
James R. Russell
Child Development Center
at
Creighton University

Parent Handbook

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2222 Burt St. Omaha, NE 68178
402-280-2460

Director, Carol Houser
Assistant Director, Shanna Harald

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Description of Services

Ages of Children Served

The James R. Russell Child Development Center serves children age 6-weeks to 5-years-old.

Days & Hours of Operation

The James R. Russell Child Development Center is open from 6:30 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday, except for University holidays and two teacher work days. The work days are decided prior to the beginning of the fiscal year and generally fall on days of low attendance such as the Wednesday before Thanksgiving or the Monday following Easter. Written notices of all closings are made to the parent, except in cases of emergency. A calendar including all closing dates can also be found on the Center's website on the Events page. Classrooms will close at 5:55 pm and children will gather in the main hallway to read stories/play until pick up time. If you need to gather anything from your child's classroom or speak with the teacher on a topic, please plan to arrive before 5:55 pm.

Child Development Program

The James R. Russell Child Development Center provides nurturing essential to the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical growth of the child. Children are immersed in both outdoor and indoor play. The day consists of child initiated activities and teacher initiated activities. All children have the opportunity to play individually, play as part of a small group, nap/rest, read and explore books. Age-appropriate literature is read with children every day. Teachers foster language and social development by talking, interacting, and modeling appropriate language and behavior throughout the day.

Please see individual classroom schedules for more information.

Special Services Provided

The James R. Russell Child Development Center has the unique advantage of being located on Creighton University campus. We have student employees and volunteers contributing at the center on a regular basis. On occasion, children in our center are invited to participate as research subjects for research projects on campus.

Parent Training and Education

All parents are invited to participate as part of our Parent Council. Regular meetings provide the opportunity to learn more about topics of interest. Parents are also encouraged to attend parent education opportunities in the community – flyers will be posted on the Community Board for upcoming events.

Parent Expectations

At the time of enrollment, each family is provided a copy of the Parent Handbook and Billing Policies. It is our expectation that parents read, understand and follow the policies and procedures of our organization.

Center's Authorized Representatives

Director, Carol Houser
Assistant Director, Shanna Harald
2222 Burt St.
Omaha, NE 68178
402-280-2460

Child Care Licensing

The center is licensed by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. All regulations pertaining to child care centers are followed, including regulations from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Nebraska State Fire Marshal's Office, and the Douglas County Health Department.

At the time of enrollment, each family is provided a copy of the "Parent Information Brochure for Licensed Child Care" from the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services. This brochure describes how regulations can be accessed, how child care licensing staff can be contacted, and how complaints can be made.

For questions regarding Child Care Licensing:

800-600-1289 (toll free)

Child Care Licensing

Department of Health and Human Services

PO Box 94986

Lincoln, NE 68509-4986

dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx

New Family Orientation

Welcome to the James R. Russell Child Development Center at Creighton University. We are proud of our NAEYC Accredited program and are eager to inform you about the program, the teacher, and the policies that assure your family a safe, healthy, and accepting learning environment for your child. Your family orientation will better acquaint you with the Center.

New family orientation from a Center administrator includes:

- A tour of the facility including a verbal explanation of the program curriculum, with an in-depth review of the classroom for the new child
- Introductions to the Center teachers
- Review of the enrollment paperwork and procedures
- Reviewing the Parent Handbook

The administrator will explain and answer questions about:

- The Center's relationship with Creighton University
- The Center's philosophy and curriculum goals and objectives
- The Center's commitment to families
- The Center policy on guidance and discipline
- The variety of ways that the teacher and administration communicates with families, including communication in their preferred language or translation (as is feasible)
- How the Center addresses IFSPs, IEPs, and other individualized plans for children with disabilities and other special learning or environmental needs
- Health and safety precautions and requirements, including building security and access, medication policies, health exclusion guidelines, and emergency plans
- How the Center handles food allergies/restrictions
- The tools that are used to negotiate differences and difficulties that arise in interactions between families and program staff
- Information on payment of fees, meals and snacks, and arrangements for naptime
- Information on preschool field trips including: how parents are notified, the safety precautions that are used for trips, first aid supplies, and alternative transportation arrangements if there is a problem with the transportation vehicles during the trip

New family orientation from the classroom teachers includes:

- Work schedules and photos of the teachers
- What to bring for the child
- Where to store child's belongings

- How the teachers communicate with the parents including the Parent File
- A conversation about the child's needs and temperament

Accreditation

The Center is accredited through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC established the accreditation system in mid-1980 to help families find the best education and care for their children and to provide the early childhood education field with a credible means by which to identify and meet standards of excellence. Accreditation involves a comprehensive process of internal self-study, an external professional review to verify compliance with the Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs, and documentation of substantial compliance with the Criteria. Less than 5% of Centers nationwide hold NAEYC accreditation.

A few of the many things you can find in an accredited center are planned learning activities appropriate to the child's age and development, frequent, positive, and warm interactions among teachers and children, respect for cultural diversity, a healthy and safe environment for adults and children, and so much more...

You can learn more about the Accreditation Criteria and Program Elements by visiting NAEYC's website at www.naeyc.org/accreditation.

Program Statement

Mission Statement

The Center is committed to this three-fold mission: to serve young children, to serve their parents, and to serve the students of the Creighton community.

Philosophy

The James R. Russell Child Development Center provides nurturing essential to the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical growth of the child. The care and education of the child is based upon a partnership between the Center and the family. The Center is committed to supporting each family and the family's goals for the child. The teachers hold a sacred respect for the child, which serves as the foundation for the care routines and curriculum.

The Jesuit tradition of service to others is a key element of the Center's philosophy. Teachers, parents, and students are dedicated to the concept of serving others, at the Center, in the community and the world.

History of the James R. Russell Child Development Center

The James R. Russell Child Development Center was established in 1982 to meet the childcare needs of the parent who is a student, staff or faculty member of Creighton University. Children ages six weeks to five years are served in a high quality environment, where teachers nurture and educate the whole child.

The Center participates in the educational mission of Creighton University by providing an opportunity for students to work directly with the children, learning about the young child's development, and gaining valuable work experience. Many students volunteer at the Center as a component of their course work.

The Child Development Center is named in honor of James R. Russell, who served the University from 1979 to 1998. Mr. Russell was instrumental in establishing on-site childcare at Creighton and advocated continually for the well-being of the children and staff. Largely through the efforts of Mr. Russell, the University relocated the Center in 1997 to a building designed for young children.

Curriculum

In the past 75 years, research has focused on the distinct stage of life that is called childhood. The research illustrates the characteristics particular to early childhood, including the belief that 60 percent of a child's growth in cognitive, emotional, and physical skills occurs between birth and age six. The application of the knowledge of early childhood to teaching is called developmentally appropriate practice and this is the foundation upon which the Center's environment and practices are built.

The teachers use Creative Curriculum's Teaching Strategies Gold to engage the child in the ways he/she learns best with experiences and materials that challenge his/her mind and imagination. These experiences reach just beyond the child's level of mastery. Play materials are carefully selected to project heterogeneous racial, sexual, and age attributes that are consistent with the community and society. The teachers facilitate the play and are co-learners with the child. The child's interests and abilities are the key to expanding his/her knowledge. The teachers use these interests and abilities when adapting Creative Curriculum for the child's classroom. The child's curiosity is valued and sustained as he/she explores and interacts with the materials, the children, and the teachers.

Learning takes place individually as well as in a small community of children working cooperatively. Children learn best in this interesting atmosphere where they feel safe, valued, and secure and encouraged to explore.

Center Goals

The goals of the Child Development Center are to help the child grow physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially, and to care for the child in a loving and accepting atmosphere. The teachers assist the child in becoming a self-assured, happy, and responsible person. As the child's concept of the world is expanded, he/she is taught to relate to others, to value friendship, and to respect and appreciate people of all diverse backgrounds. The Center's goals are accomplished by caring for the child as his/her family members pursue studies or careers.

Commitment to Families

Parent-Teacher Partnership

The Center teachers and the parents form a partnership in caring for and educating the child. Our desire is to provide a supportive atmosphere for the family, its culture, language, and traditions. An essential element of that partnership is good communication between teachers and parents about concerns, challenges, and pleasures in the child's experiences. Equally important is the parent sharing the family's knowledge and insights about the child. Our goal is to share information with the family frequently, both about the child and the Center, and to encourage the parent to converse with teachers about what is new and important in the family. If the teacher knows of a change in your family or crisis that is occurring at home, we can better help the child cope and also provide the parent with understanding and support.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit their child at any time. The children and the caregivers are delighted when a parent shares a special talent, a hobby, their profession, or simply their time.

Continuity of Teachers

The Center structure is organized to minimize the transitions that children experience throughout their early childhood years. The Center has three primary classrooms, with children spending one and a half to two years in each class. The Center maintains that it is especially important for infants and toddlers to stay with the same teachers for as long as possible. Infants remain with their teachers from entry (as early as six weeks of age) until they are two years old. Toddlers are with the same teaching staff from two to three and a half years old, and children age three to five are with the preschool teachers in their class. Thus, if a child enters the Center as an infant, he/she will only move rooms and teachers twice. Through this structure, children develop strong bonds with their teachers and feel secure in the transition between home and school. This increased feeling of security leads to improved ability to advance through more complex areas of development.

Each teacher is assigned to be primary caregiver(s) for a specific group of children. The infant room teachers rotate themselves throughout the room at least once during the day so they spend quality time with each child. The teachers in each classroom share the responsibility for caring for and supporting the development of their children. Teaching staff work together to provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities and immediate care as needed to protect children's well-being.

