



Parent Handbook

Revised 2018

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Dear Parents,

Finding the best educational setting for your child can be a daunting experience. Education at any age is the most beneficial when parents and teachers partner together as educators to create a rich learning environment for children to explore, discover, and grow. As we enter this partnership together, we commit to providing a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment filled with positive learning opportunities and experiences to challenge your child and provoke questions and discoveries. Your child will be encouraged and allowed to utilize their independence and self-help skills to the greatest extent possible based on their developmental level. Our teachers will plan the physical classroom environment and lessons based on the observed developmental levels and current interests of your child. Documentation of classroom happenings will be presented with written rationale throughout the classroom and in classroom newsletters. Teachers will schedule routine conferences with you to discuss your child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development and create a plan for future growth.

As our educational partner and your child's first teacher, we expect you to commit to supporting your child and teacher throughout their developmental journey. Allowing your child time to practice rapidly developing skills as they are capable promotes persistence and independence. Actively participating in Parent/Teacher conferences allows you and your child's teacher to create a collaborative educational plan that best meets your child's needs. Following your set schedule permits your child to participate in all activities planned to meet his or her needs. Conversing with your child about the events of the day encourages language development and memory recall. Respecting your child, other families, and The Learning Community staff members and policies models positive, pro-social interactions for your child to imitate.

Together, we can create a rich learning community for your child to thrive. Thank you for sharing your child with us.

*Sincerely,
Brad Hand
Director*

OUR MISSION

The Learning Community is committed to providing young children with a learning environment that models excellence in early childhood education. During these crucial first years of education, we partner with parents to lay the foundation critical to the development of the whole child.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe children learn through play. Classrooms are arranged to provide many learning experiences for children as they interact with each other and staff. There are several interest areas within each classroom: blocks, library, discovery, manipulative, dramatic play, water/sand, and art. Children also enjoy large muscle activities on the playground.

We believe children learn best through hands-on involvement with materials, equipment, and activities.

We believe children learn how to form positive relationships while interacting with other children and adults. Through these interactions, children learn how to get along with others.

We believe children learn through trying. Self-sufficiency is encouraged (in relation to the developmental stage of the child). Each classroom is equipped with age-appropriate furniture and materials to encourage independence.

Within the above context, weekly plans are made for small group learning and purposeful play based on the observed interests and inquiries of the children.

The Learning Community, Inc. is legally responsible for all entities and actions of The Learning Community.

VISION STATEMENT

The Learning Community is a place where...

Children are seen as capable, independent individuals who are given opportunities to explore, discover, play, make decisions, and follow their curiosity and sense of wonder.

Families are devoted partners excited and involved in their children's learning, growing, and play. Families are welcomed, encouraged, and respected for their individuality, culture, and contribution to our community.

Staff are warm, energetic, and committed to children, families, and each other. They embrace and fulfill child development and early childhood principles. Each one is dedicated to creating a place of discovery and growth through play. Staff are valued for their passion, knowledge, skill, and pursuit of excellence.

We all work together to make The Learning Community a place of joy, wonder, and learning.

Early Education and Care Program

Curriculum: The Learning Community utilizes the Creative Curriculum to meet the developmental needs of each child by focusing on the interest areas within the room. Classroom teachers change the materials and provide activities to continuously meet the children's needs. Children learn by being involved in the classroom, with each other, and staff. Rather than planning activities in which staff feed information to the children, our activities are planned for children to discover knowledge through their play and work within the interest centers. Community meetings are kept short as we place an emphasis on small group and one-on-one interactions and less on large-group activities. Children have time each day to choose the activities of interest to them. Our focus mostly revolves around a study topic chosen from the observed interests and inquiries of the children which are made evident by the selection of material, artwork, and books. Goals and objectives for each age group are listed in the APPENDIX.

Research studies show the importance of play as part of an early childhood program. The Learning Community recognizes this importance and fosters child development through play. Classrooms designate large blocks of time for children to engage in various types of play. During this time, children explore important concepts such as literacy, large and small motor skills, mathematics, and social/emotional skills. The teacher's role during child's play is to guide and scaffold children's learning through open-ended questions and small group work.

Child Assessments: Assessing each child's developmental level is a critical part of our teachers' daily planning. Teachers will complete a developmental screening, Ages & Stages, within the first three months of enrollment, at every new age group transition and as needed. Teachers will also complete a developmental assessment checklist, Teaching Strategies Gold, four times a calendar year for children attending at least 8 instructional hours (not including nap times) each week. All children are carefully observed each day and anecdotal notes documented to assist the teachers in determining current interests and needs. Teachers will discuss your child's development, assessment and screening results at each Parent/Teacher conference. In the event that a child's development does not seem to be on track according to the screening and assessment tools, we will refer you to the appropriate professionals and ensure follow through with all parties. See the APPENDIX for resources and referrals.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher conferences are an integral element of our educational partnership. During this meeting, parent and teacher have an opportunity to discuss the growth and development of the individual child in each of the following areas: cognitive, language, social-emotional, and physical development as well as self-help skills both at home and school. Together, an educational plan will be created that is tailored to the development and personality of each specific child. Conferences will be scheduled twice a year, in the Fall and Spring. Additional conferences may be requested by teacher or parent/guardian as deemed necessary for all ages. Due to the importance of these collaborative meetings, attendance by at least one parent/guardian is mandatory. Families that choose not to participate in parent/teacher conferences, choose to withdraw their child from The Learning Community. If the first scheduled conference is missed, the second conference will be rescheduled at the teacher's preference and availability.

A translator will be hired if needed.

