

Great Lakes Learning Center Policies Handbook

Philosophy

Our mission is to make childcare a positive, nurturing, and educational experience for you and your child. A program with an emphasis on the development of your child, both as an individual and a member of the community will be provided. A program that will give them the foundational tools for success, as they become lifelong learners.

Welcome

We welcome you and your child to the Great Lakes Learning Center.

Early experiences are important to your child's growth and development. Great Lakes Learning Center can play a significant role during these formative years. We believe that guidance by skilled trained teachers allows all aspects of your child's physical, emotional, social, and mental development to flourish smoothly. Our programs encourage imagination and a natural inquisitiveness for learning. Activities are planned with the understanding that children learn and grow through sensory experiences and active learning situations. Your child is given choices that invite him/her to explore actively. Our Center will reflect today's changing cultural diversity using age-appropriate materials and learning experiences based on the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

We encourage the development of friendships, sharing and a cheerful outlook and self-image for each of the children enrolled in our program. We also encourage and feel strongly about an open communication channel between staff members and parents. This is vital to create an atmosphere and program that will truly benefit your child.

The following information will address and define our policies that you may find to be of the greatest concern. Once you have read these policies over, please do not hesitate to meet with the administrator or director if you have questions. Also, never hesitate to ask your child's direct care provider any questions you may have.

Center Operations

Hours

The Center will be open Monday through Friday, 6:00am- 6:00pm. (The time we open may be adjusted based on the number of children attending.)

Enrollment

A non-refundable registration fee of \$50 per family must be paid to enroll your child. We encourage you to tour the Center prior to enrollment. We also encourage you to bring your child in for some "get acquainted" time before the first day of attendance. An Enrollment Form, Health Record, Immunization Record, Intake Form, Field Trip Permission Form, Photo Permission Form, Emergency Card, Pet Permission, and Health History Form will need to be completed. All forms must be returned prior to your child beginning his/her first day. If your child is transported to or from the Center for school via the bus an authorization for transportation will also be required.

Enrollment can be done either by personal visit or by phone; however, all necessary enrollment paperwork will need to be completed before your child's first day of attendance.

State Licensed

The State of Wisconsin licensed our Center to care for children ages 4 weeks to twelve (12) years old. We can care for, up to 69 children. We strive to meet or exceed the minimum standards for childcare centers. These standards relate to our facility, programs, staff, health and safety procedures, nutrition, ratios, and record keeping. State licensing specialists routinely inspect our Center. Licensing reports are posted above the parent table. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have regarding these reports. The Licensing Book and Center Policy Handbook are also available on the parent table for your review. We believe that licensing and rigid enforcement of standards are in the best interest of all the children enrolled in our Center.

Attendance Hours

We accept children both full time and part time hours. Please refer to our tuition contract, which is included in your parent information packet for further information. We also accept children on rotating schedules keeping in mind that we reserve the right to deny your child's attendance for a day if we are not given their schedule at least a week in advance. This denial may be due to scheduling of staff and the need to always keep proper teacher to child ratios.

To go with attendance, we would also like to add that if your child is not able to go to school, they are unable to come here (i.e.: behavioral or sick)

Current Information

It is particularly important that we have your correct address and phone numbers so that we may contact you in case of illness or accident. *Please advise the office in writing as soon as possible if any changes occur in the following:*

1. Phone numbers where you can be reached during the day and at home.
2. Addresses at home and at work.
3. In case of your unavailability, name and authorized person who may be contacted in case your child becomes ill or injured.
4. Name of authorized person(s) to pick up your child.

Non-discrimination

No person shall, based on race, color, religious belief, nation or ethnic origin, sex, or disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any Great Lakes Learning Center programs or activities.

Special Needs

We will accept all children whose needs can be met in our setting, provided space is available. Although our programs emphasize a child-centered environment, we are not, at this time, able to accommodate children who would require a teacher to collaborate solely with them on a one-to-one basis. We will however make every attempt to accommodate any child that is able to participate and benefit from our program without risk to himself/herself or the other children.

Holidays

We are closed (8) holidays each year:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Should the traditional holiday occur on a weekend, we will remain open during the entire week if enrollment is at ten or more children. If the holiday is nationally observed on either Friday or Monday, we will be closed. Full daily tuition is charged for these holidays unless vacation credit is requested.

Severe Weather

The Center will be open in inclement weather. If we decide to close it will be broadcast on our Facebook page, notification on the ProCare App and Channel 4. If not posted on local news stations please keep in mind we follow the Port Washington-Saukville School district and if they close, we will close as well.

Rest

All children who spend the full day with us will be required to rest. Depending upon their age, children are expected to rest quietly or engage in quiet activities, allowing those who need to sleep the opportunity to do so. A 30-minute rest time will be followed for all ages though because this allows the teachers to get their cleaning done from lunch. Your child does not have to nap once they turn five. If you do not want them napping and they are under 5 years old a doctor's note will be required.

