**A logo with a musical note and face

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**Early Childhood Education Program**

Family Handbook

2025 School Year

**State of the Arts LLC**

**WELCOME**

Dear Family,

We are honored that you have become a part of our in-home childcare. We share a small amount of your child’s life and are privileged to be given the opportunity. Our goal is to impact on our children’s lives educationally, emotionally, and socially so they are provided with a strong foundation for their educational career. We look forward to working as a family to help each child reach goals that are set for them throughout their time at State of the Arts. We strive not only to provide a challenging academic program but a secure, personal environment of care for each individual student. We hope that we can exceed all our families’ expectations and want to take this time to personally welcome your family to the State of the Arts. Please take your time to read every section of this Family Handbook/Contract and ask any questions that you may have.

Thank you for choosing **State of the Arts LLC Early Childhood Education Program**. I look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Alisha Walls

stateoftheartsnm@gmail.com

**Early Childhood Education Program**

About Me

## Philosophy

We believe that each child is an individual and as educators we will value and develop each child's strengths, interests, skills, abilities, and knowledge to extend their learning. Young children are eager learners and even infants are born learning. Our childcare believes all children are capable of learning. The most reliable and informative assessment process is the observation and documentation of children’s performance in activities and routines that take place throughout the day while in our care. We will provide opportunities for children to explore, discover, create, and imagine through fun and exciting activities.

## Mission

Our goal is to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate childcare for all ages, with a focus on the individual child's age and ability to stimulate social, cognitive, physical, and emotional growth. Development occurs in the context of relationships (adult relationships). The context of family and community culture influences every aspect of development. Our mission is to help families grow with their child as learning experiences begin with family. We value children’s home language as it is vital to their development. We will work together as a team to gain information through authentic, observational assessment related to the guidelines used to inform families and plan individualized curriculum activities and strategies to help each child grow and develop. We will provide a safe, nurturing, and recreational environment for children in our care.

## Certification

Licensed by the Early Child Education Care Department

Alisha Walls- Masters in the Arts of Early Child Development/ Education

## Definition of Family

In this handbook when I use the term family, I am referring to a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of your child in my care.

## Hours of Operation

Childcare services are provided from 6:30 AM to 4:30 PM (15 min window travel time)

Monday through Friday.

Part time Care is offered per individual contract. (15 min window) travel time

Before and after school care for those in my zoning area: (Steppingstones & Desert Star)

6:30 AM-7:50 AM (M, T, W, TH,) and 2:00 PM TO 5:00 PM

AND on Fridays 1:00-5:00 PM

**Business hours for contact: Please only contact childcare during their specified business hours, typically from 6:00 am to 5:00 pm. Respect their schedule to ensure timely and effective communication, considering factors like dropping off and picking up time. If urgent, please call. Only use Brightwheel and email as a form of contact. I will not respond to business matters through text or any form of social media.**

## Evening & Night Care

With advanced notice, I do provide care between the hours of 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM. Children in care during the nighttime follow a schedule designed to replicate activities typical of your child’s routine at home. I have an evening and morning schedule of activities planned for the hours when children are awake. Children who attend partially through the evening hours have the opportunity to sleep as needed. Children are served the evening meal if present at that time. A night-time snack is available, and breakfast is served to all children in care for the night unless the parent specifies otherwise. An additional fee will be charge per day for this service.

## Emergency Substitute Provider

In the rare case of an emergency situation, I will call my emergency substitute provider (see list of names posted on the bulletin board). S/he will come to the facility to stay with the children during my absence. In the event that I cannot secure a qualified substitute during an emergency, you or your emergency contact will be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child (ren) and the program will close for the remainder of the day. Should this need arise, you or your emergency contact shall pick up their children within 1:00 HOUR of receiving the call.

I will provide my emergency substitute provider with a brief orientation that will include the names and ages of children present, arrival and departure information for each child including the names of people authorized to pick up your child, the location of the children’s files including emergency contact information, consent for emergency medical treatment and any special health care needs. The emergency substitute provider will have appropriate credentials and clearances. Names of approved substitutes will be provided to you and a list will be posted on the bulletin board.

**Please note that this option is not always available, and state requirements require that the main provider must be present 75% of the time. (They have not specified what this means as terms of days, weeks, month)**

## Holidays

The childcare will be closed on these holidays and in addition to Military Family Days, which usually land on Friday before the holiday or Monday after the holiday. If anything changes, those changes will be listed ahead of time. All days will be subject to change at any need for childcare.

**New Years Eve**

**New Year’s Day**

**Dr. Martin King Day**

**Lincoln Day**

**Washington Day**

**Memorial Day**

**Juneteenth**

**4th of July**

**Labor Day**

**Columbus Day**

**Veterans Day**

**Thanksgiving Day**

**Christmas Eve**

**Christmas Day**

## Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and enrollment fee and first tuition payment paid prior to your child’s first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of $50.00 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable. Fee will be refundable if you and your family are approved for ECECD subsidy childcare assistance.

Based on the availability and openings, my program admits children from 5 months to 12 years of age.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. I do not discriminate based on special needs if a safe, supportive environment can be provided and we can accommodate care.

## Ratio and Capacity

Program can enroll up to 11 children with a ratio of 1:6 (My BIO children are not counted in ratio unless they are under the age of 6)

## Waiting List

Children will be enrolled from the waiting list in the order from which they are listed. A family with a child already enrolled in my program will be given priority.

## Adjustment/Trial Period

My program is a fun and exciting place for children to experience and learn about their world and make new friends. But it does take time for a child to adjust to a new childcare setting. I will try to make the adjustment easier by encouraging your children to discuss feelings, providing extra attention and support, participating in role-playing and reassuring them of their family’s return.

A two to four-week adjustment period begins on your child’s first day in my care. During this time, the family can decide to terminate the signed contract. (What’s already been paid will not be refunded)

***Orientation***

We request that a parent visit their child in the classroom prior to the child’s actual start date. In most cases, one or two visits are best; please speak with the Director about your child’s’ pre-start date visit(s). An enrollment form, contract and a developmental history form must be completed by a parent prior to your child's first visit day. And health, vision, dental screening within 45 days of being in the program. The child's health care practitioner will need to complete a physical form, and shots must be up to date. During the first few weeks your child will be adjusting to a new place and many new faces. We are interested in making this adjustment as easy as possible for both children and families. Options for easing your child into the program should be discussed with the Director.

***Transitions***

The childcare is organized and staffed to minimize the number of transitions children experience. Being mindful of the importance of the bonds that are established with teachers and peers, every effort is made to maintain continuity of relationships between teaching staff and children and among groups of children. Developmental needs or concerns are always considered when planning transitions for children and clear communication takes place between the center and home and among teaching staff.

**Please note:** The childcare makes every attempt to plan for and enact transition plans that have been discussed with families; in the event of an unforeseen change to enrollment, staffing, or program operations, transition plans may need to be altered to ensure compliance with State regulation, as well as to ensure a best practice experience for children. When transition plans must be altered, the childcare Director will contact the families to discuss.