Student employees are considered secondary caregivers and are encouraged to be involved in the care and learning of the children, however, the teachers are ultimately responsible for the class. Student employees are generally assigned to one primary classroom for the semester/year. Each student employee works a set schedule in order

to help maintain the feeling of continuity for the children. The students are encouraged to model their words/actions after the primary teachers in order to provide a consistent environment for the children.

Written Communication

Frequent newsletters are a source of information about the Center and the activities of the specific age groups. Newsletters are posted on the Center's website and parents notified by e-mail that new information is available. Postings include monthly newsletters, meal menus, upcoming events, and weekly class letters. Families receive e-mail notices of upcoming meetings, field trips, health concerns, and other pertinent information from the Center's administrators. Every room posts information, including daily classroom happenings for parents. Each family has a folder in the room's Parent File, which serves as the family's mailbox for many types of information.

Parent Council

The Parent Council provides a means of further involving parents in the Center. Membership in the Council is open to all parents. Through the Council, the parents, staff, director and assistant director have the means to expand their cooperative role and work together to achieve the best possible care and education of the children. All parents receive meeting notices and agendas, and parents are encouraged to attend the monthly meetings. Meeting days and times will be based on what works for the majority of parents. Most frequently the times have been 4:30 – 5:30 pm. The Council organizes annual family activities to build community between families and sponsors educational programs for families as well as fundraising for the Center.

One month per year the parent council meeting is used for a Curriculum Night where teachers present to families about the learning occurring in their classroom. Topics include teaching strategies, how developmental goals are met, common developmental goals for each age group, regular routines and activities and more. All current and upcoming families for the age group are encouraged to attend and discuss what their goals for their children are and how they are met in the classroom.

Confidentiality

The child's records are considered confidential and kept in a locked file. Records include the child's enrollment paperwork, developmental screening results and assessments. Access to files is limited to administrators, teachers and senior teachers. The child's file may be reviewed at any time by the parent. When a non-custodial parent requests access to the file, we will first obtain permission from the custodial parent. Information in the child's file is confidential and will not be released without permission from the parent. The parent must give written permission before information regarding the child will be released. Information from the child's assessments and screenings will be used by the teachers to optimize the child's experience at the Center. For example, if a child's screening indicates that his/her gross motor skills are below her age expectations, the

teachers will plan to present a variety of activities each day to help the child improve his/her skills.

Every Center employee and volunteer is advised of the Center's policy on confidentiality and must sign a statement to attest to their compliance with the policy. This policy is vital to assure respect for the privacy of the children and their families.

Parent/Teacher Communication

It is a priority for the Center teachers to communicate frequently and thoroughly with every parent. When questions or concerns arise regarding the child or events in the classroom, the parent is encouraged to ask the child's teachers for more complete information. Please initiate communication with your child's primary teacher in the child's room when questions arise on:

- Potty training
- A child's eating habits
- Feeding an infant
- Transition to the next room
- How responsive the child is to the teachers and other children

The primary teacher is the person who interacts with the child each day, knows him or her best, and has the background to provide the parent with the information they need. All teachers are available to give the parent information on the child's day and any teacher will help you with special instructions for your child.

While student employees are often good observers of the child, they are not the persons who are responsible for the child and in the classroom with the child day in and day out. The child's primary teacher is the appropriate person with whom to discuss any concerns.

Child Assessment/Family Conferences

The Center assesses a child upon admission with Ages and Stages Questionnaire, a child assessment tool based on a family questionnaire. The Center's curriculum coordinator or other designated staff member scores the questionnaire and meets with the family to discuss the results. Results from this assessment help the child's teachers understand how the parents see their child developing. Parents can find more information on Ages and Stages Questionnaire at agesandstages.com.

All of the child's enrollment forms, family information, and assessment results are locked in a file in the director's office. See the section on confidentiality for further information.

Teachers use Teaching Strategies Gold, the Creative Curriculum Child Assessment Online Tool. TS Gold is a password protected internet based child assessment tool. The Center

purchases the right to use TS Gold on a yearly basis. The child's teachers and the program administrators are the only ones who can access the child's TS Gold profile.

The assessment generated by TS Gold is based on classroom observations made by the child's teachers. The teachers enter their observations of the child regularly into the TS Gold program to help them track how the child is developing and learning. The teachers use TS Gold to guide their work with the child, identifying the child's interests and needs, and then improving and adapting the curriculum as well as their teaching practices. Assessments obtain information on all areas of children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health and physical development (including self-help skills).

The primary teacher meets with families on the result of assessments, giving them written reports at least twice a year, and anytime the child is assessed. The teacher will invite two-way sharing of the child's progress, accomplishments, and difficulties in the classroom and at home as well as to plan learning activities. The teacher is sensitive to family values, culture, identity, and home language.

It is very important for parents and teachers to share information daily, as well as to meet to discuss assessments in a more formal conference. A parent may request additional conferences at any time and the teacher will request a meeting if a concern arises with the child. If outside services are needed, teachers will meet with parents to discuss the options available. If the concern is related to the child's development, teachers work with parents to arrange more in depth developmental assessments through outside professionals. The teachers and Center staff are happy to work with outside agencies to adjust their curriculum or environment to meet the child's needs. (Guidance and Discipline handout available on request)

Challenging Behavior

When a child has persistent, serious, and challenging behaviors in the classroom, the teachers, families, and other professionals work as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that support the child's inclusion and success.

Teachers observe children with challenging behaviors. They identify events, activities, interactions, and other factors that predict the behavior. Teachers address challenging behavior by assessing the function of the child's behavior, convening families and professionals to develop individualized plans to address behavior, and by using positive behavior support strategies. Teachers employ a variety of discipline methods with the child such as reinforcing positive behavior, direct teaching of acceptable actions, and redirection. The teacher's calm, respectful response to these behaviors will consistently provide for the safety of that child and all the children in the classroom. The primary teacher and the director will communicate frequently about the child's progress with the parent. The teacher and director may request evaluation of the child by a health

care professional and/or seek outside intervention with parental permission. (see developmental assessment/behavior handout)

The Center staff understands that a child who has challenging behaviors will mostly likely not change those behaviors quickly and that we must be consistent and patient in our approach as we work with the child over time. The Center Director considers the termination of a child's enrollment only when all avenues to resolve his/her behavior have been exhausted.

Resolving Your Concerns

The Center director is available to hear concerns of parents at any time and will work to resolve issues within the classroom. Your concerns are important to us as it is our job to serve you and your family. Any concerns that remain unresolved after addressing them with the teacher and the director should be addressed to the Associate Vice President – Human Resources.

Center Director

Carol Houser – carolhouser@creighton.edu or 402-280-2460

Associate Vice President – Human Resources

Jeff Branstetter – jeffbranstetter@creighton.edu or 402-280-5530

Center Structure

Supervision and Staff

The James R. Russell Child Development Center is a University department under the supervision of the Associate Vice President - Human Resources. The program is administered by a full time qualified child care director who holds a degree in Education, Early Childhood Education or Child Development. A full time qualified assistant director supports the administration of the program.

Each group of children is staffed by a combination of teachers and senior teachers who are University employees and are assigned to work with a specific group of children. The Center is committed to hiring senior teachers who have a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood, Education, or Human Development and Family Studies. The senior teacher must have had experience in an early childhood classroom. An associate's degree in Early Childhood is preferred for teachers. Many of the staff members at the Center hold a bachelor's degree in Education, Psychology, or Human Development. Others hold a Child Development Associate, a nationally recognized certification in early childhood care and education. Every teacher must demonstrate dedication in caring for children and participating in their learning.

The Creighton University Human Resource Department conducts a criminal background check on each new employee. All employees and volunteers must clear the Child Abuse Registry Check as well.

The director, assistant director, and each teacher must complete at least 12 in-service hours of educational training each year and have a yearly physical. Staff are encouraged to be members of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Each member of the permanent staff is certified in Infant/Child CPR and first-aid. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services regulations state that infants ages 6 weeks – 18 months should have a teacher-child ratio of 1:4. Children 18 months – 3 years should have a teacher-child ratio of 1:6 and children 3 – 5 years should have a ratio of 1:10. In our Center we strive to have one extra adult at all times, sometimes filled by our student employees to decrease stress, attend to individual children's needs and to allow teachers to be able to leave the room for their personal needs or to gather needed classroom materials from storage.

Student Employees and Volunteers

Students and volunteers supplement the core staff. The student employees are often education, nursing, occupational or physical therapy, or psychology majors who have an interest in working with young children. Volunteers are Creighton students who are completing a requirement for service work or requirement for a class.

Each student employee and volunteer must be cleared on the Child Abuse Registry Check through their home state. The student employee receives a thorough orientation

from the director or assistant director as well as extensive training from the Center staff. The volunteer has a short orientation. Both work in classrooms under the supervision of the teachers. Volunteers are not counted in the Center's teacher-child ratio and are never left alone with any child or group of children.

General Information

Closing for Inclement Weather

If the University is closed for inclement weather, the Center will also close. This information is announced on local radio and television stations. You may also call the University weather hotline number 280-5800. The hotline message is updated frequently and has the latest information.

If the University announces a late start, the Center will open one half hour before the starting time. If the University closes early, the Center will close also. Children need to be picked up within a half hour of the announced closing. Parents have the option to participate in the Center Alert system to receive closure notifications specific to the Child Development Center.

