

early learning center

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

UD Early Learning Center Staff Handbook

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Welcome to the University of Delaware Early Learning Center

Mission of the Early Learning Center:

The ELC supports children and their families by providing a high quality, nationally accredited program of early care and education; supports academic and research programs of the University as a site for observation, practicum and research students and faculty; and actively participates in state and national initiatives to advance the field of early care and education.

Philosophy of the Early Learning Center:

Although the program in each classroom varies to reflect the ages of the children, the children's interests, and the teacher's style, a basic philosophy remains constant throughout the ELC: The staff believes in helping each child develop to his/her fullest socially, emotionally, physically, creatively and intellectually. Parents and other family members are viewed as essential partners in that process.

Programs at the Early Learning Center—Quality early care and education is the foundation service at the Early Learning Center, based on what research indicates is recommended practice for children ages birth through twelve. Additional programs for children and families are also provided. Some of these programs may be family support programs that focus on education, literacy, and family interactions. Others may be enhancements to the child care, such as special activities within the classroom to enhance children's skills. Families will always be made aware when new programs are available and when programs are to be added.

Research at the Early Learning Center—Research activities take place at the Early Learning Center, so that we can better understand how children grow, learn, and interact, and to better understand how families and children are supported. These activities may include such things as measuring children's development over time, observations of children's interactions with toys, activities, and other children, and audio and video-taping of children's activities. Research also includes asking families to complete questionnaires about their background and their views of their children. Finally, teachers and other staff may be asked about their views of children, the activities that take place at the ELC, and how effective they think services are for children and families. All research that takes place at the Early Learning Center is reviewed and approved by both the Center committee on research and the University of Delaware's research review board.

Training at the Early Learning Center—Families and children are best served by professionals whose practices are based on sound theory and current research in human development and learning. As a University practicum site, the ELC serves students who are studying to enter a variety of fields including teaching, nursing, physical therapy, and psychology. Learning skills in a center that provides high quality services is one of the best ways to ensure that new professionals will be well prepared to serve children and families.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT RESEARCH ACTIVITY

- Each semester there are hundreds of students and researchers who work in the ELC. The ELC provides research and clinical/practicum opportunities to more than fifteen departments at the University of Delaware, including Human Development and Family Studies, Education, Psychology, Physical Therapy, Nursing, Health & Exercise sciences, Foreign Languages, Biology, English, Music, Agriculture, Disabilities Studies, Communications, Hotel & Restaurant Management, and Nutrition.
- Researchers, complete an application process before being permitted to study or conduct research in the ELC. A preproposal justifying access to the Early Learning Center including the impact on children, families, ELC staff and the field of study must first be presented to the ELC Research Coordinator.
- The ELC Director and the ELC Research Coordinator independently determines whether or not it is an appropriate activity before passing the preproposal to the ELC Research Committee for review and a vote to approve or disapprove the activity. At any point, the preproposal may be refused, returned for revisions, or to provide further clarification about the proposed activities.
- The preproposal is then voted on by the ELC Program Council, which includes University faculty members representing different disciplines, as well as a representative of Office of the Vice President of Research. If the preproposal is approved and it is a research project. The proposal must also be submitted to the University's Human Subject Review Board for approval.
- All researchers and University students who will be in the building more than seven hours in one week or a total of forty hours or more in a year are required to have a criminal background check, which includes a child abuse registry check and adult abuse registry check. Additionally they must complete a health exam and TB test.

Participation in Programs, Research and Training Activities at the Early Learning Center

In addition to the services provided to children and families, we are a research and training center. Because the ELC is committed to providing excellent services to families and children and to continuous improvement, we ask that all families enrolled in the ELC participate in the research, training, and program activities that will allow us to learn more about children's development and how to better support families.

It is expected that all ELC employees will cooperate fully with clinical and research projects.

Target Population:

The Early Learning Center strives to serve a diverse population which includes;

- ❖ State Subsidized (Purchase of Care) clients, up to 30% of the total enrollment;
- ❖ Children with a diagnosed disability who are actively receiving support services, at a minimum of 20% of the total enrollment;
- ❖ Children living in foster care or who are adopted, up to 10% of the total enrollment
- ❖ Children of University of Delaware employees and from the broader community

Security Measures

The health and safety of our children is of paramount importance. Some important information:

- *Entering and Exiting the Building:* You will be issued an ID card to use on our electronic entries. It is important that you not allow anyone else access to your card.
- *Picking Up Children:* Only persons authorized by families will be permitted to pick up a child from the ELC. Authorized persons must be a minimum of 16 years old and should be asked to present identification. (See section titled “Release of Children.”)
- *Surveillance Features:* The ELC is equipped with security cameras both inside the building and outside. In addition, there are cameras, microphones and observation booths overlooking all spaces used by children. Interior windows have been installed throughout the building to increase visibility.
- Observation booths are left unlocked. As stated in your letter of employment, classrooms are observed, video-taped or audio-taped for a variety of reasons. You will not receive notice of observation or recording.

Additional Facility Safety/Security Features:

- All ELC staff and researchers are identified by a badge. University students also wear identification.
- All ELC staff are required to have training in first aid, CPR, blood borne pathogens, and the operation of a fire extinguisher. Before working with children, staff must have a criminal background check, including a child abuse registry check and adult abuse registry check. In addition, all staff are required to have a periodic health exam and TB test.
- Separate playgrounds are available for each age group and are equipped with age appropriate equipment set into a resilient material. Six foot fencing surrounds the perimeter of the ELC playground.
- Classrooms are equipped with age appropriate furniture, toys and equipment, as well as safety outlets throughout the room, and finger guards on bathroom doors. Infant rooms have diffused lighting to protect developing eyes.
- Low child to caregiver ratios
- Ability to lock down portions of the building
- Internal intercom system.
- Smoke, sprinkler and fire alarm systems.

Items available for your reference at the Front Desk:

- A copy of *Delacare*, Delaware’s child care regulations;
- Current notices of convicted sex offenders living or working in the area; and
- Samples of the research tools currently being used in the universal data collection.

ELC Specific Policies

NOTE #1:

These policies are in addition to the Policies and Procedures outlined by the University of Delaware and accessible to all employees at the reception desk and on-line at <http://www.udel.edu/ExecVP/policies/personnel/index.html> which includes University-wide policies on;

- Administrative
- Facilities
- Financial
- Personnel, including information on hiring, discipline, dismissal, suspension and layoff
- Procurement
- Research
- Safety & Security

NOTE #2:

A full copy of the *Delacare* regulations is available for employee reference in each Associate Director's office. In addition, the regulations may be accessed at the front desk and on-line at http://kids.delaware.gov/occl/occl_providers.shtml

NOTE #3:

All employees are to read and abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. A copy will be provided upon request, and can be accessed on-line at <http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/PSETH05.asp>

NOTE # 4:

All infant and toddler classrooms are to read and follow the New Direction Early Head Start (a partnering agency of the ELC) policy and procedure manuals. Each classroom has a full set of manuals and another set is located in the associate director's office.

Overview of Employee Responsibilities:

Employee Attributes *As defined by Delaware First Core Competencies:*

Exhibits stable and responsible work habits. Accepts challenges and learns from mistakes. Expects continuous change. Displays imagination and creativity. Employs humor and patience. Takes time for regular reflection and self-examination. Works cooperatively with co-workers in a team effort. Communicates effectively with adults. Exhibits ability to empathize with others. Demonstrates unconditional caring, warmth and respect for each child's uniqueness. Exhibits the ability to be delighted and curious about children. Serves as a model for children through their own conduct. Communicates effectively with each child, both verbally and non-verbally. Shows respect for the diversity of families, children and co-workers.

