



Parent Handbook

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School History and Philosophy

The Early Childhood Center (ECC) is a non-profit corporation, founded in 1945 by a group of dedicated parents from the Claremont Congregational Church, now known as Claremont United Church of Christ, who identified a need for a pre-school program that was different than others in the Claremont area. These parents imagined a preschool where their cooperative efforts could create a stimulating and exciting learning environment for their children. They created a school where parents could play a direct role in their child's education!

Today, the Early Childhood Center is one of a handful of Parent Participation preschools in the Claremont area. We continue to have a very dedicated group of parents who are committed to carrying on the tradition of excellence at ECC.

The Early Childhood Center embraces a developmental philosophy of learning, which supports and respects the child as he/she is. ECC supports the knowledge that children learn best through play and hands-on experiences. Through the guidance of carefully selected teachers, each child will have the opportunity to explore and enrich his/her world socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually toward optimal growth. We also feel strongly that all of our families feel supported and nurtured in their child-rearing efforts, and respected in their cultural and religious beliefs and traditions.

Mission Statement

The Claremont United Church of Christ Early Childhood Center strives to provide a developmentally appropriate program, which nurtures the individuality of each child by supporting children and families of all ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. We provide a variety of challenging activities that promote the child's physical, creative, emotional, cognitive and social selves. We celebrate individuality by helping children develop positive self-esteem and an awareness of others. We also encourage family involvement by offering a parent participation program.

Governance

The Early Childhood Center is a non-profit organization governed by the Church Council of Claremont United Church of Christ Congregational, administered through the Early Childhood Center Board. The Board is composed of nine members of the church elected by the congregation, three ECC parents appointed by the Board, a Liaison of the church, and the Director of the Center.

Policies and Procedures

Enrollment Procedures

The Early Childhood Center's admission policy is non-discriminatory with regard to race, religion, sex or national origin. We serve children 2 months to 5 years of age. Each child will be assigned to a specific classroom and set of teaching staff.



In compliance with licensing regulations, registration and emergency forms must be received prior to any child's admission to the classroom. All other health and immunization records shall be submitted at this time, as well. Children whose forms have not been received by the designated deadline may be excluded from the classroom until such forms have been received.

Annual registration for the September-August term will be in the spring of each year. Continuing children must be enrolled in our summer program to guarantee their spot for the fall session. Each child is allowed one schedule change per academic year without a fee. Any additional changes will be subject to a \$25 Contract Change fee. Availability to children who are changing schedules will be on a first-come, first-serve basis and will depend on openings.

Enrollment of Children with Special Needs

It is the policy of the school that children with special needs be included in enrollment when it is determined that the staff and/or facility can provide a beneficial classroom setting for this child. At the time of registration to the Center, parents shall be required to fully disclose any known special needs of his/her child. It is the prerogative of the school to request that the child be evaluated prior to admission to the school and that any medical, education, or other pertinent records be offered to the school for consideration.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

- Arriving at school ON TIME will help ease children into our daily routine—it is much more difficult to join an activity or group of children already “in progress.”
- Plenty of rest, a good breakfast, and an unhurried routine will help insure that children function at their best.
- Children are encouraged to wash their hands as soon as they enter the classroom. This will help us keep germs at a minimum.
- CHILDREN SHOULD BE SENT TO SCHOOL IN PLAY CLOTHES! Wearing clothes that “cannot get dirty” will inhibit a child's interaction with materials.
- We plan to play outside everyday, therefore please dress your child for the weather!

- For the child's protection, a parent/guardian, at least 18 years of age, must accompany the child into the Center and must pick up the child from the Center.
- The children at the Early Childhood Center will only be allowed to leave with their parents and the people that have been authorized on their emergency consent form.
- An authorized representative of the parent/guardian may pick up the child by following the proper procedures after the parent/guardian notifies the school in writing and by verbal consent. Picture identification will be required from the authorized representative before the child will be released to their care. All authorized persons must present a photo ID upon the release of the child, when requested.
- The staff will, in accordance with California State law, refuse to release a child to the parent/guardian or representative whose condition poses a hazard to that child.

Extended Leave

The Early Childhood Center's expenses do not change when individual students take an extended leave of absence from the classroom. Therefore, tuition payments must be made in full during extended leaves. Or, a child may voluntarily withdraw pursuant to the terms of *withdrawal procedures*. If space is available, the child may re-enroll and a new registration fee and admission fee would not be required. The Early Childhood Center offers no guarantee that openings in the classroom will not be filled during the time a student has voluntarily withdrawn.

