

Family Handbook



Riverview Christian Early Learning Center

RCELC is a nonprofit educational center
sponsored by Riverview Christian Ministries

The mission of RCELC is:

To provide quality, Christ-centered childcare in a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment that promotes spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. We desire to encourage and support families as they raise their children, presenting God as a loving Savior by modeling Christ's love, in excellence.

2021 - 2022

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WELCOME TO RIVERVIEW CHRISTIAN EARLY LEARNING CENTER

We are grateful that you have entrusted your child to our care. We look forward to being a part of your child's growth, development, and early education. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of this wonderful process! Riverview Christian ELC is a ministry of Riverview Christian Ministries. We are a non-profit, non-discriminatory, service organization established in 1987. We are licensed and certified by the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) and comply with all standards set forth by that department. We are also a participant in the PA Keystone STARS program. (More information on Keystone STARS may be obtained at <http://papromiseforchildren.com/choose-a-quality-program/keystone-stars>.) The following policies and procedures have been thoroughly thought out to provide a quality program for your children.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide quality, Christ-centered childcare in a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment that promotes spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. We desire to encourage and support families as they raise their children, presenting God as a loving Savior by modeling Christ's love, in excellence.

Goals

1. To communicate God's love, grace and Word to every student, family member and each other (staff).
2. To develop a safe and creative atmosphere for children/families and staff to thrive.
3. To communicate the spiritual and educational excellence of RCELC to every family in the local community.

Foundation (A Biblical World View)

- We believe it our responsibility to teach and exhibit a biblical worldview, exemplified in Jesus Christ.
- We believe in Triune God: The Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- We believe the Word of God is inspired by God and infallible (perfect) in its original context.
- We believe every person is born in sin, with no ability to save himself from sin.
- We believe that Jesus Christ came to die on the cross to save us from sin.
- We believe that Jesus rose from the grave, and we can share in that power.
- We believe that God sent His Holy Spirit to counsel us, show us our sin and provide the power and benefits of the Cross and Resurrection.
- We believe every person (children included) can be freed from the dominion of sin and be restored to God's plan for their lives (image).
- We believe in worship.
- We believe that everything we do should glorify God and eternally enrich each child and family we serve.

Room	Ages	Staff: Child Ratio	Class Size
Infant Rooms	6 Weeks - 18 Months	1:4	8
Pre-Toddler Rooms	12-24 Months must be walking	1:5	15
Toddler Rooms	24-36 Months	1:6	18
Pre-School Rooms	3 - 4 years	1:10	20
Pre-K Rooms ¹	4 by Aug. 31	1:10	20
School Age Rooms	K – 6 th grade	1:12	36
Pre-K Counts Wrap Around Care	3-5 years	1:10	20

(Due to enrollment numbers, the age cut off may be subject to change.)

¹Must be completely potty trained as well!

Hours of Operation

6:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

(Hours of operation subject to change)

Children must arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. for care, unless prior arrangements have been made with the office and your child's teacher. Your child is to be picked up by **5:25 p.m. so everyone is out of the building by 5:30 p.m.** A fee will be assessed for pick-ups starting at 5:30p.m. **Families who are frequently late pick-ups (3 late pickups within a 6 month span) will be asked to commit to a more reliable designated pick up person or may be requested to seek an alternate program which meets their family's scheduling needs as our staff also have families and engagements outside of their scheduled shifts.** Please notify the office if you must pick-up late due to an unexpected circumstance. **(Should you need to reach someone in the event of an emergency, past office hours, please use extension 213 to reach someone in the Infant 1 Room.)** Due to lower attendance in the early morning and late evening hours, certain age groups are combined at these times. Please see your child's classroom teacher for current room hours.

All families must complete (truthfully and in entirety) Drop-Off Notes and Health Screening questions through the Tadpoles App each day, prior to child's arrival in the classroom. The information should consist of pick-up person and time of expected departure, information pertaining to medications, and social/emotional responses to sleep and morning routines. Late arrivals, early departures, and or absences should also be documented through

Tadpoles. Not completing this information may result in refusal of care for the day or a phone call to attain the mandatory information.

If your drop off times will be inconsistent, please notify the classroom or the ELC office at least 1 day in advance where possible. We understand that circumstances may arise where drop off times may differ from day to day but giving us advance notice allows the teachers to plan their day better, based on the number of children they will have. We also must follow DHS ratio mandates, and a student's fluctuating schedule may conflict with classroom staffing. It is essential to maintain the pick-up times specified on your student's Tuition Agreement Form.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs will be accepted at Riverview Christian Early Learning Center, provided we have acceptable accommodations. We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care. We require that the child's parents provide us with necessary information about his/her needs, physician, and specialists. The parent should complete an IEP/IFSP sign-off sheet stating that we have been given a copy of the report. IEP/IFSPs must be provided to the ELC office prior to the child's first day.

Prior to their first day, a meeting or phone conversation between the child's family and teacher may prove to be beneficial, to best meet the needs of the child's first days of transition. The RCELC staff will work with the parents and specialists to facilitate the adjustment for the needs of the child.

Children whose teachers and/or families are concerned with possible developmental delays, through usage of assessments, may be referred for supplemental supports and given additional resources (which are always available from our office). It is the family's responsibility and liability to follow through on obtaining these additional services.

RCELC does not employ a full-time nurse onsite for extensive medical needs (i.e. feeding tubes, I.V. necessities, diapering after Pre-School age, etc.).

Children who cannot maintain active large group care for an extended amount of time will be sent home early. We do not provide 1:1 care for children. Refunds on tuition will not be issued. Referrals will be provided as alternate options in the event we are unable to meet the child's needs without reasonable accommodation.

We will not be obligated to maintain enrollment for children whose families' do not wish to work with our program in supporting the health, safety, and developmental progress of all children within the program. This may be in the form of providing documentation within a specified amount of time, attainment or provision of supportive services specific to the needs of their child, missed appointments, etc. (Behaviors which jeopardize the health and safety of our students and staff; including but not limited to elopement and aggressive behaviors; and/or significantly hampers the development of our student body will not be permitted and may necessitate an early pick up or other alternate plan of action.)

Enrollment Policy and Procedures

Children are granted enrollment on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to sex, race, color, religion, creed, political belief or national origin. Enrollment is open to all children, provided the center can meet the needs of the child.

A child should be enrolled no less than 1 full business day prior to his or her first day of attendance. As part of the initial enrollment process, the following forms **must** be completed and submitted to the office prior to the first day of attendance (unless otherwise noted below):

1. Registration Form
2. Emergency Contact Form (updated every 6 months or less)
3. Agreement Form (updated every 6 months or less)
4. Permission to Photograph Form
5. Toileting Assistance Form (all children under age 5)
6. Child Health Assessment Form (this is required no later than 30 days after enrollment date. Additional updates will be requested from the ELC office)
7. Sunscreen Permission Form (May-September)
8. Custody Orders/Court Documents, including PFA's (if applicable)
9. IEP/ISP permission form & IEP/ISP hard copy (if applicable)
10. ELN (Early Learning Network) Child & Family Information Form (Infant through Pre-K students only)
11. Registration for the Tadpoles App/Communications (Infant through School-Age families) and Class DoJo (for School-Age/Camp for behavior/reward systems and class specific information)

As part of the initial enrollment process, the following payments must be submitted to the office prior to the first day of attendance:

1. Non-refundable Registration Fee
2. One Week Tuition on Deposit - (the deposit is held until the child is completely withdrawn from RCELC - it will not be considered payment for the first or any other week of attendance but will be refunded after withdrawal paperwork is completed)
3. Subsidy caseworker confirmation prior to enrollment (If applicable –subsidized families with a co-pay of less than \$50.00 will be required to make an initial deposit of \$50.00)

The annual/ongoing enrollment process requires the following forms and payments be submitted to the office prior to their required due date, set forth by ELC Administration:

1. Completed Registration Form accompanied by the annual non- refundable registration fee/s. (including subsidized families)
2. Completed Emergency Contact Form (updated every 6 mos. or less)
3. Agreement Form (updated every 6 months or less)
4. Permission to Photograph Form
5. Toileting Assistance Form (All Children Under Age 5)
6. Custody Orders/Court Documents (if applicable)
7. IEP/ISP permission form & IEP/ISP hard copy (if applicable)

Pre-K Counts Enrollments & Pre-K Counts Wrap Around Care

PreK Counts is a free program for children ages 3-5 years, which runs on a 180-day schedule that aligns with Muhlenberg School District's school calendar for days in session. Should Muhlenberg School District have a scheduled day off, so will RCELC's Pre-K Counts program. Should Muhlenberg have a scheduled ½ day, PreK Counts will operate on their normal schedule of M-F 8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Wrap Around Care is available on a limited basis which also requires financial obligations. **If RCELC is closed for holidays, inclement weather, etc.- PreK Counts is also closed.**

Families must apply for PreK Counts by completing an application and providing necessary documentation to determine eligibility. Documentation includes proof of age, medical records, 2 proofs of residency, and proof of income. Specific/permissible documents are listed on the PreK Counts application cover sheet. Families who qualify for PreK Counts will be considered qualified for consecutive years; however, a new application and an updated physical will still be required for enrollment into the program. Applications are handled on a first come, first serve basis regardless of previous enrollment.