Entry Door

The entry door is a secured door. To ensure the safety of everyone in the Center, DO NOT open the door for anyone you do not know, or allow someone you do not know to enter behind you. A telephone, along with instructions, is available for visitors. If you notice a suspicious individual, call Public Safety at 280-2104. On enrollment, parents with University IDs will have their access turned on. Non-affiliate parent/guardians have the option of getting a key card from Card Services for a small fee. Any other adults that regularly pick up will be given key card access only with the approval of administration on a case by case basis. If someone enters behind you, please notify a staff member to verify that their presence is approved.

Family Directory

The Center maintains a Family Directory listing the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of every family who wishes to be listed. The directory is updated periodically and sent to parents electronically. You may request a copy from the Director.

Babysitting List

The Center provides parents with a list of student employees who are interested in caring for children in their homes in the evenings and weekends. The list is provided upon request. The Center requests that teachers and senior teachers not care for children outside the Center.

Research Studies

The Center is available to Creighton students and professors for a limited number of research studies. The parent is notified well in advance of all planned studies, and written parental consent must be obtained before a child may participate.

Classroom Gifts

The Center welcomes gifts from parents and friends. A gift of a book or a special toy could mark a child's birthday or serve as a memorial to a relative or friend. Your child's outgrown toys, books, and clothing are often welcome additions to the classroom. Please check with your child's teacher or the director for specific needs.

Admission Policies

Eligibility

To qualify for enrollment at the James R. Russell Child Development Center, a child's parent must be affiliated with Creighton University as a student, staff or faculty member. The Center welcomes and encourages the enrollment of all eligible families. No applicant is discriminated against because of the race, color, religion, ancestry, sexual preference, age, or national origin of the family. A child with special needs may be accepted based on the ability of the Center and the teachers to care for the child. When no waiting list exists, the Center may accept a child with no parent/guardian affiliation with Creighton for a 5% added fee. Children of employees of the CHI Health system will be accepted when no waiting list exists with no added fee.

Enrollment

The parent must complete all registration forms, including the child's health record, family information, and the parental permission and emergency care form in order to complete enrollment of their child. The family must complete the family questionnaire for the Ages & Stages child assessment within 45 days of enrollment.

Family Information

The family must furnish the Center with the family's full name, address, and phone numbers, including the emergency contacts for the parents. When the parents do not live together, both parents' information should be listed. If there is any legal action regarding the child's custody, the parent must furnish the Center a copy of the action.

Child Health Record

The parent must furnish the Center a list of the child's current health status. This includes

- An immunization record. Every child's immunizations must be completed according to the schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control. The parent will furnish the Center with evidence of immunizations within six weeks of enrollment. Parents must report additional immunizations as they are administered throughout their enrollment. If the parent has religious objections to the child receiving immunizations, the parent must sign a form indicating the objection. If there are medical reasons why a child cannot receive immunizations, the physician must sign a form to verify.
- The completed Health Form signed by the child's physician, showing that the child has recently been seen and is fit for child care. In the event the child is under-immunized, the parent will supply evidence of the reason. This form must be submitted within 45 days of enrollment. If the child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as

- a conditions of remaining enrolled in the program, except for any immunizations for which parents are using religious exemption.
- Proof of routine health screenings. The parent provides documentation that the child is receiving routine health screenings. When a child is overdue for any routine health services (immunizations or screenings) the Center will notify the parent. The child's continued enrollment depends on the parent supplying evidence of updated immunizations and routine health screenings. A typical schedule for health screenings can be found below.
 - Special Instructions. For the child with a food allergy, we request permission from the family to post that information for those who will be serving food to the child (teachers and student employees) A child who needs served a milk alternative, must have a statement from the physician to that effect and must complete a USDA form giving permission to use an approved milk substitute. Include in your instructions any special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness. The Center will maintain areas used by children who have allergies or other special environmental health needs according to the recommendations of health professionals.
 - Proof of current health insurance coverage. The parent supplies information for treatment in the event of an emergency.
 - A list of individuals the parent authorizes to have access to health information about the child.
 - Health and safety information will be provided to regulatory agencies on request.

A typical well baby/well child visit schedule will look like this:

Two-three days from discharge
2 weeks
1 month
2 months
4 months
6 months
9 months
12 months
15 months
18 months
24 months
3 years
4 years
5 years

Information from the American Academy of Pediatrics (2008) and from the Creighton University Medical Center (2005). Based on the recommendations of your child's doctor, your child's schedule may be different.

Enrollment Fee

Once accepted into the program, the child's family will pay a non-refundable one-time \$100 enrollment fee to hold the child's space. The enrollment fee must be paid in advance of enrollment.

Visiting the Center

The parent and child will visit the Center prior to the child's starting date. This will give both the parent and child the opportunity to meet the teachers and to see the child's room.

Enrollment Contract

The enrollment contract is signed by the parent and the Center director. The contract consists of both parental responsibilities to the Center and the Center's commitment to the child and family.

Fee Payments

Tuition is paid monthly, in advance of service, and is due on the first of the month, unless another arrangement is made with the Center director. Payroll deduction is available for Creighton employees. Checks are accepted but not credit cards. Cash is not encouraged. Check payments may be left in the birdhouse, a locked box located near the director's office. Parents are also welcome to use Bill Pay through their bank. Please inform the Center Assistant Director if you utilize Pay Flex-the Center will provide the Pay Flex form for reimbursement. Refunds are not made for illness or vacation (see below – Vacation Week). Receipts are returned within two or three days of payment. When payment has not been made by the 15th of the month, a 5 percent service fee is charged.

Late Fee

The Center operates between the hours of 6:30 A.M. to 6 P.M. Teachers leave at 6 P.M. and they are required to lock the doors at this time. When the parent has not arrived for his/her child by 6 P.M., there is a charge of \$20.00. After 6:05, an additional \$10.00 is added for each 5 minute increment that the child remains at the Center. Teachers must notify the Center director of each late pick up regardless of circumstances.

Health and Safety

Illnesses

A child often experiences an increase in mild illnesses after entering group care. The frequency and severity of these illnesses will vary from child to child. The Center staff observes the strict sanitary procedures important to controlling illnesses including the frequent washing of hands and teaching the children good hand washing procedures. However, since many viruses are airborne, even the most diligent hand washing will not prevent the spread of germs. Excluding mildly ill children is not always a solution, since the contagious phases of many of these illnesses occur when the child is asymptomatic.

Supporting each child's health needs is important to the child care staff. Please notify us of any change in your child's health.

Please notify the Center if your child is ill and will not attend that day. If your child contracts any communicable condition, please let the Center know so that we can notify the other families in the Center.

The Center does not have the physical capacity to isolate and care for the child who becomes ill, however a mildly-ill child will be allowed to lie to his/her mat or bed in the room with frequent checks and comfort by the teachers. A child with a high fever or intense symptoms will be taken to the director's or assistant director's office for care and comfort until the parent arrives to pick them up.

The Health Exclusion Guidelines were developed by a pediatrician and a group of parents with the purpose of helping the caregivers and parents evaluate the symptoms in a child. The guidelines address most of the common childhood illnesses. When a condition or symptom not covered in the guidelines is present, a judgment based on the knowledge of the child and the immediate circumstances will be made.

When a child becomes ill, he/she is isolated from the other children, and the parent is notified to pick up the child within an hour. If the parent cannot be reached, we will contact the person indicated by you on your child's emergency care form.

The Center notifies parents when a child has contracted a communicable disease by postings and e-mail. This may include appropriate signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that parents should implement at home. The Center works closely with Creighton University Student Health and the Douglas County Health Department to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when an outbreak of a communicable disease occurs.

The illness of a child presents a difficult dilemma for the working parent. At the same time, the well-being of all of the children in the Center is of prime importance. Parents

are asked to adhere to the exclusion guidelines. The caregivers make every effort to be consistent in the application of the Center's health guidelines. The Health Exclusion Guidelines follow this section and provide more complete information.

Care for the Child Who is Ill

There is one option in the community available to the parent who cannot miss work due to an ill child. Bergan Mercy Hospital has a program called Under the Weather, 398-6300, which cares for mildly ill children. The program has limited space and requires the parent to make a reservation.

Hand Washing

The teachers are diligent about good hand washing procedures and wash their hands frequently, such as on arrival, after outdoor play and after any contact with bodily fluids. The children wash hands before meals, after contact with bodily fluids and after playing outdoors. Please direct your child to wash his/her hands upon arrival.

Meals and Snacks

Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided daily for the children. Children sit at a table and participate in family style meals with their peers and a teacher for each meal or snack. Meals are an important element of the child's day where each child practices healthy eating habits and table manners. The children engage in table conversation with the teacher and other children. The Center serves breakfast from 8:00 –8:45 A.M., (the kitchen closes promptly at 8:45 A.M), lunch from 10:50 to 11:15 A.M., and snack after the children's rest time. The Center participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, and all meals and snacks follow the USDA guidelines. Meals are provided by the University's contracted food service. Menus are made available to parents and posted to the Center's website.

Please make the staff aware of any special dietary needs specific to your family or your child. We will accommodate those needs to the best of our ability. Once a child is old enough to eat table food no food may be brought from home due to Health Department regulations, unless special circumstances exist.

Peanut/Tree Nut Free Center

Please do not bring anything containing peanuts or peanut butter into the Center. We do not allow any food that contains, or has been manufactured on equipment, with peanuts or tree nuts into our classrooms. If your child consumes a product with nuts prior to coming to the center, please practice proper hand washing to prevent nut oils from transferring onto center toys and furniture.