ELC Employee Responsibilities: PROFESSIONALISM

- Positively support and represent the Early Learning Center (ELC) and its mission, as well as The Center for Disabilities Studies, the University of Delaware and the Center's participants to; families, coworkers, granters, state agencies, foundations, collaborative partners, and the community at large. Support collaborative efforts between the ELC and its four

constituencies; children & their families; researchers; pre-service undergraduates & graduates; and community members who work with and for children and their families.

- Comply with all local, state, and federal laws, codes and regulations, including *Delacare* licensing requirements. (*Delacare* is Delaware's child care regulations as determined by the Office of Child Care Licensing.) Follow all program policies and procedures, including those outlined in the employee handbook.
- Abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Be a role model to others, demonstrating respectful interactions. Participate effectively as a member of a team, cooperating with others to ensure the success of the ELC and its programs. Support other team members in their role.
- Practice confidentiality in all matters related to the staff and families, as well as proprietary information regarding the operation of the ELC.
- Accept and utilize constructive feedback to improve performance. Participate in setting and meeting goals. Continue professional development to meet or exceed annual *Delacare* licensing requirements.
- Practice effective methods of communication with parents, staff, administration and the University community.
- Consider all aspects of the ELC's operation as the employee's responsibility; this includes responsibility for all children in the Center; the greeting of families and ensuring that they are connected with the person or information that will assist them, the maintenance and upkeep of the Center, and the promotion of the Center in the community.

ELC Employee Responsibilities: PROGRAM

- Develop a warm, positive, nurturing relationship with each child. Respond appropriately to children's emotional needs. Accept children's feelings and help them to express those feelings in safe and appropriate ways. Help children handle daily routines, transitions and unexpected changes. Interact with children to support their development and learning. Encourage and accept children's creative expressions. Engage in genuine conversations with children. Actively listen to children and encourage them to ask questions. Support and encourage children's participation in a variety of activities. Model respect and positive behavior.
- Use a variety of teaching methods to support children's learning. Base programming and decision-making on knowledge of best practices as demonstrated in current research, data, trends & approaches, and through observation of children's interests, strengths, needs and questions. Work closely with others to ensure developmentally appropriate programming.
- Provide materials, activities and experiences that promote development and provide a balance of quiet/active, child-initiated/teacher facilitated, indoor/outdoor, and small/large group activities. Provide opportunities for cooperative play and interactions. Recognize the role of the environment as teacher and arrange the physical learning environment to encourage play, exploration and learning.
- Use knowledge of each child's family, culture and individual interests to develop and enrich curriculum.

- Observe children’s experiences as a basis for curriculum development, parent communication and assessment. Work with others to develop on-going documentation and assessment of children’s developmental progress.
- Assess the developmental progress of each child across all developmental areas, using a variety of instruments and multiple data sources that address the program's curriculum areas. Collect information across the full range of children's experiences.
- Establish an environment that fosters trust, respect, cooperation and appropriate behavior. Help children deal with stress and change. Encourage children to develop self-regulation. Help children use effective problem solving and appropriate conflict resolution strategies. Modify situations to prevent problems. Implement positive guidance strategies reflective of the ELC’s philosophy.
- With Administrative support, refer children to outside services as needed.
- Take steps to ensure children’s health and safety. Practice Universal Precautions and infection control, including appropriate hand washing, sanitation, and diapering procedures. Practice safe food handling procedures. Help children to adopt good health and safety practices.
- Keep all children under direct supervision at all times as outlined in NAEYC codes 3.C.02 and 3.C.04.
 - 3.C.02- Teaching staff supervise by positioning themselves to see as many children as possible
 - 3.C.04 (preschool and kindergarten) Teaching staff supervise primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g. those who can use the toilet independently, who are napping)
- Conduct regularly scheduled health & safety checks and implement plans for improvement.
- Assist the program in meeting or exceeding expectations to achieve and maintain NAEYC accreditation.

ELC Employee Responsibilities: FAMILIES

- Strive to provide a program that ensures high family satisfaction.
- Establish strong reciprocal relationships with all families. Communicate with families using different modalities to best meet their needs. Establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Work to build a sense of community. With others, ensure that all families, regardless of family structure; socioeconomic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds; gender; abilities; or preferred language are included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities. Be available and accessible to parents.
- Communicate with families regarding child’s daily activities, the curriculum, shared care-giving issues and developmental milestones. Address parent concerns in a timely manner. Seek help when needed.
- Demonstrate respect for the family’s role as primary educator and caregiver, and for the diversity of family culture, structure, function, lifestyle and child rearing practices. Support the family by providing relevant information about child development and learning, as well as center and community resources.

- Engage with families to learn about their child's interests, approaches to learning, and the child's developmental needs and to learn about their concerns and goals for their children. Become acquainted with and learn about their family structure; their preferred child-rearing practices; and information families wish to share about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds. Incorporate information gleaned from these interactions into ongoing classroom planning.
- Foster family participation in the program. Assist with family events.
- Ensure smooth transitions for children and their families as they begin their experience at the ELC; as they move-up to the next classroom; and as they leave their enrollment from the center.

ELC Employee Responsibilities: RESEARCH & PRESERVICE

- Cooperate with Administration in providing access to the ELC and its constituencies for research, as well as undergraduate & graduate pre-service activities, and community training & collaboration.
- Works cooperatively with team members to create and maintain an environment conducive to the growth and learning of college students assigned to the classroom.
- Demonstrate ability to establish effective, professional relationships and to work collaboratively with researchers and other members of the ELC community.

ELC Employee Responsibilities: ELC FINANCIAL HEALTH

- Exercise waste control in the use of resources.

Policies Begin in Alphabetical Order from Here:

Accidents: Children

When an accident or injury occurs to a child during the hours of care, the ELC will take the necessary emergency action to protect the child from further harm and will notify the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). The ELC will maintain an injury report for each incident in the child's file and will report to the Office of Child Care Licensing an accident or injury which results in death or inpatient or outpatient treatment.

Any employee witnessing an incident or administering first aid/CPR will be responsible to complete an accident/incident report for the event and have it signed by the parent/guardian. (Only one report per incident.) One copy will be given to the parent and one copy will be maintained in the child's permanent record.

If an injury is minor, requiring only a band aid or ice, administer appropriate first aid and complete an incident form. If it is more serious, consult with Administration. It may be necessary to call the parent and advise the parent to see a physician or take the child to the emergency room.

Should a child require emergency medical treatment, dial 911. Notify Administration. Once emergency services have been contacted, contact the parent to apprise them of the situation. If emergency services arrive before the parent, a staff person is to chaperone the child to the hospital, taking the child's emergency consent form.

See section below titled "First Aid/CPR"

Appraisals & Professional Development Plan:

Each spring all permanent ELC employees are appraised for the prior year's performance. A self-appraisal, supervisory appraisal, and individual meeting with supervisors are part of this process. Goals are created for the upcoming year and a timeline is created to meet goals. All permanent staff will compose their professional development plan after the annual appraisal with their immediate supervisor.

The professional development plans should:

- meet the annual training requirements for staff as listed in the Delacare Rules for Early Care & Education Centers
- be based on needs identified through staff appraisals, family surveys, and UD student/faculty surveys
- include mentoring, coaching and other professional development opportunities for all staff
- include trainings and discussions
- include necessary training in ELC policies & procedures
- include training in: skills for building positive relationships; curriculum; teaching practices; skills for partnering with families and communities; mentoring and leadership skills; child development; working with children with special needs; assessment procedures; and skills for collaborating and participating as a member of a team

The professional development plan will be reviewed and approved by the immediate supervisor.

Individual Professional Development Plans are available for review by the Office of Child Care Licensing as a part of the Center's annual licensure renewal process.

Assessment Plan:

Assessment of children is an integral part of all of the ELC programs. Teachers and staff use assessment to identify children's interests and needs; document children's developmental progress and learning; improve curriculum and teaching practices and the environment; arrange for developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessments when necessary and plan for program improvements.