## Inclusion

I believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. I will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in my program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

State of the Arts accepts applications for children with special needs. We realize the benefits of supporting children with special needs and attempt to accommodate children appropriate and helpful for them; however, CI&DC can only provide such services as are reasonable and beneficial to the class as a whole and do not cause undue burden to the program, staff, and other children. It may be necessary to turn down an application for enrollment or to terminate continued enrollment of a child with special needs when to do otherwise would jeopardize the safety and wellbeing of the child, the other children in the classroom and/or the staff.

Communication is the key aspect to successfully support a child with special needs. The parents, teachers and specialists who work with a child with a disability are all equally involved in sharing information, communicating their needs, and listening to each other.

A child with special needs should be assessed by an Early Intervention Team if the child is under 2 years, by the child's school system if he/she is older than 2 years, or another service provider.

The evaluation will decide services which will benefit the child and the method by which the services will be provided. The Director will aid the parents with a referral if necessary.

At the initial meeting, the Director will meet with the parents/guardians to discuss the child's disability/special needs. The child's IEP/IFSP or other information will be discussed. With parental permission, specialists may be requested to attend. The Director, with parental consent, will identify in writing the accommodations the childcare would have to make to meet the needs of the child, including

1) change or modification in regular center activities

2) size of group and appropriate staff/child ratio

3) special equipment, materials, ramps, or aids.

If it is determined that CIDC can accommodate the child, the parents, child, and classroom teacher will meet to determine how and when the child will transition into the program, if the child is new to the program. If the child has been enrolled, the staff and parents will discuss the new information. All records, screening/assessment information, IEP/IFSP, and observations will be placed in the child's folder and remain confidential. Parents may access their child's file at any time.

A staff person will act as the liaison for a child with special needs and will meet with the parents and child, preferably before enrollment to begin developing a supportive relationship. As the childcare liaison, this teacher will also be responsible for preparing progress reports every three months and setting up conferences when needed. In addition, a specialist from the Early Intervention Team or the School System who deals with the child's predominant disability will be chosen to act as a community liaison and will be responsible for coordinating communication amongst all parties. He/she will be active at CIDC to ensure the effective integration of the child into the classroom and to monitor progress thereafter. With parental consent, the Director will also inform the administrator of Special Education in writing that the Center is serving a child with a disability.

The director, in conjunction with staff members and the child's team will assess the classroom, common areas, and playground for the adaptations, equipment, and materials needed to accommodate the child with special needs.

Routines and classroom arrangements will be reviewed. Whenever necessary, additional staffing shall be recruited to assist in making the child's enrollment as successful an experience as possible.

Per regulations, at least five hours each year of training in special education needs to be obtained by each staff person. The childcare allocates a financial stipend for members of their staff to facilitate staff training. If possible, specialists will be recruited to train staff for the specific needs of children enrolled. Our childcare will continue to develop a resource library with information on special education. Parents of children with special needs and specialists working with the child are encouraged to share written materials with staff members

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP**)

An Individual Education Plan states in writing the specific services required to meet the needs of a child and any change or limitation in his/her participation in regular center activities. Specific services, where appropriate, should include, but not be limited to

1) physical therapy; 2) speech and language therapy; 3) psychological services; 4) psychiatric services; 5) education services; 6) social services; 7) occupational therapy.

The plan describes the method by which the above services will be provided including 1) who will provide the service 2) where the service will be provided; 3) schedule for provisions of the services 4) any special equipment, materials, ramps, or aids required by the child.

The IEP shall also recommend the size of the group to which the child may be assigned, and the appropriate staff/child ratio required for such a group. If the parent does not approve the IEP, such disapproval will be signed by the parent and placed in the child's record.

The IEP shall be reviewed by the team at least every ninety days. The review shall include, minimally, an observation of and/or individual session with the child by the consulting resource teacher. If the parent is unable to meet with the team for the review, the opportunity must be given to the parent for a separate conference with the consulting resource teacher.

**Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)**

An Individual Family Service Plan is determined by Early Intervention Agencies for a child under the age of three. It states in writing the specific services required to meet the needs of a child and any change or limitation in his/her participation in regular center activities. The specific services and methods by which these services will be provided are like those in an IEP.

## Non-Discrimination

State of the Arts is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children, families, and staff. We adhere to a strict non-discrimination policy, prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or any other protected status. We promote equal opportunities, fair treatment, and respect for diversity in all aspects of our operations, including enrollment, employment, general policies, and program participation. Our goal is to create a welcoming space where everyone feels valued and included, fostering a community that celebrates differences and promotes understanding.

## Confidentiality

Unless I receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released apart from that required by regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children in my program are confidential.

## Therapy

If your child has therapy that will attend childcare, they are allowed to. If the therapy company is licensed, they can find a designated space for sessions and keep confidentiality protocols. Prioritize the well-being of the child, maintain open lines of communication between therapists, childcare staff, and parents to address any concerns or updates regarding the child’s progress. And follow all children’s rules and regulations. If I feel uncomfortable or the safety of the child is a concern, I have the right to ask the therapist to leave the program.

## My Qualifications

Alisha Walls has 15 years of experience in the childcare industry, and I exceed the state requirements and qualifications.

I participate in ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

## Staff Qualifications

Any Staff, Assistants, or Substitutes that are employed by me will have appropriate qualifications in the childcare industry and will meet the state requirements. A list of qualified staff, assistants, and substitutes will be provided to you and available on the bulletin board. The staff here at State of the Arts will be required to have experience of working with children aged 0 to 12 years old. While working for our childcare, they would have to complete regular training along the side of Early Childhood Education and maintain their training throughout their employment. They are required to complete at least 24 hours of training every quarter. In the process of hiring an employee, they must complete a background check and fingerprinting. All staff will be required to obtain CPR and first aid, pediatrics certification before employment. All staff will complete a criminal record check twice a year and report immediately on any incidents that occur during employment. All staff will also keep a clean driving record.

## Communication & Family Partnership

**Daily Communications.**

[A]Daily notes from me will be written in our Brightwheel app and our family board to keep you informed about your child’s activities and experiences in my program. The purpose of this app is to ensure regular two-way communication between your family and me. I encourage you to share events and information from home that will enable me to understand your child and to help strengthen our partnership in the care of your child.

**Family Boards.** I have a bulletin board with program news, lesson plans, menus, upcoming events, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Email.** I encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that I may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

**Family Activities.** Each family is a child’s first teacher. I value families as partners in the growth and development of children in my care. I encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit your child(ren) in my classroom, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. I encourage families to participate and support their children’s learning goals.

Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet. Please share some as well.

# Curricula & Learning

## Learning Environment

I provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages of the children in my care. I have a flexible daily routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. I strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas.