Withdrawal Procedures

When a family voluntarily withdraws from the Center, the parent must notify the Director at least 2 weeks in advance (school closures are not considered sufficient notification). Following the 2-week notice, the current month's tuition will be pro-rated and a refund made, if applicable. Registration fees, Admission fees, and Earthquake fee are not refundable at this time.

Termination Policy

The Early Childhood Center reserves the right to terminate its relationship with any family. A family may be excluded for:

- Submission of a false statement by a parent/guardian on any document processed in connection with initial admission or retention.
- Failure of a parent/guardian to cooperate with program personnel, staff, and or failure to follow school policies and procedures.
- Behavior by a parent/guardian or child that jeopardizes or appears to jeopardize the safety of other children, the staff, him/herself, or the church personnel.
- If tuition payment is more than 30 days late, your child/children *will not* be able to attend preschool until your account is paid in full or special

arrangements are made. *(Reminder - absences due to illness or vacation do not excuse tuition payments each month.)*

Steps for removal:

If a problem exists with a child, a conference will be held with the family, teacher and/or Director.

If a second conference is needed, the Director may state that entering a counseling situation may be a stipulation for continuance in the program.

Lastly, if all attempts to reconcile have been exhausted, the family will be asked to leave the program.

Grievance Policy

The Early Childhood Center recognizes that decisions on educational and administrative-related issues can result in differences of opinion. Whatever the issue, the Early Childhood Center is committed to a communication process that is flexible and informal as possible. However, ECC also recognizes the need to maintain an orderly flow of information. To that end, the Early Childhood Center has established the following practice in resolving staff/parent conflicts:

1. To report or resolve an issue, you are encouraged to contact the Director of the Early Childhood Center.
2. If the Director is unable to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you should contact the Senior Pastor.
3. If the Senior Pastor is unable to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you are then encouraged to contact any member of the Early Childhood Center Board.

Child Placement/Advancement Policy

Our child placement/advancement policy supports the following, as suggested in *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*, by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Developmental interests and abilities cover a wider range than the chronological age of the group would suggest.

Developmental appropriateness includes both typical and individual development. In order to maintain a developmentally appropriate program, children will be placed throughout the year (as openings occur, and as deemed appropriate by the family, teacher, and Director), as well as the beginning of each fall session. The twelve youngest children in the Center occupy the Little Stars classroom. Children are advanced to the next classroom or placed according to the following advancement criteria:

1. Availability
2. Developmental needs of the child
3. Child's age
4. Special circumstances

Payment Policies

Tuition: Monthly tuition and any additional fees are due on the 1st of each month. Families will not receive a monthly invoice unless additional fees are

charged, such as late fees or extra time. A late fee of 15% will be added to your entire balance on the 2nd Thursday of each month. If you are unable to make your payment by the due date, please let us know!! Doing so may avoid a late fee. The yearly tuition cost is based on your child's current classroom schedule. Annual tuition fees are pro-rated for actual number of days we are open during the school year (from the first day of school in September, to the Friday before the August closure), and are unaffected by school closures. Please see "*Enrollment Procedures*" for our Contract Change Policy.

Registration Fee: Registration fees are due at the time of enrollment and are not refundable:

- Annual Registration Fee (per child) \$100.00

Admission Fee: A non-refundable fee to place a child on a class list ahead of other children on the waiting list:

- Admission Fee (per family) \$100.00

Earthquake Fee: Earthquake supplies are purchased each year depending on the number of children enrolled:

- Earthquake Fee (per child) \$20.00

Annual Financial Agreement: Each family will receive an annual Financial Agreement upon enrollment of their child. These agreements are required to be signed and submitted to the ECC office by the person who will be financially responsible for their child's tuition payments.

Subsidized Tuition Payments: Parents/guardians who are receiving district, state, or federal aid to pay for their child's monthly tuition must have an acceptance notice on file prior to enrolling their child. Moreover, parents/guardians will be responsible for paying any/ all portions of tuition that are not paid by the subsidized aid.

Extra Time: Children may stay past their scheduled time only if space is available. *These times must be pre-arranged with the teacher.* Families who pick their child up past their contracted schedule will be charged extra time at the end of the month.