Teachers use a variety of assessment methods and tools throughout the school year to assess children across all areas of development. Assessment is generally informal and takes place in the classroom while children are engaged in activities. Assessments are ongoing throughout the year and results are recorded in the assessment tool quarterly for infants and toddlers and triennially for preschoolers. These methods and tools include, but are not limited to the following:

- The Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers
- Ages & Stages – ASQ-SE and ASQ-3 for infants and Toddlers
- Teaching Strategies GOLD (preschool)
- Anecdotal notes/observation
- Children's work samples

Teaching teams meet to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of the children. Teachers keep assessment information confidential in their classrooms, and may share this information with their administrators as deemed necessary. Parents/guardians are always welcome to request a copy of their child's file.

Teaching staff value effective communication with families and share assessment information with families frequently throughout the school year. This communication may occur through communication journals, face-to face, phone, or email conversations, or in family conferences, which are held twice annually and more often when requested. Information gleaned from multiple assessment sources along with family goals serve as the foundation/starting point for teacher's planning.

When teachers suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner and is provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

Attendance: Children & Arrival/Departure of Children

Staff will ensure that parent/guardian signs child in/out each time s/he enters or leaves the building. A sign-in sheet is to be available in the classroom. In addition, daily attendance records will be maintained and periodic checks of attendees will be conducted throughout the day to ensure all children are accounted. In particular, staff will count the number of children in their care upon leaving the building and again upon return.

See "*Release of Children*"

Attendance: Staff

It is essential that staff arrive on time at the beginning of the day and when returning from a lunch break. It is expected that staff will be in their classroom at the beginning of their shift, e.g. if a staff person is scheduled to work from 9:00-6:00, then s/he should be in the classroom ready to work at 9:00.

In accordance with *Delacare* regulations, staff must clock in/out when arriving/leaving the building, such that there are four ProCare punches per employee per day. Repeated absences or lateness puts the ELC in danger of being out of compliance with child care regulations and is disruptive to young children and their families. Procedures for calling out from work or requesting days off are available from your Associate Director.

Cell Phones and Texting:

While caring for children, cell phone usage and texting is to be limited to short-length emergency calls and messages only.

Child Abuse & Neglect:

The Early Learning Center will provide each employee with written information governing the reporting provision of the Delaware child abuse and neglect law(s) and regulations. Each employee is required to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse & neglect and outlining the employee's responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to State Law.

The ELC will report any suspected or alleged incident of child abuse or neglect to the Division of Child Protective Services through the Child Abuse Reporting Number (800-292-9582) and will cooperate fully in the investigation of any incident.

As required by Delacare, the Early Learning Center will not employ or retain in any capacity any person whose child or children are removed from his/her custody because of abuse or neglect; nor will the Center employ or retain in any capacity any person convicted of any offense defined as sex abuse in Delaware Code, Title 11, Chapter 85, Subchapter IV, Subsection 8850.

Protocol for suspicion of neglect or abuse by a parent, guardian, or other adult:

In the event an employee suspects abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, guardian, or other adult, the employee will:

- Immediately contact an associate director to discuss their concerns. If an AD is not available, s/he should discuss the matter with the Director.
- The AD or the Director will be available to assist the employee in contacting the Division of Child Protective Services and to follow the guidelines set by the Division should s/he require assistance or support. The Early Learning Center, in accordance with law, will not discourage, inhibit, penalize, or otherwise impede any staff member from reporting any suspected or alleged incident of child abuse or neglect. The AD is responsible to immediately report the circumstances around the suspicion of abuse and/or neglect and the action taken to the Director.

Protocol for reporting an ELC staff member for suspicion of neglect or abuse:

Any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by an employee or volunteer of the ELC must be immediately reported to an Associate Director *and* to the Director. The ELC will immediately report the suspected abuse or neglect as required by Law, and take remedial action to protect children from harm.

- In the event an ELC staff member is alleged to have perpetrated an incident of child abuse or neglect, that person shall a) have no direct contact with any child, or b) be reassigned to other duties that do not involve contact with children, or c) be placed on Administrative Leave by the Director and/or the ELC Human Resources liaison, until the investigation of the incident has been completed.
- The ELC will take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment as required by Delacare Rules #138-140 and by Law, against any staff member who commits an act of child abuse or neglect.
- In addition, should abuse or neglect be substantiated, the Early Learning Center will take long term corrective action to eliminate factors that may have caused, contributed to, or otherwise resulted in a continuing risk of abuse or neglect to children if the abuse or neglect occurred at the Center by an ELC staff member.

Communications:

BETWEEN STAFF:

Staff are responsible to communicate all pertinent information among one another to ensure that any staff member, substitutes or volunteer assuming responsibility for a child or children as, for example, during shift changes, is adequately informed of any significant information, problem, need or special circumstance involving the child or children. One to one conversation or a log book will be used. This is especially critical when shifts change.

WITH CHILDREN:

Staff talk frequently with children and listen to children with attention and respect. They respond to children's questions and requests, use strategies to communicate effectively and build relationships with every child and engage regularly in meaningful and extended conversations with each child. Teaching staff express warmth through behaviors such as physical affection, eye contact, tone of voice, and smiles. Teaching staff help children understand spoken language by using pictures, familiar objects, body language and physical cues. Whenever possible, teaching staff support the development and maintenance of children's home language.

WITH FAMILIES:

Staff will use a variety of formal and informal methods to communicate with families, including such strategies as one to one, conversations at drop off and pick up time, periodic telephone and/or email communication, family events, parent training, and in written form; such as a daily report, journal, memo, newsletter, parenting article, or web communication. Staff will share information about the program philosophy and curriculum objectives, including educational goals and effective strategies that can be used by families to promote their children's learning. Staff will seek input from families regarding curriculum activities throughout the year.

Not less than every six months, staff will meet with parents to share information about their child's development and progress, including developmental milestones achieved by the child and any other important information relating to the child.

WITH STUDENTS & RESEARCHERS:

Staff will interact with students during clinical placements and research projects in addition to faculty researchers. Staff are expected to communicate all pertinent information (ie. classroom procedures) and address questions that will assist the students and researchers in having a successful project. Specific information about a child and/or their family should not be discussed (ie. child's diagnosis or family's socioeconomic status) as it is confidential and cannot be shared. If staff are uncertain as to the type of information they can share or about a question that was asked of them, please consult with the Coordinator of Research, Director, or Associate Director for further discussion.

WITH COLLABORATORS, OUTSIDE AGENCIES, VISITORS, AND OTHER ADULTS:

At times staff may interact with other collaborators and visitors from outside agencies (ie. therapists and staff from the Division of Family Services). In many instances, these visitors are working with a specific child/ren and/or their families. Staff are expected to share all pertinent information and address questions without sharing any confidential information (see examples above). Questions or information that you have reservations about sharing should be directed to the Director or Associate Director for further discussion.