The curriculum is research-based and supports the development of the whole child. Young children are eager learners. High-quality, comprehensive resources empower educators to intentionally teach and care for our youngest learners during the most critical and formative years of development. Children will be able to participate in learning activities that promote their learning on their needs and what they would like to learn. We will be observing children in their development and keeping documentation of their growth. We will also follow Pre-K New Mexico Guidelines and Reggio Emilia. We participate in the FOCUS program for NM. A lesson plan will be posted weekly on the parent board for you to view what your child will be learning each week. The lesson plan is also available on the app. \_\_\_\_\_\_

Reggio Emilia is an educational philosophy and approach to early childhood education that originated in the town of Reggio Emilia in Italy after World War II. The key principles are child center learning, project based, documentation, the role of the environment, and collaboration. The Reggio Emilia approach is widely respected for its holistic view of children’s development, valuing their abilities to express themselves through various “languages, including art, music, and movement.

Lesson plans are done weekly and updated with current observations of your child. Information should be shared with parents on curriculum. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child’s learning at home or milestones that can be implemented into the lesson plan.

Development occurs in the context of relationships (adult relationships). We value all children’s culture and language as it is vital to their learning and development.

## Observations and Research

Periodically, childcare professionals, health care professionals and students request opportunities to observe young children; they are interested in typical behavior, developmental skills, and/or how children interact with peers/adults. The child’s teacher will do observations weekly and those are used to gain strategies to help your child grow and develop throughout our program. Observations will be used to help individualized activities on our curriculum each week, that parents will be informed about weekly. Parents are informed about these observations and will be able to participate in recommending activities for their children. The most reliable and informative assessment process is the observation and documentation of children’s performance in activities and routines that take place throughout the day. If there is an outside observer, all requests are with the consent of the Center Site Director and are scheduled in advance. A consent form will be given to the parents explaining the reason for the observation, the name and background of the person requesting the observation and the date/time of the observation. Parents reserve the right to deny permission. Unless written on a consent form, an observation will mean that there is no interaction between the child and the observer and no identification of the individual child.

## Ages and Stages

Ages and Stages will be provided to parents monthly or every two months.   
Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ®) provides reliable, accurate developmental and social-emotional screening for children between birth and age 6. \_\_\_\_\_\_

## Outing & Field Trips

Weather permitting, I conduct supervised walking trips around the neighborhood. Children are always accounted for. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and I encourage you to join your child on the trip. (Not Required) *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child’s family.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child. Please do not send your child in sandals or flip flops.

The safety of children will be guarded in all activities. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the childcare program as well as during field trips. Your permission for your child to participate in walking or outside field trips excursions is part of this agreement. You will be notified of all field trips. We will also utilize the park located near the house. There is time to time that we may take our learning further by visiting the local store or other parks. Also, if an emergency happens with my children at school. (I must go) There will also be times when I don’t close my business to attend school events for my children (that I may take the children to). You will be notified.

**Headcount Procedures Regular and accurate name to face headcounts**

1) Utilizing the name to face option on Brightwheel app for children’s names that accurately reflects those in attendance.

(2) Includes room and area sweeps.

(3) Occurs any time a child or group moves from one location to another – whether inside or outside. Accurate attendance sheets of children’s names are always maintained; children visiting another classroom (most typically for transition visits but for any reason), must always be signed in and out of the group they are in or visiting.

During a name to face headcount, the staff member conducting the name to face headcount visually verifying the physical presence of the child against the Brightwheel name to face option.

## Staff Responsibilities

Accurate knowledge, always, of the number of children in a group at any time and, if utilizing the support of a white board/dry erase sheet to track and update the total number of children throughout the day, these supports must ensure the printed attendance sheet also accurately always reflects – - those in attendance.

## Television Time

My normal daily routine does not include television watching, but from time-to-time, I may record a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid. Television consumption will not be longer than 7min-30 min and the program will be screened prior to showing. Programs will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. My focus is to provide your child with a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Alternative activities are available for children during television time.

## Electronic Media

Electronic Media is limited to 15 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violent and high-quality educational content. Alternative activities are available for children during this time.

## Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. I utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

## Celebrations

My celebrations and holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff, and community.

We would like to inform you that we will celebrate holidays and any culture events. Please be advised if there is any holiday or event that you would not participate in, please advise the director. We will also inform you that we would love to learn about other celebrations as well. We want to welcome all backgrounds and cultures.

## Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs.

After lunch, all children will participate in quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities. Children will not be woken up by staff. Children will wake up on their own. Remember this is the only time staff get their break.

***Safe Sleep Policy***

To reduce the risk of SIDS, our licensing agency, ECECD has an established policy regarding infant sleep practices and State of the Arts adhere strictly to this policy for the health and safety of the Infants in our care.

1. Children younger than six months of age at the time of enrollment must always be under direct visual supervision, including while napping, during the first six weeks they are in care.

2 “Programs serving infants must place infants on their backs for sleeping, unless the child’s health care professional orders otherwise in writing.” Blankets, “loveys” or any other items are not permitted in cribs. Only sleeping sacks and pacifiers without anything attached to them (such as loveys, clips, etc.) are permitted in cribs.

3. After being placed on their back, an infant who can easily turn from back to front and front to back may remain in the position they are in once asleep.

4. No child under twelve months of age shall be placed in a crib containing pillows, comforters, stuffed animals, or other soft, padded materials. Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used.

5. In keeping with Early Education and Care best practices all infants will be placed unrestrained in their designated cribs for napping.

6. We will ensure that crib salts are no more than 2-3/8 inches apart and that cribs have firm, properly fitted mattresses with clean coverings and no places to trap small heads.

7. Alternate infant sleep positions require a written and signed physician’s note explaining medical reasons why an infant sleeps in a position other than unrestrained on his/her back. In this event, we will keep a note in the child’s file and post a notice by his/her crib. All childcare providers will be informed of any medical requirements.

8. In keeping with best practice recommendations for Infants in childcare settings, the Childcare will not swaddle Infants after 8 weeks of age

## Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a home/childcare partnership that supports your child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. I am committed to working with you to make sure that toilet training is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child’s physical and emotional abilities and your family’s concerns.

Parents supply all diapers and wipes. Our teachers are experienced in training young children in how to use the bathroom. It is essential that the parent and teacher communicate about the needs of the child and work together to make this developmental milestone positive and successful. We recommend that when in training, your child be dressed in "user-friendly" clothing. Overalls, zippers, and snaps are difficult for small children to manage-- especially in a hurry! While toilet training, parents are to provide lots of thick training underwear, (5-10) pants, socks, shoes, and outer clothing. If you’re fully potty training at home, then we will too. But if you are not doing it at home, the process won’t start with childcare. We must stay consistent and on the same page to help your child. If we become aware that the potty training at home is not consistent, then we won’t continue the process here at childcare. The parents must be doing the same thing at home as well as in childcare.

Children in dresses should have shorts under dresses and infants/toddlers must always have diaper covered. Please put underwear over the diaper before dropping off children to help with smooth transition for potty. We will not change children. If they come in a diaper, your child will stay in a diaper and get changed every 2 hours. Please help with the potty training.

If your child is sent home with dirty clothing, you are responsible to bring back a clean set the next day to avoid being called to bring more clothing.

***Bodies and Boundaries***

There is a natural curiosity among children with regards to their bodies. When situations arise where we must speak to children about body parts, we use the anatomically correct terms. We also teach children that every person has boundaries and that our bodies are private and should be respected. Parents will be notified if situations occur in the classroom that directly affects their child(ren).

