



Mitchell County Early Learning Center

Parent Handbook

Updated January 26, 2015

Dear Parents,

We are thrilled that you have chosen The Mitchell County Early Learning Center as your “partner” in the care and education of your child. Like you, we are interested in your child’s total development. Our commitment is to provide you and your child with the best in education and child care. As a partner in the care, early education and enrichment of your child, we are always interested in your comments regarding the care and education that your child receives.

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with our policies and procedures.

Please read and refer to this handbook as needed. When changes are made, you will receive a notice of change and will be referred to our website www.usd273.org . Anytime you have any questions or concerns, we suggest you speak directly to your child’s teacher. Any further concerns can be directed to the Director.

Welcome to the Mitchell County Early Learning Center!

The Early Learning Center: Philosophy Statement

Our curriculum, based on The Creative Curriculum®, is child-directed, meaning it is based on the needs and interests of the children, providing developmentally appropriate practices for each age group and adapting to the needs of individual children. We embrace the belief that children learn best through their experiences in active playtime, and when they have the opportunity to thoroughly explore, question, investigate, and manipulate objects and materials in their environment. Our teachers utilize a curriculum framework that includes the developmental goals and recommended expectations for children’s growth and development based on the Kansas Early Learning Guidelines, and activities and learning experiences that promote these goals and expectations. We make sure the teachers are provided the materials they need in order to fulfill their curriculum plans. We recognize that children develop at various paces, therefore teachers individualize plans as needed in order to accommodate this. Our teacher facilitated play-based learning provides children the opportunity to: work and play with other children (social development); to express themselves creatively through art, music, dramatic play and language; to learn cognitive skills, including math and science concepts; and to develop physical skills.

Our Mission

The Mitchell County Early Learning Center was opened in 2007 through the cooperation of Mitchell County Partnership for Children (MCPC) and U.S.D. 273. These organizations have been committed to significantly improving the quality of life in our community. The Learning Center is dedicated to meeting the needs of all children regardless of age, sex, race, color, creed, national origin, handicap or economic status.

Child Care Services

Children from 2 weeks to 12 years old are accommodated in an environment specially designed to meet the needs of their age group. Stimulating, developmentally focused activities, learning opportunities and enrichment activities are provided as appropriate to the child's age and developmental stage. Nutritious meals and snacks are served family-style in the cozy environment of their classrooms.

The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Fees are determined by the age of the child.

The Center is funded by user fees, donations and gifts.

Our Beliefs in Helping Children Grow Socially and Personally

We believe that children learn best through play and experiences. We believe that the teachers must lovingly guide and redirect the children to help them learn to cooperate with their peers and to have positive, learning experiences - to encourage and enhance their growth and development. We believe that we can best accomplish this by:

1. Have a variety of age appropriate materials and activities for the children.
2. Provide appropriate child/adult ratios.
3. Use group management techniques, limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid overcrowding and to allow for sufficient materials and the opportunity for interaction.

4. Speak with a child if their behavior is inappropriate for the area or the material they are using.
5. Be positive and praise appropriate behavior.
6. After using the above techniques, if a child is having trouble getting along, he or she will be asked to go to another area for a while.

Most times, if a child's behavior is inappropriate, a simple reminder or a little more attention will be all they need. The Center uses Conscious Discipline to promote permanent, positive behavior changes. Conscious Discipline® is a social and emotional intelligence program by Dr. Becky Bailey that is based on current brain research, child development information, and effective educational practices. Conscious Discipline® offers a relationship-based community model of classroom management, utilizing the daily conflicts that occur among children as "teachable moments" for learning self control, conflict resolution, character development, and social skills. For a complete review of the research that supports Conscious Discipline® visit the website: www.ConsciousDiscipline.com.

If these techniques do not achieve the desired goal, in the case of older children, a short "time out" (3-5 minutes) will be used to help children "regroup" and think about appropriate behaviors and actions. Our main purpose is to provide for the safety of individual children and the group as a whole.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Guidance Strategies Used at Mitchell County Early Learning Center

At MCELC we respect each child and his or her level of development, individual personality, and their family and cultural influences. We create a positive environment (plenty of toys, activities, space, as well as area boundaries to divide activities) so as to influence behavior.

