwheel

Brightwheel is a parent communication tool. Quality of early childhood development is dependent on the connection between parents and their child's caregivers. This tool allows teachers to keep parents informed of their child's day, including activity reports, learning activities, special reminders, photos and online billing.

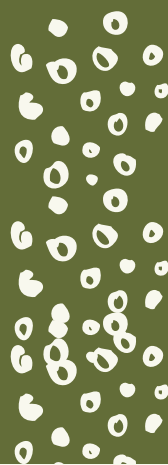
ABC Mouse

ABCmouse.com is an online based learning tool. The comprehensive curriculum includes Language development, Reading, Math, Science and Technology, Social Studies, and Health. Our Pre-K students are given an opportunity to use ABCmouse.com at school.

Daily Classroom Schedules

Each classroom develops a daily schedule to best serve the children in their group and the activities they need to accomplish. We ask that all children arrive to the center by 9:00. This ensures your child's full participation in the education program. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



Infant

Infancy is the most important time in the development of a child. Infants gain confidence in themselves and their abilities. From first smiles to first steps, we encourage babies to meet all their milestones in a loving, caring environment.

Waddler

Exploration and discovery is the basis for everything we do in our Waddler Program. We offer the children an opportunity to hold, touch and explore the world around them. They begin to learn letters and numbers through music, books and interactive teaching.

Toddler & Young Preschool

Our Young Preschool Program is all about socialization and conversation. Toddlers learn how to express their wants and needs verbally, explore their many emotions, and learn from each other through play. Potty training, self-feeding, and following multi-step instructions are mastered in this classroom.

Preschool

In our Preschool Program, your child will discover letters, numbers, shapes, and colors through games, reading and dramatic play. We give our preschoolers the freedom to express themselves and learn through experience in an interactive and natural environment.

Pre-K

Kindergarten readiness is our main goal in the Pre-K Program. In addition to building on the fundamentals of letters and numbers, children will practice self-help, problem-solving, and social cues. This will give them a strong foundation that will help them be confident and successful in kindergarten.

Transitioning to a new room

As children grow and develop, they need new challenges and social interactions with other children in their peer group. Children will make a transition to the next program based on their age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. This transition is a gradual transition over a week's time to ensure that it is an easy, comfortable change for your child.

CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENTS



Creative Curriculum

The curriculum of choice at TELC is the state recognized Creative Curriculum. This curriculum is taught in all our classrooms in various degrees. This curriculum is child led to ensure each year your child's learning is age appropriate, unique and enjoyable.

The Creative Curriculum® is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop their creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. The program is divided into 11 “studies” that are a child lead discovery. Through these “studies” the children will learn social, emotional, fine/gross motor, and problem-solving skills, along with letters, numbers and shapes.

Teaching Strategies GOLD

Teaching Strategies GOLD is an ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through kindergarten; helping teachers focus on what matters most for school readiness. GOLD helps teachers plan for each child and ensure that every child is making progress. We know how important these early years are to children’s success in school and in life. Like you, we want to do everything we can to give your child a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES



Arrival

TELC opens Monday through Friday at 6:30 a.m. If you arrive before 6:30 a.m., your child will not be able to enter the building until 6:30 a.m. Upon arrival, please ring doorbell for prompt admittance. A staff member will come to the door and take a visual assessment of your child's general health. At this time, you may let staff members know any information or updates needed to care for your child for the day. Please save tuition, academic or any other questions for a phone, or email exchange with the Director, or your child's teacher.

In order to follow our daily routines, our center has established a 10:30 a.m. drop off deadline to limit disruptions. If your child has not arrived at the Center by 10:30 a.m., we ask you not send him/her in. If the reason for your lateness is due to a doctor's appointment or unforeseen mishaps, we ask that you please call in advance to advise of his/her arrival time.

Pick Up

The Center closes at 6:00 p.m. Please plan on picking up your child before this time. You will be provided with a passcode for entry to the building. Please do not share this passcode with family or friends who are assigned emergency contacts for your child. At pick up time you may be asked to complete paperwork that needs to be signed for your child. This is an excellent time to speak with your child's teacher about their day or discuss any other questions or concerns you might have with the Director.

