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Parent Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to Priceless Treasures Preschool and Childcare. We are so excited that you have chosen us to care for your most priceless treasure, your child(ren)! To facilitate greater understanding between us, we have created this handbook. It covers our childcare philosophies, business policies, and expectations. In order to make our relationship as enjoyable as possible, the following pages contain mutually beneficial requirements, which are necessary to ensure that there are no misunderstandings between either party. The words “I”, “me”, or “my” refers to Lena Perez, owner/director. The terms “we” and “us” refers to the owner and staff. The word “you” or “your” refers to the child’s parents or guardian.

Please read this handbook carefully, and feel free to discuss with me any questions that you may have.

Childcare Philosophy

We believe that the first years of a child’s life are by far the most important, helping to lay the foundation for all intellectual and emotional development to follow. Through nurturing and individualized attention, we take great care to provide a warm, friendly, and fun environment for your child, while ensuring they receive the guidance and structure that they need. We strive to nurture your child’s ideas and imagination, acknowledge each child’s individuality and abilities, and validate each personality. Our goal is to provide a place where children know that they are accepted, loved, protected, and wanted; helping to instill in each child a strong sense of self-worth and purpose. Our job is to make sure that each child has numerous positive experiences and interactions throughout each day. It is our hope that when the day is done, and your children come home, they feel happy and proud of themselves; eager to express the happenings of their day.

We believe children learn best through play and exploration; through using everyday opportunities to practice and build on their skills and abilities, teaching them self-motivation and self-direction. While some observers may say that the children are “just playing”, when one takes a closer look, they will find that through building with blocks, children work on

coordination and small muscle skills, social skills of communicating with friends, and hand-eye coordination, to name a few things. Through dramatic play/dress up, children work on modeling of adults' behaviors, refining their small muscle coordination, cognitive and social skills, large muscle coordination, and more. Each activity and experience provides the child opportunities to practice and grow in their skills and varying abilities.

Our role is to provide activities that enhance the child's natural curiosity and interest level. It is important to encourage children to participate in a variety of individual and group activities designed to develop language, enhance physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth, skills and attitudes.

We believe that play is a very important part of a developmentally appropriate early childhood program. Play is a child's work. It is the young child's way of reaching out to learn about the world around them. In our program, children have uninterrupted periods of play time in which to enjoy self-chosen activities. With a variety of materials, children are encouraged to work out individual ideas and foster their creativity.

We feel that good communication between parent and provider is a very important part of a quality early childhood program. Because of this, we are committed to creating a strong bond with you and your child, helping to ensure the best start to your child's life. Our goal is that you feel completely confident and reassured when you leave your child in our care. Each child is different, unique, and special and will be treated as such.

We encourage families to share their traditions whenever possible. Our goal is to integrate different cultures and help children gain understanding and acceptance, develop love and respect for themselves, others and all things. We believe it is important for children to be connected with their family culture and for us as adults to maintain a connection between home and child care when possible.

We use The Creative Curriculum and a Social/Emotional curriculum called Second Step. Our curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development: social, emotional, cognitive, and physical. The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school. These activities can be adapted for children of all ages, stages, and for those of differing abilities. We welcome children of all abilities, needs, family structures, and ethnicity.

Curriculum is not just what story is read, what art project is done, what worksheet is filled out, or what product is made; a large part of curriculum is playtime. Activities like crawling, walking, running, throwing, catching, jumping, climbing, and balancing will develop gross motor skills. Once gross motor skills are mastered children can gain fine motor skills.

Activities such as building with blocks, stringing beads, drawing, painting, and placing pegs into holes will help with the development of children's fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and their sense of direction. These are the same skills that are needed for reading, writing, and math. By embracing each child's development from a very young age, we can assist in building a strong foundation for growth. Together, we can help children by recognizing that educational opportunities exist in the simplest activities.

Open Communication

Communication is very important to us and is the key to a successful childcare arrangement. The parent and the teacher need to have a good working relationship so they can communicate and work together. Parents and teachers need to exchange pertinent information in the child's life, such as changes in routine, special events or activities as well as changes such as death, divorce, separation, moving, visitors and any other changes that might or would affect your child. All of this information is very important in understanding the child's feelings, behavior and well-being. When we accept a new family into our business, we like to make sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us. We welcome questions,

feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the child/children. Sensitive issues will be discussed in private outside of regular childcare hours either by telephone or conference.

