



Parent Handbook 2024-2025

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School Year Calendar 2024-2025

2024	
July 4th (2024)	Fourth of July EEC Closed
August 30th	EEC Closed Professional Development
September 2nd	Labor Day EEC Closed
September 18th	Open House 5:30-6:30
October 4th	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
October 10th	EEC Fall Pumpkin Patch
October 31st	Classroom Halloween Celebrations 3:30 parade 5:00 pm closure
November 1st	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
November 11th	Veterans Day Observed EEC Closed
November 28-29th	Thanksgiving EEC Closed
December 6th	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
December 20th	EEC Holiday Party 5:00-6:30 Early Closure at 5:00
Winter Break: December 24th – January 1st	
2025	
January 2nd	School Resumes
January 17th	Professional Workday EEC Closed
January 20th	Martin Luther King Day EEC Closed
January 27th	Re-enrollment for Returning Families Begins
February TBA	Parent Teacher Conferences
February 7th	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
February 17th	Presidents Day EEC Closed
February 24th	Open Enrollment Begins
March 7th	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
March 28th	Professional Workday EEC Closed
April 4th	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
May 2nd	Staff Meeting Early Closure 4:00
May 5th – May 9th	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 26th	Memorial Day EEC Closed
June 13th	Graduation Early Closure 4:00
June 30th	Professional Workday EEC Closed

**Calendar subject to change – parents will be notified if changes occur.*

Special Classroom Celebrations Not Early Closures	
October 10th	EEC Pumpkin Patch
November 1st	Diwali Celebration
November 15th	Thank You Breakfast Café Parents only!
November 21st	Children’s Thanksgiving Lunch
December 23rd	Winter Holiday Celebrations: Hannukah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa
January 2nd	Noon Year’s Eve Celebration
February 10th – February 14th	Week of Kindness
February 14th	Valentine’s Day Classroom Celebrations
March 3rd- March 7th	Read Across America Week
March 14th	Holi Celebration
March 17th	St. Patrick’s Day Classroom Celebrations
April 14th – April 18th	Week of the Young Child
April 18th	Easter Classroom Celebrations

Philosophy

History

The Early Education Center (EEC) is a play-based program with inspiration taken from Reggio-Emilia philosophy. We focus on creating a positive, safe, and nurturing environment for children and their family. We believe children learn best when they are given the freedom to explore, create, discover, and have hands on experiences with the world around them. Through careful observation of the children’s interests, teachers create a rich curriculum and environment that supports each child at their own developmental level. Our learning environment allows for all children to experience the high-quality care they deserve and the freedom to be the natural and playful learners they are meant to be!

Staff

Qualified Educators are essential to the quality of any school. Educational background and experience with children are important considerations in the selection of our teachers. Because we believe that positive teacher and child interactions contribute to all facets of a child’s growth and development, our teachers are warm, nurturing, energetic, and are committed lifelong learners. Professional Development during staff meetings and school closures is just one way we support the quality of our programs with current best practices in early childhood education. Leadership in the classroom is shared among teaching teams.

Staff for the 2024-25 School Year

Julie Fernandez-Director

TBD-Assistant Director

Monkey Teachers	Chameleon Teachers	Tiger Teachers
Nancy Chavez	Stacy Ahlf	Ivette Ceballos
Melanie Beltran	Debbie Labucay	Karla Carmona
Zucelly De Leon	Huriya Karadag	Valerie Reyes

Admissions

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Addition to the waitlist is done upon receipt of a complete application and a \$50 fee. Re-Enrollment for returning families begins in January for the following school year. Open enrollment for new families begins in February. Siblings of current students, Highlands District Residents, and siblings of students in our After School Program are given priority during our open enrollment period. Start dates for new students will depend on matriculating students’ last day of school.

Registration

An annual, non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of registering for the EEC and every year thereafter. The fee for residents is \$400. For non-residents is \$700. Your registration is not complete, and your child's spot is not confirmed until the registration fee has been received with a signed Admission Agreement.

