



# Parent Handbook

Policies and Procedures  
2016

## Welcome to the Family

We are pleased to welcome you to the nation's premier family-operated, values-based, educational child care—Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™. Our commitment to our children and their families is exemplified by our use of the lighthouse, long recognized as a symbol of safety, strength, and guidance.

This handbook contains the basic policies and procedures used in each of our facilities. Please read it carefully; sign the acknowledgment form on the last page; and return the form to your director.



### **PROPRIETARY NOTICE**

The material contained in this handbook is proprietary to Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™. Any unauthorized use is strictly prohibited. Any person, copying, duplicating, or otherwise using any portion of this materials without the written permission of Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ will be subject to prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

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## Mission Statement

Our goal is to nurture the development of each child's full potential—  
intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically—in an atmosphere of safety and trust.

## Core Values



We believe that each child is an individual, with his or her own unique set of strengths, talents, and gifts.



We believe that every child has a right to excellence in all aspects of early childhood education.



We believe in the importance of teaching character values, and more important, in modeling their use in our interactions with children, their families, and one another.



We believe in the use of positive discipline strategies that lead children to become self-disciplined.



We believe that honest and frequent communication between the school and the home positively impacts children's success.



We believe in the importance of continuing professional development and personal growth through educational opportunities and supportive communities of learning.



We believe that every teacher and staff member can make a difference in the lives of the children and families we serve.

## Policy Statement

The policies and procedures contained in this handbook are effective as of September 2016. All policies and procedures are reviewed annually. Should any of these policies and/or procedures be updated, revised, or otherwise changed, parents will be notified via email. Parents will receive a new handbook via email and may always request a physical copy at the front desk.

# Our Curriculum

## Infants and Toddlers

The Comprehensive Infant Curriculum is a complete program for infants from birth to 18 months of age. This curriculum, together with teacher and parent support, provides everything needed to address the needs of the “whole child,” and gives your infant a strong foundation across all elements of early development.

The comprehensive Toddler Curriculum builds on this early learning by emphasizing the interrelationship among the teacher’s expertise, the child’s interests, fundamental principles of child development, the child’s unique family context and culture, and social interactions with other children and adults.

## Preschool: Two Years through Private Kindergarten

Our preschool program uses our proprietary Lighthouse C.A.R.E.S.™ curriculum, which is based on the following five foundations:



**C**HARACTER VALUES EDUCATION. Our **comprehensive** curriculum focuses not only on intellectual development, but also on healthy social and emotional growth through systematic character values education.

The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.

Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

**A**CTIVE ENGAGEMENT. Activities are designed to promote active learning through a “hands on” approach that **allows children to explore** the world in which they live.

Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

**R**ESearch-CENTERED PRACTICE. Learning activities are grounded both in time-honored practice, such as learning through play, as well as in **current research findings** in the field of neuro-education. “Brain-based” learning strategies, for example, reveal that memory and creativity are enhanced by music, movement, and artistic expression.

Music and language are partners in the brain.

Our sense of song helps us learn to talk, read and even make friends.

DIANNA DEUTSCH

**E****MBEDDED CONTENT**. Our **fully-integrated** curriculum is characterized by thematic units which combine the key skills of reading and mathematics with learning in the content areas of science and social studies.

**Children’s brains need to be immersed in real life, hands-on, and meaningful learning experiences that are intertwined with a commonality and require some form of problem-solving.** STEPHEN RUSHTON

**S****TANDARDS-BASED OBJECTIVES**. Every learning activity is **carefully planned** to meet or exceed both national and state standards. **K.2.01 Compare attributes of two objects using appropriate vocabulary.** North Carolina Standard Course of Study, Kindergarten.

Lighthouse C.A.R.E.S.™ incorporates three primary times of focused learning: The Learning Wall, Lesson Plan instruction, and classroom Discovery Centers (both “free choice” and assigned rotations). Each classroom is equipped with the following Discovery Centers: Literacy, Math and Manipulatives, Science, Art, Technology, Blocks and Building, and Dramatic Play. Individual classroom teachers also add a variety of centers--including thematic prop boxes, book boxes (highlighting a specific book, such as The Very Hungry Caterpillar), and sensory tubs--tied to our monthly themes. In addition, our Discovery Centers are equipped with a wide variety of activities furnished by our two primary vendor partners, Kaplan Early Learning Company and Lakeshore Learning. All preschool children receive instruction in both Spanish and American Sign Language.



### **School-Age Children**

The purpose of the afterschool school-age program is to provide an environment for our elementary children that is filled with both fun and enrichment. Every CLLC School-Age classroom is complete with displays, decorations, and fully-equipped Discovery Centers. Centers at this age include Science, Manipulatives, Blocks and Building, Art, and Library, as well as Homework and Snack Stations.

In addition to the many child-directed activities contained in the Discovery Centers, “Schoolers” may choose to learn about one of several themes offered, including *Our World, Our Lives, Our History, and Our Planet*. The overall curriculum of the School-Age program is based on the book, Creative Resources for School Age Children.



## Technology Use Guidelines

The use of technology tools—whether devices, programs, or processes—is a valuable means of supporting and enhancing learning. Interactive technology devices used at CLLC locations may include computers, laptops, tablets, interactive learning tables, interactive books and games, Smart boards, and digital cameras. CLLC policy emphasizes the use of interactive technologies and specifically limits the use of passive technology. Screen time, of any kind, is prohibited for children under two years of age.