Conferences will be scheduled as a routine part of your child's care yearly; as this is a time for us to share our information regarding your child's growth and development, as well as for you to share with us what goals you have for your child, what interests they may have, and for you to contribute to your child's learning and developmental goals. This is also a great time to discuss any resources that your family might be needing. We will seek to provide information regardless of language, literacy, or ability. We also post community resources by the front door and can discuss these with you individually if you have questions.

Parents will have the opportunity to download an app on their phone to be able to see their child's daily information. For infants, this may include information such as feedings, diaper changes, schedule, temperament, activities, and things to remember.

I invite you to share with me in writing, by telephone, or schedule an appointment at any time to talk about any concerns you may have. You are encouraged to call me at any time between the hours of 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. If I am unable to answer the phone, please leave a message on my voicemail and I will call you back as soon as possible.

Enrollment Policy

There are several forms that must be completed and turned in before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible from us. The forms are as follows:

- Enrollment and Authorization Form
- Priceless Treasures Preschool and Childcare Contract
- Infant/Toddler Needs and Services Plan (Infant/Toddler Room only)

- Immunizations-If your child has consistently lived in Oregon, I am able to look up this information for you. If you have lived out of state, or have any information missing on this report, you will need to provide a copy of your child's immunizations
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (we will let you know when this starts)
- If necessary, legal documents regarding the child(ren)'s custody.

You are required to keep us informed of any changes in address, telephone numbers, and other pertinent information listed on any/all of the above forms. **For the safety of the child(ren), all records must be kept up to date.** We will also do an information update with each family yearly to be sure that we haven't missed any changes. If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask.

Arrivals & Departures

Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a mealtime). It is normal for children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when being dropped off. Please be very brief (no more than 5 minutes is sufficient) during drop-off times; the longer you prolong the departure the harder it is on both you and your child. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back are all that is needed. In our experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

Please be brief at pick-up times also. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider/staff), and children will test to see if the rules still apply. Please take the parental role during these times.

We will try our best to send your child home with a clean diaper, and would appreciate the same consideration when they are dropped off.

We prefer that there are no pick-ups or drop-offs during the designated daily quiet time, but if it is necessary please be as quiet and brief as

possible. Children who arrive during quiet time will be expected to remain quiet (they may play/read quietly) until quiet time is over, so that others will not be disrupted from their naps.

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents or someone else the parents designate. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is NOT on that list, we MUST have written permission to release your child. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them, we would need to ask for photo identification. We do not mean to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for your child's protection. We will not let a child leave without a parent's verbal permission even if that person is listed as one of your designated pickup people.

Logging in & out

It is important that **parents log their children in and out each day.**

This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought/picked up the child each day.

Operating Hours/Attendance

Priceless Treasures is licensed for extended care hours in order to help meet the needs of families with varying schedules. While we are open these hours, it DOES NOT mean that a child can come anytime during these hours. When we discuss your childcare needs and you fill out your contract form and give me the hours needed, **THESE ARE YOUR CONTRACTED HOURS.** We plan staff scheduling around these hours, so if you come outside of those hours, there may not be room. Any time outside of your contracted time will need to be pre-approved to ensure adequate staffing and there will be an additional fee. We are required to maintain ratios, and will not risk being out of ratio for a child coming during their non-contracted time.

Please notify us if your child will be late or absent on their regular, contracted days.

Absences

There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your child care fee for your time missed due to illness, holidays, days off, or vacation. A place has been reserved for each child that cannot be filled on a short-term basis.

Holidays and Vacations

Below are paid holidays if they fall on a contracted day for your child. In addition, please have a backup/substitute childcare provider for these occasions.

- * New Year's Eve (closing at 5 pm)
 - * New Year's Day
 - * Martin Luther King Jr Day
 - * President's Day
 - * Memorial Day
 - * Independence Day (July 4th and 5th)
 - * Labor Day
 - * Veteran's Day
 - * Thanksgiving and the Friday after Thanksgiving
 - * Christmas Eve (closing early)
 - * Christmas Day + one day moveable- will post each year by Sept
- When a holiday (listed above) falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the preceeding Friday, when a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday. Your tuition rates will remain the same, these are considered paid holidays.

NOTE: I do reserve the right to close for any reason in which I cannot operate in a safe manner: i.e. loss of electricity, water, heat, or in

extreme circumstances (such as weather conditions and medical epidemics). Childcare fees are paid for any of these occurrences.