Discipline and Guidance: Children need adult guidance as they learn rules for daily living, expectations for appropriate behavior, and boundaries for physical and emotional safety. All staff members are trained to understand appropriate behavioral expectations. Our goal is to establish an environment where children develop respect, self-control, empathy for others, and learn appropriate ways of resolving problems and conflicts.

Guidance techniques that are implemented in the classrooms include:

- Giving children choices whenever possible
- Modeling appropriate behavior
- Reinforcing appropriate behavior
- Redirecting to a more acceptable activity
- Ignoring misbehavior of a less serious nature
- Active problem-solving with children involved
- Helping children find acceptable ways of expressing strong feelings

- Helping children find the words and actions to solve problems themselves
- Making directives or suggestions through positive statements
- Finding logical consequences for inappropriate behavior
- Brief self-removal for child to settle self and regroup

Staff will never use physical abuse, punishment, shame, humiliation, fear, delayed or extended consequence, or loss of affection with children.

A collaborative meeting of parents/guardians, staff, and director will be requested to discuss possible solutions to reoccurring serious mistaken behavior.

Age Grouping/Ratios: Children are grouped into classrooms according to age. In order to provide continuity of care and decrease the number of classroom transitions for the children, four age groupings will be used:

<u>Classrooms</u>	<u>Ages</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Max Group (classroom)</u>	<u>Max Group (playground)</u>
Continuity of Care (COC)	6 weeks-24 months	4:1	7	8
Twos	24-36 months	5:1	10	10
PreK	3-5 years	10:1	18	20
School-agers	Kindergarten-12 years	20:1	20	30

Daily Schedule: Schedules are designed around the developmental needs of the children and are flexible to meet the daily needs of the children. Sample daily schedules are listed for each age group in the APPENDIX.

Birthdays: Families are welcome to celebrate a child's birthday within the classroom community. You are encouraged to visit the classroom with a special activity such as reading your child's favorite story to the class, facilitating a cooking activity with one of your child's favorite foods, bringing your child's favorite game to play with classmates, or sending non-edible "treats" such as stickers or pinwheels for peers. Any edible treats must be in an unopened commercial package, and must meet the dietary restrictions of each child in the class. Parents are not allowed to bring in any beverages; drinks will be served by TLC. Please discuss your intents with your child's teacher in order to assist with daily planning and determine quantities needed.

Diapering/Toileting: You are responsible for providing an *unopened* bag of disposable diapers as needed. Teachers will notify you when diapers need to be replaced. Diapers are changed at least every 2 hours, when children awake from a nap, and more frequently as needed.

Cloth diapers: Families choosing to use cloth diapers are responsible for maintaining at least a two day supply of diapers and waterproof diaper covers at the center. Covers will be changed at each diaper change. Soiled diapers and diaper covers will be given to parents at the end of each day for laundering.

When you and your child's teacher observe that your child is ready for toilet training, we strongly encourage the use of regular underwear or thick training pants rather than Pull-Ups®. When a child is ready for the transition to underwear, a consistent toileting routine at both home and school should result in a relatively smooth transition.

Outside Play: Allowing children to interact with nature and have large areas to develop large motor skills is essential to their overall development. All children will have at least one outside playtime each day as long as the temperature is above 25° and not raining, as required by state laws. If the temperature falls below 10°, children are permitted to be outside for half of the regular time, with the exception of the COC and 2's rooms. When the temperature drops to 0°, no children may be outside. All temperatures are based on wind-chill factor. When unable to play outside, children will be allowed gross-motor play in the multi-purpose room.

When an Ozone Action day is declared for the city of Fort Wayne, children's outside time will be reduced to 15-20 minutes in the morning only. Children's playtime will also be restricted to a shortened period in the morning on Heat Advisory days.

You may request that your child be excluded from outside activities 2 days per season. All requests must be made in writing. Any additional days require a doctor's note stating medical reason for exclusion from outside activities.

Field Trips: Teachers will notify you in writing of any scheduled field trip. A signed permission form must be on file prior to participation in a field trip. Staff will account for children before, during, and after field trips and must maintain appropriate child/staff ratio at all times. Field trip admission costs for enrolled children are covered by the Materials Fee. Parents attending field trips are responsible for paying any admission fees associated with trip.

Transportation: All children will be secured in proper restraints. No child will be permitted to ride in the front seat of any vehicle. Staff member or parent volunteer driver must be at least 21 years of age, hold a proper driver's license, and provide proof of insurance. If a parent volunteer is driving any children, a staff member will be in the vehicle at all times. Documentation must be on file at the center prior to transporting children.

Walks: Staff and children may take walks, wagon rides, or buggy rides around the East State Professional Park as weather permits on a daily basis. Walks/rides may not leave the property of East State Professional Park. You must provide signed permission on the Enrollment Form in order for your child to participate on classroom walks.

Visitation/Phone Calls: The Learning Community has an open-door policy. Unscheduled visits by custodial parents or guardians of a child at The Learning Community are welcomed at any time. You may call the center to talk to the teaching staff to check on your child. However, unless it is a scheduled phone conference, please keep all phone conversations short to allow staff to continue to provide quality education and care for your children. Please be considerate of meal and snack times when planning to visit your child or talk with the teacher.

Transitions to New Room: Scheduled transitions to a new classroom will be based on your child's age. You will be notified by your child's current teacher of the scheduled transition. The process will take place over the course of a period of weeks depending on the needs of the child.

Toys: We provide a stimulating classroom full of materials and supplies. Children's personal toys need to be left at home. The Learning Community assumes no responsibility for personal toys. If your child would like to share a book with the class make sure that it is clearly labeled and understand that other children may be handling it. Use of toy guns, war toys, and other toys of destruction are not permitted.

