

ECE Academy
Policies and Procedures

Communication

Good communication is of the utmost importance. When a new family is accepted into our center, we like to be sure that we can share openly about any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar child care philosophy between the center and the parents. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the child(ren). Sensitive issues will be discussed in private at a mutually beneficial time.

Enrollment Policy

There are several forms that make up the ECE Academy enrollment packet. This enrollment packet must be completed and in our possession before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible and satisfies the record keeping requirement of state licensing guidelines. All forms will be reviewed annually. If there are changes to any of the forms in the enrollment packet, please notify your director to update your records.

Last week security deposit: Each parent when enrolling must pay an amount equal to one week's childcare as a last week of care security deposit. This payment may be made in installments but must be paid in full within 30 days of enrolling.

Tuition / Payment Procedures

Your specific rates will be outlined in your Contract and Rate Agreement. Tuition is payable in advance and is due no later than 12 NOON on Friday two weeks prior to care, unless another arrangement has been agreed upon. Payment may be made online, money order, or cash. There will be a late fee of \$5 for failure to pay by noon on Friday. An additional \$10 (total \$15) late fee will be assessed if not paid by closing time on Friday. An additional \$10 late fee (total \$25) will be charged if payment is not made by closing time on Monday. Repeated late payments may be grounds for termination. Parents who are late on a payment will be denied childcare until account is made current.

Parent Vacation: You must continue to pay your tuition on your vacation to hold your daycare spot.

Maternity Leave: To hold a spot you must continue to pay while you are on maternity leave.

Late Fees

A \$2.00 per minute late pickup fee will be assessed for all children picked up after closing. This must be paid in cash at the time of pickup, or before the child's next regularly scheduled day. This will be strictly enforced, and habitual tardiness may result in termination of services.

Hours of Operation

We offer both full and part time care. Full time is considered from 30-50 hours per week. Part time is considered less than 29 hours per week. Add-ons or schedule changes may be accepted to our daily schedule only if there is a position open for that day, and they will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Please remember that schedule changes of this nature create some disruption to our normal schedule. We would appreciate as much notice as possible, so that we can plan for meals, sleeping arrangements, and any changes in activities that may occur.

We maintain an open door policy for parents during daycare hours. This means that parents are always welcome to call or drop in to see their children. 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. If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you would leave a message, we will call you back as soon as possible.

Arrival and Departures

Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a meal time). We will try our best to send your child home with a clean diaper, and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief, the longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. In my 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, as well. This is a time of testing, when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider). All children will test to see if the rules still apply. During arrival and departure, we expect parents to back up our rules. Please be in control of your child during pick up times.

Please leave your cell phones in your car so that the director, teachers and your child will have your undivided attention at pick up or drop off time.

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents, or someone else the parents designate on the Authorized Pick up and Emergency Contact Form. 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 then we will need to ask for identification. This is not meant to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for the child's protection. Drop off and pick up are not good times to discuss serious problems. Little ears and minds hear and understand everything. Your director can set up a time where the issues can be discussed in private.

Sign In / Out

It is required by state law that all parents sign their child in and out each day. For your convenience, a sign in/out sheet, pen, and a clock are located by the door, this gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought/picked up the child each day.

Absences

Childcare fees are based on enrollment (a reserved space), not on attendance. To maintain a reserved space, fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation, or for any other reason.

Holidays / Vacations

The following is a list of the holidays that ECE Academy Daycare will be closed:

New Year's Day
Memorial Day
Patriot's Day (Staff Training Day)
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day (Staff Training Day)
Thanksgiving Day and the day after
Christmas Eve (all centers close at 3:00 pm)
Christmas Day

If one of these holidays falls on a weekend, then we will be closed either Friday or Monday.

Clothing / Attire

Children should arrive dressed for play. We like to have fun! Having fun involves outdoor play and lots of messy activities, so make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. You will be expected to supply an art smock to protect clothes from paint or other art materials, and bibs to keep food stains to a minimum. Please don't dress your child in nice clothing and expect them to be spotless when you arrive to pick them up. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate for outdoor play. Make sure to include hats, mittens, boots and coats for cold weather.

Personal Belongings

We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, videos, etc.). Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite sleepy toy for naptime only, and toys may be brought for show and tell activities. We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name.

