



# **Kids Come First Early Learning Centers**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

---

## Kids Come First Early Learning Centers, Inc.

### WELCOME

Dear Family,

Welcome to Kids Come First Early Learning Centers (**Kids Come First ELC**). We are enthused about your interest in an excellent preschool program for your child. We believe you will find ours a quality program, and that our reputation for a sound curriculum combined with a caring staff will provide your child with an excellent preschool and early childhood experience.

We started providing services for families of preschool children in 2009 and have been building on that strong foundation ever since. We are continually updating our curriculum and our structure to meet the changing needs of our diverse community.

We believe in providing a safe, clean, healthy and educationally stimulating environment that is conducive to meaningful learning experiences. Activities in our preschool program are both age appropriate and individual appropriate. Our programs are tailored to meet the needs of children so that they may develop to their fullest potential. The children will be allowed to initiate play in a stress-free environment, which enables them to learn and explore their world and interests.

**Kids Come First ELC** serves as an extension of your family and sharing ideas and genuine love for children is of the utmost importance. We encourage parents to visit and participate in school activities, and our open door policy allows parents to come and visit unannounced and as often as they choose, as long as your child is enrolled in the program. This helps build a partnership and help children make the connection between home and the Center.

These are some of the most important years of your child's growth and development. Through use of effective early childhood practices appropriate for young children, we recognize this fact and offer you our support as well.

We look forward to having you join us as we work together in building a foundation for your child's future.

Thank you for choosing **Kids Come First ELC**. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Rita A. Streater  
Executive Director

**Kids Come First Early Learning Centers, Inc.**

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT US</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Philosophy .....	1
Mission .....	1
Certification .....	1
Definition of Family .....	1
Hours of Operation .....	1
Holidays .....	1
Admission & Enrollment .....	2
Annual Re-enrollment .....	2
Inclusion .....	2
Non-Discrimination .....	3
Family Activities .....	3
Confidentiality .....	3
Staff Qualifications .....	3
Child to Staff Ratios .....	3
Communication & Family Partnership .....	4
Open Door Policy .....	4
Publicity .....	5
<b>CURRICULA &amp; LEARNING</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Learning Environment .....	5
Curricula & Assessment .....	5
Developmental Screening .....	5
Outings and Field Trips .....	5
Transitions .....	6
Transition from home to center .....	6
Transition between learning programs .....	6
Transition to elementary school .....	6
Transition for before/after school care .....	6
Electronic Media .....	6
Multiculturalism .....	6
Celebrations .....	7
Rest Time .....	7
Infant / Toddler Safe Sleep and SIDS Reduction Policy .....	7
Toilet Training .....	8
<b>GUIDANCE</b> .....	<b>8</b>
General Procedure .....	8
Challenging Behavior .....	9
Physical Restraint .....	10
Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families .....	10
<b>TUITION AND FEES</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Important Notice</b> .....	10
Tuition Rates .....	10
Tuition Deposit .....	11
Payment .....	11
Methods of Payment .....	11
Late Payment Charges .....	11
Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges .....	12
Late Pick-up Fees .....	12
Special Activity Fees .....	12
Registration/Re-enrollment Fees .....	12
Credits/No Credits .....	12
<b>ATTENDANCE &amp; WITHDRAWAL</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Absence .....	13

Vacation .....	13
Withdrawal .....	13
Transfer of Records .....	13
Closing Due to Inclement Weather .....	13
<b>DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP .....</b>	<b>14</b>
General Procedure .....	14
Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up.....	14
Right to Refuse Child Release.....	14
Cell Phone Usage .....	14
<b>PERSONAL BELONGINGS .....</b>	<b>14</b>
What to Bring .....	14
Cubbies .....	15
Lost & Found.....	15
Toys from Home .....	15
<b>NUTRITION .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Foods Brought from Home .....	15
Food Prepared for or at the Center.....	15
Food Allergies .....	15
Meal Time .....	16
Infant Feedings .....	16
Children 24 Months and Older.....	16
School Aged Participants.....	16
<b>HEALTH .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Immunizations.....	17
Physicals.....	17
Illness.....	17
Allergy Prevention.....	18
Medications.....	18
Communicable Diseases .....	18
<b>SAFETY.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Clothing.....	19
Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play.....	19
Communal Water-Play.....	19
Injuries .....	19
Biting .....	19
Respectful Behavior.....	20
Transportation.....	20
Smoking.....	20
Prohibited Substances.....	20
Dangerous Weapons .....	20
Child Custody.....	21
Suspected Child Abuse .....	21
<b>EMERGENCIES.....</b>	<b>21</b>
Lost or Missing Child .....	21
Fire Safety.....	21
Emergency Transportation .....	21
<b>CENTER POLICIES .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Zero Tolerance Policy.....	22
Hair Beads Policy .....	22
Breakfast Policy .....	22
Late Arrival Policy .....	22
Religious Practices .....	22
<b>FAMILY ACTIVITIES .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>19</b>