Breakfast, lunch, and snack are provided for children within the PreK Counts program. Families are still responsible for additional student needs, especially for those enrolled in Wrap Around Care.

Summer Camp Enrollments

Summer Camp enrollments will begin in the March prior, for children who have completed kindergarten through 6th grade. Enrollment in the school-age before and after care program does not guarantee Summer Camp enrollment. Summer Camp enrollments are received on a first come, first serve basis, and spacing is limited. Additional camp forms containing permission forms and schedules will be sent home in May. These mandatory forms must be completed, signed, and returned at least one week prior to the child's first day of camp for proper processing.

Cold, nut free lunches are required daily for Summer Camp attendees due to higher enrollments, off site field trips, pavilion lunches, etc. (Sole exception includes a preheated thermos meal.) Food requiring microwave or other stove preparation is not permitted for camp attendees. We are not staffed to take children to field trip kiosks to order hot food or provide special cooking accommodations based on preference and not specific food allergies which require action plans by a medical care provider. Please do not send money for gift shops as we are not staffed to accommodate children's shopping experiences and check out processes.

Shoplifting or attempted shoplifting will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action which may include but not be limited to: exclusion from future trips, forced withdrawal from the camp program, and forfeiture of any deposits. Tuition will not be prorated for those who are prohibited from attending on field trip days for any disciplinary reasons.

Families must arrive promptly, prior to bus departure, on field trip days. Should a camper arrive after bus departure and the tardiness was not previously scheduled (i.e., doctor appointments, etc.) attendance for the field trip will not be permitted. We can no longer accommodate unscheduled late drop offs at field trip sites, including pool days. Children must be checked into the program and assigned to a staff member prior to boarding the bus from the facility.

Family Handbook

All families will be able to access the Family Handbook on our website. Those parents without computer access may ask for a hard copy. There are also hard copies located in the office and within each classroom for on-site reference. It is the responsibility of all families to become familiar and adhere to all policies contained within, and to stay informed on changes made, as necessary.

Part-Time/Full-Time Enrollment Policy

Part-time is defined as 27 hours or less for the week (this includes every age group EXCEPT Infants, School-Age virtual care and Summer Camp).

Parents enrolling their children part time must choose specific days and times; this schedule should remain the same each week. The two options RCELC offers are that your child to attend 3 full days per week or 5 half days per week (morning through early afternoon, children's regular arrival time should be no later than 10:30am to participate in routines, special activities, and assessments).

If you desire that your child deviates from his or her routine schedule, a Change of Schedule Request form must be completed and submitted to the office no less than two weeks from the date the change is to occur. These forms may be obtained from the ELC office or from our website's enrollment page.

We will do our best to accommodate schedule changes; however, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to provide care in the case of a schedule change request.

Families should adhere to the days and times communicated on the Agreement Form. If a scheduled closing / holiday occurs on a day your child is scheduled to attend, we can no longer accommodate last minute changes. Part-time Families must submit any necessary holiday alterations at least 2 weeks prior to the holiday. Tuition rates have been calculated with consideration to holiday closings, emergency closings, and absences due to illnesses which includes those generated for part-time students. (Children/families under mandatory quarantines will not be charged tuition for the duration of the quarantine, if proper documentation is provided.)

When enrollment status (full-time or part-time) has been chosen and the Agreement Form signed, approval from the Director of Scheduling must be obtained in order to change this status. Switching time brackets for arrival and departures, from full-time to part-time, or part-time to full-time will require a new Agreement Form to be completed and signed.

Payment Policy

Tuition is due each week on Monday by 9:00 a.m., regardless of your child's attendance.

Riverview Christian Early Learning Center is a non-profit service organization. Therefore, your commitment to your financial agreement is vital to our daily operations. In order to maintain a stable and consistent program, we must offer our staff the security of knowing that their employment here is secure and stable. Your tuition is the only financial resource we have to compensate our staff. Paying tuition only when your child is in attendance would not allow us to provide our staff with a financial guarantee.

Weekly rates have been calculated with consideration given to holidays, in-service days, and emergency closings. The only exception is the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, which we are closed with no charge. (Exact days will be communicated each year and will vary depending on when the holidays fall.)

Billing is completed every Friday for the following week of care. Printed invoices (bills) **will not** be automatically given for every account. If a printed invoice is needed, please provide 24 hours' written notice in email or writing to the Financial Director.

Families with more than one child will be eligible for a discount on their tuition. A 10% (for PT students) / 20% (for FT students) discount will be applied for a second child and the discount will be applied to the youngest child's tuition rate. A 15% (for PT students) / 30% (for FT students) discount for a third child, etc., will be applied to the youngest child's tuition rate. (Multiple child discounts do not apply to School-Age students, except for full-time summer camp students). Discounts may not apply to families receiving subsidized funding.

Parents of children in the school-age program will be required to pay the minimum weekly fee each week, **regardless of child's attendance, holidays, and school vacation days.** School-Age parents will be invoiced the flat fee for the week. Any additional hours accumulated due to Muhlenberg School District closures/holidays will be billed the following week, on a flat rate basis of an additional \$20.00 for full day care (up to 10 hours).

If parents of a school-age child desire to utilize RCELC for only snow days, early dismissals, and school vacation days, the child must be enrolled in the school-aged program and will be billed the rate for the cycles in attendance. Advance notice of 2 weeks prior to the intended attendance is required for staff to child ratio requirements. Extended care hours may be available based upon the attendance needs of Muhlenberg School District students.

Invoices (bills) and occasional account statements or notices will be sent via email to the address on file with the ELC office or placed in your child's mailbox, located in your child's classroom.

Timely tuition payments are required and necessary. Payment is due each week on Monday for *that* week of care/education. **Late fees will be assessed if payment is not made by 9:00 a.m. Monday.** In the event of an absence or holiday on a Monday, accounts should be pre-paid to avoid late fees.

Families who utilize the myprocare.com self-payment option should make their payment no later than 4:00 p.m. Sunday to allow time for processing. (See Payment Procedures for more information.)

If a family falls two weeks behind in their tuition the family will be asked not to attend RCELC until arrangements are made. Your spot will not be held and may be taken. If a family is facing a financial hardship, they need to speak to the Financial Director (ext. 205). Repeated late payments will result in your family being required to set up automatic payments via checking or credit card accounts. If a payment plan is needed, auto payments will also be required.

Subsidy is accepted and RCELC does not charge any overage or difference in balance from assigned co-pays. The exceptions are if children are picked up after 6:00pm, are here more than the contracted hours (in this case, the families will be billed the appropriate fees or the

normal hourly rate), or upon initial enrollment if a co-pay is less than \$50 (a minimum \$50 deposit is required) and annual registration fees.

Our contract with ELRC mandates us to report both non-payments of subsidy co-payments and attendance fluctuations to the ELRC office. Should your child incur absences, please notify both RCELC and your subsidy caseworker.

Additional fees will apply to all families for the following reasons:

1. Picking up a child after the close of the center
2. Paying after 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning for the current week of care
3. Non-Sufficient Fund Charge (checks returned, or electric payment returns)
4. Care provided beyond the original contracted hours

Please see the current [Tuition Rate Form](#) for specific fees.

Payment Procedures

Parents who choose to make electronic payments and have total access to their invoicing and accounts will go to myprocare.com, our preferred method of billing/payments which enables families to pay via a debit or credit card online. Families wishing to utilize a EFT Debit or EFT Credit account must obtain specific forms- please contact the ELC office.

RCELC also accepts checks and money orders. If paying via these methods, please ensure that your child's name is written on the memo line so that we can efficiently apply payments to the appropriate account. Checks and money orders can be placed in the drop box located in the ELC office at any time. Please sign the clipboard on the counter, just above the drop box, to verify you have made a payment to the account.

Families may opt to pre-pay for multiple weeks of care based upon their payroll needs. If you would like more information on this option, please contact our Financial Director for details.

Attendance and Absence Policy

To ensure quality in our early educational programs and to decrease interruptions during classroom routines, children must arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. for morning care and no later than 10:30 a.m. for daily care. This is to ensure that your child is receiving consistency to routines and proper developmental instruction within our learning program. This also reduces/eliminates disruptions to the classroom routines and program dynamics. It is imperative that you communicate fluctuations in schedules with your classroom or the ELC office. (Including both early and late arrivals due to appointments, personal routines, schedule changes, etc.)⁵

Families must communicate late arrivals or absences through Tadpoles or ClassDojo by 9:30a.m. if their child will be late or absent for the day.

