Christ the King Cathedral Early Childhood Development Center

Parent Handbook and Operational Policies

Revised Edition 2026

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Section 1: Welcome to ECDC

Welcome to Christ the King Cathedral Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC).

We are honored to partner with families in the care, education, and spiritual development of their children.

ECDC provides a Catholic Montessori environment focused on:

- Faith development
- Independence

- Respect
- Hands-on learning
- Positive relationships
- Whole-child development

We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and joyful environment where children can grow academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

Section 2: Mission, Philosophy, and Accreditation

Mission Statement

Beginning with The Word.

We bring Christ to the children who attend ECDC each day through our thoughts, words, and actions.

Montessori Philosophy

Our Montessori approach encourages children to:

- Learn independently
- Develop confidence and self-discipline
- Explore through hands-on experiences
- Progress at their own developmental pace
- Respect themselves, others, and their environment

Each child is viewed as a unique child of God with individual strengths and needs.

Accreditation and Licensing

ECDC is:

- Licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

We meet or exceed state licensing standards and follow nationally recognized best practices in early childhood education.

Section 3: Programs and Classrooms

Programs are organized developmentally and may overlap by age depending on individual readiness.

Programs Offered

- Infant Community
- Mobile Infant Community
- Toddler Community
- Young Children Community
- Primary Communities
- LLP (Living and Learning Program)

Children transition between classrooms based on developmental readiness rather than age alone.

Section 4: Enrollment and Admissions

Enrollment Priority

Enrollment priority may be given in the following order:

1. ECDC employees
2. CTK Church and School employees
3. Siblings of current students
4. CTK School families/Parish families
5. Catholic families
6. Date placed on waitlist

Wait List Policy

Due to limited availability, many classrooms maintain waitlists.

A non-refundable waitlist fee is required to reserve placement.

Required Enrollment Documents

Prior to enrollment, families must provide:

- Enrollment forms
- Emergency contact information
- Immunization records
- Required medical forms
- Tuition payment information

Incomplete enrollment paperwork may delay placement.

Section 5: Tuition and Payment Policies

Tuition Payments

Tuition is drafted electronically through the approved tuition payment system.

Tuition:

- Is due monthly
- Is based on annual enrollment divided into monthly payments
- Is non-refundable once drafted
- Is not reduced for absences

Additional fees may include:

- Late pickup fees
- Returned payment fees
- Special program fees
- Lost or replacement key

Tuition Drafting

ECDC Tuition/LLP School year drafts occur on the 5th of each month. LLP Summer tuition drafts the Friday before the attending week.

Families are responsible for ensuring payment information remains current.

Accounts not successfully drafted may incur additional fees.

Tuition Adjustments

ECDC reserves the right to adjust tuition rates, schedules, and operational calendars annually.

Section 6: Hours of Operation and Holidays

Hours of Operation

ECDC operates Monday through Friday.

Hours and holiday schedules are posted annually and may change based on operational needs.

Families should review the school calendar regularly.

LLP Program Hours

The LLP program follows a separate calendar aligned with CTK School schedules.

Holiday care and summer care may require separate registration.

Space may be limited.

Section 7: Daily Procedures

Arrival Procedures

Children must be escorted to their classroom.

Families are responsible for:

- Signing children in and out daily
- Providing updated pickup information
- Communicating medication or schedule changes

Dismissal Procedures

Children will only be released to authorized individuals listed in enrollment records.

Identification may be required for pickup.

Parents must notify ECDC if someone different will pick up their child.

Parent Responsibility After Pickup

Once a child is signed out and released to a parent or authorized pickup person, supervision becomes the responsibility of the family.

Section 8: Attendance and Late Pick-Up

Attendance Expectations

Consistent attendance helps children feel secure and supports classroom routines.

Families should notify the school when a child will be absent.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Children must be picked up before closing time.

Late fees will be charged according to the current late fee schedule.

Repeated late pickups may result in additional action, including possible withdrawal from the program.

Weather Closures and Delays

ECDC may close or delay opening due to weather or emergency conditions.

Notifications will be communicated through approved parent communication systems.