During the enrollment process, each family completes a "Parent Input Form". This form provides authorization for select individuals to pick-up children from the Center. Children will only be released to their primary caregivers and authorized individuals. In the event that someone different is picking up your child, the primary caregiver is required to give verbal or written permission to the Center. Upon pick up, staff members will ask for the individual's ID to photocopy and put it in the child's file with the date of pick up. If a parent does not give advance permission of a new authorized individual for pick-up, child will remain at the Center until a parent/guardian is reached and gives permission.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Tuition

Tuition is due by your arrival time for the week of service. Payment can be made via the Brightwheel app, check or cash. All checks should be made out to The Early Learning Center and the week of service dates and week number written in the memo line. Checks are to be placed in the black drop box next to the front door.

If your tuition payment is cash, your payment needs to be in a sealed envelope with your child's name, week of service, and the amount enclosed. The envelope should be placed in the black drop box next to the front door.

Tuition increases will occur annually in September. There is an annual re-enrollment fee for the upcoming school year.

A summer activity fee will be assessed annually and is due in the month of June.

Vacation Week

Each family is provided one unpaid week of tuition for vacation per contract year. Please submit in writing, which week of service you will be taking, at least two weeks prior.

Withdrawal of Service

A MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS WRITTEN NOTICE is required for termination of childcare services. Even if your child does not attend during that two week period, payment is still required. Any fees not paid on time with regards to termination of childcare services will also be subject to daily late fees, until full payment is received. If fees are not paid, the unpaid bill will be placed into collections.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION POLICIES

The Early Learning Center understands that communication and involvement between parents and our teaching staff is very important on a daily, weekly and monthly basis to insure that each child gets all their needs met academically, socially, and physically. We pride ourselves on our “open door” policy by offering many ways for parents, teachers, and office staff to communicate.

Parent/Family Workshops

Below you will find a list of potential workshops that we offer twice a year.

- Food Allergies
- Parent Resilience
- Parent Bonding
- Toilet Training
- Car Seat Safety Checks
- Positive Parent/Child Interactions
- Communication
- Positive Discipline

On top of these we also host Back to School Night, and one Family Fun Night per year.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Though our doors are always open to conferences when you request them, at least two times a year we offer to sit down with all preschool and pre-k parents/guardians to discuss your child's academic achievements. Conferences occur in the Fall and Spring where your child's individual portfolio and assessments conducted in the classroom will be shared. Additionally, we ask you bring observations from home and any questions or concerns that you would like to discuss to this meeting.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Email

We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we can have an open form of communication for any comments, suggestions, or concerns.

Calendars and Newsletters

Monthly Calendars are a snapshot of what your child's class will be learning each day in conjunction with our Creative Curriculum studies. Monthly Newsletters provide Center news, events, and announcements. Monthly Calendars and Newsletters will be sent via the Brightwheel App.

Communication Boards

Located throughout the center, communication boards provide center news, upcoming events, reminders of holiday closing dates, announcements, etc. Additional information about The Early Learning Center's "happenings" can be found on our Facebook page @TELC.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES



Allergies

Families are expected to notify the Center regarding children's food or environmental allergies. Children with diagnosed allergies, or asthma, are required to provide the Center with an individualized health care plan, signed by the child's physician, detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, care, and all necessary medication. We are not a peanut free Center.

Handwashing

We encourage the importance of handwashing at an early age to help lessen the spread of germs. Children will wash their hands upon arrival to school, before eating, after bathroom visits, when returning from outside, and at any other necessary time. Handwashing is a healthy habit that should also be reinforced at home.

Staff Safety Training

Upon hiring, every staff member completes a 10-hour health and safety training. Additional training includes: CPR, First Aid, and EPI Pen Training.

First Aid and Accident Reports

Bumps and bruises are a part of childhood and when these minor scrapes and scratches occur at our center TELC and First Aid will be given. For small injuries, an accident report will be filled out and shown to the parent(s)/guardian(s) upon pick up with a detailed account of what happened. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will sign the accident report acknowledging they were notified of the accident and the report will be put in the child's permanent file.

For injuries to the head, or any injuries deemed more than a minor injury, the Director, or teacher, will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) to make them aware of the accident.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

Emergency Action Plans

An Emergency Action Plan will be developed for children in the program having long term, chronic health care, or other special health care needs. Such a plan will be developed with information from the child's physician, parents, and health care consultant. Classroom staff will be made aware of the plan to the extent that it impacts the child's daily classroom schedule and any special accommodations that need to be made within the classroom environment.