The teachers are fully trained in child development and how it relates to guidance (discipline) and the positive guidance strategies we have listed below.

The program has a set daily routine but allows for flexibility. Clear guidelines are provided so that children know what is expected of them. Limits that relate to safety and protection of self, others, and the environment are clear and are enforced consistently in a positive way. Children are given time to respond to expectations.

Teachers may use a variety of strategies depending on the child and the situation. These strategies include:

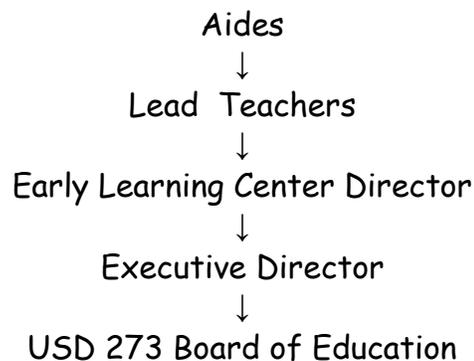
- Gaining a child's attention,
- Staying in close proximity to the child,
- Reminding,
- Acknowledging feelings before setting limits,
- Redirecting or diverting,
- Age appropriate choices, and
- Natural consequences.

Time out is used as a last resort.

All children will be treated with respect. Children will not be disciplined in a punitive manner. Corporal punishment will never be used and food will never be withheld as a form of discipline.

Our goal is to encourage children to develop respect, self-control, self-confidence, and sensitivity in their social interactions during their time at the MCELC.

Mitchell County Early Learning Center Line of Authority



Screening

The first 1000 days (3 years) are the most crucial in a child's brain development. Screening will allow us to get a clearer picture of where a child is at so that we as providers, as well as you as parents, can help all children enter school ready to learn.

Mitchell County Partnership for Children (MCPC) provides many programs and services at the Early Learning Center. In order to measure MCPC's outcomes and maintain funding that allows MCPC to provide these important school readiness programs, MCPC screens all children at the Center two times a year using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3), to screen overall developmental skills; the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-SE (ASQ-SE), to screen social-emotional skills; and the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI) to monitor the growth and development of children. The myIGDI is completed 3 times a year for preschool-age children. In addition to measuring the outcomes of the programs MCPC provides, as parents, the summaries from both the ASQ-3 and the ASQ-SE give you valuable information regarding typical overall development (ASQ-3) and typical development in the area of social emotional skills (ASQ-SE).

If a parent would like screenings to occur at additional times, please make that request through the Center Director. A consent form will be provided to you upon enrollment at which time you will have the option to give your consent or opt out of the screening. Our hope is that you as parents will be as excited as we are as providers to participate as we think this will enhance and improve the quality of our care.

**The Mitchell County Early Learning Center Fee Schedule
Effective 12/2/13**

Child Care

Infant	\$28.00 per day
Toddler	\$23.00 per day
Preschool	\$23.00 per day-\$13.00 per day for children attending 1/2 day preschool
Kdg-6th Grade (Summer)	\$18.00 per day
Kdg-6th Grade (School Year)	\$22.00 full day
Before School	\$3.00 per day
After School	\$7.00 per day
Early Dismissal	\$8.50 per day
Late Start Days (start)	\$6.00 per day (Before school care when schools have a late start)
Sick Care	\$38.00 per day - If staffing available
Family Discount	1st child-regular rates, 2nd,3rd child receive \$5/day discount. This discount is for full-time families only.
Drop-In (available on limited basis)	\$35.00 per day for Infants \$30.00 per day for Toddler-Preschool Room \$20.00 per day for child attending preschool \$25.00 per day for School Age \$11.50 per day for School Age After School Care

*If you schedule for your child(ren) to attend near a holiday or on a non-school day when the Director's request sign-up care or as a drop in, you are charged for what you scheduled.

Enrollment	\$25.00 (one-time family fee)
Transportation	\$1.50 per day (for pre-school)
Late pick up Fee	\$5.00 per minute after 6:00 p.m.
Late payment Fee	\$5.00 a day

Child Home Connection \$.50 per child per month (This money will be used for family involvement activities, center/home connection building, parent education, etc.)

Fees are due every other Thursday after a Monday billing. If a parent would like to pay in advance for the month, they may do so.

Rates are subject to change.