# Guidance

## General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving helps children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. I encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

## Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, I intervene immediately to protect all the children.

My usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child.

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when I need to ensure a child’s safety or that of others.

If behavior continues, your child will be put on a behavior plan and if no progress is happening, the childcare provider has the right to disenroll the child immediately without notice.

Many discipline problems can be avoided by the following proactive strategies practiced in the classroom.

The teacher will:

1. Provide a structured environment in which a child feels secure and confident choosing his/her work.
2. Set behavioral expectations through classroom instruction, role modeling, and class meetings
3. Post and discuss classroom rules and the Montessori standards of behavior (grace and courtesy).
4. Redirect a child and use conflict resolution techniques
5. Work one-on-one with children who need additional guidance
6. Refer child to Behavior Action Plan to respond to challenging consistent behaviors or behaviors that exhibit a lack of care for environment, self, or others.

The behavioral expectations we have for the children all fall under the umbrella of one simple rule:

1. Respect yourself, others, and your environment. To do so, the children are taught (through simple lessons and games) to demonstrate age-appropriate responsibility, respect, and self-restraint.
2. 2. Treat all classroom materials, indoors and out, with great respect and care
3. Return all things to their proper place.
4. Keep the environment (classroom, bathrooms, outdoors, shared spaces) clean and orderly.
5. Work quietly in the classroom to respect the work of others.
6. Always walk indoors.

\*\*If a student is not meeting the standards of behavior expected in the classroom, teachers/guides must use the behavior action plan to determine the course of action required for the child. Constant communication with parents must take place regarding any concerns or issues with behavior. Communication should open a positive channel of communication between home and school. A child’s behavior becomes a problem when his/her negative actions disrupt the environment and affect the positive values and culture defined here. For the safety and well-being of all individuals in the environment, the following are examples of behaviors which should be addressed using the Behavior Action Plan.

1. Intentionally disrupting the learning environment

2. Misuse or abuse of classroom materials or playground equipment or any other property

3. Intentionally not following directions in the classroom, in the outdoor classroom area or on the playground

4. Encouraging others to break rules

5. Disrupting or impeding the work of others

6. Showing rudeness or disrespect to others

7. Physical aggression of any kind.

8. Verbal abuse of any kind.

For any reason these solutions are not helping the child in the program. The child may need more guidance beyond the staff’s control. The child will be removed from the program at any time without notice.

## Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child’s behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with your family as the first step to understanding your child’s individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of my program.

On rare occasions, a child’s behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

* A child appears to be a danger to others.
* Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
* Undue burden on my resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.

***PARENT/GUARDIAN’S ROLE IN SUPPORTING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR***

* 1. Modeling: A parent is the most important teacher in a child’s life. Children observe and often imitate or react to the behavioral responses that are used by significant adults in their environment. Parents who are respectful and kind to others, especially their own children, are likely to see that same behavior develop in their children. Demonstrating a variety of healthy responses to frustration and setbacks, as well as modeling effective problem-solving techniques and non-judgmental communication are especially valuable to young children who are still learning to establish their own self-control.
* 2. Discussion: While children absorb a great deal by observation, discussing ways to show respect, build trust, show empathy, manage anger, and practice forgiveness can help a child build successful relationships.
* 3. Reinforcement: Reggio Emilia philosophy does not advocate external rewards for desired behavior (or punishment for inappropriate behaviors), as this tends to reduce intrinsic motivation. However, acknowledging and reinforcing positive behavior is always important and will help shape a child’s behavior far better than criticism.
* 4. Home/School Communication: Changes in a child’s home life may affect his/her behavior and performance at school. Parents should notify the child’s teacher/guide if any significant changes occur, such as:
* 1. Extended vacations or business trips by a family member
* 2. Child staying somewhere other than home (relative/friend’s house) for more than a day or two
* 3. Loss of family members, including pets
* 4. Moving /Relocation
* 5. Change in family environment (separation, divorce, new partner, new baby) \* This information will be kept strictly confidential.
* We expect parents to support our efforts and to understand that children cannot be allowed to continually interrupt the learning environment and process for others.

# Tuition and Fees

**Enrollment Fee**

Application Fee: $50.00 is needed when applying for the waiting list; this fee is non-refundable.

**Enrollment Deposit**

Upon an approved start date, you must pay an enrollment deposit. If you decide not to enroll your child after signing a contract and sending a deposit, then your enrollment deposit is non-refundable, and you will still be bound for 2 weeks of childcare.

**Tuition and Payment Policies**

Children between the ages 5 MONTHS and twelve years are eligible for enrollment at State of the Arts. Children may attend childcare for no more than 50 hours a week between 6:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.(15 min window travel time), On your contracted time. Monday through Friday. An invoice will be sent out every Friday through Brightwheel app. State of the Arts uses Brightwheel to keep up with records of payment. Please pay through Brightwheel app.

1. **Full Time Tuition is $250.00 a week with (8.1875) tax/per child initial\_\_\_\_\_\_**

M-F 6:30 am to 4:30 pm (29-30 hrs plus a week)

1. **Part Time Tuition is $200.00 a week with (8.1875) tax/ per child initial \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

(8-28 hrs a week)

1. **Part Time / Before and After school care is $180/225 when out of school a week with (8.1875) tax/per child**\_\_\_

M-F 6:30 am- 7:00 am and 2:00 to 4:30 –

pm and Fridays 1:00 to 4:30 pm (15 min window travel time)

(8-25 hrs a week)

1. Drop-in care is $60.00 a day 5-10 hrs
2. Hourly care is $18.00 an hour 1-5 hrs
3. Night care $85.00 a night (per child) 130 a night (2 children or more)
4. Tuition is due at the time of drop of each Monday, if we are closed on the Monday of care, tuition will be due the Friday before. If we are closed that Friday and Monday, tuition is due that **THURSDAY** arrangements need to be made to make payment beforehand. Late fees will be charged.

Care can be denied the next day if payment is not received. Childcare has the right to do an automatic withdrawal if payment is not received and will be charged fees if processing doesn’t go through. \_\_\_

Options are available for payment. All payments will be charged state tax at the rate of **8.175** if you choose to use a credit card on the Brightwheel app it will add to an extra 2.9% fee.