Special Needs: The Learning Community makes every attempt to accommodate children with special needs. A team meeting of classroom teacher, parent/guardian, administrator, and outside therapists/teachers must be held prior to the first day of your child's attendance to review the IFSP or IEP and create a care plan that meets the child's needs. Additional conferences will be held a minimum of twice a year to review child's care, development, and changing needs. A current copy of child's IFSP or IEP must be kept on file at the center.

Enrollment Policies

The Learning Community is an equal opportunity child care provider. Enrollment is granted regardless of race, religion, color, nationality, sex, or disability.

Required Documentation for Enrollment: The following documents must be completed, signed, and on file prior to any child receiving care:

Enrollment form	CACFP paperwork
Birth certificate	Getting to Know You Form
Any relevant court orders	Infant Feeding Plan
Physical and immunizations forms	Brightpoint forms

Health Examination/Immunization Records: State regulations require each child to have a physical examination within twelve months prior to admission or within 30 days following admission. This examination shall include all immunizations appropriate for the child's age. Maintenance of age-appropriate physical and immunization documentation is required for all children. Age-appropriate immunizations as required by our program are listed in the Appendix.

It is your responsibility to provide documentation of immunizations each time they are received. The maintenance of these records is required by the state of Indiana. Failure to keep your child's health record current will result in your child being refused admission to The Learning Community. Child files are checked quarterly for required updates.

When a child is behind recommended schedule of immunizations or on an alternate shot plan, documentation must be provided from the doctor indicating a schedule of vaccinations to bring them up to date. See Appendix for complete list of state required immunizations.

Confidentiality: All information pertaining to the admission, health, development, behavior, family, or discharge of a child is classified confidential and will not be released to individuals other than parents/guardians without a written release from the parent/guardians. We are required to release necessary information to the Division of Family and Children, Child Protective Service, or other agencies authorized by law.

Admission files are kept locked in the main office area. Our administrative staff are the only staff members with open access to files. Teachers keep child assessments, developmental checklists, observations, and anecdotal notes in their classroom to assist with planning and curriculum. Information contained in these assessment files are for use and discussion by the teaching staff for planning purposes only within the confines of their classroom teaching staff and teacher collaboration groups. Information included in either set of files may not be discussed outside of The Learning Community or shared with other center families.

Scheduling Policies

Hours of Operation: The Learning Community is open from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm on Monday through Friday. Due to nap and rest times, children may not be dropped off between or picked up between 12:00-2:30 pm.

Arrival/Dismissal: It is the responsibility of the adult dropping off or picking up a child to notify caregivers in classroom of arrival and departure, sign-in on the attendance clipboard, and successfully clock-in/out on ProCare. Adults must not leave children unattended or allow children to walk by themselves to the classrooms to drop off their siblings. Attendance clipboards will travel with the class and will be used as official record of attendance in case of emergency. Families repeatedly failing to consistently sign children in and out on a daily basis may be refused care. Families need to use the front doors for entrance and exit each day. Children may not be removed through any playground gates or while on a supervised walk. Children must be supervised at all times in the hallways.

Holidays: We will close on the following holidays:

**New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day,
Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas day.**

In the event a stated holiday falls on a Saturday, The Learning Community will close for operation on the Friday before. Should the holiday fall on a Sunday, we will close on the following Monday. Regular weekly fees will be expected for these days for Community families.

Schedules: Our classroom teachers put a great deal of effort into creating lesson plans around each of your child's developmental levels and needs. Specific activities are prepared for and scheduled based on the schedule that you have submitted for your child. When schedules are followed closely, your child has the opportunity to participate in all of the activities and work that the teacher has carefully chosen to support your child's continued development. However, when a child arrives late or misses a day without notice, important learning opportunities and meals/snacks that have been ordered are wasted. We understand that on occasion, situations will arise making it impossible to stick to your set schedule. In these situations, please call with a new arrival time. If you find yourself consistently missing your currently scheduled drop-off and pick-up times, stop by the front desk to submit a **Request for Schedule Change** form by Thursday at noon the week prior to the change. Schedule changes are subject to classroom availability.

Community: Weekly schedules that are turned in at the time of enrollment are valid for one year unless an alternate schedule is submitted and approved. During the school year, school-aged children will be billed at the weekly before and after school care rate. Enrollment preference will be given to families with full-time schedules.

PUFW: Weekly schedules that are submitted at the time of enrollment are valid for the current semester only. Temporary schedule change requests need to be submitted to the front desk by THURSDAY at NOON of the week prior to schedule change. Schedule changes are subject to classroom availability. Reduction in scheduled hours submitted beyond this deadline will not result in a reduction in fees. **Request for Schedule Change** forms are available at the front desk.

PUFW: families are not required to pay for regularly scheduled school-related breaks and holidays, given that a schedule change was submitted.

Occasional Care/Varied Schedules: Individuals needing infrequent or varied schedules will be enrolled on an Occasional Care basis. Occasional Care scheduling is based on availability and is not guaranteed. Schedule requests will be accepted as current enrollment allows. All occasional care must be approved prior to arrival at the center. Once a time is scheduled, charges will be incurred regardless of attendance. All paperwork must be completed in child's file in order to attend.

Late Pick-Up: The center closes at 6:30 pm. Families with children at the center past 6:30 pm will have a fee of \$5 per minute PER CHILD assessed to their account. If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian past 6:30 pm, emergency contacts listed on the Enrollment Form will be contacted. In the event that all efforts to contact an authorized contact fail, Child Protective Services will be contacted by 7:30 pm.

Authorized Persons to Remove Child from Care: Any authorized individual that is not known to the staff MUST provide picture identification in order to remove a child from the premises. Individuals not listed on Enrollment Form and without direct consent from the parent/guardian will NOT be allowed to remove a child from the center. Furthermore, only an adult will be authorized to remove children from the classroom. Siblings are not allowed to remove children from the classroom by themselves, unless they are over 18 years old.