Supplies

Parents must supply the following items to be kept in their cubby:

Diapers, wipes, pull-ups, powders/ointments, pacifier (preferably on a string), bottles, bibs, saline drops/gel and nasal syringe, blanket for rest time, and a complete change of clothes (replace when soiled), sunscreen & bug spray.

All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name. Eating utensils, cups and dishes will be supplied. If any of these items are brought, they must be marked with your child's name, to avoid mix-ups with other children.

Donations help us keep costs down, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated.

Dress up clothing, costumes, jewelry, hats, etc.

Paper of any kind, brown, white, colored, waxed, foil, etc.

Art supplies; crayons, watercolor paints, fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.

Supplies; Kleenex, hand sanitizer, clorox wipes, hand soap, tissue, paper towels, napkins, etc.

IDEAS! We welcome any ideas that you may have for fun activities or crafts!!!

Infants and Toddlers

Infants and toddlers will not necessarily follow the same schedule as the preschoolers. They are not capable of sitting still for circle time, may need a morning nap, etc. Infants are always fed on demand. Breast feeding infants need to have an adequate supply stocked and properly labeled. Toddlers usually eat meals and snacks on a set meal schedule.

A report will be prepared for each infant/toddler each day. It will include things such as, time of feedings, what was eaten, amount eaten, time of diaper checks and results, times of naps, any medication given, and various comments about the child's day.

Preschool Schedule

Preschoolers enjoy a structured schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day to flow more smoothly and allows the children to anticipate upcoming events. We will adhere to our written schedule to the best of our ability. There will be times when we have to make adjustments to the schedule. We appreciate families considering our schedule when picking up or dropping off children. It is better if arrivals and departures do not occur during quiet time, but when they do, please take 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.

We thank you for the information you filled out for us regarding your preschooler's individual needs and schedule. It will help us get to know your child better.

Our daily schedule, while very flexible, is as follows:

7:00 a.m. - Center opens - Learning Centers
8:45 a.m. - Breakfast
9:15 a.m. - Circle time
9:30 a.m. - Structured activities (preschool program)
10:30 a.m. - Gross motor play (outside weather permitting)
11:45 a.m. - Story time/wash-up for lunch
12:00 p.m. - Lunchtime
12:45 p.m. - Naptime
3:00 p.m. - Afternoon snack
3:30 p.m. - Gross motor play (outside weather permitting)
4:30 p.m. - Dramatic Play/Learning Centers
5:30 p.m. - Center Dinner
6:00 p.m. - Reading Circle
6:30 p.m. - Dismissal

Depending upon the number of children and weather we will be out of the building daily from 9:30 a.m. till 11:30 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. till 5:30 p.m.

Meals

We participate in the U.S.D.A. Food Program and all meals will be provided at no cost to parents. All parents will be required to fill out the USDA Eligibility Form regardless of eligibility. Any parents who refuse to participate must provide all meals, snacks and drinks.

As long as ECE Academy Daycare participates in the USDA Food Program, all meals will be provided at no extra cost. Meals will consist of breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Children who arrive after meal times should be fed before they arrive. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board just inside the door. Copies of the menu are provided to parents upon request. We prefer that children do not bring food, drinks, etc. from home unless requested. Children tend to think the "grass is greener . . ." when they see someone eating something different from them. We will honor a parent's religious or philosophical objections to a menu item and the parent can substitute any objectionable item with an item from home.

It is our belief that infants should be fed on demand. If parents have another feeding schedule in mind, we will need to discuss, so that the infant's needs will be adequately met.

If your child has allergies, and requires a modified diet, we must be notified of this in writing. We will need to have a physician's written instructions describing any foods the child is not permitted to eat. An appropriate substitution will be made, if possible. If a child has so many allergies that he/she cannot eat from our menu, we may require the parents to provide his/her lunch and snacks.

We never force a child to finish what is on his/her plate, but we do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. Sometimes they are surprised by what they like! All eating patterns will be communicated to the parents.