Family Discounts for Full-time Care

One child - regular rates

Two-children - \$5.00 a day discount

Three children - \$10.00 a day discount

The family discount applies to children attending full day. This does not apply to drop-ins, children attending preschool half-day or school age children.

Rates will be charged for days the Center is open.

If a child becomes ill at the Center and needs to go home, the child must be picked up within an hour in order to avoid sick care charges for the day. Please note the conditions for illness on page 17. Keep in mind that additional conditions will be dealt with on an as needed basis.

Preschool Transportation

Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, MCELC will provide preschool transportation when there is a minimum of 3 children needing transportation to or from a local preschool on a full-time basis (minimum 4 days a week throughout the school year).

Holding Current Slots

Parents can pay \$280 (two weeks of care) to guarantee an infant slot. A hold infant slot form is required along with the \$280. Once the infant attends the Center, this \$280 will be credited to the first bill. If the infant does not attend the Center, the \$280 will not be refunded. The MCELC can no longer guarantee slots following a child's extended leave from the Center. After attending for one year, each full-time child can be gone from the Center for one week per year without having to pay to hold the slot. Otherwise, in order to hold a slot, the rate is the normal daily rate. The only exceptions are the two situations listed below when a charge of \$7.00 per day for children in the school age program, \$10.00 per day for children from one year of age through preschool and \$12.00 per day for infants will occur.

These two scenarios can qualify for an extended leave under the following guidelines:

1. If a parent is a school employee and the child does not attend in the summertime, the parent must pay the hold a slot fee listed on the fee agreement based on their child's age per week per child to guarantee that slot will be available in the Fall. While holding a spot, a parent may call 24 hours in advance to request care and, based on availability, may attend, paying the drop in fee per child. The parent can choose to not

pay to hold the slot as long as they understand that in the Fall, the slots may all be full.

2. If a parent goes on maternity leave and has an older child(ren) in the Center who will be staying home with her, the parent must pay the hold a slot fee listed on their fee agreement based on their child's age per week per child to hold the slot for the older children. . While holding a spot, a parent may call 24 hours in advance to request care and, based on availability, may attend, paying the drop in fee per child The slot for the infant is held with \$280 fee that is addressed in above.

Families who utilize the center 12 months a year, will receive one week vacation after 1 year of attendance with no fees due for any child in their family who attends full time. *This does not apply to a child who is holding a spot or a child who attends half-day preschool or the school-age program. A full-time child is a child who attends the Center full days, 12 months of the year.*

Late Pick Up Fee

\$5.00 a minute after 6:00 p.m.

The policies for Late pick up is as follows:

First Occurrence:

1. Parent will be given a verbal warning along with the fee.

Second Occurrence:

2. Parent will be given a written warning that states the next late pick up; care will be terminated at Mitchell County Early Learning Center along with the fee.

Third Occurrence:

3. Child care is immediately terminated at Mitchell County Early Learning Center.

DCF – Department for Children and Families

We gladly accept DCF EBT payments for child care. Families receiving DCF assistance will be charged the rates listed on the fee agreement.

Billing Cycle

Fees will be billed every other week and are due on Thursday following the Monday billing period. A \$5.00 per day delinquency fee will be charged each day that a

payment is late following the Thursday due date. The Policies for delinquent payment as follows:

First Occurrence: When a parent is two days late (Tuesday following the Thursday due date.)

1. Parents will be verbally asked to pay bill. Parent is given 2 days to pay in entirety including any late fees for child to continue attending center.

Second Occurrence:

2. Parents will receive a written notice that they must pay two weeks of care in advance effective immediately and must maintain this credit balance in order to avoid immediately dismissal.

Scheduled Holidays

The Center will be closed in observance of the following major holidays and one in-service day:

New Year's Day
President's Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
October In-service day
Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving
Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas

Occasionally when a holiday falls on Saturday we will observe the Friday prior and if the holiday falls on Sunday we will observe the following Monday. You will be notified of these changes.

Registration and Admission

Parents must fill out registration information presented in the enrollment packets. **This packet must be completed in full before a child is admitted to the Center.**

Admission is open to all children regardless of age, sex, race, color, creed, national origin, handicap or economic status.