**ALAMOGORDO PUBLIC SCHOOL CALANDER ATTACHED TO THIS HANDBOOK. (Part-time Children) THE HIGHLIGHTED DAYS WILL BE THE DAYS YOUR CHILD WILL NOT ATTEND SCHOOL AND YOU WILL NOT BE CHARGED. IF CARE IS PROVIDED FOR AT LEAST 2 DAYS TUITION IS STILL DUE. Parents whose child is attending PRE-K/Public Schools and will need childcare on school closures or holidays will then pay full time rate during those weeks, if child is out more than one day. If its just one day you will not be charged a full-time rate.**

**PLEASE NOTE YOU PAY FOR YOUR SPOT NOT ATTENDANCE**

Other option\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Fees***

* A $60.00 fee is charged for late tuition payment. Your payment is considered late if not paid before dropping off. Please make payments by 8:00 am every Monday. Special payment arrangements may be made in advance with the director. If arrangement is made and not kept dismissal of your child from the program until payment is made and late charges will be double. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Any child who is in our care for more than 10 hours in one day will be charged an additional $18.00 an hour fee \_\_\_\_\_
* Only one card per family should be on file. The main payer of the family will have their card listed on the account. An active card must be present at all times while your child attends care. \_\_\_
* Tuition is still expected for days your child may be absent due to illness, family emergencies, doctor visits, hospitalizations, vacations, or any other reason. Please note that tuition rates do not change in the event of a week including a holiday. After extensive research, we have found our policy to be consistent with other childcare centers. Because our costs remain the same throughout the year, we rely on the specified tuition to be paid each week to meet our expenses. Consequently, as much as we might like to, we cannot make allowance for any days missed in your regular attendance schedule \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* A $2.00 a minute will be paid for pick up if you are late picking up your child. Due in cash at time of pickup. \_\_\_

**Renting your Spot**

* You can rent your spot when you’re going on vacation. However, please don’t wait until the last minute to arrange to rent your spot, due to the paperwork having to be submitted to the state and getting the information out to the family you are renting your spot too. 3 weeks’ notice, or more, is needed for renting your spot. \_\_\_\_\_
* It is your responsibility to find someone to rent your spot if wants to save money for the weeks you are gone. If (Director/provider) does the renting out, money will not be reimbursed for that child renting your spot. And your payment will still be due. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Tuition is still required by YOU when renting your spot out. The person you are renting your spot out to will pay you. No money exchange will happen between me and the person you are renting your spot to. \_\_\_\_\_\_
* If the person you are renting your spot out does not complete the proper paperwork, prior to them renting the spot, renting the spot will be denied. \_\_\_\_\_

The amount of tuition is based on your child's predetermined schedule and has no bearing on your child's actual attendance, (i.e., sick days, vacation days, holidays, etc.) When extra hours are asked, you must pay for the extra time that is not included in your child’s predetermined schedule. For example, if your child’s schedule is 715-430 pm and you request an extra hour in the morning (615-715), you will be charged for the extra hour regardless of whether you pick up at 4 or 5.

**ECECD Subsidy Policy**

* Parents who are receiving ECECD childcare assistance must pay the full regular tuition rate until the authorizing paperwork is delivered to us for ECECD billing and first payment is received. Upon our receipt of ECECD payment, your account will be credited towards the following month. You are responsible for directly paying us your ECECD co-pay each month. Rates may vary according to ECECD disbursement. If ECECD billing lapses it is your responsibility to pay the full tuition amount until ECECD notifies us otherwise. You will be responsible for payment until ECECD payment is received. We do not reimburse money paid to us by the state. YOU ARE NOT INTITIED TO THAT MONEY. Please note you may also be required to pay the taxes on childcare that ECECD does not include in tuition.

**Military Assistance Policy**

* Parents who are receiving Military childcare assistance must pay the full regular tuition rate until the authorizing paperwork is delivered to us for military billing. Upon our receipt of military payment, your account will be credited towards the following month. You are responsible to directly pay us your military co-pay each month. Rates may vary according to military disbursement. If military billing lapses it is your responsibility to pay the full tuition amount until military childcare assistance notifies us otherwise. You are required to pay us until payment is received by the childcare awareness program. Payment doesn’t reach us at the end of each month. So, you’re responsible for the payment until that happens. Not active at this moment. (will update)

## Credits & No Credits

* **Families contract for a specific weekly schedule** as completed on the *Enrollment Agreement* Form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required every week year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary every week all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather, infectious disease (except as noted below) or public health emergency such as a pandemic, or weather-related or environmental emergencies.

# Attendance & Withdrawal

## Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:00 AM, please call me at OR SEND MESSAGE THROUGHT THE APP 575-636-3376. I will be concerned about your child if I do not hear from you. If you do not contact program your child will be marked absent and not attend for the day. And you risk your spot being filled for the day.

***Schedule Changes***

Schedule changes may be possible if space is available. If you reduce the number of days your child attends, a month’s notice is required so that we can fill in the available opening. We discourage parents from making more than 2 schedule changes per year to provide consistency for the groups and for individual children. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances. When the maximum capacity for each group is reached, an internal waiting list will be established. The order in which children are enrolled is directly dictated by the requested schedule and the spaces available. Whatever schedule you request, those are the times your child is allowed in care. If your child comes before or after scheduled time, you will pay for that time.

## My Vacation

My personal vacation consists of two week paid a year. You will be notified well in advance of these dates. [A] Full tuition is still due during these weeks.

Families are responsible for finding back-up care for their children during holidays, provider vacations and planned or unplanned closings. I don’t mind helping but please let me know well in advance. I work hard on planning out a yearly schedule for everyone’s convenience.

***Vacation for Providers***

If the provider/director takes a vacation (outside of her two-week paid vacation) for more than 3 days during a week’s period, then only half of the tuition is due that week. Tuition is still due upon being gone the whole week. But only half of the tuition will be due to cover the business cost of running. This does not include me being sick or having to shut down due to children being sick. This states if I am closed for more than 3 days for be just taking a vacation.

## Withdrawals

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by me when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of your two-week deposit. When your two-week notices are put in place. Full tuition for those 2 weeks is due at the time of notice. Your two-week notice will start at one notice and payment is fulfilled. If you are on childcare assistance with ECECD you must email them and CC our program on the email. [Stateoftheartsnm@gmail.com](mailto:Stateoftheartsnm@gmail.com)

## Closing Due to Extreme Weather or Sickness

If it becomes necessary to close early, I will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child’s early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

State of the Arts will be open on public school designated "snow days"--we may open late if necessary. On a rare occasion our center may be forced to close due to a situation beyond our control (e.g., ice storm, electrical outage, no water service, or anything that doesn’t comply with our licensing regulations that prevent us from opening). Every attempt will be made to inform parents of an emergency closing. If the owner is sick, a substitute will sub, if available. Tuition is still due, and nothing is refundable. Families will be notified through email and Brightwheel.

# Drop-off and Pick-up

## General Procedure

I open at 6:30 AM, and please do not drop off your child prior any earlier than this time. Families are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

I close at 4:30 PM (15 min window pick up), and please do not pick up your child later than this time. Families are expected to enter my home and sign-out their child out and leave by closing time. This means you should not show up at 4:30 pm nor show up 5 min prior. Please plan to pick up your child and be out the program by closing time.

**Extra Hours/Days Policy**

Families may request extra hours/days in addition to their scheduled hours/days. Please note, extra hours/days may not always be available due to enrollment, staffing, or program operations and the Center must ensure compliance with State regulation, as well as to ensure a best practice experience for all children.

Families must request the specific hours/days at least 48 hours in advance of the time requested. There is a flat rate of $18 an hour or any portion of the hour for extra hours. Please keep in mind that when extra hours are requested, you must pay for the extra time that is not included in your child’s predetermined schedule.