Sibling Discount: Families may receive a 10% sibling discount on all children whose tuition is least expensive as long as all children are enrolled in a Monday-Friday schedule.

School Calendar/School Closures

The Early Childhood Center follows the Claremont Unified School District calendar for most school closures. We are closed for all federal holidays, as well as one annual staff in-service day in June, two weeks for winter break, one week for



spring break, and the two weeks prior to Labor Day. All school closures are posted on our school website, on each monthly newsletter, and/or upon request. *Please note that tuition must be paid in full without deduction for absences or school closures.*

Extended Care

The Early Childhood Center will provide Extended Care during our school closures, with the exception of our annual staff in-service, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Winter Break (with a few exceptions), Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Extended Care is not included in monthly tuition, and requires an additional tuition fee. Extended Care registration forms are distributed approximately one month prior to school closures.

Health Policies

In an effort to create a healthy and safe preschool environment, the Early Childhood Center will adhere to the following policies recommended by the State of California Department of Public Health.

1. Complete registration, emergency, health, and medical forms must be turned into the ECC office prior to the child's first day of admission to the classroom.
2. Insure that your child's immunizations are current.
 - IF YOUR CHILD IS FULLY IMMUNIZED—Copy of current immunization record must be on file prior to the child's first day of admission to the classroom.
 - IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT FULLY IMMUNIZED—your responsibilities are listed below.
 - a) Statement of Exemption to Immunization Law printed on the reverse of the Certificate of Immunization form must be filled out and submitted to the ECC office. Please be sure to submit a copy of any immunizations your child has had on the front of the form.
 - b) Parent/guardian must be completely knowledgeable on the symptoms of any diseases your child has not been vaccinated for. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms of these diseases, you must notify the Director immediately.
 - c) Be prepared to keep your child out of school until the Director (in conjunction with the State of California Department of Public Health) determines it is safe for your child to return. Understand in advance that this time period may be as long as 2 months, depending on the circumstances.
3. Keep your child and yourself out of school if you exhibit any of the symptoms of contagious illnesses listed below:
 - Fever of 100 degrees F. (auxiliary) or higher within 24 hours

- Thick, colored nasal discharge
 - 2 or more loose, watery stools in succession within 24 hours
 - Thick, colored drainage from the eyes
 - Vomiting on 2 or more occasions within 24 hours
 - Within 24 hours of starting any antibiotics
 - Any evidence of pinworm, scabies, head lice and/or nits
 - Any unusual rashes not associated with diapering, heat or allergies (chicken pox, ringworm, roseola, hand-foot-and-mouth, etc)
4. Often the spreading of illness occurs before severe symptoms occur (i.e., fever, vomiting, etc.). Observing your child's behavior is the key way to detect the possible onset of an illness. It is up to you to keep your child home if you believe he/she is coming down with something other than a common cold.
 5. The State of California Department of Public Health requires that you contact the Director immediately if you suspect anyone in your family has any type of contagious illness (i.e., pink eye, chicken pox, head lice, pertussis (whooping cough) so that an Exposure Notice may be sent out to all of the other families. The Director must also be contacted if you or your child were exposed to any contagious illness.
 6. Be overly cautious in regard to hand washing for both adults and children at school. Hands should be washed at the following times:
 - Upon arrival at school.
 - Prior to handling or eating food.
 - After using the toilet or helping your child use the toilet, and after a diaper change.
 - After blowing nose.
 7. Although there are shaded areas on both of our playgrounds, we will apply sunscreen as needed throughout the day, with the consent of the parent. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen on their child before school for everyday outside play. Staff will apply sunscreen throughout the day **ONLY** if an *Authorization to Apply Sunscreen* form is filled out by parent/guardian. *The public health authority does not recommend the use of insect repellent in our region.*
 8. **Parents are required to adhere to our program Health Policy at ALL times. Our Health Policy is located on our website and included in all enrollment packets.**

Medication Procedures and Storage

Children must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school. In the event that your child needs medication while at school, we will only administer oral medication that is prescribed by a doctor, and in the original container. Exceptions will only be made at the discretion of the Director. An "Authorization to Administer Medication" form must be filled out, or medication will not be given. Medication will be stored in the refrigerator in a labeled plastic container (Rainbow Room & Teddy Bear medication will be stored in the Little Stars

refrigerator). The staff has been trained in medicine administration in accordance with NAEYC recommendations. Following the doctor's instructions on the original bottle, our teaching staff are authorized to give your child any medication needed during school hours.