---

## ABOUT US

### *Philosophy*

Kids Come First Early Learning Centers, Inc. (Kids Come First ELC) is a comprehensive educational community exclusively for kids ages 6 weeks to 12 years. The center dedicates its efforts and resources toward ensuring top-rated care giving services coupled with a high-quality activity-based learning environment tailored for children in these age groups. The center responds to the needs of its parents and students by working to provide affordable, first-class care giving and early education by providing a broad range of integrated programs and services, and innovative learning approaches.

### *Mission*

Kids Come First ELC is committed to taking a leadership role in affordable child care services, higher learning, community services, and promoting cultural diversity. The center has a strong commitment to accessibility and diversity. Its open door policy embraces all who desire to provide a better quality of care, preparedness and education for their children.

### *Certification*

Kids Come First ELC is licensed by the state of Georgia to operate as a licensed Child Care Learning Center, and abides by Bright from the Start: GA Dept. of Early Care and Learning rules and regulations, in addition to our own policies and procedures.

Kids Come First ELC is a member of the Georgia Alliance for Quality Child Care (GAQCC) and is committed to ensuring all its facilities become Quality Rated centers.

### *Definition of Family*

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

### *Hours of Operation*

The school calendar runs from August through May, with summer camp beginning June through July. Our hours of operation depends on the facility. For our Scenic Hwy location, it is: Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. For our Shannon Way location, it is: Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

School age care will also be conducted during these times for school holidays/closings/early release. After School care is available from 2:30 p.m. until closing.

### *Holidays*

We are closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Day After
- Christmas Day (and the Day Before or Day After) *(subject to change)*

---

## **Admission & Enrollment**

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and the registration fee plus first tuition payment paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

A registration fee of \$100.00 per family is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

A one-week, non-refundable tuition deposit is required for each child enrolled. This deposit will be held without interest and will represent tuition payment for the last week of the child's enrollment.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age.

Our process for introducing children to our program is to have the parent and child visit their potential classroom during the regular classroom hours. This gives the parent and child a chance to observe the classroom activities and routines, and a chance to meet the teacher and other children.

Children are admitted without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

The following forms must be submitted prior to enrollment:

- A signed Parental Agreement
- A completed Registration Form
- Updated Immunization Records and Health History Forms (GA Dept. of Human Svcs. Forms 3231 and 3300) within 30 days of enrollment
- Challenging Behavior Acknowledgement
- Notice of No Liability Insurance Form
- Meal Benefit Form
- Infant Feeding Plan (if applicable)
- Transportation Agreement (if applicable)

## **Annual Re-enrollment**

Our operating calendar runs from August to July of the following year. Each child must be re-enrolled annually in August, each upcoming school year. A non-refundable re-enrollment fee of \$75.00 per family will be due by Aug. 31 each year.

- The re-enrollment fee will automatically be added to your Aug. 1 tuition bill and is due by Aug. 31.
- If your child(ren)'s initial start date was between Mar. 1 and July 31 of the current year, the re-enrollment fee is waived for the upcoming school year.

## **Inclusion**

**Kids Come First ELC** believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

Children with special needs and disabilities are accepted, and we will make reasonable modifications in the premises and/or programs to accommodate the child. If the required modifications are deemed to be unreasonable or if trained staff is not available to accommodate the child, the child will be referred to another facility better equipped to suit the child's needs.

---

## Non-Discrimination

At **Kids Come First ELC** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

## Family Activities

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet.

## Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

## Staff Qualifications

Our teachers and staff are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Teacher	Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education or higher	2 years
Teacher Assistant/Aide	Child Development Associate Credential	1 year

Caregivers participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **Kids Come First ELC**.

## Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
≤ 12 months	[4 to 1]	[6]
13-35 months	[8 to 1]	[10]
3 year-olds	[12 to 1]	[14]

---

4 year-olds	<u>[15 to 1]</u>	<u>[22]</u>
5 year-olds	<u>[18 to 1]</u>	<u>[25]</u>
6 to 12 year-olds	<u>[25 to 1]</u>	<u>[25]</u>

Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

## ***Communication & Family Partnership***

**Daily Communications.** Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child’s activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be placed into your child’s cubby at the end of the day.

**Bulletin Boards.** Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Newsletters.** Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available at the sign-in/sign-out desk for your taking.

**Email.** We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

**Parent Resource Room.** Our parent resource room provides a learning environment for parents to share opinions, ideas and experiences and increase their understanding of learning and development.

**Family Visits.** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor’s badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.

**Family Night.** Family nights are scheduled on a regular basis. These nights include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. Family Nights allow families and children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child’s learning experience and connect with other families.

**Conferences.** Family & teacher conferences occur twice a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child’s strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child’s growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child’s progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

## ***Open Door Policy***

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

---

## **Publicity**

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained prior to use of photographs.

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

## **CURRICULA & LEARNING**

### **Learning Environment**

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

### **Curricula & Assessment**

**Kids Come First ELC** uses the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lessons plans posted in each classroom.

### **Developmental Screening**

**Kids Come First ELC** performs 3-4 Child Observations on all students enrolled. To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants. Developmental screening is conducted with written consent from the child's parent/guardian(s).

### **Outings and Field Trips**

Weather permitting; we conduct 45 minutes of supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around the neighborhood 2 times a day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child's family.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

---

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as during field trips.

## ***Transitions***

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

### ***Transition from home to center***

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

### ***Transition between learning programs***

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

### ***Transition to elementary school***

Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

### ***Transition for before/after school care***

Children who are of school age may continue with before/after school care at our center. The center will provide staff to ensure that your child arrives at the bus stop for pick up (before school) and drop off (after school) in a timely manner. The Supplemental Enrollment Form must be completed and on file with the center in order to be eligible for this service.

## ***Electronic Media***

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, used to meet a developmental goal, and limited to no more than 60 minutes per week per child.

Georgia rules prohibit any screen time for children under two. This includes TV, videos and computers.

## ***Multiculturalism***

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

---

## **Celebrations**

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

## **Rest Time**

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 10 minutes. Only cribs that are safety approved in compliance with Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards are provided for infants to sleep in.

After lunch, all children less than 5 years of age, participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

School age children, although not required, shall be provided an opportunity for a regular rest period if the child desires. For children who do not want to rest, a space and time for quiet play will be made available.

### ***Infant / Toddler Safe Sleep and SIDS Reduction Policy***

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning requires child care facilities adopt Safe Sleep and SIDS Reduction policies as prescribed by the state. The following statements describe our policy at Kids Come First Early Learning Centers:

1. All child care staff working in this room, or child care staff who may potentially work in this room, will receive training on our Infant / Toddler Safe Sleep Policy.
2. Infants 12 months and younger will always be placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is a signed sleep position medical waiver on file. In that case, a notice will be posted on the infant's crib.
3. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies are placed on their back to sleep, but when babies can easily turn over from the back to the stomach, they can be allowed to adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep. A note will be placed in the child's file stating when the child is able to roll over to their side or stomach. A similar note will be posted over the child's crib. The parent / guardian will also be notified verbally.
4. We will follow this recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics. However, child care staff can further discuss with parents how to address circumstances when the baby turns onto their stomach or side.
5. Sleeping infants will be checked periodically and frequently by staff. We will be especially alert to monitoring a sleeping infant during the first weeks the infant is in child care.
6. Room temperature will be kept between 70-74 degrees F. A thermometer is to be kept in the room to monitor the temperature at all times.
7. Infants heads will not be covered with blankets or bedding.
8. No loose bedding, pillows, wedges, other infant positioning devices, monitors, etc. will be used in cribs unless the parent/guardian provides a physician's written statement

---

authorizing its use, along with instructions on how/when to use the device. We will tuck any infant blankets in at the foot of the crib and along the sides of the crib mattress.