Enrollment

In addition to completing registration, all enrollment forms need to be completed prior to your child’s first day. A packet will be given to you with all necessary documents, and you will be required to return the packet on the date written on the packet. You are responsible for keeping your information up to date, including immunizations records.

Annual Tuition

<i>2024-2025 EEC Monthly Rates (Effective July 1st)</i>		
Program	Resident	Non-Resident
Monkeys: Rate 5 Day	\$2979	\$3276
Chameleons & Tigers: Rate 5 Day	\$2720	\$2992

Payment

Tuition can be paid by cash, credit card, check (payable to Highlands Recreation district). Payment must be made by the end of the 5th business day of the month. A \$50 late fee will be assessed following a late payment. Checks returned for insufficient funds will be subject to a \$20 charge.

There is a 2.95% service fee* for credit or debit card payments made through our Brightwheel app. (*subject to change) To avoid a service fee you may pay by cash, check, or e-check. To have your payment deducted automatically from your checking/savings account, please enter your payment information in Brightwheel.

Tuition Late Fee Policy

If tuition is not received by the 5th of the month, a \$50 late fee per child will be added to your balance. An additional \$10 per day will be added after the 10th of the month.

If payment is not made before the following month, care may be suspended until the full balance is current. Late fees will continue to be incurred until payment is made. Tuition is due regardless of a child's absence from the program for any reason and is required to hold their space.

Your family account with the Highlands Recreation District will also be suspended until the balance is paid in full.

Withdrawals

A 60-day written notice must be given for you to withdraw from the center. If less than 60 days' notice is given, payment for additional months of tuition (up to two months) will be required until the space is filled. Tuition will not be prorated for a midmonth withdrawal date.

Start Date

Children new to the Early Education Center will be informed of their start date 60 days prior to their first day. Consideration will be taken of preferences for a start date but cannot be guaranteed. Failure to enroll your child and pay the first month's tuition for the assigned start date will result in a loss of placement.

End Date

Families with matriculating students will be required to notify the EEC by the end of April of their child's last day at the EEC. Matriculating students will be required to exit by the end of June. We recommend enrolling children in summer camp for additional care before starting TK/Kindergarten.

Refund Policy

The Admission Agreement is binding. No refunds will be given for registration fees or tuition.

Program Closures, Cancellation and Refunds

If the EEC is closed due to COVID-19 or any other reason for more than 15 days, families will receive prorated credit for the current month and a full refund for future sessions if payment was made in advance. **No** refund or credits will be given for families that are required to quarantine because of a positive case of COVID-19. The Early Education Center reserves the right to modify or cancel programming at any time for any reason, such as staffing shortage or financial reasons.

School Closure

The EEC Director in coordination with the General Manager may decide to close the school for the following conditions: prolonged period without heat or electricity, no water, poor air quality, and

dangerous driving or working conditions for our staff or students. School closures will be communicated to parents by phone, email or in person.

Late Pickup Fee

Please pick up your child(ren) by 6:00pm, per the clock in the classroom. Every 1st **Friday** of the month, the EEC closes at 4pm for Staff meetings. Late fees will also be charged for any pickup past 4 pm on those days. **There is a late pickup fee of \$10 per every 5 minutes of daycare after 6 pm (or 4 pm on early closure days).** This overtime Charge is payable to Highlands Recreation District and can be given to the on-site staff or you can pay in person. Payment must be received within 5 days, or you will incur an additional late fee. **This fee may not be added to the monthly tuition.**

**Frequent lateness, which is defined by three late fees in one month, may result in termination from the EEC program.*

Visitation

Parents and legal guardians are welcome to visit and spend time in their child's classroom at any time.

Programming

Programs

We offer year-round, full day childcare from 7:30am-6:00pm for children ages 3 months to 5.5 years in three classrooms. Our Monkey classroom is for children aged 3 months through 2 years with 8 children. Our Chameleons and Tiger classrooms are mixed ages from 2 years through 5.5 years of age and are limited to 18 children. Each classroom is staffed with 3 Early Childhood Educators.