Illness, Accidents and Injuries

Sick children cannot be cared for at school. If a child becomes ill while at school, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. We do not have the facility for an "isolation area" for sick children, so if we are unable to get a hold of the parent/guardian, we will begin to call other contacts listed on the child's emergency form.

If a child receives a minor abrasion, bite, or injury at school, a "This Is What Happened Today" form will be filled out by a staff member and placed in the child's sign-in sleeve. The form must be signed by the parent/guardian and left for placement in the child's file. In the event of an accident or injury which requires medical attention, staff shall immediately notify the parents/guardian and/or medical personnel as instructed in writing on enrollment forms by the parent. All teaching staff has been pediatric CPR/first aid certified.

Toilet Training

We do not require children to be potty trained to attend school. We will collaborate with families when it is decided to begin the toilet training process. Families are expected to bring an appropriate amount of extra clothing and underwear in the event of accidents.

Pet Policy

All family pets that are brought to ECC to share must have their current vaccination record on file in the office.

Safety Policies

Head Count of Children

The staff of ECC is responsible and required to take a headcount of the children in their class in accordance to their roll sheet. Because of this, it is important for parents/guardians take the time to make sure that staff updates their roll sheet when their children arrive. Roll is taken each time the children transition from one area to another, such as from the classroom to the playground.



Lost Child Policy

In the case that the count reveals a child is missing, all staff and parents are informed immediately. The children in each class are collected and kept together with at least one adult while the other staff searches the suspected areas, inside and out. If there is not sign of the child after a thorough and comfortable search, the teacher and/or Director will call 911 and the parents/guardian immediately.

Child Picked Up After Closing or Not Picked Up At All

All families are asked to arrive before 6:00pm to pick up their children so that they may have the time to collect their belongings. Parents/guardians who are running late should call the school so that we are able to inform the child and alleviate any concerns. Be assured that children will not be left at the school until someone has arrived to pick them up. If there is no contact by the parents by the time the school is closed, we will begin calling the numbers on their emergency contact list until we have reached someone that has been authorized to be responsible for the child. Since the center closes at 6:00pm, a late pick-up charge of \$5 will be assessed for **each 5 minutes or fraction thereof** that a child is left beyond closing time. This fee is payable immediately to the employee(s) who has remained with your child. In the event that no one can be reached and we have put forth sufficient effort, the local police department will be notified.

Family Access and Release Policy

The Early Childhood Center has a Family Access Policy, whereas known parents and family members may enter the school grounds, facility and/or classrooms at any time. However, the children of the Early Childhood Center will only be allowed to leave with their parents and the people that have been authorized on their emergency consent form, or by written authorization. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform any person that may be unfamiliar to the staff that they will be required to present identification for the release of the child. If ECC staff has any doubts, parents will be called to confirm the release. Please let the teachers know ahead of time if we should expect an unfamiliar face to come for your child.

Reporting of Child Abuse

Child abuse is generally defined as non-accidental, physical or mental injury caused by the acts of omissions of the child's parents or caretakers including physical abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment and sexual abuse. As required by the State of California Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Law, any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse, must immediately report such information to Child Protective Services.

Reporting of Licensing Complaints

The Early Childhood Center is a fully licensed facility subject to the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, issued by the State of California Department of Social Services. We strive to provide a program which meets or exceeds the

regulations issued by the Department. Parents/guardians who have any questions or concerns should contact the Director. Parents/guardians who have licensing questions or complaints should file them with:

Community Care Licensing Child Care East
1000 Corporate Center Drive #200-B
Monterey Park, Ca. 91754

Emergency Evacuation Plan

AREA EVACUATION

In the event of an emergency, all classrooms have assigned evacuation meeting areas: Little Stars, Crayon Club, & Ducklings will meet in the front of the UCC Sanctuary; Grandma's House will initially meet in the front of Grandma's House for roll call, and then move to the grass area on the corner of Harrison Avenue & Harvard Avenue; Rainbow Room & Teddy Bears will meet on the grass area on the corner of Harrison Avenue & Harvard Avenue.

If the building and surrounding areas need to be evacuated, notices will be posted on the buildings and on trees with the destination, address of the destination, and the time of departure.