Leave of Absence: Leaves of absence will be granted at the discretion of the Directors based on feasibility and current enrollment. Anyone requesting a leave of absence of two weeks or longer must fill out a blue change of schedule form and contact the Director to discuss the situation. Depending on the length of the leave requested, a holding fee may be required.

Withdrawal from the Center:

Community: Should the need arise to withdraw your child from The Learning Community; a two week notice of intent to withdraw from the program is required. Two weeks tuition will be assessed to the account if proper notification is not given.

PUFW: Families choosing to withdraw from the center must give a two week notice. One week tuition will be assessed to accounts that choose not to give adequate notice.

Vacation:

Community: After attending The Learning Community for 90 days, each child receives two weeks of vacation time to use prior to the child's next anniversary. Vacation time must be used in one week increments with 1 week vacation equaling the typical weekly schedule for the child. When using a vacation week, one half of normal weekly fees will be assessed to your child's account. Submit a **Request for Schedule Change** form by NOON on Thursday the week prior to desired vacation to receive discounted vacation rate.

PUFW: Vacation time does not apply to Purdue University Fort Wayne student and faculty.

Emergency Closings: We will close under any of the following circumstances:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| Loss or contamination of water supply | Sewage backup |
| Extended loss of electricity | Lack of heating |
| Weather damage | Noxious gas leak |
| Fire damage | |

Closings due to travel advisories will be announced on FM 95.1, 97.3 and Channel 15, 21, and 33. In case of mid-day closing, you will be notified via phone. In the event a parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contact individuals named on the Enrollment Form.

School Age Expulsion from School: The Learning Community is not responsible for providing child care during regular school hours for a child that has been suspended or expelled from their school for any reason.

Financial Policies

Registration Fees:

Community: A registration fee of \$50 for the first child and \$75 per sibling group must be received prior to care given. This fee will be posted to the ledger on the date of enrollment. This is an annual fee due at the enrollment anniversary.

PUFW: Registration fees for college families are \$15 for the first child and \$10 for each additional child per semester.

Deposits:

Community: Community families are not required to submit a deposit.

PUFW: At the time of enrollment, a deposit of \$25 for the first child and \$10 for each additional child will be collected. This deposit will be used to cover any unpaid fees during the semester. Deposits that are not used may be rolled over to the following semester. Deposit funds not utilized during care will be refunded to the family within 30 days of withdrawal as long as sufficient notice of withdrawal was given. Families withdrawing from the center with a balance on their account will forfeit all deposits as a late payment fee.

Materials Fee:

Community: A materials fee of \$100 per family will be assessed to each account in two \$50 installments: January (or first month of enrollment) and August. This fee is due thirty days after the enrollment date.

PUFW: A materials fee of \$50 per family is due at the beginning of each semester of enrollment.

Weekly Fees: Payment is due by Friday of each week. Accounts that become delinquent by two weeks will be withdrawn from the center. In the event that an attorney is needed to collect outstanding balances, the responsible party named on the account becomes accountable for all attorney, court and collection fees.

Community: Weekly fees are due by Friday the week of care.

PUFW: Hourly fees for the current week of care will be billed at the beginning of each week for scheduled hours. Billing for hours attended outside of scheduled hours will be billed the following week. Hours that are scheduled but missed due to illness will be billed as scheduled.

Making Payments: We accept cash, personal checks, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover. Account balances are posted on the check-in screen on Procure. Envelopes for cash payments are available at the front desk and on the side of the lock box. Complete the front portion, enclose cash, and place in lock box. Checks made payable to TLC may be deposited in the lock box also. Credit card payments can be taken by an individual at the front desk. Credit card users will be asserted a 2% fee of total bill. Manually/phoned in credit card payments will be asserted a 5% fee to total bill.

Tuition Express: Tuition Express is a program through our childcare software, Procure, that allows us to offer automatic payment options. You may sign up for automatic tuition payments through your credit card, checking account or savings account. Withdraws from your account are made on Wednesdays of each week. Withdraws from a credit card are still processed a 2% fee.

Returned Check Fee: A \$35 fee will be assessed for all checks returned by the bank.

Food Policies

Due to severe allergic reactions in some children, The Learning Community will not serve foods containing peanuts/nuts or peanut/nut products.

Meals/Snacks: All meals and snacks served will meet the minimum requirements established by the State. All children will receive a full portion of each food and drink item served. Seconds will be available upon child's request. Children will be allowed to begin eating as soon as they are served. Menus are posted in each classroom and at the front desk.

Eating Schedule: Meals and snacks will be served at the following times. Your child must arrive within stated time frame to receive the meal or snack.

	Fed on demand in accordance with individualized feeding plan	
Infants:		
Toddlers:	Breakfast 7:00-7:30	AM Snack 9:30-9:45
	Lunch 11:45-12:15	PM Snack 2:30-2:45
Twos:	Breakfast 7:00-7:30	AM Snack 9:30-9:45
	Lunch 11:45-12:15	PM Snack 3:00-3:15
PreK/SA (Breaks):	Breakfast 7:00-7:30	AM Snack 9:30-10:00
	Lunch 12:00-12:30	PM Snack 3:00-3:30
School Aged	Breakfast 7:00-7:30	PM Snack upon return

***You may not bring food for children to eat in the classroom who have missed the scheduled meal.
Children must finish any and all food items before entering the building.***

Infant Food: The Learning Community provides baby food and cereal, as well as Similac **ready-to-feed** formula as part of daily feeding. Families choosing to provide their own baby food must bring it in the unopened original packaging. In addition, families choosing to use nursery/distilled/purified water may provide a jug for use while at school. Those families wishing to make their own baby food may discuss procedures with the director.