## Physical Activity

Our center is taking a proactive approach to helping children stay physically active. In each classroom, there are activity areas set up to encourage physical activity. Physical activity occurs in each classroom during structured and unstructured time. We also promote large motor development outdoors. We spend time outside each morning and each afternoon as weather permits. While outdoors, children have opportunities to run, climb, jump, pedal, push and pull etc. They are encouraged to participate in group games that are physically active that help develop their gross motor development.

Our playground environment sparks the children's imagination and serves as an integral part of physical development. Physical activity and exercise are encouraged to teach a healthy lifestyle. The equipment on the playground is safe and inspected regularly by our teachers and director to ensure that they remain that way. We have separate play areas to ensure child safety. The infants and toddlers play in different areas than our pre-school and school aged children. At the end of the day, the children may be grouped together with low child/teacher ratio and appropriate supervision. Your child's safety is one of our greatest concerns.

Our center is a play-based program, utilizing best-practice in the field of early education.

The safety of food brought from home must be ensured by refrigerating or other means to maintain the appropriate temperature.

- Provide strategies to educate children and parents on nutrition.
- Providing parents with information about foods that may cause allergic reactions.
- Providing sample menus of healthful lunches for parents whose children bring food from home.

## Character Development

Our exclusive program of character development is an essential part of each of our programs. By planning targeted activities and modeling desired traits, our children are consistently exposed to such positive values as cooperation, helpfulness, patience, respect for diversity, kindness, and gratitude. Not only does this instruction aid in establishing good habits for the future, it also reduces the incidence of misbehavior in the classroom. Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, our newly-revised monthly themes will include the following character values:

- C**ooperates (September)
- H**elps Others (October)
- A**ppreciates Humor (March)
- R**esists Impatience (December)
- A**ccepts Responsibility (April)
- C**ares and Shows Kindness (May)
- T**rusts and Is Trustworthy (February)
- E**xpresses Gratitude (November)
- R**ecognizes and Celebrates Differences (January)



### Show and Tell

Show and Tell times, typically held on Friday mornings, are a valuable part of our curriculum and a special venue for encouraging language development. Classrooms generally rotate Show and Tell among a few "Show and Tell Stars," designated each week, so each child has a chance to have his or her special time to share. Occasionally, your child's class will have an "All Class Show and Tell," such as "Bring a Bear Day" or "Bring Something Red Day." These special times are noted on your child's "Calendar Connections." (See "*Lighthouse Connections*" in the *Parent Communication* section.)

Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers™ is not responsible for lost personal items or clothing. Please do not send personal possessions with your child unless specifically requested. Toy guns or weapons of any kind are prohibited at all times.

## Positive Discipline Strategies

At CLLC, “discipline” is defined as **training by instruction or example**. CLLC policy prohibits the use of any form of negative discipline, including “behavior charts” or any similar reward/punishment technique. Ten positive discipline strategies, which are of benefit to both teachers and parents, are:

**D**evelop a plan. *Be familiar with the personalities and needs of your individual children, as well as overall developmental guidelines for your age group.*

**I**gnore the misbehavior, if possible; *but remember...you are ignoring the **behavior**, not the **child**.*

**S**tructure the environment. *Children who are engaged in creative and meaningful learning activities have few behavior problems.*

**C**hoose your battles. *Ask yourself, in the grand scheme of the day, how important is this?*

**I**nvolve the child through choices and consequences. *Provide children with as many choices as possible according to their development levels. Teach children that their actions have consequences; and that **they choose** whether or not to follow the classroom/family rules.*

**P**rovide privileges in relation to responsibilities. *Subtly (but consistently) reinforce the connection between “the more responsible we are” and “the more things we get to do.”*

**L**earn to ACT instead of REACT. *Action is both self-driven and positive; reaction, on the other hand, is negative and implies that someone or something else is in charge of actions.*

**I**ncrease your consistency. *Children want to be able to depend on us—even when they are testing their boundaries (and you!).*

**N**otice positive behavior. *The most impactful discipline strategy for young children is to “catch them being good.” Children want our attention; and they will settle for negative attention if they can’t get positive attention. Encouraging words, combined with engaging and developmentally-appropriate activities, are the most important tools a teacher (or parent) has in his or her toolbox.*

**E**xcuse the child for some “self-time.” *This strategy should be used sparingly and only as a last resort. If a child’s behavior has become disruptive or physically aggressive, the child should be “excused” from the group. The purpose of “self-time” is not to punish the child, but to give him/her a chance to re-gain control.*

## Prohibited Strategies

CLLC maintains a **zero tolerance policy** regarding any forms of discipline or guidance which involve harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline methods **are strictly prohibited**:

1. Corporal (physical) punishment, including grabbing, squeezing, pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
2. Threats of corporal punishment;
3. Any punishment associated with food, naps, blankets/toys, or toileting;
4. Picking up, lifting, and/or dragging a child by hands or arms;
5. Hitting or tapping a child with hand or instrument;
6. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
7. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
8. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
9. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet, with or without the door closed;
10. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age; and
11. Inappropriate restraint of a child.