Toilet Training

We use naturally occurring opportunities with potty training where it is child led/initiated. Children are never forced to use the toilet. Because children are on their own biological schedules, each child's toilet training is on an individual basis. Some of the signs to look for include: appropriate language skills to communicate the need to use the toilet, staying dry for longer periods of time, the ability to dress and undress self and the interest in staying dry or clean. We will be glad to assist you in toilet training your child with the understanding that it will be successful only if we work together. Toilet training will be done in a relaxed manner with the cooperation of the family. If potty training is begun when your child is ready, the task is easy and quick. If a parent undertakes the task of potty training when they want it to happen, the task is arduous and painful for all concerned. Thirty months of age is a good rule of thumb to start checking for signs of readiness. When we agree that the time is right for your child and until he/she is totally successful in his/her toileting, he/she should wear clothes that promote their independence. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists. Please do not send them in the following types of clothing: overalls, onesies, belts, buckles, buttons, snaps, suspenders, skirts/dresses or tights as these will create a problem when a child is in a hurry to use the bathroom. We ask that you begin toilet training at home during a weekend or vacation. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. We do this through positive encouragement (i.e. sticker chart, high-5's, "bragging" on them to others, clapping, whoo-hoo's).

Extra clothing is **REQUIRED**. All children not 100% potty trained are required to wear diapers or pull-ups when in daycare. Underwear can be worn at home for those children who are in the process of potty training. State regulations mandate "that children who do not have control over their bodily functions must have protective undergarments on at all times to

avoid contamination of the childcare areas”. Protective undergarments are considered to be diapers (disposable or cloth with a plastic protector over the outside), pull-ups, or any other bladder/bowel control wear. This is a special time for your child, a sign that he/she is growing up. Toilet training should be a good experience.

We do not launder soiled items and will send them home in a plastic bag. Please replace any clothing sent home the next day. If no clothes are available, Priceless Treasures will provide clothes. Please wash and return these clothes.

Meals

We are applying to be enrolled in the USDA Food Program. Nutritious meals and snacks will be served to all children at no extra cost to you. You are responsible for feeding your child if he/she will arrive at childcare after a mealtime.

Infants are provided with Kirkland Infant Formula with Iron or Kirkland Soy Formula, cereal, and baby food at no additional cost to you if you desire. If you choose a different formula, then you would need to provide that formula for your child. Infants are always fed on demand.

Please do not allow your child to bring in any food, drink (this includes a morning Sippy cup), candy, or fast food. Please have them finish their food in the car or save it for when they leave. If there is a special day and you would like to bring some food to share, they may bring enough for everyone, but it needs to be all age appropriate, UNOPENED, and store bought for safety reasons. No gum!

We will supply sippy cups, all food, and drinks. We believe mealtime should be a pleasant time; therefore, children are always offered food but are not forced to eat it. We do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. Sometimes they are surprised by what they like! As children

are eating, we often talk about good nutrition and healthy eating habits. Children are provided child-sized utensils to use and help during the meals (cleaning up spills, clearing the table after themselves, etc). Our program offers fresh fruits and vegetables daily. Children sit at tables of smaller groups to eat. If a special modified diet is required due to a medical issue, there will be a form that you will be required to fill out. Please let me know of any and all food allergies your child might have.

Meal/Snack times are as follows:

Breakfast	8-8:30
AM Snack	10:15-10:30
Lunch	12:00-12:30
PM Snack	3:15-3:30

All meals and snacks will be served at the table or the picnic table outside (when weather is agreeable). Adults sit with the children and encourage children talking to each other, answering questions we have asked and taking turns listening to one another. We either eat with them or feed the infants and include the babies in the conversation. We may also read a story during lunch time, asking open ended questions. This is a fun time of hearing about various pets, weekend activities, and other stories that come up.

TV & Screentime

Screen time is used intentionally for active child involvement and instructional goals (often when children have questions about something and we can look up and get information for them with the tablet and discuss what we have learned). There is no advertisements or brand placement. Adults do not use electronic media for personal use during childcare hours.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs are welcome in our program. We have experience in caring for children with physical challenges, allergies, and asthma. If your child requires a special diet, we are willing to work with you on this. If your child has a special need, including special health concerns, please provide me with written instructions for providing special therapy, and individualized program of instruction, or behavior guidance. These instructions may come from you, a physician, a therapist, or another qualified person. I am happy to collaborate with professionals, as needed.