Please notify the Center Director two weeks in advance before a child is to be withdrawn. Parents are required to pay for those two weeks. All scheduling is done through the Director. Each family will be asked to give their schedule upon enrollment. This allows the Director to schedule the appropriate staff in each room and helps us in our lunch and snack count. We understand that things arise periodically that may affect your schedule. However, we ask that you let the teachers and/or Director know of any variations in your schedule. There will be additional questions asked regarding schedules during holiday seasons that we will require of families. This helps us to provide a safe healthy environment for all.

Termination Guidelines

We want every child to have a positive learning experience at the Mitchell County Early Learning Center. And for that reason, there are circumstances which could necessitate termination of child care privileges. They could include:

1. A child that has needs that cannot be appropriately met at the Center.
2. A child exhibits behavior, which repeatedly endangers the health and/or safety of other children or staff.
3. A child who does not have paperwork required by the state up to date.
4. Inability of a parent to adjust and adhere to the program, policies and procedures, or its philosophies. (e.g. abiding by the sick policy, respectful communication with staff, adhering to scheduling policy)
5. Reoccurring late fees
6. Reoccurring late pick-up

Of course, all efforts will be made to work with parents and children to overcome normal difficulties. Dismissal of any child from the Center would be considered a last resort.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent or individual transporting the child, to leave and pick-up the child in the building. Please use the **North Entrance** at all times. The traffic in front of the Center is one way traffic. The speed limit in front of the Center is 5 mph.

A sign-in/out sheet is provided in the room for parents to register their child each day when they enter and leave the building.

All school age children using bus transportation will be checked-in by a staff member as soon as they arrive.

Parents must check-in with one of their child's teacher daily. The parent should make the staff aware of any special circumstances that may affect the child that day.

When parents have more than one child, please drop off older children in their rooms first. Then at pick up time, please pick up infant or toddler before older children. This is for the safety of all the children in their environment.

If a child is to be absent, or arrive later than their normal scheduled time, for whatever reason, notify the Center office by 7:45 a.m. (answering machine available when Center is closed) to avoid \$10 late notification charge added to the fee for each child that day.

Periodically throughout the year, the Center will have sign-up sheets for parents to let the Center know if a child will or will not attend on a given day or days. This is usually, but not limited to, holidays. The Center will begin asking for schedules two weeks in advance. Families will be penalized an additional \$20/day per child if they are not signed up correctly by the assigned cut-off date. **If a child is sick and the parent calls before the required time that day, the \$20 fee will not be charged.**

No articles of play may be brought onto the premises. No war like toys such as guns, swords, etc. may be brought to the Center. Items brought for school (i.e. show-and-tell, projects, etc.) need to be left in backpacks and not played with during child care hours. Please do not send your child to the Center with his or her favorite toy. We are not responsible for toys lost or broken on the premises.

Release Procedures

A child will not be released to an adult who is not specified on the Child-Family information sheet. If there is a variance in child pick-up, please call the Center and notify them. Proper identification will be required of anyone not known to the staff that is picking up a child due to a change in plans.

Security

The Center has a security system installed in each building. Upon enrollment, each family will be given a keycard and asked to sign and abide by the following security card agreement.

SECURITY KEY CARD AGREEMENT

The Key Card will allow entrance into the center from 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

The center opens promptly at 6:30 AM. Your Key Card **will not** work before this time. Please do not ring the door phone and try to enter the center before the 6:30 AM opening. The staff is not permitted to let you in any sooner. Your key card will work until 6:00 PM when the Center closes. After 6:00 PM, parents will have to ring the door phone.

Each family will be issued a maximum of 2 cards. There is no cost to families at this time. However, if a card is lost or damaged there is a \$3.00 replacement fee. There is an upfront cost of \$9.00 for key-fobs. If a key-fob is lost or damaged there is a \$10.00 replacement fee. **It is important to notify a Center Director (Charissa or Cindy) immediately of a lost Key Card so the card can be deactivated. This protects the children if the card were to fall into undesirable hands.**

We have installed a door phone outside the MCELC entrance. This is to be used by parents who forget their card or authorized persons who are dropping off/picking up their child(ren). We also ask parents to make every effort to remember to bring their card each day. It is extremely difficult for the teachers to leave their children to answer the door without effecting ratios or disrupting the class. Children should never have access to Key Cards. School Age children can continue to be dropped off at the door by parents who let them in with the Key Card. The only time a child should use the door phone is when they are coming from school or an activity unattended by a parent.