See "Confidentiality," "Accidents: Children"

Community Resources:

Act Now Crisis Line and Children's Services.....	800-969-4357
Brandywine Counseling.....	302-656-2348
Catholic Charities.....	302-655-9624
Center for Disease Control.....	800-232-4636
Children and Families First.....	302-658-5177
Child Development Watch.....	302-995-8617
Child Mental Health Services.....	302-633-2579
Child, Inc.....	302-762-8989
Dart First State Reduced Fare Program.....	302-577-3278
Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families.....	302-633-2505
Delaware Division of Family Services.....	302-633-2650
Delaware Guidance for Children and Youth.....	302-652-3948
Delaware Health and social Services.....	302-577-4643
Delaware Helpline.....	302-577-3000
Delaware State Housing Authority.....	302-577-5001
Developmental Disabilities Council.....	302-739-2232
Easter Seal Society.....	302-324-4444
Henrietta Johnson Medical Center (Wilmington).....	302-655-6190
Hudson State Service Center (Newark).....	302-283-7500
Jewish Family Services of Delaware.....	302-478-9411
Libraries – Delaware Division of.....	800-282-8696
National Directory Assistance.....	411
New Castle county Head Start Program (3-5 year olds).....	302-452-1500
New Directions Early Head Start (pregnant women and birth – 3 year olds).....	302-831-0584
Occupational Therapists and Associates.....	302-736-0990
Office of Child Care Licensing.....	302-892-5800
Parents as Teachers.....	302-454-5955
Parent Education Partnership.....	302-633-2505
Parent Information Center.....	302-366-0152
Poison Control Center.....	800-722-7112
Read-Aloud Delaware.....	302-656-5256
Wilmington Head Start (3-5 year olds).....	302-421-3620
YMCA of Delaware.....	302-571-6975

Confidentiality:

As stated above, staff will practice confidentiality in all matters related to other staff, children and their families, as well as proprietary information regarding the operation of the ELC.

Although confidential information about children and families is expected to be shared and discussed with administration in order to provide the employee with support and feedback, it is not to be shared with other employees. Supervisors are also bound by confidentiality policies.

Consistency of Care:

To maintain consistency of care, the Early Learning Center hires one teacher and one classroom assistant for each classroom. When substitutes are in the classrooms, all attempts are made to send the same substitutes to rooms they have experience in. The ELC believes in transitioning children from classroom to classroom as little as possible. Therefore children transition from infant to toddlers, toddlers to young preschool and young preschool to older

preschool. Transitions to Kindergarten from the older preschool program are varied depending on their next placement which can be to public, private or charter schools.

Classroom staff schedules are staggered to provide children as much time during the day with their primary caregivers – the teacher and classroom assistant. For infant staff lunches every effort is made to provide substitute coverage that is consistent for the children. During opening and closing times, children may be moved to another room within their age range with the teachers in that classroom assuming the responsibility of care until parents arrive. Since the ELC operates for 11 hours per day, children who stay for most of that time will experience a transition to another classroom/group.

Every attempt will be made to maintain ELC ratios, however there may be occasions – such as drop-off and pick-up – when classrooms will move toward, but not exceed, state ratios.

Curriculum:

The curriculum at the Early Learning Center for all age groups is designed to support the positive growth and development of the whole child. Activities are planned for children that stimulate and promote their positive growth in all developmental areas – cognitive, language, physical, creative, social and emotional development. The Creative Curriculum® and the Delaware Department of Education Early Learning Foundations for Infants/Toddlers and Preschool are used as a guide for infant, toddler and preschool classes.

Staff assess children's current levels of development and plan activities designed to foster and support their growth. Our approach is designed to allow children to explore materials and activities so that they construct and discover knowledge, and develop skills through high quality, purposeful activities provided and supported by the teachers. The curriculum guides the development of a daily schedule that is predictable yet flexible and responsive to individual needs of the children. Teaching staff include the family in curriculum development by seeking their input during parent/teacher conferences and through other means of communication (email, conversations, classroom participation, etc.). Staff implement the curriculum in a manner that reflects responsiveness to the family home values, beliefs, experiences and language. Curriculum is adapted or modified to allow for differences in age and ability and developmental stage. Adaptations for the individual needs of children in the program are not limited to children with identified special needs.

At the ELC, children actively explore and learn about their environments, their peers, their communities, and themselves. Curriculum at the Early Learning Center ensures that there is a strong emotionally secure base for every child, and then uses children's natural curiosity and play as the foundation from which to support their cognitive, language, social, physical, creative and emotional skill development in order to prepare them for success in school and life.

Lesson plans are submitted electronically for review by the Associate Director, or Director. See your AD for specific details on when to submit your plans and the format to be used.

Diapering:

For the comfort of the child, children who are wet or soiled need to be changed upon discovery. Staff will check diapers no less than every two hours, upon awakening and will refer to the diapering procedure posted at all changing stations and on the portable changing table for appropriate diapering procedures. In addition, staff will ensure that parents provide extra clothing and diapering supplies for their children.

Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed bag and returned to the parent at the end of the day. To protect the health of all children, soiled clothing will not be cleaned in the center's washing machine, including cloth diapers.

Cloth Diapers: Staff may only use commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use. The child's health care provider must document in writing the medical reason. When using 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. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit. (This means parents must provide ample outer coverings since they cannot be used twice at the center). Cloth diapers that are soiled are placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing) that is able to be sealed – such as a Ziploc bag. This bag will then be placed in another bag and put in the child's diaper bag in the cubby. Soiled diapers are to be removed by parents daily from the center. Bags cannot be reused unless they are disinfected at home by parents using soap & water, then a bleach water solution rinse (1 part bleach: 10 parts water) and air dried.

All other diaper procedures will be followed as they currently exist.

When using a portable diapering table, staff will ensure it is placed no more than 5' from a hand washing sink.

Discipline/Positive Guidance

The ELC employs positive guidance as a method of behavior management, with a strong emphasis on preventative measures. Strategies are appropriate to the child's age, developmental stage and individual needs. One goal is to help each child develop self-control. We recognize that it is important to work together with parents to encourage the child's positive behaviors.

As a reflection of our philosophy, some of the strategies rarely used are stickers or token economy systems of behavior management, and time out, which are reserved for extreme behaviors and require a behavior management plan approved by the Director or the Director's designee.

At no time will any staff member or volunteer of the ELC use any form of corporal punishment, including but not limited to shaking, spanking, slapping, pinching, pushing, humiliating, threatening, biting or hair pulling. Teaching staff never use threats or derogatory or humiliating remarks and neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

The ELC employs a positive guidance approach to dealing with children's challenging behaviors. The most important step in the process entails teacher's use of preventative strategies. Teachers recognize the essential role that relationships play in their ability to facilitate children's social competence therefore they take intentional steps to ensure that every child feels accepted and gains a sense of belonging.

Teaching staff promote pro-social behavior by interacting in a respectful manner with all staff and children and by modeling behaviors such as; caring, turn-taking, listening, negotiating, comforting, and by intentionally facilitating children's efforts in these areas. Teachers actively teach social, communication and emotional regulation skills and they assist children in resolving conflicts. Staff guide children who bully, isolate, or hurt other children to learn and follow the rules of the classroom.

When challenging behaviors occur, teachers observe to identify events, activities, interactions and other contextual factors that predict challenging behavior and may contribute to the child's use of challenging behavior. Information regarding the behavior is recorded on a **Behavior Incident Recording Form** (found in the copy room file cabinet). Teachers identify skills that need to be taught and incorporate these into their activities and routines. Teachers use environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.

Teaching staff respond to a child's challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child, provides for the safety of others in the classroom, is calm, is respectful to the child and provides the child with information on acceptable behavior. If challenging behavior persists then teachers meet with their AD to re-examine collected data and to plan how to proceed. Next steps might include one or more of the following: development of Behavior Support Plan, classroom consultation and/or technical support, referral to outside agency. Throughout this process teachers and administrators work collaboratively with families to support the needs of the child.

Dress Code:

Since ELC staff will be a role model to children, students and community providers, and because they will be video-taped for research and educational purposes, they are expected to dress comfortably but professionally. Sneakers, comfortable shoes, "business casual," black jeans, khakis, plain or patterned shirts are examples of appropriate clothing.

Clothing not permitted includes, but is not limited to clothing that is excessively dirty or in ill repair; blue jeans; shoes that could lead to injury (such as high heels); clothing that depicts images or text that is not appropriate for young children; clothing that reveals one's stomach or private areas; or any clothing that restricts a staff person from participating fully with children. Shorts and skirts must be of an appropriate length.