Staff members at CLLC are specifically trained in the use of positive guidance methods, and may only use discipline strategies which encourage the development of self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction.

## An Individualized Approach

Discipline strategies are individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward the goal of "self-discipline." In addition, we believe in establishing open, honest communication concerning every aspect of your child's development and in working as a team to achieve the desired results. If necessary, we will meet with you to complete a Behavior Modification Plan if the child's inappropriate behavior is deemed by us to be a safety concern or to be a disruption to the classroom environment. As a last resort, we reserve the right to deny services due to aggressive and/or unsafe behaviors exhibited by the child or parent.

## Discipline Guidelines to Remember

- ♥ *The goal of discipline is self-discipline.*
- ♥ *Discipline is not something you do **TO** the child. It is something you do **FOR** the child.*
- ♥ *Love, in the absence of instruction, will not produce a child with self-discipline, self-control, or respect for his fellow man.*
- ♥ *The proper attitude for a child's misbehavior is, "I care too much about you to let you act like this."*
- ♥ *Every child is important and deserves to be valued.*

# Parent Communication and Notifications

## Parent Information Board

A statement of where to locate the center license, state and local inspections, and additional parent access information is located on the Parent Information Board in the front hallway. This board will also include the name of the person in charge of the center, a current list of employees, visitor information, and weekly menu.

## Classroom Information Boards

Parent Boards, posted outside each classroom door, include, but are not limited to, the following types of information: teacher biographies and photos, “key learning” and scope and sequence posters (one each for fall, winter, and spring), daily schedule, and weekly lesson plans (if applicable).

The classroom Teacher Board, posted inside the classroom, includes the following types of information: state licensing ratio chart, student allergy list with photos, opening and closing procedures, cot assignment and numbering list, lesson plans, and daily schedules.

## Preschool Lighthouse Connections



In addition to informal discussion with teachers at the beginning and end of the day, posted notes, and work sent home, Lighthouse Connections offers parents four additional forms of communication:

1. **Calendar Connections**, which provides you with a monthly classroom calendar and note, highlighting the monthly activities and special days;
2. **Curriculum Connections**, which gives parents answers to such questions as: *How can I encourage my child’s reading and language development at home?*
3. **Collection Connections**, which allows busy parents to be involved in their child’s learning by collecting needed supplies, such as menus or clear plastic bottles, and by modeling care of the environment through recycling<sup>1</sup>; and
4. **Character Connections**, which complements our character values instruction by providing parents with “at-home” activities and resources (beginning in September of 2016).



These resources may be distributed as both flyers and/or website posts, depending on your local center location.

<sup>1</sup> These items may be included as a part of your monthly classroom calendar of activities.

## Daily Communications Log

The Daily Communications Log, which may be distributed as a “hard copy” or electronically (depending on your local center), contains information for families of infants and toddlers concerning daily activities such as toileting, meals and snacks, naps, overall mood of the child, and classroom activities.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring that contact information (email address, phone number, address etc.) is up to date. To update contact information with the school, parents may do so in writing at the front desk or via email to the center director

## Center Websites

The Children’s Lighthouse website, <http://www.childrenslighthouse.com>, provides links to each of our individual center locations. Children’s Lighthouse information and photos may also be accessed through our Facebook page.



## Parent Observations

CLLC maintains an **open door policy** at all times. We welcome parent visits and invite you to observe your child through the classroom hallway windows at any time; however, we do ask that you spend no more than five minutes in the classroom during “drop off” and “pick up” times to minimize disruption for the other children.

## Parent Conferences:

Conferences will be periodically to discuss your child's progress and development. These conferences will be offered to parents to exchange information a minimum of 2 times per year. Please feel free to discuss any questions/concerns you have at any time with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will be able to speak with you or you may make an appointment so that we can have someone cover his/her class for a more in-depth conference at any time. Information from teacher observations and written assessment is shared during these meetings.

## Parent Surveys

Parent surveys are conducted at selected times throughout the year. Please take a moment to complete the parent survey so we may better serve your needs. Your opinion is important to us.

## Opportunities for Family Involvement

**Celebrations and Birthdays.** Seasonal holidays, cultural celebrations, and birthdays are special days for our children and their families. In order to broaden our children’s cultural experience, we encourage you to talk to your Center Director about sharing your family’s unique traditions. If you would like to provide food for a special day, please make sure that your food is commercially-packed, with all ingredients clearly listed, so we may safely

accommodate our children with food allergies or dietary restrictions. PLEASE NOTE: We do not allow any peanut product, including peanuts, peanut butter, or food cooked in peanut oil, because of the high incidence of severe peanut allergies among children.

**Special Events.** Individual centers sponsor a variety of events for children and family participation, including annual book fairs, “Fall Fest,” Spring Fling,” and others. These events will be noted on your center’s annual and monthly calendars.

**Classroom Visitors.** Do you (or a family member) have a special skill, hobby, or talent that you would like to share? For example, we have been visited by a mother who played a musical instrument, a grandfather who was a beekeeper, and a father who raised chickens! Whatever your special gift, we would love to have you share it with your child’s class. Please contact your Center Director for more information.

**Collections.** Because we value authentic, hands-on learning experiences, we are always on the lookout for interesting “stuff” to enhance our learning center materials and “Prop Boxes.” For example, if your Monopoly™ game is missing its cards, save the houses. We will use them for counters in our Math and Manipulatives Discovery Center.