9. Toys and stuffed animals will be removed from the crib when the infant is sleeping.
10. Only one infant will be in a crib at a time, unless we are evacuating infants in an emergency.
11. No smoking is permitted in the infant room or in any area of the center's property.
12. All parents of infants cared for in the infant room will receive a written copy of our Safe Sleep Policy at the time of enrollment.
13. No child will sleep in a swing, bouncy seat, car seat, etc. Children are to be placed immediately in their crib when they go to sleep.
14. A written physician's statement must be provided in order to obtain an exemption from this policy. The copy will be placed in the child's file.

### ***Toilet Training***

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

## **GUIDANCE**

### ***General Procedure***

**Kids Come First ELC** is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

### ***Discipline Policy***

We have created a discipline policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children. A copy of the discipline policy is included in your enrollment package for you to review and sign.

---

## Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness.

Each student at **Kids Come First ELC** has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

We use positive discipline at Kids Come First ELC. Our teachers strive to consistently give praise for earned success and positive encouragement. Prior to expecting good behavior, children must know what is expected of them. Standards for good behavior are clearly communicated to the children at their level of understanding. In all discipline we will use guidance methods in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. The child could be asked to leave the activity to help the child regain control of him/herself. Time away is not a time when a child is humiliated or shamed. Corporal punishment is illegal in child care and is not permitted.

### **WE DO:**

1. Praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. Reason with and set limits for the children.
3. Model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. Listen to the children.
6. Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. Explain things to children on their levels.
10. Use short supervised periods of time-out (described below).
11. Stay consistent in our behavior management program.

### **WE DO NOT:**

1. Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. Make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. Deny food or rest as punishment.
5. Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. Place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. Allow discipline of children by children.
9. Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. However, we maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. Hitting, kicking, spitting, hostile verbal behavior and other behaviors which will hurt another child or staff are not permitted.

---

If a child's behavior indicates that Kids Come First ELC is not able to meet his or her needs, the Director will contact the child's parents to arrange a meeting to be held within 24 hours. A parent or staff member may also request a meeting: staff, and other professionals providing services to the child may be asked to attend the meeting. An action plan will be developed that establishes reasonable, attainable objectives for the child. A copy of the plan will be given to the staff and to the child's parents. A log will be kept of the child's progress. If the site Director and/or Executive Director feel Kids Come First ELC cannot accommodate the needs of the child, or if the objectives established for the child are not met, Kids Come First ELC reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment.

Any child who does not respect the physical boundaries at Kids Come First Early Learning Centers, or exhibits behavior that threatens his or her wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others, after repeated attempts to correct the behavior, is subject to dismissal without notice. Any inappropriate behavior by a child/parent/guardian/authorized pickup person, including verbal or physical abuse of any child or staff member, or confrontations with any child or staff members, is grounds for immediate termination of the family's enrollment at Kids Come First ELC without notice.

**A child who is dismissed due to behavior issues will no longer be eligible to attend at any time.**

### ***Physical Restraint***

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

### ***Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families***

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### ***Important Notice***

All payment and fee processing will be completed by the site Director. He/she will be in charge of collecting tuition and other fees and contacting families regarding payment issues. If you have a question or concern regarding a payment or fee, please contact the site Director.

### ***Tuition Rates***

Full-Time Rate (3-5 days):

- Infants: \$235.00 per week
- Ones: \$215.00 per week

- 
- Twos: \$205.00 per week
  - Threes: \$195.00 per week
  - Fours: \$185.00 per week
  - Fours (PRE-K): Free
  - School Age: Varies

#### Part-Time Rate (1-2 days):

- Full day (4+ hours): \$85.00 per day
- Half day (Less than 4 hours): \$65.00 per day

Families contract for a specific weekly schedule as indicated on the *Enrollment Agreement* Form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required every week year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary every week all year. No credits are given for sick days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather.

### **Tuition Deposit**

A Tuition Deposit equal to one week of care is required at the time registration is confirmed. This deposit is applied to the last week of care provided a two-week written notice is given. If a two-week written notice is not given when a child has withdrawn from the program, the family will be billed for one week of care, which may come out of their deposit.

### **Payment**

Enrollment at Kids Come First Early Learning Centers is tuition-based and is always due in advance with no deduction for absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due **WEEKLY** every **MONDAY** morning, in advance of care for that week, as outlined in the *Parental Agreement*. Normal weekly tuition remains due for the days/weeks your child is absent in order for us to hold your child's spot. If your child is absent for more than 2 weeks without payment, your child's spot will be forfeited and given to another child.