ASQ Evaluations

All children 5 years and younger will receive a free ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) Evaluation within the first month of care. Annually from the date of enrollment, we will conduct another age appropriate ASQ evaluation. This questionnaire can be filled out by the parent, the provider, or both. If there are any concerns, we would be happy to help you connect with Willamette ESD.

Child's Health

Your child will not be accepted into childcare if he/she is sick. If your child is sick PLEASE keep them at home until they are well. A sick child should be allowed to recover fully after an illness so that other children in the group do not risk exposure and so that the child is able to fully participate in childcare activities. If you are unable to remain at home with your sick child it will be necessary for you to make substitute child care arrangements at your own expense. If your child becomes ill while in our care, you will be notified immediately.

Symptoms Requiring Removal of Child from Child Care

- Fever: Fever over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. A child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to childcare; that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol or any other fever reducing substance.
- Diarrhea: runny or watery stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
 Note: As for infants with fevers and/or diarrhea and as it pertains to teething, I will only accept a child with these symptoms back into care after the child has seen a doctor and a note is sent from the doctor stating that these symptoms are due to teething
- Vomiting: two times within 24 hours
- Sore throat: when accompanied by fever or swollen glands
- Runny nose: your child may be brought to care if he/she has a common cold (slight cough, clear runny nose, occasional sneezing). Discharge of any color other than clear is not acceptable in childcare.
- Runny and/or Crusty Eyes: Watery, matted, and/or red/pink eyes are not acceptable in childcare.
- Rash, lice or nits: body rash, especially with fever or itching
- Excessive Crankiness: Child is irritable, excessive whining or crying, wants constantly held, or requires more attention than I can provide without jeopardizing the health, safety, or well-being of the other children in my care.

We reserve the right to determine when a child should be sent home due to illness. Children may return to care 24 hours after symptoms of illness end or with written authorization from your doctor stating the name of illness and when child may return to group care. Please notify us as soon as possible when your child becomes ill so that we are able to notify the other parents. If your child is thought to have a communicable disease, you will be notified and asked to pick him/her up. He/she will be isolated from the other children and given special attention and comfort until you arrive. Your child will be accepted back into care when no longer contagious. All other parents will be notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for.

Thank you for doing your part in keeping everyone as healthy as possible.

Medications

Both nonprescription and prescription medications, ointments, and creams can be given to your child if needed. Parents are required to fill out the proper forms and to supply all medications in their original containers. All written instructions shall be valid for six months unless a shorter time period is designated by the physician, dentist, or parent. These must be labeled with the child's name. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** We are unable to exceed the manufacturer's recommended dosage unless with written physician's instructions when administering nonprescription medication.

Medical Emergencies

We will supervise your child/children closely in an attempt to prevent injuries, but accidents resulting in injury do occur. We have been trained in first aid and CPR and will follow our training. If the injury is minor (requiring only a band-aid or ice) we will tell you about it when you pick up your child. If it is serious, we will call you and may even suggest that you take your child to the doctor or the emergency room. If an injury is very severe, 911 will be called for assistance before we call you and your child will be sent to the designated hospital on your Emergency Transportation Authorization Form (typically Salem Hospital). If an ambulance is called to transport your child, the cost of the ambulance will be your responsibility. You are responsible for all costs involved in emergency treatment, including emergency transportation, if required. Priceless Treasures Preschool and Childcare will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on these premises, or while the child is in our company during field trips or outings.

If you cannot be reached, we will call the emergency contacts that you have listed. Please remember to keep the emergency information up-to-date!

Biting Policy

Unfortunately when groups of small children are together, biting incidences will occur occasionally. One of our primary goals is to provide a safe and loving learning environment for children. When a biting incident occurs, there are many upset feelings. When it does occur, we take it very seriously and try to find the reason why the child bit and try to extinguish the behavior as quickly as possible and assist in developing positive social skills. Biting is not uncommon. It causes more upset feelings than any other behavior in group settings for young children such as learning centers and child cares. Parents of the child who was bitten, parent's of the child biting, and for the teacher. All want the behavior to end as quickly as possible. As we know, young children up to two years of age learn through mouthing objects and people. Typically this does not continue after the age of three.