Children are required to bring a small blanket and a sheet for rest time. These items should be labeled with your child's name and need to be taken home weekly for laundering.

Clothing

We request that all children bring a complete set of extra clothing in case of accidents. This includes pants, shirt, socks, and underwear. Your child's name should be clearly marked on all clothing. A lost item is much easier to return if it is labeled. Please ask the administrator or the teacher in your child's room if your child is missing anything. After a reasonable length of time, unclaimed items will be given to charity.

Children should come to the Center dressed in washable, comfortable play clothes. Tennis shoes or other soft-soled shoes are the safest and we recommend that your child wear these. Sandals, open toed, or dress shoes can be dangerous when playing outside. They also tend to be more slippery which could cause your child to hurt themselves.

Also, please consider the outdoor temperature and time of year when your child is dressed. Please bring the necessary outerwear (i.e., boots, hat, mittens, snow pants, etc.) for the weather conditions. We will be going outside every day, weather permitting. Sometimes during the spring and rainy season it is nice to have a pair of boots because the playground will still be muddy. The children enjoy playing outside and it is healthy for them to spend some time each day outside.

The state rule requires us to go outside every day. The infants and toddlers can go out at 20 degrees or above in the wintertime, summertime it's 90 degrees or less. Two and up can go outside at 0 degrees and above and 90 degrees or less in the summer. Please keep this in mind when your children dress for the day.

Personal Belongings

Except for "Show and Tell" days, we ask that children leave their toys, food, gum, pets, and money at home. We provide a wide variety of learning and play materials for each child to use. It is very upsetting for a child to have a favorite toy broken or lost or to lose money. It also may be difficult for the teacher to identify the correct owner of the lost item, especially in the case of money. **We cannot stress this enough, please do not bring toys from home. Save them for a special occasion with a teacher's permission to do so.**

Birthdays and Special Occasions

Birthdays are a special day for all of us! We would like to be part of your child's birthday celebration. We will do whatever we can to make his/her day special here at the Center. If you would like to bring in a "special" nutritious snack or some inexpensive prize (i.e., stickers, pencils, party favors) for the other children in his/her group please plan with your child's teacher or the Administrator.

If there are any other special occasions that you would like recognized for your child, please discuss it with his/her teacher or the administrator.

If your child has special dietary needs, please advise the Center Administration so that we can make sure to post those needs within the Center and log them into our health books so that all staff are aware of any restrictions that may affect your child when a treat is brought in by another child.

Classroom Environment

We believe the environment that your child learns and plays in must be clean and safe. Our staff is responsible for ensuring this type of environment. The staff will group the children and provide play and learning activities geared specially to each child's needs and abilities.

Our mission is to make sure that your child feels safe and secure in his/her environment. Your child will have access to an abundance and wide variety of equipment such as books, educational toys and games, and dramatic play items. Depending on the age of the child, there will be various learning/play stations set up in his/her room such as housekeeping, dress-up, art, music or reading. The children will work or play together in small groups in the learning stations around their room. They also will participate in circle time and other activities the teacher has planned. Many times, parents comment that all they see their child do is play. We feel that given the right environment and tools your child will learn through play. This is their job at this stage in their life. Through this play they will learn many life skills that will carry them through their adult life.

Our center also has a large playground with additional space for running and playing in the large field. It is one block from one of Port Washington's nature trails and city parks that the children occasionally take walks to. Being outdoors will enhance their imagination and let their minds run free through creative outdoor play.

We do not have any religious training held here or taught in the classrooms.

Safety

Arriving at the Center

Our responsibility begins when you place your child in the care of one of our staff members. Absolutely under NO circumstances should your child be sent into the Center on their own. You need to accompany your child into his/her classroom to assure their safe arrival. Also, if you have an infant or toddler, we will need you to complete the information on the Daily report that informs your child's provider of when they last ate, slept, and were changed. This will help us better care for your child and ease their transition from you to us. Also, if you have an older child, please allow enough time at drop off to talk with the teacher to inform them of anything that may be important to care for your child.

All teachers carry a handwritten attendance form with them so that they are aware of all the children they always have in their care. They also carry your emergency contacts with them so that they have all the necessary information in case of an emergency.

If your child is not dropped off at their scheduled time, we will call you to make sure they are safe and to verify their schedule. We will make every attempt to reach you but if we do not, we will leave a message for you. We ask that you return our call and inform us of your child's schedule. We will log this phone call in the office. Please keep in mind if we have not been able to reach you or your child has not come in within 2 hours of making phone calls, we will assume that your child is not coming in for the day and we will be taking them off the attendance.