Section 9: Health, Illness, and Medication Policies

Illness Policy

For the health and safety of all children and staff, sick children may not attend school.

Children should remain home if they:

- Have a fever
- Are vomiting
- Have diarrhea
- Show symptoms of contagious illness
- Cannot comfortably participate in activities

Children sent home sick must meet return-to-school guidelines of 24 hours fever, vomit and diarrhea free for 24 hours without medication before returning.

Communicable Illness

Certain contagious illnesses require medical clearance before returning to school.

Families should notify the school promptly regarding communicable diseases.

Medication Procedures

Medication may only be administered when:

- Proper authorization forms are completed
- Medication is in the original labeled container
- Instructions are provided by a healthcare provider when required

All medication must be:

- Given directly to staff
- Properly labeled

- Stored securely

Medication may not be kept in backpacks or diaper bags.

Emergency Medical Care

Families must complete emergency medical authorization forms.

In an emergency, ECDC may contact emergency medical services if parents cannot be reached immediately.

Immunization Requirements

Children must meet all Texas immunization requirements for enrollment.

ECDC follows diocesan immunization policies.

Updated records must remain on file.

Section 10: Safety and Security

Building Security

ECDC uses a secure access system.

Families receive security access cards or fobs.

Families are responsible for:

- Keeping access devices secure
- Not sharing access cards
- Returning devices upon withdrawal

Replacement fees may apply.

Emergency Preparedness

ECDC maintains emergency procedures for:

- Fire
- Severe weather
- Lockdowns
- Medical emergencies
- Evacuations
- Utility failures

- Missing children

Emergency procedures are reviewed regularly with staff.

Gang-Free and Smoke-Free Zone

The ECDC campus is both:

- A gang-free zone
- A smoke-free and tobacco-free environment

Firearms Policy

Unauthorized firearms are prohibited on school premises in accordance with Texas law.

Section 11: Behavior Guidance and Discipline

Positive Discipline Philosophy

ECDC uses positive guidance and discipline practices that emphasize:

- Respect
- Redirection
- Problem-solving
- Emotional development
- Consistency
- Safety

Families receive a separate discipline and guidance policy during enrollment.

Parent Communication Regarding Behavior

If ongoing behavioral concerns arise, staff may:

- Communicate with families
- Schedule conferences
- Develop support plans
- Recommend outside resources when appropriate

Safety Concerns

Every child has the right to a safe learning environment.

Children whose behavior creates ongoing safety concerns may require additional intervention.

Section 12: Suspension, Expulsion, and Withdrawal Policies

Suspension and Expulsion

ECDC is committed to maintaining a safe environment for all children.

Suspension or expulsion may occur when a child:

- Creates a serious safety risk
- Repeatedly harms others
- Demonstrates aggressive or dangerous behavior
- Requires supervision beyond available staffing resources

Administration will:

- Document incidents
- Communicate with families
- Attempt reasonable interventions when appropriate

Final decisions are made by administration.

Discharge Policy

ECDC reserves the right to discontinue enrollment for reasons including:

- Non-payment of tuition
- Repeated policy violations
- Habitual late pickup
- Unsafe behavior
- Inability to maintain a constructive school-family relationship

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Withdrawal Policy

Families must provide a 30 day written notice prior to withdrawal.

Failure to provide required notice may result in additional tuition responsibility.

Section 13: Curriculum and Assessments

Montessori Curriculum

ECDC uses Montessori curriculum practices designed to support individualized learning.

Children progress through lessons at their own pace with teacher guidance.

Assessments

Children are assessed regularly through developmental observations and assessment systems.

Assessments may include:

- Developmental checklists
- Progress reports
- Parent conferences

Families receive assessment updates throughout the year.

Classroom Transitions

Transitions between classrooms are based on developmental readiness.

Developmental Concerns

If developmental concerns arise, ECDC may recommend families consult with pediatricians or early intervention services.

ECDC does not diagnose developmental delays.

Section 14: Nap and Safe Sleep Policies

Nap and Rest Time

Rest and sleep are important for healthy child development.

Children are provided with scheduled rest periods appropriate for their age and developmental needs. We do not wake children who are napping.