E- Communications:

Employees will follow the University of Delaware *Employees' Use of E-Communication*, Policy 1-19 administrative section outlined in the UD personnel policies located at <http://www.udel.edu/ExecVP/policies/administrative/index.html>. In addition, staff of the ELC is prohibited from posting pictures and information about children and families on any web sites or social media format not authorized by the ELC director.

Environmental Health & Safety:

The Early Learning Center is inspected annually by a Public Health Official from the state, an Occupational Health and Safety official from the University, as well as an inspector from the City of Newark. To protect children and adults, administrators consider results from the environmental health and safety inspection reports very seriously and take necessary steps to ensure that the center is safe.

Fully working fire extinguishers and fire alarms are installed in each classroom and are tagged and serviced annually. Fire alarms are tested monthly during evacuation drills. Drills are recorded in a log, which is maintained by the Senior Secretary at the front desk.

Smoke detectors and the carbon monoxide detector, which is to be located in the separate mechanical room are interconnected into a fire alarm control panel, which is constantly attended by the University on campus.

The ELC facility including the outdoor play area is entirely smoke free. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children. No firearms are permitted on the premises.

Areas used by staff or children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishing or supplies will be maintained according to the recommendation of health professionals.

In cold weather, teachers ensure that children wear clothing that is dry and layered for warmth. Staff will remind families to send in appropriate clothing and accessories if necessary. In sunny and hot weather, teachers give children the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun, they wear sun-protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection will be either sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher that is applied to exposed skin (only with written parental permission to do so).

If any air pollution alerts arise, ELC staff will protect children and adults by limiting outdoor physical activity as a precaution.

Evacuation Procedures:

Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. In the event of an emergency (real or drill), staff must evacuate their area, take a written listing of all children present and their emergency contact information, and meet in the designated safe area.

The ELC has periodic fire/evacuation drills. During these drills all individuals in the building need to evacuate. These drills are conducted monthly at various times of the day, and are unannounced.

Family Style Dining:

Classroom staff will guide the children during meal times using the family style dining model. Children will be encouraged to participate in: setting the table, serving appropriate (those not requiring staff assistance) foods to themselves and cleaning up. Staff will: eat with the children and model portion control by putting the appropriate serving size on their own plate (following the Child and Adult Care Food Program) meal pattern requirements. They will also encourage children to develop independence and self-help skills that match their current developmental levels, set a good example by demonstrating a positive attitude toward all foods served and sit at the table with the children in order to participate in language development.

Feeding Infants & Toddlers:

Infants unable to sit are held for bottle-feeding. All others sit or are held to be fed. Infants do not have bottles while in a crib or eat from a propped bottle at any time.

Toddlers do not carry sippy cups or regular cups with them while crawling or walking.

Files: Child

Children's files include, but are not limited to, the following information; contact info, person's authorized for pick-up, family developmental history, and medical history. If applicable, the following items are also included; IFSP/IEP therapy plans, court orders, and custody agreements.

Classroom forms that are maintained in children's files include;

- Administration of medication forms
- Accident/Incident reports
- Assessments
- Notes of parent meetings outlining behavior plans
- Any paperwork required by specific grant requirements
- Letters of notification to transition to other classrooms and/or programs at the Early Learning Center

Medical records and information are confidential and will be protected in accordance with the Office of Child Care Licensing regulations. Each child must have on file within one month of his/her start date at the Early Learning Center, an age appropriate health appraisal certified by a health care provider. This health appraisal is considered current if dated within 12 months of the child's enrollment date, and must be updated yearly or in accordance with the recommended schedule for routine health supervision of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The health appraisal includes:

- A health history
- A physical examination
- Growth and development
- Recommendations regarding required medication, restrictions or modifications of the child's activities, diet or care
- Medical information pertinent to treatment in case of emergency
- Documentation of any recommended or required screening or testing such as for blood-lead or tuberculosis
- Documentation of the immunization status, with a listing of day, month and year of administration for each immunization required by the Division of Public Health. Current information regarding immunization schedules can be accessed at www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm.

A child's main medical file may also include:

- Accident/injury reports
- Allergy Action Plans
- Authorization forms for medication administration

Child files are audited quarterly. Families receive notification in advance of their child's health appraisal expiring, in order to properly schedule physical appointments. Families are required to complete Child Information Card upon enrollment which is kept in the children's files. Information from these cards is entered into ProCare.

Child files are confidential, but immediately available to:

- Administrators or teaching staff
- The child's parents or legal guardians
- Regulatory authorities, on request.

Files: Staff

Staff files include, but are not limited to the following information; name, date of birth, home address and telephone number, as well as date of employment and, if applicable, date of termination.

Paperwork includes:

- Resume.
- Reference letters from two people not related to the employee, to attest that s/he is of good character and reputation, respects and understands children, and is sensitive to meeting their needs.
- Release of employment history form and service letters. Service letters will include the staff person's most recent employer and any health care or child care facility within the five years prior to ELC employment.
- Statement regarding staff person's status relative to conviction, current indictment or involvement in any criminal activity involving violence against a person, child abuse or neglect; possession, sale or distribution of illegal drugs; sexual misconduct; gross irresponsibility or disregard for the safety of others; or serious violations of accepted standards of honesty or ethical behavior; or any case of child abuse or neglect substantiated by the Division of Family Services or the respective responsible entity in any other state or country.

Per licensing regulation #138, the ELC shall not employ any person with any conviction, current indictment or involvement in any criminal activity involving violence against a person, child abuse or neglect; possession, sale or distribution of illegal drugs; sexual misconduct; gross irresponsibility or disregard for the safety of others; or serious violations of accepted standards of honesty or ethical behavior. (See the section titled "Child Abuse" for additional information on employment restrictions.)

- Verification of fingerprinting, which must be completed *prior* to active employment at the ELC.
- Release form and verification of adult abuse registry check to be completed *prior* to active employment at the ELC.
- Proof of health/TB, which needs to be renewed every two years.
- Copy of job description (Note: a copy of all job descriptions is available from the leadership team).
- Orientation form, including employee acknowledgement that s/he has received an orientation and a copy of
 - ELC Staff Handbook,
 - NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct,
 - Guidelines to Practica and Research in the ELC, and
 - ELC Parent handbook.
- Proof of education/training.
- Proof of current first aid, CPR, and blood borne pathogens training.
- If applicable, proof of AED training.
- Professional development plan.
- Annual appraisal.
- If applicable, documentation of performance issues and employment action plan.
- May also contain; emails, memos, letters and other communication.

First Aid, CPR, AED & Blood Borne Pathogen Training:

Delacare regulations require all staff to be certified in infant/child/adult first aid and CPR. Periodically this training is provided at the ELC. It is the responsibility of each employee to attend when it becomes available or seek training on their own. All new staff must have proof of both first aid and CPR within six months of employment.

In addition, the University requires annual training in Blood Borne Pathogens for all staff that could potentially be exposed to bodily fluids. This training is offered on-site at the ELC annually and via on-line instruction.

The Early Learning Center has an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) mounted near the main lobby. Each year a number of staff are certified to use this equipment.

First Aid Kits:

First aid kits are readily available and maintained for each group of children by the classroom staff. Employees are to take at least one kit to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the center. A list of what supplies are to be included in the kits is available in the replenishment supply bins for first aid. It is the responsibility of staff to check their kits at least 4 times per year to ensure they are fully stocked. The ELC follows the Licensing requirements for contents in the first aid kits.

Hand Washing:

All ELC Employees, children (independently or with staff assistance) and volunteers are expected to observe hand washing routines, regardless of glove usage, with soap and running water (rubbing hands together for at least 10 seconds) followed by the use of single service towel to dry hands at the following times:

- Upon arriving for work and before departure;
- Before/after preparing, handling, serving or eating meals;
- Before/after using a sensory table with other children;
- Before/after administering medications;
- Before/after caring for a child who may be sick;
- After coming into contact with blood, fecal matter, urine, vomit, nasal secretions, or other body secretions;
- After toileting or diapering children or self;
- After removing gloves;
- When moving from one group to another that involves contact with infants and toddlers
- After playing in a sandbox;
- After playing outside;
- After handling garbage or cleaning products; and
- After handling animals or their equipment, or after coming into contact with an animal's body secretions.