There are many evacuation sites on the Red Cross Evacuation Site list, so our destination will depend on the surrounding situation.

***It is extremely crucial that ALL adults dropping off and picking up children from the Early Childhood Center sign-in using the accurate time and their full signature. Sign-in books will be carried by our staff to the evacuation site, so if your child is not signed-in, we may not know they are here...if your child is not signed-out, we may think they are still in attendance and missing!!**

CAMPSITE PROCEDURES

All children will be escorted to the planned camp site, which is the Kingman Chapel. This site will serve as both a camp site and reunion site. If this site needs to change based on circumstances, notices will be posted on the buildings and on trees with the destination, address of the destination, and the time of departure.

All emergency supplies will be brought to the campsite. If necessary, all staff members are expected to remain on site for 72 hours.

FIRST AID KITS

All classrooms are equipped with stocked First Aid Kits and Emergency Backpacks. First Aid Kits are checked on a monthly basis, and re-stocked as needed. Emergency Backpacks are taken on field trips, walks, fire drills, and in the event of an emergency.

Please refer to our Emergency Evacuation Plan map on www.claremontecc.org.

Ground Rules for Parents

- Accompany your child into the classroom and sign them in. You will also be required to sign your child out of the Center before he/she leaves. Your full signature is required when you sign your child in and out.
- Check bulletin boards and sign-in sleeves for important communications.
- Please inform your child's teacher of anything which might affect your child's behavior in school—lack of sleep, upsets at home, loved one out of town, company, etc. This knowledge will help teachers to better understand your child's behavior and adjustment to the classroom.
- Please say "good-bye" to your child before leaving. "Sneaking out" to avoid separation issues generally magnifies the problem and can result in loss of trust between parent and child. Teachers will be happy to assist you should you have problems, or need help with separation.
- Arrival and dismissal times are generally not good times for teachers to talk at length with parents. Our place is with the children at these times. If you have questions or concerns that will take more than a few moments to discuss, please schedule a convenient conference time.
- Please check and clear out your child's cubby and sign-in sleeve after each class.

Parent Participation

The Early Childhood Center recognizes the parent as the child's first and most important teacher and supports this role by providing opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children.

Parent Participation preschools are unique! When parents and teachers work together, the link between home and school is strengthened.

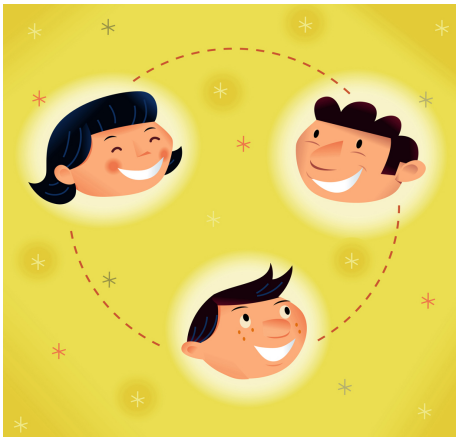


- For children, parent involvement demonstrates that education and school experiences are valued.
- For teachers, the varied talents and support of our parents enrich our classroom environment.
- For parents, classroom participation provides an opportunity to gain insight and understanding of child development and supports the development of parenting skills useful in everyday interactions with children.

Parent participation means a greater investment and greater return. The cooperative efforts of parents and teachers working together provide the best learning environment for young children.

The success of the Early Childhood Center is a direct result of all parents fulfilling their responsibilities as listed below:

1. Parent Participation is required in all classrooms, September through August.
2. Monthly participation is required for each child enrolled in the center. An enrollment of five days per week requires two participations per month. An enrollment of two or three days per week requires participation one time each month. Participation in the classroom is from 9:00 am-12:00 noon. Parents must participate the entire time to receive credit.
3. Parents who are unable to participate in the classroom may purchase or donate items for their child's classroom each month. Wish lists for needed items are posted on the Parent Board in each classroom. Participation credit will be given when items are brought to the classroom.
4. Parents who do not participate will be charged \$15.00 per non-participation each month.
5. Actively participate in all fund-raising projects.
6. Serve as a driver and attend field trips, as needed.
7. Submit all forms and pay tuition and fees on time.
8. Only ECC staff is permitted to escort or help children with toileting. *Parents are welcome to diaper or escort their own child to the restroom.*
9. Participate in two Work Parties per year.