Our classroom teachers are required to keep an illness and injury log. They will need to include your child's symptoms in this log. (Please be sure to enter child's symptoms into the Tadpoles/DoJo system for any absences (i.e., fever, cough, rash, etc.) to assist in staff keeping accurate records and documentation.) Also, our staffing is based directly on attendance and the staff to child ratios mandated by the DHS; therefore, a lack of proper communication may result in being denied care due to scheduling ratios and morning schedule adjustments.

School-Age families are to notify the School-Age staff of children who will not be on the morning and/or afternoon bus, either via the Tadpoles or DoJo apps. This prevents confusion during bus transition times and emergency phone calls being made in attempts to locate the child.

Absence Due to Illness

If a child is absent one or more **full weeks** and is under a doctor's care, an 80% tuition discount will be given for the week(s) not attended if a doctor's note is provided covering the entire absence. A "**full week**" is defined as Monday through Friday of a particular week or 5 consecutive school days, even if a weekend occurs in that period. Parents/guardians must communicate lengthy absences with the ELC to prevent a forced withdrawal from occurring. Families must communicate with ELC office staff or document information pertaining to illnesses and symptoms into Tadpoles. In addition, families receiving subsidy funding should also communicate absences directly to their caseworker.

Families under mandatory quarantine due to Covid will be credited for the duration of their quarantine dates, when the ELC is provided with medical documentation of the quarantine and medical release.

Tuition Free (Vacation) Week

Every family actively enrolled in RCELC's **Full-Time** care programs for one full year, will be eligible for one FREE WEEK. "Actively enrolled" is defined as uninterrupted attendance for one full year. "One full year" is calculated as 365 days from the child's first day of attendance.

FREE WEEKS are not applicable to children in the school age program or subsidy families. Children enrolled in the School-Age summer program will only pay for the weeks in attendance.

In order to utilize a FREE WEEK, parents must obtain the *Vacation Week Form* from the office or from our website. Your child should not attend RCELC during any portion of that week. This form must be completed and submitted to the Financial Director **two weeks prior to utilizing the FREE (VACATION) WEEK**. If this form is not completed and submitted to the Financial Director, it will be deemed that proper notice was not given, and full payment will be required. Families receiving subsidy are responsible to communicate vacations and extended absences to their caseworker.

Leave of Absence

A LEAVE OF ABSENCE is 3 or more consecutive weeks, up to a maximum of 3 months, in which the child is not in attendance (for reasons such as maternity leave). A *Leave of Absence Form* must be obtained from the office, completed with your anticipated date of return, and submitted no less than **two weeks prior** to your planned leave time to qualify. Taking a LEAVE OF ABSENCE forfeits use of the FREE WEEK. Families receiving subsidized funding do not qualify for Leave of Absences without prior authorization from their caseworkers.

Families who exceed the 3-month maximum will be considered withdrawn from the program, and any tuition deposits will be considered forfeited. Should the family wish to return to care, they will be required to complete the enrollment process again, as well as being placed at the bottom of any waitlists which may be in place.

Families who withdrawal their child/ren during a Leave of Absence will forfeit any deposits made at initial enrollment and must still submit a completed Withdrawal form to the ELC office.

Withdrawal Policy

If withdrawal from RCELC is necessary, a *Student Withdrawal Form* must be obtained from the office or from our website, completed, and returned to the ELC office at least two-weeks before your last day in attendance. **This advanced submission of withdrawal form is required for full refund of tuition on deposit. If less than two-week notice is given to the office, the tuition deposit will be forfeited.** The family will still be responsible to pay for all dates in which care was provided. Lack of submitting a withdrawal form/notifying the ELC office in writing of your child's last day of attendance; will result in an additional billing cycle being applied to your account. Families receiving subsidized funding must notify their caseworker of withdrawal from the program.

Families who do not communicate child absences, due to illness or other reasons, within a 2-week time, will be considered withdrawn at the end of business on Friday of the 2nd week. They will be responsible for any accruing tuition costs during this 2-week period, and forfeiture of any deposits to cover the costs of the accrued balance. Families who have been withdrawn due to non-communication will be required to reenroll their child/ren by navigating through the steps of initial enrollment (and payment of any outstanding balances, if applicable). Should there be a waiting list, they will be placed in queue of their time of reenrollment submission.

Arrival and Departure Policy

All children must be supervised at all times. This also applies when children are with their parents. Under no circumstances should children be permitted to wander the building and/or grounds unescorted. Please help us provide consistent guidelines. All traffic must adhere to proper direction in lots & use designated parking areas/spots, which do not interfere with traffic patterns. Please do not have loud music blaring out of vehicles as it is a disruption to classrooms and may scare little ears.

- **Parking Lot**

Parents and designated adults should park in one of the spaces in the front parking lot. If all the spaces are taken, you may park directly in front of the building. However, this is a fire zone, so parking is restricted to five minutes. Always turn your car off and never leave children unattended in your vehicle or in the parking lot. **Please be advised, the speed limit in our parking lot is 5 MPH. Always use extreme caution when backing out of your space and while driving in the lot. The parking lot is closed when the bus is dropping off or picking up children. You must abide by the PA school bus laws.**

- **Drop Off**

All families should use the main entrance for dropping off and picking up children. Children must be escorted by their family in the parking lot and along the sidewalk leading to the ELC. Please ring the bell and someone from the office will open the door. Children should be taken directly to their classroom, by the family who is required to write the arrival time on the daily sign-in sheet.

Direct family/teacher contact must be made before you depart, in order for your child to become our responsibility until you return.

Drop-Off Notes MUST be completed in Tadpoles, each day, for every student. Please relay any important information to the teacher relating to the child's physical/emotional state, change in pick up procedures or any other pertinent information that may assist the teacher in the

daily care of your child. For confidentiality purposes, we only allow one family at a time in our Infant, Pre-Toddler, and Toddler classrooms. If you feel that you have waited for an extended amount of time, please knock on the classroom door to notify those inside, prior to your entering.

There is a marked increase in behavior problems during times of transition, that is, when parents are dropping off and picking up their children. The staff must be free to monitor behavior and ease children through these stressful periods. We understand that some exchange of information may be necessary; however, we ask that you keep your interactions with the staff to a minimum during these times. For more involved conversations, please set up an appointment, this includes visits with previous staff/classrooms.

- **Pick Up**

A child shall only be released to the child's parent/legal guardian, or to an individual designated in writing by the enrolling parent. A child shall be released to either parent unless a court order (on file at the facility) states otherwise. If someone other than yourself (or the regular pick-up individual) will not be picking up your child, please notify your child's teacher in advance. The following procedure is applicable to anyone picking up children.

You must have a photo ID ready to show the classroom teacher/assistant. Once the classroom staff get to know you, you may not be required to show your ID. **Individuals may have their photo taken (or a photo of their ID) to upload into the Tadpoles system. This will eliminate the need to present your photo ID in the future.** (Children will NOT be released to individuals without proper identification.)

Ring the bell and office staff will open the door. Please come directly to the office so office personnel can write down your arrival time on the master attendance sheet, then proceed to your child's classroom. You will also need to write the time of departure and sign the daily attendance sheet. Again, Infant, Pre-Toddler and Toddler families should enter classrooms only one family at a time to respect others' confidential information. If you feel that you have waited and extended amount of time, please knock on the classroom door, to notify those inside, prior to your entering the classroom.

In an emergency, a child may be released to an individual upon the oral designation of the parent, if the identity of the individual can be verified by a staff person.

If a child is released upon the oral designation of the parent, the following information shall be logged in the child's record.

1. Name of parent making request
2. Date and time of request
3. Name of individual to whom the child is to be released
4. Name of staff person taking the call and recording the information
5. Confirmation of identification provided by the pick-up person (i.e., Driver's License Number)
6. Name of the staff person releasing the child

For the safety and well-being of all our students and staff, information on a child's attendance and/or whereabouts (i.e., field trips) will not be disclosed over the phone. Verification of parental identity must be made prior to disclosure of this information.

While we value and appreciate courteous behaviors, opening/holding doors for others poses a breach in security, including the safety of your own child. You may not be aware of custody, PFA's or other court proceedings which may be in effect.

Parent Conduct

We expect all adults entering the building to conduct themselves in the same mature and moral manner expected and exemplified by the staff (including, but not limited to, language and tone of voice/digital correspondence). We may not allow any individuals who have been convicted or are awaiting trial on charges involving a crime of child abuse, child neglect, physical violence or moral corruptness, to enter this facility. This is a *PA Department of Human Services* mandate. Parents/family members who display behaviors on ELC property such as: verbal, written/digital or physical intimidation, inappropriate language, implied threats, smoking/drinking/drug usage, will receive a verbal or written warning, which will be included in the child's file. The second offense will result in being banned from ELC property.

If someone attempts to pick up a child and is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, a verbal request will be made for alternate pick up to be made and/or authorities may be contacted.