Safe Sleep Practices

Infants are placed on their backs to sleep unless medical documentation states otherwise.

Cribs and sleep areas follow state and NAEYC safe sleep guidelines.

Soft bedding and unsafe sleep items are prohibited for infants.

Nap Items

Children over one year old may bring approved comfort items for rest time.

All items must fit within cubby storage.

Section 15: Outdoor Play and Weather Policies

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important part of the daily schedule.

Children participate in outdoor or movement activities daily when weather conditions are safe.

Weather Guidelines

Outdoor activities may be modified based on:

- Temperature
- Wind conditions
- Severe weather
- Air quality

Indoor movement activities are provided when outdoor play is not possible.

Clothing Requirements

Children should arrive with:

- Weather-appropriate clothing
- Closed-toe shoes
- Jackets or coats when needed

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Parents should apply sunscreen before arrival.

ECDC may reapply sunscreen or insect repellent with written permission.

Section 16: Food, Nutrition, and Meal Procedures

Meal and Snack Guidelines

Healthy eating habits are encouraged.

Families may be responsible for providing lunches depending on the classroom.

Meals and snacks should:

- Be nutritious
- Be developmentally appropriate
- Follow allergy and safety guidelines

Food Safety

Parents should:

- Label food containers
- Send prepared foods ready for serving
- Avoid sending foods that create choking hazards
- Follow classroom food instructions

Allergies

Families must notify the school regarding food allergies or dietary restrictions.

Classroom allergy information is maintained for safety purposes.

Infant Feeding

Parents provide formula, breast milk, and infant foods.

Infants are fed according to individual feeding schedules.

Birthday Treats

Families may provide birthday treats with advance notice.

Treats must comply with allergy and classroom guidelines.

Section 17: Parent Communication and Conferences

Parent Communication

ECDC values strong communication with families.

Communication methods may include:

- Parent apps
- Email
- Conferences
- Daily reports
- Classroom updates
- Phone calls

Conflict Resolution

ECDC encourages respectful and open communication.

Families are encouraged to:

7. Speak directly with the classroom teacher
8. Schedule a meeting with administration if needed
   Work collaboratively toward solutions

Parent Conferences

Families may request conferences regarding:

- Development
- Behavior
- Classroom transitions
- Assessments
- Academic progress

Parent Access

Parents may visit the center during operating hours in accordance with security procedures.

Section 18: Confidentiality and Records

Confidentiality

All child and family information is kept confidential.

Information is only shared with authorized individuals when necessary.

Child Records

Parents may review their child's records according to school procedures.

Families should keep:

- Contact information
- Medical records
- Emergency information

updated at all times.

Social Media and Privacy

Families are encouraged to respect the privacy of children, staff, and other families.

Section 19: Emergency Procedures

Medical Emergencies

In medical emergencies, staff may:

- Provide first aid
- Contact emergency medical services
- Contact parents immediately

Incident reports will be completed when required.

Tornado and Disaster Procedures

ECDC and LLP maintain designated emergency shelter locations.

In catastrophic emergencies, families will receive communication regarding reunification procedures.

Section 20: Volunteer and Visitor Policies

Volunteers

Volunteers working with children may be required to complete:

- Background checks
- Fingerprinting

- Safe Environment training

Visitors and Tours

Tours are scheduled through administration.

Visitors may be required to check in and provide identification.

Section 21: LLP Program Information

LLP Program Overview

The Living and Learning Program (LLP) provides after-school and holiday care for CTK students.

LLP policies may differ from ECDC classroom policies.

LLP Registration

Holiday and summer care may require separate registration.

Space is limited.

LLP Snacks and Lunches

Families may be responsible for providing lunches during holiday or summer care.

Healthy food guidelines apply.

Section 22: Parent Resources

Community Resources

Families seeking additional support or resources may contact:

- 2-1-1 Texas
- Local community agencies
- Parenting Cottage
- Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

Licensing Information

Parents may review:

- Licensing reports
- State minimum standards
- Inspection reports

through the Texas DFPS website.

We do not follow the CACFP food guidelines as parents provide all food. To see the guidelines link to https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/nutrition-standards

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