Center Food

Unless very special circumstances exist, families may not bring food to the Center for their child's consumption. All Center food is prepared served, and stored in accordance

with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Meatless meals are provided for children whose family does not eat meat. The Center serves only 100% apple and orange juice. The Center serves 2% milk to children above the age of two years. The Center does not serve hot dogs whole or cut into rounds, uncooked peas, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Food is cut into ½ inch squares for toddlers/twos (larger for older children) according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. Meals and snacks are served to children when they are seated at a table. A teacher sits with a group of children at the table for meals and snacks. Water is available in the classroom.

Special Needs

The Center accepts children with special feeding needs according to the ability of the teachers to properly care for the child. The child's health care provider will give the program an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members and specialists involved in the child's care. For the child with a disability that includes a special feeding need, the teachers keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and provides the family with that information.

The teachers protect the child with food allergies from contact with the problem food. Please furnish the Center with your consent for us to post information about your child's food allergy in the food preparation area and in the areas of the facility the child uses as a visual reminder to all those who interact with the child during the day. The Center does not serve peanut butter or any foods containing peanuts to any child.

Toothbrushing

After lunch, every child over the age of one brushes his/her teeth with an individual toothbrush. The teachers model good brushing techniques for the children.

Medication

Our goal is to give medication safely. The Center administers medications to children in accordance with the "Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Centers" from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. We do not purchase, prescribe, or provide any form of medication. Non-prescription preventatives such as sunscreen, insect repellent, non-medicated diaper cream, lotion, lip balm, and toothpaste are not considered medications and only require parental consent.

All medications, prescription and non-prescription, must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form completed by a parent and a medication order from a licensed health care provider. The Medication Authorization Form includes the following information: date, child's full name, name of medication, dosage, method of delivery, time to be administered, and parent's signature. The medication order from a licensed

health care provider may guide the use of prescription or over-the-counter medications and must provide specific instructions for administration and dosing.

All medications must come in the original container and be given to a teacher upon arrival. Prescription medications must be labeled with the child's first and last names, the date the prescription was filled, the name of the licensed health care provider, the expiration date of the medication or the period of use of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it. Non-prescription drugs must be labeled with the child's first and last name. Medication dosages must be appropriate for the age and weight standards on the original label unless otherwise stated by the physician's order. In addition, a written statement must be obtained by a licensed health care professional if a medication is to be given by a route other than oral, topical, inhalant or instillation. This includes a nebulizer, Epi Pen or feeding tube.

All medications are properly stored and kept locked, away from the children, at all times. Please do not leave any medications in your child's backpack, bag, or cubby (including diaper ointment or lip balm).

Medication is dispensed only by staff members who have attended and passed annual "Medication Administration" training approved by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Medication training includes training on the five rights of medication administration (the right drug, the right recipient, in the right dose, by the right route, and at the right time). Staff required to administer special medical procedures have demonstrated to a health professional that they are competent in the procedures and are guided in writing about how to perform the procedure by the prescribing health care provider.

When medication is administered, the date, time and person administering the dose is documented on the Medication Administration Form. This information is available for review by parents, staff, and administration at all times.

Medications recommended on an "as needed" basis, like Tylenol for teething, may be kept at the center with time limited instructions. On the "As Needed" Medication Authorization Form, the parent must give specific instructions about the circumstances required for medication administration and authorize approval on a weekly basis. A parent will be notified prior to administering any "as needed" medications and required to initial the Medication Log at pick-up that day. Medication that is no longer being used will be given back to parents to take home.

Accidents and Injuries

The teachers are very diligent in the supervision of the children at all times. Whether indoors, on the playground, or on a trip outside the Center, the children are under the watchful eyes of the teachers. The buildings and the playground are frequently checked

for any material or physical environment that may be a hazard to the child. Keeping the buildings and grounds in a good state of maintenance is a high priority.

Even with these precautions, accidents do occasionally occur. All accidents are reported to the parent. When an illness or accident necessitates immediate medical care, the child will be transported to Creighton University Medical Center by ambulance or by Creighton Public Safety. The parent is always promptly notified when this action is taken.

Food or Environmental Allergy Protocol

Parent/Guardian Responsibility:

- Provide documentation of child's allergy along with an Individualized Health Plan (IHP) from child's medical provider.
- Provide the Child Development Center with emergency allergy medication (Epi-Pen, inhaler, Benadryl, etc.) with signed medication administration form documenting instructions/situations for use.
- If allergy is food related, provide a list of common foods containing allergen.
- Provide documented preference for response to potential allergic reaction.

Sodexo/Food Provider Responsibility:

- Provide the Center a comprehensive list of ingredients to all standard meals twice yearly or when new meals/components are added.
- Meet with Center administrators twice yearly to review menu, food allergies, and recommended substitutes
- Review allergens with chefs twice yearly to avoid cross contamination.
- Center Responsibility:
- Meet with Sodexo twice per year to ensure food allergy needs are met and CACFP approved substitutes are used.
- Update Sodexo immediately on enrollment of a child with a food allergy.
- Review all IHPs with teachers and kitchen aide quarterly or when new children enroll.
- Update classroom allergy list yearly, as new children with allergies enroll or as allergies are diagnosed.
- Monitor children's food intake to prevent inappropriate food consumption as much as possible.
- An administrator will verify food substitutions daily and initial menu.
- Training for kitchen worker will include all known allergens in food and food substitutions.

Note: despite diligent efforts, it is impossible to eliminate all risk for children with food allergies, including children's potential food sharing or outside food brought in by non-

Center staff. When a potential ingestion is discovered, staff will follow individual child's medical protocol and attempt to contact parent/guardian immediately.

Health Exclusion Guidelines

If one or more of the following conditions exists, the parent will be notified immediately and must come to pick up their child within one hour. The child's condition should be evaluated by a physician, who will indicate when he/she may return to the Center.

Parents should apply the same guidelines when determining whether or not the child is well enough to attend the Center.

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the teachers.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the teachers can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children as determined by the child care provider
3. The child has any of the following conditions:

Fever	is greater than, or equal to 100.4 degrees. A child may return once he/she is fever free for 24 hours, without the use of medication. If the child is evaluated by a medical provider and cleared to return before the 24 hours, the parent needs to provide a note from the medical provider stating what the child is diagnosed with and clearing them for return with a rationale.
Signs of Illness	including lethargy that is more than expected tiredness, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child.
Diarrhea	defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet or antibiotic use (with documentation provided by the family), and increased frequency of passing stool, that is not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet.
Blood	in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
Vomiting	2 episodes in one day.
Persistent Abdominal Pain	(continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
Mouth Sores	with drooling, unless a health care provider or Health Department official determines that the child is noninfectious.
Rash	with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease. Teacher may request physician permission to be at school.
Pink Eye	purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

References: Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out of Home Child Care Programs, Second Edition American Academy of Pediatrics

When a child is diagnosed as having one of the following diseases, the parent will keep the child at home until the guidelines for returning are met for his/her specific condition.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	fever of 100.4 or greater accompanied by sores on hands, feet and in mouth OR fever of 99.7 if accompanied by mouth sores that affect a child's ability to eat and drink. Child may also be excluded if uncomfortable enough that eating patterns have changed. Child may return when these symptoms are gone.
Viral Respiratory Illness	when the child feels well enough and the fever has not been present for 24 hours without medication.
Pink Eye	(conjunctivitis) when the physician permits; generally 24 hours after medication is begun.
Measles	four days after appearance of rash.
Rubella	six days after appearance of rash. However, the child who has been diagnosed with congenital rubella must be cleared to return to the Center by a physician.
Mumps	nine days after the onset of parotid swelling, and the swelling has subsided.
Diarrhea	when the physician permits and the stool is contained by diaper or toilet use. Stools cannot contain blood or mucus. The exceptions are diarrhea caused by Salmonella typhi (3 negative stool cultures required), Shigella or E. coli 0156:H7 (2 negative stool cultures required)
Impetigo	must be evaluated by a physician. The child may return 24 hours after treatment has started.
Scabies, Lice, Ring/Pinworm	must be evaluated by a physician, and the child may return when the physician permits and the treatment is initiated.
Chicken Pox	when all lesions have dried and formed crusts, usually 6 days after onset.
Meningitis	when physician permits. (depends upon the type of meningitis)
Strep Infection	when the child has been on medication for 24 hours, and the fever is gone.
Mouth Sores	when the physician determines that they are not infectious.
Tuberculosis	when the physician determines that the child is not infectious.
Hepatitis A	one week after onset of illness or jaundice, or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis has been administered to appropriate children and staff members.

Outdoor Play

The teachers provide large motor activities every day, indoors and outdoors (when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). All activities are carefully supervised and the equipment is checked for safety.

When the children are outdoors they are protected by clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. In the summer, the Sky Shade offers protection from the sun and the heat, as do the trees and an umbrella used in the sand area. The Center follows the general guidelines of playing outside when temperatures are between 20-90 degrees Fahrenheit, however all decisions to go outside are subject to weather conditions and the Center director's judgment of safety.

Teachers protect the children from the sun by applying a sunscreen (45+ SPF) to exposed skin with parental permission. Insect repellent is used when public health authorities recommend it to children over the age of 6 months. The repellent contains DEET, is made for children, and is not used more than once per day.

Child's Earrings

Children under the age of 3 ½ who have pierced ears need to wear studs with a screw back or a locking back for their safety and that of the other children in the room. The teachers will remove non-conforming earrings.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a severe storm, the children are evacuated to the Center kitchen, which is an approved tornado shelter. If a fire occurs, the children are evacuated immediately to an approved location. Emergency drills are practiced quarterly. Parents will be notified if the building is not safe and the children cannot return.