Why do children bite? Children will bite for many different reasons. Some of them include:

- Experimental biting
- Jealousy
- Teething discomfort
- Becoming independent
- Child with delayed speech/communications often bites
- Is learning to play with other children
- Is frustrated in expressing his/her needs or wants
- Is threatened by new or changing situations such as a mother returning to work, move to another home, a new baby, or parent's separating.
- Adult or another child made game with play biting

When a child bites another child, we will:

- Intervene immediately
- Help the child who was bitten (TLC, ice, and apply Neosporin, etc)
- Talk briefly to the child who bit and remove the child from the situation for a brief period of time. We will tell the child in a calm but firm voice, "No biting, biting hurts."
- Notify parents of all children involved
- Talk with the parents of the child who is biting

- Send home notice verbal/and in writing to both parents
- Document biting child with date, time, child bitten, area bitten, and area of body bitten on child
- Try to shadow closer the child during free play when biting often occurs.

While using all of these techniques, most children resolve the biting behavior. However, should this continue without any improvements, then we must take further steps to ensure the safety of the children in our care. Therefore, we may require that the child that is biting find another childcare environment that will meet his/her individual needs.

Child Abuse

We are required by law to report any suspected physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect.

Dress Code

Please dress your child appropriately. All diapers and underwear must be covered by clothing. Socks must be worn at all times and closed-toe shoes for safety. If your child is wearing boots, sandals, or flip flops, please consider bringing a pair of tennis shoes that can be worn for the various activities of the day. Activities may be messy, you need to supply a complete change of clothing in case of an accident, spill, toilet issue, etc.

Daily Schedule

Young children, toddlers and babies enjoy a structured schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day to flow smoothly, allows the child/children to anticipate coming events, and aids in achieving a variety of goals. We will adhere to our written schedule to the best of our ability, keeping in mind that anything can happen when children are involved. There will be times when we have to make adjustments to the schedule. we would appreciate it if you consider our schedule when picking up or dropping off your children. It is better if arrivals and departures do not occur during quiet time, but when they do, please make note of the fact that children may be sleeping. Come and go as quietly and quickly as possible.

Children who arrive during quiet time will be expected to rest or play quietly until the rest period is over.

An example of a day at Priceless Treasures Preschool and Childcare:

7:30-8:00 am	Arrive/Select an activity (ex: Games, puzzles, draw, write, color, read books)
8:00-8:30 am	Hand washing/Breakfast
8:30-9:00 am	Clean up/Toilet time/diaper changes
9:00-9:20 am	Group Time (songs, finger play, letter and number recognition, days of the week, science, math, cultural diversity)
9:20-10:00	Children select an activity of their choice or join in a group activity such as finger painting, water play, cooking, puppet making, reading to children one-on-one, dictation of children's work Children help clean up.
10:00-10:30am	Wash hands/Snack/Clean up
10:30-10:45 am	Toilet time/Wash hands/Get ready to go Outside
10:45-11:40 am	Planned Outdoor play/Walks/Free play
11:40-12:00 pm	Clean up/wash hands/Read Aloud/get ready for lunch
12:00-1:00 pm	Lunch and conversation Clean up/wash hands/change diapers/brush Teeth
1:00-3:00 pm	Read Aloud/Rest time/quietly read books
3:00-3:30 pm	Put mats away/Snack/Change diapers/Get Ready to go outside
3:30-4:30 pm	Active play outside (or inside if weather is bad)
4:30-4:45 pm	Group meeting
4:45-5:30	Limited choice time-table toys, blocks, Writing, coloring, read books, swing, play in

sand, self-selected small groups
Diaper changes
5:00-5:30 pm Parents arrive/Children leave for the day

Activities and Curriculum

Age appropriate activities are scheduled with flexibility, allowing us to respond to the needs of the individual child and day. We will offer times for outside play, crafts, stories, instruction, and naps appropriate to the child's ages, interests, and abilities. We will provide your child with tender loving care, understanding, patience and guidance. Chores, such as picking up, cleaning of the table after meals, and folding hand towels will likely be a part of the day. We provide preschool curriculum, developing large and small motor skills. We do many arts and crafts where the focus is on the process, not the product. Free play is an important part of a child's early years. It is here that they learn social skills that will be needed the rest of their lives.