Arrival and Departure

You are welcome to bring or drop off your child at any time during center hours, however, for the benefit of the child it recommended that drop-offs occur before 9:30 am. This gives children an opportunity to experience and develop routine and fully engage with materials and peers especially during center circle time and small group instruction.

Please sign your child in and out each day with your personal code on Brightwheel. Only adults over the age of 18 are allowed to sign in/out. *Failure to do so may result in a \$500 fine from Community Care licensing which parents or legal guardians who fail to sign in or sign out will be responsible for.*

If someone other than you or those listed on your approved pick-up list is picking up your child, please make sure to provide a written note with the person's information and inform them they must bring picture I.D. You may add people to your approved pick-up list at any time during the year. Please be considerate of our educators' time and allow enough time when picking up your child at the end of the day to gather his/her belongings before the center closes.

Absences

We require families to let us know via Brightwheel, classroom and Director emails of absences including illness or planned vacations.

Enrichment Classes

The recreation department offers a variety of enrichment classes. Families are welcome to sign up for classes but must choose those that **end by 4:00pm** to ensure that teachers can escort your children back to the classroom. However, you are responsible for picking up your child from the enrichment classes

that end after 4:00pm. Enrichment class registration is done separately, through the registration office. **When signing up for classes you must email JFernandez@highlandsrec.ca.gov to ensure that your child is added to our escort list. In addition, a permission slip must be on file.**

***In the case EEC teachers are out of ratio due to staff being absent and unable to bring your child to their scheduled class, the responsibility of getting the child to the class will be up to the parents/guardian.**

Special Events

During the year we celebrate several special events with children and families. Some of these events include the EEC Pumpkin Patch, Halloween Parade, EEC Holiday Party and end of year graduation celebration. If there are special events that are meaningful to your family, we would like to celebrate them with you in our classrooms.

Curriculum

The Early Education Center offers a developmentally appropriate program with age-appropriate activities. Our curriculum is play-based, and Reggio Emilia inspired, which is based on children's own interest and allows them the freedom to learn at their own pace. We encourage exploration of the environment through hands on learning, which is an essential component in stimulating curiosity in children. The daily schedule allows for a balance between indoor/outdoor activities and structured and unstructured time. Our child centered environment supports independence to choose from a variety of materials and activities. Language, literacy, math, science, and music are integrated into our daily curriculum.

We offer meeting opportunities prior to enrollment for new families to support a child's transition to school. Communication regarding these meetings will be sent out by your child's classroom. Optional Parent Teacher conferences are held in February and are a wonderful opportunity to share information with your child's teacher.

A Typical Day in the Tiger and Chameleon Classrooms

- **Arrival Indoor/Outdoor Play**
- **Snack**
- **Circle**
- **Lunch**
- **Nap**
- **Snack**
- **Indoor/Outdoor Play**

Learning Environment

The following is a list of possible activities during inside and outside play. The classroom is organized into various learning centers. Children may select activities from these centers.

Art

Open-ended art projects are offered every day. In addition, children are free to choose from a variety of materials such as paper, crayons, markers, tape, scissors, glue sticks and recycled materials. The EEC emphasizes the process of the activity and not the finished product.

Dramatic Play

Pretend play supports children's learning and development across all domains. Our dramatic play center inspires children to take on new roles that encourage creativity, exploration and making sense of their outside world.

Language and Literacy

The reading nook is a comfortable area that provides a space for children to independently choose books to explore. Books are rotated in coordination with the current children's interests and seasons. Exposure to literature is crucial to children's interest in reading. The writing center is a place that supports children's emergent writing skills.

Science

Through measuring, weighing, predicting, and examining, children are natural explorers. With an abundance of tools, like magnifying glasses, magnets, and scales, children have the opportunity to explore their world around them through hands on activities. This may include planting and maintaining a garden, exploring the lifecycle of an egg, exploring chemical changes or the physical properties of air.

Sensory Table

Our sensory table will house a variety of materials including water, birdseed, bubbles, cloud dough, beans, rice, and small dramatic play provocations. An example of these provocations could be the inclusion of small wood animals or natural materials like glass pebbles.