Leaving the Center

It is necessary that we send your child home only with the parent who enrolled the child or with someone that the parent has specifically authorized, in writing, on the enrollment form. Great Lakes Learning Center abides by all legal and binding court orders. No child will be released to anyone, except those authorized on the enrollment form, without a signed and dated permission slip or phone call from you to release your child to that person. If we do not know the person picking up the child, we will ask for a picture ID. Safety is of our utmost concern, and we do this only in the interest of your child. It is emphasized regularly in staff meetings.

A child will not be released to a parent or an authorized pick-up person if they appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol. If another contact person or authorized person for pick up cannot be reached the authorities will be called and the child/children will be turned over to Social Services.

Pick-up time provides an opportunity to gain experience about your child's day, please ask your child's teacher about his/her day. You will also have access to the ProCare App, and you can check on your child that way as well.

Please be sure to check your child's cubby at the end of the day for any notes or other information that needs to be taken home.

Emergency Evacuation

Emergency evacuation routes are posted throughout the Center. We will be having regularly scheduled fire/tornado/evacuation drills.

In case of an emergency mandating that we leave the building, we will contact you as soon as we know the children are safe and out of danger. Your child's teacher carries the emergency cards that we ask you to always complete upon registration with them, so it is particularly important that all information on this card is up to date and complete.

If you would like to see a more complete copy of the emergency plans for each instance, a copy can be found in the Parent Resource Book located at the Parent Table in the hallway.

HEALTH

Medical Requirements

Wisconsin State Law for childcare centers requires that your child have a Health History completed by a parent/guardian and an immunization record on file prior to your child starting at the Center. A Health Form, completed by a physician, must be turned in within 30 days of enrollment. This form is for your child's benefit and will be kept on file at the Center. The Health Form indicates the results of a physical given by the physician, including any special instructions in caring for your child such as allergies he/she may have. We will provide you with the necessary forms. For all children under the age of two, a physical is required every six months. All children two years of age up to kindergarten will need to have a physical form completed every two years. Any children enrolled in a public or parochial school will only need to complete a Health History form to be kept on file at the Center.

We are not authorized for the care of Mildly Ill Children at our facility.

Illness

Teachers are required to make a health assessment of each child who arrives in the room. Any child who shows signs of illness will not be admitted to the Center. If your child becomes ill at school, you will be notified and asked to pick your child up immediately. If you are not available, the emergency person designated at enrollment will be notified to come and pick your child up. Children who are ill with a contagious disease may not attend the Center. The Center Administrator or Director will determine if the child is too ill to remain at the Center. Any child experiencing the following symptoms should be removed from the Center:

1. A fever of 101 degrees or more
2. Contagious skin or eye infections
3. Diarrhea three times in one day
4. Vomiting

These or any other contagious conditions that develop at school will warrant your child to be isolated on a cot or in a crib within sight of a staff person until a parent or emergency person picks the child up. If a child is suffering from diarrhea or vomiting, they must be free of those symptoms at least 24 hours before returning to the Center. If you believe any symptoms are due to something other than a contagious condition a note from a physician must be given to the Center Administrator or Director to put into the child's file.

Our COVID policy at this time is for ages 2 and over, 5 days out and able to return with a mask on for days 6-10, if under the age of 2 they will need to remain out for 10 days due to not being able to keep a mask on. We go off symptoms start date as day 0 and then count out from there, if there are no symptoms then we go off positive test date. This is the policy the PWSSD follows as well.

Medicine

We will be glad to administer medicine prescribed by your child's physician. The medicine must be in its original container, which clearly states the child's name, the prescribed dosage, the date, and the doctor's name. Any non-prescription medication must be labeled with your child's name and an Administration of Med's request form, including dosage and directions for administration, must be filled out by the parent prior to the staff administering the medicine. **Putting "as needed" in the time for dosage spot, is not permitted by licensing.** There must be a specified time. Medication forms are available at the parent table in the hallway, from your child's teacher or from the Administrator. It will be dispensed only at the specified times shown on the form. All medicines will be kept out of the reach of children. We will refrigerate those that require it. All doses of medication are recorded in the Center medical logbook. Parents have access to those parts of the log that concern their child. Please keep in mind that your child should not come to the center if sick and medicine should not be given to mask symptoms of any kind.

Communicable diseases

When your child is suspected of having a communicable disease the County Public Health Nurse will be notified by administration. Your child will be watched for symptoms and parents will be notified by signage throughout the Center and in some cases a note that will be sent home in your child's cubby. Your child may be readmitted with a physician's statement. State statutes prohibit reporting of AIDS cases.

If your child should become infected with a contagious disease, please notify the Center immediately so the Center Administration can notify other families who may have been exposed to the contagious disease.

Reporting Absences

If a child is going to be absent, please notify the Center. If a child is ill, it is required that the parent notifies us of the nature of the illness. If a child that is scheduled to attend for the day does not come in, we will call the parents or guardians within 1 hour of their scheduled time to ensure that everything is okay. If your child is not here within 2 hours of their scheduled time, if you have not responded to us reaching out, we will assume your child is not coming and we will be taking them off the schedule for the day.