For example, if your child’s schedule is 9-5 and you request an extra hour in the morning (8-9), you will be charged for the extra hour regardless of whether you pick up at 4 or 5. If a family is in regular need of requesting extra hours/days, please speak to the Director about the possibility/availability of a formal schedule change.

**Drop off and Pick up Policy**

To uphold the integrity of the children’s daily schedule, we request that children be dropped off at childcare no later than 9:00 am except for doctor’s appointments, occasional needs, and emergencies. Please plan your appointments after nap time or before. Children will not be allowed to be dropped off once picked up from childcare. Example: If you pick up your child at 12:00 for an appointment and we don’t allow dropping off at nap time. Please plan to keep your child the rest of the day. There will be no dropping off after nap time either. We will count your child gone for the day, due to ratios and scheduling. It is very hard to transition your child during transition times.

The Childcare department should be notified as soon as possible in advance of changes to drop off time. We ask that drop off not occur during nap (~11:30 am -3:00pm) as this may be disruptive to the group as well as possibly difficult for your child. Please plan your appointments. Please notify the director through the Brightwheel app, text, or email.

We will not accept children during nap time hours.

(575) 636-3376 or stateoftheartsnm@gmail.com

(575) 495-2053 (house number)

Parents are required to sanitize their hands and children’s hands before using the tablet to sign in and before children enter the play area. Children will be directed by the teacher to wash their hands in the bathroom.

Parents are expected to accompany their child into the center. The teachers are glad to assist you and your child at your drop-off time. Teachers, however, will not assume direct responsibility for your child until you are ready to walk out of the building. If your child is screaming before dropping off, please take the time to try to calm them before coming into the program.

It is important for the teacher to keep a watchful eye on all the children in his or her care. You are welcome to stay for a short while and assist your child through this transition. Simply notify the classroom teacher when you are ready to leave, and the teacher will assist.

Only the individuals listed on the Child Information Record, or on a written permission note from the parent, will be allowed to leave with a child. Nobody under the age of 18 will be able to pick up your child. The staff is expected to request a picture I.D. from any unfamiliar person (including grandparents). If there is any concern, the staff of Create, Imagine, & Discover Childcare reserves the right to deny a person's request to pick up a child. Please update information in the Brightwheel app.

Only parents are responsible for opening and closing the door. Please do not open the door unless you are ready to leave or come in. Children running out the door into the street is NOT OK! The childcare will not be responsible for any injuries.

Your child’s classroom teacher may be available at pick-up time for short questions. For longer discussions or concerns please schedule an appointment.

Parents are expected to assume full responsibility for their child once they enter the classroom. Your child has waited all day to see you and is excited when you walk through the door. At pick up please put away your cell phone and give your full attention to your child.

Children enrolled on a part-time basis are expected to be picked up at the agreed upon daily time. The parent or guardian of a child not picked up until after the agreed time, or past closing (4:45 p.m.), will be charged $2 per minute due at pick up\_\_\_\_

Families who pick up later than 2x, in a week, will pay $5 per minute after scheduled time.

All late fees are expected to be paid the day you were late (cash) handed to the provider that day. This fee applies per family. Payment should be given directly to the staff members. Fail to do this, your child will be excluded until paid (tuition still due

Excessive abuse of late pickup times can result in disenrollment. We discourage leaving your idling vehicle in the parking lot during drop off and pick up times. In case of extreme cold or heat please make your transitions brief, so the vehicles are not left unattended for a long period of time. NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE.

If your child receives a ride to school in the morning your child needs to be at the childcare by 7:10 am each morning. If you will not make it, please reach out as soon as you know you will not make it. Fail to reach out and your child’s ride comes without proper notice, you will be charged $10.00 each time it happens. \_\_\_

## Use of Cell Phones

Drop-off and pick-up are my primary windows of time to communicate with you about your child, in addition, children need your full attention currently. Therefore, I respectfully ask that you not use cell phones while dropping off or picking up your child. Staff use cell phones or tablets to communicate through the app. If you see them on it, that’s probably what they are doing.

## Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released from you or the required individuals you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick up your child, you must let me know in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will have to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of my policy.

If your child has not been picked up after closing and I have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. I will stay with your child as long as possible, but after 15 min I have not been able to reach you or any person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, I will call the local child protective services agency or the police.

## Right to Refuse Child Release

I may refuse to release children if I have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger your child. To protect your child, I may ask if another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up your child, or I may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from my program.

## School Transportation

We provide transportation to and from school when it is open for childcare. (Desert Star and Steppingstones ONLY) Children must arrive at childcare by 7:10 am. We will leave at 7:15 am. Children will be picked up between 2-3 every day except for Fridays 1-2. If you do not meet these times, you will be required to take your child to school.

# Personal Belongings

## What to Bring

* **Infants**: enough clean bottles for a day’s use, at least 10 diapers per day, and at least 5 changes of clothes per day.
* **Toddlers and up**: enough clean bottles for a day’s use (if applicable), 10 diapers and at least 3 changes of clothes per day.
* **Older Toddlers**: at least 5-10 changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program. CROCS- or shoes that can be easily disinfected.
* **Preschoolers:** at least 3 change of clothes, socks, underwear, and shoes.
* **Kindergarteners:** at least 3 change of clothes, socks, and shoes.

Please label all items brought from home with your child’s name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. I am not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the program.

## Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a “cubby.” Cubbies are labeled with your child’s name and photo. Please check your child’s cubby daily for items that need to be taken home.

Each child has a bucket found on top of the children's cubbies. Please check this daily. All written communication from the Director and teachers is placed in the mailboxes as well as your children's artwork.

To keep you informed about center activities, upcoming events, reminders, and general announcements, we publish a monthly newsletter. We urge you to read it carefully. You'll also find that the newsletter can serve as a good discussion starter when talking to your child about the latest happenings at school. We will also attach an article with the newsletter to keep you informed about child development.

## Toys from Home

I ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home.

**Programming Evaluations**

The childcare conducts a semi-annual program survey to get feedback from enrolled families. The survey is anonymous and is a way for families to provide the Center their comments, compliments, ideas, and suggestions.

Suggestions and comments can also be sent to ECECD program.

**Date Nights**

Date nights are open for you to use. There is a fee for this service. Each date night can be different in price each time. Usually, these ones are scheduled. Any date night requested outside of the scheduled date nights will be a different fee. If a date night falls on a Friday evening. Children must be picked up and out of the program for at least 2 hours before returning to date night. So, if we have a date at 6:00 pm on a Friday evening. Your child must be picked up at 4:00 pm or before returning at 6:00 pm.

**Birthdays and Special Events**

Let us celebrate your child’s birthday here at our childcare. There will be a $80.00 charge for the party. This will include cake, pizza, balloons, and a gift. Please arrange this ahead of time.

**Summer Camp**

All children enrolled in summer camp will pay a summer camp fee of $100.00. This fee covers a summer camp t-shirt, water bottle, and backpack. This will be due every summer sometime in May. \_\_\_\_

You can choose an option of paying each week for a trip or pay for the whole Summer.