Math/Cognitive

Children become familiar with basic math concepts by learning to sort, classify, count, and measure through a variety of means. In the math center children have the chance to explore a variety of materials such as puzzles, manipulatives, and loose parts. Math is included in nearly all aspects of the curriculum, from sand play to cooking projects to counting songs during our circle time.

Outdoor play area

Our outdoor environment supports gross motor movement, as well as connecting with the natural world. With the abundance of open space surrounding our center, children have many opportunities to explore beyond our preschool yards.

Communication

The Directors and Teachers do their best to keep you well informed. We believe in open communication with families. We encourage you to inform us of anything going on in your child's life that may affect him or her while at the EEC. Parents best support our community by communicating concerns openly and constructively to the teacher or administrator. While parents may not agree with every decision made by the center, we strive to find the best possible solution in order to strengthen our relationships with families.

Parents can contact us by phone (650) 341-4251, send a message to your child's classroom via Brightwheel, or send an email to the administrators.

Julie Fernandez
TBD

Director
Asst. Director

Jfernandez@highlandsrec.ca.gov
xxxxxxxxxx@highlandsrec.ca.gov

Parent Communication

Classroom Whiteboard

This is where you will find daily curriculum plans and important reminders.

Student Cubbies

This is where you will find hard copies of student communication.

Monthly Newsletter

Is available electronically via the Rec e-News distribution which can be found on the Highlands Recreation District website.

Brightwheel

The EEC uses a childcare app called Brightwheel. This is a private and restricted app for enrolled families. We will send pictures and child reports. This app will also be used for messaging with your classroom teachers and administration.

Addressing Concerns

Any concerns about your child's experience within our learning environment should be addressed to your child's teacher first. If issues or concerns remain unresolved after seeking classroom input, please contact the Director or Assistant Director. Our door is always open!

Health and Safety

Illness and Exclusion

Please do not bring your child to school when they are sick. If your child develops an illness while at school, you will be notified to come and pick them up immediately. Please see illness protocols below for non-Covid 19 illnesses and attached document for Covid-19 policies.

***See attached Covid-19 Symptoms Protocols**

Children must remain at home until they are symptom free without medication for 24 hours. While we understand that children cannot remain at home for every cold, *we reserve the right to exclude children if they appear to be too unwell to participate in school fully.* Children with heavy discharge from the eyes or nose, may be excluded for 24 hours. Please note, if your child is picked up from school, we ask that you keep them home the entire next day and not bring them back right at the 24-hour mark, as symptoms do not typically resolve as soon as they get home. Children who show symptoms of Hand Foot and Mouth disease will also be sent home. Symptoms include blisters on the hand, foot or mouth, a sore throat, and a fever.

If a child is diagnosed with Hand Foot and Mouth disease, per the CDC recommendations, we require that families keep their children at home until the rash subsides, as the disease can remain contagious during this period. Children with Lice must be “nit free’ before returning to school. Please notify the Director if your child has a communicable disease, as we are required to post exposure notices.

It is our experience that following immunization shots, many children feel too unwell to participate in the activities of the center. We recommend families keep children home on the day they receive immunizations.

Masks

- Masking is optional, indoor and outdoor, for both staff and students over 2 years of age.
- If an exposure occurs in the classroom, the whole class will be required to mask for 10 days. If a child is exposed outside of school, they will be required to wear a mask for 10 days.

Symptoms and Exclusions

Children who are sick, who have a temperature of 100.4 or greater or who are showing symptoms of illnesses will be isolated in the Directors office or in a secluded area of the classroom. Parents must come and pick up children within *30 minutes* of notification.