## Parent Concerns

If you should have any concerns regarding your child or center policies and procedures, or if you would like to schedule a conference with your child’s teacher, please do not hesitate to contact your Center Director.

## Treatment for Pests

As part of commitment to provide your child with a safe, pest-free learning environment, Children’s Lighthouse periodically applies pesticides to help manage insects, weeds and pathogens. Pesticides are applied only by trained and licensed technicians. Should you have any questions concerning our pest prevention please contact a school administrator.

# Licensing Information

## Local, State, and National Inspections

Each Childrens Lighthouse Learning Center™ is licensed by the state in which it operates. Every center is also inspected and monitored by state and local licensing agents, fire inspectors, and health inspectors. These inspections typically focus on staff qualifications, facility and playground maintenance, health and safety guidelines,

nutrition, record-keeping, and specified child: staff ratios. In addition, a representative of the Children’s Lighthouse Home Office Team will visit each center periodically through the year to monitor the categories listed previously, as well as our national curriculum and materials standards. Parents may review these standards, as well as inspection reports, at any time with their local Center Director. In addition, Center Directors will also provide parents with essential licensing contact information, such as telephone numbers and applicable websites.

## Child Abuse Awareness

### Education and Training

According to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), child abuse and neglect affect about 6 million children in the United States each year. Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ trains employees on the prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse situations. The training must be completed within 90 days of employment and yearly thereafter. The training includes opportunities for feedback, as well as a written questionnaire, to ensure that all staff understand the information presented.

Children’s Lighthouse is also committed to increasing awareness of this very important issue through a combination of education and support for the families we serve. CLLC informs both parents and staff by sharing information concerning child abuse and neglect prevention methods, as well as warning signs of abuse, through a combination of memos, monthly newsletters, and electronic communications through our website, Facebook®, and Twitter®. Parent information concerning child advocacy organizations and the detection and prevention of abuse are included in the “Parent Resource” section at the end of this handbook.

### Mandated Reporting Requirements

State law mandates that teachers and childcare employees report suspicions of child abuse and/or neglect. Failure to do so can result in legal liability. A report is not an accusation, but a request for investigation and possible help for the family involved. Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ complies with all state and federal laws for reporting child abuse and/or neglect. We want all of our children to be safe and well-cared-for—not just while in our care, but always. If you would like more information on the mandatory reporting requirements for your state, please contact your Center Director.



## Child Advocacy Information

Your local or state Child Abuse Hotline is listed on your Tuition Contract and/or Enrollment Form. Parents of children who are/have been victims of abuse or neglect may contact local child advocacy websites, state child protective services, or local law enforcement to obtain assistance and/or intervention. A list of your community child advocacy websites and other information concerning child abuse may also be obtained from your Center Director.



**National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-Child (1-800-422-4453)**

# Enrollment Policies and Required Forms

## Non-Discrimination Enrollment Policy

CLLC offers educational childcare services to all interested families within our local communities. Our enrollment policies are based on non-discriminatory policies and laws. We do not discriminate on the basis of religion, color, race, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, or any other factor prohibited by law. Children are admitted to our program as openings are available, based on the order of their enrollment application and receipt of the designated registration fee.

## Confidentiality and Children's Records

All information contained in your child's records is privileged and confidential. Parents or guardians may have access to their child's records at reasonable times upon request. Please contact your Center Director should you wish to add or update any information contained in your child's records. Updates might include such information as: changes of address, telephone, employment, and/or names of persons authorized to pick up your child. Your child's records will be kept for the minimum time specified by your state's licensing regulations. Should you require a copy of your child's file, an administrative fee may be charged.

## Children with Special Needs

CLLC makes reasonable accommodations for children with special needs, based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or similar assessment and as indicated on your Enrollment Form. Please note that "reasonable accommodations" do not include adjustments to the classroom's child: teacher ratio. (See also: "Required Enrollment Information" below)

## Required Enrollment Information

All forms provided to you upon acceptance **MUST** be completed before your child may attend. To enroll (or re-enroll) your child, you must complete and sign the Enrollment Form, as well as any other local and/or state-specific forms required by licensing regulations. Those forms/information include, but are not limited to, the following:



CLLC and state required **Enrollment Information Form**, which includes basic information about you and your child, and which will be given to you upon payment of the registration fee. All families should maintain current information by calling, emailing or giving updated information to the director via email (the school email address can be found both on the website and Center Specific Sheet).



**Authorized Release Information**, included in your Enrollment Form, includes the names, address, and telephone number(s) of all persons that you authorize to pick up your child from your center. CLLC will only release your child to an authorized person, specifically designated by you, in writing. For the safety of your child, we will require that a photo ID be presented EACH TIME the authorized person picks up your child;



**Tuition Agreement**, which must be completed and signed. **PLEASE NOTE:** Children's Lighthouse reserves the right to change or modify fees and/or policies with a two-week notice. CLLC reserves the right to deny services due to aggressive and/or unsafe behaviors exhibited by a child or parent. In rare cases, this denial of service may be immediate if the behavior is deemed unsafe for staff, our children, other parents, or school property. Information regarding payments, charges and separation procedures can be found in the Tuition Agreement.