Cleanliness/Sanitation

We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before and after meals and after toileting. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. If parents provide a toothbrush and toothpaste, teeth will be brushed as well. All employees are required to wash their hands frequently and also use antibacterial gel. Infants sleep in separate cribs or pack and plays, with clean sheets used only by them. Beginning at toddler age, washable nap mats are used. Each child has a separate nap mat; with a sheet and a blanket that are washed weekly (unless soiled, then they are washed as often as necessary) and mats are wiped with disinfectant weekly. Children use separate cups, plates, bowls and eating utensils that have been thoroughly washed. High chair trays, etc. are disinfected after each use. We disinfect toilet seats and clean potty chairs between each use.

Fire Drill

We are required by state law to do 1 fire drill per month at each location. We vary the time of day to help the staff and children prepare to evacuate the building quickly and safely. We will not do fire drills when the temperature is below 20 degrees or above 85 degrees. Evacuation cribs with wheels are used to transport infants and non-walking toddlers to the emergency meeting area.

Toilet Training

When you feel your child is ready for toilet teaching, we ask that you begin this teaching at home during a weekend or vacation. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. The child must be showing signs of readiness. When a child is ready, the process should go pretty quickly. The child must be kept in pull-ups or 5-ply training pants at all times. Putting a child in diapers part time, and training pants part time, can be confusing and delay the training process. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we may continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement.

Activities / Curriculum

Our main objective is to have fun, improve social skills, and encourage creative expression. We will utilize a variety of activities to accomplish this goal. Free play, computer programs, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, dramatic play/pretend, puzzles, and educational TV/videos are just some of the activities we will be doing.

Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and may also play music during other activities, for example, during arts and crafts or meal times. Some of the music we will be using may include, classical, children's songs (by a variety of

artists), foreign language tapes and others. Television will be used as a tool to help children unwind and relax. We usually watch no more than one hour of television per day, and some days none at all. The exception may be on rainy days, or if we are having a particularly difficult day. Viewing will be limited to PBS and child-friendly, educational-style videos, such as Barney, Richard Scarry, Wee Sing, etc. We carefully screen everything the children watch and watch along with the children. We avoid any type of graphic images, potentially frightening images, unpleasant language, or anything of that nature, as we believe that young children are extremely impressionable. We prefer to err on the conservative side when choosing appropriate viewing. Children of all ages will be taught age appropriate curriculum daily. Our educational program is one of the most highly advanced learning programs in the State of Maryland.

Center Rules

There are certain center rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow. This is for the safety and well being of everyone. In addition we realize that we must expect a certain amount of wear and tear where children are concerned, we do not want to have our center "demolished".

There will be no running permitted in the center. Hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, or pinching other children/infants/adults will NOT be allowed. No standing or climbing on chairs or tables. There will be no use of obscene, derogatory or disrespectful language. Children may not walk around the center with food, cups or bottles. Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parent at the cost to replace the item. Please support us in the enforcement of these rules, in order to create a better environment for all (see [Departure and Arrival](#)).

No smoking is permitted on the premises as per state law; this included parents and staff.

Reporting Requirements

As a child care center we are mandated reporters to the Department of Human Services if we feel a child is being abused or neglected. Always be sure to let your director know when you drop your child off if he/she has any unexplained cuts or bruises. All children that come to daycare with injuries have them logged into the child's file.

If you ever feel that ECE Academy Daycare is not operating in a safe manner, please bring the matter to our attention. If you desire a copy of the state licensing guidelines, we will be happy to supply you one. We are proud to say we do our best to follow state licensing guidelines to the letter. Our staff is highly trained in knowing and complying with all applicable state and local laws. If you observe something that you know is a violation of state licensing laws, you can report the incident by calling the Department of Human Services at 301-909-6300. We pride ourselves in running one of the safest child care centers in Maryland.

Indoor / 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 the 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 appropriately dressed (see Clothing/Attire section) for outdoor play at all times. Our activities will include walks, playground, water play (sprinkler in summer), and others. We do not go outside when the temperature is below 20 degrees (including wind chill), or above 90 degrees (including heat index). We are mandated by state law to take the children outside. Parents who feel that their child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities must keep them out of daycare until they are able to participate in all activities.