School-Age Procedures

School-Age pick-up/drop off procedures at RCELC include:

- In class sign out and pick-up only. This prevents confusion for ELC staff when taking attendance of children getting on/off the bus.
- **Normal morning drop-off must be before 8:20 a.m. After 8:20 a.m. you, the parent, must sign your child in with staff at the bus stop.**
- Let the ELC teachers know when your child will not be getting off the bus in the afternoon, via Tadpoles or Dojo apps or by calling the ELC office. This prevents confusion and makes for a smoother afternoon transition for students and staff, and prevents unnecessary calls made to you.
- Additionally, families of children who may be scheduled for AM care, are not in AM attendance, but will be arriving on the PM bus must also notify the School-Age staff via Tadpoles or DoJo. This eliminates confusion during bus transitions and will allow us to efficiently notify families of children who may have missed the PM bus.

Dismissal Policy

We reserve the right to terminate care at any time by giving 5 days' notice to the parent/guardian and refunding any unused tuition that was paid in advance. Our agreement form does not constitute a contract but provides an **at will** agreement for child-care between the parent/guardian and RCELC. However, if extreme, uncontrollable behavior occurs which poses a safety concern; a parent may be called to pick up their child immediately.

The following are reasons for dismissal:

1. Delinquent tuition after two weeks.
2. Failure to update immunization or physicals in accordance with state regulations.
3. Prolonged absence without notification (greater than 1 week).
4. Leave of Absences exceeding 3 months.
5. Disruptive behavior that is a detriment to the social or educational well-being of the

- children. (Adults and Children)
6. Physical danger to self or other children (including biting) (Adults and Children)
 7. Failure to abide by established policies (including frequent late non-emergency related pick-ups).
 8. Incompatibility between the program of the center and the needs of the child. We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care of children.

A child who has been dismissed may be reinstated to RCELC if the reason for dismissal is corrected and an opening is available. A Records Transfer Fee may be incurred if families request for file copies to be made.

Immediate dismissal may be necessary in the event of extreme cases which pose a threat to the health and safety of others, or deliberate destruction of ELC property and resources, and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Discipline Policy

Our staff will treat all children equally and will **never** use physically or verbally abusive behavior to correct a discipline problem.

At RCELC, we all share a common goal: to train up our children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). We continuously rely on the Lord to show us what it means to "train up" a child so he/she will ultimately be obedient to God.

What do we know about God? We know that God loves children (Matthew 19:13). Our teachers not only love the children in their care, but also love to teach. Because we love your children, we consider safety one of our top goals. We know our God is a God of order. This is why each room follows a curriculum and a daily schedule. We feel it is important to teach the children to clean up classroom centers and help to keep the room neat.

We know our God is very creative. Just take a look around! Nature alone speaks of God's unique creativity. At RCELC we emphasize art, music, exploring nature, and the use of high-quality resources to develop each child's creativity and imagination.

We know our God is a God of discipline. Without his loving discipline, we would be lost! Our children need his loving discipline too. He uses a child's parents first and foremost for this (often challenging) job. As teachers, we partner with parents and therefore also play a role in accomplishing this job. The main tools we use in our classrooms are re-direction and in some cases a time-out.

When is time-out used? Time-out is used in the classrooms of children 3 years old and up, when a child's negative behavior continues despite warnings, loving guidance, moving a child to a different location in the classroom, and/or separating a child from others. We DO NOT use time-out for normal childish behaviors that are part of learning and growing. Teachers use Bible stories, puppets, role-playing, and other creative methods to help children learn about behavior that is pleasing to God.

Time-out will also be used when a child is physically aggressive and therefore threatens the safety of others in the classroom, including himself/herself.

A child will sit in time-out one minute for each year of age. A notice of the time-out will be

sent home explaining the reason for the time-out.

All teachers will deal with each child individually and will inform the parents regarding behavior in the classroom. Extreme, challenging behaviors may necessitate an early pick up for the day, an action plan to be developed and implemented between the family and program, or a need for additional supportive services prior to returning into the program, as we are not staffed to provide one on one care for children. **Should a family be requested to seek supportive services and do not take the necessary steps/efforts in initiating the process, we may not be able to guarantee care after 2 weeks. Challenging behaviors which jeopardize the health and safety of self, peers, and/or staff will not be tolerated.**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all children. Bullying in all forms is prohibited. We have a NO TOLERANCE policy toward any deliberate physical, emotional, verbal or cyber bullying. Any child found bullying will be confronted, and parents will be notified. Appropriate action will be taken, which may necessitate family meetings, action plan development, early dismissal, or withdrawal of the student. Adherence to this policy will be handled on a case-by-case basis with consideration for the age and development of the child/ren in question, family partnership/ accountability, support placement, and monitoring of progress.

We have the right to expel any student/family who continues to pose a deliberate threat to self, other students, and or staff.

Health Policy

Every child enrolled at RCELC must always have a current and age-appropriate physical on record (the *Child Health Assessment* form). The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services requires that we follow the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation for up-to-date physical examinations. We will do our best to send home reminders a month before the physical is due, however this does not negate parents' responsibility to submit updated forms per the schedule below. Failure to submit and update records could result in dismissal.

**Initial Health Reports Must Be Dated
According to the Following Schedule:**

- **Infant (6 wks-12 mos.):** no more than 3 mos. prior to first day of enrollment
- **Young Toddler (12-24 mos.):** no more than 6 mos. prior to first day of enrollment
- **Older Toddler or Preschooler (2 years-entry to Kindergarten):** no more than 1 year prior to first day of enrollment
- **School-Age:** Entry into Kindergarten and 6th Grade

**After Initial Examinations,
the Following Schedule Should Be Followed:**

Infants..... Quarterly
 Young Toddlers Every 6 Months
 Older Toddlers & Preschool Every 12 Months
 School-Age..... Entrance into Kindergarten and 6th grade

RCELC will make every effort to protect the health of each child. Parent cooperation is

necessary in helping prevent the spread of communicable diseases!! (A communicable disease is an illness that can be spread from one person to another person.)

Children with Allergies or Other Medical Needs

If your child has an allergy, asthma or other health care need that requires special attention, please make sure to convey this information, (in writing), to the office and the teacher. A doctor's note, with essential emergency instructions may be necessary for some allergy cases. We will want to post a picture of your child and the allergy information within the classroom, to notify staff of the child's allergy. We will ask for emergency response information along with your signature on the back of this sign, permitting us to post this information. Rescue medications, prescribed by a health care provider, will be kept in the classroom's emergency bag which is stored out of the reach of children.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

Parents should be on alert to detect symptoms in their own child such as sore throat, nausea/vomiting, runny nose, coughing, diarrhea, and colds. We strongly recommend that every family finds someone who can provide childcare in case of an unexpected illness.

Please keep your child at home if he or she:

- **has a fever (100°F or higher- without medication, as per CDC recommendation)**
- **Excessive coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath (without a Dr's note indicating a chronic condition such as asthma or allergies)**
- **is vomiting**
- **has uncontained diarrhea (pre-toddlers and up)**
- **has diarrhea (infants)**
- **has a rash accompanied by a fever or the rash is spreading**
- **has lice/nits**
- **Has been directly exposed to someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19 (ie. in the same home, caregiver, or other direct exposure) RCELC must also be notified**
- **Is awaiting results from a Covid test**

This will protect your child as well as others within the school.

If a child is well enough to come to school, we will expect him/her to go outdoors with the rest of the class (weather permitting). We are not staffed to provide one-on-one care for children who cannot go outdoors.

If a child develops an elevated temperature (99.6°F - 100°F) while at RCELC, parents will be notified so they can begin to prepare for the possibility of an early pick up. If the temperature goes above 100°F, the family will be contacted for pick up.

If a child develops episodes of vomiting or diarrhea while at school, we will conduct a general assessment that includes tolerance to activity, body temperature, appetite, etc. before contacting parents for early pick-up. If we determine that early pick-up is necessary, we ask that you or someone designated by you, come as quickly as possible (preferably within the hour, for the comfort of your child). We will isolate your child and

provide a place where your child can rest until you arrive.

Diarrhea – A child will be excluded from group setting if: stool is not contained in the diaper for diapered children/diarrhea is causing “accidents” for toilet-trained children, and/or stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child, or blood or mucus is found in stool.

A child can be readmitted to group setting: (1) After a health professional clears the child for readmission for all cases of bloody diarrhea, (2) once diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper, and when toilet- trained children do not have toileting accidents, or (3) once stool frequency has reduced to fewer than 2 stools above normal for that child, even if the stools remain loose.

If a child develops a rash during the day, parents will be notified. A rash accompanied by a fever, an oozing rash, or a spreading rash will require early pick-up and may require a written release from a medical care provider for readmission into the classroom.

Any family who fails to openly communicate/ refuse/or deliberately neglects to share information pertaining to communicable illnesses, symptoms, and/or medications taken within the last 24 hours, etc. may become subject to removal from the program and/or be required to be immediately picked up.