Injury

If a child is injured while attending the Center, first aid will be administered. The teacher who was present at the time it occurred will complete an accident report. You will be provided with a copy of this, and one copy will be kept at the Center as well. We are required to note accidents in our medical log. A parent may review those parts of the medical log that concern their child. If treatment by a doctor is needed, we will make every effort to contact you and/or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In the event of an emergency, we will make sure that your child receives the necessary emergency treatment until we can reach you. The authorization for emergency treatment on the enrollment form must be signed when you enroll.

Emergency Medical Treatment

If your child sustains a more severe injury the Rescue Squad will be called. If after the Rescue Squad's evaluation, they deem that your child needs treatment at a hospital, one of the following hospitals will be used if neither you nor your emergency contact can be reached.

St. Mary's Ozaukee – 13111 N. Port Washington Road, Mequon
Aurora Medical Center- Grafton- 975 Port Washington Rd. Grafton, WI 53024

You will be asked to designate which hospital you prefer on your child's emergency card.

Child Abuse

We are required by law to report any suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect. The teachers will report any suspected incidents to the Administrator and to Child Protective Services.

Confidentiality

We take confidentiality of child and family information profoundly serious at Great Lakes Learning Center. We hold our employees responsible to comply with this rule and non-compliance could result in dismissal. Our employees are told not to discuss or to disclose the personal information of any child in our care.

However, this does not apply to:

- ❖ The parent or a person authorized in writing by the parent to receive this information.
- ❖ Any agency assisting in planning for the child when informed written parental consent has been given
- ❖ Agencies authorized under s.48.78, Stats.
- ❖ A parent, upon request, has access to all records and reports maintained on his or her child
- ❖ All records required by the Department of Children and Families for licensing purposes are available to licensing representatives.

Center Cleanliness

Our Center is designed to be easily cleaned and maintained at a high standard of sanitation. It is cleaned daily. Staff clean and disinfect changing tables after each diaper change, cots, and cribs weekly after rest time, and lunch tables, before and after eating. Preventative pest control is also conducted.

Personal Cleanliness

We work to develop a sense of personal hygiene with children. Our teachers model this behavior by washing hands before and after feeding, eating and toileting/diaper changing. Your child's wet or soiled clothing will be changed promptly, and the clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. Hand washing, a favorite activity for children, occurs after toileting and before and after meals.

Outdoor Play

Each room's daily schedule includes at least one outdoor time. State licensing requires that we include outdoor time when weather permits. The fresh air and movement help to promote a child's wellbeing and general good health. If children are dressed properly, weather conditions should not pose any health risk. If a child is well enough to attend our Center, he/she is well enough to participate in outdoor activities. Please supply appropriate clothing, allowing for the Wisconsin weather extremes. Children do not go out if the temperature/wind chill is less than 20 degrees for infants and toddlers. 2 years old and up are allowed to go outside with the temperature as low as zero. We cannot keep individual children inside for health reasons. If you feel your child is too sick to go outside, then they are too sick to attend care for the day.

Nutrition

Lunch will be provided by the Harbor Club; breakfast and snacks will be provided by the center. Every snack is planned to meet a child's nutritional requirements set forth by the US Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program and the State of Wisconsin Licensing Regulations for Child Care Centers. These requirements ensure that each child receives a variety of foods that contain the proper nutrients needed for growth and development from the basic food groups and provide food experiences that promote ethnic and cultural diversity. Meals are served in a "family style" atmosphere which encourages integration and role modeling of appropriate manners and socialization between the children and their teacher. Children are encouraged to try new foods but are not forced to eat. Food is never used as a reward or punishment. We ask that you do not send food from home except if your child has a special dietary need prescribed by a doctor. The parents will provide this food.

Menus

Snack Menus are developed weekly and posted in your child's room. Please inform us in writing of any food allergies your child may have. Substitutions may be possible. If special foods must be prepared for your child, you will be asked to provide them.

If you would like to join your child for a meal or snack at any time, please notify the Administrator or Director. You are always welcome!

Please do not send candy or gum with your child.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served at 9am every day and can be provided by parents or otherwise it is provided by Great Lakes Learning Center.

Lunch

Lunch is served every day at Noon and can be provided by parents, otherwise food is provided by the Harbor Club upstairs. A protein, vegetable, bread form, fruit and milk will be served. It is especially important to provide choices, which include the four major food groups.

Snack

An afternoon snack is served after nap time or rest time, or when the school age children arrive back at the Center. Two of the following components are served: bread form, fruit/vegetable, milk, and protein. Occasionally children prepare their own nutritious snacks under teacher supervision for a learning activity. Please let the teacher know of any special ethnic food you would like to introduce to the class for snack time.