Discipline Policy

We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, 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 center frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, etc. We will try to prevent problems, redirect when appropriate, discuss inappropriate behavior, encourage making amends when offense involves another person, and sometimes withdraw privileges based on the principle of "natural consequences". An example might be where a child is misusing a toy then he/she will not be allowed to play with the toy for a period of time. The use of time-outs will be rare except when a brief cooling off period is needed. Sometimes when children are fighting or throwing toys, we will put the toy in a short time out, and then bring it back into circulation a little later. This seems to work better than giving the child a time out.

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. If a discipline problem arises that does not respond to the above mentioned techniques, we will hold a conference with the parents. 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.

Illness Policy

ECE Academy Daycare is a "well-child care facility". At no time do we provide sick child care. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well-being and safety of all concerned. Sick Child Policy: Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to daycare, if the child shows any signs of illness (see SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CHILD CARE), or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular day care program. Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. These people can in turn expose the other children. Sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to daycare before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be

unnecessarily inconvenienced. Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important.

Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging handwashing and other sanitary practices (see Cleanliness and Hygiene). If your child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the daycare (including being able to play outside), then your child **MUST** stay home.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come pick the child up.

For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection, he/she may return to day care immediately if he/she has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours. If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to care, please call your onsite director to discuss it. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor.

Symptoms requiring removal of child from daycare:

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally, or 102°F taken rectally. For children 4 months or younger, the lower rectal temperature of 101°F is considered a fever threshold; (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to daycare, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Medications

Parents will provide any medications needed by the child, including over-the-counter and prescription medicine. Written authorization is needed for us to administer ANY medication, prescription or over-the-counter. NOTE: All medicines must be in their original container with pharmacist's or manufacturer's label, child's name, dosage instructions, current date, name of medication, and times to be administered clearly written.

Medical Emergencies

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid, and if an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital where you will be asked to meet us. If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment, or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation, if required. The owners of ECE Academy Daycare, will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on these premises.

Termination Policies

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

- Failure to pay
- Routinely late picking up your child
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the center 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
- Serious illness of child

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when terminating, and will give the same courtesy in return. Parents are required to give two weeks written notice when they decide to terminate child care. The two weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance. We will give two weeks notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. The provider reserves the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

Anyone who terminates daycare and has a balance that is outstanding will need to have the account settled within 30 days. All accounts not settled within 30 days will be turned over to a collections agency regardless of amount owed. All accounts turned over to collections will have a \$20 per week late fee plus 35% collections fee added to amount due.

Waiver

In connection with any injury my child(ren) may sustain or illness or other medical conditions my child/(ren) may experience during his/her/their participation with an ECE Academy employee, I authorize any emergency first aid, medication, medical treatment, or surgery deemed necessary by the attending medical personnel if I am not able to act on my child(ren)'s behalf. If I cannot be contacted in the event of an emergency, I further hereby grant ECE Academy employees permission to administer immediate treatment and/or take my child(ren) to a hospital emergency room via ambulance/emergency vehicle. I

further authorize the attending medical personnel to execute on my child(ren)'s behalf any permission forms, consents, or other appropriate documents relating to medical attention. I agree to assume all liability for any expenses incurred in such an emergency (transportation, hospitalization, x-rays, etc.). I also understand and agree that ECE Academy staff will notify me if my child(ren) becomes ill during camp hours, and I will arrange to have my child(ren) picked up immediately from camp. Further, I waive and release ECE Academy and its owners, officers, directors, employees, agents and independent contractors from any and all liability for personal injuries, illness, loss, or damage to property.

I /We authorize(s) emergency transportation by either ECE Academy personnel or if necessary by ambulance or other emergency vehicle. If there is no medical emergency, the ECE Academy staff will first use reasonable efforts to contact the parent(s) and /or guardian(s) before administering or authorizing any treatment. Notwithstanding other provisions in this consent form, ECE Academy staff shall not have the authority to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining procedures for the child(ren).

I acknowledge that if accidental injury occurs to my child/(ren) while in the care of an ECE Academy staff member, I waive my right to maintain a lawsuit against ECE Academy personnel.

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Director's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Photography Release

Students will be filmed and photographed during activities for promotional use only. Photos and videos will only be posted on the www.eceacademy.com website and the ECE Academy Facebook page. If you would prefer for your child's photos or videos not be posted please sign below. By not signing you are admitting that you are comfortable with us posting your child's photos and videos for promo purposes only.

Permission Not Granted for Photo/Video Release

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____