Breastfeeding: Families are welcomed to supply breast milk and/or schedule nursing sessions in the classroom or alternate location within the center. See Breastfeeding Procedures form for handling and labeling procedures.

Special Diets-Food Allergies or Medical Reasons: We accommodate all special dietary needs of children. Children requiring a special diet due to medical reasons or allergic reactions are required to have a doctor's note stating allergy/medical condition and dietary instructions/substitutions to follow. Depending on the necessary food substitutions, you may be required to provide special foods.

Special Diets-Religious/Personal Reasons: A child requiring a special diet due to religious or personal beliefs shall provide a written statement of requested dietary changes. Depending on the requested food substitutions, you may be required to provide special foods.

Treats from Home: Special treats brought from home to share with classmates must be store bought and in the original packaging. Treats must meet dietary restrictions of all children in the classroom. Please notify the classroom teacher in advance and plan to provide enough for each child.

CACFP: (Child and Adult Care Food Program): CACFP is a program funded by the USDA through the Department of Education that subsidizes the food service costs to qualified schools and care centers. Paperwork for the program will be provided for required annual updates.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement: "The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability." To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th, and Independence

Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 or 888-5983 Extension 512 (toll free). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. See Appendix for full USDA Non-Discrimination Statement.

Health and Safety Policies

The Learning Community prohibits smoking, use of alcohol, use or possession of firearms (unless required as a condition of employment), and use or possession of unauthorized potentially toxic substances in the child care center and property.

Exclusion of Sick Children: Any child with a fever of 101° or greater, reoccurring diarrhea, or vomiting must be excluded from the center until they are symptom free for a 24 hour period *without the assistance of medication*. Reoccurring diarrhea is defined as 3 or more liquid stools in a day. Each case will be considered on an individual basis by the administrative staff. Conditions such as teething, receiving shots or allergies where a fever may be a side effect do not apply to this rule. Any oozing or rash of an unknown cause must be assessed by a medical professional and documentation provided from a medical professional that it is not contagious before attending center. If a child becomes ill at the center, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed on the Enrollment Form will be called.

If the child is running a temperature of 101° or higher, vomiting, or has diarrhea, the child must be picked up as soon as possible.

Any child sent home with a fever of 101° or higher, vomiting, or diarrhea may not return until they are symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication unless specified as non-communicable by a doctor with an accompanying doctor's note.

We will follow the recommendations of the State indicated on the Communicable Disease Guidelines for Child Care Centers listed in the APPENDIX.

Prescription Medication: When the need arises, we will administer prescription medications as prescribed by a doctor. Medication will not be administered without a signed Medication Authorization Form completed for the specific week medication is needed or verbal permission granted per phone call. With the exception of prescription diaper creams, all medications must be kept in the main office.

Non-prescription Medications: The Learning Community keeps a supply of acetaminophen and Benadryl (or generic equivalent) on site. In order for a child to receive these medications, they must be approved on the Enrollment Form and a Medication Authorization Form completed for the specific week medication is needed or verbal permission is granted over the phone.

Acetaminophen may only be given for fevers of 100° or greater or teething pain.

Benadryl may only be administered for allergic reactions or seasonal allergies in children ages 2 and older. Non-prescription Medication Authorization must be renewed every two years and annually for children ages two and under. **All other non-prescription medications, ointment, lotion, or Chap Stick cannot be dispensed without a written doctor's order stating medication name, dosage, frequency of dosage, and medical reason for medication.**

Scheduling Medicine Dosages: The safest place for medication to be administered is in the home. When the need arises that your child requires medication, you need to plan as many dosages as possible for your child at home.

Safe Sleep Practices: All infants will sleep in cribs at least until they are steady walkers and one year old. All infants and toddlers sleeping in cribs will be placed on their backs to sleep in safety approved cribs unless an alternate sleep position is needed for a medical reason and a written note from the infant's health care professional is provided. When

infants are able to easily turn over from their backs to a prone position, they will be placed on their back but allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer to sleep. Infants that fall asleep anywhere but in a crib (bouncy seat, stroller, etc) will be transferred to a crib and placed on their back. Infants will be lightly clothed and comfortable while sleeping. No soft materials such as pillows, blankets, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft products will be allowed in the crib. Parents may choose to provide a sleep sack for their infant.

Accidents/Injuries: If a child is injured while at The Learning Community and requires medical attention, you will be notified immediately. An accident report will be completed and filed with the state. First aid will be administered on site for minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, etc.). You will be notified by a phone call in an event of a more significant injury that does not require outside treatment (black eye, insect sting, etc.). Minor injury reports are posted in each classroom.

Insurance: If a child is injured while at the center and requires medical attention, you are responsible to submit all claims to your insurance company. Any medical charges that are not covered by your insurance company may be submitted to The Learning Community. Once The Learning Community submits the claim to our insurance company, the insurance company will work with you directly to resolve the matter.

Release of a Child to an Intoxicated or Impaired Person: Any parent/guardian who appears intoxicated or impaired but insists on removing a child from our care will be reported to the police immediately. Individuals listed as an emergency contact on the Enrollment Form who appear intoxicated or impaired will be denied access to children and parents will be contacted to make alternate transportation arrangements.

Court Orders: We will comply with any court order that prevents a particular individual from having contact with a child. A copy of the court order must be kept on file at the center.

Clothing Policies: When assisting your child with dressing for the day, please take the following factors into consideration.