- Each cardholder must be at least 18 years old.
- If the Key Card is given to a secondary cardholder, the card holder is responsible for any misuse of the card by any secondary cardholder.

- If the Key Card is given to a secondary cardholder, the card holder is responsible for informing any secondary cardholders of these requirements and their responsibility for using the Key Card.
- The card holder will keep the Key Card in a safe place at all times and at all times I will be accountable for the card.
- The card holder will not tamper or intentionally damage the Key Card in any way, shape or form.
- The card holder will take all reasonable care to prevent the Key Card from being damaged, lost, stolen or misused.
- If the Key Card is lost or stolen, the card holder agrees to immediately notify a Center Co-Director at MCELC as this jeopardizes the safety of the children and staff at the MCELC.
- The card holder will notify MCELC regarding any unauthorized use of the Key Card.
- The card holder will report the discovery of a lost or stolen Key Card to MCELC.

Supplies

Please send the following items:

- Blanket for naptime
- 2 or 3 extra sets of clothes to keep at the Center
- 2 boxes of Kleenex
- Tooth brush

Meals and Snacks

Meals are an important part of our day. All meals will be served in your child's room, family style, by their teachers. Menus for the week will be posted in each room.

Breakfast will be served till 8:20 a.m. Lunch is served at approximately 11:00 a.m. Children arriving after these times will not be eligible for that meal. Snacks are served at approximately 2:45 (preschool who ride bus will be served snack when they arrive).

As part of the Kansas State Department of Education Child and Adult Food Care Program, the Center requires a completed food reimbursement form for each family.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

Food at the center is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

All food and beverages brought from home must be labeled with the children's name and date. This includes breast milk and formula. Breast milk should be brought in a ready-to-feed container or freezer bag. Mothers are welcome to coordinate with the infant teachers to come and nurse their baby if desired.

Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods (e.g. cereal) unless the child's health care provider provides written instructions and a medical reason for this practice.

Infants that are unable to sit will always be held for bottle-feeding. Infants and toddlers are not allowed to have bottles while in a crib or bed and do not eat from propped bottles at any time.

Solid foods (including cereals, fruits and vegetables) are not served to infants younger than 6 months of age, unless the practice is recommended (in writing) by the child's health care provider and approved by families.

Cow's milk is not served to infants younger than 12 months, and only whole milk is served to children ages 12 to 24 months.

Teaching staff offer children fluids from a cup as soon as the families and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready to use a cup. Toddlers do not carry bottles, sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling or walking.

For children with special health care needs or food allergies or special nutrition needs, the Center will use an individualized care plan that is prepared in consultation with family members, the child's health care provider, and specialists involved in the child's care.

Outside Play

Outside play will be a part of each day at the Center. All children will go outside if the temperature is above 32 degrees and under 100 degrees, unless it is raining. Please dress children appropriately for the weather, including hat and gloves during the winter months. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment requires that children participate in outdoor play daily. A written note from the parent is requested to be excluded from outside play.

Child's Personal Belongings

All outer clothing and personal items should be marked with the child's name. Children should always be dressed for play. A light jacket is necessary for outdoor play or walks when weather permits. Old shoes or boots are also a good idea. During winter months, weather permitting, short outdoor excursions are often taken. Please dress your child warmly, with boots, hats and mittens/gloves.

Two complete changes of clothing are needed for each child under the age of 5. Clothing should be labeled with his/her name.

Health and Safety

A physical examination is required of all children who attend MCELC. A form is provided in the Enrollment Packet.

Any illnesses must be reported to MCELC promptly. Staff will remain alert to symptoms of illness throughout the day. Children who display symptoms will be placed in temporary isolation and parents will be notified.

For the protection of all children, the Center Director, or staff on duty, reserve the right to refuse admittance to any child, who in their opinion should receive medical attention.

As per state law, all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate officials.

The following is a list of exclusions and when they can return to the childcare setting.