Employees do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or for removing smeared fecal material. For this use the bathtub located in the restroom in the infant wing of the building.

Health: Children

Upon arrival, each child will be observed for common signs of communicable disease, physical injury or other evidences of ill health.

Children shall be excluded from care if they have symptoms of illness specified below, unless written documentation from a licensed physician, or verbal with written follow-up, states the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to the child or to other children. The symptoms of illness for possible exclusion shall include, but not be limited to any of the following:

- Temperature: infants four (4) months old and younger, equivalent to 100 degrees or greater even if there has not been a change in behavior;
- Temperature: children older than four (4) months, equivalent to 101 degrees or greater; accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness - until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility. Oral temperature shall not be taken on children younger than four (4) years (or younger than three (3) years if a digital thermometer is used). Rectal temperature shall be taken only by a licensed health care professional;
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs) - until medical evaluation allows inclusion;
- 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 in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools;
- Vomiting illness (two (2) or more episodes of vomiting in the previous twenty-four (24) hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than two (2) hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms;
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that condition is noninfectious;
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease;
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until after twenty-four (24) hours after antibiotic treatment has been initiated;
- Scabies, until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Pediculosis (head lice), until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend care;
- Impetigo, until twenty-four (24) hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until twenty-four (24) hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever;
- Varicella-Zoster (Chicken pox), until all sores have dried and crusted (usually six (6) days);
- Shingles, only if sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing; if not exclude until sores have crusted and are dry;
- Pertussis, until five (5) days of antibiotic treatment;
- Mumps, until nine (9) days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Hepatitis A virus, until one (1) week after onset of illness, jaundice or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis (currently, immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff;
- Measles, until five (5) days after onset of rash;

- Rubella, until six (6) days after onset of rash;
- Herpetic gingivostomatitis (cold sores), if the child is too young to have control of oral secretions; or
- Unspecified illness if it limits the child's comfortable participation in activities or if it results in a need for greater care than can be provided without comprising the health and safety of other children.

The child may return to the Center when the symptoms are no longer present or a licensed physician indicates the child poses no serious health risk to the child or to other children.

The Center will not permit a child with a reportable communicable disease, as specified by the Delaware Division of Public Health to be admitted to or remain at the Center, unless written documentation from the child's licensed physician states the child has been evaluated and presents no risk to the child or to others; or the Center has reported the illness to the County Health Officer of the Division of Public Health and has been advised he child presents no health risk to others. If there is conflict in the opinions of the physician and the County Health Officer regarding the exclusion of a child, the Center shall follow the instructions of the County Health Officer. Please refer to the Division of Public Health's web site for a list of communicable diseases at <http://dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/dpc/rptdisease.html>.

The Center will report any reportable communicable disease to the County Health Officer of the Division of Public Health in accordance with Division of Public Health procedures.

When a child has been diagnosed as having a reportable vaccine-preventable communicable disease, all children who have not been immunized against the disease will be excluded from the Center in accordance with Division of Public Health procedures.

If a child who has already been admitted to the ELC manifests any of the illnesses or symptoms specified here, the Center will remove the child from the group of well children to a separate area until the child can be picked up by a parent/guardian or authorized pick up person; or a licensed physician indicates verbally or in writing that the illness/symptoms pose(s) no serious health risk to the child or to other children. While a child is cared for in the separate room/area, the ELC will ensure that the child is supervised and the child's individual needs for rest, comfort, food, drink and appropriate activity are met.

Please do not wear strong perfumes or colognes while at the ELC; many children have respiratory problems that can be affected by such products.

Each child must have on file within one month of his/her start date at the Early Learning Center, an age appropriate health appraisal certified by a health care provider. This health appraisal is considered current if dated within 12 months of the child's enrollment date, and must be updated yearly or in accordance with the recommended schedule for routine health supervision of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Health: Adult

If a staff member becomes ill, it will be necessary to contact a supervisor immediately so appropriate staffing can be arranged. To protect the health of children and adults, if any employee is sick for three or more days a doctor's note may be required to return to work. In

addition, written evidence of follow-up of any known health problem that affects or potentially affects your ability to care for children is required by Delacare regulations.

A staff member or volunteer can not provide personal care to or have direct contact with children when that staff member or volunteer is known to have a communicable or other reportable disease which is readily contagious to others during normal working activities, whether the person has symptoms or is a carrier of such disease. Additionally, the staff member or volunteer will not be involved in food preparation or serving, if so indicated by the symptoms or illness. The County Health Officer will be notified of the reportable communicable disease and consulted to determine the most appropriate action, including exclusion.

Staff and volunteers who work more than 40 hours per month and have contact with children are required to submit a completed health appraisal form, including freedom from tuberculosis verification every 2 years.

Holidays & Days Closed:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving & the day after, Winter Holiday (usually Dec 24-31). When a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the Monday after.

In addition, the ELC is closed five days per year for in-service (*see yearly calendar for dates*). The Director will determine the dates annually and families will be provided yearly calendar in order to make alternate child care arrangements.

On even numbered years, the ELC will be closed on Election Day.

Hot Beverages:

No hot drinks such as coffee or tea are permitted in areas of the ELC where children are present.

Hours of Operation:

The Early Learning Center is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Children will be admitted for attendance beginning at 7:00 a.m. All children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. when the center closes.

Illegal Substances:

Per regulations set forth by the Office of Child Care Licensing, no employee or volunteer may be under the effects of alcohol or illegal drugs, or other drug use that adversely affects essential job functions. Unlawful use, possession, manufacture, distribution of controlled substances or alcoholic beverages in the workplace is also prohibited.

Lesson and Experience Plans:

Lesson and experience plans are to be completed on a weekly basis and submitted to the Associate Director for approval. Plans are to be posted in the classroom for parents to view.

Meals:

Employees will encourage children's good health by serving nutritious meals & snacks, and teaching hygiene to the children, especially handwashing and tooth brushing. The ELC encourages home living skills and socialization by employing family style dining.

All requests for special foods and diets must be documented and recommended by your child's physician. The Early Learning Center is not required and does not provide special foods for children with food intolerances. Parents must provide appropriate food substitutes for their child. All food substitutes must meet the USDA's CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) food guidelines. All foods and beverages brought from home should be labeled with the child's name, date and classroom. Food should be in unbreakable containers that can be heated in the microwave.

Medication:

Only those employees who have an Administration of Medication certificate will administer medications to children. All paperwork required by the State will be maintained by any person administering medications.

1. The Early Learning Center cannot give medication on an as needed basis. Licensing does not allow us to decide whether or not a child needs medication. Parents/Guardians must specifically identify the date and time for any medication to be given on the medication log.
2. Anyone giving medication must be certified. Medication must be kept in a location that is secure and not accessible to children. When dropping off medication, parents should give it directly to a teacher or classroom assistant so that it can be secured.
3. Parents/guardians must sign in medication (on the medication log) - indicating what is to be given (name of medication), how much is to be given (please make sure you provide an appropriate measuring device so that the exact amount can be measured and given), route the medication is to be given (ex: by mouth) and when (time).
4. Medication must be in its original container and have proper labeling including the child's name and instructions for giving the medication. If it is a prescription the medication must be in the prescription bottle with the child's name on it. If the medication states, "under a certain age (for example 6), consult a physician", then the Early Learning Center must have a note from the doctor stating that it is okay to give that particular medication to the child and how much is to be given. If this dosage changes and the child is still under the identified age, the doctor must update the directions.
5. Teachers must check the expiration date before giving medication. Medication that is expired cannot be given - Teachers will contact the parent/guardian to let them know.
6. For medications that will be given for a period of time parents/guardians must provide a date for the medication to begin and a date when teachers should stop giving the medication. Once the end date is reached the medication will be sent home. The parent/guardian can bring the medication back and provide the needed information again when the medication is next needed.
7. Cough medicine, Tylenol, etc. cannot be kept 'just in case'. Parents should bring in these medicines as the need arises. These medicines must be in their original container and labeled with the child's full name.
8. For sunscreen and diaper ointment- parents can sign on a monthly basis. Sunscreen should be sent home at the end of the summer- (unless it is a child who needs to wear it on an

ongoing basis) Sunscreen needs to be replaced each summer because it loses its SPF strength. Spray sunscreen may not be used on infants and toddlers.