Parent Participation Guidelines

- Please make arrangements for your other children. Because participating requires you to be in the classroom with your child, we cannot allow siblings in the class.
- Contact your child's teacher at least one day prior to your helping day for any special or planned activities.
- Please leave your cell phone in the car or switch the ringer off. While in the classroom, your place is with your child and the others. We understand there may be an exception to this rule due to emergencies, just be respectful to the classroom.
- Adults need to wear "play clothes" too. You will be asked to participate in activities as a child.

- As a participating parent, professional behavior is expected. It is inappropriate to discuss the behavior or activity of other children in the classroom with 3rd parties. Direct any questions you have regarding classroom issues to the teacher.
- If in doubt about what to do—please ask! It is the teaching staff's job to help you feel comfortable in the classroom.

Work Parties

Each family is expected to donate a minimum of six hours per year during scheduled Saturday Work Parties. The goal of these Work Parties is to clean, or complete any needed work, on the school. Families who are unable to participate will be billed \$15.00 for every three hours of non-participation on their child's June invoice (maximum of \$30.00). Families who are unable to participate in scheduled Saturday Work Parties should talk to the Director or their child's teacher about alternative options.

Special Events

Holidays

The Early Childhood Center recognizes the value in celebration and the importance of establishing family and cultural traditions in regard to holidays. As educators, our role in regard to classroom celebrations is to;

- a) demonstrate sensitivity toward the diverse family and cultural backgrounds represented by our families, and
- b) continue to provide developmentally appropriate activity which respects the needs of the children we serve. Our classroom celebrations do not replace regular classroom routines, but rather become a part of them. Your child will always be accepted and encouraged to share, at his/her own initiative, any family or cultural tradition at any time. We also encourage our families to participate and share their family and cultural traditions, as well.

Birthdays

Please contact your child's teacher prior to classroom birthday celebrations. Parents may provide a special birthday snack, as long as it is healthy and nutritious. It is inappropriate to distribute party invitations at school, unless you plan to invite the entire class.

Field Trips

As with all school activities, field trips are part of our educational curriculum. Teachers will plan, with advance notice, occasional field trips based on the needs and interest of the group. Trips will be planned with safety in mind, which are meaningful and relevant to your child. Children will be actively supervised by a responsible adult at all times on field trips, and all ratios will be maintained at all times. Staff will carry a first aid kit and emergency information for each child in attendance. Driving field trip policies are as follows:

- Parent helpers will drive.
- Parents are required to give written permission for their child to participate in each driving field trip.
- In accordance with California State law, children **MUST** be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint (safety seat or booster seat) **IN THE BACKSEAT OF A VEHICLE** until they are at least 8 years old or at least 4'9" tall. Due to this law, parents must provide a child restraint system for their child to participate in field trips.
- Drivers transporting children are required to properly use child restraint systems.
- Drivers are required to hold liability insurance on the vehicles and a valid driver's license.
- Drivers are required to carry cell phones, but are prohibited from using wireless phones to talk, write, send, or read text-based communication while driving—with or without hands-free devices.

Occasional local walks are taken with the infants, toddlers and preschool children without advanced notice.

School Communication

**The Early Childhood Center staff will always do our best to communicate and provide crucial information to parents in a language that they can understand. We will also try to provide a translator, if necessary.*

Early Childhood Center Website: www.claremontecc.org

Our website is constantly updated and will provide current families, as well as new families who are interested in learning about ECC, with a wealth of information! In order for the center to cut down on the cost of paper, it is expected that each family will take the responsibility to check the website on a frequent and consistent basis. Crucial and helpful information can be found on our website, such as, our annual calendar of events and closures, enrollment and Extended Care registration forms, monthly newsletters, classroom newsletters, school and classroom event photos, tuition rates and schedules, contact information, Health Policy, and ECC Mission Statement and Philosophy.

Early Childhood Center Monthly Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter is posted on www.claremontecc.org on the first of each month. This publication provides important information regarding school and classroom activities, important dates, and newsworthy school information. Please take a few minutes each month to read the all-school newsletter as well as the newsletter posted on each classroom page. These are our most important vehicles for communicating school activities.

Sign-in Books

Each child has a sign-in sleeve in their sign-in book. These books are located just inside each classroom. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S SIGN-IN SLEEVE**

DAILY FOR CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS, BUT DO NOT LEAVE IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE OFFICE OR YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS.