### **Methods of Payment**

Several methods of payment are available for families' convenience. Families can pay by cash, check, money order, automatic electronic funds transfer or credit card. To set up automatic, recurring payments, please contact the site Director.

### **Late Payment Charges**

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs and as a result, the business does not have the latitude to allow families to accrue a balance equal to more than one week of tuition. **Late payments will result in the imposition of late payment fees. Failure to pay child care payments will result in child care services being terminated.**

If tuition is not paid by close of business on Tuesday, a **\$35** late payment fee will be assessed and added to your statement. Accounts not paid in full, including all late fees, by the end of the week may result in suspension of service. **Repeated late payments will result in your family being required to set up automatic ACH or credit card payments.**

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date.

---

If payment is more than 30 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

### ***Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges***

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) and credit card transactions will be charged a fee of **\$35.00**. This charge may be collected electronically. Two returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on “cash or money order only” status.

### ***Late Pick-up Fees***

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at normal close of business time and will be due upon arrival.

### ***Special Activity Fees***

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.

### ***Registration/Re-enrollment Fees***

- **Registration** - A non-refundable enrollment/registration fee of \$100 per family is due upon registering your child(ren) the first time.
- **Re-enrollment** – A non-refundable annual re-enrollment fee of \$75.00 per family is due annually by Aug. 31.
  - The re-enrollment fee will automatically be added to your Aug. 1 tuition bill and is due by Aug. 31.
  - If your child(ren)’s initial start date is between Mar. 1 and July 31 of the current year, the re-enrollment fee is waived for the current year.

### ***Credits/No Credits***

- **Vacation** - to retain your child’s spot during vacation, half of your regular tuition is due. Vacation days can be used if written notice is given in advance for the days the child will not be in attendance. **Tuition must be paid prior to going on vacation**. These fees are non-refundable if you choose not to return.
- **Credit will be given for Excused Absences** - if your child is hospitalized, absent due to a contagious disease, or absent at the request of the child’s doctor, the absence is considered excused. A written doctor’s note is required to receive a credit.
- **Credit will not be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days.
- **Credit will not be given for Inclement Weather** - if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, full tuition remains due for that week.

---

## ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

### Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 10:00 AM (or after 8:00 AM for Pre-K), please call us at 800-880-8849 opt. 1 for Scenic Hwy or opt. 2 for Shannon Way. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

If a school age child will not be attending before or after school care, please notify us at 800-880-8849 opt. 1 for Scenic Hwy or opt. 2 for Shannon Way.

### Vacation

Each child is given 2 weeks at half price when your child is on vacation each calendar year and can only be applied during summer (June – July) in weekly increments. Vacation days only apply if your child is normally scheduled to attend on those days.

Should your child's vacation last more than 2 weeks, full tuition still remains due to reserve your child's spot on the roster.

### Withdrawal

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Your one-week deposit will be used for the child's final week of care. If we can no longer care for your child for any reason, we will give you at least a two-week notice as well, when appropriate.

Examples of why we would terminate your child's care include (but may not be limited to):

- Failure to complete required forms.
- Failure of parent to pay tuition.
- Lack of parental cooperation.
- Failure of child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time.
- Our inability to meet the child's needs.

### Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.

### Closing Due to Inclement Weather

**Kids Come First ELC** will reserve the right to either close or operate on an alternative schedule due to inclement weather. The center will make every effort to remain open during inclement weather. However, if Gwinnett County schools are closed, **Kids Come First ELC** may also elect to close, if deemed necessary.

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced via email or text message, on WSBTV, our website, and our phone system.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

---

## DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

### *General Procedure*

We open at 6:00 AM (Shannon Way) and 6:30 AM (Scenic Hwy). Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in on both the IN/OUT Computer Kiosk and the Sign-In/Out Pad. Both steps are to be followed as well when signing the child out when they leave.

We close at 6:30 PM (Shannon Way) and 7:00 PM (Scenic Hwy). Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

### *Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up*

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. The emergency contact list you are required to complete designates who may pick the child up if there is an emergency and you cannot contact us. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 1 hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### *Right to Refuse Child Release*

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

### *Cell Phone Usage*

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

### *What to Bring*

- **Infants:** enough clean bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be labeled and dated.