9. Insect repellent must be included on forms authorizing staff to apply to your child. The bottles should be labeled with your child's name. Insect repellent should contain DEET and be used for children only that are older than two months.

The ELC strictly adheres to the guidelines set forth in the Administration of Medication self-study guide which is available on-line at www.state.de.us/kids/occl_providers.htm. It is critical that all medications be out of the reach of children in a locked container. Any medications that need to be refrigerated will be stored in a closed container that is separate from food in the refrigerator located in the laundry room.

Observation Booths:

Observation booths are available for use by families, staff, UD students & faculty. Children, food and drinks are not permitted in observation booths. Families are welcome to observe without an appointment.

Orientation:

All new employees who are employed full or part time will be provided training on the following:

- ❖ Emergency and evacuation procedures;
- ❖ Center policies on positive behavior management, routine and emergency health care including health exclusions, child accident and injury procedures, administration of medication, child care, goals and program for children, recordkeeping, family involvement, safety and sanitation procedures, nutrition and food safety, transporting children, if applicable, and release of children;
- ❖ Center personnel and administrative policies;
- ❖ Child abuse and neglect law and reporting requirements and Center's procedures to report abuse and neglect;
- ❖ Recognition of the symptoms of childhood illnesses, including reportable communicable diseases, child abuse, sexual abuse and neglect;
- ❖ Information on any other Federal or State Laws or regulations applicable to children and families in care including non-discrimination;
- ❖ applicable licensing rules
- ❖ the location of a copy of the complete rules shall be made available at the Center for staff review whenever requested.
- ❖ In addition, ELC Departmental Policies;
- ❖ NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct;
- ❖ *Guide to Practica and Research Activities at the ELC*;
- ❖ Parent Handbook;
- ❖ Job Description;
- ❖ ELC Mission;
- ❖ UD Policies and Procedures which includes procedures for hiring, discipline, dismissal, suspension, and lay-off of employees in accordance with applicable laws.
- ❖ NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards

In addition, periodic updates will be provided as information is revised.

Parking – Newark:

The Early Learning Center parking lots are University of Delaware Gold Lots and require a parking pass which may be purchased from Parking Services on Academy Street. Without a permit, your car will be ticketed and/or towed at your expense. Staff is not permitted to park in the parent drop-off/pick-up spaces or the visitor spaces. Likewise, staff is not permitted to use a parent parking pass. THERE IS NO EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE.

One alternative is to use public transportation. The ELC is conveniently located within one block of stops for the University shuttle buses, the Newark UniCity buses, and the Dart bus system. Bus schedules are available on-line. For staff riding a bicycle to work, there is a bike rack located in front of the Early Learning Center.

Ratios:

At no time are children to be unsupervised. Every attempt will be made to maintain ELC ratios, however there may be occasions – such as drop-off and pick-up – when classrooms will move toward, but not exceed, State ratios.

Age Group	ELC Ratios	State of DE Ratios
Infants 0-18 mos.	1:3 <i>Group size of six</i>	1:4 <i>Group size of eight</i>
Toddlers 1-2 years	1:4 <i>Group size of eight</i>	1:6 for one year olds 1:8 for two year olds <i>Group size of 12 & 16</i>
Preschool 3-4 years	1:7 <i>Group size of fourteen</i>	1:10 for three year olds 1:12 for four year olds <i>Group size of 20 & 24</i>
School Age 5-12 years	1:12 for kindergarten 1:15 for school age	1:15 <i>Group size of 30</i>

During times when children are normally arriving and leaving, the Center may integrate age groups, with the exception of infants, who must always remain a separate group. If groups are blended, then there will be an organized approach to the supervision and accountability for children. As classrooms blend/un-blend, it is essential that information on children be passed between providers either verbally or in writing.

In addition, when children are in mixed age groups, the ratio for the youngest child will be maintained.

During nap times when children are sleeping, the Delacare licensing permits ratio decreases to ½ of the normal staffing pattern, such that toddlers can be as high as 1:12, preschool 1:20 and kindergarten 1:15. Infant ratios remain the same, regardless of whether the children are awake or asleep.

At least two staff members must be in the building during all hours of operation, which is to include one member of the leadership team or a person designated by leadership to open/close the center.

Release of Children:

To protect the safety of the children in our care, it is critical that children only be released to authorized individuals as listed by the families in their enrollment packet and any subsequent updates.

A list of authorized pick-up persons will be available to classroom staff.

- If a staff person does not recognize the person picking up:
 - Ask for identification. Record information and retain written documentation of ID for at least 24 hours. If possible, make a photo copy.
 - Compare the person's name with the list of authorized pick up people. If the person is on the list of authorized pickups, have the person sign the in/out sheet. If not on the list, do not release the child. Ask the person to go to the front desk and speak to an administrator.
- If a staff person recognizes the person as authorized to pick up the child, have the person sign the in/out sheet.

In the event of an emergency, the parent may call to grant permission to have someone pick up who is not on the list. Confirm that the caller is the parent. The parent must provide verbal or written permission (written is preferred and can be faxed or emailed). It will also be necessary for the parent to provide the person's name and description. Upon arrival, this person must present identification and a photocopy, scan or digital picture made.

If the person arriving to pick up the child appears to be intoxicated or otherwise incapable of bringing the child home safely, call the front desk and ask for the assistance of an administrator.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS: Unless the Center has a copy of a valid court order barring a non-custodial parent from contact with his/her child, the ELC cannot refuse a parent. If the Center has a court order stating that a non-custodial parent is not allowed contact with the child and the non-custodial attempts to take the child, call 911 immediately and report the situation.

If a family wishes to add or delete people authorized to pick up their child, they must provide the ELC this information in person and in writing to the front desk staff. The change will be noted in our files and the staff will be notified.

Requesting Leave to Complete Course Work

When you decide to take a class using your tuition remission benefit, you are to first speak to your assigned associate director bringing all you class information with you.

When looking for courses, your first approach should be to find a class that meets in the evening, weekends or online. Taking time off from work should be your last option. As you know most schools offer classes at a variety of times. They also offer classes at different times during different semesters. Please consult with your academic advisor about what classes you intend to take to get the certification/degree you are pursuing and ask her to map out when those courses are offered throughout the academic year (all semesters and summers) and then ascertain which would better fit with your job hours and responsibilities.

If your class takes place during your assigned work schedule or you would need to leave early, the details must be worked out before you commit to the class. First try to find a colleague who could change hours with you so you would not need to take vacation time. You may need to switch with several people to cover your shift to make it work. It is your responsibility to work out coverage. Write down all of the class meeting dates and times and ask people to sign up to cover

you. While you might find someone who will commit for the whole semester, you may also need to break it up among several people so you can obtain coverage. Once someone has agreed to switch hours, have them sign the sheet. The people who commit to you must follow through as they would expect for you to do the same if they need your assistance.

Once you have details of coverage worked out, see your AD to review your plan for coverage. If approved, the AD will then notify the director via email that you have approval and you have met the requirements above.