Classroom and Visiting Pets

Classroom pets and visiting pets should appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Teaching staff supervise all behavior when in close proximity to animals. Program staff make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Reptiles are not allowed as classroom pets because of risk for salmonella infection.

Any interaction with an animal is always optional, not forced. If you have concerns about your child's reaction to animals, please let the teachers know immediately and we will work together to create a plan that fits your child's needs and the classroom needs.

Transportation Services

Transportation services are not provided on a regular basis, but are utilized for field trips and special events.

All vehicles used for transporting children are currently registered, insured, and maintained in a safe and clean condition. No child will be permitted to remain unattended in the vehicle.

The following vehicles are used for transporting children:

Creighton University 24-passenger shuttles

Vehicle qualifies as a bus, weighing over 10,000 pounds.

No additional restraint system is required.

Inspected and checked after each shift and fully serviced once a month.

Creighton University 12-passenger vans

Children must be properly secured in an appropriate restraint system.

All car seats must be federally approved and must be the correct type for the child's age and developmental level.

The number of children transported will not exceed the seating capacity of the vehicle as indicated by the manufacturer. Teachers will count children before, during, and after transportation.

Each vehicle used will:

- Be driven by an adult with a current and valid state driver's license that authorizes the driver to operate the type of vehicle driven, as verified by the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Be driven by an adult who has a current Creighton University Driver's Training Certificate issued by the Environmental Health and Safety department.
- Contain a first aid and bodily fluid clean up kit.
- Contain parent contact information for each child being transported.
- Prohibit smoking in the vehicle.
- Be able to maintain temperatures between 60-90 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Be locked when the vehicle is in motion.
- Maintain age appropriate staff-to-child ratios.

Written permission from parents for the center to transport children will be kept on file at the center for each child enrolled. Children will not be transported without the prior knowledge of the parents, except in a medical or other emergency.

When children are being transported, at least one person accompanying the children in the vehicle will have:

- Current CPR and First Aid course certification

- Nebraska “Safe Kids Buckle Up” Transportation Training
- A cellular telephone

The following rules will be communicated to children and enforced during transportation:

- Children must stay seated while the vehicle is in motion
- Children must face the front at all times (sit on pockets)
- All hands must remain inside the vehicle at all times
- Feet must be kept out of the aisle
- Voice levels must be kept to a minimum

Emergency procedures on a field trip:

- In every emergency, contact the Director or Assistant Director to communicate information and assist in decision making
- Stay calm and comfort/guide children as needed
- If a child becomes ill, call the child’s parent and arrange pick up from the field trip location
- If the vehicle breaks down, follow guidance from the driver and Public Safety about alternate transportation arrangements
- If the vehicle is involved in an accident, follow guidance from the responding police officer or first responders

Superhero/Princess Play

We recognize that children will be exposed to media including movies and television shows that frequently depict superheroes, princesses, etc. even if parents choose not to share these. Because there are often challenging values/actions presented in these media, we have planned a curriculum to support the positive values associated with them and address potential negative values. Each classroom will have a slightly different approach based on their age and developmental level of understanding but a common core will be support of values such as leadership, courage, empathy, friendship and family, helping others, teamwork, good choices and more. We encourage you to discuss these values if/when you and your child view these types of media at home. No passive media (television, iPad, etc.) will be used at school for this curriculum. Please speak with the teachers about any concerns you might have about this curriculum theme and/or any ideas you have for activities or focuses.

Guidance and Discipline

Teaching Appropriate Behavior

Each child is guided and disciplined with love, acceptance, and gentle correction. The rules are few, but logical and consistently enforced. Teachers consistently reinforce the child's positive behavior. The needs of the young child are considered in arranging the rooms, selecting learning materials, and planning the curriculum. When the child is active, interested, and learning, he/she is much less likely to misbehave.

From infancy on, a child is taught to use kindness in social interactions and problem solving. The teachers teach empathy, both by modeling and by using words to help bring understanding of another's feelings. The child learns how to interact with his/her peers in daily situations and to create solutions to his/her problems. Friendships among the children are encouraged, and often a child develops friendships which endure throughout the time he/she attends the Center and beyond.

A child's anger is accepted, and he/she is encouraged and taught to express the anger in a non-violent way. Rules regarding aggression against other children are strictly enforced. The parent is informed when his/her child hurts another child.

When challenging behavior occurs, the caregivers use explanations, choices, and redirection to help the child act appropriately. Logical consequences also help the child learn positive behaviors. The rooms are arranged to provide a quiet, safe space for the child who feels out of control. The teacher focuses on the situation and appropriate methods of helping the child. Physical punishment, denial of food and withdrawal of affection are never employed.

Providing the child with an atmosphere of love, approval, and clear limitations helps him/her learn acceptable behaviors and validates self-worth.

When the child demonstrates persistent challenging behavior such as hurting other children, teachers, or self the teacher and director will meet frequently with the family to create an individualized plan to teach positive actions. Teachers may also use a Behavior Report to document repeated or especially concerning behaviors, then utilize the Report to create the individualized plan for that child.

A handout outlining the Center's strategies for Guidance and Discipline is available on request. The Director and Assistant Director will conduct a parent education meeting annually on Guidance and Discipline and how the Center handles behavior situations.

Your Child's Birthday

Birthday Treats

Your child's birthday is a special occasion for him/her. If you would like to send a special birthday treat at snack time, please inform your child's teacher. Please choose one item from the following list of things that the children enjoy.

Please do not bring any food to the Center containing peanuts or peanut butter. All food must be individually packaged. Unfortunately, we are not able to accept food made at home. All food must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. **Please do not send cake or cupcakes for birthday treats.**

A few suggestions for birthday treats:

- Ice Cream Cups
- Popsicles
- Rice Krispy Bars
- Cookies (individually packaged)
- Fruit Roll-Ups
- Individual packets of snack crackers (Goldfish, Cheeze-Its, Ritz)

You may bring birthday napkins, but please do not bring party decorations, balloons, or bags of candy or toys for the children. The Center always furnishes drinks, cups, and plates.

The shared snack will start no later than 3:00 pm for toddlers and 3:30 pm for preschool.

If you want to do something special for the room for your child's birthday, we suggest a gift for the room that everyone can enjoy. Some ideas are gift certificate from the Bookworm, a gift certificate from Playtime Schooltime Equipment, Learning HQ, or Fat Brain Toys, children's CD's, books, puzzles or games.

Birthday Party Invitations

Birthday invitations must be mailed directly to families invited to the child's party in order avoid hurt feelings among the children who are not invited. Your family directory supplies names and addresses for mailing invitations.

Holiday Policy

Definition of Holiday Activities

It is important to define holiday activities because the words “holiday” and “celebration” mean different things to different people. For the purposes of this holiday policy and to define our holiday practices in the classroom, we define “holiday activities” in the following way.

Holiday activities at RCDC can be as simple as reading a book about a holiday and as elaborate as having a party in the classroom with food, decorations, guests and music. Activities often involve a group discussion about a holiday and how a family celebrates it, or the reading of a book about a holiday. Other times teachers set up open-ended, developmentally appropriate activities for children that relate to a holiday. Individual classrooms will make plans to have holiday celebrations or gatherings that are appropriate to their age group.

Goals and Functions of Holidays

1. To validate children’s and families’ holiday experiences and traditions at home.
2. To expose children to different ways of celebrating the same holiday.
3. To expose children to celebrations, traditions and religions different from their own.
4. To foster respect for celebrations, traditions and religions different from their own.
5. To provide a fun break in the routine.
6. To build a sense of community, family and togetherness.
7. To provide accurate information about holidays in a developmentally appropriate way.
8. To provide a stress-free environment.

Role of Holidays in the Program

Since we plan curriculum in a way that is reflective of children’s needs and interests, the exact amount of time we spend on holidays will vary. We use children and families in the program as a “barometer” to help us decide how much we will do with holidays. We do have some guidelines, however, to make sure holidays do not take over the entire curriculum. When we are recognizing a holiday (i.e. having a discussion or reading a book) or providing activities related to a holiday, we might include up to five holidays per month (but less is fine, too).

For example, on the Friday before Memorial Day, we will talk about the fact that the Center is closed on the following Monday and explain why, in two or three sentences based on the children’s level of understanding. When we are doing calendar in the morning, we may talk with children about holidays that just occurred or that are

imminently approaching. These recognitions of holidays, however, are no more than two-minute discussions about what the holiday is called and what it is all about, unless children ask to learn more. Similarly, when we provide activities, they will be open-ended and one of many choices so they are not the focus of the entire curriculum.

How Decisions Will Be Made About Which Holidays to Include

Individual decisions about which holidays will be included will be made every year and other times of the year when children and families leave or enter the program. In general the holidays celebrated should reflect the population of the Center and our community at Creighton.

1. First, teachers, the assistant director and director will use a variety of methods to determine what holidays are important to the children and families in the program. These will include a survey, the Culture and Diversity enrollment form, parent meetings, and daily communication.
2. Then the teachers will make a list of any additional holidays they think are important to include. These include holidays they have incorporated in the past, social justice holidays, holidays that are celebrated by the staff, and holidays that support overall classroom goals.
3. Next, the staff and director will look at what holidays to include with which the children are unfamiliar. Before deciding to include any of these holidays, teachers will make sure they can introduce them in a relevant, respectful way that connects to children's own experiences.
4. Staff and the director will then look at the list they have generated so far and decide if anything else should be added to the list and if anything should be dropped from the list. Together they will make sure that all the chosen holidays meet at least one of the stated goals for holidays and that none of those holidays will offend or hurt any child or family.