Parent Board

There is a Parent Board located in each classroom. Please check this board daily for school and classroom information, and articles of interest to parents.

Board Meetings

Depending on personal schedules of the school administration, Board meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm. These meetings are open to all families at the Early Childhood Center. Parents who are interested in taking an active role in the Early Childhood Center Board should let the Director know by November of each school year.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Two scheduled conferences per family will be held each year. A goal-setting conference will be scheduled early in the fall session, and a formal assessment conference will be held in the spring. Other necessary conferences between school administration, teachers, and parents/guardians, will be scheduled on an as-needed basis.

Phone/Email

Please be sure that your phone number and email address is kept current by updating your information in the ECC office, as needed. We are trying to encourage the use of email to communicate with parents and staff.

Teachers are available by phone and/or email as needed to discuss classroom issues or concerns regarding your child. Staff requests that calls be made during naptime when their attention can be focused elsewhere, unless your need is urgent. Individual conferences may be scheduled at any time, as needed. The classroom numbers are listed below:

<input type="checkbox"/> Office	624-2916
<input type="checkbox"/> Little Stars	625-3810
<input type="checkbox"/> Crayon Club	624-0187
<input type="checkbox"/> Ducklings	625-3810
<input type="checkbox"/> Grandma's House	624-0315
<input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow Room	624-0187
<input type="checkbox"/> Teddy Bears	625-3810
<input type="checkbox"/> Fax	626-1724

In addition to communicating school information to parents—we would like to hear from you as well. If you have questions, concerns, comments, or ideas, please contact your child's teacher or the Director at any time.

What to Bring

Little Stars, Crayon Club, and Ducklings:

1. A fitted crib sheet and crib-size blanket. Child's blanket and sheet must be taken home on Fridays (or sooner if soiled) to be laundered.
2. Disposable diapers and wipes.
3. A complete change of clothing.
4. For children in the Little Stars classroom, please provide two prepared bottles of formula or breast milk.
5. For children in the Crayon Club and Ducklings, a lunch box with nourishing food and a sippy cup.
6. Please provide any special items that will be needed by your child (i.e., special blanket, toy, or pacifier). Special items are important because they are a link between home and school.
7. Everything must be permanently labeled with your child's name, including bottles. All bottles must have a lid.

Grandma's House, Rainbow Room, and Teddy Bears:

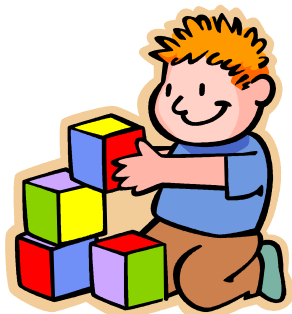
1. A complete change of clothing: pants and shirt or a dress, shoes, socks and underwear should be labeled with your child's name.
2. If your child stays for nap, he/she will need a fitted crib-size sheet and blanket. Due to limited storage, large blankets, sleeping bags, and/or pillows are not allowed. Your child's blanket and sheet must be taken home on Fridays (or sooner if soiled) to be laundered, and a clean one brought back the next school day.
3. A lunchbox filled with enough nourishing food to satisfy him/her for lunch.
4. All items must be permanently labeled with your child's name.
5. If your child is enrolled in Grandma's House, a sippy cup with a lid.

Curriculum

The Early Childhood Center embraces the developmental philosophy of learning, which respects each child as a unique individual, and supports the knowledge that young children learn best through play and hands-on experiences.

Through daily classroom activity, we strive to maintain a BALANCE between:

- Child-directed and teacher-directed activity
- Structure and flexibility
- Group needs and individual needs
- Program goals and children's interests
- Security and risk-taking
- Familiarity and challenge



Each child will always be offered the following daily activities:

- Creative Arts
- Blocks

- Dramatic play
- Sensory materials
- Manipulatives
- Science
- Literature
- Music & Movement
- Nutritious snacks
- Outdoor Play

At the Early Childhood Center, our curriculum is...