- **Comfort:** Clothes should be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor activities.
- **Fasteners:** Complicated fasteners are frustrating for both child and adults.
- **Condition:** Only send your child in clothes that you don't mind them getting paint, marker, and dirt on.
- **Shoes:** Open-toed shoes and flip flops are hazardous for physical and outdoor activities. Mulch may splinter under toenails. Toenails can be pulled out if a child trips in open-toed shoes on cement. Children may not wear flip flops while at The Learning Community. Buckle-up sandals are appropriate for summer.
- **Weather:** Weather-appropriate clothes must be provided for your child each day.

The Learning Community is not responsible for clothing damaged during normal children's activities.

Spare Clothing: Spilled drinks, food stains, bathroom accidents, and falls are all a normal part of childhood learning. Each child needs a minimum of one complete change of weather-appropriate clothing in their cubby or backpack to be used as needed. Additional changes of clothes will be needed during times of toilet training. Spare clothes should be changed as weather changes and child changes sizes.

Amber Teething Necklaces: For the safety of the children, amber teething necklaces are not allowed. These pose a strangulation hazard, especially for the younger ages.

Communication Policies

Parental Concerns: Concerns which require administrative staff attention should first be discussed at the level of occurrence. Classroom concerns should first be discussed with your child's lead caregiver. If you feel that the situation does not improve or correct itself, schedule an appointment with the Director to further discuss the situation.

Daily Communication: Teachers communicate with parents verbally at both drop-off and pick-up about children's ongoing development and learning. Email and phone conferences will be utilized for longer conversations. Staff will complete a daily care sheet for each child in the COC and Twos classrooms that records meals/snacks, diapering/toilet use, sleep times, and general mood. As children's language develop, they become more capable of sharing daily activities with parents. Preschool classrooms post daily conversation prompts next to the sign-in area to assist parents with conversation starters regarding the events of the day.

Parent Bulletin Board: The Parent Bulletin Board is located at the front of the building and is reserved for important information concerning upcoming program and community events and program reminders.

Newsletter: We will publish a monthly newsletter to provide parents/guardians with information regarding upcoming events, updates to policies or procedures, and other pertinent information. The newsletters will be sent out to families through email, and hard copies will be available at the front desk.

Reporting Abuse and Neglect: As required by law, each of our staff members receives annual training to recognize and report child abuse and neglect. Staff members are instructed to report suspected abuse and neglect to an administrator immediately for reporting to Child Protective Services.

Parental Conduct

As responsible adults, you are expected to follow the policies and procedures of The Learning Community and to behave in a respectful, appropriate manner with staff members, children, and other parents/guardians.

Lengthy conversations should be avoided in the classroom in order for staff to maintain proper interaction and supervision with children. Phone calls during nap, emails, or conferences are effective tools for discussing issues in further detail.

Out of respect to others and your children, swearing and use of other foul language will not be tolerated in the center.

In order to greet your child and to respect the privacy of others, all cell phone conversations must end prior to entering the building.

Any parent/guardian that engages in threatening or harassing behavior (sexual or non-sexual in nature) with a child, parent/guardian, or staff member will be escorted from the premises and future access to center grounds will be denied.

In addition, parents must abide by laws pertaining to car seats. If we observe a parent or guardian neglecting to use a car seat, the Fort Wayne P. D.'s desk sergeant will be notified.¹

¹ A copy of current Child Passenger Safety laws is located in the appendix.

APPENDIX

Creative Curriculum Objectives for Development & Learning

Sample Schedules

Communicable Disease Guidelines for Child Care Centers

When Do Children Need Vaccinations?

Resources and Referrals

Child Passenger Safety

USDA Full Nondiscrimination Statement

CREATIVE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING

Social–Emotional Development

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
 - a. Manages feelings
 - b. Follows limits and expectations
 - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
 - a. Forms relationships with adults
 - b. Responds to emotional cues
 - c. Interacts with peers
 - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
 - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
 - b. Solves social problems

Physical

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
 - a. Uses fingers and hands
 - b. Uses writing and drawing tools

Language

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
 - a. Comprehends language
 - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
 - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
 - b. Speaks clearly
 - c. Uses conventional grammar
 - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
 - a. Engages in conversations
 - b. Uses social rules of language

Cognitive

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
 - a. Attends and engages
 - b. Persists
 - c. Solves problems
 - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
 - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
 - a. Recognizes and recalls
 - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
 - a. Thinks symbolically
 - b. Engages in sociodramatic play

Literacy

15. Demonstrates phonological awareness

- a. Notices and discriminates rhyme
 - b. Notices and discriminates alliteration
 - c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound
16. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet
- a. Identifies and names letters
 - b. Uses letter-sound knowledge
17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
- a. Uses and appreciates books
 - b. Uses print concepts
18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
- a. Interacts during read-alouds and book conversations
 - b. Uses emergent reading skills
 - c. Retells stories
19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
- a. Writes name
 - b. Writes to convey meaning

Mathematics

20. Uses number concepts and operations
- a. Counts
 - b. Quantifies
 - c. Connects numerals with their quantities
21. Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes
- a. Understands spatial relationships
 - b. Understands shapes
22. Compares and measures
23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

Science and Technology

24. Uses scientific inquiry skills
25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
26. Demonstrates knowledge of physical properties of objects and materials
27. Demonstrates knowledge of the Earth's environment
28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

29. Demonstrates knowledge about self
30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
31. Explores change related to familiar people or places
32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

The Arts

33. Explores the visual arts
34. Explores musical concepts and expressions
35. Explores dance and movement concepts
36. Explores drama through actions and language

English Language Acquisition

37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

SAMPLE SCHEDULES

Continuity of Care*

6:30-7:00	Play
7:00-7:30	Breakfast
7:00-9:00	Exploration/diaper checks
9:00-9:15	Hand washing and snack
9:15-10:45	Exploration, diaper checks, indoor/outdoor activities including choice, art, and music
10:45-11:00	Group time: conversation, stories, creative movement, music, or concept development
11:00-11:30	Hand washing and lunch
11:30-1:30	Nap
1:30-2:30	Quiet play, diaper checks, clean up nap items
2:30-3:00	Hand washing and snack
3:00-4:00	Exploration, diaper checks, indoor/outdoor activities including choice, art, and music
4:00-4:15	Group time: conversation, stories, creative movement, music, or concept development
4:15-6:30	Indoor play, art activities, diaper checks *Infants will be fed according to individual feeding plans.