- 
- **Toddlers:** enough clean bottles for a day's use (if applicable), six diapers and at least two changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be labeled and dated.
  - **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program.
  - **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
  - **Kindergarteners:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.
  - **After School Care Children:** books for homework, appropriate play clothes.

Parents are responsible for replenishing wipes and diapers. Teachers will inform parents when refills are needed. Please label all items with a permanent marker with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center.

### ***Cubbies***

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and photo. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

### ***Lost & Found***

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located at the center's office. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

### ***Toys from Home***

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

## **NUTRITION**

### ***Foods Brought from Home***

We request that you do not bring food from home into the center. Accommodations may be made for children with medical exceptions.

### ***Food Prepared for or at the Center***

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service.

### ***Food Allergies***

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

---

## ***Meal Time***

At meal time the dining table is set with disposable plates and flatware, and the food is served to the children by kitchen staff. Everyone sits at the same table. Children are encouraged to serve themselves from food passed around each table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

## ***Infant Feedings***

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child’s home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 14 days.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child’s name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

## ***Children 24 Months and Older***

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

## ***School Aged Participants***

- Before and after school child care participants will be offered a light snack at each session. These snacks are not a meal. If your child will be arriving before 7:00 AM, arrangements can be made to serve your child breakfast. Otherwise, please make sure your child has had breakfast before arriving at child care and is supplied with an adequate lunch if required for school.

---

## HEALTH

### *Immunizations*

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every August, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### *Physicals*

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received no later than 30 days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

### *Illness*

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.

- 
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
  - Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
  - Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

### **Allergy Prevention**

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

### **Medications**

Our center does not administer prescription or over the counter medication to children. We request that you keep your child in the comfort of your home until he/she feels better.

Topical ointments/preparations such as sunscreen, insect repellent, baby powder, etc. may be administered to children upon a signed written authorization from the child's physician or parent/guardian.

### **Communicable Diseases**

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus

- 
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
  - Tuberculosis

## **SAFETY**

### ***Clothing***

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

### ***Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play***

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 90°F or less than 30°F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality index rating is 101 or higher.

### ***Communal Water-Play***

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions, such as drying ears thoroughly with a towel, drinking plenty of fluids, reapplying sunscreen, checking diapers and taking kids on frequent bathroom breaks to prevent peeing or pooping in the water, are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease.

### ***Injuries***

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

### ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the child who bit to learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

---

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

If biting continues after steps are taken to correct the behavior, or if biting is aggressive, breaks the skin or does not lesson within a reasonable time, the parent may be asked to dis-enroll the child for a short time. If biting continues after returning, the parent may be asked to withdraw the child until he/she is older.

### ***Respectful Behavior***

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

### ***Transportation***

Our center policies apply to the transportation of children to and from school, and to and from off-site activities.

All vehicles used for transporting children to and from the center will be currently registered and maintained in a clean and safe condition. No child will be permitted to remain unattended in the vehicle. Children will remain seated while the vehicle is in motion. Keys will be removed from the vehicle at all times when the driver is not in the driver's seat. Smoking is prohibited in the vehicle at all times. Each vehicle used will be driven by an adult with a current state driver's license that authorizes the driver to operate the type of vehicle driven.

For each enrolled child, a transportation release form signed by the parent/guardian will be on-site at the center. When children are being transported, at least one person accompanying the children in the vehicle will have current CPR and First Aid course completion.

If there are delays or problems with transportation, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. The center will do everything in it's' power to ensure transportation needs of the students are met.

### ***Smoking***

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are always Non-Smoking and Non-Vaping areas. Tobacco or E-Cigarettes in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

### ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

### ***Dangerous Weapons***

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

---

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

### ***Child Custody***

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

### ***Suspected Child Abuse***

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, including sexual abuse, no matter where the abuse might have occurred.

The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

Staff members receive training annually on ways to recognize child abuse and neglect. In the unlikely event a staff member abuses a child, policies are in place to discipline and/or terminate such an employee, as well as notifying the proper authorities.

## **EMERGENCIES**

### ***Lost or Missing Child***

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 15 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

### ***Fire Safety***

Our center is fully equipped with all fire safety features including alarms, strobe lights, extinguishers, rolling cribs, etc.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on an annual basis.