How Holidays Will Be Implemented in the Curriculum

Below is a list of general guidelines we follow at RCDC as we implement holidays:

1. We are inclusive. We strive to validate everyone and exclude no one. We pay attention to the balance and the importance we put on certain holidays over others. No one holiday is portrayed as more important than any other.
2. We concentrate on reflecting a holiday in a way that is important and relevant to families at home.
3. We work to be culturally relevant in all of our activities. We portray holidays from the point of view of the person or group that celebrates those holidays. If teachers are not of the religious or cultural group that celebrates a certain holiday, we gather information from books and others who do celebrate the holiday.

4. We do our own research. Teachers learn what they can about a family's holiday that we are unfamiliar with before asking that family to supply information. This communicates respect and a genuine desire to obtain information.
5. We involve parents/guardians as much as possible in the implementation of holiday activities and celebrations. We also keep families informed of upcoming holiday activities and events.
6. We are careful to avoid stereotypes when presenting holiday information to children, putting up decorations and implementing activities.
7. We provide activities that are developmentally appropriate for the ages and stages of the children. Young children need concrete, hands-on activities with simple explanations. We are careful not to abandon all we know about good practices when it comes to holiday activities. We know that teacher-directed art and reproducible crafts that all look alike do not foster creativity or individual expression.
8. We are sympathetic to the fact that holiday time can create hardships for some families due to financial constraints, family problems, etc. We are careful not to implement any activities that put financial pressure on families.

How Religious Aspects of Holidays Will Be Approached

While teachers will not teach the religious aspect of a holiday or teach one religion or religious holiday as the correct one, we will explain, in a developmentally appropriate way, what the historical meaning of that holiday is. Religious aspects will be explained matter-of-factly, with simple language using phrases such as "some people believe that.." or "some people celebrate by..." Families will be consulted for the actual language they use when talking about religious holidays to their children. Children will also be referred back to their families for more in-depth information about religious aspects of holidays. Teachers will minimize talking about religion while taking care not to sacrifice the underlying meaning of the holiday.

Plan for Children and Families Who Do Not Celebrate Holidays

We will not celebrate any individual holiday that excludes one or more children. If we have children in the program who do not celebrate any holidays, we will work with the families to come up with a plan for meeting their children's needs so they are not left out.

How We Will Evaluate the Effectiveness of Holiday Activities

We will be constantly reflective of holiday activities we have done in the past and how we might handle holidays in the future. Once a year, the teachers, assistant director, director and families will get together to talk about what is working, what isn't working and to discuss future strategies.

Infant Room

Program and Environment

The infant program meets the needs for physical comfort, emotional security, beginning socialization and language development for the infant from age six weeks to 2 years. Feeding, diapering and sleeping compose much of the infant's day. The infant's sense of emotional security is enhanced by the nurturing, loving adults who care for the child. The caregivers encourage the appropriate physical skills for the child's age. The beginning of socialization occurs in the infant room, when the child notices the other children. Language development is enriched by teachers who speak frequently to the child, encourage the child's responses, and teach simple signs beginning at five months. The children all have access to books and the teachers read to them individually and in small groups many times during the day.

An environment of bright colors and appropriate toys provides optimum stimulation for the infant's growth. Floor gyms, mirrors, and soft toys surround the youngest children. As the child matures, the learning materials grow more complex. The child who is able to sit and crawl is introduced to balls, stacking and sorting toys, as well as blocks. The young walker is encouraged with push toys, table toys, and simple art materials. Music is an important element of the curriculum for every infant, youngest to oldest. The infants participate in the Nature Classroom (when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). Part of the area is covered with a Sky Shade during the late spring, summer, and early fall. The shade protects the children from the heat and deflects up to 95% of the harmful UV rays.

The infant room is cleaned every day with disinfectant used on as many surfaces as possible. Toys put in a child's mouth or otherwise contaminated are washed by hand with soap, rinsed, sanitized, and air dried or washed and dried in the dishwasher or washed in the washing machine and dried in the dryer.

In the young infant area everyone either removes or covers his/her footwear in order to keep the carpet clean for the very young infants who are encouraged to play on the floor. Shoe covers are available for parents and visitors. If children or staff are barefoot in this area, their feet must be visibly clean. The older children will play on the other side of the room. If there is a reason they need to be placed on the younger side, the teacher will cover their shoes with socks.

Arrival/Departure/Separation

When your child enters the Center, his/her teacher will help you both as you become acquainted with the Center and the room. Each child and parent will experience separation in a different manner, and spending time with your child as he/she enters the program is essential to a successful transition. It is important for both of you to be comfortable at the end of the transition period. We encourage you to tell your child

good-bye rather than leaving without warning, even if the parting evokes tears. Goodbye routines such as reading one book, giving a hug, kiss or high five, or helping to select a toy for the child can be helpful to creating a smooth transition. Our role is to be supportive for both the child and parent.

Daily arrival and departure are important times for you and your child. Sign your child in and out each day on the daily attendance sheets in the room. Please direct your child to wash his/her hands upon arrival. Settling your child into the room and making sure the teacher knows you have arrived facilitates the transition from home to the Center. Touch base with the teacher in charge and communicating any important information about your child/family. The communication between parent and caregiver at the beginning and the end of the day is very important. The teachers want to know how your child has been since the day before. At the end of the day, the teacher closing the room will share the happenings of your child's day with you.

For children with special needs, please let the Center director know your child's specific needs around arrival and departure.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will pick the child up at the end of the day, please leave a note with the teacher or call the Center with this information. We will not release a child to anyone without your specific permission. The director, assistant director or teacher will check photo identification at the door before showing the person picking up into the classroom.

Diapers

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the use of disposable diapers for child care centers. The Center furnishes disposable diapers for infants. Diaper fees are included in the tuition rate. The Center does not accept cloth diapers unless a child's health provider documents the child's need. AAP guidelines are also used for the diaper changing process. Diapers are checked at least every two hours as well as being changed when necessary. Daily diapering charts are kept at the Center and are available for parents at their request.

Naps and Bedding

The children are encouraged to nap according to each one's individual needs. The child is always placed in bed on his/her back. Infants are allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when he/she can easily turn over from the back to front position. The Center supplies the infant's bedding (crib sheets, blankets, and mattress pads). Sheets, pads, and blankets are washed regularly. No toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, or sheepskins are placed in the cribs. If the teacher uses a blanket, she places the infant at the foot of the crib, tucking the blanket around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the child's chest. The teachers in the infant room have all successfully completed Safe Sleep Child Care Provider Training.

Infant Schedule and Feeding Form

The parent completes an information form with the infant's schedule and diet for the teachers. A detailed description given by the parent helps the teachers better meet the child's needs. As the child matures, the parent frequently updates the form.

Daily Schedules and Feeding

Each child in the younger group follows his/her own schedule of eating, resting, and playing. This schedule frequently changes as growth occurs and the need for sleep is less. Teachers work with families to ensure that the food selected is based on the infant's individual nutritional needs and developmental stage. Feeding and diapering are opportunities for one-on-one interactions and bonding with the teachers. The teachers will become very familiar with your child and offer feeding at the child's cue, unless you direct otherwise. Bottles and food are not offered to comfort the infant. Children six months or younger are always held for bottle feedings. When the child can easily sit up, he/she may drink the bottle while sitting, but the preference is still to hold the child. Teachers do not give a bottle to a child in a crib and never prop a baby's bottle. Toddlers/twos do not carry bottles, sippy cups or regular cups with them when crawling or walking. Teachers offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that the child is developmentally ready to use a cup.

The Center supports breastfeeding and provides a semi-private area for nursing mothers. This area gives the mother one-on-one time with her baby away from the distractions of the room. A nursing mother is welcome to nurse her baby at any time during the day. Teachers will coordinate the child's feedings with the Mother's schedule) Breast milk may be frozen and brought to the Center in ready-to-feed sanitary containers. Please label your expressed milk with your child's name and date. Frozen milk is kept at the Center at 0 degrees for no longer than three months. Non-frozen milk will be stored in the refrigerator for no longer than 48 hours (or no longer than 24 hours if the milk was previously frozen). Teachers gently mix (not shake) the milk before feeding to preserve the nutritional components. Practice feeding your baby bottles prior to entry in the Center as it is very important that the breastfed baby also take a bottle easily from the teachers.

Bottles of breast milk and formulas are heated for no more than 5 minutes in water no hotter than 120 degrees, and never in a microwave. Teachers discard bottle contents after one hour.

Except for human milk, teachers serve only formula and infant food that comes to the Center in factory-sealed containers and prepared according to the manufacturers' instructions. Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice.

The teacher uses an individual soft, clean cloth to gently wipe the child's gums after bottles and meals. These cloths are laundered after each use. The teachers help the child with teeth use a toothbrush once a day.

When the parent and the teachers decide the child is developmentally ready, the teacher will introduce drinking fluid from a cup.

The Center provides one iron enriched formula and baby food suggested by the USDA. Teachers prepare the child's clean bottles brought from home. Parents must label their child's bottles with the child's name. The parent provides any other formula needed. Open containers of liquid formula are stored in the refrigerator until needed. Glass bottles are not accepted due to Health Department regulations.

Teachers offer solid food and juice only to children over 6 months of age. Solid foods are fed only after the parent has introduced each one at home with the approval of the child's health care provider. No solid food may be added to the bottle unless by direction of the child's health care provider.