Non- Covid-19 Illness Policies

Illness	When child/staff sent home/excluded	When child/staff may return*
Chicken Pox	When lesions are noticed or present	When all lesions are dried and crusted. Typically takes 6+ days
Cold/Flu Symptoms Runny Nose, Stuffy Nose, Sneezing, Cough	If accompanied by Fever – 100.4 or greater or if child is unable to participate.	At least 24 hours if no fever is present (without medication) and the child can participate.
Diaper Rash	If sores are oozing and leak body fluid outside the diaper	When exclusion criteria are resolved
Hand, Foot & Mouth Syndrome	When lesions are noticed or present and contain fluid	When blister free
Head Lice	When nits/eggs are noticed or present	When exclusion criteria are resolved
Irritability	If irritability cannot be redirected and/or prevents child from being able to participate	When child can be redirected
Itching	If itching is suspected to be caused by any of the following: Scabies, Impetigo or Ringworm	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor’s note stating the child is not contagious
Lethargy	If lethargy prevents participation	When exclusion criteria are resolved
Mouth Sores	When sores cause drooling	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor’s note stating the child is not contagious
Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When discharge is noticed • Pinkish/red swollen or 	When exclusion criteria are resolved, a doctor’s note stating the child is not contagious, or

	irritated eyes	child is receiving medicated drops after 24 hours of diagnosis; or a minimum of 5 days has passed and no visible sign of infection
Rash	When unidentified rash is noticed and is accompanied by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior changes • Fever • Has oozing/open wound. • Child is unable to participate 	When exclusion criteria are resolved or with a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious
Strep Throat	If child has a positive strep culture	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic medicine
Diarrhea/Vomiting	Immediately	When symptom free for 24 hours
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	Immediately	When cleared by medical provider.

* Some illnesses may require clearance from the doctor *and* director to return to school.

Medication

All prescription and non-prescription medications, topical ointments and creams, including but not limited to Epi-pens, allergy medication, sunscreen, lotions, lip treatment, diaper cream and Aquaphor shall be administered only with written approval and instructions from the child's parent/guardian and in accordance with the label instructions from the child's physician if necessary. We must have the prescription bottle and the label must be unaltered.

Handwashing

- Wash Hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available. Supervise children when using hand sanitizer. Sanitizer should not be used for children under 2.
- All children, parents and staff must wash hands at the following times:
 - ✓ Before arrival to center
 - ✓ Before and after handling food or feeding children.
 - ✓ Before and after administering medication or sunscreen
 - ✓ Before and after using the toilet, and assisting a child with toileting or diapering
 - ✓ After handling animals or animal waste
 - ✓ Before and after sensory play
 - ✓ Entering a classroom
 - ✓ After coming into contact with a bodily fluids (sneezing, coughing)
 - ✓ After handling garbage (staff must wear gloves)

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

Please inform us of any allergies or special dietary needs of your child. This information will be posted in a prominent place in the kitchen and classroom. Children with allergies that require medication must have a medical plan on file. We provide alternative snacks for children with allergies. We support children with severe allergies, and may restrict certain foods like peanuts, if necessary, to keep our children safe from cross-contamination. Restricted foods will be posted on the classroom door and shared with families via email.

Emergencies

Should a disaster occur, we have emergency supplies for each child, as well as emergency and evacuation procedures. If the Highlands Recreation Center becomes uninhabitable by fire or other disasters, the children will be escorted to a designated safe space. These safe spaces are Highlands Elementary School located on Newport Street or Crystal Springs United Methodist Church on Bunker Hill Drive. Directors will contact parents following an emergency.

School Closure

The EEC Director in coordination with the General Manager may decide to close the school for the following conditions: prolonged period without heat or electricity, no water, poor air quality, and dangerous driving or working conditions for our staff or students. School closures will be communicated to parents by phone, email or in person.

Classroom Policies

Baby Sitting

The District recognizes that staff members are occasionally offered the opportunity to provide babysitting services to families who are also either occasional or regular patrons of the Highlands Recreation District. This is a mutually beneficial arrangement between families and various individuals, currently employed by the HRD, hereinafter referred to as babysitters, as it provides families with piece of mind by having known and trusted adults caring for their children, and babysitters gain additional income.