Absences must be reported through the Tadpoles app, including any symptoms/reasons for the child's absence in school. This assists our program in tracking illnesses and preventing further spreading. Some illnesses will be posted to notify families of its presence in the program so that they too may watch for signs in their own children. Posted information will always remain anonymous and never will be indicative of the ill child.

Any child who has had exposure to Covid-19 must be cleared by a medical care provider prior to returning to school.

Conditions Requiring Temporary Exclusions

If a child has been ill for more than two days, or has contracted a communicable disease, a doctor's note is required for readmission to RCELC.

Condition	A child may return when:
Temperature above 100°F	They have a normal temperature for 24 hrs., without fever reducing medication and a written release from a medical care provider.
Shortness of Breath and/or excessive coughing	They have ceased symptoms and/or are accompanied by a written release from a medical care provider.
Diarrhea/ Vomiting	There are no episodes for 24 hrs., in which 1-2 solid meals have been consumed. In the case of diarrhea containing blood, a health care professional must provide written clearance.
Bacterial Infection	They have been on medication for 24 hours or have been given 3 doses of an antibiotic and be accompanied by a written release from a medical care provider.
Rash	A doctor's note indicates that the rash is not bacterial & not contagious; if the child is on medication for 24 hours or there is no oozing or fever.
Conjunctivitis	They have been on medication for 24 hours, or with a note from a medical care provider.
Lice/Nits	Treatment has been administered and all live lice are removed through combing and removal of all live nits.
Direct Exposure to Covid-19	Must be cleared and accompanied by a written release from a medical care provider.

Medication Policy

Whenever possible, all medication should be given to your child before or after school. If this is not possible, please follow these guidelines:

All information pertaining to medications (given at home and/or to be received at RCELC) are to be reported via the child's drop off notes in the Tadpoles app. Tadpoles drop off notes must reflect if children have/not been given medication within 24 hours prior to arrival and/or will be given medication while at RCELC.

All medication must be received in the ELC office, in the original labeled container along with written instructions from the prescribing physician.

Instructions contained on a prescription label are acceptable. To protect our students, the instructions on the medication must coincide with your doctor's written instructions or we will not be able to administer the medication. Prescription medication will be administered only to the child whose name appears on the container. Medication will be administered by a staff person in the office, where all medications will remain. The office staff will be responsible for making sure the child receives the medication at the correct time.

We will not administer over-the-counter medications to children unless a doctor's note is provided. (This includes but is not limited to pain reliever medications, nose sprays, eye drops, vitamin products, lotions/creams, etc.)

A *Medication Log* will need to be completed by the parent each time a medication must be administered. At the time of drop off, **parents must verbally notify ELC personnel of any medication which needs to be administered, add it to the child's Tadpoles notes and complete a *Medication Log*.** Medication should be marked with the child's name and placed in a zip lock bag (available in the office) along with the completed log and set in the medication container in the office. In the event that medication needs refrigeration and office staff is not present when dropping off medication, please take it to your child's classroom and his or her teacher will refrigerate until office staff is available.

Office staff will administer the medication and complete the lower portion of the *Medication Log*. These completed logs will be kept in each student's file. A copy of the completed log will be placed in the student's classroom bin, and information of the provided dose into the child's Tadpoles report.

Medication Log Example:

I give permission to administer medication to my child:	
as stated below:	
Parent Signature	
Name of medication	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescription <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Prescription
Amount/Dosage	Refrigerate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	Time(s) to be given
The following part is to be filled out by staff member	
Staff Initials	Comments/Reactions
Time Given	
Amount/Dosage	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

We **cannot** store prophylactic medications (Children's Tylenol, Advil, etc.) on site to be given "as needed" as per compliance with state regulations. Specific details of the time to administer and dosage amounts must be communicated through the accompanying doctor's note. We are not medical care professionals and cannot determine "as needed" based upon personal opinion.

Children who are taking new medications should be given 24 hours' worth of dosages prior to readmission due to the possibility of allergic reactions, and information pertaining to the medication entered into the child's Tadpoles drop off notes or absence report.

Mealtimes

RCELC provides whole milk for infants through Pre-Toddlers and 1% milk for all other students. RCELC also provides a P.M. snack for all students.

We are a NO NUT facility, prohibiting the presence of peanut butter, and other foods containing nuts- this includes items such as Nutella and nut-based milk products.

Parents must supply infants with formula/breast milk, infant cereals, and other infant foods. Parents of Pre-Toddlers through Pre-K students must supply their own breakfast (if eating at the ELC) and lunch. School-Age students must bring their own breakfast (if eating at the ELC) and lunches on days of Muhlenberg early dismissals and closures. Summer Camp students should be provided with cold lunches to accommodate higher enrollments, off site trips/picnics, etc.

All items should be labeled with the child's name. Reusable containers will be rinsed with water, then sent home for a proper washing. For the safety of our children, please refrain from sending glass containers and bottles. We strongly encourage families to assist us in supporting children's healthy development by refraining from sending foods and drinks which are significantly high in sugar content such as sodas and candy because of the effects they may have on children's behaviors; therefore, these extra-sugary treats may be returned to enjoy at home.

If a meal is forgotten, parents may contact a local delivery establishment, place an order and pay over the phone. They must then notify the ELC office or child's classroom with the approximate time of expected delivery and delivering establishment. Tips for delivery professionals are to be included at the time of order placement with the delivering establishment.

Breakfast – served from 6:30-8:00 a.m. for School-Age. Other classrooms are served from 7:30-8:30 a.m. **Breakfast will NOT be served after 8:30 a.m., as this is a conflict with maintaining classroom schedules and structure.** Lunch is served at approximately 11:30 a.m. and snack is served approximately between 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Items which require time in the microwave must not exceed 90 seconds reheat time. This allows teachers to maintain classroom schedules, proper class supervision, and allow for multiple meals to be heated in the allotted time frame.

Summer Camp students will be required to pack nut-free cold sack lunches. Due to higher enrollments, field trips, picnic/pavilion experiences, etc. We cannot accommodate meals which require microwave or other heating preparation. We are not staffed to accommodate consistently late delivered lunches. Should a family wish to deliver a lunch at a later time, the child will be provided with an alternate snack during the scheduled lunch period, and the delivery person must be a designated pick-up person who will sign

the child out of camp, remain with the child for the alternate lunch period, then return them to the regular scheduled camp routine. Children must be supervised when eating. We are not staffed to provide alternate 1:1 care during scheduled routines.

PreK Counts students will be provided with breakfast and lunch through the CACFP. Menus will be posted on Parent/Family boards for reference. Families who send in food substitutes are strongly encouraged to demonstrate the importance of healthy choices and align with program values pertaining to nutrition by not sending in snacks/drinks with high sugars and/or high in fat contents.

Safety

Safety is a priority at RCELC. Conditions at our facility are regularly inspected using the Department of Health and Family Services' Safety Checklist. We assume responsibility for all children until picked up by a parent or approved contact person. Once this person has contacted the student's teacher, our responsibility ceases.

1. Injuries: Parents will be responsible for all medical expenses for bodily injury of a child enrolled at RCELC while the child is attending our programs.

If a child is injured while at school, staff will assess and treat the child accordingly. An incident form will be completed detailing the nature of the accident and injury as well as what treatment was given. Parents will be asked to sign this report and will be given the original for their records.

In the event of a serious/life-threatening injury, an ambulance will be accessed, and parents will be contacted immediately. If parents are not able to get to the RCELC, the director or a teacher will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with them until parents arrive.

2. Supervision: RCELC requires that parents bring their child to his/her classroom each day, not just to the front entrance to the school. No child should be unsupervised onsite including within the building, on the playground, in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, or in the parking lot. Children should walk, not run, within the building to prevent collisions or falls. The daily sign-in sheet must be completed by the parent entering at time of arrival and verbal contact with the teacher should be made before leaving, to ensure the child is accurately inputted into the Tadpoles system and accounted for in ratio counts.

3. Pick-Up: If a family would like their child to be picked up by ANYONE other than himself/herself, we recommend that the classroom teacher be notified. The authorized person picking up the child must be listed on the child's emergency contact form. Verbal consent may be given over the phone, as specified under the section titled Arrival & Departure Policy. All persons, other than the parents, will be asked to show a photo ID at the time of pick-up. No child will leave the ELC with anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, parent or otherwise. An alternate person will be contacted from the emergency contact list for student pick-up (refer to Parent Conduct on page 11 for more information). "In Loco Parentis" can sign certain documents, discuss accident & behavior reports. It is then the parent's responsibility to obtain this information from these individuals.

Contact must be made with classroom staff at pick up prior to exiting with your child/ren to ensure the child/ren are accurately checked out of the Tadpoles system.

4. Parking Lot: Children should never be left alone/unsupervised in parked/idling cars. **Teachers are required to supervise children at all times, and we expect that parents/guardians follow the same guidelines.** The speed limit in our parking lot is 5 MPH. Always use caution when backing in and out of parking spaces.

If the school bus is on the main street and the stop sign is out and the red lights are on, you must not exit or enter the parking lot. Additional parking spaces are found in the upper parking lot.