The challenge of providing subs to cover medical appointments, vacation days, sick days, parent conferences, UDEL and NDEHS mentoring, IEP conferences, therapist/staff conferences, etc. is immense. That is why we ask for staff to cooperate with one another and switch hours whenever possible.

If coverage cannot be worked out, then staff will need to use vacation time. Staff will not be permitted to delay their assigned lunch hour to avoid using vacation time.

We will try to do our best to work out coverage should you need it and to be equitable with all requests. It is each staff person's responsibility to plan well in advance, please do not wait until the week or two before classes start to try to arrange things as it may not work out for you.

Safety:

All areas of the ELC – both inside and outside – is to be maintained in a clean, safe condition free from hazards to the health and safety of children and adults. Any interior or exterior cause for safety concern should be remedied or reported to an administrator immediately.

Due to allergies and medical conditions of children enrolled in the ELC, we are a nut-free environment. *Please do not bring any product containing nuts into the center (this includes such things as candy bars and nut oils contained in some hand creams).* The ELC does not use air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers, to control odors in classrooms. Ventilation rather than sanitation shall be used.

For your own safety and the safety of the children, we recommend that you do not wear dangling earrings when working in the classrooms.

To protect children, families and visitors, all ELC employees will recognize that the health and safety of everyone is paramount to a high quality center. Staff protects children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns/scalding, slipping, tripping or falling to the best of their ability. Floor coverings are secured to keep individuals from tripping or slipping. To ensure the safety of the infants, the ELC program excludes baby walkers.

Sanitation:

The ELC is a shared environment --we are all responsible for its upkeep and appearance. A 10% bleach solution is to be used to sanitize surfaces (1 tablespoon per quart of water). Each evening the solution must be discarded and made fresh in the morning. Bleach bottles must be clearly labeled and **out of the reach of children**. All other toxic substances, whether or not used for cleaning, must be out of the reach of children in a secure locked cabinet.

Staff is to consult the schedule for sanitizing toys, cots, table surfaces, etc. based on NAEYC Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table posted in each classroom. Any toys that are placed in a child's mouth are washed by using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized and air dried.

Babies spend a great deal of the day on the floor exploring the world through their senses, including the mouthing of objects. To best protect them, our infant rooms are shoeless. Shoe covers are available for your use or you may enter the room in your stocking feet. Infant staff is welcome to wear slippers or shoes that are used for indoor use only.

Sleeping: Children

All cots in preschool will be a minimum of 18" apart and cots/cribs in infants and toddlers will be at least 3 feet apart. When possible, children are to sleep head to toe to prevent the spread of air-borne illnesses. To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) the following guidelines are followed:

- Infants, unless otherwise ordered by a physician and documented in writing, are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys and other soft items are not allowed in cribs for infants younger than eight months.
- If a blanket is used, the infant is placed at the foot of the crib with a thin blanket tucked around the crib mattress, reaching only as far as the infant's chest.
- After being placed down to sleep on their backs, infants are allowed to assume any sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.

A child's rest equipment shall be labeled with the child's name and only used by that child. Cots, cribs and mattresses shall be cleaned and sanitized weekly and when soiled or wet.

Smoking:

No smoking is allowed *anywhere* on the ELC grounds, including the parking lot.

Snow & Emergency Closing:

The Early Learning Center will follow the same snow and emergency closings as the University of Delaware. Information will be posted on the ELC answering machine and broadcast on local radio stations.

UD Early Learning Center Newark answering machine – 831-6205

UD Early Learning Center Wilmington answering machine – 778- 6515

University-wide closings/late opening information is available from:

Telephone: UD main phone number – 302-831-2000

Web sites: www.udel.edu/UDaily or www.udel.edu

Radio stations: WJBR 99.5 FM, WILM 1450 AM and WDEL 1150 AM

Staff Qualifications:

Please note: Biographies of staff are to be posted outside each classroom.

Each staff member is required to hold an appropriate certificate from the DE Office of Child Care Licensing which substantiates that s/he is fully qualified for the position held. The documentation

required to complete the application for the OCCL certificate includes diplomas, college transcripts, training certificates, and staff training records.

All administrative staff must hold a minimum of a BA/BS degree in early childhood or a related field. All full-time classroom staff must, at a minimum, hold a current CDA. At least 50% of teachers must have a minimum of an AA degree and at least 25% must have a minimum of a BA/BS degree in early childhood or a related field. All teachers must have or be enrolled in an AA or BA/BS degree program.

All classroom staff who do not hold an AA or BS/BA degree in early childhood or a related field are strongly encouraged to pursue those degrees using the UD Tuition Remission benefit.

Complete job descriptions with specific qualifications for each position are provided during the employee orientation and are available any time from an associate director.

Staff Schedules:

Staff is provided space and time away from children during the day. Full time staff works a 9 hour day with one hour duty-free break in the middle of their day for lunch. At least one hour of planning time is given to each teacher once a week. Staff may use the conference room, breast feeding room, art room, therapy room, small meeting room or research room during their break times should they want to remain in the building. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties. Staff are assigned hours based on the needs of the center and may be assigned to work any 8 hours shift during operational hours.

Supervision of Children:

At no time may any child be left unsupervised. While caring for children, it is important to supervise them closely and avoid activities that would jeopardize their safety or interfere with their care. Thorough planning and attention occurs during transitions in and out of the classroom, building and playgrounds. Staff should position themselves to see as many children as possible.

Infants and Toddler/Two's Class

Teaching staff supervise children in the two year old class by sight and sound at all times. Sleeping areas are contained within the classrooms. When asleep, staff is present to monitor children during rest time. Infant staff ensures the sides of cribs are up and locked immediately after placing a child in the crib.

Preschool Classes (Three's and Four's)

Teaching staff supervise children primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., those who can use the toilet independently, who are in a library area, etc.)

Kindergarten Class

Teaching staff supervise children primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible, as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (e.g., children who are in the bathroom, who are in a library area, etc.)

Teaching staff allow Kindergarten children who are doing tasks in a safe environment to be out of the teacher's sight and sound supervision for a short period of time (e.g. delivering something to the front desk or to another classroom, walking to the art room, etc.). Teachers check on

children if those children do not return promptly or if the adult at a child's destination does not confirm the child's arrival.

Telephone:

In order to ensure the accessibility of the Center to emergency calls from parents, access to the telephone is limited to business calls only, and the telephone may not be taken off the hook during nap times.

Training:

All staff is required to participate in annual training. Staff members providing direct child care and working twenty-five or more hours per week must complete eighteen (18) clock hours of training annually, and those working less than twenty-five (25) hours per week must complete nine (9) clock hours of training each year. Staff members not providing direct child care, must complete three (3) clock hours of training annually.

Only substitutes or volunteers that work or volunteer less than seven (7) hours per week will be exempt from the annual training requirements. Staff should select training opportunities that are aligned with the goals established in their annual appraisal professional development plan.

For staff members providing direct child care, all training must be within topics or core areas associated with improving quality in the early care and education and school-age care. Topics include the following core areas: Child Development; Developmental Curriculum Planning; Positive Behavior Management; Health & Safety; Nutrition; Family/Community; Professionalism; and Administration.

For staff members not providing direct child care such as those assigned only to clerical or food service duties, training must be in topics specific to the job functions of their particular position. Training in CPR, First Aid and Administration of Medication do not count toward a staff member's annual training requirement.

NOTE: Annual training hours must be completed by April 30 each year.

Weather Policy for Playing Outdoors:

The Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Care – written in collaboration with the *American Academy of Pediatrics* recommend children play outdoors daily when weather and air quality conditions do not pose a significant health risk. We follow their policy which states:

“Weather that poses a significant health risk will include wind chill at or below 15°F and heat index at or above 90°F, as identified by the National Weather Service.”