At State of the Arts, we are committed to providing an engaging, outdoor-focused experience for all our campers. As part of our program, there will be weekly field trips to locations including Alamogordo, La Luz, Las Cruces, and El Paso. These trips are integral to our summer camp curriculum and help enrich the overall experience for all participants.

**Mandatory Fee:** A non-refundable participation fee of $100.00 is required for every child enrolled in our summer camp program. Additional fees each week.

**Field Trip Participation:** Active participation in these weekly trips is mandatory for all campers, as our program thrives on outdoor exploration and adventure. We do not have the capacity to provide alternative care or separate activities for children who opt out of these trips. If you prefer your child not to attend any field trip, we kindly ask that you keep your child at home for the day.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us provide the best possible experience for all campers. **AND PLEASE JOIN US ON THE DAYS YOU CAN AND PROVIDE US WITH IDEAS ON WHERE WE SHOULD GO WITH THE CHILDREN.**

# Nutrition

## Foods Brought from Home

***[A]*** I ask that you do not bring food from home into my program. You will be asked to finish before entering the program.

## Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must let me know in writing so that I can make proper substitutions. The written notification should list proper food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. A copy should be given to me prior to enrollment along with the doctor’s note of food substitutions. Any medications listed on action plan must be provided to childcare and updated. Care will be denied until everything is on file.

## Mealtime

At mealtime, the table is set with plates, cups, forks, spoons, bowls. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus are posted for viewing by families.

I am trained in first aid for choking and am always present at all meals.

## Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

* Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held.
* Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 2-4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
* Expressed breast milk may be brought from home – ready to feed in bottles and must be used within 48 hours. Formula (24 hrs). Bottles must be clearly labeled with your child’s FIRST AND LAST NAME and the date the milk was expressed and made, rather its breastmilk or formula. (type of formula)

Billy Joe Mae- 11/13/2024

Expressed-11/10/2024 4:00 pm

Thawed out- 11/12/2024 6:00 am

Expires: 11/14/2024 @ 6:00 am

Breastmilk

Billy Joe Mae- 11/13/2024

Similac- Made @6:30 am

Expires 11/14/2024 6:30 am

Examples:

* Solid foods will only be introduced after consultation with the child’s family. Solids will start at 4-6 months and table food at 8 months.
* No food of any kind will be added to the bottles.
* Sippy cup will be introduced in 6 months and wing from the bottle by 12 months.
* Families will have to move up bottle nipple size when development happens of the child to move up. See nipple chart.

## Toddler Feedings

* Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
* Children will drink from open cup 2 and up
* Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not allowed. These foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

# Health

## Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every year flu shots are needed and shot records must be updated twice a year or as needed. I check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. If a child is not going to be immunized for medical or religious reasons, the parent will be asked to complete a form required by state regulations. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

## Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child’s physical condition should be received before but must be received no later than 4 weeks after your child begins my program. Families handle assuring that their child’s physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child’s health assessment is given to me. Dental, vision, and hearing will be needed.

## Illness

I understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to my program. I have the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. I will try to keep your child comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

* Illness that prevents your child from taking part in activities.
* Illness results in greater need for care than I can provide.
* Fever (100°F under the arm or forehead, above 100°F in the mouth, above 100°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
* Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
* Vomiting – of any kind (one vomit is a go home)
* Mouth sores caused by drooling.
* Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
* Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours. 24 hours starts once medication is in the eye. Drs not required.
* Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
* Strep throat, until 48 hours after treatment.
* Head lice, until treatment and all the kits are removed.
* Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
* Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
* Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
* Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when they are out of care for 24 hours. The 24 hours start the next day. Not when they are sent home. **Must return with doctors return note if seen by doctor and get tested for anything. Note must include what they are tested for. If positive or negative for anything we need to see what they are negative for and positive for before returning.**

* They are free of fever (without meds), vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
* They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
* They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
* They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  + The child’s physician signs a note stating that the child’s condition is not contagious, and when they can return to care.
  + The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
* If a child has a reportable communicable disease, a physician’s note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to my care is required.

**If sibling is in care and gets sent home. Both children need to be out of care.**

## COVID

State of the Arts will follow all COVID guidelines and recommendations. Masks are not required unless cases go up. \_\_\_\_

In event that you or your child contacts COVID- You are signing this to say that you will notify the center and stay home for the 5-day quarantine. And return with a negative covid test and provide proof. (Please follow covid guidelines that are listed in this handbook or doctor’s orders) Day 5 doesn’t start on the day you got notified about positive cases. Also, a Drs. Note saying the children can come back before the 5-day period or the negative test date before the 5-day period is up (will not be accepted) \_\_\_\_

The director will give you the date your child can assess and return date. \_\_\_\_

The center will only shut down if the CDC says we must shut down. \_\_\_

Tuition is always still due if still wanting to have your spot at Create, Imagine, & Discover Childcare. \_\_\_

(For this reason, this is not a non-profit business, to keep the business running)

Arrangements can be made but will not always be available. \_\_\_\_\_\_

**I will report to NM STATE PUBLIC HEALTH AS WELL AS CYFD CHILDCARE LICENCING**

I will not bring my child in sick. \_\_\_\_\_

Our Preparedness and Response Plan (available upon request) will be followed during any pandemic period. Center for Disease Control, Department of Health and/or State Child Care Licensing Rules will be followed. Response will include, but is not limited to, monitoring symptoms in staff and students, practicing social distancing, following proper hygiene protocol, implementing any/new safety equipment, isolating staff and/or students infected, decreasing class sizes, and transparent communication with families and regulating agencies\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to let me know regarding children’s food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide me with a letterdetailing your child’s symptoms, reactions, treatments and care.

## Medications

All medications should be handed to me with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in your child’s cubby or with your child to administer on their own. I will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

* **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from your child’s physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child’s name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

Only will give if meds need to be given more than 2 times a day.

* **Non-prescription medications** WILL NOT BE GIVEN
* **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the family and doctor, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered.
* Parent or Guardian to complete and sign for over-the –counter topical Ointment: chap stick, lotion, diaper cream, sunscreen, and bug spray.
* I hereby request the State of the Arts personnel to administer over the counter topical ointment or sunscreen, bug spray as directed by this authorization.
* I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless State of the Arts and any of their staff members, or directors from lawsuits, claims, expenses, demands, or actions, etc against them for helping this student use medication, provided State of the Arts staff members comply with the parent or guardian orders set forth in accordance with the provision below.
* Each time you bring in a new item not listed below, you will be required to fill out a new form each time a new brand is brought in.

## Communicable Diseases

When a child in my program has a suspected reportable disease, it is my legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. I will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

* Bacterial Meningitis
* Botulism
* Chicken Pox
* COVID-19
* Diphtheria
* Haemophiles Influenza (invasive)
* Measles (including suspect)
* Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
* Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
* Rabies (human only)
* Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
* Tetanus (including suspect)
* H1N1 Virus
* Any cluster/outbreak of illness

## Tooth Brushing

Per State licensing regulation, staff members assist children in brushing their teeth if they are in care for more than four hours per day. This practice is intended to increase awareness of the importance of good oral health practices and to assist children in establishing good oral hygiene practices from an early age. Tooth brushing takes place once a day. Individually labeled pediatric toothbrushes and individual toothbrush holders are provided by the childcare and water, toothpaste, is used for children to brush their teeth.