CHILD IS TOO ILL

Your child is too ill to come to the Center if he or she has any of these signs:

Seems **very** tired and needs bed rest (this is common with flu symptoms)

Unusual behavior: cranky, listlessness, crying more than usual, obvious general discomfort, loss of appetite

Temp. of 101°F or above

Cough that disrupts normal activity

Has **vomiting** or **diarrhea**

Breathing: labored, rapid, and/or wheezing

Yellowish tint to **skin** or **eyes** and/or unusually dark, tea colored **urine**

Red watery or draining **eyes:** if you suspect **pink eye** contact your Ophthalmologist (there is a simple diagnostic test)

Infected areas of the **skin:** rash, sores, crusty, drainage

Fainting or seizures (other than pre-existing conditions)

Severe itching to the body or scalp

Signs of weakness, drowsiness, flushed face, headache or stiff neck

Strep throat and/or severe **red** or sore throat

Greenish nasal or eye drainage

CHILD MAY RETURN TO the Center

Fever: no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication

Cough: symptom free or physician's written approval to return

Breathing: symptom free or physician's written approval to return

Diarrhea: no diarrhea (watery stools) for 24 hours

Vomiting: no vomiting or upset stomach for 24 hours and able to take food

Skin-Eyes-Urine discoloration: symptom free or physician's written approval to return

Eyes: all discharge from eyes has stopped or physician's written approval to return

Skin Sores: healed or 24 hours after treatment or physician's written approval to return

Itching of body/scalp: if caused by lice or scabies—after use of at home treatment—staff will check child's hair before re-admittance

Fainting or seizures: symptom free or physician's written approval to return

Strep throat: 24 hours after treatment

Green nasal or eye drainage/Severe Red throat: Symptom free

Antibiotic: if prescribed be sure your child has taken the medicine for 24 hours before returning. **Take till gone**

If you think that your child has an illness that can be spread to others, please keep him or her home and out of childcare. We want to keep our children as healthy as we can without infecting others.

**Guidelines for Exclusion of Children (or Staff Working With Children) Who Are Ill
As Recommended in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety
Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs (Third Edition)***

When formulating exclusion policies, it is reasonable to focus on the needs and behavior of the ill child and the ability of staff in the out-of-home child care setting to meet those needs without compromising the care of other children in the group.

Children with fever are managed differently in child care. The presence of fever alone has little relevance to the spread of disease and may not preclude a child's participation in child care. A small proportion of childhood illness with fever is caused by life-threatening diseases, such as meningitis. It is unreasonable and inappropriate for child care staff to attempt to determine which illnesses with fevers may be serious. The child's parents or legal guardians, with the help of their child's health care provider, are responsible for these decisions. Parents should be notified anytime a child has a fever.

A facility should not deny admission to or send home a child because of illness unless one or more of the following conditions exists. The parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent should be notified immediately when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the facility, as described below:

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities;**
- 2) The illness results in a greater care need than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children; or**
- 3) The child has any of the following conditions and poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others:**
 - A. An acute change in behavior including lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, uncontrolled coughing, noticeable (spreading) rash, or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility.
 - B. Fever (temperature above 101 degrees Fahrenheit orally, above 102 degrees Fahrenheit rectally, or 100 degrees or higher taken auxiliary (armpit)) and behavior change or other signs and symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea). Oral temperature should not be taken on children younger than 4 years (or younger than 3 years if a digital thermometer is used). Rectal temperature should be taken only by persons with specific health training.
 - C. Uncontrolled diarrhea, that is, increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper until diarrhea stops; blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
 - D. Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
 - E. Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - F. Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider or health official determines the condition is noninfectious.
 - G. Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
 - H. Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
 - I. Untreated scabies, head lice, or other infestation.
 - J. Untreated Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend child care.
 - K. Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stage (chicken pox, streptococcal pharyngitis, rubella, pertussis, mumps, measles, hepatitis A).

Maintaining good health in our children is a responsibility shared by both the parents and The Center. The Center has clear policies for handling and preventing illness. Our staff has been trained in illness prevention policies and the spread of infections. Young children get sick more often because:

1. Their immune systems do not fight illness as well as an adult's.
2. They have not been exposed to many of the germs that cause infection.

During heightened flu season, or infectious disease outbreaks, the Center will enforce more strict exclusion policies in order to protect the health of all children in our care and all staff. If your child is diagnosed with influenza or any type of infectious disease, please alert the Center right away. We can then be in communication with you in regards to your child returning to the Center.