Immunizations

Your child must be up to date on all immunizations. If your child needs to have any of these, please consider spending the first 24 hours with them. Most children need one on one care and are rather fussy and do not understand why they are feeling the way they feel. Please plan on this when scheduling appointments for immunizations. We do not require you to bring us a copy of your child's immunization record because we are able to look it up online. If we find that your child is in need of any of their immunizations, we will ask you to call your child's doctor to verify.

Indoor and Outdoor Play

Indoor play: We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Toys may be rotated or placed temporarily out of use so that children do not become bored. Younger children have less developed organizational skills and can get easily frustrated or upset when there are too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with clean up, when

there are toys everywhere, because it is so overwhelming to them. For this reason, during free play times, each child may select one or two things at a time to play with. They will be shown how to put those things away before selecting something else.

Outdoor play: We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor play at all times.

Payment Procedures

Your specific rates will be outlined in your Contract and Rate Agreement. Payment is payable in advance and is due on the 1st, but will be accepted until the 5th; unless another arrangement has been agreed upon. Payments may be made by check or cash, as long as checks are not returned to me for non-payment. Please make checks payable to: Priceless Treasures.

Due to the continually rising cost of operating the child care business, your child care fee will also be increased over time. You will be given at least a thirty day notice before such an increase would take place.

NSF Checks

If a check is returned to me for non-sufficient funds, you will be required to pay all fees that have been incurred as a result of the returned check. Childcare services will be immediately halted until full payment of tuition and NSF charges has been made, with a Money Order. In addition, only Money Orders will be accepted from you from that point forward.

Late Pick-ups/Late payments

We choose not to charge late fees for late pick-ups and late payments. Our desire is to have a mutually respectful relationship, one in which we understand that things happen and can give grace in such circumstances; but in return, ask that the parent understands that our days are long with the children and we have additional work hours to put in after everybody leaves. We are available to you for your work needs, but ask that you

schedule other appointments on your own time to ensure on-time pick-ups. If this becomes a conflict, we will ask you to look for a program that better meets your family's needs.

Taxes

A year-end summary will be available for you to print off of Procure at your own leisure.

Open Door Policy

We maintain an open door policy for parents. This means that you are always welcome to call or drop in to see your children at any time during regular childcare hours. You are required to let us know of your presence before entering the premises. We would appreciate your taking into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause children to react in an excited manner that does not normally occur when there aren't any additional visitors present.

Emergency Plan

Emergency evacuation (on-site): In the event of a real emergency evacuation which allows us to stay on premises, we will contact parents as soon as possible by phone to pick up their child(ren). If phones are not working we will contact parents by digital devices used for attendance and staying connected with families throughout a regular day.

Emergency evacuation (off-site): In the event of a full site evacuation we have designated Salem Heights Elementary School as our alternative safe meeting area. We will walk the children across the street to Salem Heights Elementary School. Parents will be contacted by phone to pick up their child(ren) at the off-site location. Attendance is taken using digital device(s) once all classes have reached meeting area to ensure everyone is accounted for. A copy of all of the children's and staff's emergency contacts will be in the emergency preparedness suitcase which an office staff member will be responsible for during evacuation. Attendance records will be brought along using digital devices for each class. Staff will remain with children until they are reunified with their families.

We practice monthly fire/other emergency drills. In addition, we incorporate fire safety curriculum into our program occasionally.

Field Trips

Occasionally, we may have the opportunity to take a field trip. All children will be placed in safety-approved car seats as required by State laws. You may be requested to provide a car seat for the day and/or pay any fees associated with the trip. You will be required to sign a permission slip that we will carry with us. It is not required that your child attends the field trip, but it will be your responsibility to find and pay for alternate care if you do not wish for them to attend. You still pay your regular child care fees. Parent participation is always welcome!

Termination Policy

We reserve the right to terminate for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of a child to adjust to the child care after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations either verbally or in writing

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when termination, and will give the same courtesy in return. You are required to give two-week's written notice when you decide to terminate childcare. The two weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether or not your child is in attendance.

We reserve the right to give written notice of termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the staff or other children in attendance. You may pay two-week's fees in lieu of two-weeks notice.

Parent Involvement

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's child care experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Chaperoning on field trips
- Lending objects for units of study
- Coming and talking about your job, when asked
- Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here (see monthly newsletter)
- Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"
- Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties

Please share any family traditions, cultural beliefs, home language, interests, or abilities that you would like to plan activities with the children.