# Safety

## Home Safety

I pride myself on having a warm, loving and safe environment in which your child can explore, learn and experience many different things. Some features that help ensure your child’s safety are:

* Working smoke detectors are on each floor and near cooking and sleeping areas.
* Working carbon monoxide detectors are near the sleeping area.
* Adequate Ventilation throughout my home.
* No guns or firearms on premises.
* Fire extinguishers are maintained properly.
* Toys are age appropriate, in good repair and of a non-violent nature.
* Electrical outlets are covered.
* Pens, pencils and office supplies are out of stock.
* Knives and adult scissors are out of reach.
* Cleaners, chemicals, matches and fire starters are out of reach.
* The hot water heater is regulated at 120°F.
* Medications are out of reach.
* A well-stocked first aid kit is kept near, and expiration dates are observed.
* Animals are child-friendly, properly immunized and in good health.
* I am and all staff are certified in Infant & Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid.
* Hot radiator and water pipes are covered or out of reach or not very hot to the touch.
* Safe grassy areas to play.
* The yard is free of splinters and harmful objects.
* Safety approved play equipment and toys.
* The yard routinely treated to deter insects.
* Outside areas where children play is fenced, and gate locked.
* Children do not play outside unsupervised.
* Ponds, wells, tool sheds and other hazards are fenced or closed off.

## Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. My yard is used as an extension of my program, and daily activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One aspect of concern is the risk associated with children’s clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children’s clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for program play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Children with pacifiers will not have any kind of attachment for choking reasons. Also, they will not be able to walk around with it as well. Pacifiers will be only used for napping.

Please label all items with your child’s FIRST and LAST name.

The activities at our childcare can be messy. ☺ Please dress your children in play clothes. Although we do use smocks and roll up sleeves, we cannot guarantee that children's clothing will not get stained or soiled.

We assume that you will send your child in clothes that allow your child to participate fully in our play-based program and that you understand that clothes may get stained or soiled.

Part of each day is spent outdoors, weather allowing. Please dress your child accordingly.

Appropriate and safe footwear is needed for outdoor play. If your child wants to wear other shoes to school, please make sure that he/she has a pair of sneakers to change into for outdoor play.

Flip flops are not safe for outdoor play and are therefore not allowed; children must wear sneakers for outdoor play; in summer, fully closed water shoes with a solid rubber, non-skid soles are permissible; if there are questions about suitability of footwear, please verify with your teacher.

During the wintry weather please make sure your child has boots, (that slip on and off easily), a warm coat, snow pants, a hat, mittens, and slippers for snow play.

Each child should have a complete set of extra clothing to be kept at childcare including underwear, socks, and a pair of shoes. Children should have at least 3 full outfits a day. If they are potty training, I recommend at least 5-10 outfits with shoes that are easily cleaned.

All clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name (socks too, please). We cannot handle lost articles.

Accessories and Jewelry: Children’s accessories and jewelry are extremely attractive to young children’s eyes, fingers, and mouths. We ask parents cooperation to be safety conscious when choosing accessories that their children wear to the centers.

Small objects like barrettes and earrings can be choking hazards and necklaces can pose strangulation hazards.

Therefore, we do not permit the following type of jewelry:

➢ Dangly earrings (small, snug-fitting pierced studs are permitted); ➢ Necklaces of any kind; ➢ Bracelets with beads or charms (rubber, cloth or thread bracelets are permitted if they do not contain attachments or charms).

Comfort Items: If it will help your child feel more at home during the day, we welcome comfort items such as his/her favorite pacifier, doll, stuffed animal, books, or items that contribute to our activities are always welcome. These items need to be small enough to fit within each child’s individual cubby space.

If you have any questions about what to bring, please speak to your child's teacher. Please do not make it a habit to bring in toys daily. These just creates a problem. Toys or items brought in will be on a special day related to our lessons.

Because of the wide range of activities, it is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing. Plastic aprons will be provided by the center for art and water activities. Water activities, sand play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate an extra set of clothing be always kept at the center. All extra clothing should be marked with the child's name and placed in their extra clothing bucket.

Clothing should include underwear, socks, pants, and shirts, extra pairs of shoes. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes the next morning.

## Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 80 °F or less than 50 °F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is NOT GOOD or below.

## Injuries

First aid will be administered by me in the unlikely event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive a report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. My program is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, your child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while I will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

## Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, my response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the bitter learn a more appropriate behavior. My focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Noteswill be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter’s family. I will work with both families to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change. Child may be asked to leave the program if strategies to help have not worked.

## Pets/Animals

[A] I do have two pets on the premises. Small puppy (Sergio) and box turtle (April). The pets on my premises are very friendly, deemed healthy by a veterinarian and are current on all immunizations. There will be times when your child is around these animals. In most cases each animal is locked up.

## Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, I expect the same from all families. I will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, I reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior and to remove your child from my care without notice.

## Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children’s developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor program environment and vehicles used by my program are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on my program’s premises.

## Prohibited Substances

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence is required to leave the premises immediately.

## Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on my premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

## Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. I am legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. I will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## Suspected Child Abuse

I am required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if I have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child’s needs are met. My program will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

# Emergencies

## Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from the group during an outing or field trip and is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

## Fire Safety

My home is fully equipped with fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, and carbon dioxide alarms. The fire Department comes down and inspects our childcare home yearly or as needed.

My fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children monthly.

## Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with your child until a family member or emergency contact arrives. Signing this area will allow us permission to do so. Parents will be called and 9-1-1.

# Family Activities

From time to time, I offer an opportunity for families to take part in the activities that help with growth and improvement of their child’s education. I encourage families to take an active role.

Examples of Family Events: Please be sure to look at the Family Board for announcements of these activities and events.

• Holiday Gathering

• Book Swap

• Fall Festival

• Annual Family Picnic

Program Activities: Enjoy and help your child’s class with these special activities.

• Share a meal with your child

• Chaperone field trips

• Read to children d

• Volunteer in the classroom

• Donate requested items

• Contribute to Potluck Meal

• Family Teacher conferences

Family/Parent Articles: Family articles will be shared monthly with parents with the newsletter.

• Positive Guidance and Loving Discipline

• Toilet Training

• Safety in the Home

• Child Proofing Your Home

• Brain Development

• Nutrition and Exercise for Small Bodies

• Supporting Your Child in Times of Stress

• Food Allergies

• How to Prepare for a Conference

• Warning Signs for Developmental Delays

• Value of Reading to Your Child

• Everyday Math

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Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to me prior to enrollment.

I may update this handbook from time to time and will provide notice as updates are implemented. Each year a handbook acknowledgement would come out.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures I have set up are for the safety and welfare of all children in my care. I look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received and reviewed the **2025 Family Handbook**. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask questions if I do not understand any policies, procedures or information contained in the **Family Handbook**.

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| Family Signature 1 |  | Date |

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| --- | --- | --- |
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| Family Signature 2 |  | Date |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Provider’s Signature |  | Date |

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