As the child progresses to table food, he/she eats the food provided for the children at the Center. Unless very special circumstances exist, families may not bring food to the Center for their child's consumption once the child has transitioned to Center food. All Center food is prepared (not heated in the microwave), served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Meatless meals are provided for the child whose family does not eat meat. The Center serves only 100% juice (sweetened beverages are not served) to children over the age of 6 months and the child is allowed no more than 4 ounces a day.

The Center serves children from ages one to two years whole milk. The Center does not serve hot dogs whole or cut into rounds, uncooked peas, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, hard pretzels, or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. For children eating table food, the teachers cut foods into pieces no larger than 1/4 inch square for infants and 1/2 inch squares for toddlers/twos, according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. Meals and snacks are served to children when they are seated in a high chair or at the small table. A teacher will sit with the children who eat at the table. Children are not allowed to walk around carrying a sippy cup.

As a general rule, you may not bring food from home for your child. If your child has a particular nutritional need, please discuss it with your child's primary teacher. The Center posts the monthly menu on the website. Bibs are provided by the Center.

The teachers offer drinking water to all infants except those fed exclusively breast milk. For more nutrition information, please see the "Playground Kitchen" and "Parent Resource" pages on the Center's website (www.creighton.edu/childdevelopmentcenter)

Daily Forms

The parent of an infant is provided with a daily form to enter pertinent information at the beginning of the child's day. The caregivers use the form to chronicle the infant's eating, sleeping, and play during the day. Any unusual behavior or occurrence is noted. The parent receives the completed form at the end of the day.

For the older infant the staff provides a more general daily form for each child giving parents a written narrative about their child's day. A weekly lesson plan is posted in the room for parents to view as well as posted on the Center's "Newsletters" web page.

Parent Communication

Weekly letters are posted to the Center's website and an e-mail notice sent to you. The letters inform parents of the upcoming activities scheduled for the week. Hard copies are posted in the desk area. The weekly letters include special books, projects, songs or finger plays the children will be working with for the week, and the schedule of any special events.

Each classroom maintains a room email address, checked at least daily on the class's iPad. Families are encouraged to send non-urgent information to this address (i.e. child out sick for the day, different person picking up later that week, request for information about the child). Any email sent to these addresses is automatically copied to the director and assistant director.

Daily Schedule, Older Infants

Time	Scheduled Activity
6:30-8:00	Free Play
8:00-8:45	Breakfast
8:45-9:15	Diaper time and free play
9:15-9:30	Story time
9:30-10:30	Small group activities
10:30-10:50	Diaper time and Music
11:00-11:30	Lunch
11:30-11:45	Story time
11:45- 2:00	Naptime
2:00-2:45	Snack
2:45-3:15	Free play
3:15-4:15	Afternoon activities
4:15-5:00	Diaper time and free play
5:00-6:00	Snack and free play

Supplies from Home

The parent provides: two clothing changes, ointments or creams, clean bottles daily, and a pacifier (if used). Please bring adequate clothing for outdoor play every day – layers for spring and fall when the weather is changeable, shorts for summer, and coats, hats, and mittens for winter. All of the items from home should be labeled with the child's name. Once the child is walking, he/she needs closed-toed shoes and socks to wear on the playground. We suggest hard soled tennis shoes to support beginning walkers.

Transitioning to Toddlers

As the child nears 2 years, the parent and the primary teacher discuss the child's move to the toddler room. As children transition between classrooms, teaching staff work to maintain relationships with them. Teachers do this through spending time with the children in their new classroom and in talking with them when they encounter the children throughout the Center. As the time for a transition approaches, administrators and teachers communicate about the development and readiness of the child to the family. The family is introduced to the child's new teachers and his/her new classroom. Families work with teachers to plan a date to start transitioning the child and also schedule a time for a final conference to address the child's development and any parent concerns.

Each child's transition is planned individually to best meet his/her needs. Transitions are scheduled over an average of two weeks, though this may be shortened or lengthened depending on the needs of the child. Teachers begin by talking to the child about the approaching visits before taking the child on short visits during various points of the day in order to experience all parts of the new classroom. Teachers will stay with the child in the beginning until they feel the child is comfortable with the new teacher(s). Visits get progressively longer until the child is spending the entire day in the new classroom and is ready to officially transition. Teachers of both classrooms are encouraged to communicate frequently throughout the process in order to ensure the smoothest transition possible for the child and family.

Toddler Room

Program and Environment

The toddler room is an environment rich in developmentally appropriate centers/activities for children ages 2 to 3 ½ years. The teachers provide centers throughout the day that help develop the child's fine and gross motor skills and encourage imaginative play. The children are introduced to a wide variety of play materials and equipment used to enhance their skills and engage their curiosity as they discover the world around them. The priorities of the curriculum are to form self-help skills such as eating and toilet training, to learn appropriate social interactions with peers and teachers, and to develop language skills through modeling and literacy experiences. Music for listening and movement enriches the program. The teachers provide an environment of fun and joy while giving emotional support and encouragement to the children.

Consistency in the daily schedule provides learning through repetition as it creates a safe, loving environment. The children learn through the daily routines of eating meals in small groups, potty training and diapering, and resting at nap time. Independence is continually encouraged through these activities.

The Center's Nature Classroom provides an area for large and small motor activity as well as centers where children learn more about nature while participating in age-appropriate activities. The teachers are trained to teach children to appreciate the wonders of nature and to be comfortable with the outdoor world.

The teachers provide large motor activities every day, indoors and outdoors (when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). All activities are carefully supervised and the equipment is checked for safety.

When the children are outdoors they are protected by clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. In the summer, the Sky Shade offers protection from the sun and the heat, as do the trees and an umbrella used in the sand area.

Teachers protect the children from the sun by applying a sunscreen (45 SPF) to exposed skin with parental permission. Insect repellent is used when public health authorities recommend it to children over the age of 6 months. The repellent contains DEET, is made for children, and is applied no more than once daily. Families may decline the Center sunscreen and repellent and provide their own if desired.

Arrival/Departure

When your child enters the Center, his/her teacher will help you both as you become acquainted with the Center and the room. Each child and parent will experience separation in a different manner, and spending time with your child as he/she enters

the program is essential to a successful transition. It is important for both of you to be comfortable at the end of the transition period. We encourage you to tell your child good-bye rather than leaving without warning, even if the parting evokes tears. Goodbye routines such as reading one book, giving a hug, kiss or high five, or helping to select a toy for the child can be helpful to creating a smooth transition. Our role is to be supportive for both the child and parent.

Daily arrival and departure are important times for you and your child. Sign your child in and out each day on the daily attendance sheets in the room. Please direct your child to wash his/her hands upon arrival. Settling your child into the room and making sure the teacher knows you have arrived facilitates the transition from home to the Center. Touch base with the teacher in charge and communicating any important information about your child/family. The communication between parent and caregiver at the beginning and the end of the day is very important. The teachers want to know how your child has been since the day before. At the end of the day, the teacher closing the room will share the happenings of your child's day with you.

For children with special needs, please let the Center director know your child's specific needs around arrival and departure.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will pick the child up at the end of the day, please leave a note with the teacher or call the Center with this information. We will not release a child to anyone without your specific permission. The director or assistant will check photo ID of anyone new picking up.

Daily Schedule for Toddlers

Time	Scheduled Activity
6:30-8:00	Arrival and small group play/quiet reading
8:00-8:45	Breakfast (not served after 8:45)
8:45 - 9:30	Small group activities, diapering/toileting
9:15-9:30	Story time
9:30-10:30	Sensory and art activities, music, movement, reading, large motor
10:00 - 10:40	Outdoor play (weather permitting)
10:40 - 10:50	Small group story time
10:50 - 11:30	Lunch
11:30 - 12:00	Small Group Reading and Diapering/toileting
12:00 - 2:30	Naps, diapering/toileting as the child awakes
2:15 - 3:30	Afternoon snack in small groups
3:00 - 6:00	Small group activities, music, reading, outdoor play (weather permitting), diapers/toileting, art and sensory

Field Trips

The toddlers do not take field trips off campus. During winters in which weather does not permit playing outside, the toddler class visits the Kiewit Fitness Center for large motor play. These trips generally occur once per week during the months of January, February and March. The children are transported by Creighton shuttles. The toddlers also occasionally take walks onto campus. If the walk involves crossing a street, Public Safety is called to monitor the crossing.

Parent Communication

Weekly letters are posted to the Center's website and an e-mail notice sent to you. The letters inform parents of the upcoming activities scheduled for the week. Hard copies are posted in the desk area. The weekly letters include special books, projects, songs or finger plays the children will be working with for the week, and the schedule of any special events.

Each classroom maintains a room email address, checked at least daily on the class's iPad. Families are encouraged to send non-urgent information to this address (i.e. child out sick for the day, different person picking up later that week, request for information about the child). Any email sent to these addresses is automatically copied to the director and assistant director.

Rest Time

Each child is encouraged, but not forced to sleep during the daily rest time. A child will need a blanket for nap time. Blankets are washed at least once per month or sent home to be washed if the child has a toileting accident during nap time. Teachers sit by children and pat their backs as needed to help the children fall asleep.

Clothing and Toys from Home

Wearing comfortable play clothes is a necessity in this age group. Please provide a change of clothing and appropriate outer wear each day. Children must wear closed-toed shoes and socks. The child may be excluded from outdoor activities when he/she is wearing sandals, flip flops, or Crocs. All clothing needs to be labeled with the child's name.

For the safety of all the children, please do not store any medications in your child's bag/cubbies.