**Applicable Health Forms**, specific to your state, must be completed prior to admittance. These forms may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A copy of your child's **current immunizations** or a signed affidavit stating the reasons immunizations have not been given. NOTE: Most states require **Vision and Hearing Screening** at the age of four; your Center Director will furnish you with specific requirements for your state.
- The **Ongoing Medication Form**, for children who require daily medication.
- The **Allergy Alert Form**, for children with allergies.
- The **Physician's Recommendation and Health Statement**, which is often combined with the immunization forms. PLEASE NOTE: Children's Lighthouse Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Physician's Statement stating that your child is physically able to participate in a group care setting (such as CLLC provides) must be signed. We accept children in compliance with the ADA. If your child has special needs, please furnish a copy of his or her IEP, or similar document, for inclusion so we may provide the very best care for your child;



**Video Monitoring and Photo Release Form**, which may be included as a part of your Enrollment Form. (Please see "Photo Use and Internet Video Monitoring" below for additional information.);



**Infant Feeding Schedules**, if applicable, must be completed and updated as needed or every thirty (30) days—whichever comes first. (Please see "Nutrition" in the Health and Safety section for additional information on infant feeding.);



**Transportation Agreement**, for children participating in our “Schooler” transportation service;



If there are **Court Orders** affecting the custody of your child, you must furnish a certified copy of the court order, signed by the presiding judge. While CLLC will ensure that we are in compliance with the court order on file for your child, it is our policy to remain neutral in all custody matters. Your center may not be used as a visitation site, nor will we be responsible for determining compliance with parent visitation schedules;



**Sunscreen Permission Form**, may be a part of your enrollment packet or may be distributed at a later date;



**Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form**, which is included at the end of this handbook; and



**Any Additional Forms Required by Your Local Center or State**



**Center Specific Information Form**, which will provide information specific to the Children’s Lighthouse location where you are enrolling.

## Parent Orientation and Resources

Our center conducts an orientation to the family at enrollment. In this orientation, parents are introduced to the center’s policies and procedures, review the Tuition Contract and Center Specific Information sheet, take a tour of the facility, are offered resources on child development and other relevant topics, and given the opportunity to ask questions.

## Photo Use and Internet Video Monitoring

CLLC staff often take photos of our children in the classrooms and/or playground. While most of these photos are used solely for classroom projects, some may be used on our website, in marketing materials such as brochures or flyers, in center publications such as the parent handbook, and/or for staff development purposes. If you prefer that your child not be included in these latter categories, please check the appropriate box on your Enrollment Form.

Many of our local centers offer internet video monitoring for parents. These “real-time” videos not only offer parents the comfort of knowing their child is in good hands, but also provides a unique glimpse into their child’s daily work and play. Naturally, the security of our children and center are a primary concern; therefore, any use of these videos—including reproduction, printing, or image duplication—is prohibited without prior consent by the Center Director. If video monitoring is offered at your local center, please sign the **Video Monitoring and Photo Release Form** in your enrollment packet.

## Notification of Withdrawal

If you must withdraw from our center, for any reason, you are required to provide a two-week notice by completing the **CLLC Notification of Withdrawal form**, available from your Center Director. If proper notification is not given, you will be responsible for the payment of a fee equal to two weeks' tuition.

## Re-Enrollment

Should you wish to re-enroll your child, new enrollment information must be submitted, along with the applicable registration fee, provided an opening is available.

# Schedules, Arrivals, and Departures

## Daily Operation

Our centers are open year-round, Monday through Friday, with a few exceptions, such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. You will receive notice of any closures due to holidays or staff development days. Tuition fees remain the same, regardless of school closures. A specific list of your center's operating hours and scheduled closing dates is available from your Center Director.

## Severe Weather Procedures

If severe weather necessitates closing, early dismissal, or late arrival, we will communicate with you through both our website and the local news station (if available). Tuition will not be exempt or prorated because of severe weather closing or if a state of emergency has been declared.

## Public School Closures

If your child attends public school and that school closes for a holiday break, snow day, or any other reason, you will be required to pay an additional fee for your child to stay with us for the entire week or day. Please refer to your Tuition Agreement or contact your Center Director for additional information.

## Absences, Sick Days, and Vacations

If your child is enrolled at one of our centers on a full-time basis, you will receive a number of "absentee credits" for each calendar year. Please see your Center Director for additional information about **Absentee Credits**. If your child will not be in attendance, please contact the center as soon as the decision has been made. You may call and leave a message on voicemail or email the school. This will help for us to be able to plan for staffing, activities and meal preparation.

## Daily Arrival and Departure

For your child's safety, please escort him or her, preferably holding hands, while in the parking areas and hallways; and deliver them to the classroom door each day. The same routine should be followed when picking up your child. Make sure that the classroom teacher is aware of your child's arrival/departure. In addition, parents are required to **sign in and out** of the center at the front desk.

## Identity Codes

As an added safeguard, each center is locked at all times. Upon enrollment, parents/guardians will be assigned an identity code to use when entering our school. **DO NOT** give this code to any other person. Persons other than parents, guardians, and staff may enter by ringing the doorbell.