Food from home is not required, however if you do choose to provide, we need to make sure we are following our state guidelines so you will be asked to bring in the following - For snacks, it would need to be 2 of either a fruit - For lunches they need a grain, a protein, 2 fruits or veggies (can be 1 of each of them or 2 of one of them).

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

At Great Lakes Learning Center, we believe each child is a unique individual. Therefore, our programs are based on the individual social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of each child. We believe children are happy and secure when they have plenty of opportunities to succeed each day. Success breeds self-confidence, and self-confident children approach learning as fun and actively search for information and problem-solving opportunities. As a result, they develop into well-rounded, capable adults. Our programs emphasize helping the children's development of positive self-esteem and self-confidence in themselves and their learning capabilities.

Our programs are developmental, and we believe that children's interests and skills must guide our curriculum planning. Planning efforts respond to the direction of a child's learning. We believe that the process of learning is more important than the content of learning. Activities are designed to emphasize the experiences children are having rather than what results from activities. The creative process is more important than what is created. Helping children learn how to learn is what is important.

Each child is assigned to his/her own classroom depending upon his/her age and developmental level. The following are some brief descriptions of our different programs.

Diapering

Please supply an adequate number of diapers and wipes. Disposable diapers are more convenient, but we respect your wishes to use either cloth or disposable diapers. If you are using cloth diapers, you are asked to supply enough plastic bags each day for each diaper change. Licensing does not allow rinsing of cloth diapers. They will be placed in the bags after use and must be picked up each day. Soiled diapers will not be kept at the Center for more than 24 hours. If you use additional items for diapering such as powder, lotion, or salves, please give us a supply as needed.

Clothing

Your child will need two complete changes of clothes (keeping in mind the seasonal changes). Please mark all clothing with your child's name. They will be stored in their plastic bin. State law requires that children go outside each day the weather permits so please dress your child in appropriate outerwear. Please note that children getting dirty is normal so please keep that in mind when sending your child to school. Sending them in clothing you are okay with getting dirty is best.

Toilet Training

When your child is enrolled, we ask that you complete the intake form to make us aware of your child's toilet habits. If your child is not yet toilet trained, you will need to supply us with diapers. Toilet training will begin when appropriate for each child's age and stage of development. In compliance with State regulations, no child will be toilet trained younger than 18 months of age. Parents will be consulted on the methods used at home. Feedback will be provided on each child's progress at the Center.

Children will be offered frequent opportunities for toileting, particularly after meals and before sleep periods. We will collaborate with you to train your child. Toilet training should be a positive experience with lots of praise for doing well.

Objectives for successful Toilet Training

1. Keep the child comfortable
2. Give the child a sense of pride and accomplishment

Infant and Toddler Program

The infant and toddler program is designed to help our littlest students start blossoming and growing and hitting those milestones! Activities are planned to meet children's goals both individually and as a group. Lesson plans with themes will be created to help develop the brain.

Preschool Program

The preschool program is designed to meet the individual needs of each preschool child. Activities are preplanned and posted in the preschool room for your preview. The children will be involved in a wide variety of activities, which will involve both small and large motor skills. It is important for children to bring their own belongings and experiences to share with their class. Therefore, the children will have one day a week for show-n-tell. Each month new themes will be designed with activities for the week to correlate with the themes. Preschool children will learn to recognize colors and some letters of the alphabet. They will learn many fingerplays and songs to enhance their learning. Projects will also be done to help them become more coordinated with using scissors and coloring. These planned activities will enhance sensory, cognitive, social, motor, and communication development among the preschool students.

Clothing

Comfortable, washable play clothes are best. We would like all children to wear tennis or other non-skid shoes to avoid accidents. NO open-toed shoes, please. Your child should be dressed to allow for outdoor play in all weather. All children are expected to have an extra set of clothing at the Center, including pants, shirt, socks, and underwear. Children may have accidents that soil clothing so they will need to have replacement clothes that are suited for the weather and fit well. Please label all clothing clearly with your child's name.

Linen

Your child is required to have a sheet and blanket for his/her cot if present at the Center at naptime. Label it clearly with your child's name, pick it up on your child's last day of attendance for the week, launder it and return it on the first day of attendance the next week. Personal sheets are necessary to maintain a sanitary environment and prevent communicable diseases.

Cubbies

Your child will have a cubby for clothing and personal items. It will be labeled with your child's name. Please check it daily for correspondence.

School Age Program

The school age program will be set up to help each individual child. If you feel your child needs extra assistance with subjects that he/she may be having problems with, in school, please talk with their teacher or the Program Director. We will arrange a schedule to conduct individual tutoring for your child at the Center while he/she is present. With your permission and direction, we can contact their teacher and ask for guidance as to what would be the most helpful route to follow in helping your child.

Besides helping them to excel academically, your child(ren) will be exposed to a wide variety of activities. Some of these will include, but are not limited to, arts/crafts, indoor/outdoor games, songs/music, science and nature and various special activities. These games, projects and activities will create a well-rounded, inviting program that will be offered both before and after school.