Twos

6:30-7:30	Play
7:30-8:00	Breakfast
8:00-9:30	Exploration/diaper checks/potty breaks
9:30-9:45	Hand washing and snack
9:45- 11:30	Exploration, diaper checks/potty breaks, indoor/outdoor activities including choice, art, and music
11:30-11:45	Group time: conversation, stories, creative movement, music, or concept development
11:45-12:15	Hand washing and lunch
12:15-12:30	Lunch clean up, diaper check/potty break, lay on cots, read books
12:30-2:30	Nap
2:30-3:00	Quiet play, diaper check/potty break, clean up nap items
3:00-3:15	Hand washing and snack
3:15-4:00	Exploration, diaper check/potty break, indoor/outdoor activities including choice, art, and music
4:00-4:15	Group time: conversation, stories, creative movement, music, or concept development
4:15-6:30	Indoor play, art activities, diaper checks

Preschool

6:30-7:30	Play
7:30-8:00	Breakfast
8:00-9:15	Free Play
9:15-9:30	Community Meeting-whole group experience that may involve conversations, stories, creative movement, music, or concept development
9:30- 11:45	Snack, Choice Time, indoor/outdoor activities
11:45-12:00	Community Meeting-whole group experience that may involve conversations, stories, creative movement, music or concept development
12:00-12:30	Hand washing and lunch
12:30-1:00	Lunch clean up, potty break, quiet activities
1:00-2:30	Nap/Rest time
1:30-2:30	Quiet activities for non-nappers
2:30-3:00	Quiet play, clean up nap items
3:00-4:00	Snack, free play, indoor/outdoor activities
4:00-4:15	Community Meeting
4:15-5:00	Indoor play
5:00-5:15	Group stories
5:15-6:30	Indoor play, art activities

School Age (Before/After School)

6:30-7:30	Play
7:30-8:00	Breakfast
8:00-8:30	Bus departure

3:30-4:15 Bus arrival, snack, play, games, homework, art activities

4:15-6:30 Community Time, indoor/outdoor play, choice time

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Disease	Symptoms	Incubation Period	Restrictions
Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)	tearing, swollen eyelids, redness of eyes, purulent discharge from eyes	Bacterial: 1-3 days Viral: 12hrs-3 days	Exclude until drainage/secretion of eye is gone or on antibiotic Rx for full 24 hours
Strep Throat Scarlet Fever	red, painful throat, fever possible rash (scarlet fever)	1-3 days	Exclude until on antibiotic Rx for full 24 hours and no fever. Antibiotic treatment must last 10 days
Ringworm	red scaling, itchy, circular lesions and broken hairs form skin/head	varies 4-10 days	If on Rx, may return; otherwise exclude unless lesions are coverable
Fifth Disease	mild or no fever, "slapped cheek" rash spreading throughout body, lacy rash on arms and legs, rash may recur with sunlight, warm bath or exercise	varies 4-21 days	None
Hand, Foot, and Mouth (Coxsackie Virus)	small blisters with reddened base primarily on hands, feet, mouth, tongue, buttocks or throat	3-6 days	Exclude during acute symptoms. Lesions may not be weeping.
Rosella	high sudden fever, runny nose, irritability, followed by rash on trunk	5-15 days	Exclude until fever is down for 24 hrs
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	fever, runny nose, cough, and sometimes wheezing	1-10 days	Exclude until child has no fever and can tolerate normal activities
Head Lice	severe itching, nits, bumpy rash at nape of neck, behind ears, and/or crown of head	eggs hatch in 7 days live 20-30 days	Exclude until child & household is treated. Must be louse free to return.
Diarrheal Diseases (multiple)	abnormally loose or frequent stools, vomiting, sometimes fever	varies 6-14 hours	Exclude until diarrhea is gone for 24 hours or as advised by local health department or physicians.
Impetigo	blisters, crusts, scabs on skin which are flat and yellow, may be weeping	1-10 days	Exclude until on antibiotic Rx for 24 hrs and lesion is no longer "weeping" and forming a yellow crust
Chicken Pox (Varicella)	fever, skin eruption with blister like lesions		Exclude until all blisters have dried
Cytomegliovirus	fever, sore throat		None
Scabies	mite burrows under skin, red itchy rash	2-6 wks-initial exposure 1-4 days-re-exposure	Exclude for 24 hours after treatment is completed
Measles	fever, red eyes, cough, spots on tongue and mouth, blotchy rash		Exclude from time of initial fever till 4 days after rash appears
Pertussis	irritating cough, can last 1-2 months, "whoop" like sound when cough		Exclude until on Rx for 5 full days
Rubella	low grade fever, headache, mild redness of eyes, fine rash		Exclude for 7 days from onset
Meningitis	fever, headache, vomiting, chills, neck pain or stiffness, muscle spasm, irritability	Bacterial: 1-10 days Viral: varies	Exclude until receive Dr.'s permission to return after treatment
Hepatitis A	upset stomach, tired, dark colored urine, light colored stool, yellowish skin and eyes, fever, jaundice, abdominal pain, diarrhea	15-50 days	Exclude for 2 weeks or until 1 week after jaundice

Source: Indiana Division of Family Resources, Bureau of Child Care 3/1/2007

When Do Children Need Vaccinations?