All accidents/injuries will be reported on injury forms and made available to parents. If a child is seriously injured, the parents will be notified immediately to pick up their child for medical attention. If contact cannot be made, and an emergency exists, the child will be taken to the medical facility listed on "Medical Release Form".

Overdue Health Services

If a child is overdue for any routine health services, (such as immunizations), parents, legal guardians, or both, will need to provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and also as a condition for remaining enrolled in the program. Immunizations for which parents are using religious exemption would not be included in this requirement.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

In the event that a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program, staff will remove children who are under-immunized (due to a medical condition or the family's beliefs), to the sick room. The children's parents will be called and the Center Director and Center Nurse will be informed immediately as well. The Center Nurse or Center Director will provide the parents with written information related to the disease and risks, and will also speak with them verbally if needed. The Center Director is required to report a vaccine-preventable disease to the local health department.

Reporting Communicable Disease

The Center Director or Center Nurse will provide information to families in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed to at the Center, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that families should implement at home. Staff will be available to talk with families about their questions or concerns if needed. Parents are asked to inform teachers and/or the Director when their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease in order to protect the well-being of the staff and children at the Center.

Medications

Only trained staff will dispense medications to children. Medications will only be administered to a child if the child's record documents that the parent or legal guardian has given the program written permission. Prescription medications must include the label with instructions from the licensed health provider, the child's first and last names, the date that either the prescription was filled or the recommendation was obtained from the child's licensed health care provider, the name of the provider, the expiration date or period of use of the medication, details of the name and strength of the medication, and instructions on how to administer and store it. All medications are to be kept in a locked container. If a physician's order requires a medication to be readily available for use with a child at all times (for example, an EpiPen), a closed bag or fanny pack that is carried by an adult at all times will be used. This policy does not include the use of diaper creams or sunscreen, unless they are prescription strength.

Diapers

The Early Learning Center follows the National Association for the Education of Young Children standard that requires staff use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use. Therefore, if you wish for your child to use cloth diapers you will need to have a statement from your medical provider documenting the medical reason for their use.

For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper must have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine.

Soiled Cloth Regulation

The Early Learning Center must follow the following regulation for soiled clothing. K.A.R 28-4-132, Soiled clothing cannot be rinsed out. These sanitary laundering procedures promote infection control. It is the Center's policy based on this regulation to bag up any soiled clothing and return to parent. If you prefer to have the clothing disposed of and not returned please let your teacher know.

Bad Weather

During the day, if it is necessary to either dismiss child care early or not have child care because of bad weather, parents will be informed by the following AM/PM radio stations:

KVSV Beloit 105.5 FM and 1190 AM - Beloit
KDNS - 94.1 FM Glen Elder

If no announcements are made prior to 7:30 a.m., child care will be as usual. If weather becomes severe during the day, and child care is to be dismissed early, an announcement will be made one hour in advance of dismissal time. We will try to notify all parents by phone if the center is to be closed.

Severe Weather

During the day, the local weather will be monitored. If storm conditions arise and a WATCH is issued, precautionary measures will be taken to prepare for the situation in case the WATCH becomes a WARNING.

In the case of a Tornado WARNING, the children will be escorted to the basement of the Childcare Center until the all clear has been sounded. The School Age children will be escorted to the basement of the Administration building.

A fire drill shall be conducted monthly and a tornado drill shall be conducted monthly in the months of April through September.

Flood

The Center is not located in a flood zone.

Parent Volunteers

You can visit MCELC any time or volunteer to help the teachers in the classroom. Volunteering is easy and fun for both parents and children. A parent's presence in the classroom is a source of excitement and pride to his/her child. It is also an opportunity for parents and teachers to become better acquainted and to work together to bring out the best in the child. Please remember you are always welcome at the Center and we encourage you to participate in the many activities we offer.

Signature Page

I have been notified that the Mitchell County Early Learning Center Parent Handbook dated January 26, 2015 which outlines the most current policies of the Center is available for my reference on the Early Learning Center's website. Our family will comply with the information contained in the Parent Handbook. I understand and agree that the Mitchell County Early Learning Center has the right to amend or modify any items in the Parent Handbook. I will be notified of these changes when they occur.

Parent Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date