## Release of Child to Authorized Person

Children will not be released to any person that is not specifically designated on your Enrollment Form. Each authorized person will be required to show photo identification, such as a driver's license. This information will be copied by our office personnel. Once the person's identity has been confirmed, an **authorization sticker** will be given to said person, who must give it to the child's classroom teacher. Teachers will place the sticker on your child's daily sign in/out sheet to record the authorized pickup.

## Release of Child to Unauthorized Person

If there is an emergency which requires an unauthorized person to pick up your child, you must make arrangements, **beforehand and in writing**, with your Center Director.

## Late Pick Up

Please make every effort to pick your child up on time—he or she is eager to see you! If something prevents you from being on time, you should 1) Arrange for one of your authorized persons to pick up your child or 2) Notify the center immediately if your emergency contacts are not available.

If your child is not picked up by the school's closing time, and you have not notified the center, the following steps will be taken:

- 1) We will attempt to contact you and/or your authorized persons.
- 2) If we are unable to reach you or any of your authorized persons within thirty (30) minutes after the center's closing time, the Center Director (or designated person in charge) will decide whether and when the state Child Protective Service (or other appropriate authority) should be contacted. This decision will be based on your state's child care licensing regulations.
- 3) If authorities are contacted, they will be given the emergency contact information listed on your Enrollment Form.

**Under no circumstances** shall the Center Director or any CLLC employee take your child home. A late fee of \$1.00 per minute (\$10.00 minimum), based on the center's clock, will be charged.

## Medical Policies











Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ is committed to providing a safe environment for our children, parents, and employees. All persons on our property must adhere to acceptable safety practices and standards.

### Communicable Disease

We value your child's health and recognize the importance of preventing infectious diseases, particularly in a child care setting. If any child in our care is diagnosed with a reportable disease, as specified by your center's state licensing agency, parents/guardians of the other children will be notified. If you would like additional information about reportable diseases in your state, please contact your Center Director.

### Illness: Signs and Symptoms

Please do not send your child to school if he or she exhibits any of the following conditions and/or symptoms:

-  Any reportable condition that the local health department or your child's physician has determined to be contagious. In this instance, your child may return upon receipt of a physician's release note;
-  Any fever higher than the temperature allowed by your state licensing agency;
-  Colored discharge from the nose;
-  Constant, deep, or hacking cough;
-  Sore throat with swollen tonsils or glands, white spots in throat, or throat that hurts when swallowing;
-  Undetermined rash;
-  Stomachache accompanied by vomiting, abdominal cramping, and/or diarrhea;
-  Signs of conjunctivitis, such as redness or discharge from one or both eyes;
-  Complaints of ear pain, followed by fever; and/or
-  Head lice and/or eggs.

If any of these signs or symptoms appear while your child is at school, he or she will be kept separate from the group; and you will be contacted to arrange immediate pickup. In many cases, children will not be allowed to return until 24 hours have passed without symptoms.

### Immunizations

A copy of your child's **current immunizations** or a signed affidavit stating the reasons immunizations have not been given must be on file before your child may attend. NOTE: Most states require **Vision and Hearing**

**Screening** at the age of four; your Center Director will furnish you with specific requirements for your state. Similarly, a **TB test** may be required, depending on your center location.

### **Influenza Information**

Influenza, commonly called “the flu,” is caused by a virus which affects the nose, throat, and lungs. According to the U. S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), influenza, unlike the common cold, can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications. Severe flu complications are most common in children under two (2) years of age; however, children under the age of five (5) commonly need medical care. “Flu Season” can begin as early as October and last as late as May. For additional information, please read the CDC publication, “The Flu: A Guide for Parents,” included in this handbook and/or contact your Center Director for specific state guidelines regarding the influenza virus.

### **Handwashing**

*Handwashing is like a "do-it-yourself" vaccine. It involves five simple and effective steps--Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry--you can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so you can stay healthy. Regular hand washing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others.*

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)

CLLC emphasizes stringent hand washing and sanitation procedures (such as “covering” a cough), both as a part of our daily routine and as a specific part of our curriculum, beginning at age two.

### **Health Check**

When appropriate, CLLC staff may conduct periodic health checks prior the child’s admittance to the classroom and/or throughout the day. A **health check** is a visual and/or physical assessment taken in order to identify potential concerns—such as signs or symptoms of illness or injury-- about a child’s health. (*Please refer to the previous section, “Illness: Signs and Symptoms,” for a basic “health check” list.*)

### **Medical Emergencies and Accidents**

In case of an accident, care for the injured child is our first priority. If the emergency requires immediate attention, we will call 911. (Your emergency medical permission and preferred treatment facility is listed on your Enrollment Form.) If the injury requires treatment, but is not serious, you will be called to pick up your child and take him or her to your physician. Minor incidents or accidents, such as a splinter or skinned knee, will be treated, documented, and reported to you on the day of occurrence.