Medications

All medications are stored in a locked closet that is inaccessible to children. Children are not given any medication without the written authorization of a medical doctor. Written consent may only be on a "Permission to Administer Medications" form and all medications must be in their original bottles with original labels. Staff must also indicate on the administering form the date, time and dosage of medicine given at each administration and then initial this information. For prescription medication, only the directions on the bottle will be accepted for administering the medication. In all instances, the staff needs to know when the child received his/her last dosage of the medication from the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure medication is given at appropriate times. If the prescription medication is on an "as needed" basis, such as an EpiPen, inhaler etc., an Action Plan must accompany the medication in its original packaging with pharmacy information intact. With any prescription antibiotic, children may not return to care until they have had a full 24 hours of dosage and are no longer contagious to ensure they are well on the road to recovery.

Immunization Records

Immunization information is required upon enrollment. If your child has a well visit resulting in immunizations, you are required to provide the most current records. Our records are audited once a year by the Burlington County Health Department. The center may also ask that you provide additional medical information as required by state child care licensing regulations. Understand that your failure to provide this information may result in a suspension of services.

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES



Influenza Vaccination

According to the State of New Jersey Department of Health, the current seasonal influenza vaccine is required every year for those children 6 months through 59 months of age by December 31st and parent/guardian must submit proof of vaccination.

- Students who have not received the influenza vaccination by December 31st must be excluded (not allowed to attend child care/preschool) for the duration of influenza season (through March 31st), until they receive at least one dose of the influenza vaccine or until they turn 60 months of age.
- Children enrolling in child care/preschool after December 31st, must provide documentation of receiving the current seasonal flu vaccine before being allowed to enter school.
- Students enrolling in school after March 31st are not required to receive the influenza vaccination; however, flu season may extend until May, and therefore getting a flu vaccine even late in the season is still recommended. NJ accepts valid medical and religious exemptions (reasons for not showing proof of immunizations) as per the NJ Immunization of Pupils in School regulations, N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.

For more information, please visit “NJ Immunization Requirements Frequently Asked Questions”, at the following link: <http://nj.gov/health/cd/imm.shtml>

Immunization Exemption

If an immunization is contraindicated for medical reasons, the immunization exemption form will be provided and should be completed by the child's health care provider. It will be kept as part of the child's permanent immunization file. The medical contraindication must state both the reason and the length of the medical contraindication and be signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy in any jurisdiction in the United States.

ILLNESS POLICY



The Early Learning Center carefully follows all health guidelines to insure the healthiest environment possible. We hope that you will work with us to limit exposure by keeping your children home when necessary. To stop the spread of communicable diseases, TELC has an illness policy that we request each family strictly follow. Children who exhibit the following signs or symptoms of illness are required to remain home. If a child exhibits any of the symptoms listed below while at the Center a parent/guardian will be contacted, and you will be asked to pick up your child within 60 minutes of contact. It is at the discretion of TELC management to determine if a child needs to be picked up from the Center. ***If a child is sent home from the Center due to symptoms of illness, they will be required to remain at home the following day unless a physician's written statement is provided stating that they may return to school.*** Once the child is symptom and/or fever free for 24 hours or has a physician's written statement stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the center unless contraindicated by the Burlington County Health Department or State of NJ Department of Health.

Signs of Illness include but are not limited to:

- Overall unwell feeling
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting one time
- Skin rash other than a localized diaper rash
- Evidence of head lice
- Any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Excessive coughing that is not their baseline
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of taste or smell
- Aching
- Chills
- Headache
- Rash
- Sores on hands, feet, or mouth
- Pink or red conjunctiva with eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours
- Impetigo
- Strep throat
- Has a physician's written statement that child be separated from other children

ILLNESS POLICY

CONT'D



Children who have been ill may return when:

- Child is free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or other related symptoms of illness for a full 24 hours without the use of symptom reducing medications.
- If an antibiotic treatment is required, the child must have received the antibiotic treatment for 24 hours prior to returning to the center.
- You can provide a physician's written statement releasing the child and verifying that the child is no longer contagious for all communicable diseases or illnesses causing the child to miss 3 or more consecutive days of care.
- For non-contagious infections / illnesses / complaints (such as ear infections, teething etc.) the child may return to care without the 24-hour waiting period only if the child has been diagnosed by a doctor and is accompanied by a physician's written statement deeming the child to be safe and fever free.
- The child is able to fully participate in scheduled childcare activities.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's written statement stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

ILLNESS POLICY

CONT'D

Daily Health Screening

All staff, families, children and their household members must conduct a check before coming into the Center. Should you or any household member have any of the following symptoms during the preceding 72 hours, we ask you to remain out of the Center and notify us of symptoms. These symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Muscle Aches
- Difficulty Breathing
- New Loss of Taste or Smell
- Fever at or above the threshold temperature of 100.4° F (or would have, but for the use of fever-reducers).

Please note: COVID_19 guidelines and requirements may change, from time to time, based on current conditions. If you have any questions, please contact the Center.

For more information on the management of communicable disease please follow the link on the last page of the handbook.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICIES

Emergency Preparation

We prepare for all kinds of emergency situations with monthly drills and emergency management plans. In the event that an emergency arises, these are our emergency management plans. Please note that if we are deemed in “Lockdown” or “Shelter in Place” a sign will be placed on the front window. No one will be allowed to come in or leave the building until the area is determined to be safe again by local officials. In the event that we are in “Lockdown”, “Shelter in Place”, or “Evacuation,” a Brightwheel message and Remind alert will go out, and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified when it is safe to enter the building.

Evacuation Plan

If the Center is evacuated, we relocate to The Evergreen Dairy Bar located at 1643 Route 70 Southampton, NJ 08088, which is adjacent to our Center. A command center will be set up with local officials and all children remain there for pick up and care. If we evacuate the premises, a text alert will go out, and we will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) by phone. If we are unable to reach you, we will begin calling emergency contacts as specified on enrollment forms. If a minor accident/injury occurs, we will administer basic first aid. You will be advised of any incident and/or treatment provided. If emergency medical treatment is needed, we will first call 911, then contact the parent(s)/guardian(s).



POSITIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY

Positive Discipline Methods

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group, and the adult. Methods of positive discipline shall be consistent with the age and developmental needs of the children and lead to the ability to develop and maintain self-control. Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should not do; positive discipline tells children what they should do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

For more information on our Positive Discipline Policy please click the link on last page.

Diapering & Toilet Learning

Every child begins toilet learning at different times. When your child shows interest, you will work together with your child's teacher to encourage toilet learning. Until that time, we will provide diaper changes every two hours or as needed. Diaper changing procedures are posted near the changing tables and in compliance with state guidelines. The specific times of diaper changes will be added to your child's Brightwheel profile daily. Diapers and wipes are provided by the parent.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants, toddlers and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once. When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child that was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will be on supporting positive behaviors that address the specific reason for biting. Supervision and prevention will be the number one way we help change the behavior. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Rest Time & Infant Sleep

Nap time is scheduled from 12:00 – 2:00 pm. Infants will nap at various times throughout the day and will be placed on their back to sleep. Children from 6 weeks to 12 months sleep in a crib, with only a fitted sheet. Children ages 13 months to 4 years sleep on a Center provided cot.

Parents must provide a blanket and crib sheet and take it home weekly to be washed and returned.

EXPULSION POLICY

Expulsion Procedure

Unfortunately, there are reasons when we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center.

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION:

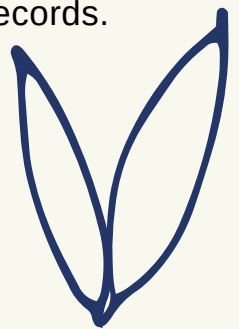
- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms, including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse, intimidation, or disrespect to staff members.
- Other

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION:

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.
- Other



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CLICK ON THE
LINKS BELOW



Expulsion Policy

Release of Children

Guidelines for Positive Discipline

Breastfeeding Policy

Use of Technology & Social Media

Management of Communicable Diseases

DCF Information to Parents

In addition to these resources, the Center has a Community Resource binder available in the office that can be used at your convenience. Please feel free to request the informational binder any time you visit the Center.