While the HRD does not encourage such arrangements, it is in everyone's best interest that the nature of the arrangement and the consequent transfer of liability be clear to all:

1. If the babysitter is caring for a child immediately following an HRD childcare program, any District liability for childcare services ends at the time the child is signed out of the program, after which time the HRD staff member becomes the sole responsible party, i.e., the babysitter.
2. If the babysitter is caring for a child immediately following any other HRD event or program, any District or contractor liability ends at the time the event or program ends or at the time the child leaves the event or program, whichever is earlier, after which time the babysitter becomes the sole responsible party.
3. The District's general liability coverage is in place, as it is for any guests on District property, until the child and Babysitter leave District premises.
4. The District does not retain any liability for any time during which the babysitter transports the child or otherwise provides care for the child. In the event of car travel, the babysitter's personal insurance may be the sole coverage, and the District makes no representations as to the existence of or level of such coverage.
5. While the District properly vets all staff members who interact with children at our facility, any vetting for any care and/or transport outside of District programs is the sole responsibility of the family.
6. Any financial arrangement is solely between the babysitter and the family.
7. HRD staff members are not under any obligation to provide care outside of District programs.

What to bring to school?

Each day your child should bring a backpack with a change of clothes and a water bottle. Clothes may also be left in the child's cubby. **Please label** all clothing items brought to school. We ask you to refrain from sending toys from home with your child to school. Comfort items like lovies and soft toys are fine, as some children need extra support separating from their families. There are several reasons why we have this toy policy: our teachers are intentional with the curriculum materials that are in the classroom; secondly, we cannot be responsible for toys from home getting lost or broken; and finally toys from home create challenging situations around sharing and self-regulation. We ask that you leave toys either at home or in the car.

Holidays & Birthdays

We recognize each child's birthday in several ways. Please coordinate with your child's teacher if you would like to bring in a special celebration or tradition. We ask if your child's class includes a child with allergies that celebratory food be bought from a store. On his/her birthday a child is invited to create a special crown which he or she can wear throughout the day.

Holidays and family traditions are important to a child's culture. We encourage and welcome you to bring or share traditions, such as special food, songs or activities that are important to your family. Doing so fosters an inclusive and respectful community and celebrates each family's uniqueness.

Clothing

In keeping with our philosophy of hands-on learning and exploration, children will get messy! The paint used in our classrooms is advertised as "non staining" and "washable" but may be difficult to remove. We strongly urge you to send your child in play clothes and sensible shoes for outdoor play. Closed toe shoes that children can take on and off themselves are **requested**. During the winter months, we will go outside in inclement weather, and therefore ask that you send your child in appropriate clothing. Appropriate clothing includes shoes that can get wet and jackets that are warm and waterproof. Families are welcome to store rain boots, water shoes and rain suits in the classroom for the rainy season.

Toilet Training

Parents of children in diapers or training pants are asked to bring an adequate supply. We ask that families *provide pull-ups with pull away tabs when children are potty training to make it easier for teachers to assist in changing in the bathroom.* We supply Kirkland Baby Wipes. If you prefer a different wipe, you must supply your own. When a child shows interest in using a toilet, we will work with families to support toilet training.

Monkeys Lunch, Snack & Bedding

Children in the Monkey room are required to provide all food and liquids from home. Breastmilk, formula, water, and food will be stored in individual bins in the classroom refrigerator and will be warmed up for mealtimes. *All containers must be labeled with the child's first and last name and date.* Any leftover liquids or food will be sent home at the end of the day. Teachers will meet individually with parents, prior to the first day, to develop a needs and services plan which will be updated quarterly.

In the Monkey classroom, each child has an individual nap plan. We will supply sheets which will be changed daily. Families are welcome to bring additional bedding to be stored in their cubbies.

California childcare licensing requirements state that cribs must be free from all loose articles such as blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, etc. It is recommended that families provide sleep sacks for children. Pacifiers are allowed but may not have anything attached to it.

Sheets will be sent home at the end of the week for washing.

Chameleon & Tigers Lunch, Snack & Bedding

Children bring lunch to school each day and the class eats together. Please pack lunches that are ready to be eaten as we are not able to heat up food for children in the Chameleon and Tiger rooms. If you would prefer a warm lunch, a thermos works great. We are also unable to refrigerate items for children in the Chameleon and Tiger rooms. Children are not permitted to share food as we need to be careful of allergies or special dietary requirements of individual children.