Summer Program

Summer is a time for relaxation and fun for children; therefore, the children enrolled at Great Lakes Learning Center during the summer will be involved in recreational activities. We will continue to have monthly themes and conduct activities around those themes. The children will experience a wide variety of activities (i.e., field trips, nature walks, hiking, arts/crafts, sports, library programs etc.). If you feel your child needs tutoring during the summer months, we will collaborate with you to plan a schedule that will maintain your child's self-esteem and allow him/her the freedom to participate in the activities being planned.

Field Trips

Some of the many learning experiences we offer are derived through educational field trips. We enjoy giving children the opportunity to gain experience about our community by providing exciting recreational and educational field trips. Parents are notified by teachers of upcoming field trips through the parent newsletters and calendars. The Authorization for Field Trip Form must be signed for your child to participate. We will provide the same responsible adult supervision for these excursions as is provided for the children while in attendance at the Center. Parents are welcome to accompany us on any of the field trips.

Transportation will be provided by:

1. Bus rental
2. Walking

The following is an outline of our Transportation Policy:

Great Lakes Learning Center contracts with a licensed bus company for any transportation of children. The transportation we provide is for field trips only. We do not transport to and from home or school. We will keep on file, a copy of the bus companies' certificate of insurance and documentation from them certifying that their drivers and buses meet all standards set forth by licensing rule DCF 251. All buses used for transportation of our children will be equipped with the vehicle safety alarm system.

As always, staff members are responsible for knowing who is always in their care. This is no difference for field trips. Added caution must be taken whenever we leave the premises for a trip.

The following procedure shall be followed for all field trips:

- ◆ A field trip permission form will be completed by the parent authorizing the child to participate in and be transported for the field trip and other activities.
- ◆ Before boarding the bus make sure that children have a Great Lakes Learning Center contact information sticker placed on them. This information will include the address and phone number of the Center so someone can immediately be reached in the case of an emergency.
- ◆ An emergency card for each child shall accompany the staff member on the field trip. This card will include parent contact, physician, or medical facility information. It also will include written consent from the child's parent, for emergency medical treatment.
- ◆ A count of children will be taken as they board the bus and the staff member responsible for the group of children will carry handwritten attendance with their emergency cards. A face-to-name count will be taken to ensure that all the correct children are accounted for as well as a number count. They also will report the number of children to a lead staff member that has been put in charge during the field trip.
- ◆ A count of children will be taken once they are seated on the bus.
- ◆ Children will be seated on the bus according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- ◆ As the children get off the bus to participate in the field trip a count of the children in each staff member's care shall be taken. Periodic count checks will continue throughout the field trip.
- ◆ As children board the bus after the field trip a count will be taken. The person in charge will verify that all children have returned to the bus.
- ◆ When the children return to Great Lakes Learning Center a count will be taken before the bus leaves the premises. Also, the lead staff member will walk from the front to the back of the bus to ensure that all children have left the bus and are in the care of their teacher.

Under no circumstances will children be sent into a building alone or be out of sight of Great Lakes Learning Center staff.

In the case of an emergency, such as a missing child, medical emergency or vehicle accident, the child's parents, the police and Great Lakes Learning Center director will be called. At all times, the safety of **ALL** the children will be the priority.

We do not provide transportation; we contract with Johnson Bus Company in Port Washington.

Staff Training

Following a careful selection process, each staff member receives an orientation before beginning to work in the classroom. All teachers are qualified according to State Child Care Licensing Rules. Teachers are selected who exhibit qualities of nurturing ability to encourage development of the child, and ability to provide age-appropriate learning environments.

Upon entering the classroom, training is done on a continual basis for all teachers. Teachers that work full time must take 25 hours of continuing education each year and those that work part time must have 15 hours of continuing education. Along with this training the Administrator and Program Director observe the teachers and provide feedback to them to ensure the competence of each staff member.

The staff will be trained on SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) and know the dos/don'ts of how to prevent it from happening and if it does know the signs. This will be an annual review of the training and any fresh staff coming in will be required to take the training.

Referral Services

Classroom activities allow us to observe your child engaged in many different situations. We also use developmental checklists and portfolio assessments to ensure that all children are within the age-appropriate range of skill development. If for some reason delays or problems are suspected, we will collaborate with you to make a referral to an appropriate community agency for assistance or further evaluation.

The program director or administrator can explain other programs or answer questions regarding referrals and evaluations and/or serve as an advocate if requested.

Guidance

Our goal is to help children develop self-control, self-esteem, an understanding of choices and consequences and respect for others, materials, and environment. This can only be done through a positive relationship between teachers, children, and families. In many instances, problems can be avoided by establishing environments and routines that promote appropriate behaviors. The use of positive reinforcement planned age-appropriate activities, and establishing limits with children that are understandable for them, assist in the development of a warm, nurturing classroom.