Children are not encouraged to bring toys from home to the Center. However, you are welcome to share a book pertaining to the current interests of the children.

Diapers and Potty Training

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the use of disposable diapers for child care centers. The Center furnishes disposable diapers. The cost of diapers is

included in the tuition rate. When the child is toilet trained, the tuition rate is reduced. Diapers are checked frequently and changed when necessary, and the AAP guidelines are used for the diaper changing process. Diapering charts are available for parents to view. Diapering time is an occasion for one-on-one interaction between the caregiver and the child.

The teachers and parent work closely together with the child who indicates readiness to toilet train. It is helpful to inform the primary teacher when potty training begins at home so the appropriate steps can be taken at school to help the child during this process.

Transitioning to Preschool

As the child approaches 3 ½ years of age, the parent and the primary teacher discuss his/her move to the preschool room. As children transition between classrooms, teaching staff work to maintain relationships with them. Teachers do this through spending time with the children in their new classroom and in talking with them when they encounter the children throughout the Center. As the time for a transition approaches, administrators and teachers communicate about the development and readiness of the child to the family. The family is introduced to the child's new teachers and his/her new classroom. Families work with teachers to plan a date to start transitioning the child and also schedule a time for a final conference to address the child's development and any parent concerns.

Each child's transition is planned individually to best meet his/her needs. Transitions are scheduled over an average of two weeks, though this may be shortened or lengthened depending on the needs of the child. Teachers begin by talking to the child about the approaching visits before taking the child on short visits during various points of the day in order to experience all parts of the new classroom. Teachers will stay with the child in the beginning until they feel the child is comfortable with the new teacher(s). Visits get progressively longer until the child is spending the entire day in the new classroom and is ready to officially transition. Teachers of both classrooms are encouraged to communicate frequently throughout the process in order to ensure the smoothest transition possible for the child and family.

Preschool Room

Program and Environment

The preschool room's curriculum offers the child of 3 ½ to 5 years a balanced early childhood program in a nurturing atmosphere. The daily program supports the child's language-literacy, cognitive, social-emotional and physical growth with both child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities. Age-appropriate materials and equipment provide the opportunity for quiet and active play, experimentation, social interactions, and learning. The curriculum supports the child's learning through play and discovery.

The teachers provide the child with an atmosphere where concrete learning occurs. The child is encouraged to question and reason. Language is developed through books, tapes, songs, and rhymes. Creative expression is encouraged in many ways, including the use of a variety of art materials and dramatic play.

Play and participation with peers and the group result in learning positive social skills and interactions. The child is encouraged to verbalize his/her feelings and to solve differences with constructive solutions. Cooperative play is encouraged, while the need to be alone is respected. The children enjoy a wide variety of play materials, and are encouraged to use them in imaginative ways.

The Center's Nature Classroom provides an area for large and small motor activity as well as centers where children learn more about nature while participating in age-appropriate activities. The teachers are trained to teach children to appreciate the wonders of nature and to be comfortable with the outdoor world.

The teachers provide large motor activities every day, indoors and outdoors (when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). All activities are carefully supervised and the equipment is checked for safety.

When the children are outdoors they are protected by clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather. In the summer, the Sky Shade offers protection from the sun and the heat, as do the trees and an umbrella used in the sand area.

Teachers protect the children from the sun by applying a sunscreen (45 SPF) to exposed skin with parental permission. Insect repellent is used when public health authorities recommend it to children over the age of 6 months. The repellent contains DEET, is made for children, and is applied no more than once daily.

Arrival/Departure

When your child enters the Center, his/her teacher will help you both as you become acquainted with the Center and the room. Each child and parent will experience separation in a different manner, and spending time with your child as he/she enters

the program is essential to a successful transition. It is important for both of you to be comfortable at the end of the transition period. We encourage you to tell your child good-bye rather than leaving without warning, even if the parting evokes tears. Goodbye routines such as reading one book, giving a hug, kiss or high five, or helping to select a toy for the child can be helpful to creating a smooth transition. Our role is to be supportive for both the child and parent.

Daily arrival and departure are important times for you and your child. Sign your child in and out each day on the daily attendance sheets in the room. Please direct your child to wash his/her hands upon arrival. Settling your child into the room and making sure the teacher knows you have arrived facilitates the transition from home to the Center. Touch base with the teacher in charge and communicating any important information about your child/family. The communication between parent and caregiver at the beginning and the end of the day is very important. The teachers want to know how your child has been since the day before. At the end of the day, the teacher closing the room will share the happenings of your child's day with you.

For children with special needs, please let the Center director know your child's specific needs around arrival and departure.

If someone other than a parent/guardian will pick the child up at the end of the day, please leave a note with the teacher or call the Center with this information. We will not release a child to anyone without your specific permission. Non-parent/guardians will have picture ID checked by the director or assistant director at the door.

Preschool Daily Schedule

Time	Scheduled Activity
6:30 - 8:00	Arrival and play of child's choice
8:00 - 8:45	Breakfast (not served after 8:45), toileting
8:45 - 9:30	Morning circle time/outdoor play (each class alternates)
9:30 - 10:45	Centers of child's choice, reading books
11:00 - 11:45	Lunch
11:45 - 12:15	Toileting and preparation for rest time
12:30 - 2:45	Rest time
2:45 - 3:30	Afternoon snack, toileting
3:30 - 6:00	Afternoon circle time, centers of child's choice, reading, outdoor play (weather permitting)

Parent Communication

Weekly letters are posted to the Center's website and are accompanied by an e-mail notice sent to you as often as possible. The letters inform parents of the upcoming activities scheduled for the week. Hard copies are posted in the desk area. The weekly

letters include special books, projects, songs or finger plays the children will be working with for the week, the schedule of any special events and some of the intended learning goals. Spontaneous/unexpected goals met are normal and the newsletter contains only a few examples of the continuous learning occurring in the classroom.

Each classroom maintains a room email address, checked at least daily on the class's iPad. Families are encouraged to send non-urgent information to this address (i.e. child out sick for the day, different person picking up later that week, request for information about the child). Any email sent to these addresses is automatically copied to the director and assistant director.

The preschool classroom also maintains a blog to share pictures, fun quotes and a glimpse of some of the learning happening in the room. Parents must give permission for their child's photo to be used within the blog. Families are given a username and password for the blog each year.

Field Trips

Preschoolers enjoy walks on campus as well as occasional field trips. The trips are geared for fun, but also provide the child with a larger window on the world. Trips include but are not limited to: The Rose Theater, the Joslyn Art Museum, and the Durham Western Heritage Museum. Teachers notify families well in advance of each outing. Parents are welcome and encouraged to accompany the children. Children are instructed to remain with their group, to board and leave the bus safely, to sit during the transport and to cross a street only with the teacher's help. The children are transported on Creighton Shuttle Buses, the City bus service, or walk to their destination. Shuttle drivers hold commercial driver's licenses (CDLs). Shuttles provide "door-to-door" service to the Center. Teachers assign small groups of children to the adults accompanying the group and count the children often, including when they board the bus from both locations. Field trips fees are paid by parents quarterly and may vary based on trip expenses (bus fees, etc.).

During winters in which weather does not permit playing outside, the preschool classes visit the Kiewit Fitness Center for large motor play. These trips generally occur once per week during the months of January, February and March. The children are transported by Creighton shuttles.

"Show and Tell" Day

Fridays are "show-and-tell" days. Each child is encouraged to describe and discuss an object brought from home. This time gives the child a chance to develop their language skills and it brings a sense of community into the classroom. Children often bring photographs, something the child has created, an object that relates to an activity, stories of family outings, or items from nature. Action figures including Barbie dolls, toy guns or weapons are not appropriate for this activity.

Rest Time

Each child participates in the daily rest period. A special blanket, small pillow or soft toy that will fit in a “nap sack” provided by the Center should be brought from home. Large pillow pets are not allowed. Pacifiers are discouraged at this age. The preschooler is encouraged, but not forced, to sleep during the rest time.

Clothing and Toys from Home

Clothing should be comfortable. Children must wear closed-toe shoes with ties or Velcro closings and socks. The child may be excluded from outdoor activities when he/she is wearing sandals, flip-flops, or Crocs. Jackets and sweaters must be marked with the child’s name. Children need appropriate outer clothing every day. Please leave a full change or two of clothing (pants, underwear, shirt, and socks) at the Center for your child. Every child will have an accident or a spill at one time or another.

For the safety of the children, please do not store any medication in your child’s backpack or bag, including lip balm.

It is helpful when children leave their own toys at home except for “show and tell” days.

Transitioning to Kindergarten

As the preschooler approaches 5 years of age, the teacher will talk with the parents about their plans for sending the child to Kindergarten. In the spring, along with the child’s time for Kindergarten Round Up, the teachers will begin to talk about coming changes and being excited to move on to a new school. Teachers will work with parents to identify any final goals/objectives for the child’s development and make a plan to work on them until the time that the child leaves the Center. Children are encouraged to express any feelings (positive or not) about the Kindergarten transition, but also to be excited about the changes approaching. Children leaving the Center for Kindergarten are invited to participate in a graduation ceremony to celebrate their time at the Center and reinforce the concept of transitioning to Kindergarten. This ceremony will be in either May or July depending on the anticipated end date of the majority of graduates.

Teachers and Center administrators are happy to work with the child’s new school to make the transition smooth through sharing of information/knowledge of the child with parent permission. Center administrators will share relevant information about area schools and Kindergarten programs throughout the year. Each year the Center will host a parent education meeting focusing on Kindergarten readiness, with local Kindergarten teachers as special guests to answer questions.