Each morning and afternoon the children in the Tiger and Chameleon classrooms are invited to the snack table. Snack is optional and children are never forced to participate. Snack will consist of two servings from at least one of the four food groups, generally a fruit or vegetable and a protein and/or carbohydrate. We do not provide alternative snacks for children who choose not to eat what is served, except for children with allergies. We will encourage all children to try new things through modeling and providing a variety of foods.

All children in the Chameleon and Tiger room are required to have a 2-hour rest period. Licensing requires that the children remain on their mats. After a 30-minute rest period, children who are not asleep will be allowed to choose quiet activities to do on their mat. When staffing allows, children who do not nap may also be given the opportunity to play outside. We will supply sheets which will be sent home weekly for laundering, as well as any personal bedding. Children are welcome to bring additional bedding to be stored in their cubbies, however, please consider the size of your child's cubby when choosing personal bedding, as we request that it not be oversized.

Please note, we understand that families may not want their children to nap, however, *licensing prohibits us from keeping children awake or waking them from sleep*. We will do our best to provide activities to keep them awake. If a child does fall asleep, we must allow them time to naturally wake up.

Behavior

Positive Guidance

We are committed to a "Positive Guidance" policy. Positive guidance encourages self-respect, self-discipline, cooperation, and problem-solving skills. Children's behavioral expectations in the classroom are set according to what is developmentally appropriate for the age of the child. The behaviors that adults may find challenging are often appropriate for a child's age and developmental stage. It takes time for children to learn the vocabulary and language skills that allow them to express themselves in socially acceptable ways. In order to support children to learn empathy and compassion, we do not force children to share or say "sorry". By setting up an intentional and positive environment, teachers support children's behavior. Through the use of "natural consequences" children are empowered to make their decisions and to be responsible for their own behavior. Teachers help children when conflicts arise in a number of ways. Some of these include redirection, validation of feelings, helping children to take a "calm down break", modeling appropriate behavior, establishing close relationships with children and families, and helping children to problem solve.

Parents

In order to support the child's environment and communication with families, it is necessary to set boundaries and expectations for adults that will foster a positive climate. The following behaviors are prohibited at the EEC and may result in termination. Any behavior that the staff consider to be rude, threatening, demeaning, or disruptive or which interferes with the staff's ability to provide care.

We understand situations arise where a family may be upset about an incident that occurred between their child and another student. While staff are not able to provide confidential information (i.e. which child bit/hit your child), we know that children usually communicate to their families what happened and who may have been involved. The EEC prohibits any rude, threatening, demeaning or otherwise inappropriate behavior between families if conflicts arise. It is recommended that if concerns are unable to be resolved amicably, a meeting be held between the families and director to discuss further actions.

Professional Referrals

An important element of our ongoing teacher-parent communication is to keep you informed of your child's behavior. If a child exhibit continued problematic behavior, the teachers and Director will meet to discuss techniques to promote more appropriate behavior. If the problem persists beyond the best interest of the child and class, we may require the parents to seek outside professional help. Failure to do so may result in a family being asked to leave the school.

Special Needs

Our school is committed to supporting an inclusive classroom and therefore welcomes children with special needs. Some children may need an aide to assist them in the classroom, however we are unable to provide individual aides for children. It is recommended that the aide meet with the staff prior to working in the classroom to familiarize themselves with our routines and philosophy. Aides must be selected and paid for by the family. If a child has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), we require the sharing of information so that teachers can individualize the curriculum to support all children. It is suggested that teachers, families, and aides meet regularly.

While our staff are not trained to provide professional assessments, they have the experience and knowledge to identify when a child is delayed in areas such as speech, development, or behavior. Should any concerns arise while the child is in the program, staff will meet with families to discuss a course of action or steps on how/where to get assistance. If a child is repeatedly needing one on one supervision ("shadowing") for challenging behaviors that is considered above the normal expectations for the child's developmental level, the EEC may require that the family seek outside services such as an aid or behavior specialist to help assist the child while at school. Our main goal is that *all* children of the EEC experience a safe and nurturing environment that allows them to explore and be the natural and curious learners that they are.