Children's behavior will be guided by setting clear limits or rules for children. We will talk with children about expected behaviors and model those behaviors consistently for them. We will state positively what children can do, using specific terms (e.g., "you need to walk" rather than "don't run"). Undesirable behavior will be redirected to another activity. Children will be given a wide variety of age-appropriate activities to choose from and will be given the attention they need before they demand it. Behavior management will be for the purpose of helping children develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others.

We understand that there will be times when a child will become distraught, fussy or will not quit crying. Our first action in these situations will be an attempt to determine the cause of the distress. It may be related to a basic need such as hunger or discomfort, or it may be that the child just needs some extra time and attention. We understand that crying is normal, and that all babies will have times when they cannot stop crying. At these times, we will stay calm and will do whatever we can to soothe your child. Sometimes this may mean just allowing the child to cry for a few minutes and then trying again. However, there also may be times when we need your advice or assistance, and we will not hesitate to call you if it is necessary.

If a discipline problem arises, the teacher will re-direct the child to an activity that will promote expected behavior. When disruptive behaviors continue beyond reasonable lengths of time and forms of redirection prove futile, a child may be given a brief time to sit out from an activity to rethink options. This re-direction can only be given to a child who is 3 years of age or older. The time frame for the re-direction will be 3 mins or less. At no time will a child be left unsupervised.

Guidance means setting limits, guiding behavior, and helping children to learn appropriate behavior. Guidance should involve problem-solving that is appropriate to the age and developmental level of the child. It is important to never confuse guidance with punishment.

If a child's behavior is consistently dangerous to other children/teachers/self, we will call you and ask you to meet with us to discuss an immediate course of action. If no solution can be found, termination procedures may be set in motion as a result.

Guidance for children under three years will be limited to redirection.

There may be times when events at home result in a change in your child's behavior in the classroom. Please communicate with the teacher so that together we can help the child work through their feelings and continue to positively interact with other children in the center.

Termination

On rare occasions, we may find it necessary to ask parents to make other arrangements for childcare because we cannot meet the needs of their child. Reasons for termination may be a child's continuing behavior that is harmful to other children or is incompatible with group care; the Center's inability to accommodate a child's special needs; or the parent's failure to complete required forms or pay fees per the payment schedule.

Initially we will talk verbally with you regarding any problems that we are encountering. If we do not solve the issue at that time, we will set up a meeting with you to try to resolve any serious problems, however, if we cannot come to a mutual agreement a written 2-week notice will be given to you regarding your child's termination from the center.

Great Lakes Learning Center will not tolerate or permit the use of any abusive disciplinary methods such as but not limited to, hitting/spanking, slapping, yelling, withholding food, ridicule, embarrassment, or humiliation of a child by anyone in our Center. We will always try to guide them the best way we can and follow positive reinforcement.

Parent Involvement

How Parents Can Help

Great Lakes Learning Center aims to be supportive of your parenting role and supplement the development of your child's future in a positive and professional manner. We realize that many parents feel some anxiety when leaving their child at the center, and that this is a normal part of the adjustment process. If you feel anxious about your decision, your child may sense this and have a harder time adjusting. Please consult the Administrator or Program Director regarding any concerns you may have.

Special Celebrations

Individual classes will usually have regular seasonal celebrations and activities such as Thanksgiving, Harvest, winter holidays, Valentines, Independence Day, etc. Parents are encouraged to bring in information or ideas for any special nondenominational ethnic holidays that their family may celebrate.

Room Visitations

A parent understanding that the first days are difficult, helps children's adjustments. If your schedule allows, you may drop in for a brief visit any time you wish after your child has adjusted. We always have an open-door policy, **unless there is a court order in place**. We invite parents to unique events and encourage them to share talents, unique skills or describe their occupation or cultural heritage to children. Please let your child's teacher know of your willingness.

Volunteers

Volunteers to accompany the children on field trips or to observe programs in the classroom are always welcome. Frequently, parents form committees to organize parties for holidays and festive times. The Administrator will be happy to collaborate with you on this.

COMMUNICATION**Parent Meetings**

Every winter and spring we will schedule a formal opportunity for you to meet with your child's teachers. This will give you a chance to discuss, in depth, your child's program, his/her progress and any concerns you may have. Do not feel that you need to limit conferences with your child's teacher to these times. Please feel free to set up a teacher/parent meeting anytime that you feel one is necessary.

Lesson Plans

The teacher of each classroom will complete weekly lesson plans which all parents are invited to review. They are posted on the classroom bulletin boards. The lesson plans provide information on activities planned, morning and afternoon, and skills that are being developed through these activities.

What We Did Today

The teacher in each classroom will post this on the ProCare app, reporting on the group's activities for each day. The Infant and Toddlers will use the ProCare app as well and it is a digital daily sheet. A brief explanation of why these activities were chosen may also be included. This provides a convenient, quick means for you to be informed of your child's daily activities and becomes an enjoyable conversation starter with your child on the drive home.