## Medications

CLLC recommends that you dispense medication to your child before or after the school day. (Most physicians can provide a prescription for 12-hour dosages of medication.) If medication must be dispensed at the center, CLLC will use the following guidelines:

- Medication must be signed in on the **daily medication log**, located in the front office, and given to a member of our management team at the front desk. Additional forms may also be required by your individual state licensing agency.
- **Prescription medications** must be in their original packaging or container and be clearly labeled with dispensing/dosage instructions and your child's first and last name.
- **Nonprescription, or "over the counter," medications** can only be administered according to the label instructions, including recommended age-appropriate dosages. Nonprescription medications must be in their original packaging or container and be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name and the date it was brought to the center. No OTC medications will be given for longer than two (2) weeks without written permission from a physician.
- If your child requires **ongoing medication**, please complete the **CLLC Ongoing Medication Form**, available from your Center Director. Additional forms may also be required by your individual state licensing agency.
- **Topical medications**, such as sunscreen, diaper ointments, or teething gels, may not require physician approval, depending on your individual state's licensing requirements. If your state does require physician approval, your Center Director will provide you with the appropriate state forms.
- If your child has an **adverse reaction** to medication, we will document his or her symptoms and call you for immediate pick up.
- **All medication** must be taken home every Friday or on the child's last day of attendance. CLLC policy prohibits the storage of medications over the weekend, except in the case of emergency medications.

## Provisional Medical Care

Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ employees receive CPR and first aid training according to their state's licensing requirements; however, CLLC employees are neither licensed nor trained to provide medical care. Our employees may not provide invasive medical treatments, determine medication dosages, or administer injections (except for a prescribed "EpiPen" or similar injection for the treatment of severe allergic reaction). Please ask your Center Director if you have any additional questions about medical care.



# Health and Safety Policies

## Animal Friends

Learning to care for an animal can be a positive influence on the development of such character traits as responsibility, helpfulness, and compassion. CLLC classrooms may include class pets, such as a fish, hermit crabs, or hamsters; and veterinarian statements, when applicable, will be available for review. With prior notice, pets are welcome to visit the classroom for “Show and Tell;” however, we ask that you not bring unauthorized animals into the building.

## Appropriate Attire

To keep your child safe on the playground, make sure that he or she wears shoes that are rubber-soled and closed-toe, with either a closed heel or heel strap. Also, we are very active-- both inside and outside—as we explore our environment. Please send your child in washable, durable play clothes. In addition, please send an extra set of clothing, clearly labeled with first and last name, to be kept in your child’s cubby—just in case. CLLC is not responsible for lost clothing.

## Biting

As you are well aware, biting is not an uncommon occurrence among young children. Biting may be used by the young child to compensate for his or her lack of language skills, in order to make his or her needs known, or as a simple expression of curiosity—*I wonder what she tastes like*. At CLLC, we take every precaution to minimize biting in each of our locations. Should you have any concerns regarding a biting incident, please contact your Center Director. PLEASE NOTE: CLLC adheres to strict confidentiality rules concerning the children in our care. We do not release the names of children or families who may be working through this developmental stage.

## Breastfeeding

As a company committed to excellence in all areas, CLLC will provide mothers who wish to breastfeed their new baby with a comfortable seat in our facility. In addition, please let us know if you would like to provide breast milk for your child while he or she is in our care. Breastfeeding Education – a compilation of breastfeeding education and support resources in the community is available to parents.

## Consumer Product Recalls

CLLC partners with two exemplary leaders in the field of early childhood education materials—Kaplan Early Learning and Lakeshore Learning—to ensure the safety and quality of our classroom environments. Any materials recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) will be immediately removed from our centers.

Parents may access recall information, which is typically posted on a weekly basis, at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov). Recall notices will include pictures of the items, as well as procedures and contact information. In addition, you may sign up to receive email notifications from the CPSC at [www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx). We encourage all parents to make sure there are no recalled products in the home.

### **Diapering Procedures**

Teachers in our infant and toddler rooms are fully-trained in safe diapering procedures, including proper sanitation of the changing area and hand washing for both teacher and child. In addition, teachers are required to wear gloves when changing diapers. Every diaper change is recorded on your child's **Daily Communication Log** (described in "Parent Communication and Notifications" section). PLEASE NOTE: To ensure your child's comfort, **parents must provide** diapers, baby wipes, and any needed diaper creams or ointments.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plans**

CLLC has plans for emergency evacuations in accordance with your state requirements. All classes routinely practice fire and severe weather drills. Documentations of emergency plans and drills may be viewed in the front office. If you have questions regarding specific state requirements, please ask your Center Director.

### **Employee Restrictions**

Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ employees are selected solely on the basis of their performance in teaching within a CONTROLLED and FULLY-SUPERVISED environment. Although our employees are discouraged from providing any type of "after hours" child care services to our families, we are unable to prohibit such activities. PLEASE NOTE: CLLC will not be held responsible for any incident involving an employee contracted for services outside the employee's CLLC work schedule. In addition, we offer no assurances of fitness/qualifications of our employees in any situation other than our professionally supervised environment; and none should be implied or inferred under any circumstance.

### **Gang-Free Zone**

A gang-free zone, which includes such locations as schools, playgrounds, and video arcade facilities, is an area in which a gang-related activity is subject to an increased penalty under individual state laws. These laws typically prohibit any type of gang-related criminal activity within 1000 feet of a school or child care facility.

### **No Cash Policy**

To ensure the safety of the children in our care as well as our employees, we do not accept cash payments, nor do we keep cash "on hand."

## Nutrition

CLLC is proud to offer nutritious and delicious, “nut-free” meals and snacks with no added high fructose corn syrup. Menus are available at the front desk. Most CLLC locations provide lunch, as well as morning and afternoon snacks.