75 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 3345. (PA Department of Transportation)

Meeting or overtaking school bus. Duty of approaching driver when red signals are flashing

--Except as provided in subsection (g), the driver of a vehicle meeting or overtaking any school bus stopped on a highway or traffic way shall stop at least ten feet before reaching the school bus when the red signal lights on the school bus are flashing and the side stop signal arms are activated under section 4552(b.1) (relating to general requirements for school buses). The driver shall not proceed until the flashing red signal lights are no longer actuated. In no event shall a driver of a vehicle resume motion of the vehicle until the school children who may have alighted from the school bus have reached a place of safety. The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection at which a school bus is stopped shall stop his vehicle at that intersection until the flashing red signal lights are no longer actuated.

Those who do not adhere to this policy may be reported to local authorities and may be mandated to park in a different parking lot and walk their child/ren to/from the ELC's front door. Our children and families are too precious to allow careless/reckless driving practices in and around our parking lots. If cones are placed at the entrance/exit of the parking lot- do not drive in between them to enter the lot- but instead utilize another one of our available parking lots.

5. Dress: Children should be dressed appropriately for active, messy play. We want to ensure that your child is safe at all times while they are here with us. Therefore, we are asking for your compliance with the following policies:

All children must have a change of clothing, to be kept in the classroom, at all times. Please make sure to update clothing according to size and season and parents must **label everything**!! RCELC staff cannot be held responsible for lost, stolen or misplaced items which have not been properly labeled.

Sturdy shoes and socks are necessary for climbing and jumping. Please refrain from putting sandals, clogs, flip-flops, and other footwear without a back strap on your child. This helps to prevent injuries in active children.

Children who have pierced ears in Infant through Pre-School classrooms must have earrings with screw on/locking backs or not wear earrings to school because they may pose a choking and/or puncture hazard. Earrings which have become dislocated from a child's ears will not be reinserted in the ear and instead will be sent home taped to a paper bearing the child's name. We are not responsible for lost/broken jewelry for any age group. Children will not be permitted to nap with necklaces of any kind. Beaded jewelry will be kept in the child's basket during school hours for Infants through Toddler classrooms to prevent choking hazards should the jewelry break.

Our teachers try to keep your child as neat as possible during mealtimes and art activities.

However, young children are messy and that is appropriate for their age, especially during outdoor playtimes. Please do not dress your child in their best clothing for school. As we strongly encourage modesty in all our students and seek to provide a sanitary environment, we ask that should little girls arrive in play dresses or skirts that they also wear shorts or diaper covers underneath over top of underwear and boys should have underwear beneath their pants. This also assists in containing any accident leakage.

We are not staffed to provide unnecessary (non-emergency) attire changes, including shoes. If your child's outfit is not suitable for possible messy play, please do not send your child in that attire.

If the snow is falling, children may still go outside to explore. Please provide suitable apparel for outdoor winter play (boots, waterproof snowsuit, mittens, and warm hat) whenever the forecast calls for snow.

When it is time for fun in the sun, you will need to provide sunscreen for your child in addition to a signed permission form approving its administration. No swimming or wading is allowed on the premises. We have water play which consists of sprinklers, spray bottles and water tables. You will need to send swimwear for these occasions. Since modesty is strongly encouraged- one-piece swimsuits or lengthy "tankinis" are enforced for our female students. Girls with immodest swimwear may be asked to wear a covering (i.e., T-shirt) or may be required to forego water play/ special activities.

To prevent injury during physical gross motor play, non-prescription sunglasses will not be worn on the playground.

Please provide sweaters in the fall and spring when transitional weather produces cold mornings and warm afternoons. Layers are encouraged for comfort throughout the winter months as well.

Emergency Operations

This policy is in place to assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of children attending Riverview Christian Early Learning Center. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies.

Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

Immediate Evacuation - Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.

In-Place Sheltering – Sudden, unexpected occurrences (weather or hazardous materials related), may dictate that taking cover in other areas of the building.

Relocation - Total evacuation of the facility and the premises may become necessary if there is a danger in the area or the building is unsafe for return. In this case, children will be taken to a re-location facility at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, (4201 Stoudt's Ferry Bridge Rd., Reading, 19605) Spring Valley Church of God 2127 Pricetown Rd., Temple, 19560). This information will be posted on the front door of the Early Learning Center.

Modified Operation - May include cancellation, postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations. Please understand that these situations may

occur anytime during the year, even in the summer.

Lockout/ Lockdown – Intruder in the area or in the building. All classrooms are to close and lock all doors and windows, close blinds, draw curtains to cover door and sink windows. All children and staff must stay in the classroom until the “All is Safe” signal is given. **In the event of a Lockout/Lockdown, no one will be permitted to enter or exit the ELC until the situation is resolved, this includes families, students, and staff.**

Please listen to Y102 or WFMZ TV channel 69 or visit their websites for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above. You may also sign up to receive informative texts through their websites.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay pertinent information to first responders and maintain safety, organization, and order for all involved. ****Even phone calls to cell phones may prove to be a large distraction during the situation and prevent urgent directions from being heard or followed or may notify intruders to the whereabouts of the carrier’s location during a Lockout/Lockdown.**

The facility Directors may provide an alternate phone number (i.e., cell phone number, etc.) to call in an emergency event.

It is strongly recommended that families attend our annual Emergency Preparedness Training. This assists in maintaining organization and teamwork should an emergency ever arise. Date and time will be announced to families and placed on our website calendar prior to the event.

The information you have provided on the *Emergency Contact Form* (designating persons to pick up your child) will be used to contact you if needed. This form is to be updated every 6 months or more often if a situation and/or information is altered. It is the responsibility of the family to make necessary updates in the ELC office within 24 hours of a change of information. **Not promptly updating Emergency Contact forms may delay notification in the event of emergencies, sickness, or injury.**

Please do not attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties. To ensure the safety of your children and our staff, we ask your understanding and cooperation.

Inclement Weather

Plan for the unexpected! Emergencies vary and may occur at any time. For that reason, we urge all families to have a back-up childcare source ready, in case we are not available.

Delays and closings are rare, but both do happen occasionally. Consideration must be made in regard to the safety of our families and their young children as well as our staff. If the need arises for a weather-related delay, closing, or early dismissal (due to weather emergencies or power outages), **All families will receive a message via their preferred method (text or email) through our Tadpoles, DoJo and/or ProCare systems so please be sure to have your current information on file with the office at all times.** In addition, you may turn on, or listen to one of the following:

- **TV CHANNEL 69-WFMZ (or www.WFMZ.com 24 hrs. a day) This web site can be**

accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with closing information delivered directly to e-mail addresses, pagers, cell phones, and PDAs.

- 102.5 FM-WRFY RADIO posts information to their website <https://y102reading.iheart.com> "StormCenter" and during on-air broadcasts.
- RCELC's Facebook Page

We ask that you do not call the ELC office to obtain open/delay status as modified staffing and classroom schedules may necessitate additional assistance from office personnel. Multiple office calls create a disruption to the routines and modifications in place. This will also keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay pertinent information to notify all families and staff in the event of additional schedule modifications.

Please know that it is our desire to provide you with quality care and early education. We understand the importance of dependability. However, if local police and transportation officials feel that conditions are extremely hazardous, we may decide to delay our opening until the road conditions improve. We will try to make our decision by 5:30 AM. If the snowflakes keep falling or the ice is not melting, please check your email and texts, turn on the radio or TV, visit our Facebook page to stay well informed!

School-Age Parents

The school-age program monitors the Muhlenberg School District (MSD) schedules; however, our operating schedule runs independently and is not based upon MSD's scheduled operations. If a delay, closing, or early dismissal is announced by Muhlenberg, we are available to provide care until you arrive. If a delay is announced, we will provide extended care until the bus arrives. Please be aware that these circumstances; however rare may cause overage in hours & require additional fees to incur.

PreK Counts Families

The PreK Counts program will follow Muhlenberg School District closures for both holidays and inclement weather. Should Muhlenberg School District be closed, RCELC's PreK Counts will also be closed. Any alterations to RCELC's normal schedule of operations will also alter PreK Counts scheduling. Students must be enrolled in wrap-around care to attend RCELC in the event of all Muhlenberg closures (additional fees will apply).

Remember that if weather conditions worsen, we may also need to close early. So please pay close attention to local updates!! Text messages may also be sent through our Tadpoles & ProCare systems; therefore, it is imperative to ensure that we have your most up to date information on file.

Parent – Staff Communication

We strongly encourage communication between parents and teachers. Our teachers are happy to answer any questions about your child's behavior, daily routines, etc. However, questions regarding RCELC policy and procedures, as well as financial concerns, MUST be directed to the office. Parents are asked not to discuss such issues with teachers.

The following are all methods used to encourage open and consistent communication between parents and staff regarding programs and events.

Tadpoles and DoJo: In an effort of "being green", classrooms will be in communication with families through the Tadpoles App. School-Age Families will also be utilizing DoJo.