Fundraising

We invite the parents to assist in fund raising efforts from time to time. Your help in these projects only benefits the children. Money raised is used to defray the cost of field trips and unique events. Before any fundraiser is started, an explanation of what the funds will be used for will be provided to you.

Newsletter

Each month the Center will publish a newsletter containing information on special activities, concerns, parenting information and other news items. This will be emailed to each family at the beginning of the month. Some ideas that you may utilize with your child at home may also be included.

Staff

To help you become better acquainted with the staff involved with the care of your children, there are pictures of each staff member hanging in the hallway with their job titles and classrooms.

MISCELLANEOUS

Pictures and Videotapes

On occasion the children will be videotaped or photographed by center staff or local newspapers. Upon your child's enrollment we will ask that you complete a Photo Permission Form.

We also will have a professional photographer take your child's picture each year. Notices will be sent out to advise you of the date and time. If you would like your child to be dressed in a special outfit but do not think it would survive the entire day, feel free to send along other clothes and let the teacher know you would like your child's outfit changed.

No Smoking

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the Great Lakes Learning Center or in the immediate outside areas of the building.

Transportation

We provide no transportation to or from home to the Center.

Fees and Tuition

Tuition charges, payment policies and schedules are reviewed yearly. This is a separate handout. The tuition and payment policies and all agency policies are filed with the Department of Children and Families.

Parent Questions and Concerns

Communication is important between parents, teachers, and the Great Lakes Learning Center. If there are concerns about what your child is doing in the classroom, please talk with your child's teacher. If you are unable to achieve a satisfactory conclusion to the problems, please see either the Program Director or the Administrator. When situations or problems arise which may require administrative input or policy interpretations the Administrator will be responsible for answering all your questions. We value the children in our care, their parents, and our employees. We will continually work to earn the trust you have placed in us. We will strive each day to provide the best possible care for your child/children in the community.

Contingency Plans

Fire:

Fire drills will be practiced monthly. At the signal, children will stop their activity and proceed out the door and across the street to the church parking lot. A head count will be taken and matched with the daily attendance sheet. The lead teacher will take the attendance sheet and emergency action forms upon exiting the building. The assistant teacher will check the building for children before exiting. The assistant teacher will call parents to arrange a pick-up, and the lead teacher will supervise the children while waiting. Children shall be housed in the church across the street or in the Saukville Public Library while waiting.

Tornado:

A tornado drill will be practiced monthly during the following months: April, May, June, July, August and September. At the signal, children will proceed down the basement stairs where they will sit with their heads between their knees with arms and hands covering their heads. The lead teacher will take the attendance sheets and emergency action forms, and the assistant teacher will check the upper level for any remaining children. Once in the basement the lead teacher will do a head count and match against the daily attendance sheet. Parents will be called to pick up their child/children, once it is safe to do so.

Extreme Heat or Cold

We would follow and be advised by the local news stations on whether it is safe to go outside or if we should stay inside. With this we would also follow the State guidelines on temperature, wind chill and heat index to know if it is safe to bring them outside as well. If conditions are unsafe all around, then we would close the center for the day if necessary.

Loss of Building Services

We would bring the children upstairs to Harbor Club to see if they would be able to house us for a period of time and according to DCF and licensing guidelines that we would need to follow.

Human Caused Events

In the event of threats to the building or occupants, we would immediately call the police/911, we would shut all doors, create a barricade by the doors, close the shades and have the children hide under tables or in a safe space with their teachers and be directed to be as quiet and still as possible. The app we use to stay in touch with parents is on our phones so we would send out a message updating parents to let them know of the situation and that we are as safe as possible. We would wait for police instruction that the scene is safe and clear. Drills will be practiced monthly. We do not provide transportation unless it is a field trip. In case of an accident, we would call 911, wait for the police to arrive, make sure the children are safe and contact all parents.

Allergic Reactions

We would notify the parents immediately of the reaction and what is happening. If it is a life-threatening reaction such as anaphylactic, we would call 911 immediately and then someone else would get the parents on the phone to make sure they knew we were calling the ambulance.

Open Door Policy

All parents have the opportunity of observing children whenever they wish and are encouraged to share their opinions regarding these observations.

Great Lakes Learning Center

**425 W Walters St
Port Washington, WI 53074**

Thank you for choosing Great Lakes Learning Center as a means of educating and caring for your child. We believe each child is an individual with unique ideas and capabilities. Our mission is to make them feel loved, secure and to help them reach the potential that is within them by giving them the tools and self-confidence they will need to succeed.

I have carefully read the information in this handbook and have met with the Administrator or Director regarding any questions. I understand and agree to abide by the statements and policies contained in this handbook.

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian

A copy of this page will be kept in the children's file.