Nap and Quiet Time

All children are required to lie down for a rest period in the afternoon. All Children must nap, rest, read or play quietly during this period. Rest time gives everyone a much needed break during the day. Without rest time, some children are argumentative in the afternoon, short-tempered with others, and not as happy when they go home in the evening.

Naptime is our only opportunity to take a break, clean up after lunch, do paperwork, fill out daily notes, and do activity planning. We provide nap mats. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that he/she sleeps with, please send it along. I would ask that you please avoid picking up or dropping off your child during naptime, as it disturbs the other children's rest period.

Infants nap at varying times and their schedules will be accommodated. Somewhere between 12 and 18 months, children usually drop down to one

nap per day. At this time, we will attempt to put them on the scheduled nap/rest period. Naptime is typically from 1:00pm to 3:00pm.

Cleanliness and Hygiene

We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Hands are washed when entering care by all children and adults when planning on spending time in the care setting. Hands are also washed before eating, after diapering or using the toilet, after tissue for nose or hands to mouth, and after being outside and many more times throughout the day. Infants sleep in separate cribs or pack and plays, with clean sheets used only by them. Beginning at about age 2, washable nap mats are used. Each child has a separate nap mat, with sheets and blankets that are washed weekly (unless soiled, then they are washed as often as necessary).

Children use separate cups, plates, bowls, and eating utensils that have been washed in a three-compartment sink and air dried. High chair tray, tables, etc. are clean and sanitized after each use.

Birthdays and Parties

Each child's birthday is his/her "Special Day." It will be your responsibility to provide cake, cupcakes, or treats for your child's special day. Please remember that they must be store bought and unopened.

We will also have holiday parties throughout the year. Sign-up sheets will be posted at the front door for your assistance with these days as needed on a voluntary basis.

Guidance and Discipline

Our philosophy is that you discipline to teach a child. We achieve this through love, consistency, and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. The children are explained the rules of the child care home frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. We also seek to teach preventative strategies such as: teaching children what words they can use instead of using their

hands on their friends. We have many activities and things for children to do to lessen the arguments over toys. We also are very conscientious of what children are doing and can step in at any time to help them manage their behavior.

Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreement between children. Young children, especially, who are not adept at communication, have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit or throw toys, etc. Although teaching children appropriate behavior is what we will be doing, remember that this behavior is normal in most cases.

The following methods of discipline will be used:

- * Encourage children to solve problems themselves
- * Intervention and discussion
- * Re-direction to another play area
- * Loss of privileges
- * Teach children there are consequences for their actions

If we feel there is a chronic behavioral issue that needs attention, we will let you know so that we are handling it in the same way and your child has continuity in discipline. These types of behaviors might include such things as biting, use of bad words, chronic hitting, etc. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents us from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and well-being of all.

Under no circumstances will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name-calling, or isolation used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.

As a home care provider, we have a responsibility by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse—physical or emotional—or neglect. This is strictly for the benefit of your child.

Adult-Child Interactions

You can expect to see us constantly with children, entering into their activities, or watching them and communicating with them using open-ended questions about what they are doing. We will give positive feedback and encourage the children in their interests and discoveries, their language, concept development, and their learning in general by acting in response to their ideas, comments, and work. We will use repetition and consistency. We will also use extension (for example a child points to a picture and says “dog”, we might say, “yes, that dog is catching a ball”). We also use self-talk and parallel talk, as we talk about what we or the child are doing, eating, touching, seeing, etc. Another way that we help children to understand concepts, answer questions, or complete activities is by using scaffolding. We break up the learning into chunks and introduce pieces at a time, adding them to the pieces that we have already learned. We will also praise them in the way that they are working with their friends’, and in the way that they are communicating their needs or wants. If a child is having a hard time in their play/work, we will ask questions to receive insight into what they are feeling and why, validate their feelings, and help them to find a solution.

Confidentiality

We keep everyone’s information confidential and in a locked file cabinet.

Parent Advisory

While we do not have scheduled parent meetings or advisory groups, I still greatly value your input and opinions in our program. Please feel free to bring any ideas to me in person, through text messages, email, or through our suggestion box. I am always looking to improve our program!

Revisions to Handbook and Contract

There will be a yearly revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract. All families will sign a new contract each year. We reserve the right to make changes in rates and policies, as we deem necessary. You will

be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least two-week's notice of changes.