Age	Hep A	Hep B	DTaP	Polio	MMR	Varicella	Hib	*Rota Virus	PCV	*Flu
Birth		X								
1 mo										
2 mo		X	X	X			X	X	X	
4 mo			X	X			X	X	X	
6 mo			X				X	X	X	X annual in fall
12-18 mo	X 2 doses 6 mo apart.	X	X (15-18 mo)	X	X (12-15 mo)	X	X (12-15 mo)		X (12-15 mo)	
2-3 yr										X
4-6 yr			X	X	X	X				X

** Not Required but Highly Recommended Especially for children in child care*

Resources and Referrals

First Steps

North Central Indiana
7221 Engle Road, Ste. 100
Fort Wayne, IN 46804

Phone: 260-207-5799

Toll Free: 1-877-494-5115

Fax: 260-478-4850 or 1-877-494-5116

<http://www.in.gov/fssa/4655.htm>

The goal of First Steps is to help Hoosier families make sure their infants and toddlers receive services now to help them in the future. Services through First Steps are designed to meet the developmental needs of the child include:

Assistive Technology (AT)

Audiological services

Developmental Therapy (DT)

Family education, training, counseling

Health services

Medical services

Nursing services

Nutrition services

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Physical therapy (PT)

Psychological services

Service coordination (SC)

Social work services

Special instruction [Developmental Therapy (DT)/Early Childhood Education]

Speech-Language Pathology (SLP)/Speech Therapy

Transportation

Vision

Fort Wayne Community Schools

www.fwcs.k12.in.us

1200 South Clinton Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Curriculum Services:

Phone: 260.467.2100 - Fax: 260.467.1978

Pyramid for Success:

Phone: 260.467.2100 - Fax: 260.467.1978

Academic Services supports FWCS' Goal I, which is the achievement and maintenance of academic excellence. It supports the schools by providing a rigorous and relevant educational program.

Information for parents including: enrollment forms, school locations, parent

handbook, student support and other parent resources can be found on the website or the FWCS Administrative Building.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/index.html>

For Information on ADHD, Autism, communication and language services or any disease related information, resources can be found at the CDC website.

Super Shots

424-SHOT (424-7468)

Super Shot provides walk in clinic, no appointment is necessary, children will be seen on first come first serve basis. Please plan to arrive early. We serve children from birth thru 18 years of age. Child must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian.

There is an \$8 fee per shot, Medicaid is accepted. No one will be turned away for failure to pay

SCAN

(260) 421-5000

www.scanfw.org

500 West Main Street

Fort Wayne, IN 46802

Scan offers free support services to help parents develop happy, healthy families by providing:

Voluntary in-home visiting to support you and your family

Screens to show your baby's development
Help with medical care, safety, nutrition, immunizations, child

development, bonding and parenting skills as well as help find community resources.

Three Wishes Early Childhood Therapeutic Program

(260) 481-2700 ext. 2137

This program serves children ages 2 to 6 with behavioral and psychiatric problems - problems that prevent them from attending a regular preschool or daycare center.

Provided is a monitoring process to improve the child's emotional well-being through:

basic skill-building, cognitive and developmental stimulation, and therapeutic treatment. These objectives are met through enhancing normal childhood growth and development, facilitating the development of positive self-image and improving a family's capacity to care for their children through parenting instruction. The program's goal is to see the child enter a regular preschool or public school with the skills necessary to be successful from educational and social standpoints. The support and expertise of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals provide the therapeutic services.

Erin's House

260-423-2466 — Office

260-432-5089 — Fax

5670 YMCA Park Drive West

Fort Wayne, IN 46835

Erin's House provides support for children, teens and their families who have suffered the death of a loved one.

Indiana Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC)

1-800-522-0874 — Office

Indiana State Department of Health

2 North Meridian Street, Section Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

WIC is a nutrition program, nationally recognized as an effective means for improving access to nutritious foods, and promoting healthier eating and lifestyles

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

September 15-21 is National Child Passenger Safety Week. Since approximately 85% of child safety seats are being misused nationally, the Indiana State Police encourages parents to take a few extra minutes to ensure their children are restrained properly.

Indiana's Child Restraint Law:

All children under the age of 8 must be properly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat according to the child restraint system manufacturer's instructions. Many parents are confused about the law, so troopers want to help explain the proper and legal way to restrain their children.

- Children under the age of one-year and less than 20 lbs. MUST be restrained in a rear-facing child safety seat. Many newer seats will restrain a child rear-facing up to 30-35 lbs. Troopers encourage parents to keep their children rear-facing as long as possible.
- Children that are at least one-year old and 20 lbs. may be restrained in a forward-facing child safety seat with an internal harness system.
- Children at least 30 lbs. may use a booster seat, but troopers encourage parents to keep their children restrained in a forward-facing seat until at least 40 lbs.
- Indiana law requires all children under the age of eight to use a child restraint system in accordance with the child restraint system manufacturer's instruction, which are based upon the child's height and weight. The child restraint system normally used by children in this age group is the booster seat.
- All children under the age of 16 must be properly restrained either by using a seat belt or a child restraint system, to include a booster seat.

Indiana State Police would like to remind parents and others who transport children the following safety tips:

- Child safety seats must be properly secured to the vehicles seat belt or LATCH system and should not move side to side or forward more than one-inch.
- Children should stay rear-facing until one-year of age and 20 lbs.
- The retainer clip that connects the two shoulder harness straps must be kept at the child's armpit level.
- Harness straps must be kept snug.

Full Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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