These apps provide instant communication and information/photo sharing with families. Parents are responsible for setting up the program/s on their phone or through email. If hard copies of daily routines are required, they may be requested through your child's teacher.

Phone: Each classroom has its own direct extension and we welcome calls from our parents during our operating hours. Please limit phone calls during naptimes to emergencies only. If there is no answer, please leave a voicemail message and staff will return your call at a more convenient time.

Parent Board: Every classroom has a parent board located in the hallway right outside the door. Teachers will post important reminders and sign-up sheets. Please remember to check this board frequently.

Mailbox/Cubby: Every child will have their own private space to store artistic treasures, as well as important teacher/administrative information papers.

Please check this spot daily.

White Board: Every classroom has a white board outside their room. This will be used to communicate daily highlights as well as important reminders.

Parent Board (located in the office to the right of the drop box) and Main Lobby Brochure Shelf: Many educational and community related pamphlets are located here. We also post important information on the easel by the front door. Please take time to occasionally browse through these areas. Additional community resources are available upon request, from the ELC office.

Administrative Communication: Communication will be sent home as seen fit by the office staff via email, text, Tadpoles App, or printed media. Please verify that your most current email address and cell phone numbers are on file with the ELC office. Please verify you can receive ELC emails, as not to miss important information which may be sent to a "spam" folder. Concerns and comments may be communicated verbally, emailed or written and placed in the Directors' mailboxes.

Early Education

Our desire is to provide a quality early learning program for all the children attending RCELC. We want to emphasize the basic skills of learning, while complying with the directives from our regulating agencies. We also consider it a privilege to be able to provide a spiritual foundation for the children who attend RCELC. As our teachers display Christ-like attitudes and behaviors, we hope that each child will develop a basic understanding of God's love, God's Word and the principles of Christian living.

Our Teaching Team brings a wealth of education, experience, knowledge, and love to our ELC. These individuals are dedicated and committed to providing a quality early learning environment for the children. Our teachers, assistants, aides, and volunteers must comply with the PA Department of Human Services' Regulations regarding:

1. Educational Requirements
2. Annual Fire Safety Training
3. Annual Emergency Preparedness Training
4. Bi-Annual Pediatric First Aid and Blocked Airway Training
5. Criminal and Child Abuse Background Checks
6. FBI Clearance (Fingerprint Check)
7. NSOR Clearance (National Sex Offender Registry)
8. Thorough Interviewing Process
9. New Staff Orientation (15 hours of video training, testing completion, and classroom observation)

10. Mandated Reporter Training
11. Six hours of additional training annually (Most of this training is provided by local colleges and professional organizations). Our teaching and assisting staff participate in additional training, as required for our current STAR level. More info. may be obtained at:
<http://papromiseforchildren.com/choose-a-quality-program/keystone-stars>

Curriculum Statement

RCELC developed the following statement to inform families about our philosophy regarding how children learn, materials and methods we will use to teach young children, what children need to learn, the teacher's role, assessment and the role of the family:

How Young Children Learn

Play is the primary vehicle that children use to explore their world. "Play facilitates the growth of children's reasoning abilities." (David Elkind, Ph.D.) This exploration needs to be offered in an intentionally planned environment that is developmentally and culturally appropriate. Children learn most when they are provided with hands-on learning activities and materials that stimulate exploration using many senses.

Characteristics of learning readiness are developed rather than taught. Only through numerous, concrete interactions with the natural world that God created, can a young child prepare to benefit from formal instruction later in the elementary years.

Learning will take place when a young child builds on prior knowledge; this is referred to as scaffolding. In other words, the young child must have the opportunity to combine new knowledge with earlier experiences. If these early experiences are not taught using authentic/concrete materials with which the child can relate, the child will not have the acquired knowledge and experience with which to build on. Children also need repetitive activities for many reasons, but especially, to begin to feel successful.

Children learn best in a setting where loving, experienced and educated adults model appropriate behavior and language. Children feel secure when there is a safe and predictable environment in which to play and grow. When children feel loved and accepted, they will begin to acquire knowledge, develop a love for learning, and begin to become the individuals that God created them to be.

Materials and Methods

RCELC utilizes a wide variety of materials to develop educational plans and appropriate learning environments for the children we serve. The following lists are divided into categories according to age.

While books, guides and learning standards are powerful resources to help teachers plan for children, curriculum decisions primarily come from the children, their families and the teachers/adults with whom they interact.

Curriculum may change from program to program and year to year, (even within the same classroom). On the other hand, the curriculum statement (the framework for classroom practice) will remain the same.

Infant/Toddler

- *The Bible*
- *YouVersion Christian Curriculum*
- *Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, A Comprehensive Approach (Teaching Strategies)*
- Pennsylvania Infant/Toddler Early Learning Standards
- Miscellaneous Teacher Resources

Pre-School/Pre-K

- *The Bible*
- *YouVersion Christian Curriculum*
- *Creative Curriculum for Preschool, A Comprehensive Approach (Teaching Strategies)*
- Miscellaneous Teacher Resources
- Pennsylvania Preschool Early Learning Standards

School-Age

- *The Bible*
- *YouVersion Christian Curriculum*
- Pennsylvania Learning Standards
- Miscellaneous Teacher Resources

Pre-K Counts

- The Creative Curriculum
- Teaching Strategies
- Pennsylvania Learning Standards
- Miscellaneous Teacher Resources

Attention will be given to the specific needs of each child. At the same time, every child will be encouraged to become a part of the classroom community. If it becomes evident that a child has a special emotional, behavioral or physical need, we have the responsibility to recommend professional assistance to the family. We are willing to work with the child, the family and the community agency to provide the best help possible. However, if the needs of the child are beyond our ability or scope of practice, we will help you find an alternative agency to provide you and your child with a more comprehensive program.

What Young Children Need to Learn

(According to the PA Early Learning Standards)

Infant/Toddler

Approaches to Learning and Cognitive Development

Communication and Emerging Literacy Creative
Expression

Physical/Motor Development
Social, Emotional and Personal Development

Program Partnerships/Family Involvement

Pre-School/Pre-K

Approaches to Learning

Creative Arts

Language and Literacy Logical

and Mathematical

Personal/Social Physical/Health

Program Partnerships/Family Involvement Science/Social Studies

The above list of standards is an abbreviated version of what children need to learn in the early years. If you would like to view a copy of the PA Early Learning Standards, please stop by the school office.

The Creative Curriculum offers support for teachers to help them teach content in ways that respect the developmental stages of children. The goal is to offer appropriate activities in content areas that are connected to the standards. This will hopefully allow children to meet criteria for school readiness, get excited about learning, academically succeed for years to come and become a person of character and integrity, the person God created them to be.

The YouVersion Christian Curriculum provides young children with Biblical truths which can be applied to their daily lives and routines in developmentally appropriate ways, without pushing doctrines. The Christian curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with the exception of PreK Counts instructional hours (8:00am -1:30pm).

The Teacher's Role

At RCELC, teachers are committed to providing care and early education in a loving and nurturing way. The following list contains only a few of the many responsibilities that our teachers and assistants have regarding the educational portion of our program.

Teachers observe, guide children's learning, and assess children's learning in order to plan for the individual needs of the children and to promote the acquisition of knowledge.

In order to guide learning, teachers, with the assistance of their classroom support staff...

- Design, set up, and maintain a safe, developmentally, culturally, and spiritually appropriate environment.
- Plan challenging learning activities that include the rotation of manipulative resources, learning materials, equipment, and natural materials.
- Set up five to six interest areas (Toddlers and up).
- Develop written plans on a weekly basis. The plans must reflect the PA Early Learning Standards.
- Use a wide range of teaching approaches.
- Develop an appropriate schedule that meets the needs of the age group they are assigned.
- Plan for large and small group instruction as well as teacher and child directed learning times.
- Develop age-appropriate guidelines that are consistently enforced.
- Have a variety of transitional activities ready to use throughout the day. In the course of a day, young children change from one activity to another rather frequently. Some young children have trouble in this area. So, Teachers need to know how to provide prompts, cues, warnings, and other activities to assist with these transitions.
- Understand the importance of modeling a Christ-like lifestyle. Children learn by the

adult role models in their life. Teacher/Child interaction is also an important component to the learning program. Literacy skills are developed throughout the entire day, not just at story time. Teachers must be ready to ask open ended questions and provide conversation starters whenever they see an open window.

- Create ways to interact and communicate with families.
- Manage the learning environment. Create a system to record and maintain files and portfolios for every child.
- Observe and document progress using the Creative Curriculum Assessment Forms.
- Arrange for environmental accommodations for children with special needs.

In conclusion, our teachers and support staff provide ongoing observation and assessment. Along with the information they receive from you and your child, they develop a plan to provide learning opportunities to meet the needs of every child.