- **Developmental:** A child's learning and skill acquisition is set by nature, but develops at the child's own pace. Each child is respected and supported at each stage of development as they progress toward their own goals and potential.
- **Play-based:** Play is the child's natural process for learning and development. Within play's natural learning environment children develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
- **Child-directed:** Children learn best when they have some control over their learning, when activities are meaningful and relevant, and when they make choices regarding what materials they use and how they will use them. These choices empower children to take control of their own learning and to become intrinsically motivated—the most effective and engaging way to learn.
- **Teacher-supported:** Rather than a dispenser of knowledge, the teacher is primarily a facilitator enabling the child to learn from his/her own experiences. The teacher prepares a nurturing environment, a wide variety of material and activity, and ample opportunity to explore.
- **Integrated:** Curriculum includes all parts of the preschool day, including arrival, routines, care taking transitions, and departure, as well as planned activities and spontaneous play. Learning occurs in all areas of the classroom and is not an isolated event, drill, or activity.
- **Emergent:** Curriculum is created daily as the children's interests and ideas are freely explored. When encouraged to make their own choices, explore their own ideas, and to follow their own interests, children are involved in the real process of discovering knowledge.

Assessment Procedures

The Early Childhood Teaching Staff will conduct assessments as an integral part of the classroom curriculum. These assessments will be used to support children's learning, using a variety of methods such as, observations, checklists, rating scales, weekly participation reports, and anecdotal records. Teaching staff will use these assessments to develop and implement curriculum that promote

and support children's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social-emotional development, approaches to learning, health and physical development. All assessments will be kept confidential in the child's individual file, with access provided only to parents, legal guardians, and ECC teaching staff.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

All lead Teachers and/or Primary Caregivers will offer their families Parent/Teacher Conferences twice a year. The first conference will take place in early fall, and will be considered an informal "goal-setting" conference. This conference will introduce parents to our assessment process, as well as gather information from families (such as family culture, home language, and personal experiences) for curriculum development and individualized teaching. The second conference for families will be to formally present the assessment of the developmental progress of each child across all development areas. All families will be provided with two reports per year.

Outside Policy

Outdoor time at the Early Childhood Center is an integral part of the curriculum. It is important to know that the children will have an opportunity to play outside on most days, with the exception of heavy rain, extreme heat, or unhealthful air quality. Children need to experience all weathers in order to understand weather! If the temperature is in the 60's or below, we will insist that all children have jackets or coats on before they go out. If they choose to unzip or remove their jackets or coats once they are busy playing, that is their choice, however, we will watch for signs of cold. Even before a child looks cold, we will ask them to listen to their bodies to decide if they are warm or cold. By following this policy, you will know what to expect at the Early Childhood Center, and the same rules will apply to all children so that they can feel in control of their play and of their day. *Exceptions will apply to infants and toddlers who cannot express their feelings of comfort or discomfort.* Please understand that children of all ages have daily opportunities for outdoor play (when weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk). When outdoor opportunities for large-motor activities are not possible because of conditions, the program provides similar activities inside. Indoor equipment for large-motor activities meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment

Snack and Lunch Suggestions

Mealtimes provides a rich opportunity for adults to model and encourage healthy eating habits. Therefore, we encourage parents to pack nutritious foods and 100% juices, water, or milk in their child's lunches. We do not serve juice to our infant and toddler students. Parents are also welcome to bring a nutritious snack

to share for Parent Participation credit. **All individual food items must be labeled with names and dates.**

Please be aware of any food allergies among the children in your child's class! Allergy information may be provided by your child's teacher, however, due to our Confidentiality Policy, names will not be disclosed. If substitutions need to be made, be aware that a young child *will* be sensitive to receiving a box of raisins when the rest of the class is eating blueberry muffins!

The Early Childhood Center will not offer children younger than four years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; spoonfuls of peanut butter; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Food served to infants will be cut into pieces not larger than ¼-inch square, and ½-inch square for toddler/twos (we will also take into account each child's swallowing capability).

Children love to cook and are capable of helping in many ways! If you are interested in involving the children in snack preparation, feel free to share your ideas with the teacher prior to class so that time can be allowed for such an activity.



Early Childhood Center **Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

I, parent or legal guardian of _____,
acknowledge that I have read the Early Childhood Center Parent Handbook on
www.claremontecc.education. I understand that it is my responsibility to read
and comply with the policies outlined in this handbook.

Since the information and policies described in the Early Childhood Center
Parent Handbook are subject to change, I acknowledge that other revisions to
this document may occur. All such changes will be communicated through
official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify,
or eliminate existing policies.

Parent or Legal Guardian's Name (printed)

Parent or Legal Guardian's Signature

Date Signed