- We must ensure the safety of the children in our care by restricting the exposure to foods and liquids that are hotter than 110 degrees F.
- Our staff are educated on food allergies and will take precautions to ensure children are protected.
- Any prepared food that is brought into the program to be shared among children is commercially prepared OR prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials.
- Healthy snacks (as listed by the Texas Department of Agriculture) are available for school aged children as students arrive.
- Teachers are restricted from rewarding good behavior or clean plate with foods of any kind.
- Milk, fresh fruit and vegetables are available for children who bring lunches from home.

**Menu Policies:** Our menu policies are structured to provide children with a variety of foods with different colors and textures to include whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables; less processed items; and foods that meet the Dietary Guidelines for American guidelines established by the USDA. The USDA Guidelines and sample menus are available upon request.

Children need balanced meals while at school. This will help their bodies to grow and develop. Offer your child a variety of fruits and vegetables that are easy to eat and look appealing for example cooked carrots are easier to eat than raw carrots. Consider adding new foods while at home instead of sending them to school. Healthy food alternatives handout is available upon request.

Parents should be aware of foods that may cause allergic reactions such as but not limited to: peanuts, tree nuts of any kind along with nut butters, dairy or lactose allergies, eggs, wheat, soy, and shellfish. For more information, please request the handout entitled, “Food Allergies in Children”.

**Infants and toddlers** are fed according to your instructions; CLLC does not provide food for the infants in our care. Please complete the **Infant Feeding Schedule** and update it as needed or every thirty (30) days, whichever comes first. Please let us know, as your child begins to eat “table food,” if you would like her or him to participate in our snack/meal program.

## Home Lunch Practices

Should you choose to provide a replacement snack or meal for your child, you will be responsible for meeting his or her nutritional needs. (*For additional information, please refer to “Celebrations and Birthdays” listed in the Parent Communication section.*)



The safety of food brought from home must be ensured by refrigerating or other means to maintain the appropriate temperature.



· Provide strategies to educate children and parents on nutrition.



· Providing parents with information about foods that may cause allergic reactions.



· Providing sample menus of healthful lunches for parents whose children bring food from home.

## Quiet Time

Specific age groups will have a scheduled time to relax and recharge. Small blankets may be provided for this time if your child needs a special “loveey.” Children who do not nap will be offered books to look through or other quiet activities. Ask your Center Director if you have other questions regarding quiet time.

## Toilet Training

When you are ready to begin toilet training your child, CLLC is on your team! We have scheduled (and unscheduled) potty times for our toddlers and twos who are just learning to use the toilet. We will document your child’s progress on your Daily Communication Log.

## Transportation: Field Trips

Only children five (5) years and older will be transported, on a fully licensed, inspected, and insured school van or bus, for field trips. Neither parent nor staff vehicles may be used to transport children. You will receive prior notification of scheduled field trips and will be required to complete **written consent/permission forms** for your child to be able to participate in any field trip.

## Transportation: School Age Children

CLLC provides transportation to and from designated public and private schools in fully licensed, inspected, and insured buses or vans. School-aged children who ride our vans/buses are expected to report to the bus immediately following school dismissal.

## **Water Activities**

During the hot summer months, most of our CLLC locations offer outdoor “splash play” water activities. Parents will be sent a permission form to sign for any water activities that involve swimming and/or a lifeguard.

## **Weapons**

Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ does not allow any type of firearm or other weapon to be carried on our property and/or any event sponsored by CLLC. An exception may be made for sworn law officers, if required by law. Please see your Center Director if you need additional information.

## Parent Referral Program

You can earn tuition credits when you refer a family to our center and they subsequently enroll. Once they have been enrolled for four (4) weeks, you will receive one free week of tuition for one child.

**Free Tuition! It's that simple!**

See your Center Director for additional information.

## Franchise Information

Are you interested in having a Childrens Lighthouse Learning Center™ of your very own?

Call 817.529.0574 or visit our website at [www.childrenslighthousefranchise.com](http://www.childrenslighthousefranchise.com)

## Additional Parent Resources

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns regarding your child's growth and development—whether school-related or not. The following list contains family website resources that you may find helpful:

<http://www.cdc.gov> provides a wealth of user-friendly materials on such topics as healthy living, disease control, developmental milestones, and emergency preparedness.

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov> offers nutrition information for parents, as well as games and songs for children.

<http://www.2.ED.gov/parents> sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education, topics on this website range from early childhood education to planning for college

<http://www.preventchildabuse.org> offers information on preventing child abuse as well as positive discipline tips for parents.

<http://childwelfare.gov> provides a wide variety of local, state, and national links to parenting and family topics

<http://www.families.naeyc.org> posts a wide variety of articles on subjects of interest to parents of young children

In addition, the following resources are included in this handbook:

1. A Promise for Prevention
2. "What to Do Instead of Shouting or Spanking"
3. Annual Developmental Milestones Checklists, Ages 1-5
4. The Flu: A Guide for Parents

**Can't find the information you want?**

**We are happy to assist you in locating any resources that you may need.**

## Acknowledgement of Receipt

I have read and fully understand the policies and procedures set forth in the Childrens Lighthouse Learning Centers™ Parent Handbook. In addition, I have received a printed or electronic copy of the handbook for my personal reference in the future.

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Printed Name of Parent or Guardian

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Signature of Parent or Guardian

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Date