Family Connection

Parents are the child's first and most important teacher. For our program to benefit the children, it is imperative that we connect with every family. We offer a "Get to Know You" survey at enrollment and we encourage our families to complete the survey and return it immediately, preferably prior to the child's first official day. Scheduled visits in the classroom prior to the child's first day may also assist with initial transitions and will begin building a reciprocal rapport between the program and enrolling family.

We also offer a 45-day conference and evaluation so you can be informed about your child's transition to the center. This is also a time for you and your child's teacher to discuss any concerns or parenting struggles that you might have; however, we always encourage open communication with our families. If you feel that a formal meeting or conference is necessary at any time, we will be happy to accommodate a convenient time to meet with you.

Families are strongly encouraged to participate in feedback surveys, events, and through multiple opportunities during the year as communicated by both classroom and administrative staff. Through these opportunities we look forward to developing team focused partnerships which provide stable foundations for our students' future success.

In closing, we look forward to partnering with the families of the children entrusted to us. The administration and staff of RCELC take our work very seriously. Although we cannot guarantee a perfect environment, we can assure you that we will do our absolute best and continue to pursue excellence. If you ever have a need or concern, we ask that you talk with your child's teacher, (for classroom concerns, and the office, (for program concerns). We value and welcome your comments, concerns, and ideas.

Methods Used to Relay Children's Progress to Families

Tadpoles /Daily Progress Sheets: The Tadpoles App (printed forms, upon request) are provided daily to parents in the infant/toddler rooms and relay information about your child's day. Items covered include, but are not limited to, meals, toileting, behavior, and activity level.

Weekly Lesson Plans: Each teacher is required to complete lesson plans for their classroom, including classroom and individual student goals. These plans are posted on the classroom's parent board and reflect the PA Early Learning Standards. Please see the curriculum section or speak with your child's teacher for more detailed information.

Classroom Newsletter/Highlight Sheet: Every teacher will have their own form of communication with families to help you stay well informed. Information may be posted on classroom Parent Boards, on whiteboards just outside of classroom doors, etc. Please speak with the classroom teacher for classroom specific information.

Conferences: Parents will receive an "It's Time for a Chat" Form, twice a year, (within 45 days of enrollment or placement into a new room and mid-year).

You will then have the option to meet with your child's teacher or decline the meeting. Please fill out the form and return it to your child's teacher. We must keep this on file always. If you feel that a conference is needed at any other time, just ask your child's teacher and arrangements will be made.

Base Line Assessment: An initial screening will be completed for every child within the first month of entrance into a new classroom. The results of this, in addition to teacher observations, will be shared with the family at the 45-Day Conference. You will also receive a progress sheet at that time. If you choose to not meet with your child's teacher, you will still receive a copy of the progress sheet.

Observations: All teachers are required to complete periodic written observations for every child in attendance at RCELC. These observations are used to help teachers focus on individual needs of children, develop lesson plans, and complete end of the year assessments.

Mid-Year and End of the Year Assessments: These tools will help you to see your child's developmental progress and accomplishments as well as any areas that need strengthening.

State Mandated Reporting

We are a mandated reporting center. The State of PA defines this as follows: A person who, in the course of employment, occupation or practice of a profession, has reasonable cause to suspect, on the basis of medical professional or other training and experience, that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of that person or of an agency, institution, organization or other entity with which that person is affiliated is a victim of child abuse, including child abuse by an individual who is not a perpetrator.

Child abuse is defined as serious recent physical injury which is non-accidental, mental injury, sexual abuse or serious physical neglect of children under the age of 18, caused by the acts or omissions of a perpetrator.

Staff is mandated to follow a specific protocol of reporting suspected child abuse, endangerment, and/or neglect to the appropriate departments under the requirements set forth in Pennsylvania's Act 31 pertaining to suspected child abuse. The employees of RCELC cannot be held liable for reports determined to be "unfounded" if the report was made in "good faith."

Miscellaneous Information

Free Health Screenings RCELC partners with preferred agencies such as The Vision Resource of Berks County, Tower Health, and other community resources to provide your child/ren (some limitations may apply) with free health screenings. These screenings do not replace routine medical care but are meant to assist in identifying potential risks and suggesting referrals for follow up. We also have access to a Health Care Consultant available for referrals. You may inquire in the ELC office for more information.

Fundraisers Because we are a non-profit center, we will occasionally provide our families with the opportunity to participate in a variety of fundraisers.

Fundraisers provide our center with essential resources and help to offset costs. Please understand that your participation (time and/or monetary) is very much appreciated, but optional.

School Photos Once a year, usually during the fall, RCELC invites a school photographer to capture the smiling faces of our children. Spring portraits may also be taken, based upon family interest. Families are not under any obligation to purchase school photographs.

Referral Rewards! Any family who contributes to the enrollment of a new family to RCELC will be eligible for a *Referral Reward*, consisting of a monetary check. Credits will be awarded after the new family maintains a current account for 90 days. The new family must indicate referral on their *Registration Form* at initial enrollment. There is **no limit** to the amount of referral incentive rewards which can be gained within a given calendar year. Reward increments are subject to change.

Birthdays are special events in the life of a young child. Teachers are very willing to work with you if you choose to celebrate your child's birthday here at school. We have found that prepackaged healthy snacks (cheese cubes, individual yogurt cups, fruit slices, etc.), cookies, and Rice Krispie treats work best. Please speak with your child's teacher in advance to confirm your plans prior to bringing treats to verify if any allergies are existent within the classroom. Please remember we are a **no nut facility**. Items should be prepackaged/factory or store sealed and have an affixed list of ingredients. Any products supplied with nuts, including but not limited to peanut butter, will be sent home.

File Transfers RCELC maintains a central file for each child in our center. Important documents are kept in this file including registration forms, agreements, medical information, observations, and assessments. RCELC can transfer these documents to another center at the written request of the parent/guardian. Forms are available in the office. Fees may be incurred for file transfers. Please refer to the "Tuition Rates" sheet (received at initial enrollment) or speak with someone in the ELC office for more information.

Calendar RCELC generates a yearly calendar which is available on our website (riverviewchristianelc.com). This calendar contains all special events and closures for the entire year. If we ever need to deviate from established dates, you will be notified in writing and/or in Tadpoles and Dojo Apps. RCELC will be closed on the following days (subject to change).

- Martin Luther King Jr Day
- Good Friday & Easter Monday
- 4th of July
- Memorial Day
- August In-service Days (2)
- Labor Day
- Election Day In-Service
- Thanksgiving & "Black Friday"
- Christmas Eve through New Year's Day

Items from Home Electronics (i.e., handheld game systems, iPads, iPods, etc.) should not be brought to school. Toys from home should be sent only upon agreement of the classroom staff or for events such as "show and tell. Please label all items with your child's name. RCELC is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items. Student cell phones are expected to be turned off and kept in a backpack or purse for safety reasons. Purses, backpacks, and

personal belongings must be kept in a cubby or locker.

Medications or items which are to be kept out of children's reach (including but not limited to lighters, creams, batteries, cosmetics, etc...) should never be stored on backpacks, diaper bags, purses, totes, coat pockets, etc... Such items should be kept at home or turned immediately into the ELC office to be picked up at the end of the day.

Riverview Christian Ministries If you do not have a home church or would like to attend our service, you are welcome to join us on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. Childcare is available during the service. You may visit www.riverviewchristianministries.org for more information.

Prayer and Assistance If your family is experiencing a hardship we are here to assist with prayer and emergency needs as we are able. Please speak with someone in the ELC office or your child's teacher. The ELC office maintains a list of various community resources available to families upon request.

The Prayer Room, located at the end of Fellowship Hall's hallway, is always open and available for families to retreat in prayer. This room is specifically designed for prayer and provides private booths for prayer, Bibles, prayer guidance booklets, cards for sharing prayer requests and praises, etc. Since this is a place intended specific for prayer: food/drink, phone/device use (unless utilizing a Bible App), loud conversations, unsupervised children, or other distractions are not permitted.

Getting Connected Periodically we have opportunities to partner with families through missionary work, small group studies, and events. We strongly encourage our families to connect and become involved. Events and opportunities may be communicated on our school calendar, newsletters, school apps, etc.

RCELC Contact Information

Address: 3301 Stoudt's Ferry Bridge Rd. Reading, PA 19605

Phone: 610-921-0285

Office Extension: 203

Email: jenn.angstadt@rclc.com

Website: www.riverviewchristianelc.com

Handbook Revised 8.2021

SUBJECT: Nondiscrimination in Services to:

Families/Clients

FROM:

Dr. John C. Letterman, Jr. (Director of Oversight)

Jenn Angstadt (Director)

Christine Wesner (Assistant Director)

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of an aide, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any family, who believes their child has been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following offices:

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
223, Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

PA Human Relations Commission
Philadelphia Regional Office Room
110 N. 8th Street, Suite 501
Philadelphia, PA 19107

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.
South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office
DHS Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Southeast Regional Office 150
801 Marker Street Suite 5034
Philadelphia, PA 19107



Riverview Christian Early Learning Center

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