### ***Emergency Transportation***

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

---

## CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed annually and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center's directors.

### *Zero Tolerance Policy*

Kids Come First Early Learning Centers has a “Zero Tolerance” policy for any type of abuse at our centers – verbal or physical – and is grounds for immediate termination of services. Any aggressive/inappropriate behavior by a child/parent/guardian/authorized pickup person, including verbal or physical abuse of another child or staff member, or confrontations with a child or staff members, is grounds for immediate termination of the family's enrollment at Kids Come First ELC without notice. Our teachers and staff are not to be confronted inside of any classroom while children are present and verbally or physically assaulted.

Any concerns you have with a teacher or other parent should be brought to the Director's attention and handled in a professional manner. By state regulations, no form of verbal or physical abuse shall be tolerated in any classroom, playground, or hallway, with children present. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and nurturing learning environment for all children in our care.

### *Hair Beads Policy*

Hair beads, barrettes, and hair clips are no longer allowed in children's hair or braids while in the care of Kids Come First E.L.C. Younger children may place beads in their mouth, ear or nose, leading to a choking hazard and/or serious damage to another child. Children arriving with beads, barrettes, or clips in their hair will be denied admission until removed.

### *Breakfast Policy*

Breakfast is only served between the hours of 7:00 – 8:30 AM. Breakfast will **NOT** be served after 8:30 am. If your child is going to arrive after Breakfast is served, we ask that you feed your child before he/she arrives at school.

### *Late Arrival Policy*

Pre-school classes begin promptly between 8:00 – 8:30 AM. All children should be in class no later than 8:30 am. Children arriving late can disrupt the class and other children. A written Doctor's note may be required for any child arriving after 8:30 am. Excessive tardiness and/or absenteeism may result in your child being dismissed from the program.

### *Religious Practices*

We feel that religious teachings should be left up to the parents/guardians. This does not mean that God is never mentioned, however. Occasionally a Bible story may be told during circle time if it fits in with our unit of study. We also pray before each meal. Sometimes God just comes up in conversation.

For example, children often start to notice the difference between boys and girls around age three, especially if they have a sibling of the opposite sex or have watched enough diaper-changings. When they ask us "why" about the physical differences between boys and girls we tell them "because God made boys differently than He made girls." This answer seems to satisfy most preschoolers. You may feel free to elaborate on the subject when your child is at home.

---

We also reinforce to the children that we love them and God loves them too. We also usually have programs at Christmas and Easter. If you do not wish to have your child participate in these, please let us know.

---

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

We offer a variety of ways for families to participate in the growth and improvement of our program. We encourage families to take an active role.

### Advisors:

- Discussion of Program Goals – annual meeting for families to provide input into our plan for the program.
- Parent Advisory Committee – meets 4 times a year to review progress toward annual goals.
- Classroom Representative – serves as a liaison between classroom parents and teachers
- Home and School Committee – meets monthly to plan family events and fundraisers

**Family Events:** We have several events throughout the year that bring our entire community together. Watch for the announcements!

- Open House
- Back to School Night
- Family Math Night
- Holiday Gathering
- Book Swap
- Fall Festival
- Annual Family Picnic

**Classroom Activities:** Enjoy and help your child's class with these special activities.

- Share a meal with your child
- Chaperone field trips
- Read to children at arrival or pickup
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Donate requested items
- Serve as a parent representative
- Welcome new families
- Contribute to class Pot Luck Meal
- Family Teacher conferences

**Family/Parent Workshops:** Our menu of family workshops changes annually. Below is a list of workshops we typically offer. We try to offer these in the early evening or on Saturdays. See the monthly calendar for scheduled topics. We welcome requests for workshop topics.

- Positive Guidance and Loving Discipline
- Toilet Training
- Safety in the Home
- Child Proofing Your Home
- Brain Development
- Nutrition and Exercise for Small Bodies
- Supporting Your Child in Times of Stress
- Food Allergies
- How to Prepare for a Conference
- Warning Signs for Developmental Delays
- Value of Reading to Your Child
- Everyday Math

---

---

## FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Kids Come First ELC Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **Kids Come First ELC** staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Kids Come First ELC Family Handbook** that I do not understand.

---

Recipient Signature

---

Date

---

Center Staff Signature

---

Date